

LINGUISTICS AND EFL TEACHING THEORIES : THE ‘BEST’ METHOD

Abbas Achmad Badib

The State University of Surabaya

Presented to the National Seminar on English as a Foreign Language

Organized by UNIROW, Tuban 7 May 2011

INTRODUCTION

This paper will address several issues or topics which are interrelated: (a) the comprehensive review of the developments or the evolutions of linguistic theories from the rather distant past, the past and the present, and the projected trends, (b) which of the linguistic theories have been adopted by the EFL teachers and the reasons and the reasons for adopting those theories, (c) the contributions and the dominant linguistic theories which have applied, including translation studies, to the process of teaching and learning as a foreign language, successful or not, and why, (d) whether the EFL teachers (applied linguists) could or could not catch up and cope with the developments of linguistic theories and the implications and consequences of failing, (e) the processes by which first, second and foreign languages and cultures are acquired, viewed from various theories, including biolinguistics/neurolinguistic, and (f) whether there is such a thing as the ‘best’ method.

The last part of this paper will look particularly at the impact of foreign language learning on (a) the quality of the language (sustainable, reduced or loss) and cultural achievements (sustainable or losing cultural identity) and (b) whether learning a foreign language, for example English, will reinforce our own cultural identity, both locally and nationally; thus learning a foreign culture which is built in the foreign language can help preserve our own cultural heritage, not necessarily sacrificing our own culture.

Judging from the position above we could expect that the Indonesian people who are mostly bilingual and multilingual could learn English without necessarily having allegiance to the foreign culture. Instead, learning English is expected to strengthen our being multilingual in which we become a group of global community with a distinct identity such as Singaporean English, Malaysian English, Australian English, Papua New Guinea English and so on. The challenge is now how to design or redesign the existing curriculum and the teaching material which suit our purposes to achieve the communicative competence in the widest sense.

The developments/evolutions of linguistic theories

This part discusses the overview of the developments or the evolutions of linguistic theories which began from a rather distant past, the past, recent past and the present condition. An interesting question to be raised is the future direction of linguistic theory whether (a) lexical semantics, discourse, and pragmatics will merge as functional unified theory, and (b) the vigorous feedback resulted from the empirical evidence provided by teachers.

This expectation is based on the fact that so far linguistic theories (linguists) and the developments of teaching and learning foreign languages (applied linguists) very often pursue their own interests and even move towards different directions. Since the focus of the two disciplines can, in fact, be regarded as having a similar object, the theoretical developments of the other can benefit their counter part.

Therefore this paper will examine the historical developments of linguistic theories rather comprehensively by which we can learn which one(s) of the linguistic theories have been dominant and influential in the teaching and learning foreign languages. Thus we can witness a wider perspective of the connectedness between the linguistic theories and the language teaching and learning from the distant past to the present. This is meant to allow us to choose a theory or a combined linguistic theory which is most suitable for teaching foreign languages objectively and appropriately based on the real settings and the real conditions or demands of the country and the learners.

We cannot afford to fail too often because the wrong choice of a theory will bring a serious risk/consequence to our country and students. So this is the target of this paper to assist us to consider and to deliberate on the issues and problems of teaching English in Indonesia profoundly and seriously.

Linguists as well applied linguists, especially those who are interested in foreign language learning and teaching, have a similar object, language. What distinguishes applied linguistics from linguistics? First we should note that there are different areas grouped under the general heading linguistics. The list embraces theoretical linguistics, descriptive linguistics, historical linguistics, comparative linguistics, cognitive linguistics, comparative linguistics, structural linguistics, text linguistics, synchronic linguistics, diachronic linguistics; rarely mentioned archaeolinguistics, neurolinguistics, palaeolinguistics and still some others. While the second are more interested in, for example, how human beings process, store, and produce the second or foreign languages.

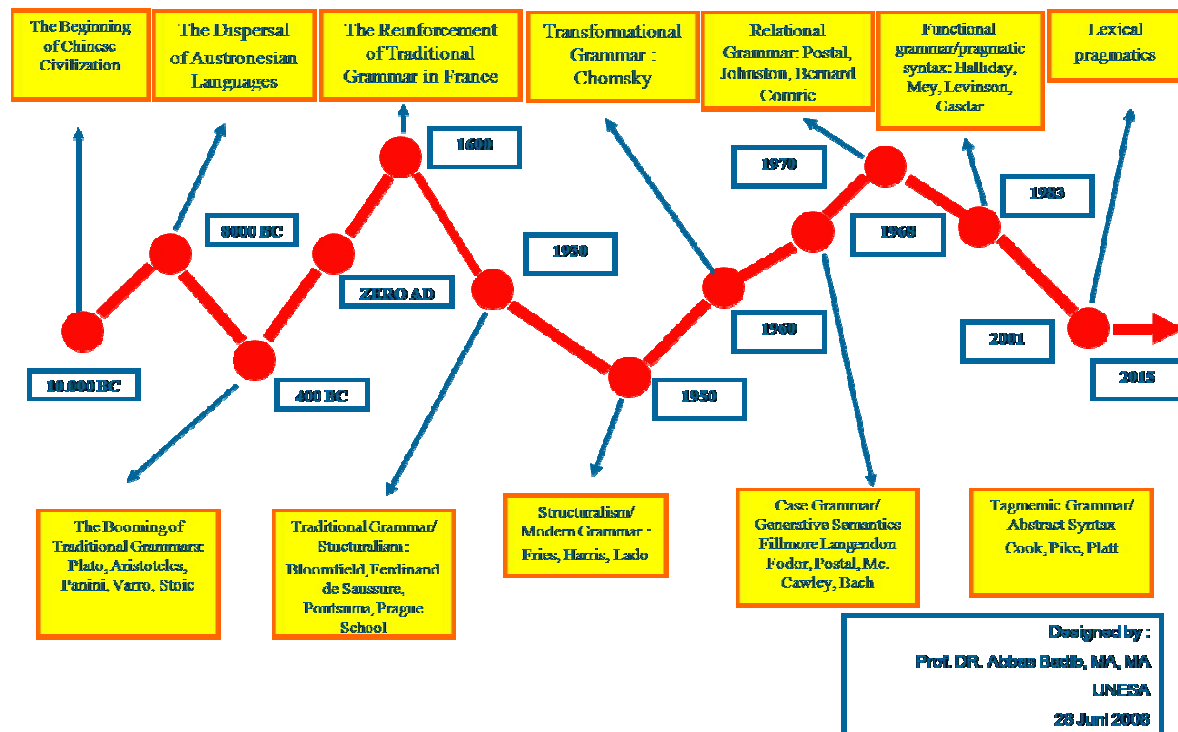
Theoretically speaking there must be a monolingual brain, a bilingual brain and multilingual brain. We should be aware, however, that are many concepts of applied linguistics. One of the leading applied linguists, Brumfit (1997b: 93) says that the theoretical status of applied linguistics is:

A working definition of applied linguistics will then be: theoretical and empirical investigation of real-world problems in which language is a central issue.

In an attempt to understand the problems related to their study they are confronted with endless difficulties from the past up to the present. Therefore both of the disciplines continue their efforts to sort out their challenges. It stands to reason that challenges faced by, especially teachers of English as a foreign/foreign language, are more complicated because of social, economic and linguistic developments. Therefore a more sophisticated approach to foreign language teaching and learning is required to allow a speedy achievement by the learners can be dealt with satisfactorily. The purpose is quite clear: to produce the qualified human resources with the mastery of English needed to fulfill the national developments.

Linguistic theories have been discussed widely by scholars who have different backgrounds and interests for more than two thousands of years. While the emergence of languages spoken by people around the world has attracted different scientists, including linguists, to unravel the mystery of the birth of human beings and the language(s). The search for the origin of human beings and the origin of language is meant to find and understand the fundamental issues regarding the evolutions of human beings and the evolutions of languages and their dispersals.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE LINGUISTIC THEORIES



The two important events concerning the history of macro evolutions of human beings and languages are estimated to take place around 200,000 years ago. These two events give births to (a) the search for the origins of speech and developments, and (b) the theory of dispersal of people and the languages. The first point leads to a fundamental research dealing with wider aspects of linguistic theories such as phonology, syntax, semantics, neurolinguistics, biolinguistics and archaeolinguistics, and the second point deals the different theories of human and the spread of languages. The relevant points of the two evolutions with this paper are (a) the evolutions of linguistic theories from the ancient time to the present, and (b) which linguistic theories influence the teaching and learning foreign languages. While the theory of the dispersals of human beings and the languages will not be dealt with in this paper due to the scope of the paper and the space available to me.

Thus by excluding the last point we would be able to focus the interconnectedness of the two fields. It is expected that after digesting the vast and long experience drawn from the evolutions of linguistic theories and their applications on the teaching and learning foreign languages we may learn a valuable and important lesson concerning the most appropriate linguistic theories suitable for teaching and learning foreign languages for a particular country for a particular time.

As mentioned above, the evolutions of linguistic theories as I have mentioned above have attracted a lot of different scholars of various academic backgrounds such as neurosciences, molecular biologists, medical doctors, mathematicians, geneticists, archeologists, and so on. For the sake of the brevity of the lengthy evolutions of linguistic theories I would like to start the evolutions by marking the formation and the dispersals of the Indo-European languages in the European regions and the dispersals of Austronesian languages in East Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific rims. Alber. C. Baugh mentions that the European and Asian languages were at one time identical (1957: 19). Baugh concludes that the home of the Indo-European language family is located between the mainland of Europe and the western part of Asia.

These formations and the dispersals of these languages are estimated to have taken place between six and ten thousand years ago. It goes without saying that the process of human movements and their contacts and their integrations/separations the verbal communication among the people from different groups must have occurred to allow them to settle down in some places. Language acquisition and language learning must be imposed by nature if they had to survive considering that nature at that time was clearly was harsh and severe. Continuous planning and serious discussions were needed to organize their strategic next moves. Using a current approach their language activity may be called a communicative approach and a direct method or a natural method.

To allow different groups to communicate each other in order to fully understand among themselves, at one stage initially translations might have been employed. The urgent need as the prime motivator to master other languages was indispensable. That was the emergence of the interdependency between a linguistic theory and foreign language learning at the early time.

The most spectacular theory of linguistics and the most influential in the history of linguistics and applied linguistics is the birth of traditional grammar which took place approximately 600 – 350 years B.C. The pioneers of the traditional grammar are the well-known philosophers such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle.

Originally the concept of the traditional grammar was imported from logic and philosophy. These philosophers were the ones who laid the foundation of the unchallenged concept of the traditional grammar. Various attempts have made to rectify or even to replace the weakness of the ‘primitive’ grammar, but it remains survived for more that two thousand and five hundred years. Up to now linguists and teachers are generally familiar with and use the traditional grammar in teaching. We have to admit that it is a remarkable record and achievement. Without the finding of the traditional grammar whether the progress of humanity could have advanced at this stage.

The birth, the survival and the rapid spread of the traditional grammar made it possible for the Greek advancements of arts, science and technology to be disseminated to not only the neighbouring territories but also to far away lands. Coupled by the economic activities of the wealthy Greek communities, Greek became the center of arts, intellectual, science, and technological advancements in which no other countries could compete except the Roman Empire, the main rival. What attracted foreigners most was not only the accumulation of the wealth of the Greek people but also the establishments of the academies by the well-known philosophers.

Foreigners who were seeking further education came to Greece to attend those academies. Those foreigners stayed for a long time in Greece to allow them to really master the Greek language in order that they could develop the four language skills. As a consequence of intensive interactions between the Greeks and the foreigners from different places coming to Greece the spread of Greek reached vast areas. The Greek then became the spoken means of communication not only in the surrounding Greece but the influence reached the distant areas, away from Greece. The influence of the Greek language could be witnessed by looking at the great number of the Greek words absorbed by the languages in those regions happened occupied by the Greek Empire.

The emergence of the Roman Empire which was established approximately 300 B.C. threatened the Greek Empire which later took the control of it. Latin which was the language of the Roman people became the means of wider communication eventually because the Roman Empire conquered more than forty countries covering the Middle East, North Africa, up to Europe. Latin was used by the Romans to translate the Greek's works of arts, science, technology, and philosophy. The Roman people were very wealthy people like the Greek people who occupied a strategic position as a center of business activities.

Therefore Latin became very influential not only in the conquered territories but also countries had contacts with Rome. The real value and need of acquiring Latin for various purposes triggered a strong motivation for the learners to learn Latin. A lot of people came to Rome simply to learn Latin because Latin was regarded as a prestigious language. The spread of modern knowledge was made possible because of Latin. The most notable influence is Latin grammar especially in Europe until the Renaissance period stretching from 14th, 15th and 16th centuries.

Despite of its weakness, Latin grammar which was founded on logic and philosophy remains survived up to now. There have been a lot of attempts to rectify, to revise, or even replace the Latin grammar by different linguists in order that it can become a workable model of grammar of a natural language, but so far the primitive notions of the Latin grammar are still retained. In other words the Latin grammar which influences the grammar around the world and with us more than two thousand years is an incredible achievement in the history of linguistics.

To show comprehensive developments of linguistic theories, I have prepared a diagram found in the appendix of this paper. This overview of linguistic theories is meant to give us a general idea of the connectedness between linguistic theories and their application in the teaching and learning English as a foreign language. We hope that we can find a reasonable justification why some of the linguistic theories are adopted or adapted by the applied linguists and still others are never considered. Continuous efforts to search for a suitable approach of teaching English as a foreign language have been tried, including in Indonesia, to ensure that the teaching and learning English could be more promising and fruitful.

Another point which I would like to include in this paper is translation, another kind of applied linguistics, since it is an integral part of learning foreign languages from the inception up to now. Professional translators are badly needed now and this job is generally well paid. To give a better perspective of translation studies I include a comprehensive diagram displaying the evolutions of translation studies covering a long period as from 3000 B.C. up to the present.

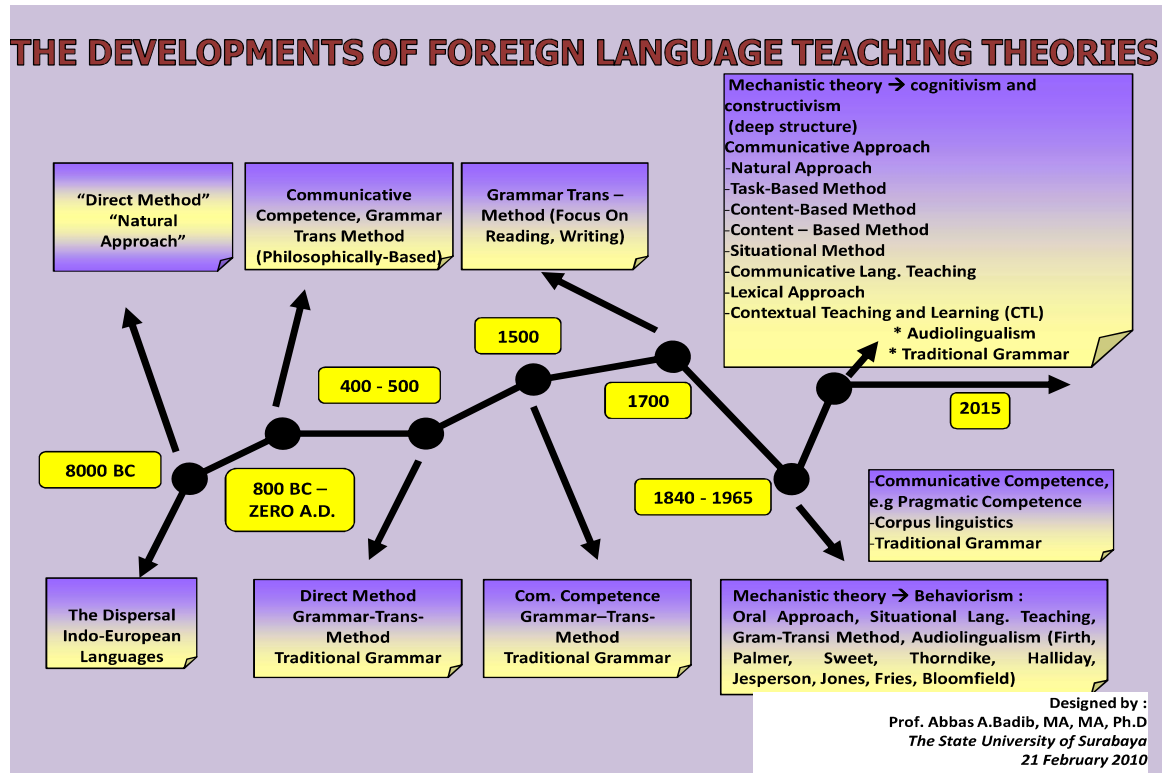
Linguistic theories and language teaching

It is expected that by now we have a better idea about the diverse versions of linguistic theories from the distant past, the past, and the present. The traditional grammar which originates from the Greek grammar, adopted by the Latin grammar spread out into vast areas, particularly in European countries, including the Great Britain has been dominating almost the entire history of the developments of linguistic theories. The popularity of Latin in the Western world until 500 years ago was due to the fact that it was the dominant language of education, commerce, religion, and government.

Amazingly, although Latin had been a dead language for almost two thousand years the goal of learning it was still directed towards oral mastery especially in the monasteries, including in England. Only later, in the sixteenth century that French, Italian, and English gained in importance as a result of political changes in Europe, and Latin gradually became displaced as a language of spoken and written communication (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 3). The declining influence of Latin the English grammar which was also founded on the Latin grammar became the model of grammar for the teaching English as second or a foreign language.

Thus the Latin grammar has been overshadowing the developments of the theory of teaching of English as a foreign language. Attempts have been made by various linguists as well as teachers of English without success. The results very often demonstrate that graduates of the Departments of English get confused with the concept of grammar.

The changes of the status of Latin became diminished from that of a living language to that of a subject in the school curriculum, the study of Latin shifted to a different function. Latin, as from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, then became a classical study and the focus was mainly in the analysis of its grammar and rhetoric. This method became the model for foreign language study during these centuries. The children in England entering a very famous and prestigious called school “grammar school” in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries were initially given a vigorous introduction to Latin grammar, which was taught through rote learning of grammar rules, study of declensions and conjugations, and translation.



Upon the mastery of the basic proficiency, the students were introduced to the advanced grammar and rhetoric because Latin was said to develop intellectual abilities and Latin grammar became an end in itself. Speaking the foreign language was not the goal and there was no relation to the language of real communication. Oral work was reduced to an absolute minimum and oral practice was limited to the students reading aloud the sentences they had translated. Thus translation method also constituted an important part to learning a foreign language. This approach, a combined grammatical analysis and translation, to teaching foreign language became known as the Grammar-Translation Method.

The Grammar – Translation Method

The Grammar-Translation Method was in fact known in the Unites States, as early as 1845, as the Prussian Method (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 5). Some of the principle characteristics of the Grammar-Translation Method were these:

1. The goal of foreign language study is to learn a language in order to read its literature. Grammar Translation is a way of studying a language that approaches the language first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules and apply this knowledge to the task of translating texts into and out of the target language. While the first language is still maintained as the reference system in the acquisition of the second language (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 5).
2. Reading and writing are emphasized. Speaking and listening are hardly considered.

3. Student's native language is the medium of instruction which is used to explain new items and enable comparisons to be made between the foreign language and the student's native language.
4. The precision of translations is the main target.

The Grammar Translation Method dominated European and foreign language teaching which began from the period of 1840s through the 1940s, and its modified form it continues to be widely used in some parts of the world today. In the mid- and late nineteenth century, opposition to the Grammar Translation Method gradually developed in several European countries. This reaction was referred to as a Reform Movement and it laid the foundations for the development of new ways of teaching languages and raised endless controversies that have continued to the present day.

The Reform Movement

The reformist group led by the practical-minded linguists such as Henry Sweet, a leading phonologist in England, Wilhelm Viëtor in Germany, and Paul Passy in France began as from 1880s to provide the intellectual leadership needed to give reformist ideas greater credibility and acceptance. The discipline of linguistics was revitalized.. Being pioneers in phonetics the three linguists believed that phonetics should be used as the foundation of teaching of modern languages to give a new insight into speech processes. Linguists emphasized that speech, rather than the written word, was the primary form of language. This concept triggered the birth of a historical linguistic association known as the International Phonetic Association in 1886, and its International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) was designed to enable the sounds of any language to be accurately transcribed. One of the earliest goals was to improve the teaching of modern languages by means of primarily studying the spoken language in order to establish good pronunciation habits (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 9).

The writings of Sweet, Viëtor, and Passy led to what have been termed natural methods and ultimately led to the development of what came to known as the Direct method.

Direct Method

One of the pioneers of the reformers was Gouin who in the first nineteenth-century attempted to build a methodology around observation of child learning language. Other reformers toward the end of the century also turned their attention to naturalistic principles of learning, and for this argument they are sometimes labeled it as "natural" method. L.Sauveur (1826-1907) was one of the reformers who tried to apply natural principles to language classes in the nineteenth century by means of using an intensive oral interaction in the target language. He opened a language in Boston in the late 1860s, and his method was referred to as the Natural Method. These reformers believed that a foreign language teaching could be conducted without necessarily involving translation and the learner's native language. These natural language learning principles provided the foundation for what came to be known as the Direct Method, which refers to the most widely known of the natural methods (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 11)

The weakness was that it overemphasized and distorted the similarities between naturalistic first language learning and classroom foreign language learning and failed to consider the practical realities of the classroom. The other weakness was that it required native speakers or who had native-like fluency in the foreign language. The last problem was that avoiding native language, translation, could be counterproductive because of the long explanation in the use of the target language.

Because of the weaknesses, by the 1920s, use of the Direct Method in noncommercial schools in Europe had consequently declined. The decline of the popularity of the Direct Method in Europe in the early part of the twentieth century caused foreign language specialists in the United States to attempt to have it implemented very cautiously in American schools and colleges. A study began in 1923 on the state of foreign language teaching that no single method could guarantee successful results.

Teaching conversation skills was regarded as impractical in view of the restricted time available for foreign language teaching in schools, the limited qualified teachers, and the irrelevance of conversation skills in a foreign language for the average American college students. Instead of teaching conversation skills, a more reasonable goal for foreign language course in the United States would be a reading knowledge of foreign language, achieved through the gradual instruction of words and grammatical structures in simple reading texts. In the United States this policy continued to characterize foreign language teaching until World War II. It seems that this is an indication or a reflection of the influence of structuralism developed by Ferdinand de Saussure (1906).

Recognizing the weakness of the Direct Method, the British applied linguist Henry Sweet, being a phonologist, and other applied linguists thought that the development of sound methodological principles could serve as the basis of teaching techniques. Therefore in 1920s and 1930s, applied linguists systematized the principles by the Reform Movement which eventually led to the birth of Audiolingualism in the United States and the Oral Approach or Situational Approach Language Teaching in Britain.

Audiolingual Method

In 1929 The Coleman Report recommended a reading-based approach to foreign language teaching in American schools and colleges (Richards and Rodgers, 2001:50). The focus was on the teaching of comprehension of texts. The results were not satisfactory because they could not meet the need of the demand of the people. The development of materials were poorly organized, graded and standardized. This condition triggered the United States Government to change the strategy to allow the U.S. Government to supply with personnel who were fluent in German, French, Italian, Malay, Japanese, Chinese, and other languages who could work as interpreters and translators. The goals could be achieved by means of establishing a special language training program. The government commissioned American universities to develop foreign language programs for military personnel. Following the plan the U.S. Government set up the Army Specialized Training Program in 1942. By 1943 there fifty-five American universities were involved in the program.

The aim of the army programs was for the students to acquire conversational proficiency in a variety of foreign languages. It was quite different from the goal of conventional foreign language courses in the United States. Therefore new approaches were needed. Linguists, such as Leonard Bloomfield at Yale University, had already developed training programs as part of their linguistic research that were designed to give linguists and anthropologists mastery of languages they were studying. This program required an intensive training involving native speakers and it was supervised by linguists who would design the grammar. This was the system adopted by the army, and in small classes of mature and highly motivated students, excellent results were often achieved. The most impressive thing was the correlation between a high motivation and excellent result.

Thus the success story of learning foreign languages attracted linguists and foreign language teachers. America emerged as a major international power. Thousands of foreign students entered the United States to study in universities, many of these students required training in English before they could begin their studies. These factors give a birth to the American Approach to ESL, which by the mid-1950s had become Audiolingualism which was coined by Professor Nelson Brooks in 1964 (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 51, 53). The theoretical foundation of Audiolingualism consisted of the combination of structural linguistic theory, contrastive analysis, aural-oral procedures and behaviorist psychology founded by B.F. Skinner. Another founder of Audiolingualism was Robert Lado who published *Lado English Series* (Lado, 1977) and *English 900* (English Language Services 1964).

Audiolingualism reached its peak in 1960s and then came criticism on many grounds. Students were unable to transfer the skills acquired through Audiolingualism to real communication outside the classrooms, and many found the experience of studying through audiolingual procedures to be boring and unsatisfying. The theoretical attack on the audiolingual beliefs resulted from the MIT linguist Noam Chomsky who rejected the structuralist approach to language description as well the behaviorist theory of language learning. This created a crisis in American language teaching circle from which a full recovery has not yet been made.

The lack of an alternative to Audiolingualism led in 1970s and 1980s to a period of adaptation, innovation, experimentation, and some confusion. Some proposals appeared in 1970s and these included Total Physical Response, the Silent Way, and Counseling Learning. Other proposals also appeared and these included Whole Language, Multiple Intelligences, Neurolinguistic Programming, Competency-Based Language Teaching, and Cooperative Learning. The latest mainstream as from 1980s up to 1998s has generally drawn on contemporary theories of language and second language acquisition as a basis for teaching proposals and these consisted of the Lexical Approach, Communicative Language Teaching, and the Task-Based Teaching.

I feel it is necessary to mention the contribution of Professor Charles Fries of the University of Michigan who, in 1939, developed the first English Language Institute in the United States which it specialized in the training of teachers of English as a foreign language or second language. Being a structural linguist, Fries applied the principles of structural linguistics to language teaching. He and his colleagues rejected the Direct Method, in which learners are exposed to the language, use it, and gradually absorb its grammatical patterns.

Fries and other American linguists were convinced that grammar or structure was the starting point and that could be achieved by means aural training first, then followed pronunciation training, further followed by speaking, reading and writing. Language was identified with speech, and speech was approached through structure. This approach became known variously as the Oral Approach, Aural-Oral Approach and Structural Approach. Again the Oral Approach lost its ground, but it was incorporated into the Audiolingual Approach as discussed above.

A discussion on the historical development of foreign/second language is not complete without mentioning the British and Australian applied linguists. These pioneers consisted of Hornby, Gatenby, Wakefield, West, Zandvoort, George Pittman, and Gloria Tate. The Oral Approach was the term originally used in the United States of America while in Britain it was called Situational Approach or Structural Approach or Situational Language Teaching.

The underlying theory of Situational Language Teaching can be characterized as a type of British “structuralism”. Speech was regarded as the basis of language, and structure was viewed as being at the heart of speaking ability. Many British linguists had emphasized the close relationship between the structure of language and the context and situations in which language is used. British linguist, such as J.R. Firth (1930) and M.A.K. Halliday, McIntosh, and Stevens (1964) developed powerful views of language in which meaning, context, and situation were given a prominent place (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 40).

The major trends of the theories of teaching of foreign languages, including English, are geared towards a communicative approach which is based on the recent developments of pragmatics and discourse. Thus we can witness that linguistic theories are sometimes randomly incorporated into the concept of the teaching and learning English as a foreign language. Some of the linguistic theories have adopted as the basis of the foreign language teaching while some others are left untouched. The most amazing thing is the concept of Traditional Grammar which remains survived for two thousand and five hundred years despite of the fact that it is constantly challenged by different linguists throughout the history of linguistic developments.

The Grammar-Translation Method has been used simultaneously with the Traditional Grammar or Grammar-Based Approach. Why? These phenomena have never been discussed. Is it because the other linguistic theories are not feasible if they are adopted as the foundation of language teaching? Or are language teachers not well versed with other linguistic theories and they are too involved in experimenting or researching their own theories? My only hope is that language teachers are not speculating with a particular approach and a particular method because they do not work accordingly, the result can be damaging to the younger generation throughout the country. It is too risky and too costly. Therefore we should review our positions and strategies as teachers of English a foreign language in Indonesia. Indonesia is a multilingual society and whether learning English as foreign language will benefit ALL the learners or will lose their native languages. I would like to address this issue below.

EFL Teaching and Multilingualism

This is the core of my paper. I would like to address the issue into three separate perspectives. The first one deals with the teaching of English as a foreign, in general, which never takes the composition of the class into the consideration, namely whether learners are monolingual/monocultural, bilingual/bicultural, or multilingual/multicultural. It is obvious that linguistically and culturally the learners are distinct and consequently the method should also be distinct. Thus one method is used to handle students having distinct linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In the history of the teaching of English as a foreign language in Indonesia what happens is that one approach, one method and one technique are applied in a class consisting of learners whose linguistic as well as cultural background may differ markedly.

We may be able to recall Robert Lado's classical book called *Linguistics Across Cultures* (1957: vii) in which he advocates that in teaching foreign languages comparing any two languages and cultures is indispensable. He says:

The results of the comparisons have proved of fundamental value for the preparation of the teaching materials, tests, and language learning experiments. Foreign language teachers who understand this field will acquire insights and tools for evaluating the language and culture content of textbooks and tests, supplementing the materials in use, preparing new materials and tests, and diagnosing student difficulties accurately.

Theoretically speaking, based on the quotation above, hypothetically, the teaching of English without considering the linguistic and cultural differences of the learners is not recommendable. It is believed that such a teaching will not produce a satisfactory result because it is linguistically as well as culturally inappropriate. This opinion is shared by Andy Kirkpatrick (1995: 77-78) who, in his article "Language, Culture and Methodology", advocates that:

An integral part of the teacher training for language teachers must include contrastive aspects of discourse rules, cultural expectations and educational traditions. Furthermore teachers need to be able to adapt and develop methodologies so that they are contextually and culturally appropriate.

Following the quotation above it can be safely stated that, ideally a good teacher of English is a teacher who is well-oriented with both the linguistic and the cultural knowledge of the source language and the target languages. In view of this ideal teacher of English Andy Kirkpatrick (1995: 79) mentions:

...that the trained teacher of English who is confronted with a multilingual classroom and who has in depth knowledge of the linguistic and cultural rules of at least one other language will, all things being equal, be a better language teacher than a monolingual native speaker.

The statement above has a wider implication for teaching English as a foreign language in a multilingual community. And we know it very well that Asian and Pacific countries are mostly multilingual and multicultural communities. The populations of the world are, more than 60%, multilingual. Multilingualism and multiculturalism have become global phenomenon. Therefore it is necessary to design multiliteracies which will benefit the future generations, including the younger generations of Indonesia. Thus learning English, if it is regarded as a language right, a part of human rights, can be aimed at firstly to design the individual, as a member of public, as well as a social being to lead a proper life. So the first aim is directed towards the ability of the individual to generate verbal linguistic meaning-making communication from the available resources.

The second importance of multiliteracies is to guarantee that the introduction of English will strengthen the mother tongues or vernaculars and not on the other around because these vernaculars to most people in Indonesia, Asia and the Pacific countries, including Australia and New Zealand have been instrumental in getting things done. They have been a powerful tool of communication, not only in rural areas but also in towns and big cities. Thus it is instructive for us to cultivate and preserve vernaculars because the existence of regional languages/vernaculars is guaranteed by the 1945 National Constitution.

The reason is that the *Pancasila* ideology is unearthed from the Indonesian soil, meaning that Indonesia consists of nature and its population in which language is a part of it. We should remind ourselves that our ambition to introduce a massive program of English as a foreign language of which the aim is still questionable, can endanger the multilingual and multicultural society of the Indonesia population. Therefore a massive contraction of cultures as well as vernaculars should and could be prevented.

Human Right, Language Right, and Linguicism

UNESCO in 1992 issued a book called *Red Book on Endangered Languages*. The book was published following in February 1992, a group of linguistic experts was convened by a UNESCO program in Paris which deals with the cultural heritage to consider and report on the language diversity of the world of the world (Bill Cope and Mary Kalantzis, 2000, 98-99). The experts called for 'world solidarity' to preserve 'the non-physical cultural heritage' of the world and endangered languages.

The concern was triggered by their findings that 90 percent of the world's currently spoken languages are endangered and many become extinct within one or two generations. It is predicted that there between five thousand and six thousand spoken languages today and at present rates of extinction there will remain only some five to six hundred by 2020, only a small handful of which will be spoken by sizeable number of people (Vines, 1996). The acceleration of language extinction is quite alarming and is going in a rapid speed. The UNESCO 1992 states:

On the basis of a feasibility study, a number of regional ecological language reserves to protect the endangered or dying languages can be set up. Their aim will be to keep the ecology of the endangered languages intact or to reduce the risks of their irreversible extinction (Bill Cope and Mary Kalantzis, 2000: 98).

Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangas (1986:20) mention that the advancement of languages of wider communication can bring the subsequent death of indigenous languages. This process is called *linguicism*. This refers to the crime of linguistic genocide and the reduction of the number of the world's languages. According to Bill Cope and Mary Kalantzis (2000: 99) the major criminal in their scenario is English. Too much emphasis on teaching of English as a foreign language without the cultivating and preserving our own languages, including vernaculars, this policy is definitely a serious blunder.

This move should be stopped before the language extinctions take place in Indonesia. It is our duty to prevent the language deaths from taking place in Indonesia because vernaculars are not only our national assets but also the world's heritage. These assets are not reversible. Latin is a good example. In short it can be stated that Teaching of English as a foreign language in a multicultural and multilingual context must consider the following aspects.

1. The introduction of English should be able to strengthen the cultivation of the native languages and cultures or *linguacultures*, a term coined by Harry Krasnick, which refers to the fundamental integration of native language within native culture in introducing English Language Teaching (1995: 92). In simple words the teaching of English as a Foreign language should not displace the learners from their native language and cultures. Linguistic and social loss should be avoided.
2. It is not appropriate to teach English which is based on wholly imported from an approach developed in a foreign country, then implanted to a multilingual and multicultural setting such as Indonesia. Measures should be taken to adjust with the Indonesian geographical, social, political, linguistic, and economical conditions.
3. The realistic need analyses must be reviewed to allow the authorities to determine whether the current approach and method, such as the 2004 Curriculum, whether they are heading towards the right direction or not and whether an interference is necessary.
4. Whether the teaching of English as a foreign language is in accordance with the ethics of human and national developments, meaning that the introduction of English will benefit the individual learners themselves, the country and the native language and their cultures or not. This necessarily means that the introduction of English can guarantee the exercise of the human rights and the cultivation and the preservation of language rights of the young learners. Thus there will be no language oppressions and no linguistic genocide or *linguicism*.
5. Whether the four language skills, listening, speaking, writing, and reading will be imposed on and acquired by all learners or depending on the objective needs of the learners. Apparently the cost and the benefit of learning English must be the prime considerations.

Now I would like to say that there are many alternatives of language teaching methods of English as Foreign language which are suitable for our schools. So it is up to us which one (ones) is the best for you and your students.

The Goal of Learning English in Indonesia: Communicative Competence

In general the goal of learning English in Indonesia is directed toward achieving communicative competence. The problem of this term is its concept is not fully understood and thus the application can vary from teachers to teachers. To show the problem please see the diagram below. From the diagram it can be seen that its underlying concept contains various linguistics theories which need comprehensive explanations and need more space to elaborate (If you want to understand this concept I refer you *Communicative Competence: Theory and Practice* by Sandra J. Savignon).

While the methods employed by teachers can vary depending on various factors, such as the result of need analysis, the motivation of the learners and the language proficiency of the teachers, the facilities available in that school, the environments whether the supports them to practice their English, the age and employments opportunities. So there is no a single method which is called the 'best' method. A teacher may use a combined method if it is needed.

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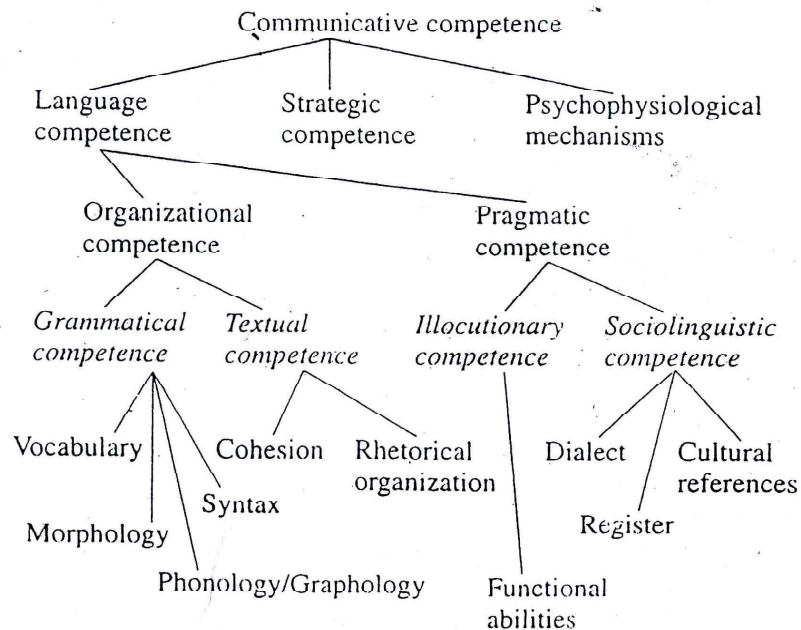


Figure 13.5 A model of communicative competence.

Conclusion

To conclude this paper I would like to invite you to recall your memory of the 2004 Curriculum known as *KBK* (Competence Based Curriculum) which was almost implemented was finally abandoned by the Department of National Education. Before it was abandoned DR Agus Wardono in 2005 invited DR Agustine Helena, the designer of the 2004 Curriculum to explain the foundation of the Curriculum. A lot of teachers who attended the meeting aired their concerns about the difficulties in implementing the in appropriate curriculum. The teachers' opposition to the newly developed curriculum was proved to be reasonable: that the 2004 Curriculum was heading towards the process of 'museumification'. But it is not totally abandoned.

If a teacher feels that the spirit of *KBK* is appropriate he or she can still use it because the basic concept of communicative competence has been used since hundred years BC.. We have to be cautious about it, though. We are not supposed to prejudge about it. Give it a chance to those who have received a mandate to carry out the risky job. Let us listen to their reports dealing with their field experience. What I say is the facts that the variables about teaching of English as a foreign language in Indonesia practically for the last 25 years remain stable. So far we have not made any satisfactory result for various reasons. The 2004 Curriculum is only a part of the variables and if there are no other substantial variables supporting it made available by the Government, the chance of the 2004 Curriculum to succeed or survive is very slim. But let us wait and see how it is going. It is only a reminder. The new substitute is known as *KTSP*.

Whatever the theories of teaching English of as a Foreign Language, I propose that the next curriculum of English should incorporate the concept of the strengthening, cultivating, preserving the local languages and cultures. In fact it is rather late. But let us deliberate on this fundamental issue seriously and how it can be carried out.

Our ambition to teach English to younger generations is expected not to distract our attention from ensuring to watch the continuous function of the local languages and cultures. They are valuable national assets of the country which are reflected in the *Pancasila* ideology. The death of the vernaculars is not reversible. They are both our national heritage and a world's heritage. The maintenance of the vernaculars will not disturb the national cohesiveness or the national unity and the role of English as an international communication can be achieved satisfactorily.

Since there is no 'best' method it is up to teachers to select the most appropriate methods used by the teachers. But the main thing is the goal is achieved: communicative competence, that is being able to use English actively and daily.

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