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SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND SOCIOLOGY OF LANGUAGE

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***Abstract.** This article explores the dynamic intersection of sociolinguistics and the sociology of language, two interdisciplinary fields that illuminate the complex relationship between language and society. Sociolinguistics investigates language variation and usage patterns within social contexts, emphasizing how language reflects and shapes identities, communities, and power dynamics. Concurrently, the sociology of language takes a broader sociological perspective, examining language as a social institution influenced by factors such as globalization, language policies, and ideological beliefs. The synthesis of sociolinguistics and the sociology of language contributes to a comprehensive understanding of language in its societal context.*

***Key words.** Sociolinguistics, social factors, identity and ethnicity, gender, economic status, occupation, geographical location*

Introduction

Language is far more than a mere tool for communication; it is deeply intertwined with social structures, cultural identities, and power dynamics within societies. The interdisciplinary fields of sociolinguistics and the sociology of language offer invaluable perspectives on how language functions within various social contexts and how it shapes and reflects broader societal phenomena.

Sociolinguistics is concerned with the study of language in relation to society. It investigates how language varies across different social groups, geographical regions, and contexts, emphasizing the impact of social factors such as ethnicity, gender, age, socio-economic status, and cultural identity on language use and variation. At the heart of sociolinguistics lies the recognition that language is not a static entity but a dynamic system that adapts and evolves within diverse social environments.

Key themes within sociolinguistics include the exploration of language variation, language and identity, language contact and bilingualism, and the sociopolitical aspects of language use. By analyzing linguistic phenomena through a sociological lens, sociolinguists uncover patterns of linguistic behavior and understand the intricate interplay between language and social life.

The sociology of language broadens the focus beyond individual language use to encompass language as a social institution. This field investigates how language is influenced by and in turn influences broader social structures, power dynamics, and cultural practices. Scholars in the sociology of language study language policies, language ideologies, language planning, and the impact of globalization on linguistic diversity.

MAIN PART

The majority of the scholars attempt to find a distinction between sociolinguistics and the sociology of language. Let us take the sociolinguistics first; it is mainly concerned with investigating the relationship between language and society with the goal being a better understanding of the structure of language and of how languages function in communication. The term sociology of language is pretty much similar to sociolinguistics; sociology of language is trying to

discover how social structure can be better understood through the study of language.

William Labov: Labov is considered the father of sociolinguistics. He is known for his research on language variation and change in urban settings, particularly in the United States. His famous study on the pronunciation of the "r" sound in New York City showed how linguistic variables are used to signal social identity and class.

Sociolinguists study the relationship between language and society. They are interested in explaining why we speak differently in different social contexts, and they are concerned with identifying the social functions of language and the ways it is used to convey social meaning. Examining the way people use language in different social contexts provides a wealth of information about the way language works, as well as about the social relationships in a community, and the way people convey and construct aspects of their social identity through their language. In other words, sociolinguistics studies language and how it varies based on the user's sociological background, such as gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic class. We also indicate aspects of our social identity through the way we talk. Our speech provides clues to others about who we are, where we come from, and perhaps what kind of social experiences we have had. We also express different aspects of our social identity through our linguistic choices, as well as the ways in which we draw on our sociolinguistic knowledge to construct or enact a particular type of social identity.

Sociology of language seeks to understand the way that social dynamics are affected by individual and group language use. According to National Taiwan University of Science and Technology Chair of Language Center Su-Chiao Chen, language is considered to be a social value within this field, which researches social groups for phenomena like multilingualism and lingual conflict. It has to do with who is 'authorized' to use what language, with whom and under what conditions.

Social factors influencing the language use

Language variation and varieties are the different ways in which the same language is spoken by different groups of people. The variation and varieties exist due to several factors, one of which is social factors. Social factors are the external factors that shape and influence the way people speak a language. In this report, we are going to explore the social factors that necessitate language variation and varieties. Social factors: Geographic location, Social class, Education, Ethnicity, Age, Identity, Occupation

The difference between the sociolinguistics and the sociology of language

The key difference between sociolinguistics and sociology of language is that the focus of sociolinguistics is language whereas the focus of sociology of language is society.

Sociolinguistics and sociology of language are two closely related fields that study the interaction between society and language. However, these two fields are not the same. Sociolinguistics basically studies how social factors affect language whereas sociology of language studies the relationship between society and language. Thus, there is a distinctive difference between sociolinguistics and sociology of language.

The importance of the sociolinguistics and the sociology of language

Sociolinguistics plays a crucial role in today's society for several reasons:

Understanding Diversity: In an increasingly interconnected world, societies are becoming more diverse in terms of languages spoken, dialects, and language varieties. Sociolinguistics helps us understand the rich tapestry of linguistic diversity within and across communities. This understanding is essential for promoting tolerance, respect, and inclusivity in multicultural societies.

Language Policy and Planning: Sociolinguistic research informs language policies and planning efforts at local, national, and international levels. By studying language use patterns and language attitudes, policymakers can develop more effective language policies that promote linguistic equity, support minority languages, and foster social cohesion.

Identity Construction: Language is intricately tied to individual and group identities. Sociolinguistics helps us understand how language choices reflect and shape identity construction processes. By examining language practices in various social contexts, we gain insights into how individuals negotiate their identities and navigate complex social landscapes.

In summary, it can be stated that sociolinguistics is a significant phenomenon and it should be considered and taken into account whenever the person wants to communicate effectively. This field is particularly relevant because of the social factors which are involved within this concept. When a person wants to socialize with people, that person should consider all of the social factors discussed in this report in order to avoid awkward situations. Sociolinguistics is indispensable in today's society for fostering understanding, promoting linguistic equity, supporting diversity, and addressing the complex language-related challenges of the modern world. By studying the social aspects of language, sociolinguists contribute to building more inclusive, equitable, and communicatively competent societies. This report summarized everything that exists within research papers; the field is open for the further exploration.

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