***Revision (2020, one hour)***

***Lecture One: History of Sociolinguistics***

This lecture deals with many sub topics. To start with, it traces back the history of this field of study which dates back to 1952. In 1960s sociolinguistics was recognized as an independent field of study.

**Sociolinguistics vs. Sociology of Language**

* -They are referred to as micro and macro sociolinguistics.
* Sociolinguists study the effect of society on language while sociologists study the effect of language on society.

**Sociolinguistics**

-Sociolinguistics is concerned with explaining why we speak differently in different social contexts and with indentifying the social functions of language and the ways it is used to convey social meaning.

Sociolinguistics investigate varieties (codes)

**Variety:** a set of linguistic forms used under specific social circumstances

*Varieties* make up the *linguistic repertoire* of each member of a speech community.

**What are the social factors involved?**

**Participants:** who talks to whom?

**Setting:** where are they speaking?

**Topic:** what are they talking about?

**Function:** why are they speaking?

**What *social dimensions* are involved in sociolinguistic analysis?**

**Solidarity / social distance 🡪** intimacy vs. distance of interlocutors

**Status / power 🡪** superiority vs. subordination of interlocutors

**Formality 🡪** high vs. low formality (setting / type of interaction)

**Function 🡪** referential (“objective” information content, e.g. news report) vs. affective function (subjective, affective content, e.g. tell about feelings)

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| **Result:** Speech behavior and social behavior are in a state of constant interaction. |

**The study of language variation and change (William Labov)**

* Sound change starts in a few words and may then spread to others of the same class
* The change may progress slowly and may end up as a regular process.
* Variation and change go hand in hand. Changes within a speech community are preceded by linguistic variation.
* Language variation occurs as a result of regional, social, stylistic differentiation or change.

**Elaborated and restricted codes and social class (Basil Bernstein, 1971)**

* It is about how the language people use in everyday conversation both reflects and shapes the assumptions of a certain social group.
* The way language is used within a particular societal class affects the way people assign significance and meaning to the things about which they are speaking.

Two types of language codes: **the elaborated code and the restricted code.**

* **Restricted code:**
* It works better for situations in which there is a great deal of shared and taken for granted knowledge in the group of speakers.
* It is economical and rich conveying a vast amount of meaning with fewer words.
* This type of code creates a sense of includedness, a feeling of belonging to a certain group
* It can be found among friends and families and other intimately knit groups
* It is less formal with shorter phrases interjected into the middle or end of a thought to confirm understanding. For example, “you know,” “you know what I mean,“ “right?” and “don‟t you think?”
* **Elaborated code**
* It spells everything out, not because it is better, but because it is necessary so that everyone can understand it.
* It has to elaborate because the circumstances do not allow the speaker to condense.
* It has a longer, more complicated sentence structure that utilizes uncommon words and thoughts.
* In the elaborate code there is no padding or filler, only complete, well laid out thoughts that require no previous knowledge on the part of the listener.
* It works well in situations where there is no prior or shared understanding and knowledge, where more thorough explanation is required.

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| There are two factors which contribute to the development of either an elaborated or restricted code within a system. They are: the nature of the socializing agencies (family, peer group, school, work) present in a system as well as the values within the system |

**Interactional Sociolinguistics (**John J. **Gumperz**)

* Speakers are members of social and cultural groups, and as such, the way they use language not only reflects their group identity but also provides indices of who they are, what they want to communicate, and how skilful they are in doing so.
* **IS** offers a means of understanding the role of language in social relationships, ways of identifying causes of miscommunication, and strategies for improving communication.
* **IS** offers a linguistic approach to the contemporary, constructionist understanding of identity put forth by researchers from a range of disciplinary perspectives.
* As an approach to discourse analysis, interactional sociolinguistics (IS) offers theories and methods that enable researchers to explore not only how language works but also to gain insights into the social processes through which individuals build and maintain relationships, exercise power, project and negotiate identities, and create communities.

**Lecture Two: major concepts in Sociolinguistics**

**Definitions**

1. **Speech community:**
2. **Variety:** explained earlier
3. **Standard variety:** The variety of language that that has a highest status in a community or nation and which is usually based on the speech and writing of educated speakers of the language. The standard variety of a language is described and structured in dictionaries and grammars (standardization). Standard English is that variety of English which is usually used in print, and which is normally taught in schools and to non-native speakers learning the language. It is also the variety which is normally spoken by educated people and used in news broadcasts and other similar situations.
4. **Dialect :** regional or social variety
5. **Regional variation**: It takes time to develop **(**British and US English, for instance, provide much more evidence of regional variation than New Zealand or Australian English.
6. **Sociolects:** A variety which is influenced by a speaker's social background (profession, age, ethnic group, sex, education, etc)
7. **Language:** A collection of dialects or varieties (anyone who speaks an English dialect speaks the English language
8. **Language vs. dialect:** Two dialects belong to the same language if they share a common grammar and vocabulary and if they are mutually intelligible (there is no clear cut distinction).
9. **Dialect vs. accent:** dialect' includes grammatical and lexical differences, whereas 'accent' only refers to pronunciation.
10. **Register:** a variety which is influenced by specific speech situations (topic, relationship between interlocutors and medium written or spoken. Registers are sets of language items associated with discrete occupational or social groups.
11. **Style:** is most often used to discuss differences in formality When choosing a style, you can speak very formally or very informally, your choice being governed by circumstances
12. **Genre:** is understood as a set of co-occurring language features associated with particular frames**. It** an acquired familiarity with certain norms of language use in particular contexts and for specific functions.

**Lecture three:**  **Language, Culture and Cognition**

* How people manage their language in relation to their cultural background and their goal of interaction.
* Varieties of language that speakers use reflect matters as their regional, social, or ethnic origin and possibly even their gender
* **The Whorfian hypothesis**: the structure of a language influences/controls how its speakers view the world.
* Change of language leads to change in social behavior
* Example, language change and a greater awareness of gender equality
* **Linguistic determinism: (the strong form)** the social categories we create and how we perceive events and actions constrained by the language. Different speakers will experience the world differently insofar as the languages they speak differ structurally. Simply put, people from different cultures think differently because of differences in their languages.
* **Linguistic relativity**: (the weak form): categories provided by language may make it easier to draw certain conceptual distinctions.
* Language provides a means of encoding a community’s knowledge, beliefs and values, i.e. its culture.
* Restricted code might constrain the cognitive abilities of those who used it
* Dialect differences were comparatively superficial aspects of language which could not conceivably have consequences for different ways of thinking.(Bernstein)

**Chapter four: Sociolinguistic factors affecting language use**

* Why linguistic change occurs
* Conscious change: standardization , pidginization, and creolization
* conscious change maybe initiated by a single individual or by small group, and imitated by those who attribute social value to them.(new vocabulary items)
* Un conscious changes occur in grammar , pronunciation and we cannot pinpoint the initiating individuals
* Gender and interaction
* Deborah Tannen suggests that gender differences in language do reflect different cultures of conversation **(a difference model)** rather than differences in access to power **(a dominance model)**
* Tannen claims that women are more likely to use language to build and maintain relationships (a **rapport style**),
* men are more likely to use language to communicate factual information (a **report style**)
* power imbalance lead women to do the shifting.
* Language encodes gender
* Gender is implicated in language change (language is hat women use to do things socially)