Language, Linguistics and the Real World

Volume I

Making Linguistics Relevant
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This publication is the result of a collaborative effort between the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics University of Malaya and HSBC Bank Malaysia Berhad and consists of selected papers from the international conference on ‘Language, Linguistics and the Real World’ 2002 held in conjunction with the Faculty’s 30th anniversary celebration of its establishment.

The papers are published in two volumes - 1) Making Linguistics Relevant and 2) Language Practices in the Workplace - which reflect the contemporary movement of the discipline from the explanation of the abstract form of the linguistic code to the context sensitive description of its communicative functions. They essentially answer the same key academic question: ‘what is the relevance of linguistics to the present day world?’ and, deriving from that, the question ‘how is language used to communicate in real world situations?’

The responses range from considerations of the nature of language itself and the ways the discipline should describe and explain it, through applications of the abstract code to express particular kinds of meaning such as politeness and responsibility, through the language of advertising and of the press to the ‘world of work’: language learning, court interpreting and the place of language in the hospital.

The two volumes provide, an insight into the way linguists are attempting to make the study of language more relevant to society and finding increasing areas in which the insights can be applied to the solution of social problems.