

英语语言学与教学丛书

丛书主编 蔡龙权

社会语言学

— 语言变体的社会诠释

SOCIOLINGUISTICS: A SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE
OF LANGUAGE VARIETIES

苏承志 程星华 著

上海科学技术出版社

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Contents

Foreword

Preface

Figures and tables

List of symbols, signs and abbreviations

Typographical conventions

Chapter 1 Sociolinguistics: first things first.....1

1.1 What is sociolinguistics?.....1

1.2 Internal and external linguistics.....6

1.3 Presupposed views of sociolinguistics.....7

1.4 Aims of sociolinguistics.....8

1.5 Sociolinguistics and related disciplines.....10

1.6 Methodology of sociolinguistics.....12

Summary.....15

Reading and discussion.....16

Chapter 2 The social functions of language.....21

2.1 Language functions in general.....21

2.2 Functions of language according to M.A.K. Halliday.....27

2.3 The social functions of language.....34

2.4 The social functions of language: a practical view.....35

2.5 Functional relationship between language and society.....38

Summary.....40

Reading and discussion.....40

Chapter 3	Language and society in interaction	44
3.1	Interrelationship between language and society	44
3.2	The effect of society on language	46
3.3	The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis	55
	Summary	63
	Reading and discussion	63
Chapter 4	Varieties of language: a preliminary view	67
4.1	The definition of ‘variety of language’	67
4.2	Classification of varieties of language	69
4.3	Speech community	70
4.4	Variety and related terms	78
4.5	Language variation and types of linguistic items	83
	Summary	86
	Reading and discussion	87
Chapter 5	Dialect	90
5.1	Definitions and classification	90
5.2	Language and dialect	94
5.3	Standard (language / dialect / variety)	103
	Summary	112
	Reading and discussion	113
Chapter 6	Register	117
6.1	Definition of ‘register’	117
6.2	Three determinants of register	118
6.3	Controversy over the denotation of ‘register’	127
6.4	Dialect and register	133
6.5	Concepts related to register	138
	Summary	140

Reading and discussion	140
Chapter 7 Mixture of varieties	144
7.1 Code-switching	144
7.2 Borrowing	148
7.3 Pidgin and creole languages	154
Summary	164
Reading and discussion	165
Chapter 8 Regional variation of language	171
8.1 Regional dialect	171
8.2 Possible causes of regional variation	171
8.3 Diffusion of linguistic innovation	173
8.4 Regional variation of the English language	177
Summary	192
Reading and discussion	193
Chapter 9 Social class and language variation	196
9.1 Social stratification	196
9.2 Bernstein's studies of social-class dialects	201
9.3 Labov's contribution to the study of social-class dialects	204
9.4 Social-class differences in phonology	207
9.5 Social class differences in grammar and vocabulary	216
9.6 Milroy's study on social networks	217
Summary	218
Reading and discussion	219
Chapter 10 Ethnicity and linguistic variation	223
10.1 Language and ethnic identity	223
10.2 Substratum effect	227
10.3 A study of BVE	231

Summary	243
Reading and discussion	244
Chapter 11 Gender differentiation of language	248
11.1 Linguistic gender differences	249
11.2 Social implications of linguistic gender differences	261
11.3 The tendency of linguistic gender differentiation	276
Summary	277
Reading and discussion	278
Chapter 12 Context and language variation	285
12.1 The notion of ‘context’	285
12.2 Contextual variables	286
12.3 Context and register	300
12.4 Forms of address	301
12.5 Contextual variations in linguistic systems	313
12.6 Diglossia	317
Summary	319
Reading and discussion	320
Appendix Native English-speaking areas	327
Bibliography	328
Subject index	338

Foreword

Modern linguistics, whether dating back to Ferdinand de Saussure or Wilhelm von Humboldt, has been developing at leaps and bounds in the past decades. Such a virile development is, as a matter of fact, an expected result of expanding human knowledge of Nature as well as various human social activities not excluding the use of human language that, if properly executed, pools human beings together and if not, pulls them apart. The study of human civilization is accordingly kaleidoscopic in general, and requests many a close-up in particular. So does the modern study of human language science, linguistics.

The designation of modern linguistics can be analyzed into a binary fashion, approach-based and content-based. In terms of approach, there are diachronic or historic linguistics, synchronic linguistics, theoretical or general linguistics, descriptive linguistics, comparative or typological linguistics, etc. In respect of content branch out plenteous cross-disciplinary concerns and issues, such as those listed alphabetically by David Crystal, anthropological linguistics, applied linguistics, biological linguistics, clinical linguistics, computational linguistics, educational linguistics, ethnolinguistics, geographical linguistics, mathematical linguistics, neurolinguistics, philosophical linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, statistical linguistics, theolinguistics, and lots of others, if we'd like to keep on reeling for instance, forensic linguistics, corpus linguistics, and cognitive linguistics. This binary division is of course contingent, because the primary studies of linguistics are, by all means, centered on phonetics and phonology, morphology and syntax, semantics and pragmatics, all being within the structure of its *ad hoc* components of language, and because the interest here and now is to

introduce the coming of *Linguistics*, *Applied Linguistics*, *Psycholinguistics*, and *Sociolinguistics*, which, written by professors who have been researching in the fields for years, go across the sheer borders of linguistics *per se* into other disciplines the contents of which, by no means, have nothing to do with linguistics.

Hence, there stand firm the appeal of reading at large and the call for reading in minute detail if personal interest and professional requirement coincidentally come into play at length. And I, irresistibly therefore, would like to make a reference to rather than a recommendation of reading these works at hand, *Linguistics*, *Applied Linguistics*, *Psycholinguistics*, and *Sociolinguistics*, with regard to viewing what happens in between linguistics and other disciplines and how the terms the happening helps keep with English language teaching as a household commonly run by those who have ever had some engagement in this business. Resolutions may hang guilty, yet a resurrection of further, and perhaps inexorable, exploration will become certain, and welcomed.

Cai Longquan
Shanghai Normal University
June 8, 2009

Preface

The present book, an introduction to sociolinguistics, is intended to provide the readers with fundamental principles, preliminary notions and the latest developments of the discipline. Our expected readers are (1) post-graduates majoring in linguistics in China; (2) undergraduate English majoring in China; (3) other college students in China; (4) students of linguistics in other parts of the world, and (5) other people who are interested in linguistics. No relevant grounding in sociolinguistics, whatever his/her background, is presumed on the intended reader.

Sociolinguistics, a relatively new discipline, has been developing by leaps and bounds since it rose as an independent discipline in 1960s. A great deal has been published in and about the subject over the past few decades. The principal attempt of this book is simply to provide a meaningful guide to the discipline for the general readers. Much of our effort has been directed to the fundamental issues of both theory and procedure, and the attempts to balance the practical and theoretical sides of the subject. And, what is more, I have personally been engaged, for long years, in conducting a post-graduate course of *sociolinguistics*, and therefore, the present book is, more or less, based on my teaching notes piled up during the years, which have been updated as frequently as possible.

Admitting that this is an introductory book, we by no means have the extravagant wishes to cover every aspect of the subject. This book is intended, as is suggested by its subtitle, to concentrate on the notion of ‘varieties of language’, which is studied in three ‘cycles’: Cycle 1 (Chapter 4) is a survey of the notion ‘varieties of language’; Cycle 2

(Chapters 5, 6 and 7) concerns the major subcategories of ‘varieties of language’, namely ‘dialect’ and ‘register’, and the outgrowth of the ‘mixture of varieties’; and Cycle 3 (Chapters 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12) covers different presentations of ‘dialect’ and ‘register’, such as regional dialect, social-class dialect, ethnic dialect, gender dialect and the concept of ‘context’. The organization of the book, therefore, is based on the principle of ‘trichotomy’.

There exist, moreover, some ‘micro-corpuses’ of sociolinguistic data in this introductory book. These include ‘functions of language’ (Chapter 2), ‘speech community’ (4.3), ‘BVE’ (Black Vernacular English) (Chapter 10), various American English pronunciations and linguistic features of Australian English (8.4), and ‘context variables’ (12.2).

The most noteworthy characteristic of this introductory book, nonetheless, is some monographic studies on specific topics, which scarcely come into view in introductory books. There is, for example, a study on ‘language variation and types of linguistic items’ (4.3), a study on the disparities between language and dialect (5.2), a study on the overlap and transformation between dialect and register (6.4), and a special discussion on the study of context and register (12.3).

It is our hope that this book will be particularly useful to students who pursue their linguistic studies and academic progress. We welcome, meanwhile, criticisms along these lines, particularly from those who, like ourselves, have the obligation of encouraging in their students a greater awareness of the wide range of sociolinguistics.

Finally, we should like to express our hearty thanks to many people. We are of course deeply indebted to all those whose names and works are listed in the *Bibliography*, for both having been used as references and quoted for the section ‘Reading and discussion’ in every chapter. We should also like to show our unbounded gratitude to many people who have provided us with helpful advice and criticism during the long period in which this book was being written. We are also grateful to Dr. Cai

Preface

Longquan, the editor-in-chief of this series, for his comments, suggestions and help at all stages. And personally, my thanks also go to two of my colleagues, Professor Zhou Xi and Professor Song Xuedong for their timely and efficient help in ‘vowel charts’ and software for phonetics. And, last but not least, I should also express my gratefulness to my students, especially Hua Xia, Zhang Yan, Wang Ling, Huang Ping, Scarlett Jiang, etc., who, at different stages, gave their help without reservation.

Su Chengzhi

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May 6, 2009

Figures and tables

Figures

- Fig. 1-1: Position of sociolinguistics in the study of language (p.5)
- Fig. 4-1: Overlapping of speech community membership (p.72)
- Fig. 6-1: Overlap between dialect and register (p.137)
- Fig. 8-1: Contrast of the vowels in the word *house* (p.172)
- Fig. 9-1: RP monophthongs: acceptable areas (p.210)
- Fig. 9-2: Contrast of [u:] and [ʊ:] (p.211)
- Fig. 9-3: Vowel variation in *part* in Norwich (p.213)
- Fig. 9-4: Vowel variation in *but* in Leeds (p.214)
- Fig. 9-5: Vowel variation in *name* in London (p.214)
- Fig. 9-6: Vowel variation in *know* in Boston (p.215)
- Fig. 9-7: Vowel variation in *roof* in Chicago (p.215)
- Fig.10-1: Italian immigrants' pronunciation of *bad* (p.229)
- Fig. 10-2: Jewish immigrants' pronunciation of *dog* (p.230)
- Fig. 11-1: RP central vowels (p.253)
- Fig. 11-2: Women's central vowels in AmE (p.253)
- Fig. 12-1 Relationship between context and register (p.300)

Tables

- Table 3-1: Contrast between Chinese and English kinship terms (p.49)
- Table 3-2: Chinese semi-lexicalized terms and their English counterparts (p.50)
- Table 4-1: Variants of /rj/ (p.81)

- Table 4-2: Variants of /t/ (p.81)
- Table 4-3: Variants of [ɛ̃] (p.82)
- Table 4-4: Numbers of examples supporting hypotheses (p.85)
- Table 6-1: Corresponding relationship between dialect and register (p.135)
- Table 7-1: Assimilation of the pronunciation of *restaurant* in British English (p.152)
- Table 7-2: Assimilation of the pronunciation of *restaurant* in American English (p.153)
- Table 8-1: Contrast of pronunciation in London, Manchester and Cheshire (p.175)
- Table 9-1: Absence of -s in Norwich and Detroit (p.206)
- Table 9-2: Class distribution of Non-RP forms of consonants in Norwich (p.209)
- Table 9-3: New York vowels in *bad* (p.212)
- Table 11-1: Gender differences in Koasati (p.254)
- Table 11-2: Percentages of non-RP [-ɪŋ] form (p.262)
- Table 11-3: Percentages of non-prevocalic /t/ in Detroit Negro speech (p.262)
- Table 11-4: Percentages of multiple negation used in Detroit (p.263)
- Table 11-5: Contrast between boys and girls in four vowels in South Africa (p.264)
- Table 11-6: Self-evaluation of *tune* in Norwich (p.270)
- Table 11-7: Over- and under-reporting of *tune* in Norwich (p.271)
- Table 11-8: Over- and under-reporting of *ear* in Norwich (p.271)
- Table 12-1: Familiar and polite address forms of second-person pronouns (p.304)
- Table 12-2 -*in*' forms used in four contextual styles in Norwich (p.316)

List of symbols, signs and abbreviations

General symbols

- [] phonetic transcription
- // phonemic transcription
- * for an ungrammatical or unacceptable sentence
- : full length of preceding vowel
- ~ nasalization, e.g. \tilde{a} , \tilde{e}

Phonetic symbols

Vowel symbols

- /i/ Cardinal Vowel no. 1, used for Eng. /i:/ in *see*
- /ɪ/ centralized unrounded close-mid vowel (Eng. vowel in *sit*, and first element of diphthong /ɪə/)
- /e/ Cardinal Vowel no. 2, used for RP /e/ in *bed*, and for the first element of the diphthong /eɪ/
- /ɛ/ Cardinal Vowel no. 3, and first element of RP diphthong /ɛə/
- /æ/ front vowel between open and open-mid (RP vowel in *cat*)
- /u/ Cardinal Vowel no. 8, used for Eng. /u:/ in *do*
- /ʊ/ centralized rounded close-mid vowel (RP vowel in *put*), and first element of diphthong /ʊə/
- /ɔ/ Cardinal Vowel no. 6; also used for RP /ɔ:/, and first element of diphthong /ɔɪ/
- /ɒ/ Cardinal Vowel no. 13 (RP vowel in *dog*)
- /ɑ/ Cardinal Vowel no. 5; also used for RP /ɑ: / in *car*
- /a/ Cardinal Vowel no. 4, the first element of RP diphthongs /aɪ/

and /aʊ/

- /ɜ/ unrounded central vowel (RP in *bird*)
- /ə/ unrounded central vowel, Eng. initial and final vowels in *another*
- /ɝ/ unrounded retroflexed central vowel (used in GA *er* in *water*)
- /ʌ/ Cardinal Vowel no. 14, used for Eng. /ʌ/ in *cup*

Consonant symbols

- /p/ voiceless bilabial plosive (Eng. *p* in *pea*)
- /b/ voiced bilabial plosive (Eng. *b* in *labour*)
- /k/ voiceless velar plosive (Eng. *c* in *car*)
- /g/ voiced velar plosive (Eng. *g* in *eager*)
- /t/ voiceless alveolar plosive (Eng. *t* in *tea*)
- /d/ voiced alveolar plosive (Eng. *d* in *lady*)
- /s/ voiceless alveolar fricative (Eng. *s* in *see*)
- /z/ voiced alveolar fricative (Eng. *z* in *lazy*)
- /f/ voiceless labiodental fricative (Eng. *f* in *four*)
- /v/ voiced labiodental fricative (Eng. *v* in *ever*)
- /θ/ voiceless dental fricative (Eng. *th* in *thing*)
- /ð/ voiced dental fricative (Eng. *th* in *other*)
- /ʃ/ voiceless palato-alveolar fricative (Eng. *sh* in *she*)
- /ʒ/ voiced palato-alveolar fricative (Eng. *s* in *measure*)
- /l/ voiced alveolar lateral approximant (Eng. *l* in *lazy*)
- /ɫ/ voiced alveolar lateral approximant with velarization (RP *ll* in *ill*)
- /m/ voiced bilabial nasal (Eng. *m* in *me*)
- /n/ voiced labiodental nasal (Eng. *n* in *no*)
- /ŋ/ voiced velar nasal (RP *ng* in *sing*)
- /r/ voiced post-alveolar approximant (RP *r* in *red*)
- /j/ voiced palatal approximant (Eng. *y* in *you*)
- /w/ voiced labial-velar approximant (Eng. *w* in *we*)
- /ʔ/ glottal plosive (as in an emphatic pronunciation of Eng. *accent*)

Abbreviations

AmE	American English
AusE	Australian English
BrE	British English
BE	Black Vernacular English
EP	English Pronunciation
FN	First Name
FP	French Pronunciation
GA	General American
HRT	High Rise Tone
IPA	International Phonetic Alphabet
LMC	Lower Middle Class
LWC	Lower Working Class
LN	Last Name
MMC	Middle Middle Class
MWC	Middle Working Class
NN	No Name
RP	Received Pronunciation
T	<i>tu</i> (casual form of address)
T-G	Transformational-Generative
TLN	Title + Last Name
UWC	Upper Working Class
V	<i>vous</i> (polite form of address)
VBE	Vernacular Black English

Typographical conventions

Italics [*italics*]

1. For emphases.
2. For terminology.
3. For Latin words or other foreign words.
4. For titles of books and journals in Western languages.

Single quotation marks [' ']

1. For direct quotations.
2. For technical terms.

Double quotation marks [“ ”]

1. For titles of articles in both Western languages and Chinese.
2. For all functions of double quotation marks in Chinese.

Double angle brackets [《 》]

For titles of books in Chinese.

Parentheses (Round brackets) [()]

For sources of direct or indirect quotations.