

# Sociolinguistics

## What is Sociolinguistics? :-

The branch of linguistics deals with the relationship between language and society.

It deals with the effect of language on society and the effect of society on language.

It studies how language varieties differ between groups separated by certain social variables, e.g.; ethnicity, religion, status, gender, level of education, age etc.

⇒ Many linguists defined sociolinguistics as mentioned below ;

• The study of language in relation to society.

(Hudson, 1996)

“Sociolinguistics is that part of linguistics which is concerned with language as a social and cultural phenomenon.”

(- Peter Trudgill, 1983)

→ So we can say the language is the communication tool and the societies is the communities of people; The place is very important because the language style of people reflects the place they belong to.

## ORIGIN OF SOCIOLINGUISTICS :-

Sociolinguistics is a new discipline of linguistics, it develops in the last the last 30 years.

Sociolinguistics in the west first appeared in the 1960s and was pioneered by linguists such as William Labov in the US and Basil Bernstein in the UK.



Dell Hymes is another sociolinguist credited with building the foundation of the study of sociolinguistics and is the founder of the journal *Language in Society*.

**William Labov**, known as the father of sociolinguistics and also linguistics Professor at University of Pennsylvania.

Sociolinguistics gives meaning by combining to words, "**Socio**" and "**Linguistics**" where, Socio means society and linguistics means the study of language.

From above we say that "**the study of the language of a society is basically sociolinguistics.**"

William Labov studies the sociolinguistics as an independent subject.

## SCOPE OF SOCIOLINGUISTICS :-

Sociolinguistics tells about the usage of language. It tells about the socio-economic situation of a person.

Sociolinguistics has become an increasingly important and popular field of study as certain cultures around the world expand their communication base and intergroup and interpersonal relations take on escalating significance.

According to Fishman, Sociolinguistics has two scopes of study

- Micro-Sociolinguistics
- Macro-Sociolinguistics

### ● Micro-Sociolinguistics :-

Microsociolinguistics refers to the research with a linguistics lean focusing on dialect and stylistic/register variation.



Micro-sociolinguistics explore the ways in which society influences a speaker's idiolect - meaning specific language of a person - and how people communicate with one another in time with different social variables;

That means micro-sociolinguistics covers the intragroup interaction or relatively small groups of speakers.

→ How we organize our social relationship with a particular society.

e.g.;

- Addressing a person
- Telling a story
- Cracking a joke.

## • Macro-Sociolinguistics :-

It focuses more on society as a whole in relation to language.

It concerns with the study of language history and development in the scope of society.

It covers a macro-sociolinguistics covers intergroup interaction or large group of people.



→ It studies what societies do with their languages

such as ; attitudes the account for the functional distribution of speech forms in society, language shift, maintenance, and replacement etc.

## PURPOSE OF SOCIOLINGUISTICS :-

Sociolinguistics are interested in how we speak differently in varying social contexts and how we may also use specific functions of language to convey social meaning or speech aspects of our identity.

Sociolinguistics teaches us how about real life attitudes and social situations.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIOLINGUISTICS :-

Campana a sociolinguist in 1993 gives the characteristics of

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sociolinguistics i-e;

- A branch of linguistics
- A science concerned with the relationship between language and society.
- It considered that language is a social and cultural phenomenon.
- It is related to methodology and contents of social sciences.
- It studies language in its social context, in real life situations by empirical investigation.



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## The two branches of Sociolinguistics,

### • Interactionist sociolinguistics :-

is most

concerned about how language use processes inform social processes.

### • Variationist sociolinguistics :-

Variationist sociolinguistics is most concerned about how social factors (and sometime social processes) inform linguistic processes.