

# Language in Society (CL2.203), IIIT Hyderabad

## Assignment 2

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### 1 Question 1

*Sociology of language* and *Sociolinguistics* are two distinct but related terms. They are *not* interchangeable; there is a difference in the fields of study denoted by them. However, their main point of difference is the *aim* of the study and not its content, *i.e.*, each of them focusses on the same domain (the use of language in society), with differing motivations<sup>1</sup>.

The sociology of language, as the name suggests, looks for clarity on the nature and functioning of society, in the use of language. It studies language in society for the sake of a better understanding of society itself. It considers language as a product of society – a “social problem and resource”<sup>2</sup>.

Sociolinguistics, on the other hand, is an examination of the interaction of society and language for the greater knowledge of language one obtains as a result. It aims to better comprehend language as a whole itself through a study of its use in society and the influences society has on it<sup>3</sup>.

However, this is not a clear-cut, black-and-white, binary distinction. In practice the border between these two fields of study is poorly defined and fluid.

### 2 References

1. Mesthrie, Rajend. *Introducing sociolinguistics*. Edinburgh University Press, 2009.
2. Fasold, Ralph W., and Ralph Fasold. *The sociolinguistics of society*. Vol. 1. Wiley-Blackwell, 1984.

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<sup>1</sup>Mesthrie, Rajend. *Introducing sociolinguistics*. Edinburgh University Press, 2009. Page 5.

<sup>2</sup>Fasold, Ralph W., and Ralph Fasold. *The sociolinguistics of society*. Vol. 1. Wiley-Blackwell, 1984. Page ix.

<sup>3</sup>Fasold, Ralph W., and Ralph Fasold. *The sociolinguistics of society*. Vol. 1. Wiley-Blackwell, 1984. Page ix.