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ЗМІСТ

Lecture 1. VARIETIES OF LANGUAGE

1. Characteristics of World Englishes

There is little question that English is the most widely taught, read, and spoken language that the world has ever known. It may seem strange, on some moments' reflection, that the native language of a relatively small island nation could have developed and spread to this status. Its path was foreseen, however, by John Adams, who, in the late eighteenth century, made the following insightful prophesy: *English will be the most respectable language in the world and the most universally read and spoken in the next century, if not before the close of this one.*

The global spread of English has been viewed as two diasporas. The first diaspora involved migrations of substantial numbers of English speakers from the present British Isles to, for example, Australia, New Zealand, and North America. Those English users who left the old country for new ones brought with them the resource of language and its potentials for change which are always with us, though we are not often called upon to contemplate them explicitly. The language that they brought with them changed over time, to be sure, but no more or less substantially or rapidly than the language “at home”, for all languages evolve in the natural course of time and use.

The second diaspora of English, in the colonial contexts of Asia and Africa, entailed transportation of the language, but only to a small extent transportation of English-speaking people. Thus, the language was brought into new sociocultural contexts by a very small number of users; neverthe-less, English became extremely important and useful to the much larger local populations, who have continued to expand the roles of English, often with greater vigor in postcolonial times.

Along with the mere numbers, it is important to note that these language-contact situations involved English and genetically unrelated and widely divergent Asian and African languages and, concomitantly, their cultures, both of which were far removed from the experience and common presuppositions of the native English speakers. These contact situations have had striking and lasting effects on English in these regions, so that although these contemporary Englishes have much in common, they are also unique in their grammatical innovations and tolerances, lexis, pronunciations, idioms, and discourse.

Everyone is cognizant of the notion of **dialects** of languages, including English. Dialects are characterized by identifiable differences visa-vis other dialects, in pronunciation, lexical choice or usage, grammar, and so on; we speak easily **of southern English, New England English, American English,** and **British English.** These are all dialects: types of English that are identified with the residents of particular places. There are also age, gender, and other sorts of group-related dialects − as is so often the case with language-evolved issues, the label depends upon the question that is being addressed. Any speaker can be said to speak various dialects, depending upon the circumstances of a discussion: in terms of geography, one of the authors grew up speaking southern American English; in terms of profession and education, both authors speak standard English; and so on.

The well-known national dialects are not usually referred to as such, for the term **dialect** has acquired various sorts of stigmatized baggage over the years. In some speakers' minds, to say that people speak a dialect is tantamount to saying that they are provincial, perhaps not well educated, though this is neither a necessary nor a proper connotation of dialect in its technical meaning. However, because of these negative associations, most people nowadays − especially in the United States − use **variety** to refer to a subtype of a language, for example, the American and British varieties of English.

Still, the substitution of one term for another is just that, and “my variety versus yours” can still be a point of contention. The implications for attitudes about control of the language are extremely hard to overcome.

Strevens made a cogent and useful distinction between **dialect, “**differences of grammar and vocabulary”, and **accent “**difference of pronunciation”. Strevens notes that we expect to find a consistent pairing of dialect and accent in any given area, and he points out that “*since dialect + accent pairs co-exist in this way it is not surprising that most nonspecialists, and even many teachers of English* *habitually confuse the terms **dialect** and **accent**, and observe no distinction between them".*

One key point, then is the following: "*In fact, the only cases where this strict pairing [of dialect and accent] does not operate are precisely in relation to Standard English".* This is why, for example, we are not at all surprised when standard English is spoken with various accents in the United States by network news anchors and by international politicians on both sides of the Atlantic. We recognize fundamental sorts of structural and semantic sameness, and are aware of but do not put a high value on differences of pronunciation. Commonly accepted varieties of English today include American and British, of course, and also Australian, Canadian, and New Zealand. There are many national varieties of English in the world today − a sense of their extent and distribution can be gained by reviewing a list of countries in which English is an official language. Refer to Table 1 which is not intended to be an exhaustive list. English may be a coofficial language, or it may be, as in the United States, the official language in fact though not in law. A more comprehensive list of "territories for which English is a significant language" is given by McArthur.

Lecture 2. Types of Variation and Types of Users

The uses and users of English internationally have been discussed profitably in terms of three concentric circles. Briefly, the circles model captures the global situation of English in the following way.

The **Inner Circle** comprises the old-variety English-using countries, where English is the first or dominant language: the United States, Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. In these countries though other languages surely are spoken, there is seldom if ever a question of any language other than English being used in an extensive sense in any public discourse (e.g., in media, government, education, and creative writing). It may be significant that in the United States, for example, the Constitution does not even bother to mention an official language.

That such a statutory status has been deemed unnecessary is probably a silent testament to the assumed sway of English. Such questions have had to be addressed in other, multilingual countries, such as India, Nigeria, and Singapore.

The **Outer Circle** comprises countries where English has a long history of institutionalized functions and standing as a language of wide and important roles in education, governance, literary creativity, and popular culture, such as India, Nigeria, Pakistan, Singapore, South Africa, and Zambia. India has the third-largest English-using population in the world, after the United States and Britain, and Nigeria and the Philippines closely follow India.

The **Expanding Circle** countries are those in which English has various roles and is widely studied but for more specific purposes than in the Outer Circle, including (but certainly not limited to) reading knowledge for scientific and technical purposes; such countries currently include China, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Korea, and Nepal. However, it must be remembered that languages have life cycles, particularly in multilingual societies, and thus the status of a language is not necessarily permanent.

This concentric-circle schematization is not merely a heuristic comparison or metaphor. Some examination of the various situations and case studies of English around the world and of the history of the spread of English will convince the reader that the circles model is valid in the senses of earlier historical and political contexts, the dynamic diachronic advance of English around the world, and the functions and standards to which its users relate English in its many current global incarnations.

It is telling, for example, that English is the associate official language or an official language in India, Nigeria, and various other countries of the Outer Circle (see Table 1). The sheer numbers of English users worldwide are almost unimaginable to the monolingual, monocultural English teacher. But it is difficult to define an English user in terms of either amount of use or degree of proficiency. Freshman composition students at the United States universities, for example, may be monolingual speakers of English, yet it is not uncommon − indeed, it is quite usual − to hear their professors complaining that they “can't write”, “have limited vocabularies”, “have no sense of idiom”, and so on. Indeed, a number of committees and commissions have been set up in the United States and Britain to address precisely these sorts of concerns. Being labeled a native speaker is of no particular a priori significance, in terms of measuring facility with the language.

Unit 3. Societal Multilingualism

The terms **bilingualism** and **multilingualism** have been used interchangeably in the literature to refer to the knowledge or use of more than one language by an individual or a community. This practice will be continued here, but we must allow for the possibility that multilingualism may be more than just a magnified version of bilingualism. Multilingualism can be, and has been, studied both as an individual and as a societal phenomenon. When it is viewed as an individual phenomenon, issues such as how one acquires two or more languages in childhood or later, how these languages are represented in the mind, and how they are accessed for speaking and writing and for comprehension become central. When it is viewed as a societal phenomenon, one is concerned with its institutional dimensions, that is, with issues such as the status and roles of the languages in a given society, attitudes toward languages, determinants of language choice, the symbolic and practical uses of the languages, and the correlations between language use and social factors such as ethnicity, religion, and class.

Bilingualism is a worldwide phenomenon. Most nations have speakers of more than one language. Hundreds of millions of people the world over routinely make use of two or three or four languages in their daily lives. Furthermore, even the so-called monolinguals also routinely switch from one language variety − a regional dialect, the standard language, a specialized technical register, a formal or informal style, and so on − to another in the course of their daily interactions. According to one influential theory, a multilingual's facility in moving from one language to another as the occasion demands is but an extension of the monolingual's capacity to shift registers and styles. The study of multilingualism, therefore, not only focuses on one of the most significant types of language use but also has the potential to shed light on language behavior in general.

There are several types of societal multilingualism. The most common type occurs when a country or region consists of several language groups, each of which is primarily monolingual. Canada is a good example. In such a case, the nation as a whole is multilingual but not all individuals are necessarily multilingual. This situation has been referred to *as the territorial principle of multilingualism*. On the other hand, multilingualism can be based on the personality principle; that is, where bilingualism is the official policy of a country and most individuals are multilingual. India and several countries in East and West Africa are good examples of this type. In reality, most multilingual nations exhibit a combination of these two types.

How do societies become multilingual? There are many reasons. **The most obvious factor** leading to societal multilingualism is migration. When speakers of one language settle in an area where another language is used and over the years continue to maintain their own language, the result is multilingualism. Spanish in the United States is a good example of this. **Another cause** of societal multilingualism is cultural contact. When a society imports and assimilates the cultural institutions (e.g., religion or literature) of another society, over the years multilingualism may result. The use of Arabic and Western European languages, for example, English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch in Asia, Africa, and Latin America bear testimony to this phenomenon. **A third reason** is annexation, as in the case of the French- and Spanish-speaking parts of the United States, and colonialism, as in many parts of Latin America, Asia, and Africa, where colonial languages such as Spanish, French, and especially English became entrenched and continue to play crucial roles long after the cessation of colonial rule. **Other reasons** include the commercial, scientific, and technological dependence of the speakers of certain languages on the speakers of other languages.

Unit 4. Verbal Repertoire

The notion of verbal repertoire is central to the discussion of multilingualism, both in the individual and in a society. **Verbal repertoire** refers to the total range of linguistic resources available to an individual or a community. For monolingual speakers, this includes the range of regional, social, functional, and stylistic varieties that they command, either productively (i.e., in speaking or writing) or receptively (i.e., in reading or understanding spoken language). In the case of a multilingual individual or society, the verbal repertoire is obviously more complex in the sense that it encompasses not only varieties of the same language but also entirely different languages. It is important to keep in mind that each language in the repertoire brings with it its own set of grammatical, lexical, pragmatic, and sociolinguistic rules and conventions (norms).

Pandit's illustration of a day in the linguistic life of a spice merchant in India is a classic example of a multilingual's verbal repertoire: *A Gujarati spice merchant in Bombay uses Kathiawadi (his dialect of Gujarati) with his family, Marathi (the local language) in the vegetable market, Kacchi and Konkani in trading circles, Hindi or Hindustani with the milkman and at the train station, and even English on formal occasions. Such a person may not be highly educated or well versed in linguistic rules, but knows enough to be able to use the language(s) for his purposes.*

An important characteristic of multilingualism pointed out by Pandit's example is the fact that multilinguals do not necessarily have a perfect or native-like command of all the languages (or codes, as these languages or language varieties have come to be called) in their verbal repertoires. Multilingualism involving balanced, native-like command of all the languages in the repertoire is rather uncommon. Typically, multilinguals have varying degrees of command of the different languages in their repertoires. The differences in competence in the various languages might range from command of a few lexical items, formulaic expressions such as greetings, and rudimentary conversational skills all the way to excellent command of the grammar and vocabulary and specialized registers and styles.

Another major characteristic of multilingual competence might be called **selective functionality.** Multilinguals develop competence in each of the codes to the extent that they need it and for the contexts in which each of the languages is used. For example, a multilingual might have an excellent reading, writing, speaking, and comprehending knowledge of one or two languages but might be more comfortable using one language for academic or professional purposes and another for intimate or emotional expression. This is in part a function of differential command of registers (functional varieties) but also of habitual associations between languages and contexts.

Thus, *a multilingual's linguistic competence is a composite of many partial competences which complement one another to yield a rich and complex resource adequate for fulfilling all the life functions*. It follows that in judging the adequacy of the multilingual's linguistic competence one must keep in mind the composite nature of the repertoire. It is neither necessary nor common to find native or near-native competence in all the languages of a multilingual's repertoire.

Unit 5. Language Choice

As a discipline, sociolinguistics provides the methodology for analysis and description of the interactional contexts: Who uses what language with whom and for what purposes? It provides frameworks with which to analyze the linguistic choices available to the multilinguals and their reasons for choosing one code from among the several that are available to them. One of the basic assumptions in sociolinguistics involving multilingual speech communities is that, as stated by Elias-Olivares: in a heterogeneous speech community, with varying degrees of linguistic diversity and social complexity, speakers interact using different speech varieties drawn from a repertoire of choices which for the most part are not random. On the contrary, the distribution of usage of these choices is determined by several factors in the social communicative system of the community.

Given the existence of different languages in the repertoire of a society or of a multilingual individual, how and when are the languages used? To answer this question, the notion of domains is very important. Domains, according to Fishman, explore "*who speaks what language to whom and when in those speech communities that are characterized by widespread and relatively stable multilingualism".*

Barber has formulated domains at the sociopsychological level. He groups the domains as **intimate** (family), formal (religious-ceremonial), **in-formal** (neighborhood), and **intergroup** (economic and recreational activi-ties as well as interactions with governmental and legal authority). In the research on domains by Fishman and associates, language choice is discussed in terms of the following domains: the family, the playground and street, the school, the church, literature, the press, the military, the courts, and governmental administration. In investigating multilingual societies, subsequent researchers have either added to or reduced the numbers of domains.

An examination of how the languages of a multilingual community are used reveals a highly sophisticated and efficient pattern. All the languages are not used in all the domains. It is believed that certain languages are particularly suited to certain domains.

All the languages in the repertoire of a multilingual community are not equally distributed in terms of power, prestige, vitality, or attitude. In other words, some languages are more valued than others. This phenomenon can be referred to as **the asymmetric principle of multilingualism.** The languages in a multilingual community can be viewed as being arranged on a hierarchy. The position of a given language on this hierarchy is determined by very pragmatic considerations. The larger the number of desired roles a language enables its speakers to play in a given society, the higher its place on the hierarchy. The more restricted the range of valued roles a language provides, the lower its place on the hierarchy. This principle can be illustrated with some examples from India. In the Indian society, the repertoire of an educated multilingual may consist of a large number of languages or codes. An individual might speak a rural and/or a caste dialect at home with members of the family and people from an extended kinship and/or what may be called native place network. Here, this dialect or minority language serves essentially to establish an ethnic identity; it may have no written literature or even a script. For example, the Brahman dialect of Tulu, a Dravidian language, is spoken in the coastal areas of the state of Karnataka in South India. It differs considerably from the non-Brahman dialect. Neither the non-Brahman nor the Brahman dialect is used for writing. Although it is spoken by about two million persons, the Tulu language is restricted in its functional range.

All Tulu speakers are bilingual in the local state language, Kannada, which serves as their medium of instruction through the secondary school. Kannada has a wider range of roles, as the language of education, administration, commerce, media, and literature. Kannada therefore gives the Tulu speaker regional identity and statewide mobility. However, even Kannada is restricted relative to certain desired roles. In addition to learning Kannada, Tulu speakers will learn English at the postprimary school level, further widening their linguistic resources. English empowers the speaker to gain access to higher technical education, to communicate on an interstate (pan-Indian) and international level, and to participate in the influential national press and media, and it provides national and international mobility as a job candidate. As a marker of sophistication, modern knowledge, and access to power, English also bestows a tangible competitive advantage and a certain intangible glamour or prestige value. However, the Tulu speaker will also study or informally learn Hindi, which is the chief medium of popular Indian movies, a useful lingua franca (a common language used by speakers of different language backgrounds) for communications with North Indian states, and increasingly the official language of the federal government. Still, there are roles that none of these languages individually, or all of them together, can play satisfactorily. The Tulu speaker might also learn the classical language Sanskrit to access, preserve, and symbolize the classical lore of India in an enormous range of fields from religion through medicine. Nor is this all. Depending on lifestyle and networks of business and personal interactions, an individual might also learn one or more regional languages, such as Tamil, Telugu, or Marathi, which she or he will use with varying degrees of proficiency. Thus, in a multilingual's verbal repertoire each language uniquely fulfills certain roles and represents distinct identities, and all of them complement one another to serve the complex communicative demands of a pluralistic society.

Thus, the languages of a multilingual community are differentially evaluated on the basis of the habitual associations between the languages and the domains of their use. If the domains in which a language is used are highly valued, then that language is perceived to be highly valued (and conversely). For example, the habitual use of Sanskrit in ritualistic and intellectual contexts by the most prestigious group in the Indian social system over thousands of years has given the language the status of a sacred, intellectual language. (But this association also sometimes works to its disadvantage: Sanskrit is perceived to be too orthodox, difficult, and old-fashioned for everyday purposes). English, on the other hand, because of the colonial history and association with currently valued domains of higher administration, science and technology, international commerce. Western culture and pop entertainment, is perceived as all-powerful and as a ticket to upward mobility. However, it is important to keep in mind that evaluation of languages in multilingual societies is not always based on materialistic criteria. The revival of Hebrew in Israel, the struggle to reestablish Catalan and Basque in Spain, the movement to revitalize Sanskrit in India, and the continued maintenance of home languages by many groups of migrants over several centuries are reminders that factors such as tribal, caste, ethnic, and national identities are also powerful forces in the use, maintenance, revival, and regulation of languages. Movements, often quite successful, now exist in many parts of the world aimed at gaining recognition and status for indigenous languages sidelined or oppressed during colonial and postcolonial regimes (e.g., in Malaysia, the Philippines, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru).

These movements typically take the form of a demand for extending the functional range of indigenous languages to include domains of power, authority, and prestige by their use in, for example, education, administration, and the legal system. Concomitantly, there are efforts to prevent hegemonic languages from usurping smaller languages by restricting the domains of use of the more prevalent languages. The dynamics of language in a multilingual society reflect the evolution of power in that society. Thus, the languages of a multilingual society exist in a state of organic tension with one another that involves small but cumulatively perceptible shifts in functional range.

Lecture 3. "Speech Communities" and Languages

The term **speech community** is widely used by sociolinguists to refer to a community based on language, but linguistic community is also used with the same meaning. If speech communities can be delimited, then they can be studied, and it may be possible to find interesting differences between communities which correlate with differences in their language. The study of speech communities has therefore interested linguists for some time. However, there has been considerable confusion and disagreement over exactly what a speech community is, as the following survey shows:

1. The simplest definition of "speech community" is that of John Lyons: Speech community: all the people who use a given language (or dialect). According to this definition, *speech communities may overlap (where there are bilingual individuals) and need not have any social or cultural unity. Clearly it is possible to delimit speech communities in this sense only to the extent that it is possible to delimit languages and dialects without referring to the community that speaks them.*

2. A more complex definition is given by Charles Hockett: *Each language defines a speech community: the whole set of people who communicate with each other, either directly or indirectly, via the common language. Here the criterion of communication within the community is added, so that if two communities both spoke the same language but had no contact with each other at all, they would count as different speech communities.*

3. The next definition shifts the emphasis entirely from shared language to communication. A simple form of it was given by Leonard Bloomfield: *A speech community is a group of people who interact by means of speech. This leaves open the possibility that some interact by means of one language, and others by means of another.* This possibility is explicitly recognised in the definition given by John Gumperz : *We will define [linguistic community] as a social group which may be either monolingual or multilingual, held together by frequency of social inter-action patterns and set off from the surrounding areas by weaknesses in the lines of communication.*

4. A later definition by Gumperz, however, introduces the requirement that there should be some specifically linguistic differences between the members of the speech community and those outside it: *The speech community: any human aggregate characterised by regular and frequent interaction by means of a shared body of verbal signs and set off from similar aggregates by significant differences in language use.* Unlike definition 2, this does not require that there should be just one language per speech community. The effect of putting emphasis on communication and interaction, as in these last two definitions, is that different speech communities will tend not to overlap much, in contrast with the earlier definitions where overlap automatically results from bilingualism.

5. A different definition puts the emphasis on shared attitudes and knowledge, rather than on shared linguistic behaviour. It is given by William Labov: *The speech community is not defined by any marked agree-ment in the use of language elements, so much as by participation in a set of shared norms: these norms may be observed in overt types of evaluative behaviour, and by the uniformity of abstract patterns of variation which are invariant in respect to particular levels of usage.*

Rather similar definitions, referring to shared norms and abstract patterns of variation rather than to shared speech behaviour, have been given by Dell Hymes and Michael Halliday. It will be seen that this kind of definition puts emphasis on the speech community as a group of people who feel themselves to be a community in some sense, rather than a group which only the linguist and outsider could know about, as in some of the earlier definitions.

6. Lastly, there is an approach which avoids the term "speech community" altogether, but refers to groups in society which have distinctive speech characteristics as well as other social characteristics. It should be noted that the groups are those which the individual speaker perceives to exist, and not necessarily those which a sociologist might discover by objective methods; and the groups need not exhaust the whole population, but may represent the clear cases of certain social types. This approach has been advocated by Robert Le Page: *Each individual creates the systems for his verbal behaviour so that they shall resemble those of the group or groups with which from time to time he may wish to be identified, to the extent that a. he can identify the groups, b. he has both opportunity and ability to observe and analyse their behavioural systems, c. his motivation is sufficiently strong to impel him to choose, and to adapt his behaviour accordingly, d. he is still able to adapt his behaviour.*

This is the view according to which individuals "locate themselves in a multidimensional space", the dimensions being defined by the groups they can identify in their society. Unlike the "speech communities" defined in 3, 4 and 5, these groups very definitely overlap. For instance a child may identify groups on the basis of sex, age, geography and race, and each grouping may contribute something to the particular combination of linguistic items which they select as their own language.

Our last quotation, by Dwight Bolinger, identifies these "personal" groups as speech communities, and stresses the unlimited amount of complexity that is possible: *There is no limit to the ways in which human beings league themselves together for self-identification, security, gain, amusement, worship, or any of the other purposes that are held in common; consequently there is no limit to the number and variety of speech communities that are to be found in society.*

According to this view, any population (whether of a city, a village or whole state) may be expected to contain a very large number of speech communities indeed, with overlapping memberships and overlapping language systems. Indeed, Le Page's proviso a (to the extent that "he can identify the groups") raises the possibility that different members of the population may be aware of different groups. If we take the position that speech communities should have some kind of psychological reality for their members (as in definition 5 above), then it follows that we must identify different speech communities in the same population according to the person whose viewpoint we are taking.

To qualify as a "community", a set of people presumably needs to be distinguished from the rest of the world by more than one property, and some of these properties have to be important from the point of view of the members' social lives. The question, then, is which of the definitions of "speech community" lead to genuine communities in this sense.

It might be thought that they all do. Even taking the simplest of the definitions, according to which a speech community is simply the set of people who use a given language or dialect, it is hard to imagine such a community having nothing but the common language or dialect to set them off from other people − nothing in their culture, nothing to do with their history, and so on. As soon as the factor of interaction comes in, of course, it goes without saying that there will be other shared characteristics in addition to the interaction. This answer has the attraction of resolving the apparent conflict between the definitions of "speech community", but leads inevitably to the conclusion that different speech communities intersect in complex ways with one another − for example, a community defined in terms of interaction may contain parts of several communities defined in terms of shared language varieties. It will be seen that this is in fact precisely the notion of "speech community" as defined in 6, so we may take 6 as the most comprehensive view which subsumes all the others, and therefore makes them unnecessary.

Hudson doubts whether the notion "speech community" is helpful at all giving the following reasons for rejecting this assumption:

1. Mismatch between subjective and objective reality. According to definition 6, communities exist only to the extent that we are aware of them, so their reality is

only subjective, not objective − and may be only very loosely based on objective reality. We all have hazy notions of the way people speak in distant places of which we have little direct experience − notions such as “Northerner” (or “Southerner”), “American” (or “British”), “Irish”, “Australian” and so on. No self-respecting dialectologist would recognise a dialect area called “Northern” (or “Southern”) English, but some lay people certainly think in such terms, so the least we can say is that if objective communities exist, they are different from the communities that we recognise subjectively.

2. Evidence against community grammars. The assumption behind all the definitions except 6 is that members of the community are linguistically “the same” in some sense, either in their use of language or in what they know and think about language. Peter Trudgill considers this assumption, and rejects it on the grounds that people do not even know the linguistic details of other people who live in the same city, let alone people who live hundreds of miles away. No doubt we could illustrate the same point even for members of the same family, especially if differences between generations are taken into account.

3. Evidence for networks. A typical social network has a small cluster of people near the centre and a collection of others “hanging on” more or less closely, and perhaps hanging on to other neighbouring networks at the same time. A community, in the sense intended by all our definitions, has a boundary (even if a hazy one), but social networks have no boundaries, not even hazy ones.

4. Small size of the most important communities. The last problem with the general notion of “speech community” is that if we are looking for social groups that are clearly relevant to a person's language, by far the most important ones are also very small − their family, their friends, their neighbours, their colleagues at school or work, any clubs or local organizations they belong to. These are the most important sources of linguistic influence, especially on children, even in these days of mass communications, but they are far smaller than the “speech communities” that linguists have tended to invoke. The conclusion would therefore seem to be that our sociolinguistic world is not organized in terms of objective “speech

communities", even though we may think subjectively in terms of communities or social types such as "Londoner" and "American". This means that the search for a "true" definition of the speech community, or for the "true" boundaries around some assumed speech community, is just a wild goose chase.

This discussion of speech communities has raised the fundamental question: "Where is language?" Is it "in" the community or "in" the individual? Language must be "in the individual" for various reasons − because each individual is unique, because individuals use language so as to locate themselves in a multidimensional social space, and etc.

Unit 7. Language and Dialect

What does it mean to say that some variety is a language? This is first of all a question about popular usage: what do ordinary people mean when they say that some variety is a language? It is part of our culture to make a distinction between "languages" and "dialects" − in fact, we make two separate, distinctions using these terms, and we may draw conclusions from this fact about our culturally inherited view of language. We may contrast our culture in this respect with others where no such distinction is made. This was the case in England until the term **dialect** was borrowed in the Renaissance, as a learned word from Greek. In fact, we may see our distinction between "language" and "dialect" as due to the influence of Greek culture, since the distinction was developed in Greek because of the existence of a number of clearly distinct written varieties in use in Classical Greece, each associated with a different area and used for a different kind of literature. Thus the meanings of the Greek terms which were translated as "language" and "dialect" were in fact quite different from the meanings these words have in English now. Their equivalents in French are perhaps more similar, since the French word *dialecte* refers only to regional varieties which are written and have a literature, in contrast with regional varieties which are not written, which are called patois. The point of this discussion is to show that there is nothing absolute about the distinction which English happens to make between "languages" and "dialects" (and for readers familiar with some language other than English, this discussion will hardly have been necessary).

What then is the difference, for English speakers, between a language and a dialect? There are two separate ways of distinguishing them, and this ambiguity is a source of great confusion. The reason for the ambiguity, and the resulting confusion, is precisely the fact that dialect was borrowed from Greek, where the same ambiguity existed. On the one hand, there is a **difference of size,** because a language is larger than a dialect. That is, a variety called a language contains more items than one called a dialect. This is the sense in which we may refer to English as a language, containing the sum total of all the terms in all its dialects, with "Standard English" as one dialect among many others (Yorkshire English, Indian English, etc.). Hence the greater "size" of the language English.

The other contrast between "language" and "dialect" is **a question of prestige,** a language having prestige which a dialect lacks. If we apply the terms in this sense. Standard English is not a dialect at all, but a language, whereas the varieties which are not used in formal writing are dialects. Whether some variety is called a language or a dialect depends on how much prestige one thinks it has, and for most people this is a clear-cut matter, which depends on whether it is used in formal writing. Accordingly, people in Britain habitually refer to languages which are unwritten (or which they think are unwritten) as dialects, or "mere dialects", irrespective of whether there is a (proper) language to which they are related. (It would be nonsense to use "dialect" in this way intending its "size" sense, of course).

It is probably fair to say that the only kind of variety which would count as a "proper language" (in the second sense of "language") is **a standard language.** Standard languages are interesting in as much as they have a rather special relation to society − one which is quite abnormal when seen against the context of the tens (or hundreds?) of thousands of years during which language has been used. Whereas one thinks of normal language development as taking place in a rather haphazard way, largely below the threshold of consciousness of the speakers, standard languages are the result of a direct and deliberate intervention by society. This intervention, called "standardisation", produces a standard language where before there were just "dialects" (in the second sense, i.e. non-standard varieties).

The notion "standard language" is somewhat imprecise, but a typical standard language will have passed through the following processes:

1. Selection − somehow or other a particular variety must have been selected as the one to be developed into a standard language. It may be an existing variety, such as the one used in an important political or commercial centre, but it could be an amalgam of various varieties. The choice is a matter of great social and political importance, as the chosen variety necessarily gains prestige and so the people who already speak it share in this prestige. However, in some cases the chosen variety has been one with no native speakers at all − for instance, Classical Hebrew in Israel and the two modern standards for Norwegian.

2. Codification − some agency such as an academy must have written dictionaries and grammar books to "fix" the variety, so that everyone agrees on what is correct. Once codification has taken place, it becomes necessary for any ambitious citizen to learn the correct forms and not to use in writing any "incorrect" forms that may exist in their native variety.

3. Elaboration of function − it must be possible to use the selected variety in all the functions associated with central government and with writing: for example, in parliament and law courts, in bureaucratic, educational and scientific documents of all kinds and, of course, in various forms of literature. This may require extra linguistic items to be added to the variety, especially technical words, but it is also necessary to develop new conventions for using existing forms − how to formulate examination questions, how to write formal letters and so on.

4. Acceptance − the variety has to be accepted by the relevant population as the variety of the community − usually, in fact, as the national language. Once this has happened, the standard language serves as a strong unifying force for the state, as a symbol of its independence of other states (assuming that its standard is unique and not shared with others), and as a marker of its difference from other states. It is precisely this symbolic function that makes states go to some lengths to develop one.

This analysis of the factors typically involved in standardisation has been quite widely accepted by sociolinguists. However, there is ample scope for debate and disagreement about the **desirability** of certain aspects of standardisation. For instance, it is not essential either that standardisation should involve matters of pronunciation as well as of writing, or that the standard language should be presented as the only "correct" variety (a point argued by many linguists and sociolinguists).

When we turn to the distinction between language and dialect, based on size, the situation is very different, since everything becomes relative − for example, in comparison with one variety a chosen variety may be large, yet compared with another it may be small. The variety containing all the items used in (English-speaking) Britain looks large compared with, say, Standard English or Cockney, but only small compared with the variety which consists of all the items used in any of the "English-speaking" countries. This being so, the claim that a particular variety is a language, in the "size" sense, amounts to very little.

The obvious candidate for an extra criterion is that **of mutual intelligibility.** If the speakers of two varieties can understand each other, then the varieties concerned are instances of the same language; otherwise they are not. This is a widely used criterion, but it cannot be taken seriously because there are such serious problems in its application.

1. Even popular usage does not correspond consistently to this criterion, since varieties which we (as lay people) call different languages may be mutually intelligible (for example, the Scandinavian languages, excluding Finnish and Lapp) and varieties which we call instances of the same language may not (for example, the so-called "dialects" of Chinese). Popular usage tends to reflect the other definition of language, based on prestige, so that if two varieties are both standard languages, or are subordinate to different standards, they must be different languages, and conversely they must be the same language if they are both subordinate to the same standard. This explains the difference between our ideas on the varieties of Scandinavia and of China: each Scandinavian country has a separate standard language (indeed, as we have just seen, Norway has two), whereas the whole of China only has one.

2. Mutual intelligibility is a matter of degree, ranging from total intelligibility down to total unintelligibility. How high up this scale do two varieties need to be in order to count as members of the same language? This is clearly a question which is best avoided, rather than answered, since any answer must be arbitrary.

3. Varieties may be arranged in a dialect continuum, a chain of adjacent varieties in which each pair of adjacent varieties are mutually intelligible, but pairs taken from opposite ends of the chain are not. One such continuum is said to stretch from Amsterdam through Germany to Vienna, and another from Calais to the south of Italy. The criterion of mutual intelligibility is, however, based on a relationship between languages that is logically different from that of sameness of language, which it is supposed to illuminate. If A is the same language as B, and B is the same language as C, then A and C must also be the same language, and so on. "Sameness of language" is therefore a transitive relation, but "mutual intelligibility" is an intransitive one: if A and B are mutually intelligible, and B and C are mutually intelligible, C and A are not necessarily mutually intelligible. The problem is that an intransitive relation cannot be used to elucidate a transitive relation.

4. Mutual intelligibility is not really a relation between varieties, but between people, since it is they, and not the varieties, that understand one another. This being so, the degree of mutual intelligibility depends not just on the amount of overlap between the items in the two varieties, but on qualities of the people concerned. One highly **relevant quality is motivation:** how much does person A want to understand person B? This will depend on numerous factors such as how much A likes B, how far they wish to emphasize the cultural differences or similarities between them and so on. Motivation is important because understanding another person always requires effort on the part of the hearer − as witness the possibility of switching off when one's motivation is low. The greater the difference between the varieties concerned, the more effort is needed, so if A cannot understand B, this simply tells us that the task was too great for A's motivation, and we do not know what would have happened if their motivation had been higher. Another **relevant quality of the hearer is experience:** how much experience have they had of the variety to which they are listening? Obviously, the greater the previous experience, the greater the likelihood of understanding it.

Both of these qualities raise another problem regarding the use of mutual intelligibility as a criterion, namely that it **need not be reciprocal,** since A and B need not have the same degree of motivation for understanding each other, nor need they have the same amount of previous experience of each other's varieties. Typically, it is easier for non-standard speakers to understand standard speakers than the other way round, partly because the former will have had more experience of the standard variety (notably through the media) than vice versa, and partly because they may be motivated to minimise the cultural differences between themselves and the standard speakers (though this is by no means necessarily so), while standard speakers may want to emphasise these differences.

In conclusion, mutual intelligibility does not work as a criterion for delimiting languages in the "size" sense. There is no other criterion which is worth considering as an alternative, so we must conclude that **there is no real distinction to be drawn between "language" and "dialect"** (except with reference to prestige, where it would be better to use the term "standard (language)", rather than just "language"). In other words, the search for language boundaries is a waste of time. Where the boundary between two languages is clear to sociolinguists, it is clear to everybody else as well − for example, there is no doubt that the languages spoken on opposite sides of the English Channel are different. And where a boundary is unclear to ordinary people, it is equally unclear to sociolinguists. We can't assume that the phenomenon "language" always reaches us neatly packaged into "language-sized" bundles. All we can assume is that there are varieties of language, and that a given variety may be relatively similar to some other varieties and relatively different from others.

Lecture 4. Regional Dialects and Isoglosses

If we consider the most straightforward variety differences based on geography, it should be possible to identify what are called **regional dialects** within any larger variety such as English. Fortunately, there is a vast amount of evidence bearing on this question, produced by the discipline called **dialectology,** particularly by its branch called **dialect geography.** Since the nineteenth century, dialectologists in Europe and the United States (and, on a smaller scale, in Britain) have been studying the geographical distribution of linguistic items, such as pairs of synonymous words (for example, pail versus bucke), or different pronunciations of the same word, such as farm with or without the /r/. Their results are plotted on a map, showing which items were found in which villages (since dialect geography tends to concentrate on rural areas to avoid the complexities of towns). The dialect geographer may then draw a line between the area where one item was found and areas where others were found, showing a boundary for each area called **an isogloss** (from Greek iso- "same" and gloss- "tongue").

Isoglosses should never intersect, because if they did they would be dividing the same population in two contradictory ways (just as if we first split it according to sex and then according to age, which is impossible to show in a single tree). Unfortunately this prediction is wrong; in fact, it could hardly be further from reality, because cross-classification is the normal, most common relationship among isoglosses. To take just one example, there are two isoglosses in southern England which intersect. One isogloss separates the area (to the north) where *come* is pronounced with the same vowel as *stood*, from the area where it has the open vowel [A], as in Received Pronunciation (RP), the prestige accent of England. The other isogloss separates the area (to the north-east) where r *of farm* is not pronounced, from the area where it is.

From such findings many dialectologists have drawn the conclusion that each item has its own distribution through the population of speakers, and that there is no reason to expect different items to have identical distributions. This seems to be the only reasonable conclusion to draw from the data. But this leads to the further conclusion that isoglosses need not delimit varieties, except in the trivial sense where varieties each consist of just one item.

Unit 9. Registers

The term REGISTER is widely used in sociolinguistics to refer to "varieties according to use", in contrast with dialects, defined as "varieties according to user". The distinction is needed because the same person may use very different linguistic items to express more or less the same meaning on different occasions, and the concept of "dialect" cannot reasonably be extended to include such variation. For instance, in writing one letter a person might start: "*I am writing to inform you that...",* but in another the same person might write: "*I just wanted to let you know that...".* Such examples could be multiplied endlessly, and suggest that the amount of variation due to register differences (if it could somehow be quantified) may be quite comparable with that due to differences in dialect. We can interpret register differences in terms of the model of acts of identity in much the same way as for dialect differences. Each time we speak or write we not only locate ourselves in relation to the rest of society, but we also relate our act of communication itself to a complex classificatory scheme of communicative behaviour.

The "dimensions" on which an act of communication may be located are no less complex than those relevant to the social location of the speaker. Michael Halliday distinguishes three general types of dimension: **field, mode** and **tenor. Field** is concerned **with the purpose** and **subject-matter** of the communication; **mode** refers to the **means** by which communication takes place − notably, by speech or writing; and tenor depends on the relations between participants. Once again, a slogan may help: field refers to "why" and "about what" a communication takes place; mode is about "how"; and tenor is about "to whom" (i.e. how the speaker views the person addressed). In terms of this model, the two examples of letteropenings cited above would differ in tenor, one being impersonal (addressed to someone with whom the writer only has formal relations) and the other personal, but their field and mode are the same.

According to this model, register differences are at least three-dimensional. Another widely used model has been proposed by Dell Hymes, in which no less than thirteen separate variables determine the linguistic items selected by a speaker, apart from the variable of "dialect". It is very doubtful if even this number reflects all the complexities of register differences. Nevertheless, each of these models provides a framework within which any relevant dimensions of similarity and difference may be located. For example, the relations between speaker and "addressee" involve more than one such dimension including the dimension of "power", on which the addressee is subordinate, equal or superior to the speaker, and the dimension called "solidarity", which distinguishes relatively intimate relations from more distant ones. In English speakers locate themselves on these two dimensions in relation to addressees largely by choosing among the alternative ways of naming the addressee − Mr Smith, sir. John, mate and so on. It is easy to see that the selection of items within a given sentence reflects different factors, depending on which items are involved. One item may, for instance, reflect the formality of the occasion, while another reflects the expertise of the speaker and addressee. This is the case in a sentence like *We obtained some sodium chloride*, where *obtained* is a formal word (in contrast with got) and *sodium chloride* is a technical expression (in contrast with salt). The dimension of formality is totally independent of the dimension of technicality, so four combinations of formality with technicality can be illustrated by the following perfectly normal sentences:

formal, technical	*We obtained some sodium chloride.*
formal, non-technical	*We obtained some salt.*
informal, technical	*We got some sodium chloride.*
informal, non-technical	*We got some salt.*

Simple examples like these suggest that different linguistic items are sensitive to different aspects of the act of communication, in the same way that different items react to different properties of the speaker. We can only speak of registers as varieties in the rather weak sense of sets of linguistic items which all have the same social distribution, i.e. all occur under the same circumstances. This is a far cry from the notion of variety in which speakers stick to one variety throughout a stretch of speech, speaking “one dialect” (perhaps the only one they can speak) and “one register”. However, it is also probably fair to say that those who use the term “register” have never really intended it to be taken in this sense, as witness the fact that all the models presented lay great stress on the need for multi-dimensional analysis of registers. Another point of similarity between dialects and registers is that they overlap considerably − one person's dialect is another person's register. For example, the items which one person uses under all circumstances, however informal, may be used by someone else only on the most formal occasions. This is the relation between “native” speakers of standard and non-standard dialects. Forms which are part of the standard speaker's “dialect” are part of a special “register” for the non-standard speaker − a serious social inequality.

Unit 10. Diglossia

Having emphasised the theoretical possibility of each individual linguistic item having its own unique social distribution among the various circumstances of use, it is now important to report in some societies there is a relatively simple arrangement called diglossia in which at least one type of social restriction on items can be expressed in terms of large-scale “varieties”, rather than item by item. The term diglossia was introduced into the English-language literature on sociolinguistics by Charles Ferguson in order to describe the situation found in places like Greece, the Arabic-speaking world in general, German-speaking Switzerland and the island of Haiti − a list which can easily be extended. In all these societies there are two distinct varieties, sufficiently distinct for lay people to call them separate languages, of which one is used only on formal and public occasions while the other is used by everybody under normal, everyday circumstances. The two varieties are normally called “High” and “Low”, or “standard” and “vernacular”. Ferguson's definition of diglossia is as follows: *Diglossia is a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation.*

For example, in an Arabic-speaking diglossic community, the language used at home is a local version of Arabic (there may be very great differences between one “dialect” of Arabic and another, to the point of mutual incomprehensibility), with little variation between the most educated and the least educated speakers. However, in a lecture at a university, or a sermon in a mosque, the only possibility is Standard Arabic, a variety different at all levels from the local vernacular, and felt to be so different from the “Low” variety that it is taught in schools in the way that foreign languages are taught in English-speaking societies. Likewise, when children learn to read and write, it is the standard language, and not the local vernacular, which they are taught.

Ferguson identifies three conditions in a speech community that lead to diglossia. The first is the existence of a large body of literature in a language that is similar to or the same as the indigenous language. This literature must embody some of the fundamental values of the community. Second, literacy in the community is usually restricted to a small elite. Third, a long period of time, even centuries, is involved in establishing the first and second conditions.

The speakers of all the languages mentioned above regard H as superior to L in many respects. Attitudinally, some speakers are very strongly in favor of the H variety, so much so that they deny the existence of L by stating that speakers of the L variety are merely speaking the language incorrectly. This is true in the case of Arabic speakers. Educated Arabs deny using the L variety of Arabic, as do Haitian Creole speakers, who claim to use only French. Often, the speakers believe that the H variety is more logical, more beautiful, and better able to express important thoughts. Subsequent research shows that several other communities such as Tamil in South India exhibit diglossic characteristics.

The most obvious difference between diglossic and English-speaking societies is that no one in the former has the advantage of learning the High variety (as used on formal occasions and in education) as their first language, since everyone speaks the Low variety at home. Consequently, the way to acquire a High variety in such a society is not by being born into the right kind of family, but by going to school. Of course, there are still differences between families in their ability to afford education, so diglossia does not guarantee linguistic equality between poor and rich, but the differences emerge only in formal public situations requiring the High variety.

It will be noticed that the definition of “diglossia” given by Ferguson is quite specific on several points. For example, he requires that the High and Low varieties should belong to the same language, for example, Standard (or Classical) and Colloquial Arabic. However, some writers have extended the term to cover situations which do not strictly count as diglossic according to this definition. Joshua Fishman, for example, refers to Paraguay as an example of a diglossic community, although the High and Low varieties are respectively Spanish and Guarani, an Indian language totally unrelated to Spanish.

However, Fishman (following John Gumperz) also extends the term diglossia to include any society in which two or more varieties are used under distinct circumstances. Fishman has generalized the concept of diglossia to bilingual communities. He notes that a hierarchical evaluation of languages as high and low is found in bilingual communities as well. For example, in Zaire, French is reserved for prestige domains such as higher education, law, and administration and thus functions as a high language relative to Lingala and other indigenous languages which are used in less prestigious domains and thus function like low languages. This extension of diglossia to bilingual communities works in most cases, except that there are many communities in which the high language is also a mother tongue and not necessarily one that is learned only in school. Furthermore, diglossia is generally interpreted as implying a rather rigid complementarity or exclusivity of functions; that is, where one variety is appropriate, the other is never used. However in many bilingual or multilingual situations one encounters not only a complementarity of languages but also a type of use which is best described as **overlapping** or **intermeshing.** Also, in a bilingual (as opposed to the diglossic) situation, the codes in question may not be so sharply differentiated into high or low codes in terms of prestige. These differences mean that the application of diglossia to bilingualism cannot be precise.

Recent empirical research on diglossia in Greece, the Arab world, and elsewhere suggests that the dichotomy may be giving way to intermediate varieties; that is, in contexts which were previously thought to be the exclusive domain of the high varieties, the use of less formal varieties which incorporate some elements of the low variety is seen.

EXERCISES

1. Discuss the following:

1. Speech communities and languages.

2. Language and dialect

2.1. What does it mean to say that some variety is a language?

2.2. What are the processes a typical standard language will have passed through? Explain each of them.

2.3. What are the problems in application of mutual intelligibility criterion for distinction between language and dialect?

2.4. What criteria are to be employed for distinction between language and dialect?

3. Regional dialects and isoglosses.

4. Registers.

5.1. What are the dimensions on which an act of communication may be located. Characterize each of them. Give examples.

5.2. Is there any similarity between dialects and registers? Ground your answer.

6. Diglossia.

2. Using your knowledge of diglossia, decide whether the blank spaces in this text should be filled with *H* (for high variety) or *L* (for low variety).

Haiti has been described as another diglossic situation by some linguists, with French as the … variety and Haitian Creole as the … variety. Attitudes towards the two codes in a diglossia situation are complicated. People generally admire the … variety even when they can't understand it. Attitudes to it are usually very respectful. It has prestige in the sense of high status. These attitudes are reinforced by the fact that the variety is the one which is described and 'fixed', or standardised, in grammar books and dictionaries. People generally do not think of the … variety as worth describing. However, attitudes to the … variety are varied and often ambivalent. In many part of Swiss Germany people are quite comfortable with the … variety and use it all the time − even to strangers. In other countries where the − variety is a language used in another country as a normal means of communication, and the … variety is used only locally, people may rate the − very low indeed. In Haiti, although both French and the Creole were declared national languages in the 1983 constitution, many people still regard French, the … variety, as the only real language of the country. They ignore the existence of Haitian Creole, which in fact everyone uses at home and with friends for all their everyday interactions. On the other hand, even here the … variety is highly valued by some speakers. So while its very existence is denied by some, other may regard the … variety as the best way of expressing their real feelings.

3. Using the information provided in the previous pages, summarise what you now know about the differences between *H* and *L* in diglossic communities.

You are advised to discuss the following questions with your neighbours and keep a record of your answers on paper.

a) How are they linguistically related? Are they distinct languages or varieties of the same language?

b) How are they used in the community?

c) Which is used for conversation with family and friends?

d) How is each variety learned?

e) Which has most prestige?

f) Which is codified in grammar books and dictionaries?

g) In which variety is literature usually written?

4. Using your knowledge of the process of standardisation of varieties, find the second half of each of these sentences. Choose the correct variant from a, b, c or d.

1. The process starts when a need arises for a common, stable variety in a speech community, so…	**a**. ...this means that grammar and dictionaries are produced.
2. This norm is usually codified	**b.** ...its range of functions is elaborated and extended.
3. In order that the variety can cope in a wide range of domains...	**c.** ...the variety acquires clear acceptance as a standard throughout the speech community.
4. Finally, full standardisation is achieved when...	**d.** ...a norm is chosen, usually based on social, political or economic factor.

Lecture 5. SPEECH AS SOCIAL INTERACTION

Unit 11. The Social Nature of Speech

One point of contact between language and thought is its use by an older generation to transmit its culture to a younger one. In other words, speech is an instrument of **socialisation** − the process by which children are turned into fully competent members of their society. However a good deal of culture is transmitted verbally, and it is often said the development of the faculty of language by the human species made it possible for “biological evolution”, working on genes, to be replaced as the dominant factor in our development by “cultural evolution”, working on our minds. There is no need to labour the point that speech is a crucial component in the process of socialisation.

It is obvious that language allows our socialisers to teach us facts (for example, “Beethoven was a composer”; “Germs make us ill”), and to name our concepts. The question is whether language can be said to build these concepts in the first place, or whether it reflects concepts which would have been there in any case. The answer seems to be “A bit of each”.

We can be sure that some concepts are independent of language. Some we learned as babies before we started to speak towards the end of the first year of life, and others were formed later, but must have developed without recourse to language since we still have no words for them in our adult vo-cabulary. For instance, we have a concept for the kinds of things we buy at a newsagent (or a tobacconist, or a do-it-yourself shop), but no name for any of these concepts, in contrast with concepts for things bought in other kinds of shop, for example, groceries. Whether or not there is a name for these con-cepts seems to have little to do with our ability to learn them. Similarly, we can see the similarities among nails, screws, rivets, nuts and bolts − they have similar functions, they are all made of metal and we might expect people to store them together − but there is no name for this concept. Examples like this are easy to multiply, and warn us against the danger of assuming that concepts only exist when there is specific linguistic evidence for them.

On the other hand, we can be equally sure that there are other concepts which we should not have if it were not for language. The most obvious cases are those which relate to language as a phenomenon − the concepts “language”, “meaning”, “word” and so on. However, there are other concepts which we learn after we have learned their names, and for which the name is our main evidence. For instance, a mother said to her five-year-old child, “*We have to keep the screen door closed, honey, so the flies won't come in. Flies bring germs into the house with them”.* When the child was asked afterwards what germs were, the answer was “*Something the flies play with”.* This example illustrates nicely the way in which a new word may act as evidence that an unknown concept exists, leaving the learner with the problem of somehow working out what that concept is, making use of any evidence that may be available.

Moreover, we learn many concepts by being told about them, especially during our formal education, so we do in fact learn them through language, whether or not we could have learned them without it. If it were not for language we should probably not have concepts to which we could attach words like peninsula, feudal, metabolism, classical or factor.

Language seems to be more important in learning some concepts than others, and one general principle may be that language becomes more impor-tant as the concepts concerned get further from one's immediate sensory experience − in other words, more abstract (as in the germs example). An-other principle may be that the influence of language is more important where there are alternative ways of interpreting experience (as in the choice be-tween East/West and left/right). If we combine this conclusion with semantic relativity, we have evidence that language does influence thought: the con-cepts that people learn through language may be different according to the language through which they learn them.

It is hardly necessary to stress the general importance of speech in social life. Speech allows us to communicate with each other at a much more sophisticated level than would otherwise be possible, and since communication is a social activity it could be said that speech is also social. We have to leam social constraints on speech over and above those which are part of our language.

It is clear that there are many such constraints, which may differ from society to society. For example, in Britain we are required to respond when someone else greets us; when we refer to someone, we are required to take account of what the addressee already knows about them; when we address a person, we must choose our words carefully, to show the social relations between us; when someone else is talking we are required to keep more or less silent (but not totally so). However, the same is not necessarily true in all societies so the constraints are learned through socialization.

Another thing which will become apparent is that the distinction between "language" and "social constraints on speech" is anything but clear, since many of the constraints discussed below refer to specific linguistic items, or more or less large classes of items, and could therefore be treated as part of language along with what we know about meanings. This is not surprising, since many items have meanings which refer specifically to aspects of the speech-events in which they are used − notably all the items with deictic meanings, referring to the speaker (I, we), the addressee (you), the time of speaking (present/past tense, today, etc.) and the place of speaking (here, etc.). Moreover, many items are restricted in their use to certain social circumstances (for example, *get* versus *obtain),* and we took it for granted that such information was part of our language. Consequently, it would be natural to make the same assumption about the information that the French word *tu* "you" is to be used only to intimates (and small children and animals). And having made that decision, it is only a small step to including in "language" similar information about whole classes of items, such as the class of first names in English, which are also to be used only to intimates (in contrast with names like Mr Brown).

It is easy to see how "language" and "social constraints on speech" merge, and it will also be clear from several points in the discussion below that social constraints on speech can apply not just to speech but to social behaviour in general. The accepted term for aspects of behaviour through which people influence and react to each other is social interaction, and speech is only one aspect of such behaviour, closely meshed with other aspects. One of the leading investigators in this field, Michael Argyle (a social psychologist), has described the field as follows: *One achievement of recent research has been to establish the basic elements of which social interaction consists; current research is concerned with finding out precisely how these elements function. It is now agreed that the list consists of various signals: verbal and nonverbal, tactile, visible and audible − various kinds of bodily contact, proximity, orientation, bodily posture, physical appearance, facial expression, movement of head and hands, direction of gaze, timing of speech, emotional tone of speech, speech errors, type of utterance and linguistic structure of utterance. Each of these elements can be further analysed and divided into categories or dimensions; each plays a distinctive role in social interaction, though they are closely interconnected.*

The study of speech as part of social interaction has involved many different disciplines, including social psychology, sociology, anthropology, ethology (the study of behaviour in animals), philosophy, artificial intelli-gence (the study of human intelligence via computer simulation), sociolin-guistics and linguistics. Each discipline brings a different range of questions and methods to bear on the study, and all can learn a lot from the others. The main methods used in the study are introspection and participant obser-vation, with a certain amount of experimentation (by social psychologists and ethologists) and computer simulation (by artificial intelligence work-ers). One of the most important contributions has been made by anthropol-ogists who engage in what is called **the ethnography of speaking** or **the ethnography of communication,** a field dominated by the work of Dell Hymes. The importance of this work has been to provide data on societies other than the advanced western ones in which most linguists live, and to make it clear how much variety there is in the social constraints on speech.

Unit 12. The Classification of Speech

Speech plays many different roles in social interaction. In its primitive uses, language functions as a link in concerted human activity, as a piece of human behaviour. It is a mode of action and not an instrument of reflection. An example of this would be the kind of speech used by people shifting furni-ture: To you ... now up a bit ... and so on, where the speech acts as a control on people's physical activity, in contrast to its function in a lecture where it is intended to influence the thoughts rather than the actions of the listeners. Another use of speech is simply to establish or reinforce social relations − what so called phatic communion, the kind of chit-chat that people engage in simply in order to show that they recognize each other's presence. We might add many other uses of speech to this list − speech to obtain information (Where's the tea-pot?), for expressing emotions (What a lovely hat!), for its own sake (She sells sea-shells by the sea-shore) and so on. One particular approach to the functional classification of speech certainly ought to be mentioned as it has been extremely influential. This is the approach based on speech-acts, which has been developed in the main by philosophers and linguists following the British philosopher J. L. Austin. Austin argued that the study of meaning should not concentrate on bald statements such as *Snow is white,* taken out of context, since language is typically used, in speech, for many other functions − when we speak we make suggestions, promises, invitations, requests, prohibitions and so on. Indeed, in some cases we use speech to perform an action, in the extreme sense the speech is itself the action which it reports − for instance, / *name this ship "Saucy Sue"* has to be said if the naming is to be accomplished. Such bits of speech are called performative utterances. It can be seen that an account of all these different functions of speech must be formulated in terms of a general theory of social activity.

One of the achievements of work on speech acts has been to draw attention to the extensive vocabulary that ordinary English provides for talking about utterances - verbs like say, promise and persuade. The following examples are just a small selection of the available terms in English:

Table 2 – Range of Utterances

general	speaking, talking
manner	saying, shouting, whispering

flow of information	saying, shouting, whispering agreeing, announcing, asking, discussing, explaining, ordering
source	acting, reading, reciting, mimicking
speaker evaluation	apologising, boasting, complaining, criticising, grumbling, joking, thanking
hearer evaluation	flattering, promising, teasing, threatening, warning
effect on hearer	cajoling, dissuading, persuading

What these examples show is, firstly, that the classification of speech-acts is of great interest and importance to English speakers, and secondly that there is no single basis for classification. We can classify on the basis of: manner of speaking (for example, whispering versus shouting), how information flows between speaker and hearer (for example, asking versus telling), where the words originate from (acting, reciting versus spontaneous speech), how the speaker evaluates the content (for example, apologizing versus boasting), how the hearer evaluates it (for example, promising versus threatening), and the effect it has on the hearer, i.e. its "perlocutionary force" (for example, persuad-ing and dissuading). We can even combine two or three of these bases; for example, preaching and lecturing are defined both by their manner and by the flow of information. Even the length of units classified − our "speech-acts" − varies vastly, from these complex categories like preaching and lecturing, which apply to long stretches of speech, to the manner-based categories (for example, whispering) which can apply just to single words. Some of these bases for classification appear to be much more important than others. For example, we have very few words specifically for describing the effects of speech-acts, as opposed to words like depress, annoy and so on which can be applied to the emotional effect of any kind of event, and not just to those of speech-acts.

If speech-act categories are cultural concepts we might expect them to vary from one society to another, and that is what we do find, speech-acts are very varied. This variation is socially very important − it is vital to know whether the speaker is joking or serious, telling us a fact or asking for infor-mation and so on; − so it is not surprising to find a rich set of categories that can be described in words. It is not just sociolinguists who like to talk about talking, and it is interesting to compare the classificatory systems that differ-ent languages recognise. Some of the categories have been studied by philos-ophers as “illocutionary forces” and “perlocutionary forces”, but the catego-ries that fall under these terms are only a small selection of the total range and may not have any special claim to being fundamental; nor can we be sure that the categories which our language recognises are the only important ones for us as students of speech behaviour. All we can be sure of is that people's behaviour varies according to what kind of speech-act they consider themselves to be performing, and that some of this variation is systematic.

Lecture 6. Speech as Skilled Work

Speech is not an automatic reflex like sneezing or a spontaneous expres-sion of emotion like laughing; it is skilled work. It is work, since it requires effort, and its degree of success depends on the effort that is made. It is skilled in that it requires the “know-how” type of knowledge, which is applied more or less successfully according to how much practice one has had (and according to other factors such as intelligence). Putting these two characteristics together, we can predict that speech may be more successful at some times than at others, and some people may be better at it than others. There is no doubt that this is the case: we all know that sometimes we get “tongue-tied” or “drop a brick”, and that some people are more likely than others to be stuck for “the right thing to say”.

If speech is skilled work, the same is true of other aspects of social inter-action in face-to-face communication or **focussed interaction: “**it is fruitful to look upon the behaviour of people engaged in focussed interaction as an organised, skilled performance, analogous to skills such as car driving”. Just as some people are better drivers than others (to the extent that some pass the driving test and others fail), so some people are better at social interaction than others. However, there are two major caveats. Firstly, success in speech varies considerably according to the type of speech-act required. Some peo-ple are good at intellectual debate and poor at phatic communion, and vice versa; children who are highly skilled in verbal games may flounder in the classroom or in a formal interview. Secondly, it is not obvious how success should be measured, except against the intentions of the speaker. For in-stance, if a chatterbox is with a person who habitually stays silent while oth-ers do the talking, each may consider themselves more successful than the other, according to how they balance the need to fill “awkward” gaps against the need to avoid triviality. The same two caveats apply equally, of course, to other aspects of social interaction.

This is not the place to try to specify the particular kinds of skill needed for successful speech, since they presumably include all the general skills needed for social interaction plus all the specifically linguistic skills concerned with the use of linguistic items. They vary from very specific skills, dealing with particular linguistic items (e.g. when to say sir) or with particular situations (for exampie, *how to conduct a business transaction on an expensive transatlantic telephone call),* to much more general skills, such as how to avoid ambiguity. We may perhaps think of these skills arranged hierarchically, with the most specific ones at the bottom and the most general at the top, and assume that in dealing with a particular situation the speaker will look for a specific skill in preference to a more general one, since the latter will always involve more cognitive effort and may be less successful. For instance, in asking for a ticket on a bus, it is easier and safer to use what you know about buying bus-tickets, or buying transport tickets in general, than to use a more general rule for requesting anything from anybody (for example, by saying Excuse me, would you mind selling me a ticket to ...). We may guess that one of the reasons why some people perform particularly well in some situations is that they have learned very specific skills for use in those situations.

Speech is socially classified in terms of types of speech-act, and these speech-act types are learned as part of our socialisation. For example, we learn how to order a meal in a restaurant by watching other people doing it, in much the same way that we learn vocabulary and grammatical constructions. The clearest evidence for this learning is that rules and skills vary from society to society.

Speech, then, is an acquired skill; but it is also work. Talking takes energy, both physical and mental, and can leave us feeling tired. Sometimes we are too tired to engage in it. The same is true, of course, of all social interaction, which raises an important question: why are we willing to do it? And why are we willing to accept the restrictions placed on us by our society's social rules? It is easy to see why we bother to say things that help us to get things that we want, but why do we bother with phatic communion and why do we worry about how we dress up our requests in speech? The question of motivation is one of the basic questions of social psychology and sociology, so we cannot expect a simple answer, but a particularly influential (and attractive) theory is based on the term **face,** which is used in much the same way as in the expres-sions *to lose face* and *to save face,* meaning something like “self-respect” or “dignity”. The theory was developed by Erving Goffman, an American soci-ologist (1969), who called the work needed to maintain face **face-work.**

The basic idea of the theory is this: we lead unavoidably social lives, since we depend on each other, but as far as possible we try to lead our lives without losing our own face. However, our face is a very fragile thing which other people can very easily damage, so we lead our social lives according to the Golden Rule *(Do to others as you would like them to do to you!)* by looking after other people's faces in the hope that they will look after ours. The princi-ple is described as follows in a standard sociology text-book: *Much of what we usually call “politeness” or “etiquette” in social gatherings consists of disregarding aspects of behaviour that might otherwise lead to a “loss of face”. Episodes in an individual s past, or personal characteristics that might produce embarrassment if mentioned, are not commented on or re-ferred to ... Tact is a sort of protective device which each party involved employs in the expectation that, in return, their own weaknesses will not be deliberately exposed to general view.*

Face is something that other people give to us, which is why we have to be so careful to give it to them (unless we consciously choose to insult them, which is exceptional behaviour). For sociolinguists the most relevant discussion of face is by Brown and Levinson, who distinguish two kinds efface. They call them **positive and negative,** but these terms can be misleading because both kinds of face are valuable; instead, Hudson calls them **solidarity-face** and **power-face,** to show the close link to the important concepts **of power** and **solidarity**. Both kinds could be described as **respect,** but this word has a different sense in each case. Solidarity-face is respect as in / *respect you for ...,* i.e. the appreciation and approval that others show for the kind of person we are, for our behaviour, for our values and so on. If something threatens our solidarity-face we feel embarrassment or shame. Power-face is respect as in *respect your right to...,* which is a "negative" agreement not to interfere. This is the basis for most formal politeness, such as standing back to let someone else pass. When our power-face is threatened we feel offended. Each kind efface is the basis for a different kind of politeness (a term which now has a rather more general sense than the ordinary one which contrasts it with rudeness). **Solidarity-politeness** shows respect for the person, whereas **power-politeness** respects their rights.

It is interesting to see how much of language is geared to looking after the two kinds of politeness, and we shall consider some of these ways in more detail below. For solidarity-politeness we have a wide range of ways of showing intimacy and affection - words used for addressing the other person (for example, *mate, love, darling,* not to mention greetings like *Hi!)* and others used to show solidarity-politeness towards the person referred to (for exam-ple, *William* or even *Bill* as opposed to *Mr Brown).* For showing power-politeness there are different "address" words (for example, *sir, please),* and all the euphemisms that protect the other person from being offended (for example, *spend a penny, pass away).*

The theory of face is part of a larger theory of social interaction, in which speech is only one component. This theory starts by distinguishing unfocussed and focussed interaction, according to whether or not the people concerned consider themselves to be “together” in more than a purely physical sense. Most interactions in modern cities are unfocussed, with strangers passing in the street or sitting next to each other on buses. The main consideration in these cases is to preserve each other's power-face. One obvious example is that we try to keep out of each other's way, but another is that we avoid eye-contact. Unfocussed interaction is a recent creation of modern social pat-terns for which our genes have presumably given us little preparation.

In contrast, focussed interaction has been the basis for social groups since the earliest times. It is focussed interaction that provides most of our face even in modern societies, so it also provides most of the serious threats to face. This is where solidarity-face becomes so important because we care about what our friends and family think of us; and power-face can be threat-ened in many ways (not least by parents imposing restrictions on children). One reason why we avoid eye-contact in unfocussed interaction is probably that it is so important as a way of negotiating our way through focussed interactions. Humans have a rich “vocabulary” for non-verbal communica-tion − smiles, frowns, winks, nods, gestures and body-movements − most of which are shared not only by all human societies but also by some primates. It seems likely, therefore, that some of the skills needed for face-work are innate, as is our general need to maintain face.

We need to save our own face by saving the face of everyone we talk to, so we need to manage our behaviour, both verbal and non-verbal, very care-fully. This does not mean that speech will be the same the world over, even if we ignore differences of vocabulary and grammar. Each society recognizes its own norms for saving face, so our face-work consists in recogniing these norms and applying them effectively.

Unit 14. The Norms Governing Speech

Skill in speaking depends on a variety of factors, including a knowledge of the relevant rules governing speech. Such rules are of various types, dealing with different aspects of speech, but all we can do here is to mention a few examples. The rules chosen vary from one society to another, which makes it easier to see that there are rules, but this should not be taken to imply that all rules are similarly variable. (It is possible that there are widespread, if not universal rules, though the emphasis in the literature is on differences rather than similarities between cultures.) We shall call such roles norms because they define normal behaviour for the society concerned, without specific pen-alties against those who do not follow them.

First, there are norms governing the sheer quantity of speech that people produce, varying from very little to very much. Dell Hymes describes a soci-ety where very little speech is the norm.

Peter Gardener did some fieldwork in southern India, among a tribal people called the Puliya, describing their socialization patterns. There is no agriculture and no industry, and the society is neither particularly cooperative nor particularly competitive; so children are led neither to be particularly interdependent nor to be aggressively competitive with each other, but simply to busy themselves with their own concerns in reasonable spatial proximity. He observed that, by the time a man was forty, he practically stopped speak-ing altogether. He had no reason to speak. People there, in fact, just didn't talk much and seldom seemed to find anything much to talk about, and he saw this as a consequence of the particular kind of socialization pattern.

We may contrast this society with one in Roti, a small island in eastern Indonesia, described by James Fox: *For a Rotinese the pleasure of life is talk − not simply an idle chatter that passes time, but the more formal taking of sides in endless dispute, argument and repartee or the rivalling of one another in eloquent and balanced phrases on ceremonial occasions ... Lack of talk is an indication of distress. Rotinese repeatedly explain that if their "hearts are confused or dejected, they keep silent. Contrarily, to be involved with someone requires active verbal encounter.*

According to Besnier much the same is true of typical Jewish east-coast Americans. There may be problems when people from societies with different norms meet, as shown by the following anecdote quoted by Coulth-ard, where other instances of different norms relating to quantity of speech may also be found: An enthnographer describes staying with in-laws in Denmark and being joined by an American friend who, despite warnings, insisted on talking with American intensity until “at 9 o'clock my in-laws retired to bed; they just couldn't stand it any more”.

Another kind of norm controls the number of people who talk at once in a conversation. Most readers would probably accept the principle that only one person should speak (otherwise there must be more than one conversation taking place, as at a party), but apparently this norm is not universal. The prac-tices in a village in Antigua, in the West Indies, are described by Karl Reisman: *Antiguan conventions appear, on the surface, almost anarchic. Fundamentally, there is no regular requirement for two or more voices not to be going at the same time. The start of a new voice is not in itself a signal for the voice speaking either to stop or to institute a process which will decide who is to have the floor. When someone enters a casual group, for example, no opening is necessarily made for him; nor is there any pause or other formal signal that he is being included. No one appears to pay any attention. When he feels ready he will simply begin speaking. He may be heard, he may not. That is, the other voices may eventually stop and listen, or some of them may; eyes may or may not turn to him. If he is not heard the first time he will try again, and yet again (often with the same remark). Eventually he will be heard or give up.*

Similarly, most readers would accept that there must be a limit on the number of interruptions permissible in a conversation; not so in Antigua: In a brief conversation with me, about three minutes, a girl called to someone on the street, made a remark to a small boy, sang a little, told a child to go to school, sang some more, told a child to go buy bread, etc., all the while con-tinuing the thread of her conversation about her sister.

Other norms refer to the information which participants in a conversation give each other. If our only concern is to communicate as efficiently as pos-sible, then information should flow freely. This may be the pattern in some societies, as suggested by some theories of pragmatics, but we cannot take it for granted. After all, information is an important commodity, and new information is particularly valuable as the substance of interesting conversations and a source of status for those who give it away. Those who have information that others don't know are in a powerful position, and may decide to ration the flow in a way that contradicts our more rational expectations. In familiar societies this is an individual matter (and we probably all know individuals who enjoy making others work hard for their information); but in some societies the process is institutionalised. For example, gossips on Nukulaelae Atoll frequently withhold important pieces of information, such as the identity of a person, from their gossip narratives, thus manipulating their audiences into asking for the missing information, sometimes over the space of several turns, as information is revealed in small doses, requiring further questioning.

Similarly, according to Elinor Keenan, in at least one part of Madagascar the norm is waived under many circumstances. For instance, it would be quite normal to refer to one's own sister as “a girl” (Keenan quotes a specific occasion when a boy said to her − in Malagasy − “There is a girl who is coming”, referring to his own sister). Or again, if A asks A “Where is your mother?” and A responds “She is either in the house or at the market”, B's utterance is not usually taken to imply that A is unable to provide more specific information needed by the hearer. The implicature is not made, because the expectation that speakers will satisfy informational needs is not a basic norm.

There are a number of reasons why speakers are so uninformative in this community. One is that they are afraid that identifying an individual may bring the person to the attention of evil forces, or get them into trouble in other ways. Another reason is the shortage of news in small isolated villages. Con-sequently, there is no reluctance to give information when it is easily available to anyone − for instance, if there is a pot of rice cooking over a fire, people will refer to it as "the rice" since anyone can see that there is rice there. Clearly, different norms for speech in different societies can often be ex-plained by reference to other aspects of their cultures and cannot, therefore, be satisfactorily studied in isolation.

Finally, there are very specific norms which may vary from society to society, such as the way one answers the telephone. To take another example, in Germa-ny the hostess at a formal dinner party would probably say to her guests *Ich darf jetzt bitten, Platz zu nehmen* (I may now ask (you) to take (your) places), using a declarative construction, in contrast with the interrogative that might be used by an English hostess: *May I ask you to come and sit down now?*

The diversity in the norms for speech are matched in the area of non-verbal communication. For example, a raised eyebrow may mean various things according to the culture and social circumstances: greeting, invitation warning, scepticism, disdain, doubt, interest, intrigue or disgust. Conversely, different actions can have the same meaning in different communities. It has even been claimed that people brought up in the southern states smile differ-ently from other Americans! On the other hand, behind all this diversity there appear to be some features that are universal, such as the obvious indications of “up” and “down”. As noted earlier, we may share some of these features with our primate relatives, in which case the explanation for the similarities is presumably genetic; so non-verbal communication offers the same range of learned and innate patterns as we seem to find in language.

Lecture 7. Cultural Differences in Discourse

Sociolinguists have documented the presence of dialects in every lan-guage. These dialects, all of which are legitimate, are associated with edu-cational, economic, social and historical conditions. To linguists, the word “dialect” refers to a way of speaking a language, and not to an incorrect way of speaking a language.

While all dialects of a given language are linguistically legitimate, some achieve social prestige. In literate, economically developed societies, the dia-lect spoken by those with the most formal education, the highest socioeco-nomic status and the greatest degree of political power tends to acquire the greatest social prestige. Typically, it becomes the standard for the culture, for writing and for education.

Standard dialects also provide a medium through which persons from dif-ferent linguistic backgrounds can communicate with one another. Social and regional variations may exist within standard dialects as long as they conform to specified linguistic rules, largely grammatical in nature. Standard English, therefore, should not be considered "Northern English' or "White English," since it is spoken, in one form or another, in all parts of the United States and by some members of all racial and cultural groups.

At the other end of the social spectrum, so called nonstandard dialects are generally spoken by the “have nots”: the powerless, the less educated, the less economically well off and the less socially prominent. While legitimate linguistically, these dialects tend to be unacceptable to the “haves” of society In American English, nonstandard dialects exist within all racial, ethnic and regional groups (see Table 2). Each dialect is a product of distinct social, historical, cultural and educational factors. All are legitimate in that they rep-resent the concepts, needs and intentions of their speakers.

For a variety of reasons, including negative public attitudes and inade-quate teaching models, nonstandard English speakers often do not effectively learn standard English in school. Without competence in standard English, students will fail academically and face diminished career, social and life op-tions. Many students who do learn standard English do so at a great price: devaluation or rejection of their home or community dialect. When competence in standard English is coupled with rejection of one's own home or community dialect, it may lead to serious psychological and identity problems.

In the United States, the schools' failure to teach standard English is re-flected in the poor performance of nonstandard English speakers on achieve-ment, aptitude and diagnostic tests. Perhaps the most alarming evidence of this failure is the low performance of nonstandard English speakers on tests used to place students in remedial or gifted programs. Virtually all of these tests presume competence in standard English.

Many African American children, usually from working class homes or communities, speak a nonstandard variety of English. This variety, often re-ferred to as **Black English Vernacular,** is thought by many sociolinguists to reflect African influences on American English, and is reinforced by social isolation, segregation and group identity.

In addition to differences in pronunciation, vocabulary and grammatical struc-tures among cultural groups, variations also exist in the rules for general dis-course in oral communication, covering such specific acts as narratives and conversation. In communicating with one another, teachers and students natu-rally will follow the assumptions and rules governing discourse within their re-spective cultures. Discourse rules govern such aspects of communication as:

- opening or closing conversations;
- taking turns during conversations;
- interrupting;
- using silence as a communicative device;
- knowing appropriate topics of conversation;
- interjecting humor at appropriate times;
- using nonverbal behavior;
- expressing laughter as a communicative device;
- knowing the appropriate amount of speech to be used by participants;
- sequencing of elements during discourse.

Based on a review of literature and anecdotal reports, Taylor has listed verbal and nonverbal communication styles of working class African Americans as they contrast with those of Anglo Americans and middle class persons of other ethnic groups. Similar comparisons may be made between other cultural groups in the "typical" American classroom.

Table 4 − Examples of Verbal and Nonverbal Communication Contrasts Among Some African Americans and Some Anglo Americans

Hats and sunglasses may be considered by men as adornments much like jewelry and may be worn indoors	*Hats and sunglasses are considered utilitarian by men and as outwear to be removed indoors*
Touching another's hair is generally considered offensive	*Touching another's hair is a sign of affection*.
Asking personal questions of a person met for the first time may be seen as improper and intrusive	*Inquiring about jobs, family and so forth of someone one has met for the first time is seen as friendly*
Use of direct questions is sometimes considered harassment; e.g., asking when something will be finished is like rushing that person to finish	*Use of direct questions for personal information is permissible*
“Breaking in” during conversation by participants is usually tolerated. Competition for the floor is granted to the person who is most assertive	*Rules on taking turns in conversation dictate that one person has the floor at a time until all of his or her points are made*
Conversations are regarded as private between the recognized participants; “butting in” may be seen as eavesdropping and not tolerated	*Adding points of information or insights to a conversation in which one is not engaged is sometimes seen as helpful.*
The term “you people” is typically seen as pejorative and racist	*The term “you people” is tolerated*.
Listeners are expected to avert eyes to indicate respect and attention	*Listeners are expected to look at a speaker directly to indicate respect and attention*

Unfamiliarity with cultural communication differences can lead to misin-terpretation, misunderstanding and even unintentional insult. For example, the African American student who shows little reserve in stating his or her feel-ings may be misperceived as hostile, or perhaps as dangerous. The student, meanwhile, may see himself or herself as an honest person willing to share feelings as a necessary first step in resolving problems.

Similarly, the African American student who looks away from speakers during conversation may be erroneously perceived as showing disrespect or not paying attention. The African American student who freely states his or her position to the teacher may be perceived as challenging the teacher's authority when the student may be demonstrating honesty and pride in the value of his or her opinion.

1. Be aware of words, images and situations that suggest that all or most members of a racial group are the same. *Example: “Why can't Joe ever be on time?”, “He's African American, isn’t he?”*

2. Avoid using qualifiers that reinforce racial and ethnic stereotypes. *Example: “The articulate African American student” implies that African American students typically have low verbal skills.*

3. Avoid racial identification except when it is essential to communication. *Example: “Judy, an outgoing student” is preferable to “Judy, an outgoing African American female student”.*

4. Be aware of possible negative implications of color symbolism and usage that could offend people or reinforce bias.

Example: Terms such as “black magic” or “black market” can be offensive.

5. Avoid language that has questionable racial or ethnic connotations. *Example: Phrases such as “culturally deprived”, “culturally dis- advantaged” and “you people” have racist overtones.*

With respect to changing communicative behaviors which violate the cul-tural rules of others, the following strategies may be useful:

1. Be aware of rules for attentiveness during conversation. *Example: The constant maintenance of eye contact while listening during a conversation often violates a conversational rule in working class African American and Hispanic cultures.*

2. Be aware of rules regarding the distance between speakers during conversation.

Example: In some cultures, speakers stand close enough to touch often. In other cultures, distance is maintained to denote respect.

3. Be aware that objects, characters and symbols may reflect different beliefs or values for different groups.

Example: The confederate flag and Uncle Remus stories may offend African Americans because they reflect the culture of slavery and the Old South.

4. Be aware that cultures may vary in what they consider humorous or taboo. *Example: Ethnic humor is often perceived by many groups as evidence of racial prejudice. Discussion of in group cultural rules and behaviors with outsiders is considered taboo within many cultures.*

5. Be aware of different rules for taking turns during conversations. *Example: African American children frequently perceive "breaking in" to reinforce or disagree with another s point to be perfectly permissible, indeed desirable.*

6. Cultures may use different standards for loudness, speed of delivery, silence, attentiveness and time to respond to another's point.

Example: Many Native American societies place high value on contemplation and tend, therefore, to feel little responsibility to make immediate responses during conversation.

7. Be aware of different cultural rules for entering into conversations in progress.

Example: African American students tend to consider conversations as private between recognized participants. Therefore, anyone, including the teacher, who "butts in " is viewed as an eavesdropper and rebuked.

One way to improve relationships across cultural lines, particularly in the upper grades, is to develop a unit on "Communicating with One Another." The purpose of such a unit would be to teach students how to communicate more effectively across cultural lines and how to address and negotiate dif-ferences.

It is also useful for teachers to brainstorm with one another on how to remove communication barriers. In addition, a well designed staff develop-ment program can lead to better relations among staff and generate effective cross cultural communication activities for the classroom.

It can also be useful for teachers to ask parents to identify sources of miscommunication and socially offensive behavior or language. Parents may be asked to suggest ways that school personnel can improve communication with students, adults and the communities.

While schools have a responsibility to teach students the behavioral codes of the society at large and to expect students to adhere to them, they have a similar responsibility to reduce culturally induced discipline problems and to avoid misinterpreting cultural differences as behavioral problems.

EXERCISES

Discuss the following:

1. The social nature of speech.

1.1. Do concepts only exist when there is specific linguistic evidence for them? Prove it.

1.2 Does language influence thought?

1.3. Social constraints on speech.

1.4. What is social interaction?

1.5. What are disciplines involved in the study of speech as a part of social interaction?

2. The classification of speech.

2.1. What is phatic communion?

2.2. Performative utterances.

2.3. Bases for classification of speech-acts.

2.4. Why is the variation of speech-acts socially very important?

3. Speech as skilled work.

3.1. Prove that speech can be considered as skilled work.

3.2. The theory of face.

3.3. The focussed and unfocussed social interaction.

4. The norms governing speech.

4.1. What are the norms governing speech in your country?

4.2. Cultural Differences in Discourse.

4.3. Tactics for Removing Cross Cultural Communication Barriers.

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