

# INTERACTIVE ARTICLE COVER

Book Review: *Give Me Tea, Please: Practical Ingredients for Tasteful Language* by Natasha V. Broodie

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## **Book Review: *Give Me Tea, Please: Practical Ingredients for Tasteful Language* by Natasha V. Broodie**

119 Pages, Kinde, \$2.99; Hardcover, \$24.39; Paperback, \$9.99. ISBN: B0B678X99N

Reviewed by

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“Give Me Tea, Please: Practical Ingredients for Tasteful Language” is highly recommended. It is a wonderful and powerful guidebook that demonstrates how to improve communication skills. Powerful and insightful, the book is an excellent guide for anyone who wants to uplift their communication in English to the next level by skillfully highlighting cultural differences that lead to communication breakdowns in English when direct translation from a non-native English language fails.

The author shares her highly valuable cross-cultural experiences in many different countries. Broodie has studied and practiced several languages, which shows in the book. The significance of her international and multilingual experience is key to how she deconstructs English language devices against non-English language systems. By analyzing the systematic construction of the English language, the author provides valuable advice on navigating the nuances of English-speaking etiquette by non-native English speakers. The guidebook demonstrates a high level of sensitivity to how and why English communication barriers and breakdowns occur in multicultural and multilingual environments.

Language devices explored in the guidebook are modals, tenses, diction, and especially pronouns. The author frames the research in the context of how these devices shift in professional environments when engaging in formal, informal, direct and indirect communication.

Interestingly, the author provides general advice on improving writing and speaking skills for non-native English speakers and tailors recommendations to sociopolitical factors, which she claims may change the art of communication for marginalized groups. The author strongly argues that marginalized groups, particularly minority races, ethnicities, and nationalities, must strategically alter English language devices to minimize offensive labeling, pejorative responses, and destructive stereotypes.

Essentially, the author claims that the same English-speaking devices used to uphold English-speaking etiquette are also strategically and systematically weaponized against marginalized

groups. And within this understanding, targeted individuals who have successfully overcome disempowerment by systemic language devices are truly the masters of the art of communication. The argument alludes to how English communication, not merely the disciplines of language learning, is based on artistic mastery rather than simply learning rules and structure systems like when solving a mathematical equation.

Moreover, for the keen reader, the subtitle of "Give Me Tea, Please", hints at the overall deeper meaning of the guidebook: English communication is an art, not merely an academic science. "Practical Ingredients for Tasteful Language" suggests the so-called "ingredients" used to craft words wisely, moving the practice of speaking English from a scientific method to an artistic practice. We see the author's desire to metaphorically liken well-spoken English to the *le plat principal* of a Michelin chef's special and secret recipe. Just like articulate communication, the culinary arts are a learnt and creative craft that transforms the science of cooking into an art form. In short, true masters of the English language can utilize and manipulate English language devices effectively and skillfully to obtain their overall objective with eloquence and sophistication.

The author and her guidebook are highly recommended to access essential tools on how to approach even the most difficult situations. Overall, the guidebook's format extends the tools from Part One in practical and meticulous methodologies throughout Part Two. In the second half of the guidebook, her case studies serve as ready-to-go drafted templates to deal with or confront common language traps in a measured and balanced manner. Additionally, the author's provision of a shortlist of idioms, expressions, and terminologies makes an excellent reference for the desk of any non-native English-speaking professional. This guidebook is easy to digest, with a strong visual design concept and color scheme, which enhances the learning and retention of the content. All the editorial choices the author has used creates a powerful and lasting impression on the reader.