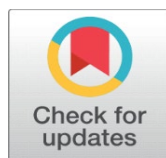


# LINGUISTIC THEORY AND MARKETING TOURISM

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## ABSTRACT

Linguistic theories have a long history. A speaker's linguistic competence is extraordinary. He or she has the capacity to generate infinite number of sentences, using the basic rules of grammar. Meaning is also equally important in linguistics. British applied linguists like D.A. Walkins, Christopher Candlin, Henry Widdowson, Christopher Brumfit, Keith Johnson, and functional linguists like J.R. Firth and M.A.K. Halliday brought about significant shifts to approach, methods and techniques in language pedagogy. Importance was given to the social situations in which the language is used and the social roles of the learners and users of the language. This led to the sociolinguistic views and brought changes in the syllabi, where situation, roles, topics, settings and activities and tasks played dynamic roles.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Linguistic theories have a long history. A speaker's linguistic competence is extraordinary. He or she has the capacity to generate infinite number of sentences, using the basic rules of grammar. Meaning is also equally important in linguistics. British applied linguists like D.A. Walkins, Christopher Candlin, Henry Widdowson, Christopher Brumfit, Keith Johnson, and functional linguists like J.R. Firth and M.A.K. Halliday brought about significant shifts to approach, methods and techniques in language pedagogy. Importance was given to the social situations in which the language is used and the social roles of the learners and users of the language. This led to the sociolinguistic views and brought changes in the syllabi, where situation, roles, topics, settings and activities and tasks played dynamic roles.

Language is a social interaction and is concerned with the social contexts in which discourse is embedded. Linguistic theories depend on the social, cultural and psychological aspects of the human being. There have been a number of theories based on one or more of these aspects. There was a shift in linguistic theory since the famous Noam Chomsky appeared in the field of linguistics. The linguist, Noam Chomsky, a believer in the nature approach to language, argues that human brains contain a Language Acquisition Device that includes a universal grammar that underlies all human

language (Chomsky, 1965, 1972). Discourse analysis is also important for teaching ESP. Needs Analysis tells us exactly what the student needs for now and the future. But Need Analysis concentrates more on the student's needs. Language acquisition does not require extensive use of conscious grammatical rules, and does not require tedious drill." says Stephen Krashen, another American linguist. He believes more in the acquisition of language than learning. Applied linguists like Krashen and Terrel focused on the semantic dimension of language. Muna Aljohani in her article, "Principles of "Constructivism" in Foreign Language Teaching" states that:

Constructivism has emerged in recent years as a dominant paradigm in education and has had a major intellectual impact on the development of pedagogy, rooted in the cognitive developmental of Piaget and in the sociocultural theory of Vygotsky, constructivist notions have had an impact on the development and application of technologically enhanced micro worlds and on linguistic investigation into literacy and narrative development constructivist learning has developed as a substantial approach to teaching.

Constructivism primarily is a synthesis of the ideas from philosophy, sociology, psychology and education (Lowenthal & Muth, 2008). It emphasizes on how to construct the meaning of the word or thing based on their own understanding. It can be done through individual experience and schema. The role of the teacher is to ask the students to learn to construct meaning and to assimilate and accommodate the students' prior knowledge and the new ones. Unlike Needs Analysis, Constructivism is a set of educational beliefs about pedagogy, that one should allow the learners to define their own learning objective and also that knowledge emerges from constructive interaction between the teacher and the students or between collaborating students. The teacher also plays a vital role in this theory.

English is taught as a second language in India. English for specific purposes (ESP) is a subdivision of English as a second or foreign language. It refers to teaching English to university students or people already in employment, with specific reference to the particular vocabulary and skills they need for their job opportunities or in their field of work. Productive communication skills are as imperative as technical qualifications for ESP learners to get a brighter job. Research in ESL and ESP studies all over the world emphasize the significance of developing oral communication skills as a priority for ESP learners since they are always in teamwork and collaboration with other English-speaking customers at their workplace, especially in the tourism industry. There is need to create an effective curriculum for the students who need to learn the global language for a more specific purpose and this theory will help them address the needs and prepare an effective and more need-based curriculum for the enhancement of their skills. Hence, constructivism will form the fundamental basis to show why there is a need for an effective curriculum for learning tourism English.

Scott McCabe in his book, *Marketing Communications in Tourism & Hospitality* refers to the various concepts of communication theories and how they can be applied in marketing the products of tourism and hospitality. He also refers to Sassure's theory of the signified and the signifier and how it can be used in the marketing of tourism (38). He goes on to say that:

There has been a postmodern turn in touristic consumption and an increase in emphasis placed on the visual aesthetic, modernist design and urban culture in consumer societies...In the hospitality, particularly the hotel sector, the precepts and ideals of post-modernism are used in marketing communications, both in the increasing attention given to visual aesthetic in the design and décor of the physical environment of the hotel...(40).

Scott McCabe concludes by saying that in this modern world, a "great deal of emphasis will be placed on the communication of brand values throughout all media channels" to reveal the importance of language skills in this industry (292).

In the introduction of *Discourse, Communication and Tourism*, Pritchard and Jaworski highlight the need for research for a better understanding and acknowledge the importance of communication in the tourism industry when they also refer to Dann, 1996 and Cronin, 2000 and make the following observation that:

... although discourse and communication are of central importance in tourism studies, they remain relatively unexplored and undertheorized among tourism researchers, and the specific links that have been made between language and tourism have for the most part ignored the vast tradition of discourse and remained resolutely non empirical (02).

A good knowledge of tourism English is an expertise that can give you an edge over others in the highly competitive field of employment. Tourism English is a bit different from regular English. It is simpler, more direct and clearer, and it has a lot of specific vocabulary and repetition. It can help to communicate fluently with foreigners, which will give a

greater chance for promotion. The websites EnglishForMyJob.com and hotel-tefl.com have a nice selection of worksheets and vocabulary lessons for the hotel industry. But they are very expensive, and not all students can access them.

In the field of tourism, a tour is led by a tour guide. To become a tour guide, you need to learn English. You also need to know the history of a place, as well as interesting facts about it. You can also get a job at an information desk near certain tourist attractions. These positions require a wider vocabulary, good spoken skills, since you often have to answer historical and factual questions.

Travel agencies and the travel agents work to help people plan their trips. They deal with purchasing plane tickets, booking hotels and creating schedules for visiting attractions and going on tours. As a travel agent, a person needs to work on a one-on-one with tourists to plan a trip that is perfect for them. This means being on the phone a lot, and working with other employees in the tourism industry. The English necessary for being a travel agent is more business-oriented, but still polite and friendly. These are a few examples why there is a great need for a special and practical curriculum.

There are numerous websites to learn English for tourism. These cater to the needs of people who are employed in this industry. These websites may not cater to the specific needs of Indian students who are specializing in tourism and management studies, as they are created and applied by foreigners. The valid question that also rises is that if it would be viable for the Indian students to pay for such expensive courses and if it will suit their needs. It can also be noticed that the curriculum and syllabi of the universities and colleges in and around the state of Karnataka, do not seem to provide a cohesive subject plan to enhance the skills of students who specialize in management skills for the tourism industry.

#### **The editorial of *The Hindu* states:**

Forty-seven percent graduates in India are not employable for any industry role. Their lack of English knowledge and cognitive skills were identified as the major obstacles to their suitability in the job market (np).

The intended research is qualitative as well as quantitative in nature. The research aims to find out if there is a dire need in the tourism industry for a detailed strategy and advanced syllabus for teaching English language skills with specific reference to communicative and linguistics skills that will fill the gap.

A careful study has been made into the curricula of Bachelor and Master's degree in Tourism of Mangalore, Kuvempu, Mysore and Bangalore state universities, Manipal and Christ deemed- to-be universities, Sharanabasava University Gulbarga and the Central Universities of Bangalore and Gulbarga to find out if there is a paper prescribed on communication skills required for the tourism industry and if such a paper focuses on English language skills to empower students with the capacity to use language instantaneously in any given novel situation.

## **CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

None.

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