

The Role of Linguistic in English Language Teaching

Nancy Putri Utami*

Magister Tadris Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

Corresponding author's email: nancyputri.utami@uinsu.ac.id

Abstract

Linguistics is required in English language teachers since it assists teachers in explaining to pupils the English components and structures. Every language has a linguistic system or norms that may be learnt in terms of phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. English language teachers, on the other hand, should be integrated with other subjects such as psychology, education- cognitive science, anthropology, language acquisition, sociology, bilingualism, and language teaching. Knowing the students is critical for teachers in order to establish suitable classroom environments. The teachers must be compassionate and patient with their students, and must be able to put themselves in their shoes. In general, the goal of English teachers is to prepare students to communicate effectively and eloquently in both spoken and written formats. To accomplish this goal, the teachers must recognize that pupils are not blank slates waiting to be filled with information. The teachers can serve as a coach, mediator, or consultant, but they must allow pupils to explore, ask questions, and share their opinions. Teaching English as a foreign language necessitates a wide range of skills and tactics. An English teacher is supposed to be familiar with the pupils and the teaching objectives, as well as the subject matter, certain teaching methods, and a broad general knowledge. Furthermore, in order to be a good role model for their students, English teachers must be very motivated in their work.

Keywords: linguistics; English; teaching

INTRODUCTION

Language is a way of expressing one's thoughts and feelings. Everyone requires language to survive and advance in life. Some people solely speak their native language and have little contact with others. Many people, however, attempt to study or acquire different languages in order to achieve greater success in life. English was picked as one of the languages because of its strategic role in the globe.

Millions of people study English as a second or foreign language since it is the most widely spoken language in the world. In this regard, attempts have been made to improve the effectiveness of English instruction. English language instruction has grown in importance as a means of preparing people to utilize the language both orally and in writing.

Chomsky stated at a recent conference of language teachers that linguists never intend to address the problems of teaching a language because their task is simply to observe, study, and try to formulate the rules or description of how people actually speak.

English is taught in Indonesia beginning in elementary school and continuing through university. It is a prerequisite for admission to a higher level of study. Particularly for graduate and postgraduate courses. The role of English in worldwide trade, business, and tourism has grown in importance. We may undoubtedly argue that English has become the world's language. Many individuals all around the world want to study English in order to thrive in numerous sectors, notably in higher education.

Teachers should not study a science only for the pleasure of studying it, but rather strive to get as much profit as possible from it. For example, an English teacher who studies chemistry does so not only for the purpose of chemistry or his or her skills in that discipline, but rather to gain as much advantage as possible from it and to address his or her difficulties.

With this in mind, let us now consider some prospective linguistic contributions to English education. Linguistic knowledge will be more valuable for English teachers in finding a good technique of teaching it.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Linguistic

According to Brinton (2000: 10), "Linguistics is defined as the study of language systems." Language systems relate to four components: phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. Brinton claims that each of the four parts (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics) has its own language system. The system learns based on each piece.

Meyer (2009: 2), on the other hand, claims that "the study of language is conducted within the field of linguistics." Similarly, Crystal (2010: 239) states, "Linguistics is the science of language." Linguists are those who study language in this manner." Meyer and Crystal both believe that language is the fundamental element in linguistics that will separate them and develop science investigations. Because the language is so big, all languages throughout the world have many elements in common, according to Brinton's perspective of the system. In this way, the system is similar to a collection of pieces that will eventually combine to form a complete language.

According to Hornby, Gatenby, and Wakefield (1961: 733), as stated in Pateda (2011: 1), "Linguistics as an adjective 'of the study of language and languages' whereas linguistic word as a noun 'the science of language'; 'methods of learning; and 'studying languages'." Linguist (N) is defined as "a person who is skilled in foreign languages." They meant two-word classes, adjective and noun, as defined by the concept of linguistic, one for learning about languages and the other for understanding of language itself.

In other words, linguistics is the study of language itself, namely how the structure of language, such as sounds, words, and sentences, may be constructed in written or oral form. The five branches of linguistic science are phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Learning linguistics necessitates

knowledge of language theory. Linguistics teaches about how language works and how it is used, created, and maintained across time. To put it another way, linguistics is the fundamental component that focuses on studying the structure of language.

Linguistics in Language Teaching

The importance of linguistics in language education cannot be overstated. According to Carter (1982), a language instructor who understands the structure of language would be able to advise his students in their choice of vocabulary and grammar structures. It should be emphasized that not every teacher is required to become a skilled field linguist with expertise in comparative theoretical methods. Without a background in linguistics, it would be very difficult for a teacher using linguistic-based materials to either elaborate on them, or repeat the linguist's formula in new material, or capitalize on points raised during discussion, or to maintain a coherent line of description.

Linguistics' primary purpose in language instruction is to generate accurate descriptions of languages. Language instruction has benefited from the description of human language sounds at the linguistic levels of phonetics and phonology. The importance of speech in language instruction may be linked to structural linguistics' impact, as well as an interest in the descriptive study of spoken language. Phonetics analyzes speech sounds in general, independent of language, whereas phonology investigates the sound system of a specific language. Phonetics can be useful in pronunciation teaching (oral) because it gives the language instructor a diagnostic understanding of how speech is formed. Phonology is required to comprehend what makes up a language's sound system and how the sounds are internalized by speakers for communication.

According to Corder (1973), in the subject of applied linguistics, the relevance of linguistics to language education is indirect, and it is not the linguist's responsibility to determine what relevance it may have. The relationship between linguistic theory and the actual teaching materials is indirect. Linguistic theory cannot offer the criteria for selecting, arranging, or presenting a teaching program's material on its own. The content of a syllabus, on the other hand, is determined by theoretical linguistic, sociolinguistic, and psycholinguistic criteria.

Corder proposed that theoretical linguistics provide a distinctive contribution to language education. He defines three orders of application in which theoretical linguistics principles are utilized to analyze language data, culminating to the definition of the second language. The selection of goods is determined by the second order applications on this basis. Such choices will be aided by contrastive analysis (which compares L1 and L2 to identify differences that are likely to cause difficulty for the learner) and error analysis (which identifies learner errors and compares them to the L2), yielding an inventory from which the linguistic content of the syllabus and teaching materials can be determined at the third-order or level of application.

METHOD

In this research, the author uses library research, which is a series of activities related to library data collection methods. According to Abdul Rahman Sholeh, library research is research that uses ways to obtain information data by placing facilities in

libraries such as books, magazines, documents, records of historical stories or pure library research related to the object of research.

According to M. Nazir, literature study is a data collection technique by conducting a study of books, literature, notes, and reports that have to do with the problem being solved. Literature study is an important step where after a researcher determines the research topic, the next step is to conduct a study related to the theory and research topic. In searching for theories, researchers will collect as much information as possible from related literature. Literature sources can be obtained from books, journals, magazines, research results (theses and dissertations), and other appropriate sources (internet, newspapers, etc.). When researchers have obtained relevant literature, it is immediately organized for use in research. Therefore, literature study includes general processes such as systematically identifying theories, finding literature, and analysing documents containing information related to the research topic with the research topic.

FINDINGS

In the field of English Language Teaching (ELT), the study of linguistics plays a crucial role in understanding and effectively teaching the English language. Linguistics in ELT focuses on the scientific analysis of language and its components, including its structure, sound system, grammar, vocabulary, and discourse. Linguistics plays a fundamental role in ELT by providing a scientific understanding of language structure, supporting accurate language instruction, facilitating error analysis, promoting language awareness, and guiding curriculum development. It empowers teachers to make informed decisions, address learners' language needs effectively, and promote language acquisition in the classroom

DISCUSSION

Understanding Language Structure

Linguistics enables teachers to comprehend the intricate structure of the English language. By studying phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics, teachers gain a deep understanding of how sounds, words, and grammar function in English. This knowledge allows educators to identify common errors and challenges faced by learners, enabling them to design targeted instructional strategies.

The concept of linguistics refers to the scientific study of language and its structure. Linguists examine various aspects of language, including its sounds (phonetics and phonology), word formation and meaning (morphology and semantics), sentence structure (syntax), and language use in context (pragmatics). Linguistics seeks to understand how languages are structured, how they are acquired and used by individuals, and how they evolve and change over time.

a. Phonetics

Phonetics focuses on the physical properties of sounds in human language. It examines how sounds are produced, transmitted, and perceived, including the study of articulation (how sounds are formed using the vocal organs), acoustic properties (the physical properties of sound waves), and auditory perception.

b. Phonology

Phonology investigates the way sounds function and pattern in a particular language or languages. It studies the organization of sounds into meaningful units (phonemes) and the rules governing their distribution and pronunciation. Phonological analysis helps explain how sounds interact and how they are used to convey meaning in specific languages.

c. Morphology

Morphology explores the internal structure of words and how they are formed. It examines morphemes, which are the smallest units of meaning in language. Morphology analyzes how morphemes combine to form words and how word forms change through processes like inflection (adding affixes for tense, number, etc.) and derivation (creating new words through affixation).

d. Syntax

Syntax focuses on the structure and arrangement of words to form meaningful sentences. It investigates the rules governing word order, sentence structure, phrase formation, and the relationships between words and phrases. Syntax helps understand how sentences are constructed and how meanings are conveyed through the organization of words.

e. Semantics

Semantics studies the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences. It examines how meaning is constructed and conveyed in language, including the relationships between words, the interpretation of ambiguous sentences, and the connection between language and the world. Semantics explores various aspects of meaning, such as lexical semantics (word meaning) and compositional semantics (meaning derived from the combination of words).

e. Pragmatics

Pragmatics investigates how language is used in context and how meaning is inferred beyond the literal interpretation of words and sentences. It explores how speakers convey meaning through implied messages, shared knowledge, social norms, and situational context. Pragmatics examines factors such as speech acts, conversational implicature, presupposition, and the interpretation of meaning based on the speaker's intentions and the listener's understanding.

Linguistics plays a crucial role in understanding language acquisition, language processing, language variation and change, and cross-cultural communication. It provides valuable insights into the complexity and diversity of human language and helps us better comprehend the structure and function of the various languages spoken around the world.

Enhancing Language Awareness

Language awareness plays a pivotal role in our daily lives, shaping our communication, cognition, and cultural interactions. By fostering a deep understanding of language structure, its nuances, and its social implications, individuals can enhance their linguistic competence and engage in more effective and meaningful communication. This article explores the concept of enhancing language awareness, its significance, and the various ways it can be developed, drawing on relevant research and scholarly works.

Language awareness refers to the conscious understanding and knowledge of language, encompassing its structure, functions, and sociocultural aspects. It

empowers individuals to recognize and appreciate the intricacies of language, thereby facilitating effective communication and promoting cultural sensitivity. Language awareness enables individuals to navigate linguistic diversity, comprehend different registers and styles, and adapt their language use to various contexts.

In the realm of education, enhancing language awareness is crucial for both teachers and students. Educators can incorporate language awareness activities into their curriculum to promote metalinguistic reflection and develop students' understanding of language structure. By engaging in tasks such as analyzing texts, exploring language variation, and examining language in social contexts, students can develop a deeper appreciation for the power and nuances of language.

Language learners can benefit immensely from activities that enhance their language awareness. By studying grammar, syntax, and semantics, learners gain insights into the underlying principles of the target language. They can engage in tasks such as analyzing authentic texts, engaging in language-based discussions, and practicing critical thinking about language use. These activities help learners develop a more comprehensive understanding of the language they are studying and improve their overall proficiency.

Language awareness goes beyond the structural aspects of language and extends into the sociocultural. Using authentic materials in language learning, participating in language-based discussions, and promoting language reflection through writing and self-assessment. These strategies help individuals develop a more profound understanding of language and its multifaceted nature.

Enhancing language awareness is a transformative process that empowers individuals to navigate the complexities of language, foster effective communication, and promote cultural understanding. By embracing language as a powerful tool, individuals can develop a deep appreciation for linguistic diversity and engage in meaningful interactions across cultures. Language awareness nurtures lifelong learning and opens doors to new opportunities for personal, academic, and professional growth.

Informing Language Teaching Methodologies

Linguistic theories and research provide valuable insights into how individuals acquire language skills, which enables teachers to develop appropriate instructional techniques. For example, understanding the principles of second language acquisition helps teachers create immersive environments, incorporate meaningful input, and design engaging activities that facilitate language learning.

Language teaching methodologies play a crucial role in the process of imparting language skills to learners. Over the years, linguistic research has significantly contributed to the development of effective language teaching methods and approaches. By analyzing the underlying structures and functions of languages, linguistics provides valuable insights into how languages are learned, processed, and produced.

Linguistics plays a vital role in informing language teaching methodologies. Through its various branches, linguistics provides valuable insights into the structure, usage, and acquisition of languages. Phonetics and phonology, morphology and syntax, semantics and pragmatics, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics all contribute to the development of effective language teaching

methods. By incorporating linguistic research into their pedagogical practices, language teachers can enhance their instructional approaches and facilitate effective language learning experiences for their students.

Addressing Learner Needs

Linguistics enables teachers to identify and address learners' specific needs. By analyzing learners' errors, language variation, and interlanguage development, teachers can personalize instruction and provide targeted feedback. Linguistic analysis helps educators diagnose language difficulties, adjust lesson plans, and develop remedial strategies to cater to individual learner differences effectively.

Developing Language Materials

Linguistics contributes to the development of language teaching materials. By applying linguistic knowledge, teachers can design authentic and meaningful materials that align with learners' language proficiency levels. Linguistics aids in creating language exercises, textbooks, and multimedia resources that focus on the language aspects most relevant to learners' needs, ensuring their engagement and progress.

Fostering Language Research and Professional Development

Linguistics fosters research and professional development in the field of ELT. By staying informed about linguistic advancements and research findings, teachers can continually update their teaching practices and adapt to evolving language learning needs. Linguistic research also informs the creation of innovative teaching approaches and materials, promoting effective language instruction.

CONCLUSION

Linguistics plays a vital role in English language teaching by providing teachers with a comprehensive understanding of language structure, enhancing language awareness, informing teaching methodologies, addressing learner needs, developing language materials, and fostering research and professional development. By leveraging linguistic knowledge, educators can design more effective instructional strategies, improve learner outcomes, and foster language proficiency in their students. Incorporating linguistics into English language teaching ensures a pedagogical approach rooted in scientific insights, empowering both teachers and learners in their language acquisition journey.

REFERENCES

- Brinton, L. J. (2000). *The Structure of Modern English: A Linguistic Introduction (Vol.1)*. Vancouver: John Benjamins Publishing <https://doi.org/10.1075/z.94>.
- Celce, M. M., Brinton, D. M., & Goodwin, J. M. (2020). *Teaching Pronunciation: A Course Book and Reference Guide (3rd ed)*. Cambridge University Press.
- Cook, G. (2008). *Language Awareness. The State of the Art*. Routledge.
- Crystal, D. (2010). Discovering Grammar. In D. Crystal, *A Little Book of Language* (pp. 34-39). Yale University Press. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1np8zv>.
- Gultom, E. (2015). Linguistics and English Language Teaching. *International Seminar on English Language and Teaching*, 125-129.
- Hawkins, E. W., & Buttery, P. (2002). *Awareness of Language: An Introduction*. Cambridge University Press.
- Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (2013). *How Languages are Learned (4th ed)*. Oxford University Press.

- Mahmud. (2011). *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan*. Bandung: Pustaka Setia.
- Meyer, C. F. (2009). *Introducing English Linguistics*. University of Massachusetts, Boston: Cambridge University Press <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511757822>.
- Nazir, M. (2003). *Metode Penelitian*. Jakarta: Ghalia Indonesia.
- Ossa, M. P. (2012, September 29). *eNotes Editorial*. Retrieved from What Is the Role of Educational Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching?: <https://www.enotes.com/homework-help/what-educational-applied-linguistic-discuss-its-362932>
- Richards, J. C. (2001). *Curriculum Development in Language Teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Schleppegrell, M. J., & Colombi, M. C. (2002). *Developing Advanced Literacy in First and Second Language: Meaning with Power*. Elbaum.
- Thornbury, S. (2019). *About Language: Tasks for Teachers of English (2nd ed)*. Cambridge University.
- Wallace, C. (1991). *Training Foreign Language Teachers: A Reflective Approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- Yuwono, A. (2015). The Role of Linguistic in Teaching of English. *Transformatika*, 94-106.