

Introduction Linguistic studies seek in the first place to understand the nature of language by following scientific methodology. Many other linguists delineate the new scope of the field in a similar way: "The theoretical and empirical investigation of real-world problems in which language is a central issue" (Brumfit, 1997, p. 93) "The study of language and linguistics in relation to practical problems" (Richards & Schmidt, 2002) "Applied Linguistics is using what we know about (a) language, (b) how it is learned, and (c) how it is used, in order to achieve some purpose or solve some problem in the real world" (Schmitt & CelceMurcia, 2002, p. 1). In this perspective, the theoretical knowledge does not come only from linguistics (although linguistics is the most important source) but can originate from other language-related fields, such as biology, cultural studies, economics, education, philosophy, politics, sociology, psychology, anthropology, and information theory among others. This makes applied linguistics eclectic and interdisciplinary. The areas which may benefit from applied linguistic work are increasingly getting wider and wider. Examples of such problem fields include, but are not limited, to the following: language learning/ acquisition, language teaching, syllabus design, literacy, language contact, language policy and planning, language assessment, language use, language and technology, translation and interpretation, language pathology (speech therapy), lexicography (dictionary making), stylistics, sociolinguistics, critical discourse analysis, bilingualism, deaf education, forensic linguistics.

Conclusion The double definition of applied linguistics may seem to be somewhat unnecessary. However, its relevance is unquestioned because it essentially tells us about how applied linguistics has developed over the years as an academic subject. One should not assume that there is a definite separation between the two senses of applied linguistics today. It is important to know that for many, "applied linguistics" is still used as an alternative term to TEFL, showing disagreement with the broader view.

I. Nature of Applied Linguistics

Wie (2014) states that "Applied Linguistics can mean different things to different people, even among those who would describe themselves as Applied Linguists" (p.2). Starting from this statement one can understand that there is some fuzziness surrounding the nature of this discipline. However, there is a common core in defining it. Applied linguistics involves essentially the exploitation of theories (originating from linguistics and other disciplines) to handle issues in multiple areas of language use. Applied linguistics is applied in nature since it uses information from theoretical disciplines in order to develop its own models. It mediates between language-related disciplines and professional practice. The sense of this term has undergone some change in line with the continuous expansions of research in this discipline. Groom and Littlemore (2011) explain how it started with a narrow focus and ended as a wideranging discipline.

II. The Narrow Sense

In the narrow sense (which is the oldest sense), it is restricted only to the study of second and foreign language learning and teaching. At its inception in the second half of the 20th century (1950s), applied linguistics focused mainly on questions related to learning and teaching of foreign languages and was meant directly at experienced language teachers wishing to do a master's degree for reasons of professional progress. At that time, programmes in applied linguistics were limited to courses on pedagogical issues such as curriculum, syllabus and materials design, language teaching methodology, classroom management and language skills, jointly with courses on pronunciation, language testing, teacher education and so on. Linguistics, in this sense, seems to be the main contributing theoretical discipline.

III. The Broad Sense

The traditional sense has

now given way to a vaster signification. In its current usage it refers to using knowledge about language to solve language problems in a wider range of areas. For example, Grabe (2002) mentions some of the concerns of applied linguistics in this new outlook: "The focus of applied linguistics is on trying to resolve language-based problems that people encounter in the real world, whether they be learners, teachers, supervisors, academics, lawyers, service providers, those who need social services, test takers, policy developers, dictionary makers, translators, or a whole range of business clients" (p.9). This pure interest in learning about all the micro- and macro- aspects of language (structure, use, learning and interplay with other phenomena) is accompanied with a more practically oriented interest. The latter involves finding ways to use the accumulated theoretical body of knowledge in some realistic way to resolve real life problems involving language. With this orientation to treating language-related issues, applied linguistics is contrasted with theoretical linguistics. Nevertheless, it is safe to say that the broader view of the field sketched out above is becoming more and more frequently recognized at present.