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Linguistics Course (3rd Year)
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Sociolinguistics

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Sociolinguistics

- **Sociolinguistics**

Sociolinguistics is the scientific study of the social aspects of language. It is the study of language in relation to society. All the aspects that were rejected by the various linguistic models in studying language were given full emphasis in sociolinguistics: language variation, speech variation, language planning.

- **Historical Review**

Linguistics in the first half of the 20th c was dominated by structuralism. Saussure made the dichotomy (*Langue/parole*) to point out the fact that the subject study of linguistics is and should be “*langue*”. Structuralists consider language to be an interlocking system or structure operating independently of the speaker. The salient feature of structuralism lies in its aims to a grammatical abstract categorization or description of language which transcends the geographic, social and individual variabilities.

American structuralism (*descriptivism*) developed from the study of the various disappearing Indian language. This led researchers such as ***Bloomfield, Sapir & Boas*** to consider only the observable data, dismissing introspection, personal judgements and meaning. In fact, the descriptivists were more restricted in their study of language than were the Europeans.

In the second half of the 20th century occurred a paradigm shift in linguistics from phonological, morphological analysis to syntactic analysis of sentences. This shift was triggered by the work of ***Noam Chomsky*** (1975). What was common in generative grammar with structuralism is the restriction of language to competence. *Chomsky's* distinction between *competence* /*performance* is to a certain extent similar to Saussure's *Langue/Parole* dichotomy.

The major trends in linguistics based their Analysis of language on the rejection of the social dimension or aspect of language. This resulted in the elaboration of an abstract and formal system (*langue & competence*).

- **Antoine Meillet**

One of the first linguists who criticized this formal decontextualized account of language was the French *Antoine Meillet*. He was one of *Saussure's* followers. Nevertheless he assumed that an objective account of language should include the social aspects of language because he believes that “*language is eminently a social phenomenon*”. Yet, he also acknowledged the fact that language is an interwoven system.

- **The social Context:** The resurgence of poverty in the USA in the 60s & 70s, as well as in many industrialized countries brought about the problem of the social insertion of the various minority group (Black, Indian, Hispanics) & immigrants. Related to these problems was the academic failure of children coming from the lower classes. Some linguists & sociologists investigated these problems where language was largely involved.

- **Basil Bernstein**

In his investigation into the academic failure of some children, the British sociologist *Bernstein* introduced the distinction between two codes: “*The Elaborated Code*” and “*The Restricted Code*”. The first code is used in formal & educated situations, displaying a range of linguistic alternations such as: Subordinate clauses, adjectives, passives...etc. It is associated with the middle class. By contrast, the second code is used in informal situations; linguistically, full of pronouns, question tags, & the use of gestures & intonation to convey meaning. This code is associated with the working class. The assumption implicit in *Bernstein's* distinction is that linguistic variation is determined by social classes. This brought about the concept of linguistic handicap or deficiency, i.e. children with the restricted code would not succeed in school where the elaborated code is the Norm.

- **William Labov**

Modern Sociolinguistics is generally ascribed to the American *William Labov*. The publication of his book “*The Social Stratification of English in New York*” made a major advance in sociolinguistics because he introduced quantitative techniques which enabled linguistics to investigate the processes involved in language change such as /**H**/ dropping-and the usage of /**r**/ in *NXC*. *Labov*

showed that young speakers from the lower middle class reintroduced the /r/ in words like “farm”, “form” because this form is linked to the upper class: prestigious. **Labov** assumes that even *performance* (*not only competence*) displays regularities, so it can be systematically described. He tried to correlate the linguistic variation with the social classes. Accordingly, sociolinguistics must transcend the opposition *Langue/Parole*, *Competence /Performance*, because it provides a limited framework to the study of language.

Labov considers grammar (*language*) not as a knowledge internalized by the ideal speaker-hearer, but grammar reflects a given speech community.

- **Conclusion**

Sociolinguistics is an interdisciplinary study or discipline. As its name suggests; it is a combination between *Sociology* and *Linguistics*.

There is, however, a clear cut distinction between the three (03) disciplines.

Consider the following utterance: “*I wanna eat a pizza*”.

1. **For a sociologist**, it represents a social interaction of integration is subservient to the use of language.
 2. **For a linguist**, the utterance is a simple sentence composed of a subject, verb and predicate, it consists of five (05) morphemes; eat has (02) phonemes.
 3. **For a sociolinguist**, the utterance may shed light on the social background, linguistic community of the speaker.
- **Wonna**: is informal form of (*want to*), so the speaker may be speaking to a friend not to, says a teacher, president...etc. The speaker then is an American (*wonna* is American word).
 - **Pizza** is a borrowing from Italian.

- **Language and Society**

In fact, we speak in terms of regional accent or dialect, however, our speech may contain a number of features which are unrelated to regional variation. Two people growing up in the same geographical area may speak differently because of a number of social factors. Speech is a form of social identity & is used consciously or unconsciously to indicate membership of different social groups or different speech communities. Thereafter, a speech community is a group of people who share a set of norms & rules regarding the use of language. This is known as “*sociolinguistics*”.

- What is *sociolinguistics*?

Sociolinguistics is considered as a branch of Linguistics that studies the inter relationship between language & society. Its history is dated between (1960-1970). It has strong connections to anthropology, through the investigation of language & culture. This is on the one hand. On the other hand, *sociolinguistics* is related to sociology, through the role played by language in the organization of social groups and institutions. So there is a *reciprocal effect* between *language & society*, i.e. society affects language & language affects society.

-Society affects Language

This is mainly seen through the semantic change. In society, we may find new items added to the previous ones and others disappear & this is because of men’s convention. So, language changes since it is a living phenomenon, that’s why we notice its evolution, otherwise it dies. Ex: In *Russian*, what was lexicalized after the world war became non lexicalized as:

- The wife’s brother: “*Shurin*”, but later on became “*Brat Zheny*”.
- Brother’s wife: “*Nevestka*”, it became “*Zhena brata*”.

So, they were affected by society either by invasion through ‘*Mass Media*’ or ‘*military invasion*’.

-Language affects Society

Sometime it is language which imposes itself on society & affects society too much. Ex: Two persons don't know each others & meet in the train department. One says: "A nice day, isn't it!" Here, language serves to make solidarity between people.

We can then differentiate between two important aspects or areas to investigate:

- 1- Micro-Sociolinguistics, i.e. "Narrow". We mean language in use.
- 2- Macro-Sociolinguistics, i.e. "Broad". To deal with dialects, register, bilingualism, style, diglossia, accents....etc.

Sociolinguistics was broadly defined by **Hudson** (1980) as: "*The study of language in relation to society.*" (p01). This is a "Macro" definition of sociolinguistics.

Whereas the Micro-sociolinguistics was defined by **Fishman** as: "*The study of who speaks to whom, when & where, how & what about*".

Who & whom: are referred to the speaker & the listener (*the participants*), this relation with each others, status, sex & age.

- When & where: are referred to the setting (*time & place*).
- How: is concerned with the channel & we've 3 channels:
 - Purely linguistic channel.
 - Paralinguistic channel.
 - The pseudo linguistic channel.

Fishman (1970) says: "*The study of the characteristics of language varieties, the characteristics of their functions and the characteristics of their speakers, as these three constantly interact, change & change one another within a speech community.*"(p4).

Further the individual's speech differs according to many varieties such as: *Dialects, idiolects, styles* (whether formal or not) & *Register* (the set of words & expressions that have a specific meaning in a specific domain). Every Register has its own jargon, i.e. terminology & every variety has a specific function. Those varieties are so different & change in their function & even the speaker

himself, he changes & if one changes, the others also change. As a result, such *three characteristics* interact with each other.

In short, sociolinguists tried to analyse (*language in use*) instead of taking a piece of language & understand its structure. So, we should know to *whom* it is said, *when & where* (*narrow scope*) in addition to the use of other features such as gestures in conversation that are known as “*paralinguistics*” (*broad scope*). They also tried to see what were the functions of natural & artificial languages to take the human societies & the different roles that are played in language.

Before going into details, it is worth to look at the differences that exist between linguist & sociolinguist; in fact, *the linguist* is interested in the *language structure*, whereas *the sociolinguist* brings *the structure* & adds to it *the use*. He can't start without knowing a given structure, so, sociolinguistics is dependent on linguistics but not vice-versa.

The Difference between Linguistics & Sociolinguistics

Linguistics	Sociolinguistics
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Language: Language is a self contained system made of subsystems: “syntax”, “semantics”&” phonology” ⇔ this is the “<i>Grammatical Competence</i>” (Chomsky). 2. Data: The upper linguistic unit is “<i>the sentence</i>”. 3. Size of Data: Linguists are interested in the “<i>grammaticality</i>” of sentences. 4. The value: Linguists are interested in the functional meaning ex: <i>Why don't you close the door?</i> It is in the form of question. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Language: Language is to be defined in terms of social situation. It is a linguistic means + social factors as:(sex, age, geography...)⇔this is the “<i>Communicative Competence</i>”. 2. Data: The sociolinguistic unit is “<i>the Speech Act</i>” (a word or a piece of discourse). 3. Size of Data: Sociolinguists are interested in the “<i>appropriateness</i>” of utterances. 4. The value: Sociolinguists are interested in the social meaning ex: <i>Why don't you close the door?</i> Here, it could be: an order, a complaint, i.e. implicit order or suggestion. It depends on the relationship between the speakers & the hearers. This sentence can also be the equivalent in social meaning of: “<i>You've left the door open.</i>”

I- The Macro-Sociolinguistics: “Broad”.

Sociolinguists tend to be very much concerned with language variation. In fact, the language can have more than one variety, especially in the way it is spoken, yet this variation in speech is very important & well recognized aspect of our daily lives as language users in different regional & social communities.

1. Language Variation

1.1-Accent & Dialect

Every one speaks with an “*accent*”. Yule (1985) said that “*It is a myth that some speakers have accents while others do not*” (p227). Some speakers may have distinct type of accent while others do not, but every language user speaks with an accent. The term “*accent*” is restricted to the description of aspects of pronunciation only which identify where an individual speaker is from, regionally or socially. It is quite different from “*dialects*”. The latter describes features of grammar and vocabulary as well as aspects of pronunciation.

Furthermore, every one speaks in one dialect or another, just as every one speaks with one accent or another. It is quite possible for different people to speak the same dialect with striking different accents.

a- Lexical Differences

There are many lexical differences between the speech of average well educated American & that of the average well educated English-man, Welshman, Scot or Irishman as for example: “**Elevator**” vs “**Lift**” “**Autumn**” vs “**Fall**”, “**Gas**” vs “**Petrol**”.

Certain words have a feminine connotation & thus they are avoided to be used by men. The difference here has to do with vocabulary. Either men or women, each has a specific way to speak, i.e. specific words through which they are recognized. Thus men avoid using some words that are generally said by women or at least regarded as womanish words as:

***Men use:**

Spoons, forks, knives.

Cups+ saucers.

***Women use:**

Cutlery.

China.

Another example: The kinship relations, which exist in all languages , in “**Yurok**”, it is the sex of the speaker which determines the name of any relation.

✓ | *nelet* | my sister when it is said by a woman.

✓ | *neweyet* | my sister when it is said by a man.

b- Syntactic Differences

People use specific structures & accents. For example:

-In British English: "*I have got*"

-In American English: "*I have gotten*"

This kind of differences of accents affect the identification of forms, ex: the phonemic difference that is exemplified, in many accents of English including **RP**, by the vowel- Contrast of put; putt, could; cud...etc, isn't find in accents of the North & Midlands of England. Consequently, there are forms that are distinguished in RP, but not in a typical Northern or Midlands pronunciation as the infinitive, the simple present tense and the present participle of "*put*" & "*putt*". Differences of context (including those which derive from the syntactic differences between "*put*" & "*putt*") usually make it clear, as they do also in written English, whether "putting" is a form of "*put*" or of "*putt*".

To illustrate the differences in vocabulary, there is an example quoted in *Trudgill* (1983), of an exchange between two British speakers (B&C), & a speaker (A) from Ireland.

A: *How long are youse here?*

B: *Till after Easter.*

(speaker A looks puzzled)

C: *We came on Sunday.*

A: *Ah, youse're here a while then.*

It seems that the construction "*How long are youse here?*", in speaker A's dialect, is used with a meaning close to the structure: "*How long have you been here?*" rather than with the future interpretation "*How long are you going to be Here?*" made by speaker (B). So, English is highly standardized as far as grammar & vocabulary are concerned.

c- The Phonological Differences

Within the same dialect of a language, people use different accents with different pronunciation. In fact, "*the accent*" covers all kinds of phonetic variation. ex: the presence or absence of the phonetic distinction between the so

called **dark**(*velarized*) & **clear**(*non-velarized*) allophones of the phoneme/l/ in English is functionally irrelevant, it is rather relevant to the identification of a person's accent. Another example; there is a quite noticeable degree of nasality in the pronunciation of vowels, in certain positions, in many American accents & this, in fact, serves to distinguish most Americans from non-Americans through their context .ex: The absence of {r} before consonants in forms like farm, farther...etc. is **stigmatized** for similar reasons in New England & not in England, of course where it is a characteristic feature of RP.

Moreover, Americans use the /æ/ phoneme in words like: Calf, bath, pass when the vowel is followed by a voiceless fricative consonant & on occasion by the nasal /n/ whereas the British use /a/phoneme instead of /æ/ only in such a case, but if the vowel is followed by consonants other than those that have been mentioned as in: *cap, cab, cat, bad, back, bag, sand, hang...etc.* Both British English & American English employ /æ/. British & American English differ in the intonation patterns; To illustrate that there is an example given by *Albert Marckwardt* (1965) (p193).

British

My name is John

American

My name is John

In British sentence, the distance from the highest to the lowest tone, is generally greater. Moreover, the British sentence reaches a high tone either at the very beginning or soon after, & then the tone descends gradually until the final terminal juncture is reached. In contrast, the American sentence maintains a fairly level tone until just before the termination.

There is an example to clarify these three kinds of differences " *you don't know what you're talking about*". This sentence meaning or grammar will be used in a similar way either by an English or a Scottish one, since both use standard English form, but have different pronunciation.

However, one who speaks one dialect of Scottish English might say: " *ye dinnae ken whit yer haverin' aboot* ". This sentence has the same meaning as the first, but with different vocabulary (*ken, haverin'*), different pronunciation (*whit aboot*), with different grammatical form as (*dinnae*).

The terms "*accent*" & "*dialect*" are not complementary. What is essentially a uniform dialect, as far Grammar & vocabulary is concerned, can be associated with several more or less different phonological systems. And this is the situation with Standard English.

Despite the difficulties of this sort, there is a mutual intelligibility among many speakers of different dialects or varieties, of English. From a linguistic point of view, no one variety is "*better*" than another, though they are different. From a social point of view, some varieties become more prestigious; in the way that the variety that develops as the standard language is one socially prestigious dialect, originally connected with political or cultural center. ex: *London for British English & Paris for French*.

Therefore sociolinguists opposed *Chomsky's* view that competence is a homogeneous capacity. They said, it is heterogeneous because not every two people would speak exactly alike & even individual himself, his language is different according to the situation & other features. This is known as **Idiolect**.

***Idiolect**

In fact, aspects of the elements of social & regional dialect variation are combined, in one form or another, in the speech of each individual. Individuals may modify & extend their idiolects through life. The term "*idiolect*" is used for the personal dialect of each individual speaker of a language.

There are other factors, such as: voice quality & physical state, which contribute to the identifying features in an individual's speech, but many of the social factors we have described determine each person's idiolect.

The individual may have dialect variants in his repertory and switch from one to the other according to the situation in which he finds himself & to the social group to which he belongs. Thus language variation in the individual & language variation in the community are two sides of the same coin.

1-2- Style, Register and Jargon

After having seen the social factors that are related to variation according to the user of the language, there is another source of variation in an individual's speech that is related to the situation of use. Therefore, there is a gradation of "Style" of speech from the very formal to the very informal, ex: going for a job interview, you may say to a secretary "*Excuse me. Is the manager in his office? I have an appointment*" whereas, when you speak to a friend about another friend, you may produce a less formal version of the message: "*Hey, is that lazy dog still in bed? I gotta him about something*". This type of variation differs from a language to another, ex: In Japanese, there are different terms used for the person you are speaking to, depending on the amount of respect.

Moreover, differences in style can also be found in written language, with business letters, (e.g. *I am writing to inform you...*) versus letters to friends (*just wanted to let you know*) variation according to use specific situations is also studied in terms of **Register**. There are kinds of Registers: The religious register in which we expect to find expressions not found in elsewhere. ex (*ye shall be blessed by him in times of tribulation*). The legal register, however, is unlikely to incorporate some of the expressions you are becoming familiar with from the linguistics register, such as: "*The Morphology of this dialect contains fewer inflectional suffixes*". One of the key features of a "register" is the use of special "**Jargon**".

*Jargon

By a "**Jargon**", it is meant the technical vocabulary associated with a special activity or group. In social terms, "**Jargon**" helps to connect those who see themselves as "*insiders*" in some way & to exclude "*outsiders*".

1.3. a- Diglossia

The term "*diglossia*" is used to describe a situation in which two very different varieties of language co-exist in a speech community, each with a distinct range of social functions. Normally, there is "*high*" variety for formal or serious matters, & a "*low*" variety, for conversation & other informal uses. A form of "*diglossia*" exists in most Arabic speaking countries where the high, or classical, variety is used in lectures, religious speech & formal political talk, while the low variety is the local dialect of colloquial Arabic.

In fact, most of us grow up with some form of speaking one dialect "*in the street*" & having to learn another dialect "*in the school*". However, if we want to talk about people knowing two distinct languages, we have to describe them as being "*bilingual*".

b- Bilingualism

In many countries, regional variation isn't simply a matter of 2 dialects of a single language, but a matter of 2 different languages. For example; Canada, is an officially bilingual country, with both French & English as official languages. More important is the fact that individual bilingualism can be the result of having two parents who speak different languages. The child can acquire the French spoken by this mother & the English spoken by his father. So, there will be two ways to talking according to the person to whom he talks to.

c- Pidgines & Creoles

Among the languages that developed during the slave trade are several known as "*pidgines*" & "*creoles*"

1- Pidgins

A pidgin may be roughly defined as a language that is nobody's native language. It arises in situations where speakers of mutually intelligible language come together.

As an illustration, west African slaves were purchased from different language groups. So that they would be unable to organize. The slaves had to develop a language for survival (only for communication) & borrowed words from the prestige language of the slave. They maintain features of the grammars of their own languages. In Hawaii, the pidgin situation involves partial mixing of Indo European languages especially "*English, French, Spanish...*"

***Characteristics**

Pidgins have a narrow range of styles & uses of small vocabularies. Sometimes not more than 3.000 words. It is used in trading only or other limited contact situations. On linguistic grounds, pidgin English, for example, can't be regarded as a dialect of the English language since it is not understood by English native speakers. It is quite separate from English.

2-Creoles

Creole languages are pidgins that have acquired native speakers. In linguistically mixed communities where a pidgin is used as a lingua Franca, children may acquire it as their native language, particularly if their parents normally communicate in pidgin. When creolization begins to take place, the language will re-acquire all the characteristics of a full non-pidgin language.

***Characteristics**

A Creole language has an expanded vocabulary, a wider range of contractions in Creole & not in pidgin.

Creole languages are perfectly normal languages. The best known Creole languages are the French Creole which is spoken in "Haiti".

II-The Micro-Sociolinguistics : “Narrow”

2.1. Speech & Communication

Sociolinguistics takes language in use, i.e. the description of language in society as opposed to *Chomsky*, who thought that in order to master language we should have the *grammatical competence* that include *syntactic, semantic & phonological* rules. But also in order to master language, we need to another competence which is the “*communicative competence*”; in which we have the ability to use language in context, i.e. We should master the linguistic rules. But when we communicate what matters most is the ability to talk appropriately as the *communicative competence* which involves sociolinguistic rules. So, sociolinguistics emphasizes on “*communication*” either through linguistic rules or non linguistic ones as *para-linguistics*. Thus, we can say that “speech” is the key element to communicate & can reveal our: Education, social class, language, sex, geographical origin, kinship & even intelligence & other social parameters.

The communicative competence involves sociolinguistic rules. It isn't a uniform meaning, it is a differential competence, i.e. It differs from one to another.

2.1.1-The Differential Competence

a*Education

Educated persons have the possibility to master more than one variety, i.e. “*formal & informal*”. Here, there is a choice of words or lexical items and variety of style. It is linked to the mastery of registers; every specific register is characterized by its own terminology, that a non educated person may not have. The more we are mature, the more is complete our grammatical competence & even the “Communicative one”

b*Age & Gender

Within groups of the same social class, there are differences found which are related to the age or gender of speakers.

Concerning “the age”; the more young is, the more distinguishable your language is, i.e. to be different from the language of old persons mainly in the voice or the pronunciation.

In fact, different people speak differently –according to the generation.

***The Gender**

women are more conscious about their accents than men. Women from lower classes have a tendency to imitate an accent which is very close to the “*prestige*” accent. That is to say, female speakers tend to use more prestigious forms than male speakers with the same general social background. For example forms like “*I done it, it growed & he ain’t*” can be found more often in the speech of males & forms as “*I did it, it grew & he isn’t*” in the speech of females. Women also generally discuss their personal feelings more than men. Men appear to prefer non personal topics such as sport & news.

We can thus say that sex is one of the principal sociolinguistically relevant variables in all languages; both in America & in Britain, women are more likely than men to adopt the accent or dialect that is associated with higher social status. So these are differences between men’s & women’s speech with respect to what is socially “prestigious”.

c*Geographical Belonging of People

People use specific structures & accents, ex: Even within the same country England, there are differences between the North & the South.

**In the North*: you need hair cutting. (They also say “*pail*”)

**In the South*: you need your hair cut. (They also say “*bucket*”)

So, a line that is called “isogloss” can be drawn to represent the boundary that exist between 2 areas.

D*Kinship Relations

The choice of items depends on the social class in which he belongs, so different accents distinguish different classes)

We speak differently with parents or teachers not as we normally speak with friends.

E*Social Class

The choice of items depends on the social class in which he belongs, so different accents distinguish different classes.

The Middle high class

- *Sweet*
- *Lavatory*
- *Napkin*
- *Shoes*

The low work class

- *Dessert /pudding*
- *Toilet/loo*
- *Serviette*
- *Footwear*

Thus the difference in situations of communication would necessarily lead to a big difference in value. Ex: “*It is cold in here*”. This sentence may have many different values, ex: informative, phatic function, introductory element ...etc. Social classes are different & are important in the investigation of social dialect. A famous study by **Labov** (1972) combined elements from place of occupation & socio-economic status by looking at pronunciation differences among sales people in three New York city department stores. **Saks** (high status), **Macy’s** (Middle status) & **Klein’s** (low status). “**Labov**” asked sales people that elicited the expression “*fourth floor*”. He was interested in the pronunciation or not of the (r) sound after vowels. There was regular pattern: The higher the socio-economic status, the more ® sounds & the lower socio-economic status, the fewer (r) sounds were produced.

Trudgill (1974) found the same variable, i.e. (r) after a vowel had the opposite social value. Upper Middle class speakers tended to pronounce fewer (r) sound than lower working class speakers. There are individuals who seem to have two (r) sound at all as in the following: (*isn’t that mahvellous, dahling*)” Again with the lower class & less educated people, there is the co-occurrence of (n) rather than (g) at the end of words like: walking & going, pronunciations represented by “*Sittin & drinkin*” are associated with lower class as well as the (H) that is dropped as in words like :” *’ouse & ’ello*” (lower social class).

Many studies , thereafter, have been done to know whether the social class affects the communication or not. Among them, the British sociolinguist *Bernstein* who worked with children from different social belonging or origins & this was exactly in “1970”, at school & he found that language has two codes.

- “An Elaborated Code , i.e. Explicit”
- “A Restricted Code, i.e. Restrained”.

****An Elaborated Code**

It is close to the formal style & used by the rich people. It is higher in degree & more complex. Linguistically is explicit in terms of grammar. It contains a lot of adjectives, verbs, Nouns, adverbs & passive constructions. The one who speaks the elaborated code doesn't make a lot of assumptions about the hearer's knowledge & we do not take things for granted that the speaker normally knows. The speaker uses a lot the pronoun “I” it means that the speaker is trying to impose his individuality & uniqueness. This code is used at school.

****A Restricted Code**

It is less formal than the first & used by working class (public). It contains short sentences, i.e. “*elliptical*”. The speaker here makes a lot of assumptions about the hearer's knowledge. ex: A child thinks that we know things that they know, but, in fact, we don't know such things. They also use tag questions. In addition to the use of “*we*” & “*you*” to show the speaker's belonging or membership within a given social group.

The sociolinguist “*Bernstein*” found that children mark the social belonging. He found that those from “ Middle high class” master both: “ *The elaborated & the restricted code* “ while the lower class master only the “ Restricted code “ & this affects not only their speech , but also their disadvantage in school. It will be very difficult for the working class children to master the “*elaborated language variety*”. They fail at school because when they come to school, they should master the 1st code “*The elaborated code*” and this is difficult. These are the reasons that make our speech differs. This is a

finding that social class may affect the competence mainly the communicative one. In this communicative competence, the sociolinguists differentiate between “productive & Receptive”.

People differ in their term of productive & receptive competence. The result was that there are no two people who share exactly the same communicative competence. They differ in their mastery of Registers, productive & receptive competence & that’s why it is called *the differential competence* because of *sex, education, social belonging & even intelligence* is different.

According to “*Receptive & productive*”, sometimes we receive but we can’t produce such: a political speech, for example. Also no 2 people share the same receptive & productive. But, still one can master both like “*the teacher*” who can understand & receive things from his students as well he can produce. Sociolinguists added to the grammatical competence the communicative one that regulates our speech & the “*cultural competence*” to respect the values of language.

2.1.2- The Cultural Competence

By “*culture*” it is quoted with norms of regulating behavior, otherwise we aren’t respecting culture. Certain norms of behavior are appropriate & when we talk, we should take into consideration the “*Culture*”.

The cultural competence goes also even to speech & silence. In fact *speech* has a positive connotation, in some cultures, the fact to talk a lot is good & some one who is silent, he is reserved & not sociable, but as we know sometimes “*silence*” is a sign of wisdom. So, when we talk, we are not respecting only syntax, and phonology, but we need the norms to regulate behavior.

Linton defined “**culture**” as: “*An organized group of models of behavior*”. The cultural components are firmly tight (close) to the communicative process. Communicating efficiently in culture presupposes the knowledge of the norms regulating the communicative behavior in that culture. It presents certain interactive blockage, i.e. people no more interact each other & no one is interested in the behavior of the other. The one who comes from an area doesn’t

share the same culture as the other, so there is a blockage, ex: In England, they don't greet each other & if someone says "good morning" to every one he meets in the street he doesn't know them, he is considered as *crazy* in the opinion of that cultural society .

2.2. Language & Situation

In situation, we should respect; *the setting* (time & place), *sex*, *age*, *the participants* (The speaker & the listener), *topic* & *channel*. These are the components of the situation & the context is determined by the situation in which we are. If face to face, he uses the *paralinguistic features*, but when it isn't face to face, there is no gestures, so the "channel" here is purely linguistic & the channel differs from one situation to another; For example: The language used in the church isn't similar to that of street. So, our speech changes according to the situation. Then the linguistic interaction between the listener & the speaker is called "*the speech event*", which is an utterance said by someone to someone else in a given place at a given time.

The largest unit that sociolinguistics takes to describe is called "*The speech event*". The latter can be defined as: "*A piece of linguistic interaction, a communicative happening consisting of one or more utterances*". So, it is the interaction between language & situation, this interaction is mainly a linguistic one. ex: "*Beware of dogs*". It is a warning & is considered as "*speech event*" which might include one utterance or more utterances according to the situation, because it respects all the conditions of *speech event* such as "*the interlocutors*", (the speaker & the hearer) *the setting* (time & place), *sex*, *age*.

The Speech Event contains smallest units called "*Speech Acts*". **Coulhard** (1977) defines *speech event* as: "*It is the largest unit for which one can discover linguistic structure*".

2.2.1. The Components of the Situation

**The Elements of Speech Event

a- The Participants

One may have many options, but only according to the situation in which he is, he will select the appropriate language variety & style, i.e. “*The linguistic choice*”. So, each one has his linguistic *repertoire* and we choose specific style in a specific situation, this is called “Switching Mechanism”, i.e. the change of style, register, & even language. Any speech situation is determined by the conjunction of some factors: “*Role relations, time & place*”.

***Role Relations

It is the status of interlocutors. **Linton** defined *status* as: “*The place, a given individual occupies in a given system at a given time*”. In a given situation there are 2 kinds of role relations between the participants.

***Hierarchized Relations

There is hierarchy between the interlocutors, i.e. One is higher than the other in terms of *status* such as: “*A teacher to a student or kinship relations*”, “*the Boss with his worker*” ...etc.

In fact, the Boss when he addresses the worker, he simply says “**Tu**” while the worker says “**vous**”. In this kind of relations the language used is made of “*Asymmetrical Rules*” which are equivalent of “*Polite*”.

*** Equalitarian Relations

There is no hierarchy between the interlocutors as “*a friend to a friend*”. They are *equal* & when they talk to each others they use “**Tu**” form. In this kind of relations the language used is made of “*Symmetrical rules*”, which are equivalent of “*familiar*”. Furthermore, in all languages we distinguish *polite* & *familiar* forms. The T/V relation is used in the hierarchized relations, The polite/ familiar forms are determined by other principles as : « **power** » and « **solidarity** »

-Power: involves the *hierarchized relations*, formal style → “*Asymmetrical rules*” it involves: older than, stronger, richer, employer of, nobler than, parents of → (V forms).

-Solidarity: *Equaleitarian relations* informal style → “*Symmetrical rules*”.

It involves a friend to friend, attended the same school, same profession, the same parents → (T forms).

But sometimes there is solidarity & power both at once as brother & sister, who is older than her.

b- The Setting : (Time/place)

- **Place:** The place determines a certain topic which could be tackled. It is the key factor of the choice of our language. ex: what we say in the *stadium* isn't the same what we say in the *Mosque*. Thus the place, in which we are, determining the formality or informality of our language.
- **Time:** It seems that some utterances are datable. Time can be either official or non- official. Certain utterances are said only once a year. Ex: “*Happy New year*”, “*Happy Birthday*”.

Peasants during summer, the time of harvest which happens once a year, utter certain expression & songs during the Harvest. There are also specific utterances said at specific times, either at the beginning, the middle or at the end. Ex: “*good morning*” should be said at the beginning of our speech, neither in the middle, nor at the end of the utterance. Again the expression “*I do*” which is used in the marriages, in the church, is said by both of man & woman to accept marriage officially . “*Yes, I do*” is said at a particular time which is mainly at the end. Moreover, “*Turn taking*” in speech is very important, i.e. when one speaks the others should listen.

C- The Linguistic Behavior

In a given social situation, the speaker is conscious of his own status, of the hearer's status, of time & place in which communication is taking place, selects from his linguistic repertoire the appropriate linguistic variety & form. Thus syntax differs according to situations. It isn't random one, but we chose specific words in specific situations. Ex; (Belt up, shut up, to be quiet) are less formal &

less polite, whereas “*Would you try to keep silent?*” or you say: “*Would you please kindly lower your voice?*” → more formal.

Conclusion

We can thus conclude that sociolinguistics is interested in 1st the *Macro-sociolinguistics*, to deal with dialects, accents, diglossia, bilingualism then the *Micro-sociolinguistics* that deals with language in use. In other words; Sociolinguists went beyond the structure of language & its grammar trying to analyze language in use to see what are the social features that are found in language variation. In addition to some paralinguistic features.

Since sociolinguists are interested in language *use*, they added to the grammatical competence “*the communicative one*” which contains social rules which are shared by people.

Speech Act Theory

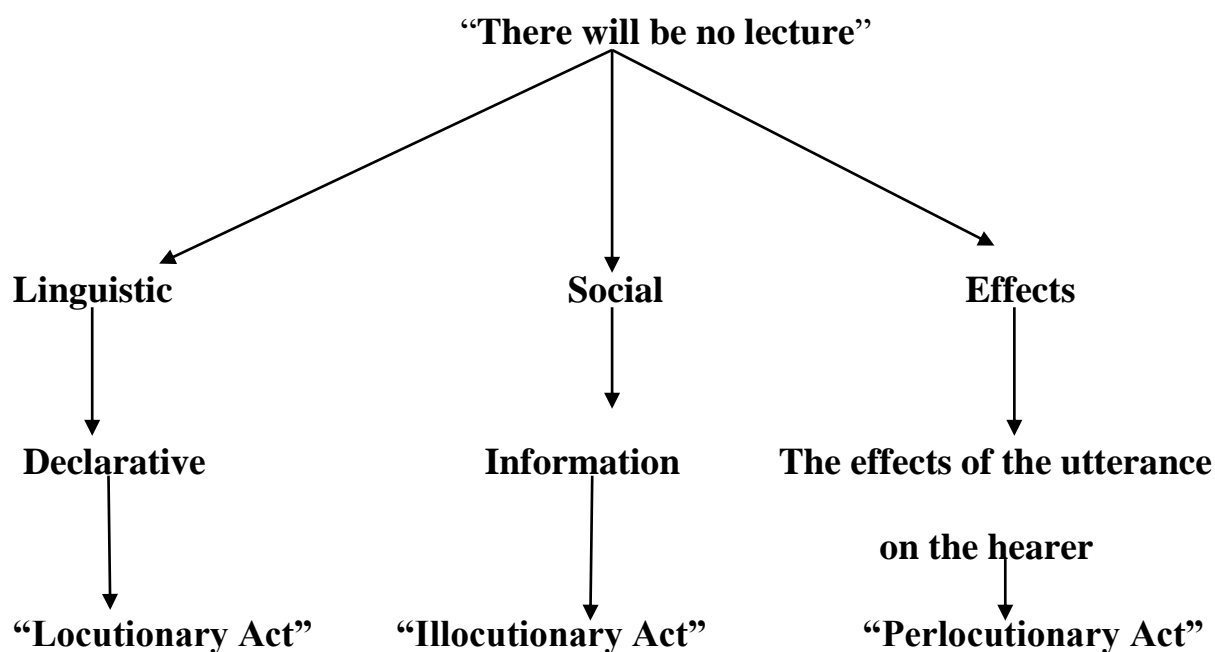
*Speech Event

“It is a piece of linguistic interaction, a communicative happening consisting of one or more utterances”.

It was defined by **Coulhard** (1977) as: *“The largest unit for which one can discover linguistic structure”* Moreover, the largest unit which is *“speech event”* contains also smallest units that are called *“The Speech Acts”*.

- **Example:** *“There will be no lecture”*

From a linguistic point of view, this sentence is “declarative” and from a social point of view, it is informing. It is a frame work to describe language in use & in context. *“Speech Act theory”* was developed in the “1960s” by a group of British language philosophers, most importantly, **J.L .Austin**, who is an American student Searle. As its name suggests *“Speech Act theory”* treats an utterance as an act, performed by the speaker in a context with respect to an addressee. Performing speech Act involves performing three Acts: *“Locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary”*



- 1- **Locutionary Act:** It is the purely linguistic meaning or part of the speech, i.e. the linguistic form of utterances “declarative, imperative, interrogative.
- 2- **Illocutionary Act:** It is the social meaning for example, some utterances serve to inform, to name, to promise, to apologize...etc.
- 3- **Parlocutionary Act:** It is the effect an utterance may have on the listener. Some effects are religious effect, legal, emotional and purely linguistic effects.

Austin focuses on 1 group of sentences that he called “performatives”, in which the saying of words constitutes the performing of an action.

Austin gave this example “*I name this ship Queen Elizabeth*”.

- **Locutionary Act:** Declarative
- **Illocutionary Act:** Naming
- **Perlocutionary Act:** That ship will officially take the same name of queen **Elizabeth** and this Act is heavily restricted.

- 1- **Legal Effect:** eg. “*Case dismissed*”. There are conditions; certain words should be uttered accompanied with certain gestures, by a certain person who has certain beliefs in certain place at certain time, after the trueal addressed in the

presence of certain people. This is one case in which Perlocutionary Act has a legal effect.

2- **Religious Effect:** e.g. “*I pronounce you husband and wife*”

It is said in the church by a clergyman, after hearing the agreements of both the husband & the wife. If we change the place, “*perlocutionary act*” couldn’t take place. If one of the conditions is absent, the Act is inappropriate, in **Austin**’s words: “*infelicitous*”. The “Felicity” conditions mean there must be one of the conditions for the Act to be legal or religious.

The “*Felicity*” conditions of an *illocutionary act* are conditions that must be fulfilled in the situation in which the Act is carried out if the Act is to be said to be carried out properly or appropriately. So, when we speak, there should be certain *locutionary act* & the more formal the situation, the more formal the “*speech act*” is.

Appropriateness Conditions

Every Speech Act is a subject to a set of conditions & if they’re all fulfilled in a given instant, the Speech Act is said to be appropriate, if not it is considered inappropriate. Not all verbal Acts, i.e. Speech Acts are so heavily restricted as dismissing a case for instance. Nevertheless all verbal acts are in some way restricted in regard to the form “s”, the locutionary act may take surrounding circumstances “the Setting”, the identity of the participants & beliefs and attitudes of the participants in greeting, protesting, apologizing...etc. Austin said that there must be *sincerity condition*, we can’t ask some one a question to intimidate and laugh at him. In addition to that the listener has to *cooperate* with the speaker to achieve the perlocutionary conditions or effects. Thereafter, some theories distinguish speech acts in two categories:

a- Constatives sentences: ex. the weather is good , bad ...

b- Performative sentences: It includes verbs as to name, apologize, inform...

In fact, Sentences as: « *I name this ship queen "Elizabeth"* (said when Smashing a bottle against the bows) "*I do*": (uttered at a marriage ceremony) are **Austin**'s own examples which illustrate the class of utterances that Austin calls *performatives*, that is, they are utterances which themselves describe the speech act which they perform. *Performatives* look like statements syntactically, but as **Austin** points out, they differ from most statements in that they can't (easily) be declared false. Thus if speaker "A" says "*I declare that king Charles II was a coward*" and speaker "B" replies "*That's false*", he seems to deny not the performative utterance, but the proposition that it contains, namely "*That king Charles II was a coward*"

The characteristic syntactic markers of a performative sentence are as follows:

- 1- The subject is in the first person (I or we)
- 2- The verb is in the simple present tense (state, ask, pardon, name ...).
- 3- The indirect object, if one is present, is you
- 4- It is possible to insert the adverbs hereby.
- 5- The sentence is not negative

All these characteristics are realized in:

"I hereby declare to you my innocence".

Austin's study of speech acts and performatives was taken further and systematized by his pupil **J.R. Searle** (*Speech Acts*, 1969), who went so far as to claim that "*a theory of language is part of a theory of action*" (ibi, p17). That is, Searle regarded the whole of linguistics as pragmatics. It is not surprising, then, that he conceived of meaning in pragmatic terms: "*The study of the meanings of sentences and the study of speech acts are two independent studies but one study from two points of view* (ibid, p18).

Grice's theory is known as the "*cooperative principle*". It is a theory about how people use language. There are some basic rational considerations guiding the conduct of conversation, formulated as guide lines for the efficient and effective use of language to cooperative ends (purposes). These guidelines are for basic maxims of conversation. They refer to the cooperative principle.

- **The Cooperative Principle**

Make your contribution such as: is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged. That's to say, you know what is required from you, you know when you have to participate ...

***The Maxims of Conversation**

1- *The Maxim of Quality*: try to make your contribution one that is true, specifically:

a: Don't say what you believe to be false

b: Don't say that for which you lack adequate evidence (if you don't have evidence for something don't say it).

2- *The Maxim of Quantity* : a- Make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange.

b- Do not make your contribution more informative than is required, you have to say what is necessary not more nor less.

3- *The Maxim of Relevance*: make your contribution relevant

4- *The Maxim of Manner*: be perspicuous & specifically: avoid obscurity, avoid ambiguity, be brief, be orderly "organized".

The participants have to use these maxims. Since these maxims specify what participants have to do in order to converse or communicate in a maximally efficient, rational cooperative way; they should speak sincerely, relevantly, clearly while providing sufficient information.

Grice gave an example to show that we don't always respect these maxims

A: *where is Bill?*

B: *There is a yellow BMW next to the blue house.*

The answer of "B" has violated the maxim of quantity & the maxim of relevance. But at a deeper level, we can assume that there is a connection between Bill & the yellow **BMW** & the blue house. It might be that Bill has a yellow **BMW** and since it is next to the blue house, Bill must be in this blue house.

The aim is to achieve successful communication.

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