

Lecture: Applied Linguistics

Intrduction:

Both theoretical and applied Linguistics are branches of linguistics. The former is the branch of linguistics that inquires into the nature of language or languages without regard for practical applications while the latter is an interdisciplinary field which identifies, investigates, and offers solutions to language-related real-life problems.

I. Applied Linguistics

The term 'applied linguistics' seems to be hard to be defined, as Vivian Cook remarks: '*Applied Linguistics means many things to many people*' (Cook 2006). Although defining linguistics is a hard task, many linguistics attempted to provide some definitions, among them Corder's definition: "*AL is the utilisation of the knowledge about the nature of language achieved by linguistic research for the improvement of the efficiency of some practical task in which language is a central component.*" (Corder, 1974, p. 24).

Schmitt & Celce-Murcia (2002) suggest that: "*Applied Linguistics is using what we know about (a) language, (b) how it is learned, and (c) how it is used, in order to achieve some purpose or solve some problem in the real world*" (Schmitt & Celce-Murcia, 2002, p. 1).

Another definiton of Applied linguistics was provided by Guy Cook in which he defines id as '*the academic discipline concerned with the relation of knowledge about language to decision making in the real world*'. Many tried to define applied linguistics such as (Stevens, 1989: p. 9), who defines AL as a "*multi-disciplinary approach to the solution of language-related problems*". He supported his definition with the following six propositions:

1. AL is based in intellectual enquiry, it gives rise to and makes use of research, and it is discipline-related.
2. Linguistics is an essential, but not the only discipline which contributes to AL.
3. The choice of which disciplines are involved in particular AL circumstances, and which parts of those disciplines, is contingent: it depends on what the circumstances are.
4. The effect of the multi-disciplinary nature of AL is that its practical operations are to be found in a number of different domains of human activity.
5. AL is typically concerned with achieving an end, with improving existing language-related operations, with solving language-related problems.
6. Linguists are not exempt from being socially accountable-from displaying a social conscience-and therefore when possible they should use their knowledge and understanding in the service of humanity (Stevens, 1988: pp. 8-9).

II. History of Applied Linguistics:

The tradition of applied linguistics established itself in part as a response to the narrowing of focus in linguistics with the advent in the late 1950s of generative linguistics. Applied linguistics has always maintained a socially-accountable role, revealed by its central interest in the problems of language (Alan & Catherine Elder, 2004).

The term Applied Linguistics (AL) is an AngloAmerican coinage, and was founded first at the University of Edinburgh School of Applied Linguistics in 1956 then at the Center of Applied Linguistics in Washington D.C. in 1957. Applied linguistics was first concerned with the principles and practices on the basis of linguistics.

In the 1960s, applied linguistics was expanded to include language assessment, language policy, and second language acquisition (SLA). Then, in the early of the 1970s, applied linguistics become a problem-driven field rather than theoretical linguistics, including the solution of language-related problems in the real world. By the 1990s, applied linguistics had broadened including critical studies and multilingualism. Research in applied linguistics was

shifted to "the theoretical and empirical investigation of real world problems in which language is a central issue." (Brumfit).

III. Linguistics and Applied Linguistics:

Linguistics is primarily concerned with language in itself and in findings ways of analysing language and building theories that describe language while Applied linguistics is concerned with the role of language in peoples' lives and problems associated with language use in peoples' lives.

IV. The Scope of Applied Linguistics:

According to Cook (2003), the areas of applied linguistics are classified into three categories:

- a. **Language and education**
 - i. First language education.
 - ii. Second language education.
 - iii. Foreign language education.
 - iv. Clinical linguistics.
 - v. Language testing.
- b. **Language, work and the law**
 - i. Workplace communication.
 - ii. Language planning.
 - iii. Forensic linguistics.
- c. **Language, information and effect**
 - i. Literary stylistics.
 - ii. Critical discourse analysis.
 - iii. Translation and Interpretation.
 - iv. Information design.
 - v. Lexicography (Cook,2003).

References

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