

Applied Linguistics and Language Teacher Education

Educational Linguistics

Volume 4

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Nat Bartels
Editor

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FOREWORD

Applied linguistics has a lot to offer language teachers. The field has produced a wealth of knowledge about language (KAL), from uses of a language's sound system to create meaning, to factors that affect language learning, to knowledge of how people structure conversations, to ways of using language to signal membership in particular language communities, among other issues. Courses on applied linguistics play a major and integral role in teacher education programs around the world and applied linguists are prominent in any discussion of language teacher education. However, any program conception, course, lesson plan, or interaction with learners of teaching can be seen as a theory of practice (van Lier, 1996); a theory of what language teachers need to know and what kind of learning experiences will help them develop this knowledge. Furthermore, while there has been much theoretical work on what teachers need to know about language and the role this knowledge might play in language teaching and learning to teach (e.g. Stern, 1983; Widdowson, 1990; Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1997; Fillmore & Snow, 2002), there has been little systematic research on the effect of applied linguistics instruction on language teachers' knowledge and practice (Bartels, 2002; Borg, 2003). Not only might the relationship between applied linguistics knowledge and language teaching be more complex than theorized, it is also possible that we are, unwittingly and with the best of intentions, imposing practices of the applied linguistics discourse community on language teachers during teacher education which are not helpful for the practice of language teaching (Bartels, 2003; Bolitho, 1987; Clarke, 1994), something I refer to as *linguistics imperialism* (Bartels, in press).

Therefore, if we want to (a) avoid a situation where applied linguists are colonizing (Gee, 1990) novice teachers, however well meaning, by requiring them to apprentice themselves to the field of applied linguistics rather than to language teaching, and (b) defend our status as an applied science and make contributions to research questions shared by other disciplines, it is important for applied linguists working in language teacher education to investigate their theories of practice in a rigorous and thorough manner. This book is meant as a beginning to such an endeavor. It presents 21 studies by applied linguists investigating their own theories about language teachers' knowledge and language teachers' learning and use of KAL in pre-service or in-service programs. The purpose of this book is to provide teachers of applied linguistics with (a) state of the art knowledge about and insights on applied linguistics and language teacher education, (b) the tools needed to research their own theories of practice, and (c) an insider perspective of how a wide variety of teachers of applied linguistics perceive and investigate their own theories of practice. In order to accomplish the last goal, every effort has been made to preserve project the individual voices of the researchers within the book. The authors have been asked not only to situate their studies within the needs of the research community, but also to make clear their own personal reasons for pursuing their research questions and to make clear what they learned from engaging in their research projects. Furthermore, the authors have been encouraged to use a personal

tone in their chapters and their personal preferences in terms of the type of English they use, subject headings, length of bibliography, etc. have been preserved.

Furthermore, while this volume focuses on the relationship between applied linguistics and learning to teach languages, this is a much broader issue. In most university settings applied linguists actively teach knowledge about language to prepare people for a variety of vocations and tasks. While language teaching may be the most significant vocation in terms of numbers, KAL is also used in preparing people to be translators, interpreters, lexicographers, journalists, editors, formulators of policy on language planning, as well as to help people learn to diagnose and treat language disorders, examine linguistic issues in legal cases, etc. Therefore, I would propose that we also need a subfield of applied linguistics, *Metalinguistics*, devoted to investigating and theorizing about the acquisition and use of knowledge about language when learning any kind of vocation or task. Thus, the contents of this book should not only be important for those interested in a deeper understanding of the role of applied linguistics in teacher education and ways of investigating this role; the research methods and results in this book can also be used as a foundation for those interested in other *metalinguistic* topics.

The book is organized into 5 parts, the first of which is the most heterogeneous. Chapter 1 (Bartels) presents a wide variety of research tools that can be used for studies of learning and use of applied linguistics knowledge. The next chapters look at the impact of a particular KAL teaching activity, mini-language lessons, on novice teachers' knowledge and conceptions about language learning (Angelova: chapter 2), the use of an internet-based questionnaire to investigate students' post-hoc attitudes towards a sociolinguistics course (Owens & Edwards: chapter 3), and the extent to which the roles of language analyst, user and teacher are integrated in a language-focused course addressed to future non-native EFL teachers (Cots & Arno: chapter 4).

Section 2 focuses on changes in teachers' conceptions, attitudes and intentions due to educational experiences focusing on writing (Villamil & Guerrero: chapter 5), language variation (Attardo & Brown: chapter 6; Riegelhaupt & Carrasco: chapter 7), discourse analysis (Balocco, Carvalho & Shepherd: chapter 8), and second language acquisition (Lo: chapter 9).

The studies in section 3 and 4 investigate how teachers use their KAL in teaching. The studies in section 3 use a variety of laboratory-type tasks (analyzing and providing feedback on learner language, lesson planning) to look at what expert and/or novice teachers know and can do with their KAL on syntax and vocabulary (Andrews & McNeill: chapter 10), content-based teaching and grammar (Bigelow & Ranney: chapter 11), phonetics and phonology (Gregory: chapter 12), and orthography (Xiao: chapter 13). In section 4, however, the studies focus on teachers' use of KAL during actual classroom teaching, focusing on systemic-functional linguistics (Burns & Knox: chapter 14), pragmatics (Yates & Wigglesworth: chapter 15; Chaves de Castro: chapter 16), syntax (Hislam & Cajkler: chapter 17), and L2 writing (McKenzie: chapter 18).

Section 5 presents studies which investigate the complexity of teachers' knowledge about applied linguistics and the complexity of the process of using this knowledge for language teaching. This section includes studies focusing on knowledge of grammar (Borg: chapter 19), discourse analysis (Belz: chapter 20), systemic-functional linguistics and L2 writing (Hazelrigg: chapter 21), as well as an entire MA program (Popko: chapter 22). The final chapter in the book (Bartels: chapter 23) summarizes the findings from these studies, analyzes them using research and perspectives from fields such as education and cognitive psychology, and poses questions for future investigation in this field.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge my appreciation to those who made this book possible. I would like to thank the contributors to this volume who not only invested significant amounts of time to design, carry out, and write up research projects related to the theme of the book, as well as giving feedback on each others' chapters, but who were also very patient with all the mistakes that their novice editor made during the whole, long process, despite the strenuous circumstances in their own lives. I would also like to thank Leo van Lier for his impromptu suggestion to take the idea of a proposed conference symposium and make it into a book. I am very grateful to Julie Kerekes, Jennifer Ewald, and Lara Hermans for reading some of the chapters and providing insightful feedback to the authors. In addition, the comments of the two anonymous outside readers were very helpful in helping the other contributors and myself to tighten the focus of the book. Charlynn Christensen deserves special thanks for doing much of the formatting of the book manuscript. I am grateful also to Trevor Warburton for his work on the index and final formatting of the book. Finally, I would like to thank Henrike, Franziska and Marika Bartels for tolerating my many absences caused by work on this book and for taking over many of my family chores so I could complete this book. I could have not have done it without you.

Nat Bartels
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