Linguistics and Other Disciplines

Prof. Israa Burhanuddin Abdurrahman (PhD)

israaburhan@tu.edu.iq

Tikrit University

College of Education for Women

Department of English

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(Linguistics)

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1- Psycholinguistics

This science is concerned with the influence of psychological matters on language use and learning. It is the sub-field of linguistics whose goal is to discover the psychological principles that underlie the ability of humans to comprehend, produce and acquire language (e.g., the first language acquisition). It is concerned with the study of human behaviour and language. Its main interest is the relation between language and thinking.

2- Sociolinguistics

It has attracted great interest in the recent years because of the way in which its concerns relate to contemporary social problems. It is the science concerned with the influence of social matters on language use and learning (accent, dialect, behavior, morals and clothes). In other words, it is a branch of linguistics which studies all aspects of the relationship language and society. It deals with the study of such matters as the linguistic identity of social groups (such as the language of minority group like the language of immigrants), social attitudes to language, formal and informal, standard and non-standard forms of language, the patterns and needs of national language use, social varieties and levels of language (the way language varies between people of different regional, social and professional backgrounds, the difference between male and female language and so on).

3- Philosophical Linguistics

A little-developed branch of linguistics which studies, on the one hand, the role of language in relation to the understanding and explanation of

philosophical concepts and, on the other hand, the philosophical status of linguistic theories, methods and observations, e.g., philosophical grammar (national grammar as opposed to descriptive grammar) and in semantics, it studies things like the truth conditions and linguistics, language and logic, etc.

4- Anthropological Linguistics

Anthropology is the science of beginning, developments, customs and beliefs of Mankind. Anthropological Linguistics is a branch of linguistics which studies language variation and use in relation to the cultural patterns and beliefs of man as investigated using the theories and methods of anthropology, e.g., it studies the way in which linguistic features may identify a member of a community (usually primitive) with a social, religious, occupational or kinship group.

5- Stylistics

Traditionally, stylistic analysis has been mainly concerned with analysis of literary style or the language variety characteristic of a writer. More recently, emphasis has been shifted to the linguistic description of 8 the utterance itself in terms of its components and characteristic deviations from the standard language and other studies. In its most general sense, stylistics refers to the application of linguistic techniques to the study of particular kinds of language current within a given speech community such as the language of science, of law, of religion, of literature or the language of different social classes. There are many different 'varieties' or 'styles' of language that we use in the appropriate situations. Stylistics studies which variety of speech or writing is appropriate to which situation and tries to develop our awareness and control of these variations. It shows us what is going on in a particular use of language.

6- Language Teaching

It concerns all educational theory and practice including instruction in both the native language and the foreign language. Traditionally, languages were taught by grammar-translation method and by reading literature. Recently, there has been a trend towards increased and more efficient modern language teaching. Contemporary methods concentrate more on the practice of actual skills such as comprehension, conversation, speaking, reading, etc. These days a great deal of attention is paid to the communicative aspects in teaching.

7- Applied Linguistics

Applied linguistics refers to the application of linguistic methodology, techniques of analysis and research findings to some nonlinguistic fields. Linguistics, in this sense, is thus very much a means to some end, rather than an end in itself. This term has been used mainly as a synonym with foreign language teaching, but several other fields of application have emerged in recent years. These include the linguistic analysis of language disorder (clinical 9 linguistics), the use of language in mother tongue education (Educational Linguistics) and development in lexicography (the art and science of dictionary making) and translation. There are many such fields and there is still much work to be done.

8- Communication Engineering

A branch of linguistics which deals with the application of the information theory to communication, i.e., the passing of messages from a source to receiver via a channel.

9- Ethnolinguistics

The study of language in relation to culture-taking 'culture' in the sense in which it is used in anthropology and more generally in the social sciences (here culture presupposes society and society in turn depends on culture).

10- Mathematical Linguistics

Refers to a number of applications of mathematical models and procedures to linguistic studies. It begins with the counting of linguistic units such as phonemes or vocabulary items.

11- Computational Linguistics

A branch of language studies which applies computer techniques to linguistic and literary research, e.g., in word-frequency counts and other fields requiring statistical analysis, such as machine translation and speech recognition.

The Uses, Applications and Advantages of Linguistics

There are various applications and advantages that one could point to concerning linguistic study:

1- Machine Translation

It refers to the automatic production of a translation by computer or similar machine. The machine programme must contain rules to analyze the original text in the source language and to find grammatical and lexical equivalents contained in its dictionary store, and to synthesis a new version of the original text in the target language. Fully automatic high-quality translation has proved a very difficult and expensive operation, but research in this field has contributed to progress in linguistic analysis.

2- Telecommunication

In its many forms Phonetics is extremely important in the field of telephone transmission. It costs money to send voices along wires, and if one can cut down on the amount of voice which needs to be transmitted, there would be a very great saving. The linguistic problem is therefore to determine which features of speech are essential for acceptability and which are not. Thus, many researches on this work are still going on.

3- Linguistic Information and Mechanical Techniques

Many applications of linguistic information to mechanical techniques can be seen such as: a. A new kind of 'visual-deaf-aid' could be produced using information obtained from acoustic phonetics, b. Another machine is called a 'sound spectrograph' which can produce a picture of speech sounds, though this picture is very complex and difficult to read. Thus, different sounds could be produced as a series of easily recognizable shapes. Then, one can turn speech directly into a kind of writing. One can speak into

microphone and the picture of what one says comes on to the screen. Deaf people once they had learnt this new 'alphabet' would then be able to read the speech directly.

Note: It has been claimed that the pictures of speech produced by the sound spectrograph contain information which will allow us, if trained, to identify the speakers. It is claimed that it is possible to pick out from ten sentences spoken by five people which sentences were produced by the same people. Some courts in the USA have accepted evidence based on information derived from these pictures of speech (or voiceprints) on the analogy of fingerprints.

4- Linguistics and Speech Pathology

A rapidly developing relationship exists between linguistics and the field of speech pathology. There are many kinds of language disorder involving both the way in which we produce speech and the way in which we receive and comprehend it. Before any kind of therapy, there must be a clear picture of exactly what the linguistic deficiency is, and how far removed it is from normality. Is it a disorder of a phonetic, phonological, grammatical or sematic nature or some combination of these? Linguists do not attempt to do the therapists job. They simply try to put at their disposal precise information about the linguistic state they are trying to help their patients to achieve.