

# APPLIED LINGUISTICS 应用语言学

乐眉云 著

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## Preface

This book is designed for a term course for MA candidates in applied linguistics, EFL teachers and EFL teacher trainees. It provides them with a comprehensive and up-to-date understanding of

- 1) the general theories of language learning and teaching,
- 2) major individual variations of language learning, and
- 3) major techniques and methods in applied linguistics.

This book deals with applied linguistics in the narrower sense. It examines language learning and teaching from the interdisciplinary perspectives of linguistics, psychology, sociology and education, which constitute the major disciplines that have contributed to language learning and teaching methodology over the past four decades. The book covers the following four areas:

1) What is applied linguistics: This part gives a general introduction to the history, definition, scope, and nature of applied linguistics;

2) General theories of language learning and teaching: This part deals with the nature of language, learning and teaching, the theories of human learning in general and of first language acquisition and second and foreign language learning in particular;

3) Individual variations: This part discusses cognitive,

affective and sociocultural factors relevant to language learning and teaching; and

4) Major techniques and methods in applied linguistics:

This part introduces four major techniques and methods in applied linguistics:

(1) contrastive analysis,

(2) error analysis,

(3) language testing, and

(4) language teaching research.

The book consists of three parts. Part One deals with the general theories of language learning and teaching, each chapter focusing on one theoretical aspect of applied linguistics. Chapters 1 and 2 are general introduction to applied linguistics and to language, learning and teaching. Chapters 3 to 5 deal with human learning, first language acquisition and second language learning respectively. Part Two discusses individual variations in language learning. Chapters 6 to 8 each discusses cognitive, affective and sociocultural factors of language learning. Part Three introduces four major techniques and methods in applied linguistics. Chapter 9 deals with contrastive analysis, Chapter 10 error analysis, and Chapters 11 and 12 each discusses testing and research methods respectively.

The book has grown out of a graduate course in applied linguistics which I have taught at Nanjing University. It was first designed to serve as a complement to H. Douglas Brown's *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*.

However, it can be used alone if Brown's book is not available.

I am greatly indebted to my students and colleagues without whose help and encouragement this book could not have been brought to completion. My heart-felt thanks go to Dr. Nancy Pine and Dr. Joe Stephenson, who not only provided me with some reference books but also patiently read my manuscripts and offered invaluable comments and suggestions.

Yue Mei-yun  
Nanjing University  
June, 1992

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## Part One General Theories

### 1 What Is Applied Linguistics

**1. A brief history:** The term applied linguistics was first introduced as early as 1870 by the Polish linguist J. Baudouin de Courtenay, who drew attention to the necessity for the distinction between pure linguistics and applied linguistics, and pointed out that applied linguistics aimed to solve problems in various fields by applying knowledge of linguistics. But it was not until the 1940s that applied linguistics was established as an independent discipline, first in the university of Michigan in the United States (in 1946), and it was not until the 1960s that it began to develop vigorously. So we can say that as a discipline, it is comparatively young, with a history of only a few decades.

The birth of applied linguistics as a discipline is closely associated with foreign language teaching. During World War I the global commitments thrust upon the U. S. and many of its citizens, military as well as civilian, required them to learn foreign languages. When the army called upon the linguists for help, they responded not only by compiling language guides and military phrase books, but also by setting up a series of intensive courses in many languages. Following their approach, after an intensive study of 40-60 hours a week in six months, students with a command of 1,

500 to 2,000 properly chosen sentences could speak the foreign language "like natives". This method became known as the "army method", or "oral-aural method", and was carried into the Foreign Service Institute of the State Department after the war, and finally into the major public schools. This method was later applied with great success to the teaching of English as a foreign language (TEFL) to non-native speakers of English. We can see that at first applied linguistics referred to the application of linguistics to teaching foreign languages. In the 1950s, along with the revolution brought about by Chomsky, linguistics shook off the fetters of structuralism. This paved the way for the development of the hybrid disciplines such as sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics. In October, 1964, the first World Congress of Applied Linguistics was held in Nancy, France, and the International Association of Applied Linguistics was set up. This marked the recognition of the status of applied linguistics as an independent discipline. Since then the World Congress of Applied Linguistics has been held every three years. Centers of Applied Linguistics have been set up one after another. Applied linguistics has become a required course for language teachers in many countries. Journals and books of applied linguistics have been published. Along with its development, its scope is broadening also. The 8th World Congress of Applied Linguistics held in August, 1987 covered the following areas:

- 1) adult language learning,

- 2) pragmatic aspects of child language,
- 3) the use of the computer in teaching languages, linguistics and the humanities,
- 4) applied contrastive analysis and applied error analysis,
- 5) discourse analysis and language teaching,
- 6) present-day problems of applied psycholinguistics,
- 7) perspectives on sociolinguistics,
- 8) typology of translation,
- 9) stylistic analysis of literary discourse,
- 10) the contribution of rhetoric and stylistics to text comprehension,
- 11) computers in applied linguistics, and
- 12) language in education in the third world.

From this brief history, we can see that applied linguistics originated in close association with foreign language teaching and has grown to cover a wide scope, but its core has always been language learning and teaching.

**2. Definition and scope:** As applied linguistics is a comparatively new discipline, there is as yet no consensus of opinions as to what its definition is and how wide its scope should be. However, the different views on its definition and scope fall into three general categories:

- 1) The narrow view: This is represented by R. L. Politzer (1972), who discusses applied linguistics with particular reference to foreign language teaching. He notes that applied linguistics in foreign language teaching requires the

use of linguistics to formulate assumptions. "Applied linguistics" he says, "... is ultimately a habit, a way of using linguistic conceptualization to define and solve pedagogical problems " (p. 5). He admits that beyond the language teaching issue, the boundaries between such fields as linguistics, psycholinguistics, and applied linguistics cannot be defined precisely.

2) The broad view: This is represented by David Crystal (1981) and L. Pap (1972). Pap (pp. 111-2) says that applied linguistics "may in effect be considered as a cross-roads, an interdisciplinary area, a combination of linguistics with psychology, pedagogy, mathematics, electronics, political science, and so forth." Crystal (p. 1) cites a "recent international conference on applied linguistics as including, in addition to foreign language teaching and learning, mother tongue teaching and learning, multilingualism, testing, language planning, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, speech pathology, lexicography, translation, contrastive linguistics, computational linguistics, writing systems, and several other areas..." In the broad view, therefore, "any definable area of human endeavor" to which "the investigation of the theories, methods and empirical findings of linguistics could be applied" falls into the scope of applied linguistics.

3) The moderate view: This is represented by J. Richards et al (1985), who compiled *Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics*. According to them (p. vi), applied lin-

guistics refers to "applied linguistics of language teaching", rather than to the broader applications of language study in such areas as medicine, law, stylistics, language planning or dictionary compilation. They say "... in general usage, the term refers to the study of language teaching and learning." In their view, the content and subject matter of the applied linguistics of language teaching and learning generally include the following areas of study:

(1) introductory linguistics, including phonology, phonetics, syntax, morphology and semantics,

(2) English grammar (or the grammar of the language the student is specializing in),

(3) discourse analysis,

(4) sociolinguistics, including the sociology of language and communicative competence,

(5) psycholinguistics, including first and second language acquisition, contrastive analysis, error analysis and learning theories,

(6) the teaching of listening, speaking, reading and writing,

(7) the methodology of language teaching, including methods, course and syllabus design, and

(8) language testing and basic statistics.

**3. The role of applied linguistics:** Although linguists differ as to the definition and scope of applied linguistics, they are unanimous in their view on its role as a mediator. That is to say it serves as a bridge or link between theories of linguis-



tics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, etc. on the one hand, and language teaching, etc. on the other hand. This relationship can be shown in the following diagram:

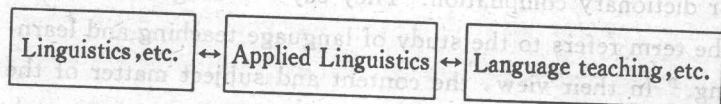


Figure 1.1 The role of applied linguistics as a mediator

Applied linguistics thus not only provides principles and basic methodology for language teachers, etc. based on the theories and insights of linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, etc., it also provides feedback to linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, etc. by summing up the experience from the practical areas such as language teaching.

**4. Theoretical bases:** What is applied in applied linguistics?

Just as there are different views on the definition and scope of applied linguistics, there are different answers to this question. Everyone agrees that applied linguistics applies, first of all, linguistics. Edward M. Anthony (in Kaplan 1980:4), for example, says, "It seems to me more appropriate to view applied linguistics as that portion of the body of accumulated knowledge called linguistics which the practitioners of a different discipline find useful in doing their work." David Crystal (1981:3) says, "In this sense linguistics is being used as a source of models, in a conventional scientific interdisciplinary way." But what else does



applied linguistics apply besides linguistics? Some would say sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics, or other hybrid fields closely related to linguistics. Others hold a broader view. Jack Richards et al(1985:15), for example, say, "Applied linguistics uses information from sociology, psychology, anthropology, and information theory as well as from linguistics in order to develop its own theoretical models of language and language use, and then uses this information and theory in practical areas such as syllabus design, speech therapy, language planning, stylistics, etc.". But we can say that what is applied is determined by what it is applied to. Language teaching needs theories different from those which speech therapy needs.

**5. The nature of applied linguistics:** Applied linguistics has the following main characteristic features:

(1) It is an independent discipline in its own right, because

(1) it has its own object of study;

(2) it has its own scientific system of theories and methodology; and

(3) it has its own researchers.

(2) It is an interdisciplinary science, because it draws upon theories not from a single science, but from several. Besides, its application is also interdisciplinary in the broad sense.

(3) It is an applied science. Its goal is to solve problems, i. e. application, unlike pure science. But we should