

The Role of Sociolinguistics in English Teaching and How to Develop Sociolinguistics Competences of Future Teachers

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Abstract: Sociolinguistics is the branch of linguistics that studies the purposes and uses of language in society. It makes an effort to clarify how language varies across geographic boundaries and how people in one setting interact with those in another. However, the influence of sociolinguistics in English teaching is also very extensive, and it is indispensable for teachers to improve their sociolinguistics competencies if they want to better teach English. This paper draws on Bayyurt's research, links the three branches of language attitude, language and culture, and language planning and policy he mentioned with English teaching, and suggests social linguistics competencies future teachers can improve for better teaching. In the end, it was concluded that future teachers should improve their intercultural computer technology competence and the use of case study competence.

Keywords: Sociolinguistics, English teaching, Language attitude, Language planning and policy, language and culture, Sociolinguistics competences

1. Introduction

The most important part of sociolinguistics in language teaching is providing the students with the proper guidelines for speaking and writing as well as raising their sociolinguistic awareness, or their understanding of the sociocultural variations among languages. It is concerned with examining the relationships between language and society with the aim of better understanding language structure and how languages work in communication [1]. Therefore, the desired outcome of teaching a foreign language should be for future English teachers to build their sociolinguistics competence, which comprises several sub-competencies [2]. Based on previous studies, this essay will explain the expanded definition of sociolinguistics that Bayyurt mentioned in 2013, and describe the relationship between sociolinguistics and English teaching based on the expanded definition of sociolinguistics. It will then explore how to develop sociolinguistics competencies of future English teachers.

2. The Expanded Definition of Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is a field of study that examines how language and society interact based on how it is used in various social circumstances. In this article, like Bayyurt, I will pay more attention to three aspects which are language attitude, language and culture, and language policy and planning.

2.1. Language Attitude

The attitude of the language is important in distinct domains such as linguistics, social psychology, and sociology. Researchers from a variety of disciplines have focused on these areas, and their definitions of linguistic attitude thus reflect their viewpoints. Numerous academics have generally identified two theoretical approaches to the study of linguistic attitudes. The first theory is the behaviorist viewpoint, which holds that attitudes must be investigated by looking at how people react to particular languages, or how they are used in actual encounters. According to behaviorists, behavior is a social phenomenon that can be seen and measured. The second theory is the mentalist theory, attitudes are a type of internal, mental state that can lead to particular types of behavior [3]. Both theories contend that socialization over time shapes attitude [4].

In addition, Amin regards that language attitudes in multilingual societies are a fascinating issue to examine from a sociolinguistic perspective. Furthermore, Bayyurt argues that there are positive and negative attitudes toward the various ways that language is used in society and give some examples. A person with a positive attitude is enthusiastic about using the language that is prevalent in the society in which they live. In contrast, a negative attitude is the speakers' disengagement with or lack of passion for using their native tongue. People's attitudes toward their native language and other languages in general influence how they speak and behave. The broad attitude toward things, people, institutions, events, and abstract concepts like language is referred to as a linguistic attitude [5,6]. From my point of view, however, a neutral attitude towards language also needs to be mentioned and considered. Because sometimes people's attitudes toward language are not necessarily absolutely positive or negative, they can have a neutral attitude.

2.2. Language and Culture

In general, the idea of culture refers to a society's way of life, artistic creations, language, religion, and traditions. Therefore, it's vital to keep in mind that social interaction processes that are culturally attributed are themselves the outcomes of socially produced processes when we use the term "culture"[7]. However, sociolinguists hold a more dynamic view: culture is constantly rebuilt following information and experiences gained via interactions in various situations.

There are two opposing perspectives on how language and culture interact: One could argue that language and culture are indivisible entities, and that language is thus strongly linked to culture, which means language and culture are intertwined. In contrast, language can be seen as a tool for communication that can be applied to any situation and wherever in the world: Language and culture are viewed as distinct phenomena, which means language and culture can exist separately [8].

However, none of these jobs are fulfilling, this is because one is not far from the idea of a closed universe of language, people, nation, culture, history, mentality, and geography, as the first underline how language is tied to culture, and the relationship between language and culture need to do specific analysis in different situations, there also has the third situation that is the hybrid of them. Language is said to be culturally neutral by the opposing viewpoint. Language is also viewed as a code to some extent, and the traditional structuralist idea of language's autonomy is close to being reconstituted.

2.3. Language Planning and Policy

The field of language planning and policy (LPP) offers a variety of research options to applied linguists and social scientists [9]. There are some crucial definitions used within Language Planning such as corpus planning, status planning, and language acquisition planning. The official status of a language, as well as general preferences and usage goals, are all discussed in status planning. Corpus planning, which is connected to language itself, includes choosing vocabulary without regard to

gender, adding new words to the language, choosing an alphabet, and identifying spelling and punctuation norms. Acquisition planning involves teaching, learning, and using the language for specific, professional goals [4,5].

In addition, Language policies can be divided into implicit and explicit [10]. The most prevalent type is explicit language policy, which is set by official bodies (such as parliaments, language academies, etc.) through laws, regulations, and other directives, and implicit language policy is deduced from the social customs of various speech communities (e.g. language used in home and universities) [11]. Hazel argues although language policy may not be explicitly stated between members, it is still present in how participants manage their interactions and implicit in how members show a willingness to deviate when they come across coworkers whose linguistic preferences or repertoires fall short of what is expected given their institutional position.

3. The Relationship Between Sociolinguistics and English Teaching

3.1. Language Attitude and English Teaching

At every age and competence level, numerous studies have been undertaken to examine attitudes toward the study of foreign languages. A study of linguistic attitudes has shown to show whether students are successful or unsuccessful in learning a language. Therefore, understanding how students' and teachers' positive or negative attitudes toward a language influence the teaching and learning of the language is the overarching goal of this line of research [2-6].

Some researchers used the Mentalist Theory to analyze the language attitudes of 1,554 Filipino elementary pre-service teachers regarding the English language. It can be inferred from the respondents' general attitudes toward English that they have a "positive" attitude toward the attitudinal object. In addition, the respondents were found to be "extremely favorable" about learning the language further to become fluent in it. Additionally, it was discovered that there is a strong association and significant correlation between the features. Furthermore, it should be mentioned that the Mentalist Theory on language attitude is used to determine the respondents' language attitudes. This is crucial because the majority of studies on Language attitude view the construct through other theories, including the behaviorist theory [2-4].

On top of that, the students in the Low-Achieving Class (LAC), disproved the idea that students with high English test scores have positive language attitudes and those with poor English test scores have negative language attitudes by demonstrating positive language attitudes on the three cognitive, conative, and affective aspects [3-6].

3.2. Language and Culture in English Teaching

When it comes to studying a foreign language, the idea of culture is important because it allows pupils to reconstruct the knowledge, they have gained in their mother tongue in light of new ideas and experiences. Students use their past cultural knowledge to prepare for the foreign language lesson and make an effort to understand new cultural concepts by contrasting and comparing them with earlier ones. For these pupils to comprehend the target foreign language more effectively, it will be beneficial to develop their understanding of the second/foreign language culture [5,6].

Due to culture's multidisciplinary nature, English language teaching (ELT) can also address a variety of aspects within it, including artistic discourses, social norms, and reflexive impacts. ELT has access to a wide range of cultural views that can be used to improve class dynamics. The importance of culture in ELT cannot be overstated since it makes the difference between illiterate speakers who stay outsiders and speakers who comprehend the meanings of words and the contexts in which they are used.[12]

In a nutshell, it might be claimed that when cross-cultural communication and transfer assumptions are made, students will examine the culture of the second language while they acquire a second or foreign language. While some studies contend that teaching about a foreign language's culture in the classroom is pointless because children won't ever use it, others contend that multilingualism and diversity are skills that students need to comprehend and assimilate recently learned topics.

3.3. Language Planning and Policy in English Teaching

Universities are compelled to organize their foreign language offerings due to the current internationalization tendencies in higher education and educational language legislation. To address these trends and students' new demands for a strong education in a world that is becoming more interconnected, universities frequently develop language policies, redesign their foreign language programs, and work to foster bilingual or multilingual strategies within graduate and undergraduate programs. utilizing Johnson's language policy analysis heuristics [13].

Language planning and policy (LPP) is a multidisciplinary field that attempts to investigate, among other things, why some languages thrive while others are neglected. To many ELT practitioners, LPP may seem somewhat academic and removed from their daily work. This is unfortunate because LPP processes involve ELT professionals in one way or another, including teachers, program developers, materials and textbook writers, administrators, consultants, and academics.

Current Issues in Language Planning, corpus planning, and status planning for national languages should result in language-in-education planning, with prestige planning serving as a motivating factor. However, in practice, language in education planning frequently serves as the only activity for language planning in many polities, which is a much more frequent situation than one in which it is a clean offshoot of national language planning [14].

4. Developing Sociolinguistics Competencies of Future English Teachers

Teachers need to try to provide strategies and materials that will speed and support the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence in a second language because a learner of a second language often does not have the time or opportunity to acquire sociolinguistic rules "naturally"[15].

4.1. Intercultural Communicative Competence

When we mention Intercultural communication, we will think of cross-cultural communication, but there are some differences between them. First of all, Intercultural communication is the study of how communication patterns are influenced by encounters between distinct cultural groups. One theory on intercultural communication holds that it occurs in symbolic intercultural contexts as a result [16]. On the contrary, cross-cultural communication is the art of recognizing the similarities and contrasts across cultural groups to communicate effectively in a given circumstance. In other words, cross-cultural communication refers to the modifications made to communication by people from different cultural backgrounds [17].

It is recommended that teachers help students develop target language communicative competence by fusing language and culture because a variety of communicative features underlying sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competencies in the target language culture differ from those in the learner's own culture. Therefore, EFL teachers are expected to teach a standard variation of English so as not to upset the native speakers and to be understood by them, while simultaneously acquainting their students with the cultural aspects of Britain and raising their understanding of the country's cultural diversity [18]. To address the use of English as a language for cross-border and multicultural communication, a new pedagogic approach is urgently required. The following standard

should be considered when developing this model: Instead of the monolingual native speaker, successful bilinguals with intercultural perspectives and knowledge could act as pedagogic role models for English as an International Language (EIL).

4.2. Computer Technology Competence

The advancement of learning technology nowadays directly impacts instructors' ability to use information technology [19]. Computer technologies serve as cutting-edge interactive learning tools that help students gain the ability to visualize phenomena, dynamically represent the explanation process, handle large amounts of educational information, contribute to the dynamics of learning, and transform a lesson into a fun interactive activity. The use of computer classrooms, multimedia educational software, the global information network of the internet, and distant learning courses become more commonplace for students and teachers [20]. Therefore, teachers that are skilled at controlling learning are necessary to achieve the best learning outcome. To increase learning outcomes, teachers' information technology proficiency is a crucial requirement. One of the key benefits of employing computer technology in the teaching and study of foreign languages is the increased variety it brings to the classroom, which boosts motivation and improves learning environments for authentic, current resources in the target language. The most important tasks for EFL teachers are to improve contemporary teaching methods like project-based learning, cooperative learning, and the use of new information technologies and online resources that support the implementation of a student-centered learning approach, as well as to provide individualization and differentiation of instruction while taking into account the abilities of the students [20].

4.3. The Use of Case Study Competence

Case studies are the most effective student-centered teaching strategy when it comes to developing the sociolinguistic competencies of future English teachers. They can serve as a rich foundation for the development of students' intercultural and sociolinguistic competencies, critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and other life skills. The word "case study" refers to a broad range of issues that are presented for consideration and on which students must decide how they would react to challenging scenarios. By putting them in a position where they must weigh complex options about cultural challenges, cases assist teachers to gauge their students' capacity for knowledge synthesis, evaluation, and application. Case studies help students become more skilled in oral and written communication as well as teamwork and collaboration. The study method was used for conducting research Case Studies, which also integrate descriptive and explanatory elements, with relation to the development of sociolinguistic competence of future English teachers in independent education. It is crucial for the instructor to let the students realize they have a problem and that they need to fix it, which necessitates a problem situation [21].

5. Conclusion

This paper states the relationship between three expanded sociolinguistics definitions and English teaching, and the methods of future English teachers to improve their sociolinguistics competencies. It concludes that teachers' intercultural communicative competence, computer technology competence, and the use of case study competence play important roles. This article is useful for people who want to understand the relationship between the main branches of sociolinguistics and how to improve future teachers' sociolinguistic skills in the teaching process. Therefore, to become a good educator, it is necessary not only to continuously improve sociolinguistics ability but also to

continuously learn in other branches of sociolinguistics so that the educated person can grasp knowledge better.

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