

A Descriptive Review on Applied Linguistics and Educational Linguistics

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Abstract

Both of applied linguistics and educational linguistics are almost the same but they are actually different. By having knowledge about them, one can differentiate and make relationship between them. This article aims at giving a descriptive review on applied linguistics and educational linguistics. The topics covered in this article are the definitions of the applied linguistics and educational linguistics, the relationship, the similarity and the difference between them, and also the scope of each of the two disciplines.

Keywords: *applied, educational, linguistics*

A. Introduction

It is necessary to have a brief understanding about the concept of applied linguistics and educational linguistics. Both of them are similar but they are actually quite different. By having understanding about them, we can differentiate and even make relationship between them. Thus, the writer tries to make a brief descriptive review on applied linguistics and educational linguistics.

This article aims at giving a descriptive review on applied linguistics and educational linguistics. The topics covered in this paper will be the definition of the applied linguistics and educational linguistics, the relationship, the similarity, the difference between them, and the scope of each of the two disciplines.

However, before starting to discuss those topics, it is necessary to discuss linguistics first. It is because when one talks about applied linguistics or educational linguistics, he or she could not ignore the concept of linguistics. Therefore, in the first part of the discussion, the writer will present a brief summary of what linguistics is.

B. Linguistics

The experts come to different ideas of what linguistics is. Richard and Schmidt (2002: 283) define linguistics as the study of language as a system of human communication. They also state that linguistics includes many different approaches to the study of language and many different areas of investigation such as sound systems (phonetics phonology), sentence structure (syntax), relationships between language and cognition (cognitive linguistics), meaning systems (semantics, pragmatics, functions of

language), as well as language and social factors (sociolinguistics). Moreover, several specialized branches of linguistics have also developed in combination with other disciplines, for example applied linguistics, anthropological linguistics, psycholinguistics, forensic linguistics, and clinical linguistics. Next, Malmkjær in *Linguistics Encyclopedia* (2002: 28) states that linguistics is scientific study of language for its own sake. The last, Saussure in Malmkjær in *Linguistics Encyclopedia* (2002: 28) also says that linguistics is not prescriptive. It is more practical orientation linguistics consists in its links with the new cognitive sciences.

Based on the above definitions, one can say that linguistics is the field of the study concerning with the language. In the other words, linguistics is the scientific study of the language. As it is concerned with language, then, the objects of the study will be anything related to the language, such as sound system, sentence structure, meaning, and the other language components.

C. Applied Linguistics

The definitions of the applied linguistics offered by experts are as follows.

1. Richards and Schmidt (2002: 320) in *Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics* define applied linguistics as follows.
 - a. Applied linguistics is the study of second and foreign language learning and teaching.
 - b. Applied linguistics is the study of language and linguistics in relation to practical problems, such as lexicography, translation, speech pathology, etc. 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.
2. Brumfit in Davies (2004: 3) states that applied linguistics is the theoretical and empirical investigation of real-world problems in which language is a central issue.
3. Schmit and Celce-Muria in Davies (2004: 4) define applied linguistics as the using of what we know about (a) language, (b) how it is learned, (c) how it is used, in order to achieves some purposes or solve some problems in the real world.
4. Grabe in Davies (2004: 5) says that the focus of applied linguistics is on trying to resolve language-based problems that people encounter in the real world, whether they are learner, teachers, supervisors, academics, lawyer, and service provider, those who need social, test takers, policy developers, dictionary makers, translators, or a whole range of business clients.
5. The last, Alan Davies (2004: 11) concludes that the definition of applied linguistics is a coherent activity which theorizes through speculative and empirical investigations real-world problems in which language is a central issue.

From those definitions of applied linguistics, it can be inferred that applied linguistics is the linguistics engineering since applied linguistics uses linguistics to solve the practical problems in human life. For example, clinical linguistics as one of the scope of applied linguistics can be used to solve the problems of language disorders like aphasia, dyslexia, etc.

D. Educational Linguistics

These are some definitions of educational linguistics offered by some expert. They are as follows.

1. Hornberger and Spolsky in Spolsky and Hult (2008: 2) define educational linguistics as an area of study that integrates the research tools of linguistics and other related disciplines of the social sciences in order to investigate holistically the broad range of issues related to language and education.
2. Richards and Schmidt (2002: 330) in *Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics* defined educational linguistics as a term sometimes used to refer to a branch of applied linguistics which deals with the relationship between language and education.
3. Unsworth (2015: 3) state educational linguistics is concerned with the study of language in teaching and learning. As such, it has interests in the nature of the linguistic system and its role in learning, as well as in what kinds of knowledge about language should be taught to children.

From those definitions, one may say that educational linguistics is the application of linguistics to solve the problems in education. Similarly, educational linguistics is the using of linguistics to solve practical problems in education.

E. Relationship between Applied Linguistics and Educational Linguistics

From the definitions of applied linguistics and educational linguistics above, one may underline that the relationship between applied linguistics and educational linguistics lies in the fact that applied linguistics is the precursor of educational linguistics. In the other words, the applied linguistics is wider than the educational linguistics or it is the umbrella of the educational linguistics.

F. Why Education Needs Linguistics Theory

Spolsky and Hult (2008: 35) stated that there are two main arguments for teaching KAL (knowledge about language). They are as follows.

1. A deeper understanding of language deserves a place in any liberal curriculum because of its long-term intellectual benefits; if it is important for children to understand their bodies and their social environment, it is at least as important for them to understand the faculty which makes social life possible.
2. KAL improves the language skills of writing, reading, speaking and listening.
3. Language is mostly learned from experience of usage rather than inherited genetically.
4. Language is fundamental to every subject, not just to those subjects where it is the primary object of study.

Next, Brumfit (2001: 1) states that the individual contribution that linguists can make to educational work is twofold. First, they can provide technical understanding deriving from linguistic, psycho- or socio-linguistic research to address educational problems, or to enable educational practitioners to become more proficient in addressing them themselves. Second, they can contribute by collaborating with colleagues, or by themselves operating both as linguistic and as educational researchers and teachers, understanding the inevitable "messiness" of classroom and broader educational practice, in which so many agendas are competing for attention in limited space. In

conjunction with the explanation, it is important to teach language since it is the vehicle of the knowledge in general.

G. The Similarity between Applied Linguistics and Educational Linguistics

The similarity between applied linguistics and educational linguistics lies on the fact that both applied linguistics and educational linguistics concern with linguistics in relation with real-life problems or with language in relation to practical problems. However, educational linguistics is narrower than applied linguistics because it only deals with the study of language in relation to teaching and learning. Whereas applied linguistics may include other things beside teaching and learning matters.

H. The Difference between Applied Linguistics and Educational Linguistics

The following are some differences between Applied Linguistics and Educational Linguistics offered by some experts.

1. Hornberger in Benson (2005: 8) says that the researchers suggest that educational linguistics is to be separated from applied linguistics. Not all interests in applied linguistics are thus necessarily tied to educational issues, which is why Spolsky defined a new field that could be considered a subfield within the larger discipline of applied linguistics in its wider sense the scope of educational linguistics under this definition is fairly wide, ranging from issues such as 'vernacular dialect use at school' to 'second language phonological acquisition' and 'teacher training in linguistics'.
2. Spolsky in Spolsky and Hult (2008: 3) views educational linguistics' core task as providing the instruments for designing language policy and for implementing language education management.
3. At the University of Giessen, educational linguistics focuses on the conceptual and methodological combination of linguistic and language-pedagogical research with regard to socially relevant issues and questions related to education and teaching (Brand, Brato, Dose, and Gotz, 2015: 2)

In conjunction with the explanation, it can be concluded that educational linguistics is different from applied linguistics. However, the two disciplines are related one another.

I. The Scope of Applied Linguistics

Experts agree that applied linguistics is a broad and macro-level term including many areas of concern. Therefore, the combination of language and real world problems is the constituent feature of applied linguistics. The following table shows some activities which have been included under the umbrella of applied linguistics (based on AILA scientific commissions) stated by Liddicoat (2010 :145).

Adult language learning	Language and the media
Child language	Language contact and language change
Communication in the professions	Language for special purposes
Contrastive linguistics and error analysis	Language planning
Discourse analysis	Learner autonomy in language learning
Educational technology and language learning	Lexicography and lexicology
Evaluation, assessment, and testing	Literacy
	Mother tongue education

Foreign language teaching methodology and teacher education Forensic linguistics Immersion education Interpreting and translating Language and business Language and ecology Language and education in multilingual settings	Psycholinguistics Rhetoric and stylistics Second language acquisition Sign language Language and gender
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Table 1. The Scope of Applied Linguistics

Next, Spolsky in Davies (2007: 36) also states applied linguistics is now a cover term for sizeable group of semi-autonomous disciplines, each dividing its parentage and allegiances between the formal study of language and other relevant fields, and each working to develop its own methodologies and principles.

From those ideas, then, it can be inferred that the scope of applied linguistics is really broad or that it may cover a lot of things such as language technology, language teaching, education, language acquisition, translation, language policy, and many other things. It means that applied linguistics is really the engineer of language to solve the problems in human life.

J. The Scope of Educational Linguistics

The following are some explanation of the scope of educational linguistics proposed by some experts.

1. Spolsky (1974: 3) states that educational linguistics is a discipline whose primary task would be to offer information relevant to the formulation of language education policy and to its implementation.
2. Hornberger in Benson (2005 : 8) states that educational linguistics specializes itself on issues in linguistic and cultural diversity and approaches to language learning and teaching that embraces local, national, and international interests. Then, he also said that educational linguistics include second language acquisition, language choice, maintenance and shift, language and ethnicity, descriptive analysis of speech acts and discourse, educational implications of linguistics diversity, language planning, bilingual education, spoken interaction in professional setting, and illiteracy.

From those ideas, one can conclude that educational linguistics will begin to work with teachers and it will look at how language works in education, how language works in a multilingual education environment, how people acquire language of the disciplines and other things in education.

K. Conclusion

Those are the discussions on applied linguistics and educational linguistics. Hopefully, the explanation presented in this article would help the readers to get a brief understanding on applied linguistics and educational linguistics, and also help them to understand some concepts of the two fields of the study.

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