

Particular to

ملتقى طلاب و طالبات جامعة الملك فيصل

Applied linguistics

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Lecture 1

Applied Linguistics

Is the academic discipline concerned with the relation of knowledge about language to decision making in the real world.

The need for Applied Linguistics

Language is at the heart of human life.

Without it, many of our most important activities are inconceivable.

Language use is in many ways a natural phenomenon beyond conscious control.

The scope of Applied Linguistics

Since language is implicated in so much of our daily lives, there is clearly a large and open-ended number of quite disparate activities to which applied linguistics is relevant

1- Language and Education

a) First-language education:

When a child studies their home language or languages

b) Additional-language education:

Often divided into second language education, when someone studies their society's majority or official language which is not their home language, and foreign language education, when someone studies the language of another Country.

c) Clinical linguistics:

Is the study and treatment of speech and communication impairments, whether hereditary, developmental, or acquired (through injury, stroke, illness, or age).

d) Language testing:

Is the assessment and evaluation of language achievement and proficiency, both in first and additional languages, and for both general and specific purposes.

2- Language, work, and law

a) Workplace communication:

Is the study of how language is used in the workplace, and how it contributes to the nature and power relations of different types of work.

b) Language planning:

Is the making of decisions, often supported by legislation, about the official status of languages and their institutional use, including their use in education.

c) Forensic linguistics:

Is the deployment of linguistic evidence in criminal and other legal investigations, for, example, to establish the authorship of a document, or a profile of a speaker from a tape-recording.

3- Language, information, and effect

a) Literary stylistics:

Is the study of the relationship between linguistic choices and effects on literature.

b) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA):

Is the study of the relationship between linguistic choices and effects in persuasive uses of language.

c) Translation and interpretation:

Is the formulation of principles underlying the perceived equivalence between a stretch of language and its translation, and the practices of translating written texts and interpreting spoken language.

d) Information design:

Is the arrangement and presentation of written language, including issues relating to typography and layout, choices of medium and effective combinations of language with other means of communication such as pictures and diagrams.

e) Lexicography:

Is the planning and compiling of both monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, and other language reference works such as thesauri.

Lecture 2

Linguistics

Is the academic discipline concerned with the study of language in general

It is bound to represent an abstract idealization of language rather than the way it is experienced in the real world.

Generative Linguistics

- Introduced by Noam Chomsky **1950s** onward. In his view, the proper subject matter of linguistics should be the representation of language in the mind (competence), rather than the way in which people actually use language in everyday life (performance).

Sociolinguistics:

- The focus is very much upon the relation between language and society.

Functional Linguistics:

- The concern is with language as a means of communication, the purpose it fulfils, and how people actually use their language.

Corpus Linguistics:

Vast databanks containing millions of words of actual language in use can be searched within seconds to yield extensive information about word frequencies and combinations which is not revealed by intuition.

- **These approaches to linguistic study** seem much closer to the reality of experience than Chomsky's, and therefore more relevant to the concerns of applied linguistics. Yet, they are abstract in the sense that they detach language from the experience of its use.
- This is because their purpose is to describe and explain and not, as in applied linguistics, to engage with decision making.

Description versus prescription

- Linguists favor description (saying what does happen) over prescription (saying what ought to happen)
- Linguists concern is knowledge as an end in itself rather than with action based upon that knowledge
- Prescription is a social phenomenon

The growth of English

- **400 million or so first** - language speakers and over a billion where it is the official language (education, business)
- The role of other international languages such as French or Russian has diminished drastically
- French is no longer the international language of air traffic control, or dominant in diplomacy
- German and Russian are no longer internationally necessary for scientific study.
- Actually, the influence of English can be seen in Films, television programs, advertisements, and The Internet.
- The teaching and learning of English has generated tremendous personal, political, academic, and commercial interest.

Lecture 3

What it means to be a native speaker?

Firstly, there is the question of personal history.

Native speakers are considered to be people who acquired the language naturally and effortlessly in childhood.

Secondly, there is a question of expertise.

Native speakers are seen as people who use the language, or a variety of it, correctly, and have insight into what is or is not acceptable.

Thirdly, there is a question of knowledge and loyalty.

Being a native speaker, it is assumed, entails knowledge of, and loyalty to, a community which uses the language.

- However, there are some aspects of language proficiency that this traditional definition of the native speaker does not include.

Firstly, it says nothing about proficiency in writing, but only about proficiency in speech.

Secondly, the native speaker's knowledge of the language is implicit rather than explicit. (Using the rules correctly without being able to explain them).

Lastly, traditional native speakerness implies nothing about size of vocabulary, range of style, or ability to communicate across diverse communities.

English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)

Speaking a new variety of English which depends neither on childhood acquisition nor on cultural identity, and is often used in communication in which no native speaker is involved.

(She go)

(you re very busy today, isn 't it?)

- The spread of English has generated intense interest in the study of language pedagogy and of **Second-Language Acquisition (SLA)**. Historically, the most active of applied linguistic enquiry has been in these areas.
- Indeed, in the early days of the discipline, applied linguistics and the study of Teaching English as a **Foreign Language (TEFL)** were considered to be one and the same. We will look back at the development of TEFL over the last hundred years or so.

Grammar-translation language teaching

- ♥ In the schoolrooms of Europe in the **20** century, the teaching of modern foreign languages was influenced by the dead classical languages, **Latin** and **Ancient Greek**.
- ♥ Modern language learning, it was assumed, brought students into contact with great national civilizations and their literatures.
- ♥ Grammar rules were explained to the students in their own language, vocabulary lists were learned with translation equivalents.
- ♥ The way into the new language was always through the student's own first language.
- ♥ Success was measured in terms of the accurate use of grammar and vocabulary rather than effective communication.
- ♥ Using the language meant written translation.
- ♥ There was no emphasis on the development of fluent speech.

Lecture 4

The Direct Method

- New types of students-immigrants, business people, and tourists-created a new kind of classroom population.
- Students did not necessarily share the same first language. So, first-language explanation and translation were not possible.
- **Hence**, the direct method was advocated in which the students' own languages were banished and everything was to be done through the language under instruction.
- **In Berlitz Schools, for example**, microphones were monitored and teachers could be fired for uttering a single word in a student's own language.
- Success was to be measured instead by the degree to which the learner's language proficiency approximated to that of the native speaker.

Natural language learning

- An approach in which an adult learner can repeat the route to proficiency of the native speaking child.
- Learning would take place without explanation or grading and without correction of errors, but simply by exposure to meaningful input.
- It was believed that neither explicit instruction nor conscious learning had any effect.
- Its view of **SLA** was derived directly from mainstream linguistics research into child first-language acquisition.
- This approach suggested that learning need not involve hard work.

The communicative approach

- The emphasis was on meaning-focused activities and the focus was primarily and necessarily social for the purpose of achieving a successful communication.
- There was a shift of attention from the language system as an end in itself to the successful use of that system in context. (from form to communication)
- Language learning success is to be assessed neither in terms of accurate grammar and pronunciation for their own sake, nor in terms of explicit knowledge of the rules, but by the ability to do things with the language, appropriately, fluently, and effectively.
- Teachers and materials designers were urged to identify things learners need to do with the language (i.e. conduct a **needs analysis**) and simulate these in the classroom.

- This shift of emphasis had consequences at both the macro level of syllabus and curriculum design and at the micro level of classroom activity.
- **At the macro level**, there has been the development of English for Specific Purposes (**ESP**) which tries to develop the language and discourse skills which will be needed for particular jobs (**English for Occupational Purposes (EOP)**) or for particular fields of study (**English for Academic Purposes (EAP)**).
- At the micro level there has been the development of **Task-Based Instruction (TBI)** in which learning is organized around tasks related to real-world activities, focusing on the student's attention upon meaning and upon successful task completion.
- Language, it was argued, is best handled all at once, as it would be in the real world, as this is the learner's ultimate goal.

Lecture 5

- **Knowing the grammar and vocabulary of the language, although essential, is one thing. Being able to put them to use involves other types of knowledge and ability as well.**

Linguistic Competence

- Isolating the formal systems of language (i.e. its **pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary**) either for learning or for analysis is a useful first step.
- However, the adoption of **traditional language-teaching** methods need not imply that this is all that learning a language involves, but only that a sound knowledge of the rules and an accurate, if slow, deployment of them is the basis for further development.
- This has come from theoretical linguistics in the work of **Noam Chomsky**. His idea is that the human capacity for language, as illustrated by a child's acquisition of the language around them, is not the product of general intelligence or learning ability, but an innate, genetically determined feature of the human species.
- We are born with considerable **pre-programmed knowledge** of how language works, and require only minimal exposure to activate our connection to the particular language around us.
- **In Chomsky's view**, the newborn infant brain already contains a **Universal Grammar (UG)** which forms the basis of competence in the particular language the child goes on to speak. If we accept Chomsky's view, language, as an object of academic enquiry, becomes something more biological than social, and similarities between languages outweigh differences.

Communicative Competence

- As a deliberate contrast to Chomsky's linguistic competence, the sociolinguist **Dell Hymes** offered communicative competence in the late **1960s**.
- As **Hymes** observes, a person who had only linguistic competence would be quite unable to communicate.
- They would be a kind of social monster producing grammatical sentences unconnected to the situation in which they occur.
- What is needed for successful communication, **Hymes** suggested, is four types of knowledge:
 - ♥ **possibility**
 - ♥ **feasibility**
 - ♥ **appropriateness**
 - ♥ **attestedness.**

❖ 1- Possibility

- A communicatively competent speaker knows what is formally possible in a language, i.e, whether an instance conforms to the rules of grammar and pronunciation. They know, for example,
 - ♥ that **'Me go sleep now'** transgresses these rules,
 - ♥ while **'I am going to go to sleep now'** does not. Knowledge of possibility is not sufficient in itself for communication.
 - ♥ **'I am going to sleep now'** may be grammatical, meaningful, and correctly pronounced, but it is not necessarily the 'right' thing to say,
 - ♥ whereas **'Me go sleep now'**, although 'wrong', may be both meaningful and appropriate.
- In addition, a communicatively competent speaker may know the rules, be capable of following them, but nevertheless break them deliberately.
 - ♥ **'That was a hard days night'**.

❖ 2- Feasibility

- A communicatively competent person knows what is feasible. This is a psychological concept concerned with limitations to what can be processed by the mind, and is best illustrated by an example.
 - ♥ **The cheese was green.**
 - ♥ **The cheese the rat ate was green.**
 - ♥ **The cheese the rat the cat chased ate was green.**
 - ♥ The cheese tile rat the cat me dog saw chased ate was green.
 - ♥ The cheese the rat the cat me dog the man beat saw chased ate was green.
- The last two sentences may be possible but they are not feasible. They do not work, not because they are ungrammatical, but because they are so difficult to process.

Lecture 6

❖ 3- Appropriateness

- This concerns the relationship of language or behavior to context.
 - ♥ **For example**, (calling a police officer 'darling' or tickling them as they reprimand you);
 - ♥ (using slang or taboo words in a formal letter);
 - ♥ or (answering a mobile phone call 'during a funeral).

❖ 4- Attestedness

- i.e. 'whether something is done'.
 - ♥ **For example**, the phrase '**chips and fish**'.
 - ♥ From one point of view this is **possible** (it does not break any grammar rule),
 - ♥ **feasible** (it is easily processed and readily understandable),
 - ♥ and **appropriate** (it does not contravene any sensitive social convention).
 - ♥ Nevertheless, it does not occur as frequently as '**fish and chips**'

❖ What do we mean by context?

All of the following, for example, might be involved in interpreting a real encounter:

- ♥ tone of voice and facial expression;
 - ♥ the relationship between speakers;
 - ♥ their age, sex, and social status;
 - ♥ the time and place;
 - ♥ and the degree to which speakers do-or do not-share the same cultural background.
- In order to give a systematic description of context, Applied linguistics has drawn upon, and also developed, **discourse analysis**.
 - The study of how stretches of language in context are perceived as meaningful and unified by their users.
 - **Three areas of study which contribute to this field are**
 - ♥ paralinguage,
 - ♥ pragmatics,
 - ♥ and genre studies.

❖ 1. Paralanguage

- When we speak we do not only communicate through words.
- **A good deal is conveyed by**
 - ♥ tone of voice-whether we shout or whisper for example,
 - ♥ and by the use of our bodies-whether we smile,
 - ♥ wave our hands,
 - ♥ touch people,
 - ♥ make eye contact,
 - ♥ and so on.

❖ 2. Pragmatics

- Is the discipline which studies the knowledge and procedures which enable people to understand each other's words.
- Its main concern is not the literal meaning, but what speakers intend to do with their words and what it is which makes this intention clear.
- **How are you?** (asking about someone's health or a greeting)

❖ 3- Genre

- A term defined by the applied linguist John Swales as a class of communicative events which share some set of communicative purposes.
- **Other Possible examples of genres include conversations,**
 - ♥ consultations,
 - ♥ lessons,
 - ♥ emails,
 - ♥ Web pages,
 - ♥ brochures,
 - ♥ prayers,
 - ♥ news bulletins,
 - ♥ stories,
 - ♥ and jokes.

Lecture 7

❖ What is language testing?

- “Language Testing is the practice and study of evaluating the proficiency of an individual in using a particular language effectively.”

❖ Types of Tests

- A. Based on Purposes
- B. Based on Response
- C. Based on Orientation and The Way to Test
- D. Based on Score Interpretation

❖ A. Based on Purposes

- There are many kinds of tests; each test has specific purpose and a particular criterion to be measured.
- We will explain five kinds of tests based on specific purposes.
- Those tests are
 - (1) proficiency test,
 - (2) diagnostic test,
 - (3) placement test,
 - (4) achievement test,
 - (5) language aptitude test.

(1) Proficiency Test

- ♥ The purpose of proficiency test is to test global competence in a language.
- ♥ It tests overall ability regardless of any training they previously had in the language.
- ♥ Proficiency tests have traditionally consisted of standardized multiple-choices item on grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and listening comprehension.
- ♥ One of a standardized proficiency test is TOEFL.

(2) Diagnostic Test

- ♥ The purpose is to diagnose specific aspects of a language.
- ♥ These tests offer a checklist of features for the teacher to use in discovering difficulties.
- ♥ Proficiency tests should elicit information on what students need to work in the future; therefore the test will typically offer more detailed subcategorized information on the learner.
- ♥ For example, a writing diagnostic test would first elicit a writing sample of the students, Then, the teacher would identify the organization, content, spelling, grammar, or vocabulary of their writing.
- ♥ Based on that identifying, teacher would know the needs of students that should have special focus.

(3) Placement Test

- ♥ The purpose of placement test is to place a student into a particular level or section of a language curriculum or school.
- ♥ It usually includes a sampling of the material to be covered in the various courses in a curriculum.
- ♥ A student's performance on the test should indicate the point at which the student will find material neither too easy nor too difficult.
- ♥ Placement tests come in many varieties: assessing comprehension and production, responding through written and oral performance, multiple choice, and gap filling formats.
- ♥ One of the examples of Placement tests is the English as a Second Language Placement Test (ESLPT) at San Francisco State University.

(4) Achievement Test

- ♥ The purpose of achievement tests is to determine whether course objectives have been met with skills acquired by the end of a period of instruction.
- ♥ Achievement tests should be limited to particular material addressed in a curriculum within a particular time frame.
- ♥ Achievement tests belong to summative because they are administered at the end on a unit/term of study.
- ♥ It analyzes the extent to which students have acquired language that have already been taught.

(5) Language Aptitude Test

- ♥ The purpose of language aptitude test is to predict a person's success to exposure to the foreign language.
- ♥ According to John Carrol and Stanley Sapon (**the authors of MLAT**), language aptitude tests does not refer to whether or not an individual can learn a foreign language; but it refers to how well an individual can learn a foreign language in a given amount of time and under given conditions.
- ♥ In other words, this test is done to determine how quickly and easily a learner learn language in language course or language training program.

♥ **Standardized aptitude tests have been used in the United States:**

- The Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT)
- The Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery (PLAB)

Lecture 8

❖ Types of Tests

- A. Based on Purposes
- B. Based on Response
- C. Based on Orientation and The Way to Test
- D. Based on Score Interpretation

❖ B. Based on Response

- There are two kinds of tests based on response.
 1. They are **subjective** test
 2. and **objective** test.

1. Subjective Test

- Subjective test is a test in which the learners ability or performance are judged by examiners' opinion and judgment.
 - ♥ The example of subjective test is using **essay** and **short answer**.

2. Objective Test

- Objective test is a test in which learners ability or performance are measured using specific set of answer, means there are only two possible answer, right and wrong.
- In other word, the score is according to right answers.
 - ♥ Type of objective test includes **multiple choice tests**, **true or false test**, **matching and problem based questions**.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Commonly Used Types of Objective Test

❖ True or False

• Advantages

- Many items can be administered in a relatively short time.
- Moderately easy to write and easily scored.

• Disadvantages

- Limited primarily to testing knowledge of information.
- Easy to guess correctly on many items, even if material has not been mastered.

❖ Multiple Choice

• Advantages

- Can be used to assess a broad range of content in a brief period.
- Skillfully written items can measure higher order cognitive skills.
- Can be scored quickly.

- **Disadvantages**

- Difficult and time consuming to write good items.
- Possible to assess higher order cognitive skills, but most items assess only knowledge.
- Some correct answers can be guesses.

- ❖ **Matching**

- **Advantages**

- Items can be written quickly.
- A broad range of content can be assessed.
- Scoring can be done efficiently.

- **Disadvantages**

- Higher order cognitive skills difficult to assess.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Commonly Used Types of Subjective Test

- ❖ **Short Answer**

- **Advantages**

- Many can be administered in a brief amount of time.
- Relatively efficient to score.
- Moderately easy to write items.

- **Disadvantages**

- Difficult to identify defensible criteria for correct answers.
- Limited to questions that can be answered or completed in a few words.

- ❖ **Essay**

- **Advantages**

- Can be used to measure higher order cognitive skills.
- Easy to write questions.
- Difficult for respondent to get correct answer by guessing.

- **Disadvantages**

- Time consuming to administer and score.
- Difficult to identify reliable criteria for scoring.
- Only a limited range of content can be sampled during any one testing period.

Lecture 9

❖ Types of Tests

- A. Based on Purposes
- B. Based on Response
- C. Based on Orientation and The Way to Test
- D. Based on Score Interpretation

❖ C. Based on Orientation and The Way to Test

- Language testing is divided into two types based on the orientation. They are **language competence test** and **performance language test**.
- **Language competence test** is a test that involves components of language such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation while **performance test** is a test that involve the basic skills in English that are writing, speaking, listening and reading. Moreover language testing is also divided into two types based on the way to test
- **They are direct testing and indirect testing.**
- Direct testing is a test that the process to elicit students competences uses basic skill, like speaking, writing, listening, or reading while indirect language testing is a test that the process to elicit students competences does not use basic skills.
- **Therefore, language testing can be divided into four types based on orientation and the way to test.**
They are:
 - (1) Direct competence test.
 - (2) Indirect competence test.
 - (3) Direct performance test.
 - (4) Indirect performance test.

(1) Direct Competence Tests

- The direct competence test is a test that measures the students knowledge about language component, like grammar or vocabulary, which the elicitation uses one of the basic skills, speaking, listening, reading, or writing.
- **For the example**, a teacher wants to know about students grammar knowledge. The teacher ask the students to write a letter to elicit students knowledge in grammar.

(2) Indirect Competence Test

- The indirect competence test is a test that measures the students knowledge about language component, like grammar or vocabulary, which the elicitation does not use one of the basic skills, speaking, listening, reading, or writing. The elicitation in this test uses other ways, such as multiple choice.

- **For example**, the teacher want to know about students grammar knowledge The teacher gives a multiple choice test for the students to measure students knowledge in grammar.

(3) Direct Performance Test

- Direct performance test is a test that measures the students skill in reading, writing, speaking, and listening that the elicitation is through direct communication.
- **For example**, the teacher wants to know the students skill in writing, the teacher asks the students to write a letter, or to write a short story.

(4) Indirect Performance Test

- Indirect performance test is a test measures the students skill in reading, writing, speaking, and listening that the elicitation does not use the basic skill.
- **For example**, the teacher wants to measure the students skill in listening. The teacher gives some picture and asks the students to arrange the pictures into correct order based on the story that they listen to.

❖ D. Based on Score Interpretation

- There are two kinds of tests based on score interpretation.
 1. They are **norm-referenced tests**
 2. and **criterion-referenced tests**.

1. Norm-Referenced Test

- Norm-referenced tests are designed to highlight achievement differences between and among students to produce a dependable rank order of students across a continuum of achievement from high achievers to low achievers (Stiggins, **1994**).
- School systems might want to classify students in this way so that they can be properly placed in remedial or gifted programs. The content of norm-referenced tests is selected according to how well it ranks students from high achievers to low. In other words, the content selected in norm- referenced tests is chosen by how well it discriminates among students.
- A student's performance on an norm referenced test is interpreted in relation to the performance of a large group of similar students who took the test when it was first formed. For example, if a student receives a percentile rank score on the total test of **34**, this means that he or she performed as well or better than **34%** of the students in the norm group.
- This type of information can useful for deciding whether or not students need remedial assistance or is a candidate for a gifted program. However, the score gives little information about what the student actually knows or can do.

2. Criterion-Referenced Test

- Criterion-referenced tests determine what test takers can do and what they know, not how they compare to others (**Anastasi, 1988**).
- Criterion-referenced tests report how well students are doing relative to a predetermined performance level on a specified set of educational goals or outcomes included in the school, district, or state curriculum.
- Educators may choose to use a criterion-referenced test when they wish to see how well students have learned the knowledge and skills which they are expected to have mastered.
- This information may be used as one piece of information to determine how well the student is learning the desired curriculum and how well the school is teaching that curriculum.
- The content of a criterion-referenced test is determined by how well it matches the learning outcomes deemed most important.
- In other words, the content selected for the criterion-standard tests is selected on the basis of its significance in the curriculum.
- Criterion-referenced tests give detailed information about how well a student has performed on each of the educational goals or outcomes included in that test.

Lecture 10

❖ Characteristics of a good test

- In order to judge the effectiveness of any test it is sensible to lay down criteria against which the test can be measured, as follows:

♥ Validity:

a test is valid if it tests what it is supposed to test. Thus it is not valid, for example, to test writing ability with an essay question that requires specialist knowledge of history or biology — unless it is known that all students share this knowledge before they do the test.

- A particular kind of ‘**validity**’ that concerns most test designers is **face validity**.
- This means that the test should look, on the ‘**face**’ of it, as if it is valid.
- A test which consisted of only three multiple choice items would not convince students of its face validity however reliable-or practical teachers thought it to be.

♥ Reliability:

A good test should give consistent results.

For example, if the same group of students took the same test twice within two days — without reflecting on the first test before they sat it again — they should get the same results on each occasion. If they took another similar test, the results should be consistent. If two groups who were demonstrably alike took the test, the marking range would be the same.

- In practice, **reliability**’ is enhanced by making the test instructions absolutely clear, restricting the scope for variety in the answers, and making sure that test conditions remain constant.
- Reliability also depends on the people who mark the tests — the scorers.
- Clearly a test is unreliable if the result depends to any large extent on who is marking it.
- Much thought has gone into making the scoring of tests as reliable as possible.

❖ A- Wilting tests

- Before designing a test and then giving it to a group of students, there are a number of things we need to do:

1. Assess the test situation:

- Before we start to write the test we need to remind ourselves of the context in which the test takes place. We have to decide how much time should be given to the test-taking, when and where. It will take place, and how much time there is for marking.

2. Decide what to test:

- We have to list what we want to include in our test. This means taking a conscious decision to include or exclude skills such as reading comprehension or speaking (if speaking tests are impractical). It means knowing what syllabus items can be legitimately included (in an achievement test), and what kinds of topics and situations are appropriate for our students.

• • •

3. Balance the elements:

- If we are to include direct and indirect test items we have to make a decision about how many of each we should put in our test. A **200**-item multiple choice test with a short real-life writing task tacked onto the end suggests that we think that **MCQs** are a better way of finding out about students than more integrative writing tasks would be.

4. Weight the scores:

- However well we have balanced the elements in our test, our perception of our students' success or failure will depend upon how many marks are given to each section or sections of the test. If we give two marks for each of our ten **MCQs**, but only one mark for each of our ten transformation items, it means that it is more important for students to do well in the former than in the latter.

5. Making the test work:

- It is absolutely vital that we try out individual items and/or whole tests on colleagues and students alike before administering them to real candidates.
- Such trialing is designed to avoid disaster, and to yield a whole range of possible answers/responses to the various test items. This means that when other people finally mark the test we can give them a list of possible alternatives and thus ensure reliable-scoring.

❖ B- Marking the test

- How to avoid subjectivity in scoring?

1. Training

- If scorers have seen examples of scripts at various different levels and discussed what marks they should be given, then their marking is likely to be less erratic than if they come to the task fresh.

2. More than one scorer:

- Reliability can be greatly enhanced by having more than one scorer. The more people who look at a script, the greater the chance that its true worth will be located somewhere between the various scores it is given.

3. Global assessment scale:

- A way of specifying scores that can be given to productive skill work is to create 'pre-defined descriptions of performance'. Such descriptions say what students need to be capable of in order to gain the required marks.

4. Analytic profiles:

- Marking gets more reliable when a student's performance is analyzed in much greater detail. Instead of just a general assessment, marks are awarded for different elements.

5. Scoring and interacting during oral tests:

- Scorer reliability in oral tests is helped not only by global assessment scores and analytic profiles but also by separating the role of scorer (or examiner) from the role of interlocutor (the examiner who guides and provokes conversation). This may cause practical problems, but it will allow the scorer to observe and assess, free from the responsibility of keeping the interaction with the candidate or candidates going.

Lecture 11

❖ Literary Stylistics

- Linguistic analysis, in other words, can describe and analyze the language of a literary text but is not of itself an applied linguistic activity. It begins to move in that direction, however, when linguistic choices are linked to their effects upon the reader and some attempt is made at an explanation. This is the endeavor of **literary stylistics**.
- It is not perhaps in itself applied linguistics as it involves no practical decision making, but it is, as we shall see, an important resource for the analysis of powerful and persuasive uses of language in general.
- It raises awareness, not only of the importance of exact wording but of how there is far more at stake in the use of language than the literal meaning of the words.
- Stylistic analyses tend to highlight three related aspects of literary language:
 - ♥ its frequent deviation from the norms of more everyday language use;
 - ♥ its patterning of linguistic units to create rhythms, rhymes, and parallel constructions;
 - ♥ and the ways in which the form of the words chosen seems to augment or intensify the meaning.

❖ Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

- Of more interest to applied linguists, and of more danger or being less transparent, is the presentation of the same facts in ways which, while not altering the truth of what is said, nevertheless influence, and are perhaps calculated to influence, the reader's attitude. Thus just as a glass might be described as 'half full' or 'half empty' with rather different implications, so the same food item can be truthfully described as either '90% fat-free' or '10% fat'. Both are equally true, but to a consumer bent upon reducing their calorie intake the former description seems more attractive.
- The literal meaning is the same, but the effect is very different. It is in precise analysis of such detail that a real contribution can be made to people's capacity to read and listen critically, and to resist being manipulated by what is said. The analysis of such language and its effects is known as **critical linguistics**, or, when placed in a larger social context and seen as part of a process of social change, as **Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)**.
 - A further area of interest, less evident without linguistic analysis, is persistent patterns of grammatical choice.
 - There are, for example, constructions which allow a speaker or writer not to mention the agent (i.e the person responsible for something).
 - Two strategies in particular allow this to happen.
 - One is **passivization**. the favoring of passive constructions over active ones,
 - for example, 'Five children were killed in the air attack' **Not** 'The pilots killed five children'.

- The other is **nominahzation**, when actions and processes are referred to by nouns as though they, rather than the people doing them, were the agent,
- **for example**, ‘Genetic modification is a powerful technique **RATHER THAN** ‘Researchers who modify genes have a great deal of power’.

❖ **Second-Language Acquisition (SLA)**

- From the **1960s** onwards, great strides were made in first language acquisition research.
- Taking its cue from these, and starting in earnest in the **1970S**, **SLA** research concerned itself with both explaining and describing the process of acquiring a **second language**.
- (In this context, ‘second language is used to refer to any additional language, embracing both foreign languages and second languages in the more limited sense.)
- It has looked at the route, the rate, and the end state of **SLA**, and the ways in which it is affected by external factors such as
 - ♥ instruction,
 - ♥ interaction,
 - ♥ and motivation.
- Particular areas of interest have included the **degree of transfer** from the first language/s, the **degree of systematicity** in learners’ language, **variation between learners or within one learner**, and—most of all perhaps—why the process of acquiring a **second language**, as opposed to acquiring a **first language**, is so often regarded as ‘**incomplete**’.

Lecture 12

❖ What is Language?

- A number of definitions have been suggested but we will consider the following composite definition.
 1. Language is systematic.
 2. Language is a set of arbitrary symbols.
 3. Those symbols are primarily vocal, but may also be visual.
 4. The symbols have conventionalized meanings to which they refer.
 5. Language is used for communication.
 6. Language operates in a speech community or culture.
 7. Language is essentially human, although possibly not limited to humans.
 8. Language is acquired by all people in much the same way; language and language learning both have universal characteristics.

❖ Schools of Thought in Second Language Acquisition

- While the general definitions of language, learning, and teaching offered above might meet with the approval of most linguists, psychologists, and educators, points of disagreement become apparent after a little probing of the components of each definition.
- For example, is language primarily a “system of formal units” or a “means for social interaction”? Or for better retention, should a teacher emerge from equally knowledgeable scholars, usually over the extent to which one viewpoint or another should receive primacy.
- Yet, with all the possible disagreements among applied linguists and SLA researchers, some historical patterns emerge that highlight trends and fashions in the study of second language acquisition. These trends will be described here in the form of three different schools of thought—primarily in the fields of linguistics and psychology—that follow somewhat historically.

❖ Structural Linguistics and Behavioral Psychology

- In the 1940s and 1950s, the structural, or descriptive, school of linguistics, with its advocates—Leonard Bloomfield, Edward Sapir, Charles Hockett, Charles Fries, and others—prided itself in a rigorous application of scientific observations of human languages.
- Only “publicly observable responses” could be subject to investigation. The linguist’s task, according to the structuralist, was to describe human languages
- and to identify the structural characteristics of those languages. An important axiom of structural linguistics was that languages can differ from each other without limit, and that no preconceptions could apply across languages.
- Of further importance to the structural or descriptive linguist was the notion that language could be dismantled into small pieces or units and that these units could be described scientifically, contrasted, and added up again to form the whole.

- Among psychologists, a behavioral paradigm also focused on publicly observable responses—those that can be objectively perceived, recorded, and measured. The scientific method was rigorously adhered to, and therefore such concepts as consciousness and intuition were regarded as mentalistic, illegitimate domains of inquiry.
- The unreliability of observation of states of consciousness, thinking, concept formation, or the acquisition of knowledge made such topics impossible to examine in a behavioral framework.
- Typical behavioral models were classical and operant conditioning, rote verbal learning, instrumental learning, discrimination learning, and other empirical approaches to studying human behavior.
- You may be familiar with the classical experiments with Pavlov’s dog and Skinner’s boxes; these too typify the position that organisms can be conditioned to respond in desired ways, given the correct degree and scheduling of reinforcement.

❖ **Generative Linguistics and Cognitive Psychology**

- In the decade of the 1960s, generative transformational linguistics emerged through the influence of Noam Chomsky and a number of his followers. Chomsky was trying to show that human language cannot be scrutinized simply in terms of observable stimuli and responses or the volumes of raw data gathered by field linguists.
- The generative linguist was interested not only in describing language (achieving the level of descriptive adequacy) but also in arriving at an explanatory level of adequacy in the study of language, that is, a “principled basis, independent of any particular language, for the selection of the descriptively adequate grammar of each language” (Chomsky. 1964, p. 63).
- Similarly, cognitive psychologists asserted that meaning, understanding and knowing were significant data for psychological study. Instead of focusing rather mechanistically on stimulus-response connections, cognitivists tried to discover psychological principles of organization and functioning.
- Cognitive psychologists, like generative linguists, sought to discover underlying motivations and deeper structures of human behavior by using a rational approach. That is, they freed themselves from the strictly empirical study typical of behaviorists and employed the tools of logic, reason, extrapolation, and inference in order to derive explanations for human behavior.
- Both the structural linguist and the behavioral psychologist were interested in description, in answering what questions about human behavior: objective measurement of behavior in controlled circumstances.
- The generative linguist and cognitive psychologist were, to be sure, interested in the what question; but they were far more interested in a more ultimate question, why: what underlying factors—innate, psychological, social, or environmental circumstances—caused a particular behavior in a human being?

Lecture 13

❖ **Constructivism: A Multidisciplinary Approach**

- Constructivism is hardly a new school of thought.
- Jean Piaget and *Lev Vygotsky*, names often associated with constructivism, are not by any means new to the scene of language studies.
- Yet, in a variety of poststructuralist theoretical positions, Constructivism emerged as a prevailing paradigm only in the last part of the twentieth century, and is now almost an orthodoxy.
- A refreshing characteristic of constructivism is its integration of linguistic, psychological, and sociological paradigms, in contrast to the professional chasms that often divided those disciplines in the previous century.
- Now, with its emphasis on social interaction and the discovery, or construction, of meaning, the three disciplines have much more common ground.

❖ **What is Constructivism?**

- First, it will be helpful to think of two branches of constructivism: **cognitive** and **social**.
- In the **cognitive** version of constructivism, emphasis is placed on the importance of learners constructing their own representation of reality. “Learners must individually discover and transform complex information if they are to make it their own, [suggesting] a more active role for students in their own learning than is typical in many classrooms” (*Slavin*, 2003, p.257-258).
- **Social** constructivism emphasizes the importance of social interaction and cooperative learning in constructing both cognitive and emotional images of reality.
- The champion of social constructivism is *Vygotsky* (1978), who advocated the view that “children’s thinking and meaning-making is socially constructed and emerges out of their social interactions with their environment” (*Kaufman*, 2004, p.304).
- One of the most popular concepts advanced by *Vygotsky* was **the notion of a zone of proximal development (ZPD)** in every learner: the distance between learners’ existing developmental state and their potential development. Put another way, the **ZPD** describes tasks that a learner has not yet learned but is capable of learning with appropriate stimuli.
- The **ZPD** is an important facet of social constructivism because it describes tasks “that a child cannot yet do alone but could do with the assistance of more competent peers or adults” (*Slavin*, 2003, p. 44).
- *Vygotsky’s* concept of the **ZPD** contrasted rather sharply with Piaget’s theory of learning in that the former saw a unity of learning and development while the latter saw stages of development setting a precondition, or readiness, for learning (*Dunn & Lantolf*, 1998).

❖ **First Language Acquisition**

- Everyone at some time has witnessed the remarkable ability of children to communicate. How can we explain this fantastic journey from that first anguished cry at birth to adult competence in a language? From the first word to tens of thousands? These are the sorts of questions that theories of language acquisition attempt to answer.

- Using the schools of thought referred to previously, an extreme **behaviorist position** would claim that children come into the world with a **tabula rasa**, a clean slate bearing no preconceived notions about the world or about language, and that these children are then shaped by their environment and slowly conditioned through various schedules of reinforcement.
- At the other **constructivist extreme** is the position that makes not only the cognitivist claim that children come into this world with very specific innate knowledge, pre dispositions, and biological timetables, but that children learn to function in a language chiefly through interaction and discourse.

❖ Issues in First Language Acquisition

• Competence and Performance

- **Competence** refers to one's underlying knowledge of a system, event, or fact. It is the nonobservable ability to do something, to perform something. Performance is the overtly observable and concrete manifestation or realization of competence. It is the actual doing of something: walking, singing, dancing, speaking.
- In reference to language, **competence** is one's underlying knowledge of the system of a language—its rules of grammar, its vocabulary, all the pieces of a language and how those pieces fit together.
- **Performance** is actual production (speaking, writing) or the comprehension (listening, reading) of linguistic events.

❖ Comprehension and Production

- One of the myths that has crept into some foreign language teaching materials is that comprehension (listening, reading) can be equated with **competence**,
- while production (speaking, writing) is **performance**.
- It is important to recognize that this is not the case:
- **production** is of course more directly observable,
- but **comprehension** is as much performance—a “willful act” to use Saussure's term—as production is.

Lecture 14

❖ Cross-Linguistic Influence and Learner Language

• The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH)

- In the middle of the twentieth century, one of the most popular pursuits for applied linguists was the study of two languages in contrast. **CAH** claimed that the principal barrier to second language acquisition is the interference of the first language system with the second language system,
- and that a scientific, structural analysis of the two languages in question would yield a taxonomy of linguistic contrasts between them which in turn would enable linguists and language teachers to predict the difficulties a learner would encounter.
- A well known model was offered by *Stockwell, Bowen, and Martin (1965)*, who posited what they called a **hierarchy of difficulty** by which a teacher or linguist could make a prediction of the relative difficulty of a given aspect of the target language.

❖ Fossilization

- The relatively permanent incorporation of incorrect linguistic forms into a person's second language competence has been referred to as **fossilization**.
- **Fossilization** is a normal and natural stage for many learners, and should not be viewed as some sort of terminal illness.
- *Vigil and Oller (1976)* provided a formal account of fossilization as a factor of positive and negative affective and cognitive feedback. They noted that there are two kinds of information transmitted between sources (learners) and audiences (in this case, native speakers); information about the **affective** relationship between source and audience, and **cognitive** information—facts, suppositions, beliefs.
- **Affective** information is primarily encoded in terms of kinesic mechanisms such as gestures, tone of voice, and facial expressions,
- while **cognitive** information is usually conveyed by means of linguistic devices (sounds, phrases, structures, discourse). The feedback learners get from their audience can be either positive, neutral, somewhere in between, or negative.

❖ Categories of Error Treatment

• Types of Feedback

- **Recast**: An implicit type of corrective feedback that reformulates or expands an ill-formed or incomplete utterance in an unobtrusive way.

♥ L: I lost my road.

♥ T: Oh, yeah, I see, you lost your way. And then what happened?

- **Clarification request:** An elicitation of a reformulation or repetition from a student.
 - ♥ L: I want practice today, today. (grammatical error)
 - ♥ T: I'm sorry? (clarification request)
- **Metalinguistic feedback:** provides "comments, information, or questions related to the well formedness of the student's utterance".
 - ♥ L: I am here since January.
 - ♥ T: Well, okay, but remember we talked about the present perfect tense?
- **Elicitation:** A corrective technique that prompts the learner to self-correct. Elicitation and other prompts are more overt in their response.
 - ♥ L: (to another student) What means this word?
 - ♥ T: Uh, Luis, how do we say that in English? What does?
 - ♥ L: Ah, what does this word mean?
- **Explicit correction:** A clear indication to the student that the form is incorrect and provision of a corrected form.
 - ♥ L: When I have 12 years old
 - ♥ T: No, not *have*. You mean, "when I was 12 years old" "
- **Repetition:** The teacher repeats the ill-formed part of the student's utterance, usually with a change in intonation.
 - ♥ L: When I have 12 years old ...
 - ♥ T: When I *was* 12 years old...