Some Subfields of Applied Linguistics

Below are the commonly regarded subfields of applied linguistics as noted Grabe (2002).

· Second Language Acquisition

Second language Acquisition theory deals with the range of variables- in particular, age of immersion, quantity of input etc which may interactively determine the level of ultimate attainment.

· Language Assessment and Testing

Language Assessment plays a gate-keeping role in terms of the functions they serve for institutions and the corresponding preparedness of institutions to invest in their development and validation. It has always involved the development and implementation of frameworks for describing student's progress in language learning over time.

· Language Policy and Planning

The practical nature of language planning deals with the analysis of policy making in contexts where language is a part. Language problems always arise, which could involve rival interest reflecting relations among ethnic, political, social, and bureaucratic and class groupings. Language policy and planning research then draws on knowledge far beyond linguistics to solve such problems where necessary.

· Lexicography

Lexicography is important and an integral part of applied linguistics in second/foreign language learning and teaching at all ages and levels of education. It is concerned with the writing and study of dictionaries for first/second/foreign language education. It also involves mono- bi- and multilingual works and general children's school, college, and specialised technical dictionaries.

· Multilingualism

This is the use of more than two languages within a speech community. Applied linguistics deals with the sociological, psychological, attending problems etc and the implications of these languages on the speech community.

· **Corpus Linguistics**

This is aimed at improving language description and theory and Stubbs (2006) notes that the task of applied linguistics is to assess the relevance of the language description to practical applications. Corpus data are essentially for accuracy in the description of language use and have shown how lexis, grammar and semantics interact.

NB: Some of the supporting disciplines which you must have been introduced to are:

· Psycholinguistics

· Education

· Sociolinguistics

· English studies

· Discourse studies

Some other newly introduced ones are in the area of forensic linguistics (language and the law) and Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). You do not have to be scared about all these disciplines. It only shows that AL is a growing discipline and has a lot of other supporting disciplines. We will go through some of these while some other courses will take care of some of the other disciplines. In going through them, we will explain how each of the ones discussed relate to applied linguistics.

Reference

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