An Introduction To Applied Linguistics

应用语言学导论

刘典忠 编著

导论

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"应用语言学"一词最早由波兰语言学家 J. Baudouin de Courtenay 在 1871 年提出,但是,直到 20 世纪 50 年代中期,英美两国的语言学家才正式使用"应用语言学"这一术语。1964 年 10 月在法国南希召开的第一届"世界应用语言学大会"和随之成立的"国际应用语言学协会"奠定了应用语言学作为一门独立学科的地位。之后,应用语言学在北美和欧洲得到迅猛发展,"世界应用语言学大会"每三年举办一次,各地相继成立了应用语言学研究中心,在许多国家,应用语言学成为语言教师的一门必修课。而在我国,直到上世纪 80 年代,外语教师才真正有机会接触到这门学科。

应用语言学是一门独立的交叉学科。由于它具有较强的交叉学科或多学科性质,学术界对其定义、研究范围和学科体系一直争论不休,尚未达成共识。但一般认为,应用语言学有广义和狭义之分。广义的应用语言学泛指把语言学知识应用于解决其他科学领

域与语言有关的各种问题,狭义的应用语言学专指语言教学,特别是指外语或第二语言教学。刘典忠老师的这本《应用语言学导论》属于狭义应用语言学的范畴。编者在国外留学期间收集了大量的宝贵资料;回国后,从我国读者的实际需要出发,根据自己多年讲授应用语言学的经验,编著了该著作,弥补了国内教科书的不足。这是一本颇具针对性的应用语言学入门书,对广大英语学习者,尤其是英语专业大学生、研究生和对应用语言学感兴趣的读者掌握应用语言学知识、从事应用语言学研究具有现实指导意义。书中每章后面的讨论题有助于读者深入理解相关内容、进一步探讨有关问题。

我相信本书的出版一定会受到读者的欢迎。

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Self-preface

The term applied linguistics came into existence in the mid-1950s almost simultaneously in Britain and the United States. In 1964, the first textbook of applied linguistics *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching* was published in Britain. Since then, applied linguistics began to develop very vigorously. However, in our country, the research of applied linguistics did not start until the 1980s. And many English learners, especially university students, are still unfamiliar with this new science. They often ask such questions as:

What is applied linguistics?

What is the relationship between applied linguistics and other sciences?

Is it necessary for us to have some knowledge of applied linguistics?

In order to meet the demand of those English learners, I decide to compile this book, which consists of five chapters. Chapter One gives a general introduction of applied linguistics. Chapter Two highlights the many ways in which linguistics and applied linguistics come together

productively. Linguistics has much to offer to applied linguistics. It is for the applied linguist to be aware of these offerings and use them in the most appropriate contexts. Chapter Three discusses the application of applied linguistics in terms of the teacher profession. In its narrow sense, applied linguistics refers to the study of language teaching and learning. In this chapter, some major aspects of the teacher profession are investigated, which is beneficial to learner teachers. Chapter Four deals with the applications of computers in applied-linguistics research. The early use of computers in solving applied-linguistics issues can be traced back to machine translation of the 1950s. At present, computers are viewed as essential tools in applied linguistics. Chapter Five deals with the sorts and ranges of knowledge required of an applied linguist.

In the autumn of 2005, I came to Toronto University as a visiting scholar of its English department. While I stayed there, I had gathered many materials about applied linguistics, which have helped me a lot in writing this book. Here I'd like to give my heart-felt thanks to Pro. Brian Corman, chair of the English Department, without whose help I could not have access to those valuable materials. I also wish to thank all the related authors from whose writings many quotations of this book have come. I hope readers will learn a great deal about applied linguistics after reading this book.

At the end of each chapter, there are some questions for discussion. Most of these discussions have been held in my postgraduate classes. If such discussions can arouse great interest of readers in applied linguistics, I will surely feel honored.

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Liu Dianzhong

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June, 2007

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Chapter One An Overview of
Applied Linguistics

1. 1 Origins of the Term Applied Linguistics

The term applied linguistics (AL) has been in use at least since
the founding of the University of Edinburgh School of Applied
Linguistics in 1956, and of the Center for Applied Linguistics in
Washington, D. C. , in 1957. In the case of Edinburgh, the impetus
behind the creation of a new department with an unfamiliar title came
from two different directions. From the one side came an initiative from
"cultural diplomacy" : the British Council for English aimed to provide
specialist courses for high-level teacher trainers and senior educators
from both Britain and overseas countries so that the practical teaching
and learning of English in Commonwealth countries and the developing
world would be substantially improved. Edinburgh University accepted
that a number of language-related areas of academic study, not solely
English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language

(ESL), would be supported by the founding of a new department of this kind under the pioneering direction of J. C. (Ian) Catford.

The Center for Applied linguistics in Washington, D. C. , owes its genesis largely to the concern of the Ford Foundation to assist in solving the problems in language education then being encountered in many countries in the developing world. They saw the need to collect and analyze data about the role and use of English and other languages, international and local, particularly in those countries that had recently obtained their independence from France or Britain, or were about to do so. As a consequence of these surveys, it was anticipated that large-scale projects would be mounted for the design and production of language-teaching materials and for the training of teachers in their use. Dr. Charles Ferguson of Stanford University was appointed the first of a series of distinguished directors of the center.

Thus, in the case of each of the academic institutions that first bore the term applied linguistics in its title, it was in the national interest of a major English-speaking country——Britain in 1956 and the United States in 1957——to promote the learning and teaching of English for educational development, and to unlock the considerable funds necessary in order to establish an institutional base.

Although the two directors and their colleagues came from academic posts in linguistics, they were faced with the immediate necessity of addressing practical tasks. At Edinburgh, a principal task was to articulate for the first time, in new graduate-level courses, the intellectual bases of language learning and language teaching for the benefit of senior educators working in the developing world. In Washington, a principal task was to design and carry out multiple large-scale surveys of language use in Africa; these, in turn, would be used as part of the design criteria for new programs of language teaching, including the preparation of new generations of teacher

trainers. Applied linguistics was thus produced simultaneously on both sides of the Atlantic, not as an a priori concept, but as the consequence of creative minds aware of the developments then current in the discipline of linguistics, applying their talents to specific language-related tasks.

It is a central feature of applied linguistics that it is task-related, problem-oriented, project-centered, and demand-led. It is also fundamentally based in academic disciplines. This point is an important one since many people outside applied linguistics jump to the erroneous conclusion that applied linguistics is a high-flown name for advanced English-language teaching. It is, of course, true that much of the demand for specialists with applied linguistics training arises in connection with language teaching. There is, though, an increasing demand for other international, regional, and national languages also, as is evidenced by the growing number of programs offered by the "cultural diplomacy" arms of the countries concerned (emulating the achievements of the U. S. Information Agency and the British Council for English) for the teaching of, for example, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Spanish, and Portuguese.

Throughout the world a surge in English multilingualism is occurring——one so strong that more and more courses are being offered to a growing range of learners with ever more specialized learning aims and needs. In order to meet these needs, it is not just classroom teachers who are required, essential though these are, but specialists able to analyze in close and relevant detail the new learners' needs and the nature of the conditions in which the learning and teaching would take place, conditions that crucially affect the design of most-appropriate teaching courses. Applied linguistics is uniquely capable of imparting the knowledge, understanding, and conceptual skills necessary to undertake these analyses and to devise the

accompanying material. But again, although it is applied linguistics, uniquely, that offers unified solutions to these higher-level conceptual problems in language teaching, it is not solely in language teaching that applied linguistics contributes. Rather, it contributes in a wide range of language-related areas.

The term applied linguistics, then, has a history reaching back over 50 years, starting from nearly contemporaneous beginnings in Scotland and the United States. The subsequent expansion of centers for the study and teaching of applied linguistics has been more rapid in Britain and Europe——including the establishment of "daughter" centers such as those in Hyderabad, Singapore, and Hong Kong—— than in the United States (although the latter country has helped to facilitate the teaching and learning of English in Guam, American Samoa, and the areas earlier known as the U. S. Trust Territories in the Western Pacific, as well as in a number of other countries through Binational Centers). The British have found that one-year, postexperience master's-degree courses in applied linguistics have attracted large numbers of high-quality applicants who subsequently find a wide range of jobs open to them——most of them, it is true, in higher-echelon positions in EFL/ESL.

In addition to centers for the study and teaching of applied linguistics, there have emerged a number of serious academic and professional associations, notably the International Association of Applied Linguistics (AILA), the British Association for Applied Linguistics (BAAL), the American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL), and similar bodies in many countries. The many thousands of members of these associations are served by a range of journals, among the most prestigious of which are Applied Linguistics (AL), Annual Review of Applied Linguistics (ARAL), English Language Teaching Journal (ELTJ), International Journal of the Sociology of

Language (IJSL) , International Review of Applied Linguistics (IRAL) , Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development (JMMD) , Language Learning System , TESOL Quarterly (TQ) , and World Englishes. Many other journals also now exist , often with more restricted circulation than the journals named here.

The economic and logistical success of applied linguistics has occasionally led to contrary or even hostile reactions , in particular from some specialists in theoretical linguistics , on the one hand , and in literature on the other. Even today it is not unknown for non-applied linguists to maintain that " there is no such thing as applied linguistics , " or at least to seek a return to the conditions and attitudes that prevailed before applied linguists became influential in language-teaching policy and decision making. Such reactions reflect complex sentiments that include some of the following : frustration with the fact that graduate-student demand , and therefore funding and resources , is typically greater for applied linguistics than for either general linguistics or English literature ; an elitist belief that theoretical or purely literary studies are morally and intellectually superior to applied studies ; a low opinion of the art of teaching and a lack of understanding of the possibilities of serious intellectual work relating to language teaching and learning ; nostalgia for earlier literature ; and a view among some specialists in linguistics that practice (i. e. , classroom teaching) must be determined by the results of research , which in turn is determined by theory , and that , therefore , foreign-language teaching must necessarily be dominated by linguistics.

Among this latter group , even when there is tolerance of the existence of applied linguistics , it is often conditional on applied linguistics' being narrowly interpreted as " linguistic theory applied. " There is a subtle presupposition within such a formulation that the intellectual paradigm for applied linguistics——its " rules of

engagement" as it were——are agreed by all concerned to be those of theoretical linguistics, and indeed of one particular school of thought in linguistics, even though the purposes of applied linguistics are (unfortunately) utilitarian. Yet the considerable and growing strength of applied linguistics is evidenced by the continuing demand for specialists trained in that field, by the continuing extension of the uses of applied linguistics into new fields, and by the growing flow of valuable contributions to research, publications, and action that applied linguists are producing.

1.2 **Definition and Domains of Applied Linguistics**

"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. Those purposes are many and varied, as is evident in a definition given by Wilkins (1999:7):

In a broad sense, applied linguistics is concerned with increasing understanding of the role of language in human affairs and thereby with providing the knowledge necessary for those who are responsible for taking language-related decisions whether the need for these arises in the classroom, the workplace, the law court, or the laboratory.

The range of these purposes is partly illustrated by the call for papers for the American Association of Applied Linguistics (AAAL) 2002 conference, which lists 18 topic areas:

Language and its acquisition

Language and assessment

Language and the brain

Language and cognition

Language and culture