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SPECIAL FEATURE ROUNDTABLE

Defining Our Field: Unity in Diversity

Six months ago, in our inaugural issue, ***Issues in Applied Linguistics*** *called for responses from our readers to two questions:*

What is applied linguistics?
What should applied linguistics be?

We were motivated to pose these fundamental questions as founders of a new journal in an emerging field, whose own graduate program in applied linguistics was in the process of becoming an independent department. This transition has raised important issues concerning our academic identity and research agenda for the future, not only for ourselves but for the larger academic community with whom we interact and exchange expertise.

Fourteen replies[1] were received in response to our questions from graduate students and researchers in the U.S. and from as far away as Brasil, Finland, Romania, and Israel. In addition to geographical diversity, the respondents represent various departmental affiliations, including sociology, Germanic languages, English, health services, linguistics, psycholinguistics, brain research, and applied linguistics. Moreover, the views expressed in the contributions not only reflect different ways of approaching the questions, they embody many of the current emphases encompassed by our interdisciplinary field.

IAL would like to thank all the contributors for helping make this Roundtable possible.

INTRODUCTION

Historically, applied linguistics has been viewed as the application of linguistic theory to the solving of practical problems in the world, though for many it has, and continues to be, associated with the teaching of modern languages. Although Gomes de Matos (1984) traces the history of applied linguistics from the establishment of the English Language Institute at the University of Michigan in 1941, the First International Colloquium of Applied Linguistics, sponsored by the International Association of Applied Linguistics (AILA), in Nancy, France (1964), dealt with a number of areas of concern, including language teaching and automation in

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linguistics (Gomes de Matos, 1984). That applied linguistics is not synonymous with language teaching, nor, for that matter, that language teaching is not informed by linguistic knowledge alone, was insightfully noted by Pit Corder (1975):

> [A]pplied linguistics in its broadest sense is concerned with many activities apart from language teaching, and . . . language teaching involves the application of knowledge derived from many theoretical studies apart from linguistics. (p. 5)

In the almost thirty years that have elapsed since the first AILA conference, regional and national AILA affiliates have been established all over the world, and the number of research areas included in AILA's conferences has increased exponentially. Indeed, departments of applied linguistics, themselves recently established, are awarding M.A. and Ph.D. degrees for work ranging from cognitive science and language acquisition to discourse analysis and language planning, among other areas of inquiry. Furthermore, applied linguistics has become the central focus of more and more journals, including this one, rather than merely a secondary concern of journals devoted to the general study of language. Today, there are those who would argue that applied linguistics has "emerged as an interdisciplinary field of inquiry with its own authority and rhetoric" (Kunnan, 1990, p. 2).

Perhaps because of this history, it is no easy matter to obtain consensus on the answers to the questions we posed, even among professionals in linguistic and applied linguistic research. As we will show, of our fourteen respondents, some continue to equate applied linguistics with language teaching or see applied linguistics, to varying degrees, as the practical embodiment of linguistic theory. But other contributors recognize the broad interdisciplinary nature of applied linguistics and the socio-political concerns which the study of language in its real-world cultural contexts entails. Two respondents even suggest that applied linguistics may not be truly 'applied,' and one contributor redefines who an 'applied linguist' might be.

THE RESPONSES

I. Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics

Our first contributor, Robert Stockwell, distinguishes between the application of linguistic knowledge to a wide range of disciplines, whose methodologies place them outside of linguistics proper, and the term "applied linguistics" which, in his view, is not a field comprising all of these disciplines. Rather, he suggests that "applied linguistics" is largely a term coined by the more innovative practitioners of modern language teaching. While our first contributor recognizes that linguistic knowledge can be applied to many areas, he locates the work of applied linguists in but a limited subset of these applications.

Robert P. Stockwell, ***Department of Linguistics, UCLA***

To answer the question "What is applied linguistics," it would be useful first to answer the question "What is linguistics?" I take *general* linguistics to be the search for and characterization of language universals. Language universals come in all colors and denominations: social (both large group and small group interaction), psychological, neurological. The decision whether a given kind of study is properly within the field of linguistics may depend on the methodology: if the methodology involves, for example, excitation of brain neurons, the results may have bearing on our search for and comprehension of language universals, but the methodology is within another discipline (neurology and neurosurgery). The excitation itself may be guided by linguistic information (e.g., whether certain kinds of linguistic performance are inhibited), and *that* would be an instance of applied linguistics--which I understand to be taking linguistic knowledge and using it in another discipline. Similarly, much of what is done with computers to simulate language behavior is not itself linguistics, but an application of linguistics, both in the sense that success is measured by linguistic verisimilitude and in the sense that a linguistic theory of some sort is built into the initial structure of the program that performs the simulation.

One can readily imagine huge numbers of applications of linguistic knowledge. It is impossible for me to see how to assimilate them all into a coherent field called "applied linguistics." I *believe*, but am subject to correction if someone can show me a better historiographic account, that "applied linguistics" is a term that came to be used to characterize the work of departments which started out trying to do a more sophisticated job of language teaching than, as they saw it, typically had been done in modern foreign language departments. It has an aura of respectability that is lacking in the acronym TESL, and besides, many applied linguists, even those in TESL programs, work on languages other than English. Into these programs there

sometimes have come psychologists, neurologists, and others who, in honest efforts to define a broader range of applications of linguistics within an ill-defined discipline, muddied the waters even further. I think that there is no definable field of "applied linguistics" in the sense that there *is* a definable field of linguistics, psychology, physics, etc., though I believe the range of useful applications of linguistics includes many that applied linguists have dealt with as well as a great deal that they have not gotten into because they lack the specific knowledge of some other discipline in which it makes sense for linguistics to have applications.

II. Relationships Between Applied Linguistics and Linguistics

The next five contributions define applied linguistics in relation to linguistics, but not in similar ways. The first, by Robert Kirsner, much like the previous contribution, views the rise of a field known as "applied linguistics" as having come about due to a division of labor in particular academic settings, although, in his view, the domain of applied linguistics is thus legitimized by its unique directions of inquiry. The second contribution, from Roger Andersen, distinguishes between two co-exisiting kinds of applied linguistics: one applying linguistic knowledge, the other being what the members of the field of applied linguistics say they do. The third contribution, by Tatiana Slama-Cazacu, conceives of "applied linguistics" and "fundamental linguistic research" as two distinct "branches" of linguistics, differing in aims but enriching one another. The fourth contribution, submitted by the Faculty Committee of UCLA's Department of TESL & Applied Linguistics, maintains that although linguistics is not the only field which influences applied linguistics research, applied linguistics nevertheless has its own unique agenda of investigative questions, methods, and applications for studying language learning and use. Finally, in the fifth contribution, John Schumann rejects any special dependence of applied linguistics on linguistics and, much like in the third and fourth contributions, acknowledges the multidisciplinary insights which inform applied linguistics inquiry.

Robert S. Kirsner, ***Department of Germanic Languages, UCLA***

The difference between linguistics and applied linguistics is like the difference between a language and a dialect. As we all know, a "language" is merely a dialect with a navy or an airforce. The difference between language and dialect cannot really be defined in structural terms; it is purely political. Similarly, the difference between linguistics and applied linguistics is (almost)

purely political. To be sure, some research topics, such as basic grammatical theory or phonetics, traditionally belong to "pure" linguistics, and some, such as the methodology of language teaching, traditionally belong to applied linguistics. But other areas can be divided up either way. First language acquisition can go to a linguistics department, a psychology department, or to an applied linguistics department. I believe that second language acquisition--which is about as much "applied linguistics" as one can get--is also a rubric at conferences of the Linguistic Society of America, so even that can belong to "linguistics proper." At a certain point, drawing the boundary between linguistics and applied linguistics is like asking the difference between chemical physics and physical chemistry. It becomes a sociological or political decision, a matter of whether a particular university administration is going to support financially the development and maintenance of an additional entity which wants to look at all those areas of language which are not--for whatever reason--adequately dealt with within its linguistics department. An example of what I mean is the difference between the way certain kinds of linguistic research are done at UCLA and at UC Santa Barbara. At UCLA most discourse work is done in applied linguistics, while at UCSB it is done in linguistics proper.

Looking to the future, I would like to see a vigorous applied linguistics that is willing to call attention to and study *all* the things that are neglected by theoretical linguistics including, but not limited to, the use of statistical techniques for language research, the process of writing, and the meaning of grammatical constructions as they are used in texts.

Roger Andersen, *Department of TESL & Applied Linguistics, UCLA*

"Applied linguistics" is at least two very different things. First of all, it is simply what we do. And "we" means all of us in the world who refer to ourselves as applied linguists and our discipline as applied linguistics, as circular as this may seem. This sense of applied linguistics refers primarily to people at "higher" levels of a pecking order which has language teachers at the bottom. Although I think this term is inappropriate to refer to the discipline practiced by those people at the top of this language teaching pyramid, it is nevertheless beyond our control that through decades of use of the term by *the people who consider themselves applied linguists* the term has come to be accepted as the only universally recognized term for this field and the people who inhabit it.

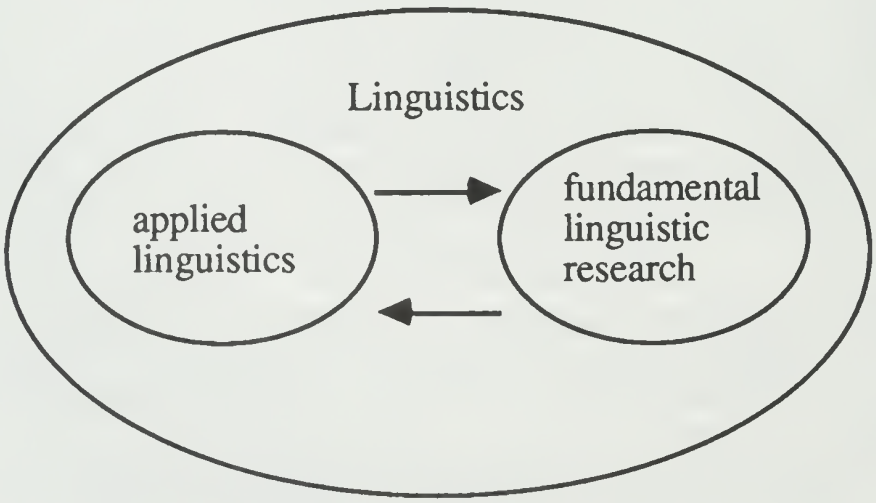
The other life of "applied linguistics" is the sum of the two words "applied" and "linguistics." That is, linguists who apply their skill and knowledge to a real world problem or concern. Examples of such applied linguists include a speech therapist trained originally as a linguist, a technical editor with a linguistics degree, and a linguist who directs a program to certify elementary school teachers to teach literacy and language arts in the children's vernacular.

There is room in this world for both types of applied linguists. Applied linguists of the type we think we are rely on linguistics to varying degrees but do not necessarily have to be total linguists. The other kind, total

linguists who then apply their skill and knowledge to a practical problem or concern, *must* be linguists first and foremost before they apply linguistics. My own preference is to be sure that students in applied linguistics have as solid a training in linguistics as is possible, but just what brand of linguistics they need and how much is debatable. We need to get rid of the tension caused by the difference in the academic training of the two types of applied linguists and accept the diversity and adversity that accompanies it. Enough of defining ourselves. Let's just work and prove with our work what we are and what we do.

Tatiana Slama-Cazacu, *Department of Philology, University of Bucharest*

In order to define applied linguistics and judiciously integrate it into a system of sciences, we reject artificial correlations or subordinations and select as a criterion the *aim* of various types of linguistic research. Applied linguistics is that field which studies language with a definite aim of application, i.e., which serves *directly* and *specifically* the achievement of a particular practical objective. Within linguistics, there is a directly applied "branch" with some theoretical foundation and a "branch" that has a *predominantly* theoretical or fundamental character. It is hard to find a suitable name for the latter. Erroneously it is called "general," "theoretical," or (completely wrongly) "pure." Though unusual, it would be more correct to call it "fundamental linguistic research," since it has as its aim the extraction of certain general or theoretical principles to describe aspects of particular languages or of the phenomenon "language" in general. But this does not mean that applied linguistics is separate from "linguistics" or that applied linguistics means "applications of linguistics." As the figure below illustrates, the two great categories of language study--different in their *immediate aims*--are correlative, closely connected (Slama-Cazacu, 1973, 1980, 1984), and even mutually influence one another. Applied linguistic research serves the fundamental study of the language, and the fundamental study of language is a necessary prerequisite for applied linguistics.



What should applied linguistics be? To answer this question we must begin with an appropriate conception of what "language" is. I have argued elsewhere (Slama-Cazacu, 1973, 1980, 1982, 1983, 1984) that since "language" is a *human* phenomenon, bearing the mark of human peculiarities and functioning in real-life settings, it cannot be analyzed exclusively as an abstract system, detached from the contingencies of human reality. If this conception of "language" is our starting point, then not only is it natural that everything which is inside *linguistics*, and which thus refers to isomorphic facts, should be imbued with similar peculiarities, but a methodological procedure should also be used which respects the specific features of language that are similar whether our investigative aim is "applied" or "fundamental." If in fundamental linguistic research some other model of "language" is employed which is different from the one used in applied linguistics, distortions will occur in any extrapolations from one field to the other, to the detriment and inefficiency of both fields. Moreover, given a real-life conception of language, it is a major error for applied linguistics to attempt to solve practical problems exclusively by linguistic means or especially by means of a linguistics which considers "language" to be an abstract phenomenon.

But while in applied linguistics it is more obvious that "language" should be viewed as a *concrete* phenomenon in *concrete* life settings, research of a general character is also required within applied linguistics itself. A *theory of applied linguistics* should specify for example, the general principles of learning a particular foreign language on a contrastive basis. Any real applications, however, can neither be made outside of a particular context nor be limited to applying only *linguistic* knowledge. "Language teaching," for instance, is achieved in a broad educational context that only partially coincides with linguistics. The situation of applied linguistics in the system of the sciences is thus that of a *multidisciplinary* field, which uses linguistic data yet must also incorporate data and methods from other disciplines, blending them into a whole.

Faculty Committee,[2] *Department of TESL & Applied Linguistics, UCLA*

Applied Linguistics is not merely linguistics applied. It can be characterized as having a central concern for language learning and use. To this concern we apply insights from linguistics, education, psychology, sociology, neuroscience, artificial intelligence and other relevant disciplines. It is also a field that can be characterized by the types of basic research questions that are addressed, by the diversity of its research methods, and by the range of applications of basic research to real world contexts. These three domains of applied linguistics are interdependent in that researchers addressing themselves to the more practical issues and questions do the best work when they are well informed of the related basic research and the relevant research tools. Likewise, those doing the more basic research have the greatest impact when they are alert to the potential applications of their work.

John Schumann, *Department of TESL & Applied Linguistics, UCLA*

Applied linguistics is a central concern for language acquisition and use. In order to speak to that concern, insights are applied from psychology, neuroscience, sociology, education, anthropology, linguistics and philosophy. Applied linguistics is not linguistics applied, and linguistics enjoys no special status in this field.

III. The Multidisciplinarity of Applied Linguistics

Taking the interdisciplinarity of applied linguistics even further, the two contributions that follow see an enormously wide range of fields which both inform and benefit from the work of applied linguists. The first contribution, by Bob Jacobs, rejects the limiting association of applied linguistics with TESL and language teaching in favor of an applied linguistics which brings the findings of other disciplines to bear on various language issues and which, in turn, contributes to the knowledge of other fields. In a similar vein, the second contribution, by Minna Ilomaki, Tarja Miettinen, and Reija Virrankoski, recognizes the many skills and types of knowledge an applied linguist needs to begin dealing with the problems inherent in international and intercultural communication, including insights from mass media, journalism, and communication studies.

Bob Jacobs, *Department of TESL & Applied Linguistics and Brain Research Institute, UCLA*

Applied linguistics is traditionally seen as the application of linguistics to teaching, as demonstrated by the closeness with which TESL is associated with applied linguistics. This view is outmoded and provides the greatest limitation to the field. Instead, applied linguistics should be seen as the application of various disciplines (e.g., neurobiology, cognitive neuroscience, psychology, sociology) to various language issues, such as language acquisition, language use, language policy. Such a perspective allows not only for rich interdisciplinary integration, but may also permit applied linguistics researchers to make contributions to other fields of inquiry.

Minna Ilomaki, Tarja Miettinen, and Reija Virrankoski, *Department of Applied Linguistics, University of Vaasa*

In light of today's European integration and internationalization, a multidisciplinary undertaking of applied linguistics, including communication studies and journalism, is needed. Students of languages, communication studies, and applied linguistics are all needed as experts in jobs that require a special knowledge of languages and of the communication problems between

cultures. The science of applied linguistics thus does not merely study the questions of linguistics in general, it also addresses the societal and cultural terms and associations of a generation, the dissemination and use of knowledge, issues of information dissemination, the possible problems arising during the communication process, the problems caused during the processing of information, the problems of bilingual processing, special languages, computer linguistics, the relationship of language and sex, and how many of these problems may in some degree be a consequence of cultural misunderstanding. Applied linguistics also deals with solving the problems of teaching languages and teaching the dissemination of information.

For applied linguistics to solve such problems, knowledge of more than just one scientific field is clearly needed, and thus a person working in the area of applied linguistics must take advantage of any theories and scientific models from fields such as sociology, psychology, anthropology, philosophy, and applied mathematics which can help in the solutions of these problems. In this sense, applied linguistics is a necessarily eclectic field of inquiry.

IV. Sociopolitical Views of Applied Linguistics

The next three contributors see applied linguistics as having an even more pronounced sociopolitical agenda than the previous contribution. The first contributor, Helen George, recognizes a strong bond between linguistics and applied linguistics, but views applied linguistics as the most coherent domain for the interdisciplinary research needed to study language loss and maintenance among the linguistic minorities who must preserve their cultural identities while trying to integrate into mainstream education. The second contributor, Catherine Pettinari, sees applied linguistics, with its focus on real-world oral and written language, as the medium through which the communication problems between "competing discourses," especially in the work place and in the web of social services, can be solved. The third contributor, Francisco Gomes de Matos, calls for applied linguistics to reduce its dependence on linguistics and set as its mission the empowerment of all "linguistically and culturally undervalued and exploited" human beings and the enhancement of "communicative peace" at all levels of society.

Helen George, *Department of TESL & Applied Linguistics, UCLA*

Because applied linguistics uses several different disciplines to describe and analyze language, it has a multi-dimensional nature that is difficult to define in one single all-encompassing statement. Applied linguistics, as an interdisciplinary study founded in linguistics, emanates from a core of

fundamental linguistic concepts and branches out into different areas of study. Linguistics provides the terminology and basic frame of reference which applied linguistics uses to varying extents to develop other perspectives on language. This makes it possible to examine language not just in terms of its structure but also in terms of other aspects such as cognitive processing, sociology of language, language planning, cross-cultural communication, and language teaching. Strands of interest radiate in different directions to weave together notions and concepts in varying patterns to create an understanding of language and its use. Since language is the focus, no matter how the research is designed, the speakers of the language are the crucial element, for at the center of the linguistic core stand the human users and producers of the language. Without the speakers, there is no language.

For Navajo speakers, language is not just a conceptual tool for communication but a spiritual gift to designate a people's unique existence. The concatenation of sounds create physical symbols for deriving meaning and forming concepts to establish the existence of things, including one's own existence. Language is powerful. It is Life, itself. Yet, because of language loss today, the existence of the Diné (Navajo) is being threatened. Over the past 125 years, the Navajo people have had to deal with a stream of disruptive cultural changes. The ensuing disorder in their traditional society is forcing Navajos to redefine existence and survival in a modern technological world. One critical facet of that endeavor is language survival.

That is where applied linguistics appears as the relevant discipline for research, because it provides a medium for understanding and describing people and language. The linguistics core allows the researcher to describe the structure of the language; ideas from education provide the tools for language teaching and curriculum development; and identified components in language planning provide the framework for planning native language maintenance and teaching academic English in the school systems. Thus, the diversified nature of applied linguistics makes it possible to account for the complexity of language while also providing practical application for social language needs.

Catherine Pettinari, ***Institute of Maternal and Child Health, Wayne State University***

Applied linguistics has too often been recognized as related to the language teaching enterprise in one way or another. It is interesting that, although there are a "multiplicity of the tools in language and of the ways they are used" (Wittgenstein, 1958, p. 13), applied linguistics has defined itself as primarily related to language teaching and learning. Yet, in thinking about the problems of modern society, many applied linguists easily see them as language and/or text problems or as problems which can be observed, diagnosed, and solved through conversation and/or text. A problem for health care providers, for example, is how to obtain information in a limited time period from women who "touch the system" only briefly and who have little motivation (often justified) to provide information which may be crucial to their future health. A problem for those dealing with policy-makers is how to frame their requests--or

construct a narrative--in ways to ensure effective results. The challenge to applied linguistics in real-life situations is thus to develop ways of systematically and relevantly confronting language and communication problems with the many analytical tools we have to explore the features of oral and written language, as well as to construct solutions with those who must live and work with "competing discourses" (Weedon, 1987) on a daily basis. A new applied linguistics in the workplace must put these issues into prominent focus.

Francisco Gomes de Matos, *Departamento de Letras, Universidade Federal de Pernambuco*

What is applied linguistics? Applied linguistics is an interdisciplinarily-oriented domain, still too narrowly based and dependent on linguistics, aimed at a deeper understanding of human linguistic interactions in varied contexts and at exploring ways for helping improve the quality of human communicative growth and development. When I stress the *still strong dependency on linguistics,* that is my perception of the field as universally (and also locally) practiced. A more broadly-based field could become a broadly-practiced activity.

What should applied linguistics be? I'd rather use *could* than *should*, so as to avoid a possible reading of something *imposed, dogmatic, thought to be/expected to be*, quite typical of Western educational traditions. Applied linguistics could become a field committed and dedicated to an in-depth, open-ended, permanent, universal (rather than predominantly Anglo-American or European-centered) search for an interdisciplinary understanding and/or solution of individual and collective communicative problems in the acquisition, learning, teaching, and uses of languages by human beings in varied and variable contexts. Such a field would be the outcome of integrated insights, principles, and research findings of arts and sciences and other types of human creations related to or with a realistic interest in language and languages. Another crucial mission for applied linguists could be that of helping to contribute to a more critical, comprehensive preparation of applied linguists as new constructors and transformers of sociocultural, political realities through the means of linguistic expression and communication. That so many human beings are being linguistically and culturally undervalued and exploited also merits a high priority attention by applied linguists.

Doing applied linguistics thus calls first and foremost for a strong determination to be at the service of fellow human beings (learners, literates-to-be, persons having speech or reading/writing disorders, language minority students, etc.) so as to help them as language acquirers, learners, and users, and especially to enhance a much needed communicative peace at the individual, community, and international levels.

V. Philosophical Views of Applied Linguistics

A different point of departure is taken by the following two contributors who explore to what extent applied linguistics can be classified as an "applied" field of inquiry. The first, Elinor Ochs, suggests that since applied disciplines can eventually generate theoretical insights, applied linguistics may be evolving into a more theoretical interdisciplinary field whose methods and explanations are challenging existing hypotheses from more isolated and idealized approaches to language. The second contributor, Joel Walters, compares applied linguistics to Aristotelian notions of theoretical, productive, and practical science and concludes that most of the subfields of applied linguistic inquiry are not classifiable as productive or practical science.

Elinor Ochs, *Department of TESL and Applied Linguistics, UCLA*

In all disciplines, intellectual activity revolves around articulation of central problems and proposed resolutions or accounts. In applied fields, the central problems tend to involve objects situated in the everyday world, and the procedures for resolving problems tend to be drawn from some particular field or fields of inquiry. The history of modern scholarship is one in which applied fields have developed such fascinating insights that they have become independent theoretical fields in their own right. Thus applied mathematics has developed into the fields of physics, biology, engineering, economy, computer science, and linguistics among others. One way of looking at this is to say that one field's application (e.g., mathematics) is another field's theory (e.g., linguistics). Another way of looking at this is to say that theories evolve out of application. Within this perspective, applications may challenge existing hypotheses and necessitate novel ways of understanding nature.

What then of applied linguistics? Parallel to the course of events just outlined, applied linguistics is rapidly evolving into a yet unnamed field. Its synthetic application of linguistics, anthropology, sociology, psychology, and neurobiology to the study of language-related problems in the world 1) reveals the inadequacies of any one field to handle the complexities of situated language problems, 2) promotes fresh ways of proceeding with data, and 3) produces new explanations of language use, language acquisition, and language change that challenge more reductionist approaches to language.

Joel Walters, *Department of English, Bar-Ilan University*

In rejecting the Platonic view of a unified, inseparable Science, Aristotle became the founder of the tradition separating Science into branches on the basis of subject matter. In the *Metaphysics* (Book I) (Aristotle/McKeon, 1970), he distinguishes among theoretical, productive, and practical science (see

also Aristotle's *Foundations of Scientific Thought*/Gershenson & Greenberg, 1963). Theology, physical science, and mathematics are specified as the three branches of theoretical science. Productive science is considered art, craft, or technique; its object is that a product "should be of a certain character" (Aristotle/Joachim, 1955, p.12). Practical science is like a prescription for behavior, its focus centered on acting and action, in particular, "doing things in a certain way" (Aristotle/Joachim, 1955, p.12). For Aristotle aesthetics is productive, while ethics is practical. Modern philosophy, in contrast, treats these fields as theoretical in the fullest sense of the term (Aristotle/Joachim, 1955). Similarly, studies in language acquisition (first or second), stylistics, language variation, brain-language relations, reading, composition, etc. all conform to Aristotle's speculative, explanation-seeking, contemplative criteria for theoretical science. Each of these branches of linguistics delineates a domain for study; each is interested in causes and/or properties of a phenomenon; and each, to a greater or lesser extent, uses principles (Gr.: *archai*) to draw conclusions (Randall, 1960).

Given these criteria and distinctions, only the language teaching branch of applied linguistics qualifies as productive or practical. Teaching methodologies, materials development, and test construction are crafts or techniques not unlike medicine and engineering. Once they are subject to examination, however (e.g., for their linguistic or cognitive bases), they leave the realm of the practical/productive. This is not to say that they pass automatically into the domain of theoretical science. Aristotle defines science as "demonstration from true principles," which involves identification and dialectical examination of those principles, collection of data (by a methodology which emerges from the subject matter), and, finally, explanation of the phenomenon (Randall, 1960, pp. 48-58). Thus, following Jarvie's (1986) argument that "applied science . . . is far more like pure science than it is like invention," it is suggested here that applied linguistics may be more theoretical than applied.

VI. (Re)analyzing Applied Linguistics

Our final contributor, Emanuel Schegloff, proposes a definition of applied linguistics which is radically different from the other contributions since it includes a consideration which we did not raise: Who is an applied linguist? This approach effectively deconstructs our original exercise and forces all of us to reconsider what it is we do.

Emanuel A. Schegloff, *Department of Sociology, UCLA*

In one common view, there are things called "languages" and, across their variation, a faculty (in a now almost archaic sense of that word) for language *per se*, or Language with a capital "L." It is composed of some sort of grasp or *knowledge*, in the abstract, of the various elements of Language and the

particular realization of those elements for particular languages. Professional students of Language, and of particular languages as embodiments of this view, are Linguists, and their discipline--Linguistics--has as its central undertaking the formulation of an account of the knowledge which *defines* a language, or Language.

In this view, "applied linguistics," if it exists at all, is concerned with the application of linguistics to practical problems, such as helping people to learn languages, to overcome problems in speaking or understanding, or to adapt language for specialized uses. "Applied linguists" (in this view) are professionals who "apply" what is known (by Linguistics) about Language to these specific settings or undertakings. Applied linguistics, then, is the application by one group of professionals of the knowledge developed about Language/language by another group of professionals.

Might we explore another version, or vision? If there is something like the Linguist's notion of a principled or abstract grasp of Language, its first-order graspers are its practitioners, that is, those who *employ it* in the first instance (rather than those who are *employed to study it*). If there is a "faculty" for language, then it is not in universities, but in *practitioners*, that is, those who practice. By "practicing" I mean here exercising a knowledge-based skill, as in "practicing medicine," rather than upgrading or maintaining one's skill, as in "practicing the piano." In this sense, "applied linguists" refers to the ordinary users of a language, the ordinary members of a society or culture who, in the first instance, have knowledge of (the) Language and who apply that knowledge to do the things they ordinarily (or extraordinarily) do with it. Every moment and act of talking, hearing, writing, reading, etc. are moments in which the resources of language are applied to some practical activity. Virtually everyone is, then, an "applied linguist."

What then is applied linguistics? Perhaps it is the study of what applied linguists do, and how they do it. *Applied linguistics* might then, in a peculiar twist with a double sense, be better termed *the study of applied linguistics*.

CONCLUSION

Many of the responses to our Roundtable suggest that "applied linguistics" may not be the most appropriate name for our field, burdened as it is with associations and expectations which derive more from its past than its future. For the present, as a number of contributors maintain, the field of applied linguistics has become a nexus for knowledge which heretofore was isolated in separate domains of inquiry but which inevitably had to come together if the complexities of human language and interaction were ever to be understood. To be applied linguists necessarily demands, therefore, that we develop expertise in more than one subfield of the

study of language. In addition, as several contributions have stressed, this interdisciplinary imperative challenges us to translate our interest in real-world language into an agenda for understanding and solving real-world sociopolitical problems. The responses to this Roundtable reflect, in various ways, an awareness of one or both of these important concerns. The identity of our field may lie, therefore, not only in agreeing to be unified in our diversity but also in realizing what our unified diversity can contribute to the world.

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Notes

[1]Some of the contributions have been shortened and edited due to space constraints.

[2]Marianne Celce-Murcia kindly provided us with a copy of the definition of applied linguistics as stated in the official departmental review (1990). The faculty members who authored this joint statement were Roger Andersen, Lyle Bachman, Donna Brinton, Russ Campbell, Marianne Celce-Murcia, Brian Lynch, and John Schumann.

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