

**Applied Linguistics: Reflections on an Evolving Discipline with a Focus on Publications  
in the Journal TEANGA, *The Journal of the Irish Association for Applied Linguistics*,  
between 2001 and 2023**

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**Abstract**

This study tracks the evolution of the content in a single applied linguistics journal, TEANGA, *The Journal of the Irish Association for Applied Linguistics* (TEANGA). The aim is to gain deeper insights into the nature of applied linguistics research. A second, related objective is to compare the research published in TEANGA with broader developments in the field of applied linguistics. Using elements of both quantitative and interpretative content analysis, the paper analyses the focal topics of the keynote and research papers published in the eight annual issues of TEANGA published between 2001 and 2023, together with those of the articles in the six single issue volumes which were also published during this time frame. The findings suggest that, in line with the discipline of applied linguistics more broadly, second and foreign language teaching and learning, including language teacher education, are a central focus of both the annual and special issues. A number of other sub-disciplines are also quantitatively significant. These include multilingualism and plurilingualism, discourse analysis, corpus linguistics, language policy and planning, and sociolinguistics. Reflecting the journal's particular context, Irish-English bilingualism and Irish immersion education play an important role. No obvious trends were observed in terms of these particular broad areas either increasing or decreasing in importance. However, an evolution in terms of topic was observed within an individual area. The focus in this regard was placed on second and foreign language teaching and learning. The impact of technological advances and socio-political change resulting in increased linguistic diversity could be observed in developments in the use of Information and Communication Technology inside and outside of the classroom to support virtual exchange and informal language learning. A focus on a wider range of languages was also observed in the later papers. Limited evidence was found of some of the more niche and emerging areas in the broader field of applied linguistics such as social justice, raciolinguistics, artificial intelligence, ethics in linguistics research and multilingual sustainability. Implications of the findings are considered.

**Keywords:** applied linguistics, linguistics, TEANGA, content analysis, second and foreign language teaching and learning, Ireland

## Introduction

This research tracks the evolution of the content in a single applied linguistics journal, TEANGA, *The Journal of the Irish Association for Applied Linguistics* (TEANGA). The purpose of this exercise is twofold: firstly, to identify consistent and emerging trends in applied linguistics research as reflected by the publications over time in a single journal in order to gain deeper insights into the nature of applied linguistics research. In parallel, the study facilitates reflection on how the applied linguistics research published in TEANGA compares with the broader developments in the field.

The paper begins with an overview of the nature and development of the field of applied linguistics. It then presents an analysis of the material published in TEANGA between 2001 and 2023. Finally, it discusses the findings and considers their implications.

The discipline of applied linguistics has proven difficult to define. This is partly a result of its relative youth, dating from the 1940s (Grabe, 2010, p.34), and the fact that it is informed by and informs so many other diverse disciplines. These include, but are by no means limited to, education, cognitive psychology, sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, neurobiology, and information and communication technology.

Difficulties associated with the definition of applied linguistics are also caused by the relationship between linguistics and applied linguistics. Linguistics has been frequently defined as the scientific study of language (Halliday 2006). This can involve the study of various formal aspects of language such as form, meaning and content (Mukherjee 2022) or morphology, grammar, syntax, and phonetics (Oxford English Dictionary). Lyons, Hamp, Eric and Ivić (2023, no page), define theoretical linguistics as “the scientific study of language... whose goal is the construction of a general theory of the structure of language or of a general theoretical framework for the description of languages”. In other words, the overarching goal is to better understand the nature of language as an abstract system. This

underlying core objective is where linguistics and applied linguistics diverge. Applied linguistics has been defined as concerned with “the theoretical and empirical investigation of real-world problems in which language is a central issue” (Brumfit, 1995, p. 27) or as expressed on the website of the series *Trends in Applied Linguistics*:

Applied linguistics is understood in a very broad sense, by focusing on the application of theoretical linguistics to current problems arising in different contexts of human society (de Gruyter Mouton, 2024).

Thus, while theory and theoretical development play an important role in applied linguistics, there is a greater focus on the exploration of real-world situations where the role of language is crucial. As Pennycook (2021, pp.6) points out, “the applied element needs to be able to articulate projects for change”. In the words of the *Association Internationale de Linguistique Appliquée* [International Association of Applied Linguistics] (AILA):

Applied Linguistics is an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary field of research and practice dealing with practical problems of language and communication that can be identified, analysed or solved by applying available theories, methods and results of Linguistics or by developing new theoretical and methodological frameworks in Linguistics to work on these problems. Applied Linguistics differs from Linguistics in general mainly with respect to its explicit orientation towards practical, everyday problems related to language and communication. The problems Applied Linguistics deals with range from aspects of the linguistic and communicative competence of the individual such as first or second language acquisition, literacy, language disorders, etc. to language and communication related problems in and between societies such as

e.g. language variation and linguistic discrimination, multilingualism, language conflict, language policy and language planning. (AILA, n.d.)

As alluded to in this definition, applied linguistics contains a large, diverse and ever evolving range of sub-fields. It has traditionally been most closely associated with the field of second and foreign language teaching and learning (Kaplan, 2000). There has been considerable focus in this research domain on the effectiveness of different pedagogical approaches to language teaching, learning, and assessment.

However, applied linguistics encompasses a much wider set of domains and contexts than second and foreign language teaching and learning and, indeed, one which continues to expand. These include, in what is not intended to be an exhaustive list, multilingualism and plurilingualism (including minority and heritage languages), corpus linguistics, discourse analysis (including critical discourse analysis), forensic linguistics, language planning and policy (including linguistic rights), language teaching and learning, lexicography, literacy, neurolinguistics, pragmatics, raciolinguistics, psycholinguistics, second language acquisition (SLA), sociolinguistics (including language and identity, and language ideologies) and translation (see, for example, Busch and McNamara, 2020; Godfroid and Hopp, 2023; Heller, 2005; Hunston, 2022; Kramsch, 2000; Liddicoat, 2023; Ó Murchadha & Kavanagh (2021); Paulston (1997); Skutnabb-Kangas (2008)). Some of these areas are more niche and/or more established than others. Many are evolving as a result of social and political change, technological development, and developments in related fields in both the humanities and social sciences (Pennycook, 2021), and the natural sciences, including, for example, the field of neurobiology (Schuman 2010).

This development of many of the sub-fields of applied linguistics is illustrated by the discussion in a recent (2022) special issue of the *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*

(ARAL) entitled “Social justice in applied linguistics: Making space for new approaches and new voices”. ARAL moved away in this volume from the publication of state-of-the-art review articles by established scholars and invited submissions by emerging researchers (Mackey, Fell, de Jesus, Hall, & Ku, 2022), at the same time implementing an innovative, collaborative peer review process. This process involved the appointment of a team of researchers who simultaneously acted as both reviewers and mentors for the authors as part of an iterative writing process involving the provision of several rounds of feedback and support. Topics in the published articles include translanguaging drawing on critical race theory (Arango, 2022), dual language bilingual education (Barko-Alva, 2022), linguistic repertoires and social mobility (Cui, 2022). Work in critical applied linguistics in diverse areas reflecting events such as the recent pandemic and issues surrounding social justice, equality, critical pedagogies and environmental sustainability are further examples (Pennycook 2021), as is recent research in the field of multilingual sustainability which bemoans the fact that, “Sustainability science is written in global languages and does not “speak” most of the around 7000 indigenous languages spread around the world” (Litre et al., 2022, pp. 8133). Developments in artificial intelligence (AI) continue to pose new challenges for the applied linguist in a myriad of domains (Casal & Kessler, 2023), including the ethicality of the use of AI tools for research purposes, and the concept of ethical applied linguistics research (De Costa, Sterling, Lee, Li & Rawal, 2021).

Thus, while applied linguistics continues to have second and foreign language teaching and learning at its heart, it increasingly draws upon a range of other disciplines as well as, itself, being composed of a large number of sub-disciplines. The nature of the discipline of applied linguistics contributes both to its richness and potential as an area of study as well as to its complexity and, sometimes, to its fragmentation.

The following section shifts focus from the field of applied linguistics as a whole to a single journal in the field. It presents an analysis of the content contained within the volumes of TEANGA published between 2001 and 2023.

### **Research Topics Covered in TEANGA: 2001-2023**

#### **Context, Research Paradigm, Methodology and Method**

“TEANGA” (the Irish word for 'language') is a bilingual (English Irish), research-oriented journal. It implements double-blind peer review and has been indexed in the Scopus database since 2020 (TEANGA Website). The journal first appeared in print form in 1979 and has been an online, open access journal since 2017 (TEANGA Website). It is affiliated with the [Irish Association for Applied Linguistics \(IRAAL\)](#) and an annual volume has been launched in recent years at the *Annual Conference of the Irish Association for Applied Linguistics*. IRAAL, founded in 1975 is the leading body responsible for the development and promotion of applied linguistics in Ireland and IRAAL is itself affiliated with the *Association Internationale de Linguistique Appliquée* [International Association of Applied Linguistics] (AILA).

This study employed a longitudinal case study design (Yin, 2018). This is understood here as the analysis of the content of a single journal (or case) over time. Content analysis was used to identify the focal topic in each of the articles published in the eight annual volumes and six special issues of TEANGA that were published between 2001 and 2023<sup>1</sup>. The process contained both quantitative and qualitative elements and reflects a move away from an exclusively quantitative approach within a positivistic paradigm, towards one

<sup>1</sup> The volumes of *Teanga* referenced for this study are available open access at the following link: <https://journal.iraal.ie/index.php/teanga/issue/archive>

that incorporates a qualitative element and is thus aligned with an interpretivist framework (Graneheim, Lindgren and Lundman, 2017).

The quantitative element involved identifying the focal topic in the case of each paper and using percentages and analysis of chronological trends to obtain insights regarding the most salient areas and their development over time. In cases where an article spanned more than one research area, the researcher determined which topic was the more/most salient based on its significance within the research presented (interpretative content analysis).

The analysis took place in three phases. In phase one, the titles and abstracts of the 69 articles in the eight annual volumes published between 2001 and 2023 were collated. The annual volumes include both papers presented at the annual IRAAL conferences and others submitted to the journal editors for consideration for publication. The eight volumes were TEANGA 20, 22 and 25-30. TEANGA 21, 23 and 24 were excluded from the first part of the analysis as, although not specifically categorised as special issues in the journal’s [archives](#), they focussed nonetheless on a single issue. They were therefore categorised for the purpose of this study with the three issues explicitly labelled as special issues (Table 1).

**Table 1:**

***Teanga volumes published between 2001 and 2023***

<b>Year</b>	<b>Annual Volumes</b>	<b>Special Issues/Guest edited volumes focussing on a single topic</b>
2023	<b>30</b>	–
2022	<b>29</b>	–
2021	<b>28</b>	12: (Dis)Covering Discourses in Ireland

2020	<b>27</b>	11: Irish Sign Language (ISL)
2019	<b>26</b>	10: Multilingualism in the Early Years
2018	<b>25</b>	–
2016	–	24. Language Teacher Education
2005	–	23. Learning German as a Foreign Language
2004	<b>22</b>	–
2004	–	21. Corpus Linguistics
2001	<b>20</b>	–

Once the titles and abstracts of the articles in the annual volumes referred to above (Stage 1) had been compiled, the focus/topic of each article was identified by the researcher and categorised as best fitting under one of the following headings (provided below in alphabetical order).

- Bi-, Multi- and Plurilingualism
- Corpus Linguistics
- (Critical) Discourse Analysis
- Forensic Linguistics
- Language Planning and Policy
- Second and Foreign Language Teaching and Learning (including Language Teacher Education)
- Lexicography
- Literacy



- Neurolinguistics
- Psycholinguistics
- Raciolinguistics
- Pragmatics
- SLA
- Sociolinguistics
- Translation
- Other

These headings were derived from the review of the nature of applied linguistics in the opening section of this paper (Introduction). The option “other” was included to allow for the possibility of topics in other sub-fields of applied linguistics or related fields emerging.

Once the papers had been categorised (Table 2), the total number of papers in each year was used to determine a percentage frequency figure for each category in each year (Table 2, Figure 1, Figure 2). Despite the quantitative nature of this work there remains a degree of interpretation of a more qualitative nature required on the part of the researcher in terms of for which category a particular research paper is most appropriate, given the porous, permeable nature of the categories and the interdisciplinary nature of some of the material. This reflects the move within content analysis, discussed by Graneheim, Lindgren and Lundman (2017, pp. 29) (Introduction), from, “‘a counting game’ to a more interpretative approach within the qualitative paradigm”.

In phase two, the single-issue volumes (including the Special Issues) were reviewed in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the topics published in TEANGA over the time period. The number of articles and their topics in each single-issue volume were considered.

It emerged that, unsurprisingly given its centrality to applied linguistics, a particularly significant number of articles dealt with the area of second and foreign language teaching and learning. It was, therefore, decided to conduct a second level of analysis on the topics categorised as belonging to the field of second and foreign language teaching and learning (phase three). A similar approach was used to phase one with the one difference that a list of potential categories was not prepared in advance. Instead, an inductive approach was employed to allow the themes to emerge from the data. To begin, the list of titles and abstracts for the papers categorised as belonging to the field of second and foreign language teaching and learning was reviewed a second time. The individual topics were then identified and collated according to sub-themes (Figure 3). The findings of these analyses are presented in the following section.

## **Findings**

### **Phase 1: Annual Volumes**

The results of the first stage of the analysis are presented in the following table (Table 2). The results for each volume are presented in the same format, i.e. the raw number in brackets followed by the percentage of the total number of papers published in that year/annual volume that it represents.

**Table 2**

*Papers published categorised by topic and by year*

<b>Year/ Topic</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>n=9</b>	<b>n=11</b>	<b>n=9</b>	<b>n=4</b>	<b>n=9</b>	<b>n=11</b>	<b>n=7</b>	<b>n=9</b>	<b>n=69</b>

Bi-, Multi- and Plurilingualism			(1) 11			(1) 9	(1) 14	(2) 22	(5) 7.2
Corpus Linguistics		(1) 9				(1) 9	(2) 29	(1) 11	(5) 7.2
(Critical) Discourse Analysis	(1) 11	(1) 9							(2) 2.9
Forensic Linguistics					(1) 11				(1) 1.5
Language Planning and Policy	(2) 22	(1) 9	(1) 11	(1) 25	(3) 33	(1) 9			(9) 13
Language Teaching and Learning	(5) 56	(5) 45	(5) 56	(2) 50	(3) 33	(4) 36	(4) 57	(3) 33	(31) 45
Lexicography						(1) 9			(1) 1.5
Literacy								(1) 11	(1) 1.5
Neurolinguistics									0
Pragmatics			(1) 11						(1) 1.5
Psycholinguistics									0
Raciolinguistics									0
Second Language Acquisition			(1) 11			(1) 9			(2) 2.9
Sociolinguistics	(1) 11	(2) 18			(2) 22	(2) 9		(2) 22	(9) 13
Translation				(1) 25					(1) 1.5
Other		(1) 9							(1) 1.5

For ease of interpretation, the same data is presented in the following two figures (Figures 1 and 2). Figure 1 provides a summary view of the areas in which articles were published between 2001 and 2023. The largest percentage (45%) of articles published dealt with topics

in the field of second and foreign language teaching and learning. This was followed by language policy (13%), and sociolinguistics (13%). Multilingualism and plurilingualism (7.2%) and corpus linguistics (7.2%) follow in turn. These areas are followed by discourse analysis (2.9%) and SLA (2.9%). The final group contains papers classified as forensic linguistics (1.5%), lexicography (1.5%), literacy (1.5%) and pragmatics (1.5%). Reflecting the journal's particular context, issues relating to Irish-English bilingualism and Irish immersion education also feature significantly across a number of research domains. The paper listed under "other" was in the field of phonology and concerned itself with comparing the speech of an English speaker from the Republic of Ireland, living in New Zealand, with what the literature suggests would be typical Irish English speech. It is possible in the light of the discussion in the first section of this paper that the topic may lie closer to the field of linguistics than to the field of applied linguistics (see discussion in Nádasy, 1995). No other papers were classified under the heading of "other" suggesting that the list of topics identified for this analysis was a sufficiently comprehensive set of potential categories in this case. The remaining areas listed, i.e. neurolinguistics, psycholinguistics and raciolinguistics were not represented in the selected publications.

**Figure 1:**

*Primary focus of articles published between 2001 and 2023*

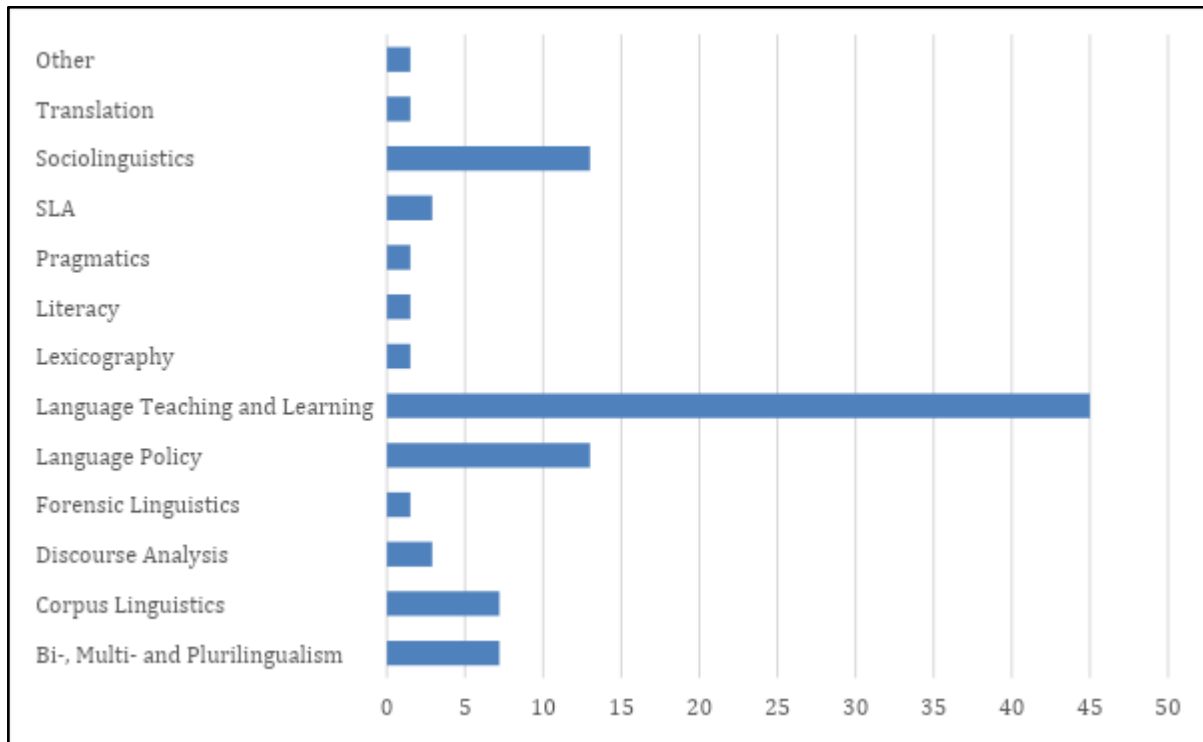
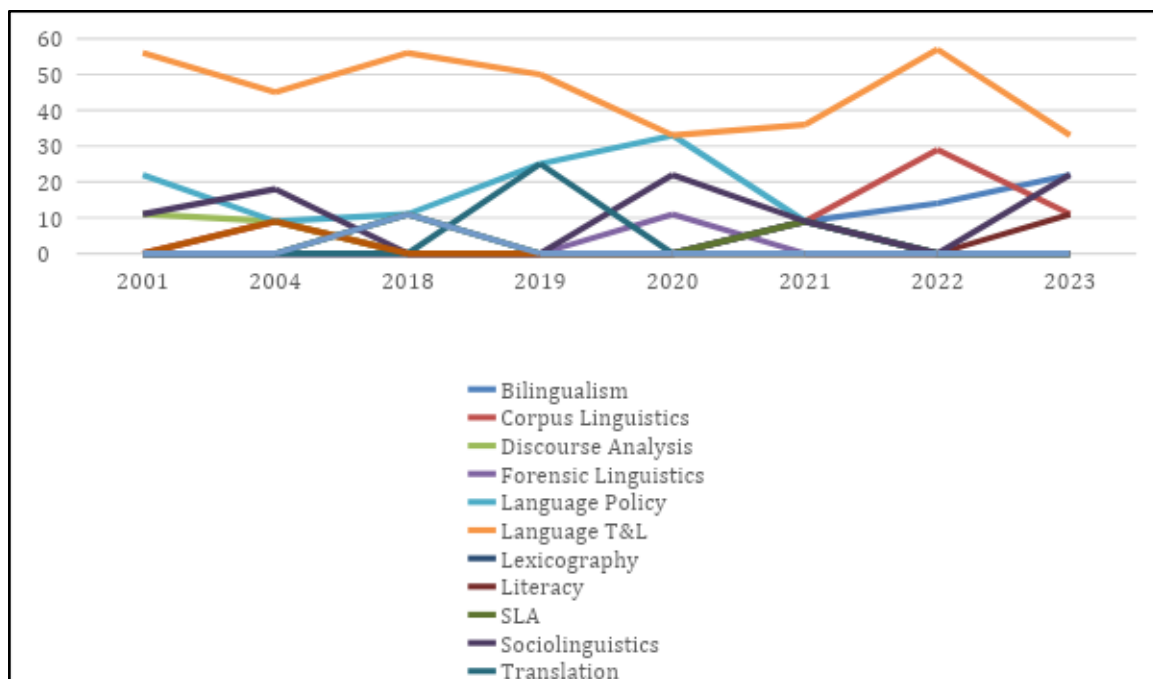


Figure 2 presents the data in the form of a line or trend diagram in order to make it easier to observe developments over time. Again, the relative strength and stability of second and foreign language teaching and learning can be observed. Language policy is stronger in the earlier years of the analysis. In general, however, no other clear trends emerge with most areas demonstrating some change but remaining relatively stable over the time period.

**Figure 2**

*Changes in fields of focus of articles published in TEANGA between 2001 and 2023*



## Phase 2: Special Issues

Six volumes of TEANGA, focussing on a single issue were published alongside the annual issues during the timeframe of this study. Two were devoted to articles on second and foreign language teaching and learning, one to multilingualism and plurilingualism, one to corpus linguistics, one to Irish Sign Language (ISL) and one to discourse analysis.

The first, [TEANGA 20](#), published in 2004, contained eight articles written in 2002 following the first *Inter-Varietal Applied Corpus Studies* conference. The topics fall within the scope of corpus linguistics. They include the Limerick Corpus of Irish English, multi-word clusters in spoken English, personal pronouns, grades and changes in student academic writing, discourse features in spoken Burmese, adult literacy learners' experience of spoken and written ellipsis, semi-specialized corpora of written French in language learning,

exchange in family discourse, and intonation of declarative-mood questions in Hong Kong English (TEANGA Website).

The second, [TEANGA 23](#), is in the field of language teaching and learning. Published in 2005, it contains eight articles on aspects of teaching and learning German as a foreign language in Ireland. These include the role of *Landeskunde* (civilisation studies) in the German language classroom, an experimental study designed to test the pedagogical approach, and Community Language Learning. These papers were followed by two studies of university language learners. The first assessed their levels of motivation and confidence and the second their levels of motivation and attitudes towards language learning. A further paper reflected on a pilot module using a Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach. This was followed by a sixth on the impact of the use of word processing tools on the teaching of writing skills in the foreign language. The seventh paper also considered the learning and teaching of writing for school pupils while the final paper presents the findings of an empirical study on the teaching and learning of the gender of German nouns.

Published in 2016, [TEANGA 24](#) focuses on language teacher education. It contains eight papers looking at Irish language programmes in Initial Teacher Education, Continuous Professional Development for foreign language teachers, language education for non-native language teachers, peer observation in language teaching, language teacher education in Ireland North and South, languages in Northern Ireland education, and research methods in second language didactics (TEANGA website).

[Special Issue 10](#) deals with multilingualism in the early years. Published in 2019, it is made up of selected papers from the *Multilingualism in the Early Years* conference held in 2017. It contains four keynote papers dealing with intervention to support oral language skills in English, early years provision in Wales, the benefits of multilingual environments for early language learning, and the use of picture books to support language learning. The research

papers deal with the silent period in second language acquisition, language maintenance in bilingual children, English as an Additional Language in primary school, heritage languages, minority language development, Polish supplementary schools, the relationships between language and emotion, pre-primary school programmes, transition between early school levels, English in *Gaeltacht* primary schools and oral production in young children (TEANGA Website).

[Special Issue 11](#) is concerned with Irish Sign Language (ISL). Several of the papers were presented at the inaugural *Irish Deaf Research Conference on ISL and Deafness* in 2018. The topics covered include the origins of ISL, a lexical frequency analysis of ISL, embodiment in ISL passives, verbs in ISL, the European Language Portfolio and ISL learners, fingerspelling in ISL, deaf people and the Irish justice system, and interpreter teams.

Finally, [Special Issue 12](#), focusses on the discourses of Ireland. It brings together papers discussing and challenging discourses written by researchers from a variety of fields including linguistics, literature, cultural studies, social studies, sociology, government and politics, economics, clinical therapies and media studies. The topics covered include politics, identity, gender, health and migration. In a departure from the other special issues, what unites the papers in this special issue is not a topic but instead the fact that the papers all report on research which used either discourse analysis or critical discourse analysis as the methodological approach.

There are a number of common traits visible in the focus of the annual volumes and the special issues. These include the centrality of second and foreign language teaching and learning which also comprises language teacher education, the significance of multilingualism and plurilingualism as well as the established place of discourse analysis and corpus linguistics. ISL appears for the first time in these special issues while language



planning and policy, and sociolinguistics play a less prominent role than in the annual issues. The role of research methodology in applied linguistics also begins to emerge as a particular issue with one volume devoted to studies on different topics that use what has been described as both a research domain and a research methodology, i.e. corpus linguistics (McEnery and Hardy, 2012).

### **Topics in Language Teaching and Learning**

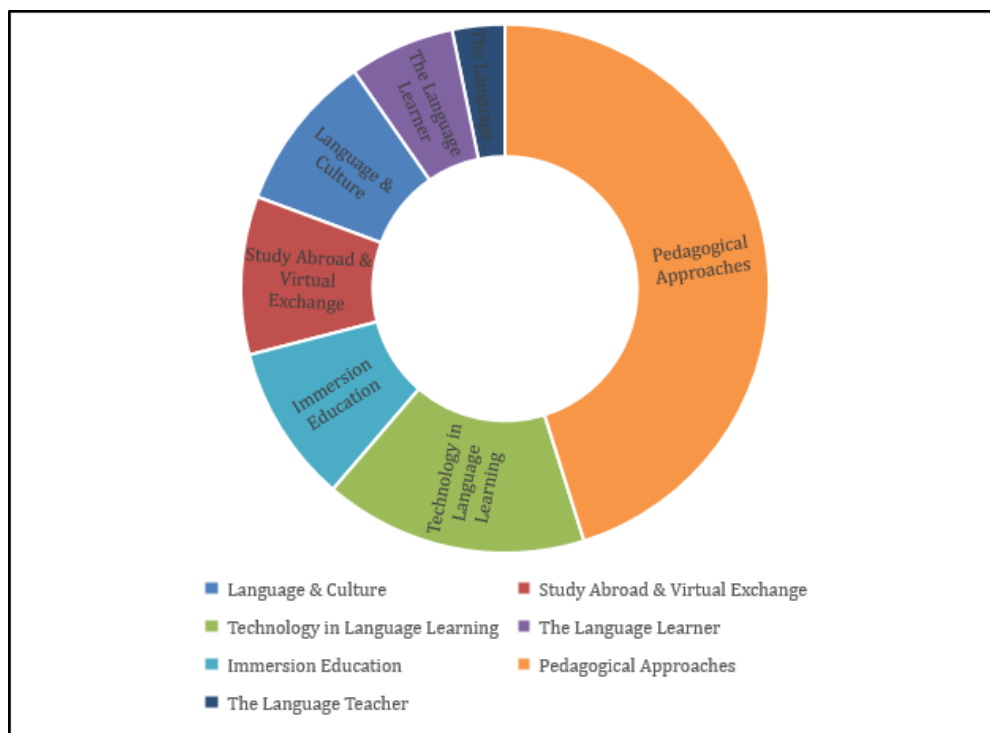
The analysis of the topics focussed upon within the broader area of language teaching and learning in the annual volumes indicated that one way of classifying them is under the following broad themes (presented here in order of frequency of publications over the time period):

- Pedagogical Approaches to Second and Foreign Language Learning, Teaching and Assessment
- Technology in Second and Foreign Language Teaching and Learning
- Language and Culture in the Language Classroom
- Study Abroad and Virtual Exchange
- Immersion Education
- The Language Learner
- The Language Teacher

As Figure 3 below again demonstrates, pedagogical approaches to second and foreign language learning, teaching and assessment dominate with 14 papers devoted to this area. This is followed by technology in second and foreign language teaching and learning (5), language and culture in the language classroom (3), study abroad and virtual exchange (3), immersion education (3), the language learner (2) and the language teacher (1). As was to be expected, there was considerable overlap within papers with a number encompassing more

than one topic. Again (as with the classification process for the papers in the annual issues), the dominant topic or focus of the paper was chosen as the basis for categorisation, thus involving an element of interpretative qualitative analysis alongside the more traditional quantitative approach (Graneheim, Lindgren and Lundman, 2017).

**Figure 3:**  
**Sub-topics of second and foreign language teaching and learning covered in annual issues of TEANGA 2001-2023**



In addition, one of the special issues focussed exclusively on language teacher education while the second, which focussed on the teaching of German in the Irish classroom also concerned itself with pedagogical approaches including Community Language Learning and CLIL alongside the teaching of writing, and noun gender (see Special Issues above).

There were no obvious trends in terms of the frequency with which these topics were the focus of publications in TEANGA between 2001 and 2023. However, the focus of the areas covered by the papers has evolved in line with social and technological changes (see

Pennycook, 2021 and Schuman, 2010 in the first section of this paper) as well as developments within the subdisciplines.

For example, in the category, Pedagogical Approaches to Learning, Teaching and Assessment, there is a greater focus on questions around the integration of translation (Little, 2004) and literature (Amador Moreno, 2004; Shanley & McDermott, 2004) into English, French and German language courses. This research continues to remain valuable both in its own right and as a foundation for developing areas such as pedagogical translation (Dooly & Vinagre, 2022). There is greater focus in the later publications on more recent pedagogical approaches, such as mediation (North, 2022) and CLIL, including where a learner may be working through a third language in Irish immersion settings (Ní Dhíorbháin, 2020), as well as on approaches suited to languages more recently introduced into the Irish education system such as Chinese (Osborne, 2018). There is also an increasing emphasis across the domains of both pedagogical approaches and the use of technology on informal or extracurricular language learning beyond the more traditional classroom setting (Catibusic, B., Karazi, S., & Deng, J. 2023; Osborne and Zhang, 2023), involving for example a smartphone (Mullen, 2021). In contrast, some of the earlier material focusses to a greater extent on self-access language centres and multimedia rooms. The impact of technological development continues to be visible through the area of study abroad with a recent study considering the potentially transformative nature of virtual exchange (O'Reilly & Arnold, 2022) alongside actual study abroad (Howard, 2020).

### **Concluding Remarks**

The focus of this paper is on the evolution of the content in the applied linguistics journal, TEANGA. The research had two main objectives. The first was to identify trends in the applied linguistics research published in TEANGA in order to gain greater insights into the

nature of the field. The second objective was to facilitate reflection on how the research published in TEANGA compares with developments in the field of applied linguistics as a whole.

In terms of the first objective, the findings indicate that, in line with the discipline of applied linguistics more broadly, second and foreign language teaching and learning including language teacher education is a central focus of both the annual and special issues of TEANGA. In addition, a number of other sub-disciplines are significant. These include multilingualism and plurilingualism, sociolinguistics, language policy, corpus linguistics, discourse analysis, second language acquisition, as well as, to a lesser extent, forensic linguistics, lexicography, literacy and pragmatics.

There were no obvious trends in terms of research articles in these particular broad areas either consistently increasing or decreasing in number over the time period. However, an evolution in terms of one topic analysed in greater depth was observed. In this regard, the focus was placed on the most quantitatively significant topic, i.e. second and foreign language teaching and learning where the impact of technological advances, socio-political change and increased linguistic diversity on the nature of research into language teaching and learning was observed.

In relation to the second objective, limited evidence was found in the publications in TEANGA between 2001 and 2023 of some of the emerging areas in the broader field of applied linguistics. These include social justice, race and gender, artificial intelligence and multilingual sustainability. It is unsurprising that the content of a journal is strongly influenced by its history and context. However, the absence of some of the emerging areas in applied linguistics may change in the future, given the journal's stated aims of encouraging:

...submissions with a solid theoretical foundation and rigorous methodology, but also innovation and creativity in researching new areas of applied linguistics and related fields (TEANGA Website, n.d.).

TEANGA may consider, for example, inviting papers on some of these emerging topics or commissioning special issues in these subfields of applied linguistics. It is also possible that future submissions to TEANGA may naturally fall within these domains as these emerging areas develop further in significance within the wider field of applied linguistics.

Ethical research in applied linguistics did not appear as a topic in the material reviewed. However, in terms of research methodologies employed in the papers, an increasing preponderance of qualitative over quantitative experimental studies was noted, a trend also observed by other applied linguists (see Mackey, Fell, de Jesus, Hall, & Ku, 2022). While not a focus of this study, the changing nature of research methodologies in applied linguistics would be a valuable focus of future work.

There are of course limitations to this study. Publications in a single journal are not representative of an entire discipline. Some of the focal topics of such publications are influenced by the environment in which a journal is situated and its possible association with national conferences, colloquia and other similar events. This is reflected, for example, in this case in the number of publications related to Irish-English bilingualism and Irish immersion education in TEANGA. In addition, publications represent only one aspect of the state of the art in any discipline alongside conference papers, reports, Special Interest Groups etc. This is particularly true of a praxis-oriented discipline such as applied linguistics with its focus on real-world issues.

Nonetheless, the study provides some insights into the nature and evolution of the discipline of applied linguistics, particularly as it is understood by contributors to and editors

of the journal, TEANGA. It also suggests emerging areas within applied linguistics within which TEANGA may choose to have a presence in the future.

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<sup>2</sup> This article was first published in print in 2004 and appeared online in 2019.