

Encyclopaedia of Applying Linguistics in Classrooms: Corpus and Functional Approaches

Contributors: Yanqing Chen , Siu-lun Lee, Mohammad Reza Talebinejad, et al.



About the Book

Critical pedagogy in language teaching is a perspective in language curriculum theory and instructional practice that supports and advances teaching and the study of languages in ways that would promote social justice. Linguistics is the study of language in all its aspects including its structure, its diversity, how it changes and evolves, how people learn and make use of it to communicate, and how it is implicated in relations of power. It provides students with an insight into the most fundamental of all human faculties, develops strong analytical skills and a foundation for work in many diverse areas. Linguistics and Applied Linguistics has strengths in many significant areas of research. It has an outstanding record in attracting nationally competitive publication and research grants and has established extensive collaborative networks with local and international scholars in the field.

Encyclopaedia of Applying Linguistics in Classrooms: Corpus and Functional Approaches brings together current research and practical innovations in the field of foreign language teaching. The contributions are all by well-known experts in the area. More specifically, the volume aims to give some comprehensive and updated coverage of theory, research and practice in two of the most challenging issues in today's English language teaching scenarios: the development of L2 vocabulary knowledge and the contribution of new corpus-based evidence to language teaching. It will be of particular interest to those studying second or foreign languages, and to anybody seriously interested in practical issues to do with communication in social contexts. It is also a useful general preparation for a career in second or foreign language teaching, including teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) or as a Second Language (TESL). Linguistics and Applied Linguistics is inherently a multi-disciplinary study, drawing on methodologies and theories from many fields, including archaeology, psychology, anthropology, history, literature, philosophy, sociology, social theory, education, the mathematical sciences and computer science. Thus it has contributions to make to a range of study and professional practice areas.



www.korospress.com

ISBN 978-1-78569-556-8



9 781785 169556

Chen, Lee, Talebinejad

Encyclopedia of Applying Linguistics in Classrooms: Corpus and Functional Approaches



Encyclopaedia of **APPLYING LINGUISTICS IN CLASSROOMS: CORPUS AND FUNCTIONAL APPROACHES**

Volume III: Applied Linguistic Science to Language Pedagogy

Contributors

Yanqing Chen, Siu-lun Lee, Mohammad Reza Talebinejad, et al.



KOROS PRESS LIMITED

Encyclopaedia of Applying Linguistics in Classrooms: Corpus and Functional Approaches

Volume III: Applied Linguistic Science to Language Pedagogy

Contributors: Yanqing Chen , Siu-lun Lee, Mohammad Reza Talebinejad, et al.

Published by Koros Press Limited

www.korospress.com

United Kingdom

Copyright 2017

The information in this book has been obtained from highly regarded resources. The copyrights for individual articles remain with the authors, as indicated. All chapters are distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permit unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

Notice

Contributors, whose names have been given on the book cover, are not associated with the Publisher. The editors and the Publisher have attempted to trace the copyright holders of all material reproduced in this publication and apologise to copyright holders if permission has not been obtained. If any copyright holder has not been acknowledged, please write to us so we may rectify.

Reasonable efforts have been made to publish reliable data. The views articulated in the chapters are those of the individual contributors, and not necessarily those of the editors or the Publisher. Editors and/or the Publisher are not responsible for the accuracy of the information in the published chapters or consequences from their use. The Publisher accepts no responsibility for any damage or grievance to individual(s) or property arising out of the use of any material(s), instruction(s), methods or thoughts in the book.

Applied Linguistic Science to Language Pedagogy

ISBN: 978-1-78569-556-8 (Set of 3 Volumes)

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A CIP record for this book is available from the British Library

Printed in the United Kingdom

Encyclopaedia of
APPLYING LINGUISTICS IN
CLASSROOMS: CORPUS AND
FUNCTIONAL APPROACHES

List of Contributors

Mohammad Reza Talebinejad
Dept. of English, Shahreza Branch, Islamic Azad University, Iran

Aasa Moattarian
Dept. of Foreign Languages, Sheikhbahae University, Esfahan, Iran

Margo K. Russell
Portland State University

Ka Ian, Justina CHEANG
Lingnan University

Chere M. Smith
California State University - San Bernardino

Felipe Flores Kupske
Universidade Comunitária da Região de Chapecó – Unochapecó.

Laz Chinedu Ogenyi
The Use of English Unit, School of General Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

Preface

Critical pedagogy in language teaching is a perspective in language curriculum theory and instructional practice that supports and advances teaching and the study of languages in ways that would promote social justice. Linguistics is the study of language in all its aspects including its structure, its diversity, how it changes and evolves, how people learn and make use of it to communicate, and how it is implicated in relations of power. It provides students with an insight into the most fundamental of all human faculties, develops strong analytical skills and a foundation for work in many diverse areas. Linguistics and Applied Linguistics has strengths in many significant areas of research. It has an outstanding record in attracting nationally competitive publication and research grants and has established extensive collaborative networks with local and international scholars in the field.

Applied Linguistic Science to Language Pedagogy brings together current research and practical innovations in the field of foreign language teaching. The contributions are all by well-known experts in the area. More specifically, the volume aims to give some comprehensive and updated coverage of theory, research and practice in two of the most challenging issues in today's English language teaching scenarios: the development of L2 vocabulary knowledge and the contribution of new corpus-based evidence to language teaching. It will be of particular interest to those studying second or foreign languages, and to anybody seriously interested in practical issues to do with communication in social contexts. It is also a useful general preparation for a career in second or foreign language teaching, including teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) or as a Second Language (TESL). Linguistics and Applied Linguistics is inherently a multi-disciplinary study, drawing on methodologies and theories from many fields, including archaeology, psychology, anthropology, history, literature, philosophy, sociology, social theory, education, the mathematical sciences and computer science. Thus it has contributions to make to a range of study and professional practice areas.

Contents

	List of Contributors.....	vii
	Preface.....	ix
Chapter 1	Second Language Acquisition Research and Language Pedagogy: A Critical View Mohammad Reza Talebinejad and Aasa Moattarian	1
Chapter 2	Linguistics an Introduction	11
Chapter 3	Second Language Development is Not Linear.....	43
Chapter 4	Linguistics: The Scientific Study of Human Language.....	51
Chapter 5	A Comparison of Linguistic Features in the Academic Writing of Advanced English Language Learner and English First Language University Students..... Margo K. Russell	61
Chapter 6	Domesticating Translation Can Make a Difference: A Case Study of Foreign Film-Title Translation in Hong Kong and Taiwan	95
	Ka Ian, Justina Cheang	
Chapter 7	The Narrative Performances of Teenage Girls: Participation, Identity, and Authority as the Foundation for Power	143
	Chere M. Smith	
Chapter 8	Second Language Pedagogy and Translation: The Role of Learners' Own-Language and Explicit Instruction Revisited.....	189
	Felipe Flores Kupske	
Chapter 9	Strategy Use and Language Performance by Second Language Learners in Nigeria	201
	Laz Chinedu Ogenyi	
	Citations	215
	Index.....	217

SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION RESEARCH AND LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY: A CRITICAL VIEW

Mohammad Reza Talebinejad¹ and Aasa Moattarian²

¹Dept. of English, Shahreza Branch, Islamic Azad University, Iran

²Dept. of Foreign Languages, Sheikhbahae University, Esfahan, Iran

Keywords: Second language acquisition research, Theory and practice, Research in action

ABSTRACT

Over the past several decades, a substantial body of research on second language acquisition has been provided. The current study was an attempt to investigate language teachers' views on applying research findings in their everyday practice of language teaching through a critical lens. Data for this qualitative study was collected by means of a semi structured interview with 10 language teachers teaching English at different language institutes in Iran. Analyses of data revealed that, although teachers find second language acquisition research a useful tool for their professional development; they do not usually consult bodies of research in their everyday teaching practice. They report problems in applying second language research in their practice due to problems with practicality, particularity, and possibility. The findings suggest that language teachers need to be exposed to insight from SLA research and practice.

INTRODUCTION

Second language acquisition (SLA) research has created a strong interest to encourage teachers to be engaged with research in their professional practice and development; SLA researchers are also interested in presenting their findings to engage teachers and other educators. The increasing number of professional journals, research articles, and conferences dedicated to the field is a clear evidence for this interest (Ellis, 2010).

Although, it is claimed that SLA research and language pedagogy are interconnected, the relationship between the two cannot be easily defined. It is believed that SLA research produces many pedagogically motivated studies

(Erlam, 2008); however, there have been some controversies in applying research findings in teaching practice. Han (2007) argues over impossibility of linking research to practice. He asserts that some SLA researchers do not consider practical implications in mind; therefore, the results of many SLA studies cannot be considered as beneficial in teaching practices. Some researchers, on the other hand, suggest that improving language teaching is one of the main reasons behind conducting SLA research (Larsen-Freeman, 1998; Pica, 2005). Above all these debates stand the teachers; this is the teachers who should eventually decide whether the findings of the SLA research are pedagogically relevant to their practice (Widdowson, 1990).

A widely held assumption in educational research is that teachers who are engaged with research can deliver a better quality of teaching (Williams & Coles, 2003). Borg (2010) recommends language teachers to engage with SLA research, since such engagements can be considered as a productive form of professional development.

Despite all these, language teachers do not effectively engaged with research as part of their day to day practice (Borg, 2010). Being conscious of the existing gap between the two and recognizing the dangers associated with this gap, scholars have highlighted the problem and warned the academic society (Belcher, 2007). However, adequate disciplinary effort has not been made to examine the essential problems which made the gap wider (Biesta, 2007; Ellis, 2010; Nassaji, 2012). Thus, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth analysis of the relationship between SLA research and language pedagogy.

A great number of studies conducted in this area have identified some factors affecting research-practice gap. Labaree (2003), for example, believed that the gap is mainly caused due to the differences between researchers' and teachers' cultural orientations. He asserted that while researchers are mostly theoretical, intellectual, analytical, and universal, teachers are more experiential, personal, normative, and particular. Such differences lead to a culture clash and misunderstanding between teachers and researchers. Stewart (2006) pointed out that teachers and researchers do not receive an equal degree of recognition in academia. Teachers' knowledge and opinions are often undervalued, although they enjoy in-depth knowledge of actual teaching practice. In the same line, Freeman and Johnson (1998) considered lack of a deep understanding and appreciation of teacher knowledge as the main issue, and argue that research findings are not clearly articulated to be used in classroom practice. Block (2000) interpreted the existing gap in terms of differences between teachers' and researchers' discourses; in fact, he emphasized researchers and teachers are different people coming from different worlds.

Reviewing the existing literature, Borg (2010) reported that non-collaborative school cultures, limited resources and limitations in teachers' skills and knowledge to do research as some of the important barriers.

Many suggestions have been also offered to bridge the gap. One of the most important issues to be considered is to promote teacher research. This kind of research encourages teacher autonomy and empowers teachers in their professional activities (Allwright, 2005; Borg, 2010).

Action research has been advocated by many scholars as an influential initiative to raise teachers' awareness and to engage them with research (e.g., Burns, 2005; Allwright, 2005). Despite the attempts made to promote action research to gain a better understanding of teaching practice, the findings of research in recent years (e.g., Nassaji, 2012; Tavakoli & Howard, 2012) indicates that it is still not a widely-practiced activity.

Haley and Rentz (2002) emphasized that teacher education can play a crucial role in preparing teachers to apply research in their teaching practice. Teacher education is not only about teachers and their education. It is surely more than sum of the two, since it often deals with critical issues and questions beyond their boundaries (Kumaravadivelu, 2012).

Cochran-Smith and Zeichner (2005) considered education and teacher education as social institutions that address not only ethical, social, and moral issues, but also philosophical and ideological questions (as cited in Kumaravadivelu, 2012)

It is generally held that by performing a comprehensive analysis of teachers' beliefs and views on the relationship between SLA research and language pedagogy, invaluable information will be provided. Therefore, the present study is set to enrich our understanding of teachers' ideas on their engagement with SLA research in their daily practice of teaching.

To meet the aims of the study, some operating principles were chosen. Three parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2012) were selected as operating principles in this study. By operating principles here, he means a set of central tenets to clearly define the way a model, a system, or a corporation operates. He believes that on the basis of the educational, cultural, social, and political imperatives of language learning, teaching, and teacher education, these principles potentially offer the necessary conceptualization and contextualization. Moreover, by making use of these principles, new patterns can be offered in which the roles of

learners, teachers, and teacher educators are all connected. Such patterns can establish symbiotic relationships with synergistic results.

The Principle of Particularity

This principle is defined based on the hermeneutic philosophy of situational understanding with the claim that a meaningful pedagogy need to be developed on a general interpretation of particular situations. Kumaravadivelu (2012) believes improving pedagogy equals improving those particular situations; hence, in language teaching it must be considered that “a particular group of teachers are teaching a particular group of students pursuing a particular set of goals within a particular institutional context embedded in a particular sociocultural mileu” (p. 13). Thus, local demands and lived experiences are under the spotlight here. He pointed out that the principle of particularity is inextricably linked to the principle of practicality.

This principle takes a stand against pre-selected principles and procedures which mainly aim at accomplishing predetermined goals; it, rather, opts for context-sensitive teaching which is practiced based on a deep understanding of sociocultural, political, and linguistic particularities. This principle strongly advocates enabling “teachers to theorize from their practice and practice what they theorize” (p. 13), and, in fact, argues against considering theorist and teachers as dichotomous.

The Principle of Practicality

The principle of practicality aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice. It mainly intends to clarify that teaching should not be looked at as mechanisms to maximize learning opportunities, but as active process which enables teachers to theorize from practice by understanding learning and teaching possibilities. In this sense, this principle is closely related to the principle of possibility.

The Principle of Possibility

This principle is mainly derived from critical pedagogy, in which teachers are invited to make use of variety of instruments and strategies to deal with social and educational dynamics. Therefore, there would be some classroom events and activities which have not been anticipated by policy planners, curriculum designers, or textbook producers. It favors teaching programs that considers sociopolitical issues and tries to recover consciousness among all the participants so that they can construct and reconstruct their personal and social identities.

In the present study attempts were made to analyze language teachers’ perspectives on the existing problems in applying research findings in their every day teaching practice based on the principles of practicality, particularity, and possibility. They were then invited to provide suggestion to fill the existing gap.

METHOD

Participants

The participants of the study were 10 language teachers teaching English at different language institutes in Iran. To ask the participants for their attendance, a number of language teachers taught at different language institutes in Esfahan were contacted and invited to take part in the study. The 10 participants who volunteered and attended the interviews came from different professional and educational backgrounds, and had varying teaching experiences. All participants were evaluated as qualified practicing teachers. Table 1 provides a summary of their personal background characteristics.

Table 1: Participants’ background information

	Age	Years of teaching experience	Academic degree completed
1	37	15 years	MA
2	32	5 years	MA
3	31	6 years	MA
4	28	3 years	BA

5	34	11 years	MA
6	24	2 years	BA
7	25	1 year	BA
8	37	10 years	BA
9	31	9 years	MA
10	33	5 years	BA

Instruments

To provide an open platform for the teachers to discuss their perspectives in details, a semi-structured interview was considered as a methodologically appropriate instrument to elicit data.

As for the content of the interviews, various sections were included to collect extensive data. This semi-structured interview protocol was developed based on the theoretical framework of the study. The interview questions were finalized based-on the feedback received from a panel of experts in Applied Linguistics.

The interview questions were divided into five main sections. The first part was on their background information; they were asked about their age, teaching experience, and their familiarity with SLA research. The next three parts contained questions on particularity, possibility, and practicality of applying research in their everyday teaching practice. In the final section, the teachers were invited to provide suggestions to bridge the existing gaps.

Procedure

Face to face interviews were conducted in a place of convenience to the participants, each lasting 30 to 45 minutes. First, the purpose of the study was explained to the participants, and then the questions were asked. To avoid any misinterpretations, all the interviews were conducted in the respondents’ native language (Persian), and at least one of the researchers was present in the interview sessions.

RESULTS

Based on the results obtained from the interviews, the researchers recognized that teachers who had taught at university level or the ones who studied in graduate levels thought more positively about the value of research. They mentioned this positive attitude is mostly fostered in university environment and not language institutes. Moreover, more experienced teachers were more eager to use SLA research in their teaching practice than less experienced ones. In general, however, they discussed that there are lots of problems in applying research in practice. The interview questions were designed in a way to lead the respondents to discuss the problems within the main principles of possibility, practicality and particularity.

In the following, their responses are classified and presented. Due to reasons of space, in each part, few quotes are presented as evidences for the results.

Possibility

With regard to possibility of applying SLA research to language pedagogy, teachers mostly mentioned that the outcomes of research in applied linguistics are not always possible to be applied in language classrooms. The reasons provided by the teachers could be divided to the following:

A. Lack of knowledge in analyzing research articles

Some of the participants mentioned that they do not know how to choose reliable sources; moreover, they complained they don’t know how to apply the results in their teaching practice.

I might sometimes refer to some research articles written in the field, but unfortunately, I cannot understand how to use the results in real classes.

I might give enough importance to it but I feel, sometimes, I’m not quite aware of all the sources available. You know, I cannot find reliable sources especially on the net. There are many different scientific journals, but some of them cannot be trusted, I think.