

Issue of Identity and Boundary between Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching

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Abstract

This paper examines debate in applied linguistics stemming from disputes surrounding its nature, scope and relationship with theoretical linguistics and English language teaching. The paper inspects radical ideas on applied linguistics and the discipline's connection with linguistics and English language teaching, through an examination of conflicting definitions and contemporary research interests. Set against the theoretical frames of post-modernist and post structuralist perspectives, the discipline of applied linguistics presents a wide spectrum of perceptions and models, ranging from the restricted to the open field. The current crisis of identity and boundary between applied linguistics and English language teaching is traced to historical and conceptual premises. The historical development of the field and the main changes affecting its focus are correlated with the global spread of English and the ensuing concerns. The conceptual premise is addressed with respect to the changes in the linguistic theory. The position adopted in this paper is that applied linguistics is not an extension of English language teaching. Applied linguistics incorporates English language teaching or language in the classroom perspective and with the same clarity and precision offers through disciplined and methodological enquiry a macro frame that incorporates all aspects of language in communication. The paper concludes with the proposition of two frames in applied linguistics, each with specific concerns and possibilities: a macro applied linguistic frame which considers applications of language within the large area of interdisciplinary language-related studies, and a micro applied linguistic frame which considers pedagogic and educational concerns and is reserved for ELT.

Keywords: applied linguistics, ELT, macro and micro frames, post-structuralist, post-modernist.

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