



LINGUISTICS AND THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

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Abstract

Linguistics as the scientific study of language has very crucial role in running language instruction. Changes in language teaching-learning method reflect the development of linguistic theories. This paper describes how the three broad views of linguistic theories, namely traditional grammar, generative grammar, and functional grammar work in relation to English language teaching and learning. Since both linguistics and language learning have the same subject to talk about, the knowledge of the language, then, is the core. Linguistic features analyzed are on the levels of Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Semantics and Discourse as the basic components, supported by Psycholinguistics and Sociolinguistics. In relation to language teaching and learning, especially English, such knowledge on the English language gives learners the chance to apply in social communication and in any occasion. The use depends on the viewing of linguistic theories (English) in certain era, which reflects the need of learners in using English. It is assumed that the more linguistic competence someone has, the easier he/she can run his/her instructional activities. As the consequence, in the English language learning, the syllabus designer should notify the mentioned levels of linguistic components while constructing English instructional materials, methods, and evaluation based on the stage of learners to avoid misunderstanding in use. In this case, English instructors/teachers should also update their linguistic competence, especially on Psycholinguistic and Sociolinguistic points of view.

Key words/phrases: linguistics, English, language instruction, linguistic competence

A. INTRODUCTION

As for the sake of communication, more people think that language is not more than only the tool of expressing ideas, stating the emotion and the like. No matter what words are used and how they are used, as long as they can catch the message, and understand it, that is enough. While others view how a language arranged in form of words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and even paragraphs. They pay attention to the system of language, how a language works. This second view regards language as a science, which is particularly called linguistics. From the development of language study, these two sides appear in language teaching.



Linguistics as a science of language is theoretical, in which the investigation is based on some rational and systematic study. Each study deals with the data from the phenomena of language used, following the analysis that will yield any kind of theory of language. As a matter of fact, the history of linguistic development shows two different perspectives on language, namely prescriptive and descriptive view. The former deals with normative approach, in which a language used can be said right (grammatical) whenever it fulfills the norm of that language. In this case, analyzing the language uttered is based on the rules of that language (usage). The latter, language is described as it is used. Data, such as words, phrases, clauses, sentences, or even paragraphs obtained, are observed and analyzed in natural language, following general principles of empirical research procedures. In conclusion, linguistics is not theoretical and descriptive, but also empirical science in which detail observations on language confirm generalization.

Prescriptive and descriptive view of language in linguistics study affects language instruction (Stern, 1983). Changes in language teaching-learning method, for instance, reflect the development of linguistic theories. Since the 17th century, the development of linguistics has pictured out language teaching. It is shown by the need of the people in using a language and the base to change the view of what language is. And as matter of fact, the theories of language instruction moves in line with this development.

By 19th century, people needed to learn a language to get the information from written text, which was mostly in English. As a result, they learned English through translating English into their native language. The goal of foreign language study is to learn a language for its literature, benefit from the mental discipline and intellectual development. For that purpose, grammar of English should be mastered by considering some principles (Richards & Rodgers, 2003). They are detailed analysis of its grammar, such as emphasizing on accuracy, having practice on basic unit of sentence, deductive way of teaching grammar, the reading and writing as the major focus, vocabulary learned is from the reading text; and the medium of instruction is learners' native language. This is popular called Grammar Translation Method (GTM). All principles are based on the norms the language used, and that is to show that language learned is based on the prescriptive view—mastery of structurally related elements of language for the coding of meaning. The way to view language in this concern is included into traditional grammar. It focuses on the distinction between what some people do with language and what they *ought* to do with it, according to a pre-established standard. And the aim is producing proper language.

The change on the theory of language study is of Chomsky's ideas (1972) related to generative grammar. As the idea that languages are universal, linguists view language from its basic system. A language is the system of creating a small set of rules that could generate all the sentences. The identification and explanation of constituent elements of the language was described in order to make up the language and show their interrelation and interaction (Stern, 1983).

Previously, de Saussure's contribution to language in this concern, was summarized by his translator Roy Harris, as follows:

"Language is no longer regarded as peripheral to our grasp of the world we live in, but as central to it. Words are not mere vocal labels or communicational adjuncts superimposed upon an already given order of things. They are collective products of social interaction, essential instruments through which human beings constitute and articulate their world."

Language is, therefore, a system of interdependent entities. It is not only on the elements of the language itself, such as phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics, but other fields of study as well, like psychology, sociology and anthropology. As a result, the field of study on psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, and anthropolinguistics emerged.

The way of having a language in teaching also moved. The rules governed are practiced through several methods. One of the well-known methods is Audio Lingual Method (ALM). Since the idea that language is a system of structurally related elements for the encoding of meaning, the characteristics of this method refers to it. Richards & Rodgers (2003) stated that the elements of a language produced should be in a ruled-governed. They were described at any structural level (phonetic, morphological, syntactical etc). These levels were thought of systems within systems. The learning principles should be considered as the psychological foundation, namely: a process of mechanical habit formation, effective skills learning with aural-oral training, analogy (the process of generalization and discrimination), and meaning learned in a linguistic and cultural context.

The third view comes up with functional grammar. It is not just a new type of jargon but another way of understanding sentences. The core of this view is based on the concept that language used functions to express meaning by considering the context and situation. This view is emerged by a linguist, M. A. K. Halliday, and it is commonly known as Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) theory. This theory, nowadays, has been expanded and explored by many other linguists and also language educators.

Halliday emphasizes that SFL theory is different from the previous views of linguistics in terms of the concept that learning a language does not only involve grammatical features of the language, but also the contextual situation and cultural values in where it is used. He states “learning a language is learning how to mean in context”. It indicates that people need to consider the appropriate words that will be used in a particular context because of the availability of varying language forms. Because of that, Halliday adds, making a choice of words which are appropriate to the particular context becomes a crucial point. In this case, SFL theory can give such useful value in analyzing the language choice. This theory is supportedly applied through activating real language used in particular cultural situation during the process of language learning.

Because no clear idea which first begins, whether semantics or grammar Halliday (1990), functional grammar is one that is pushed in the direction of semantics. Grammatical analysis treats linguistic items not as expression but as forms. In grammar, we are exploring that language not as sound or as writing, but as *wording*. It refers to the words and structures that are used. It corresponds very well to grammar – lexicogrammar which consists of structure and vocabulary.

The three views of linguistics theories above basically provide a significant impact on the development of English language instruction. The linguistics theories suddenly bring a new concept of English instructional design. The changes of linguistics theory in one era influences to the way of conceptualizing language instructional design. As a matter of fact, the language educators and language learners should acquire and comprehend the language competence in order to maximize their language performance. Because of that, this article discusses how Linguistic features as language competence take a part in English language teaching. Besides, this article also explains how linguistics work in English teaching instruction.

B. LINGUISTIC AREAS AS LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Linguistics as a language science is the foundation of language knowledge. Linguistic itself is a part of language competence in English language teaching. In fact, linguistics theories are interrelated to English language teaching. The movement of English language instruction is in line with the movement of one view of linguistics to another one. It means that language teaching is influenced by the development of linguistic theories since those theories are the indicator of learners' linguistic competence. Shortly, linguistic features is as language competence in English language teaching.

Let's start with a basic assumption that one's linguistic abilities are based on knowledge she/he possesses. It is the knowledge that we are seeking to investigate. One of the insights of modern linguistics is that speakers of a language have different types of linguistic knowledge, including how to pronounce words, how to construct sentences, and about the meaning of individual words and sentences. To reflect this, linguistic description has different levels of analysis.

The division into levels of analysis seems to make sense intuitively: if you are learning a foreign language you might learn a word from a book, know what it means but not know how to pronounce it. Or you might hear a word, pronounce it perfectly but do not know what it means. Then again, you might know the pronunciation and meaning of, say, a noun, but do not know how its plural is formed or what its genitive case looks like. In this sense, knowing a word unites different kinds of knowledge, and this is just as true of how to construct phrases and sentences.

Many linguists agree there are some of linguistic areas that function as the indicators of language competence in English language teaching. Those language areas consist of phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, discourse as well as psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics. Since those features are interrelated each other, they build a systematic language, which is commonly known as linguistics. Each of those areas contributes to formulate a systematic form and meaning in a particular context.

Defined as the study of sound system in a language, phonology mostly has an analysis of spoken utterance. It deals with the organization of sounds to signal meanings (McMahon, 2002: 1-2). Since this linguistic area studies the sound patterns of human language, phonology is also known as a field of a language that discusses about alternations, syllables, and patterns of language that can be shown clearly in spoken language. This linguistic area is expanded into a deeper concept by giving meaning to the sounds that are uttered. It is related to the next language feature that is called morphology.

The next area of linguistics concerning with the smallest linguistics unit having meaning or grammatical function, as Carstairs and McCarthy (2002) argue that morphology is related to the knowledge of meaning of words. At the same time, morphology also discusses how to relate sounds and meaning. Meanwhile, the other linguists argue that morphology discusses the structure of words and the smallest meaning-bearing units and how they combine into words. Thus, this field of linguistics discusses word, its roots, shapes, and affixes, inflection and derivation, and so on.

Another area that functions as a language competence in English language teaching is syntax. Syntax deals with a greater aspect rather than the morphology scope. It deals with the formation of sentences, how words are combined to larger units than words, to phrases and sentences. What should be analysed in syntax study is crucial to be

mastered. It should be seen that the highest hierarchical component of syntax is sentence. In analyzing a sentence, Collins and Hollo (2000: 13) principally pay attention to two types of description that is syntactic class and syntactic function. Syntactic class refers to the grammatical properties, like noun phrase, verb phrase, and syntactic function is related to the grammatical role, such as subject, predicate, and the like.

It is the largest unit of grammar which is independent and expresses a complete idea with subject and verb as the constituents of sentences and also of clauses within sentences (Quirk, 1987: 719). The subject is the person or thing that acts or is described in the sentence while the predicate (verb in Quirk term) is the action or description (Scocco, 2007). The basic parts of a sentence according to Nortquist (2010) are the subject, verb and the object. The subject is usually a noun to indicate the name of person, place or thing. The verb, which Scocco calls predicate, follows the subject. It does not only identify an action but also state of being, while an object usually follows the verb.

Since linguistic description is an attempt to reflect a speaker's knowledge, the semanticists, furthermore, are committed to describing semantic knowledge. It is the next linguistics area. The term semantics, according to Palmer (1981) and Saeed (1997) refers to studies in the science of meaning, study of meaning communicated through language. While Cruse (2000) positions himself on cognitive semantics: the meaning of a linguistic expression is taken to arise from the fact that it gives access to a particular conceptual content. It conceptualizes a broader view about linguistics study since it concerns on the study of how language organizes and expresses meanings (Lobner, 2002). Since the main core discussion of linguistics is to find the correlation between linguistics code and its meaning, semantics takes a role in building this correlation.

Theoretically, semantics consists of two approaches that are commonly known as formal semantics and cognitive semantics (Chierchia and McConnell, 1990). Formal semantics tries to describe the the natural language in a formal situation or in unambiguous way. So that, this kind of approach concerns with how linguistic codes are related each other in formulating meanings that represent the truth-condition. Meanwhile, cognitive semantics approach does not consider the logical structure of the language. It tries to explain semantics phenomena by considering the psychological and even cultural aspects. Because of that, this approach does not concern with the truth-values of language used in terms of the meaning-bearing. Based on the two kinds of semantics approach, a general statement can be emerged that is semantics generally analyzes the meaning in which the linguistics elements are expressed.

In a larger and more complex discussion, the term discourse appears as linguistics feature which enlarges the knowledge discussed in semantics scope. It is the result of an act in communication in form of paragraphs, conversations, as well as interviews (Paltridge, 2004). Discourse is related to explaining the meaning of an utterance by considering the cultural, social and environment aspect in order to get truth-interpretation of the utterance. It is strengthened by Jorgensen and Phillips (2002) who define discourse as "a particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspects of the world)". They argue that the term discourse commonly appears in terms of discourse analysis. Discourse analysis, then, deals with how the language is used and influenced directly by different aspects of social life. The way people utter differ each other by considering the cultural values and social aspects. Different discourse, such as discourse in the context of studying in the classroom and context of bargaining on market, will show different language used. The difference can be analyzed based on the language choice, its politeness, the degree of formality, and so on. Hyme's communicative competence, aims at describing social and language skills in this case

Based on the explanation above, it can be inferred that language features (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and discourse) cannot be separated from English language teaching since those features are the language competences in language teaching. It means that the process of acquiring language successfully depends on how human can produce the right syllables, words and even sentences that contains the appropriate meaning in appropriate context of humans' life.

Psycholinguistics as the study of language mechanism gives fairly contribution. In a more detail explanation, it can be stated that psycholinguistics is the study of how word meaning, sentence meaning, and discourse meaning are computed and represented in human mind. In line with this, Trieman et al (2003) state that psycholinguistics considers the properties of the human mind as well as the structure of the language. As a result, both of them cannot be separated since they are interrelated each other.

The phenomena of this interrelationship can be seen in some uses. Recent approaches to the lexicon have adopted "multiple-trace" theories of human memory which propose that multiple entities (Gaskell, 2006:6). Words, for example, are encoded and stored in lexical memory in the form of detailed perceptual traces that preserve fine phonetic detail of the original articulatory event. Then, speech perception, according to him, is likely preferred to be done in the presence of the speaker. Suppose we do multimodal conversation in face to face situations, it reveals the complexity and richness of language and the challenge of uncovering the processes that allow us to communicate freely. While the absence of the face reduces the information support for understanding. Another case is reading activities. The theory of the clarity of the anatomical distinctions in the visual pathways showing that multiplicity of representation levels in written language, understanding reading provides us with an invaluable avenue to understanding cognition, such as reading with eye movements or no can result the same in two readers' activity. This statement can be generalized that psycholinguistics concerns about the correlation built between the meaning of a language used to the processing of language use in human mind. Thus, the competence to have such knowledge should be put into practice.

Related to sociolinguistics, two society and language are studied descriptively on the effect of any or even all aspects of **society**, including cultural **norms**, expectations, and context, on the way **language** is used, and the effects of language use on society (Labov: 2001). One can be seen from Volk and Angelova's (2007) study of the first graders peer interactions in a dual language program; the effect of contending language ideologies and their influences on the language choices made the children outlined. The result shows the interactions and communicative successes and failures experienced in school settings can and will contribute to revisions in an individual 's commitment to using and mastering the languages.

Furthermore, the work of Limpopo's programs offers confirmation of the principle that the more their learning context allow learners to draw on all points of the continua, the greater the chances for the full biliterate development (Hornberger, 1989:289) in Hornberger (2010: 550). For these bilingual learners, the *development* of biliteracy occurs 'along intersecting first language-second language, receptive-productive, and oral-written language skills continua; through the *medium* of two or more languages and literacies.

The next point that can be seen is language variety and communicative repertoire. In their widest sense, they include different language varieties in bilingual and multilingual settings, different dialects, creole activities, styles, registers or other differentiated language use in monolingual settings, as well as multimodal and literate varieties. As they are the effect of practical use of language in daily communication, all

teachers as language planners in the classroom have to consider this as the implications for learners' futures.

C. HOW LINGUISTICS WORK IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

English language instruction relies on the need of the people in certain situation. In certain purpose, in which people know English only for getting written information, traditional grammar is usually used. As your need is for translating text into their own understanding, the grammar of English needs to be mastered. The study in University College London by Tarsoly and Riitta, as an example, based on the general awareness of how languages work, *the less widely taught languages* (Hungarian and Finnish) were greatly and usefully taught through grammar translation method (e.tarsoly@ssees.ucl.ac.uk, r.valijarvi@ssees.ucl.ac.uk) than the widely taught languages (French and German). The morphological complexity of Finnish and Hungarian, as the implication, should be pointed out as a key grammar aspect and word formation.

From generative grammar as the basis, many kinds of instruction are created in English language teaching. Based on Hymes' (1971) opinion, that language is a socially constructed phenomenon, so linguistic forms are best understood as meaning resources used in specific situations. Then, the coverage of linguistics mentioned can be seen in any kind of text. The students can use text as a medium which enables them to practice English in written form. Text is defined in any different way, firstly. as any passage spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole (Gleason, 1998:277) and Thornbury (1999: 71), and as a combination of lexical and grammatical device, which shows cohesiveness and coherence in order to make sense of utterances Marina (2006).

There are many reasons why people analyze text. First is to explicate or give a close reading of the text. Second is to find a sub-text (or the meaning beneath the obvious meaning of the text). Third is to bring background to bear upon the text (for example, if people know something about the author, they can understand the text in a deeper way). Fourth, it is to compare with other texts. Fifth, it is to place the text within a context (of the author's life, for example, or the historical period in which the text was created, or of a certain literary or artistic movement). Finally, it is to use the text to prove a larger thesis (about a writer's motivation, for example, or the themes that interested a certain group of writers at a certain time).

As this importance of the text analysis, any kind of linguistic areas should be learned through it. It is focused on the structure of written language in order to provide a detailed linguistic analysis of texts. The students as readers are able to analyze the text syntactically with questions in their mind, such as "How good is the grammar in the text?" They analyze the text in order to get the understanding how words can be put together to have meaning. Then, the task is that the students will be asked to break down the sentences in text and analyze them syntactically.

Written texts differ from one another not only in genre and function, but also in their structure and form (Wisniewski, 2006). This written text is of primary importance to language teachers, as the knowledge of arrangement and variety of writing that influences readers' understanding, memory of messages included in the discourse, as well as the speed of perception. Moreover, written texts analysis provides teachers with systematic knowledge of the ways of describing texts. In addition, understanding these concepts should also improve learners' writing skills as they would become aware of traits essential for a good written text.

According to Woods (2006), using text analysis in teaching English can engage students and tutors in the exploration of texts. Furthermore, analysis of texts also

encourages students to reflect upon and critically evaluate knowledge acquired in the study of, for example, syntax and semantics as well as naturally drawing students to the investigation of socially-situated language use. Even it provides students with the opportunity to examine how meaning is constructed and negotiated in texts and to reflect on the role that language plays in social life. It means that the students do not only try to find the rules to get meaning in the text but also to know the role of the language.

Text analysis technique contributes to the students' understanding about the meaning of the text. The students can be good writers if they understand the construction of the text, how words combined together to achieve well-formed and meaningful sentence. Moreover, they can also understand the function of the text. This technique will motivate the students to be critical thinkers because they examine, identify, and analyze the rules.

What we face today in our Indonesian recent curriculum is the approach which is based on functional grammar which is also a variety of generative grammar. The work of this view in English instruction is genre-based approach. In analyzing text, Williamson (2005) suggests several ways as material objects. One of them is the analysis of the structure of the texts. To do the analysis, there are some questions that lead the students to comprehend the meaning of the texts. They are: What comes first? What comes after? How is it built? Is it a travelogue, or fantasy or a historical novel or a nonfiction work or poetry or what? Does it follow a time-line, a logical sequence, a problem-solution-resolution process, a simple list of items, a comparison and contrast analysis, a balance of forces analysis, or does it simply jump back and forth chaotically? How are the chapters and sections divided? What sort of language and imagery does the text contain? What style (tone) of language is used (high, medium, or low)? How good is the spelling, grammar, vocabulary and punctuation?

The other is analyzing text by breaking down the text into its components. The readers can examine different aspects of the text. They can also look at the word choice, and the structure of the sentences used. The next search may be transformation used in the text.

It also links words that share the purpose. Let's take a look at the sentence prepared by teacher Ruth French (Australian primary school English teacher) :

"In week 3, our class went to the Australian Museum".

1 2 3 4

From the text, the analysis can be by breaking parts as follows.

Phrase 1 = "circumstance of time", meaning when the action happens.

= "theme" of the clause,
= the writer's "point of departure".

Phrase 2 = "participant",

= "actor" in the action process

Phrase 3 = "action process"

Phrase 4 = "circumstance of place"

Three important areas in the scope of language choice and form can be seen as follows. Firstly, *field*, which shows the actual experiences and content in the text. It relates to ideational meaning, showing the phenomena about things (living and non-living, abstract and concrete), about goings on (what the things are) and the circumstances surrounding these happenings and doings. The second is *tenor*, language use according to the situated relationship of the author to the reader (or audience). That

is related to interpersonal relationships, interactions and mood (*declarative, imperative*) and modality (*fortunately, unfortunately*). It expresses a speaker's attitudes and judgments. And the last is *mode*. It is related to textual meanings. Textual meanings express the relation of language to its environment, including both the verbal environment-what has been said or written before (co-text) and non-verbal, situational environment (context). These meanings are realized through patterns of theme and cohesion. Textual meanings are most centrally influenced by mode of discourse.

D. CONCLUSION

In English language instruction, the main thing that should be considered is English linguistics components. As it is the application of the linguistic knowledge, the English language instruction will be well designed based on such components. Linguistics has the purpose to explore the general principles on which a language is constructed and operate as system of communication. The achievements of linguistic inquiry are implemented in effective language teaching. On the three views of seeing the language, the implementation of these views in English teaching mostly depends on the purpose of language instruction.

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