

# DOWNLOAD PDF LINGUISTIC VARIATION AS SOCIAL PRACTICE (LANGUAGE IN SOCIETY)

## Chapter 1 : LANGUAGE, SOCIETY, CULTURE. CONCEPT OF CULTURE IN LINGUISTICS | Irena Mygov

*Linguistic Variation as Social Practice is a study of the speech of the adolescent population of a midwestern high school, relating individuals' subtle patterns of pronunciation and grammar to participation in the peer social order.*

Nomenclature[ edit ] Before the 20th century, the term philology , first attested in , [19] was commonly used to refer to the study of language, which was then predominantly historical in focus. Linguistics is a multi-disciplinary field of research that combines tools from natural sciences, social sciences, and the humanities. The theory of variation therefore would elaborate on the different usages of popular languages like French and English across the globe, as well as its smaller dialects and regional permutations within their national boundaries. The theory of variation looks at the cultural stages that a particular language undergoes, and these include the following. Pidgin[ edit ] The pidgin stage in a language is a stage when communication occurs through a grammatically simplified means, developing between two or more groups that do not have a language in common. Typically, it is a mixture of languages at the stage when there occurs a mixing between a primary language with other language elements. Creole[ edit ] A creole stage in language occurs when there is a stable natural language developed from a mixture of different languages. It is a stage that occurs after a language undergoes its pidgin stage. At the creole stage, a language is a complete language, used in a community and acquired by children as their native language. Dialect[ edit ] A dialect is a variety of language that is characteristic of a particular group among the language speakers. This is what differentiates a dialect from a register or a discourse , where in the latter case, cultural identity does not always play a role. Dialects are speech varieties that have their own grammatical and phonological rules, linguistic features, and stylistic aspects, but have not been given an official status as a language. Dialects often move on to gain the status of a language due to political and social reasons. Differentiation amongst dialects and subsequently, languages too is based upon the use of grammatical rules, syntactic rules, and stylistic features, though not always on lexical use or vocabulary. The popular saying that " a language is a dialect with an army and navy " is attributed as a definition formulated by Max Weinreich. Universal grammar takes into account general formal structures and features that are common to all dialects and languages, and the template of which pre-exists in the mind of an infant child. This idea is based on the theory of generative grammar and the formal school of linguistics, whose proponents include Noam Chomsky and those who follow his theory and work. This should not make us think, though, that it is actually any better than any other dialect. As a social practice, discourse embodies different ideologies through written and spoken texts. Discourse analysis can examine or expose these ideologies. Discourse influences genre, which is chosen in response to different situations and finally, at micro level, discourse influences language as text spoken or written at the phonological or lexico-grammatical level. Grammar and discourse are linked as parts of a system. Registers and discourses therefore differentiate themselves through the use of vocabulary , and at times through the use of style too. People in the medical fraternity, for example, may use some medical terminology in their communication that is specialized to the field of medicine. This is often referred to as being part of the "medical discourse", and so on. That is the stage when a language is considered a standard variety, one whose grammatical laws have now stabilised from within the consent of speech community participants, after sufficient evolution, improvisation, correction, and growth. The English language, besides perhaps the French language, may be examples of languages that have arrived at a stage where they are said to have become standard varieties. In some analyses, compound words and certain classes of idiomatic expressions and other collocations are also considered to be part of the lexicon. Dictionaries represent attempts at listing, in alphabetical order, the lexicon of a given language; usually, however, bound morphemes are not included. Lexicography , closely linked with the domain of semantics, is the science of mapping the words into an encyclopedia or a dictionary. The creation and addition of new words into the lexicon is called coining or neologization, [34] and the new words are called neologisms. However, this is often considered a myth by linguists. The capacity for the use of language is

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considered by many linguists to lie primarily in the domain of grammar, and to be linked with competence , rather than with the growth of vocabulary. Even a very small lexicon is theoretically capable of producing an infinite number of sentences. Relativity[ edit ] As constructed popularly through the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis , relativists believe that the structure of a particular language is capable of influencing the cognitive patterns through which a person shapes his or her world view. Universalists believe that there are commonalities between human perception as there is in the human capacity for language, while relativists believe that this varies from language to language and person to person. The 20th century German linguist Leo Weisgerber also wrote extensively about the theory of relativity. Relativists argue for the case of differentiation at the level of cognition and in semantic domains. The emergence of cognitive linguistics in the s also revived an interest in linguistic relativity. Any particular pairing of meaning and form is a Saussurean sign. For instance, the meaning "cat" is represented worldwide with a wide variety of different sound patterns in oral languages , movements of the hands and face in sign languages , and written symbols in written languages. Linguistic patterns have proven their importance for the knowledge engineering field especially with the ever-increasing amount of available data. Linguists focusing on structure attempt to understand the rules regarding language use that native speakers know not always consciously. All linguistic structures can be broken down into component parts that are combined according to sub conscious rules, over multiple levels of analysis. For instance, consider the structure of the word "tenth" on two different levels of analysis. On the level of internal word structure known as morphology , the word "tenth" is made up of one linguistic form indicating a number and another form indicating ordinality. The rule governing the combination of these forms ensures that the ordinality marker "th" follows the number "ten. Although most speakers of English are consciously aware of the rules governing internal structure of the word pieces of "tenth", they are less often aware of the rule governing its sound structure. Linguists focused on structure find and analyze rules such as these, which govern how native speakers use language. Linguistics has many sub-fields concerned with particular aspects of linguistic structure. The theory that elucidates on these, as propounded by Noam Chomsky, is known as generative theory or universal grammar. These sub-fields range from those focused primarily on form to those focused primarily on meaning. They also run the gamut of level of analysis of language, from individual sounds, to words, to phrases, up to cultural discourse. Sub-fields that focus on a grammatical study of language include the following. Stylistic analysis entails the analysis of description of particular dialects and registers used by speech communities. Stylistic features include rhetoric , [37] diction, stress, satire , irony , dialogue, and other forms of phonetic variations. Stylistic analysis can also include the study of language in canonical works of literature, popular fiction, news, advertisements, and other forms of communication in popular culture as well. It is usually seen as a variation in communication that changes from speaker to speaker and community to community. In short, Stylistics is the interpretation of text. Theoretical[ edit ] One major debate in linguistics concerns the very nature of language and how it should be understood. Some linguists hypothesize that there is a module in the human brain that allows people to undertake linguistic behaviour, which is part of the formalist approach. This " universal grammar " is considered to guide children when they learn language and to constrain what sentences are considered grammatical in any human language. Proponents of this view, which is predominant in those schools of linguistics that are based on the generative theory of Noam Chomsky , do not necessarily consider that language evolved for communication in particular. They consider instead that it has more to do with the process of structuring human thought see also formal grammar. Functional[ edit ] Another group of linguists, by contrast, use the term "language" to refer to a communication system that developed to support cooperative activity and extend cooperative networks. Such theories of grammar , called "functional", view language as a tool that emerged and is adapted to the communicative needs of its users, and the role of cultural evolutionary processes are often emphasized over that of biological evolution. This is analogous to practice in other sciences: Prescription , on the other hand, is an attempt to promote particular linguistic usages over others, often favouring a particular dialect or " acrolect ". This may have the aim of establishing a linguistic standard , which can aid communication over large

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geographical areas. It may also, however, be an attempt by speakers of one language or dialect to exert influence over speakers of other languages or dialects see Linguistic imperialism. An extreme version of prescriptivism can be found among censors , who attempt to eradicate words and structures that they consider to be destructive to society. Prescription, however, may be practised appropriately in the teaching of language , like in ELT , where certain fundamental grammatical rules and lexical terms need to be introduced to a second-language speaker who is attempting to acquire the language. Anthropology[ edit ] The objective of describing languages is often to uncover cultural knowledge about communities. The use of anthropological methods of investigation on linguistic sources leads to the discovery of certain cultural traits among a speech community through its linguistic features. It is also widely used as a tool in language documentation , with an endeavour to curate endangered languages. However, now, linguistic inquiry uses the anthropological method to understand cognitive, historical, sociolinguistic and historical processes that languages undergo as they change and evolve, as well as general anthropological inquiry uses the linguistic method to excavate into culture. In all aspects, anthropological inquiry usually uncovers the different variations and relativities that underlie the usage of language. Sources[ edit ] Most contemporary linguists work under the assumption that spoken data and signed data are more fundamental than written data. Nonetheless, linguists agree that the study of written language can be worthwhile and valuable. For research that relies on corpus linguistics and computational linguistics , written language is often much more convenient for processing large amounts of linguistic data. Large corpora of spoken language are difficult to create and hard to find, and are typically transcribed and written. In addition, linguists have turned to text-based discourse occurring in various formats of computer-mediated communication as a viable site for linguistic inquiry. The study of writing systems themselves, graphemics , is, in any case, considered a branch of linguistics. Analysis[ edit ] Before the 20th century, linguists analysed language on a diachronic plane, which was historical in focus. This meant that they would compare linguistic features and try to analyse language from the point of view of how it had changed between then and later. However, with Saussurean linguistics in the 20th century, the focus shifted to a more synchronic approach, where the study was more geared towards analysis and comparison between different language variations, which existed at the same given point of time. At another level, the syntagmatic plane of linguistic analysis entails the comparison between the way words are sequenced, within the syntax of a sentence. For example, the article "the" is followed by a noun, because of the syntagmatic relation between the words. The paradigmatic plane on the other hand, focuses on an analysis that is based on the paradigms or concepts that are embedded in a given text. In this case, words of the same type or class may be replaced in the text with each other to achieve the same conceptual understanding.

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### Chapter 2 : Language Variation as Social Practice : Penelope Eckert :

*Language Variation as Social Practice: The Linguistic Construction of Identity in Belten High (Language in Society) by Penelope Eckert and a great selection of similar Used, New and Collectible Books available now at [www.nxgvision.com](http://www.nxgvision.com)*

Though, despite such a far-reaching statement, scholars in the field of linguistics and later on of sociolinguistics for quite a long period of time have been discussing social and cultural aspects of language functioning. Let us consider the first one. According to theoretical manuals in sociolinguistics there are several possible relationships between language and society. Certain evidence may be adduced to support this view: A second possible relationship is directly opposed to the first: This is the view that is behind the Whorfian hypothesis. A third possible relationship is that the influence is bi-directional: Let us now have a closer look at the above mentioned Whorfian hypothesis. It is a long-standing claim already concerning the relationship between language and culture that the structure of a language determines the way in which speakers of that language view the world. This claim has intrigued many anthropologists and linguists and there is a fairly extensive literature concerning it. The opposite claim would be that the culture of people finds reflection in language they employ: In this view cultural requirements do not determine the structure of a language but they certainly influence how a language is used and perhaps determine why specific bits and pieces are the way they are. The claim that the structure of a language influences how its speakers view the world is today most usually associated with the linguist E. Sapir and his student B. However, it can be traced back to others, particularly to W. Today the claim usually referred to as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis or the Whorfian hypothesis. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. Whorf extended these ideas. One of the strongest statements by Whorf concerning his ideas is the following: Formulation of ideas is not an independent process, strictly rational in the old sense, but is a part of a particular grammar, and differs, from slightly to greatly, between different grammars. We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages. The categories and types that isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organized by our minds – and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds. We cut nature up, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement that holds throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language. He does not go all the way to say that the structure of a language completely determines the way its speakers view the world. However, he does go on to add: The person most nearly free in such respects would be a linguist familiar with very many widely different linguistic systems. As yet no linguist is in any such position. In this view different speakers will therefore experience the world differently insofar as the languages they speak differ structurally, and not even the most skilful linguist aware of all the subtleties of structural differences among languages can escape to see the world as it is rather than as it is presented through the screen of this language or that. That is, you perceive only what your language allows you to perceive, or predisposes you to perceive. Therefore, speakers of different languages will have different world-views. Cultural aspect of language functioning mentioned earlier presupposes having more precise look at the phenomenon of culture, at the way it is usually viewed in language study as well as in related disciplines. Rather we intend to view it as in the sense of whatever a person must know in order to function in a particular society. That knowledge is socially acquired: Culture may find its manifestation in body language, gestures, and concepts of time, hospitality customs, and even expressions of friendliness. While all these certainly reflect the cultural norms accepted in a particular society, the influence of culture on language use is both broader and deeper. Greenberg, a well-known ethnographer, maintains that culture involves three fundamental aspects of human experience: Culture includes everything that members of a social group have produced and developed – art, laws, and, of course, language which determines the way of their

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thinking. All these are transmitted from one generation to another through a process known as enculturation. A person may learn the values of his culture - and in such a way become enculturated - through the process of social interaction that is through the teachings of his parents, peer groups, schools, religious institutions, government agencies, and media. People who identify themselves as members of a social group professional or ethnic affiliation, nation, etc. This is a view of culture that focuses on the ways of thinking, behaving and valuing currently shared by the members of the same social community. There is also another way of viewing culture - one which takes a more historical perspective. For the cultural ways which can be identified at any one time have evolved and become solidified over time, which is why they are so often taken for natural behavior. The culture of everyday practices draws on the culture of shared history and traditions. This diachronic view of culture focuses on the way in which a social group represents itself and others through its material productions over time - its technological achievements, its monuments, its works of art, popular culture - that punctuate the development of its historical identity. Whereas language is not a culture in this sense - it is a free code, distinct from the way people think and behave, though it plays a major role in the perpetuation of culture, practically in its printed form. An interesting view of the subject may be found in the manual by R. He traces the emergence of a new way of thinking about culture and society in general. But this later use, which had usually been a culture of something, was changed in the 19th century to culture as such, a thing in itself. Thus we define culture as a certain membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history. Even when they have left that community, its members may retain, wherever they are, a common system of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating and acting. Thus there is no strictly defined term for the concept of culture. We can only be certain that our cultures and societies are constantly in the process of transition of change and that this change is to a large extent connected with the notion of culture. The statement indicates that there is an obvious link between language the one uses and culture the one belongs to. Though, according to a well-known linguist Claire Kramsch, the relationship of language and culture in linguistics is one of the most hotly debated issues at present time [Kramsch We may amplify these words and try to apply them to the notions of cross-, multi- and interculturalism, which are although closely connected with the language and culture evidently do not have precise definition of their own. Depending on how culture is viewed and which discipline one comes from, various explanations of the above mentioned terms are used to refer to communication between people who do not share the same nationality, social or ethnic origin, gender, age, occupation. Anyway, both terms are used to characterize communication, say, between Chinese-Americans and African-Americans, between working-class and upper-class people, between men and women. Intercultural cooperation refers to the dialogue between minority cultures and dominant cultures, and is associated with issues of bilingualism and biculturalism. Thus knowing the culture does not mean that one has an obligation to behave in accordance with its conventions. Similar distinction is made by Bruner [Bruner Hence biculturalism assumes that an individual identifies with and accepts the beliefs, values, and practices of particular culture, whereas interculturalism assumes a knowledge of rather than acceptance of another culture. In becoming bicultural an individual would seek to acquire cultural pragmatic rules. In the case of interculturalism, on the other hand, an individual would seek only to gain knowledge of these rules. To acquire an international language clearly does not require biculturalism. In an individual sense, it characterizes persons who belong to various discourse communities, and who therefore have the linguistic resources and social strategies to affiliate and identify with many different cultures and ways of using language. The cultural identity of multicultural individuals is not that of multiple native speakers, but, rather, it is made of a multiplicity of social roles which they occupy selectively, depending on the interactional context in which they find themselves at the time. We have already specified that members of the community as representatives of some definite culture share sets of beliefs, political or ethical, they share to a large extent the way they construe the world, how they classify objective phenomena, what meaning they give to this classification. Communities share a common history and agree about what is or is not important to them, a common value system. All these things are their culture. What is the connection between language and

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culture? Is it always and necessarily the case that languages and cultures go together? May communities with different cultures use the same language? Or may a culturally homogeneous community use different languages? Historically speaking, it seems to be the case that when two groups of what was a single cultural community lose physical, economic and political contact with each other they begin to diverge [Corder]. On the other hand, when two culturally different communities come into contact and develop common economic and political systems there appear to be several different things that can happen. They may eventually merge, they may remain culturally distinct whilst being politically and economically a unit. Their languages may coalesce, one may supersede the other, or they may both continue side by side suffering some degree of mutual influence [Weinreich]. Firth said [Firth] 'Unity of language is the most figurative of all unities, whether it be historical, geographical, national or personal. But what is the relation between them? Before suggesting an answer to this question we should note one important fact: Learning these is the process of socialization and is principally carried out through language, first in the home, later in the school and in the life of the community at large. Language mediates between the individual and the culture. But to do this successfully it must possess certain specific properties which qualify it for this task. For example, it must have codifiability, an economical and easily learned way of referring to objects and events which that culture classifies together or regards as useful or important. To take a specific example, if it is regarded as socially valuable, important for the maintenance of social structure, then the language of that community will encode that information in an economical and readily memorizable form, e. In this sense the language of a community will reflect the culture, and serve the needs of that community by making it easy for it to realize distinctions where these are important and useful, whilst disregarding distinctions where they are not important or socially relevant. If, then, languages do reflect cultures, it is easy to see that where there are cultural differences between communities these will be reflected in differences in their linguistic systems. So far we have been considering the relations between a language, an individual and a culture. We have been working intralinguistically or intraculturally. But in the context of our research we must also consider the problem cross-culturally. This means asking the question: Languages evidently do differ in the way they symbolically reflect the world, that is, in the way they categorize or codify the experience of their speakers. As we have seen, the way they do this reflects the interests, needs, concerns and preoccupations of the community they serve. Where a society needs to recognize distinctions readily and economically, the language will reflect this need. This is most clearly seen in the lexical encoding of experience. Thus we would expect to, and do, find differences in the vocabularies of two different languages. Where language A has a single name for some phenomenon, language B has no such word and has to resort to periphrasis to express the same notion.

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### Chapter 3 : Linguistics - Wikipedia

*Linguistic Variation as Social Practice: The Linguistic Construction of Identity in Belten High (Language in Society)* by Eckert, Penelope () Paperback on [www.nxgvision.com](http://www.nxgvision.com) \*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers.

She is the author or co-author of three books on sociolinguistics, the co-editor of three collections, and author of numerous scholarly papers in the field. In other words, few students exist outside the dichotomy, instead locating themselves as "In-betweens. The pre-conceived notion that California speech is based on solely Hollywood is false and the cultural and linguistic diversity throughout the state is sizable. California women are known for valley-girl language, whereas California men are known for their pitch rising throughout their sentences following a plateau. Uptalk also occurs later in their phrases and Eckert is known to analyze uptalk in detail. Californians view their dialect as similar and identifiable to most states, [excluding states with distinct accents: Chicago and New York]. California English is known for the linguistic and paralinguistic features that articulate vowels "o" and "u", pronounced, "eeuw". Words like "dawn" and "don" are pronounced similarly; different vowels that are pronounced with the same sound. A common word like "mom" can sound like "mawm". Words like "coin" and "loud" are examples of a diphthong. A community of practice is a group of people who, through interaction and shared context, define a set of practices based upon language style, values, belief systems, dynamics of power, and performance. The community of practice is defined by the context of the environment and social dynamics which include age, gender, sex, sexuality, and social class of the participants. Through commonalities in the use of language, identities are constructed and co-constructed. Phoneme variation, topics of interest, vocabulary use, discursive practices, and avoidance or uptake of standardized English are all language variables in which one negotiates identity, relationships, and power within and across communities of practice. Eckert is cautious of many sociolinguistic studies that draw conclusions about language and gender without taking multiple contextual factors and the variety of community of practices into consideration. Eckert also points out that studies of gender and language need to not solely focus on linguistic differences but also on overlaps in language use. Eckert points out that gender is not solitary, that gender is a socially constructed through multi-modal factors such as class, sexuality, age, ethnicity, and sex. Eckert, however, points out that in all-female communities, tags and intonation are used to assert dominance and power. Furthermore, Eckert posits language style as a mechanism by which one establishes identity within communities of practice. She points out that generalizations about the use of profanity are problematic because the reasons for such discourse could be varied.

### Chapter 4 : Penelope Eckert - Wikipedia

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