

The Changing Relationship Between Linguistics, Natural Language Processing, And Applied Linguistics

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ABSTRACT---It is no exaggeration to say that linguistics has undergone a renaissance with the rapid development of computers and the internet. Every aspect of linguistics has been affected by the application of this technology. In particular, the development of our understanding of natural language processing has achieved hitherto unimagined levels of mastery regarding natural language processing. Far more than a theoretical exploration, a new level of applied linguistics now ushers every aspect of linguistic knowledge to the task of processing and learning languages.

Keywords: *Software Linguistics, Applied Linguistics, E-Learning.*

I. COMPUTER-AIDED LANGUAGE LEARNING (CALL)

Computer-aided language learning (CALL) is a powerful example of the way linguistics has bridged the gap between the scholarly study of language in all its aspects, from vocabulary, to pronunciation, from syntax to semantics, from pragmatics to morphology, the use of CALL has revolutionized linguistics. The ultimate implementation of this new world of applied linguistics is represented by the sudden worldwide adoption of the World Wide Web. The internet allows CALL to enter scholarship, and pedagogy with an adroitness and joy that has not been previously experienced, for example, in foreign language classrooms.

Today, it is widely accepted that everyone must be technologically literate, and this has resulted in computers and the internet becoming an indispensable appendage to linguists, teachers, and students alike. The internet is routinely and commonly used for 'almost everything' including to perform searches for information, communicate with family and friends, conducting business negotiations, banking transactions, professional consultations, to buy all kinds of items and as a form of entertainment. Thus, the growing popularity of new technologies has led to its use in the field of linguistics and

education for what has been referred to as e-learning or CALL. Every aspect of linguistics has been touched by this trend.

CALL originated in the last century, when the first mainframe computers were introduced in some universities. Michael Levy, a theorist, defined it as "the search and study of applications for teaching and learning of languages."¹ For example, through the project PLATO (Programmed Logic for Automated Teaching Operations), initiated at the University of Illinois.

In 1960, thousands of computers around the world were networked for education, and this was a milestone in the first stage of CALL. However, except for that project, implementation was minimal until the 1980s. Over the past two decades, however, the picture has changed dramatically. Since the 1990s, according to Hubbard "the question is no longer whether to use the computer, but how."² This usage extends from specific uses of computers in campus classes to completely virtual courses.

II. CREATING NEW SUBFIELDS OF LINGUISTICS WITH COMPUTERS

In fact, CALL has itself become a proper subfield of linguistics - much more than a passing trend. CALL is now a linguistic field that investigates any use of computers in teaching and learning of second languages and foreign languages. Simons (2012, p. 3) goes so far as to consider it the new technology-based linguistics as a branch of science. It is multidisciplinary; it is influenced by disciplines such as linguistics, computer science,

¹ M. Levy, *Computer-assisted Language Learning: Context and Conceptualization*. Oxford University Press, 1997. p. 1.

² P. Hubbard, ed. *Computer Assisted Language Learning: Critical Concepts in Linguistics. Present Trends and Future Directions in CALL*. Routledge, 2009. p. 1.