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**The relation of sociolinguistics in foreign language teaching**

**Abstract**

In recent years, an approach to linguistic research has been developed, in which attention is focused on the functioning of language in the community of its native speakers and the purpose of which is to create a language theory suitable for explaining the relevant facts. It follows from this that the focus of the research here is not on the language as such, not on its internal structure and inventory of linguistic means, but on how representatives of a particular society use the language, which is the main focus of the branch of linguistics called “sociolinguistics”. Sociolinguistics as a science studies a language in connection with the social conditions of its existence. Sociolinguistics places special emphasis on the use of language, highlights communication skills, considers language learning in relation to society and culture, since each language is a reflection of a certain culture and has deep cultural connotations. The aim of the present paper is to study and examine the relation of sociolinguistics to foreign language teaching. Generally, foreign language teaching is related to sociolinguistics in different ways. Different definitions of the term “sociolinguistics” by foreign scientists were reviewed and analyzed. Various social factors such as situation, social settings, context and others that take a great part in language teaching process and influence on foreign language teaching and learning were discussed. In the article, such research methods as reviewing, analysis and generalization were applied. Finally, the dimensions examining the relevance and role of sociolinguistics in foreign language teaching were represented.

*Key words:* sociolinguistics, language teaching, social factors, linguistics, EFL learners, sociocultural approach, sociolinguistic problems.

**Introduction**

Sociolinguistics comes from meanings donated by many researchers from different spheres of sciences, mostly they are linguistics, sociology, and anthropology and some ideas have grown from educators. On this distinction allow us to give description taken from generally accepted theories.

Sociolinguistics (social linguistics) is a branch of linguistics that studies a language in connection with the social conditions of its existence. Linguists note the importance of dealing with social issues connected to their research. The wide-spread example of it is the testimony of linguists about “Black English” and the educational right of its users in 1979 [1]. The American sociologist W. Labov, who is one of the founders of modern sociolinguistics, in his work “The study of language in its social context” states that “in recent years, an approach to linguistic research has been developed in which attention is focused on the functioning of language in the community of its native speakers and the purpose of which is to create a language theory suitable for explaining relevant facts”. It follows from this that the focus of the research here is not on the language as such, not on its internal structure and inventory of linguistic means, but on how representatives of a particular society use the language.

According to Penelope Eckert [2], “Sociolinguistics studies focused on correlation of specific variables and static categories, variation study embraces the ideas on language as the notion to make identities. As should now be apparent, the study of sociolinguistics is deeply concerned with aspects of scholarship which are in a variety of waves. At the very least, Richard Hudson, defines sociolinguistics is a socially relevant variety of linguistics, but it is probably much more. Social conditions mean a set of external circumstances in which a language actually functions and develops: the society of people using this language, the social structure of this society, differences between native speakers in age, social status, level of culture and education, place of residence, as well as differences in their speech behavior depending on the communication situation”.

**Research Method**

This paper deals with the observational method to review the collected data. In this case the researchers focused on the speech of future teachers in delivering the learning material to students.

The main goals of sociolinguistics are to study the use of language by representatives of a particular society, to identify and analyze factors, various kinds of changes in the society in which this language lives, affecting its development. These goals correlate with two core sociolinguistic problems – the problem of social differentiation of language and the problem of social conditionality of language development.

**Discussion**

Currently, L.P. Krysin considers that nationally oriented research directions are clearly distinguished in sociolinguistics. This circumstance is due to the fact that in each country and, more narrowly, in each ethno social community, peculiar conditions for the functioning of the language(s) are formed, and such problems that are relevant for this national community (or multinational, but characterized by the unity of socio-economic and political life) are brought to the fore.

One of the basic concepts, sociolinguistics is the concept of a linguistic situation – a set of forms of language existence (regional koine, territorial and social dialects) serving a continuum of communication in a certain ethnic community or administrative-territorial association [3]. In essence, the language situation is the state of a socio-communicative system and the functional relations between its components (languages, jargons, social and territorial dialects) during a certain period of its functioning.

Currently, important changes are being recorded in the language situation in the United Kingdom. Firstly, the composition of the social and communicative system is changing, caused by a large influx of migrants to the British capital and other major cities, this is facilitated by the social policy of the official authorities, the policy of multiculturalism, expressed, in particular, in loyalty to the culture of immigrants, in providing equal opportunities to all members of multinational British society. In the materials of some researchers, it is noted that more than 300 languages are spoken in immigrant communities. Although the positions of the state language (English) are supported by the state language policy directed to integrating migrants into British society. This leads to changes in the composition of the socio-communicative system serving this society. The processes of contact between different cultures are also reflected in lexical borrowings.

Secondly, the balance of the social and communicative system is changing due to the expansion of the scope of some socialists, in particular computer and Internet jargon. The famous British linguist D. Crystal called this phenomenon as “Digital Revolution. Slang vocabulary used in social networks, specific abbreviations that have arisen when writing text messages of mobile phones, emoticons and emoticons are used not only in informal communication, but partially pass into standard English.

Another important objective of sociolinguistics is the use of language for communication purposes, and in particular the study of speech behavior as a result of choosing the most effective option for constructing a socially correct speech patterns. At the same time, it is necessary to identify the basic criteria for the selection is their selection mechanism as socially significant options. The end result is the identification of social norms that determine the speech behavior of society representative.

In sociolinguistics, in this regard the term “sub code-switching” is used, when a communication participant switches from one language (dialect, style) to another, replacing one language means with another in the process of communication, depending on the communication situation.

The mechanisms of code-switching ensure mutual understanding between the participants of communication, comfort and efficiency of its process. On the other hand, the inability of a communicant to change his speech, to vary language means depending on the communication situation, following only one code is perceived as a communication problem and leads to communicative conflicts.

In addition to the theoretical development of the tasks facing it, sociolinguistics also solves applied problems. One of them is the problem of teaching foreign languages. It is generally recognized that language teaching is most effective when its teaching methodology takes into account not only linguistic proper, but also extralinguistic factors. This is a necessary condition for the formation of students’ socio-cultural competence. The concept of foreign language socio-cultural competence as awareness of the socio-cultural context of language use has relatively recently entered the conceptual apparatus of the theory of teaching foreign languages. Sociocultural competence is part of the communicative competence and is its component, it is “a set of knowledge about the country of the language spoken, national and cultural characteristics of the native speakers’ social and speech behavior and the ability to use such knowledge in the process of communication, following customs, rules of conduct, etiquette norms, social conditions and stereotypes of behavior of native speakers” [4]. However, the concept of socio-cultural competence is currently being clarified and supplemented in connection with the development of society and changes to the requirements for a specialist who professionally speaks a foreign language.

Thus, sociolinguistics is the science of the connections between language and society. The essence of sociolinguistics is to study the influence of social factors on the structure and use of language [5].

The main topics that are considered in sociolinguistics are:

(1) Linguistic strata of a country or area, such as diglossia, bilingualism, multilingualism;

(2) Language variations consisting of regional and social dialects and jargon, formal and informal styles;

(3) The relationship between conversation and code selection, as well as interactions between code selection and personal relationships;

(4) Society and its groups are considered in the context of the connection of language or its variations and social effects;

(5) Methods and rules of language change that are the result of social, cultural and political factors and language contacts [6].

The importance of social and cultural factors in language teaching cannot be overestimated in sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistics places special emphasis on the use of language, highlights communication skills, considers language learning in relation to society and culture, since each language is a reflection of a certain culture and has deep cultural connotations.

Sociolinguistics and English teaching have a long-time and close relation. For example, Yang Yonglin points out that first, from the angle of theoretical reference, Hymes’ Communicative Language Teaching, Labov’s sociolinguistic theory of variant, etc. all provide references for English teaching; second, from the angle of research on extension, the observing scopes of sociolinguistics have extended from the concrete use of language in the social context to the influence of cultural and social factors on the environment of foreign language acquisition [7]. Obviously, this overlaps with the research scope of English teaching; last, from the angle of academic publishing, the publication of many monographs and proceedings such as Preston’s Sociolinguistics and Second Language Acquisition and Wolfson’s The Multi-Dimension Sociolinguistics and English Teaching fully indicate that the cooperation between sociolinguistics and English teaching is increasingly close. Thus, sociolinguistics and English teaching become increasingly closer in recent years, which not only provides a new theoretical perspective for the research of English teaching, but also provides concrete guidance for English teaching practice.

According to Roger W, there are several social factors that correlate to language teaching in sociolinguistics perspective as follows [8]:

*Ethnicity* – a result in significant linguistic variations. History and politics will influence the development of any language in non-predictable way, to deliberately maintain and determine their separateness.

*Gender* – existence of recorded differences in men and women speeches observable across a whole range of linguistic variables. These differences do not concern the lexical and grammatical differences, but are clearly evident in prosodic features.

*Geography* – all languages demonstrate geographic variation. Regional difference matter is complicated in industrialized societies where geographic mobility is common. Regional variation known as “dialect” and “accent” which refers to the pronunciation pattern often combines to form recognizable regional variation. An EFL teacher in Scotland might face difficulties while teaching, because Scottish accent is different from English accent.

*Social class* – differences in languages across class boundaries employ inferior forms to disassociate themselves from society. The language used by professional classes is labeled as “correct” and promoted by governmental educational standard. In contrast, other forms of language are labeled as “incorrect” and accepted as substandard.

*Occupation and Role* – it is felt that the changes that we most commonly overlook are the changes in language owing to the profession of the writer or speaker, or their relationship to others. The impact of role is evident in the language of groups of builders, school children and shop assistants as well as politicians and sports commentators.

The language is not uniform or constant. Rather, it is varied and inconsistent for both the individual user and within and among groups of speakers who use the same language. Therefore, it is inevitable that the roles of sociolinguistic lead the teaching language entails the goals either teaching second or foreign language.

**Teaching EFL Related to Sociolinguistics**

In recent years, foreign language education has become a significant phenomenon. Responding to personal or professional needs, people learn a foreign language to communicate with colleagues, to qualify for education abroad, or to have a travel abroad. In order to understand the process of language acquisition, second or foreign language education, linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, and specific knowledge of language teaching techniques and methods is gaining its momentum.

Teaching English as a foreign language which is also known as teaching English to speakers of other language involves teaching English to students whose first or second language is not English. The learners may be children or adults with varying levels of ability. According to Yasemin Bayyut the significance of sociolinguistic in foreign language education is examined along three dimensions: attitudes towards learning a foreign language, inclusion of culture in foreign language lessons, and the contribution of language planning to foreign language education [5, p. 78]. Curriculum and instruction can be arranged to promote positive attitudes toward the foreign language to be learned and nationalities associated with the language. Inclusion of cultural elements in the foreign language curriculum helps learners to understand new language concepts and provides a context for their use.

The basic theoretical features of sociolinguistics and the context of its practice lend foreign language education its rich social content. To illustrate, when one considers language education in a school context, noting student-teacher interactions alongside educational components of teaching and learning, the significance of social interactions is readily perceived. Regarding communications functions, the application of sociolinguistics in a classroom context can contribute enormously to the development of foreign language teaching techniques [9].

**Conclusion**

Based on the discussion mentioned above, we come to conclusion that sociolinguistics has an important role in language teaching because it consists of the work on link between language and society, language variation and attitudes about languages. Sociolinguists are able to lead the learners to speak appropriately to social context. It is important to the teachers to introduce sociolinguistics with the means of teaching language materials. They may pay attention to how to speak fluently but speak correctly is expected too. Actual communication is beyond knowing only vocabulary and grammar structures, and without considering communication in its completed way, learners ill not be able to speak fluent in another language. Each language is spoken within different contexts by different people and for unrelated reasons and when someone is learning language, it is important to count those factors to effectively communicate with others.

Therefore, teachers have to identify all features linked to use a language either speaking or written. Teachers hope to transform their learners to gain sociolinguistic competence for hours of several lessons, but by contextualize the language, regularly reviewing the impact of cultural and social factors on the language. Learning materials prepared for EFL learners need to be introduced as isolated exercises and could be incorporated to most exercises and examples.

In teaching English as a foreign language also the learners should be introducing the use of English in social context appropriately. They are not only able to express it, but also they have the capability to determine the correct expression for the appropriate situation, class, time, age, gender, other social context.

Therefore, in language teaching, teachers should make students understand: in different situations, you need to use different speech patterns, styles. At the same time, it is necessary to create situations during the lesson that students may encounter in real life.

Thus, sociolinguistics has a great influence on the teaching of a foreign language. Language is a kind of social phenomenon; it always appears and develops against a certain social background. Thus, teachers should pay attention not only to teaching the rules of the language, while ignoring its social context. To achieve the true goal of teaching English, it is necessary to integrate the language with the social context.

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Соңғы жылдары тілдің ана тілінде сөйлейтіндер қауымдастығында қызмет етуіне назар аударылатын және оның мақсаты тиісті фактілерді түсіндіруге қолайлы тіл теориясын құру болып табылатын лингвистикалық зерттеулерге көзқарас жасалды. Бұдан шығатыны, мұндағы зерттеу жұмысының басты назары тілдің сол күйінде емес, оның ішкі құрылымы мен тілдік құралдардың түгенделуінде емес, сол саланың басты назарында тұрған тілді белгілі бір қоғам өкілдерінің қалай пайдаланатын білдіретін тіл білімі «әлеуметтік лингвистика» деп аталады. Әлеуметтік лингвистика ғылым ретінде тілді оның өмір сүруінің әлеуметтік жағдайларымен байланыстыра зерттейді. Әлеуметтік лингвистика тілдің қолданылуына ерекше мән береді, қарым-қатынас дағдыларын көрсетеді, тіл үйренуді қоғаммен және мәдениетпен байланыстырады, өйткені әрбір тіл белгілі бір мәдениеттің көрінісі және терең мәдени коннотацияларға ие. Бұл жұмыстың мақсаты – әлеуметтік лингвистиканың шет тілін оқытумен байланысын зерттеу және зерттеу. Жалпы алғанда, шет тілін оқыту әлеуметтік лингвистикамен әртүрлі тәсілдермен байланысты. «Әлеуметтік лингвистика» терминіне шетелдік ғалымдардың әртүрлі анықтамалары қаралып, талданған. Әлеуметтік жағдайлар, контекст және тiлдi оқыту процесiнде үлкен рөл атқаратын және шетел тiлiн оқыту мен үйренуге әсер ететiн әртүрлi әлеуметтiк факторлар талқыланды. Мақалада шолу, талдау және жалпылау сияқты зерттеу әдістері қолданылды. Соңында шетел тілін оқытудағы әлеуметтік лингвистиканың өзектілігі мен рөлін зерттейтін өлшемдер ұсынылды.

Түйінді сөздер: әлеуметтік лингвистика, тілді оқыту, әлеуметтік факторлар, лингвистика, ағылшын тілін үйрету, социомәдени көзқарас, әлеуметтік лингвистикалық мәселелер.

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В последние годы развитие получило подход к лингвистическим исследованиям, при котором внимание сосредоточено на функционировании языка в сообществе его носителей и целью которого является создание языковой теории, пригодной для объяснения соответствующих фактов. Из этого следует, что в центре внимания исследования находится не язык, не его внутренняя структура и инвентарь языковых средств, а то, как представители того или иного общества используют язык, что является основным направлением деятельности отрасли - языкознания под названием «социолингвистика». Социолингвистика как наука изучает язык в связи с социальными условиями его существования. Социолингвистика уделяет особое внимание использованию языка, выдвигает на первый план коммуникативные навыки, рассматривает изучение языка в связи с обществом и культурой, поскольку каждый язык является отражением определенной культуры и имеет глубокие культурные коннотации. Целью настоящей статьи является изучение отношения социолингвистики к преподаванию иностранных языков. Вообще, преподавание иностранных языков связано с социолингвистикой по-разному. Рассмотрены и проанализированы различные определения термина «социолингвистика» зарубежными учеными. Обсуждаются различные социальные факторы, такие как ситуация, социальная среда, контекст и другие, которые играют большую роль в процессе обучения языку и влияют на преподавание и изучение иностранного языка. В статье применены такие методы исследования, как обзор, анализ и обобщение. Итого, были представлены аспекты, изучающие актуальность и роль социолингвистики в обучении иностранным языкам.

Ключевые слова: социолингвистика, преподавание языков, социальные факторы, лингвистика, изучение английского языка, социокультурный подход, социолингвистические проблемы.

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