

*Introducing the Linguist and Linguistics* fills an existing need to clarify the usual assumption by both well-educated laymen and the general populace that a linguist is one who is very fluent in many languages; as well as misconceptions about linguistics. Hence, the purpose of this book is to explain in clear terms what linguistics is and who can rightly be called a linguist.

Also, the text serves as a career guide to students in secondary schools, universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, etc. of the economic benefits of studying linguistics and being a linguist.



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## Foreword to the First Edition

Only a few individuals have ever heard of the discipline of linguistics before, and fewer still know what exactly it is all about. All too often, the assumption made even by well-educated laymen hearing the name for the first time is that any person called an expert in it must be fluent in several languages. Mr Sanusi's aim in this short thoughtful book is to clear this and other popular misconceptions about linguistics as an academic discipline. In six short chapters he discusses the nature, aims, principles and major subdivisions of the subject, and also highlights, for all prospective students, some of the disciplines' major areas of practical application in education, government, mass communication and history.

The book fills an existing need, and all those who take enough trouble to read through it are sure to gain some insights into this all-important subject dealing with human communication.

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## Preface to the First Edition

The urge to write this book was initially prompted by my experience as an undergraduate student of linguistics. My friends and room-mates in the university often raised series of questions just to find out what exactly linguistics is, as a discipline, and who actually could be referred to as a linguist. As a result of such probing questions, I was always forced to define, from time to time, what my course of study 'linguistics' is all about.

I also faced similar inquiries during my service year in 1983, in Benue State. Any time I had to introduce myself and my course of study to the NYSC members, they would always be wanting to know what linguistics is all about. Their conception of linguistics was quite erroneous and totally contrary to what linguistics actually is. For many of them, a linguist is viewed as a polyglot.

The purpose of this book therefore is to define, in simple language and explain in clear terms, what linguistics is all about and who could be correctly referred to as a linguist. It is also hoped that the book will make explicit what exactly we have in mind when we define linguistics as the scientific study of language.

Considering the narrow scope of this book, it is pertinent to state here that the book is purely introductory as regards the task of having to define and explain what linguistics is all about and who a linguist is.

I hope this book will go some way towards removing some of the misconceptions the general public has about linguistics and the linguist, and thereby enlighten readers who are very new to the subject.