Research Article

SOCIOLINGUISTIC PROFILE RESEARCH PAPER

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ABSTRACT

This research paper explores the sociolinguistic profiles of learners in a sixth-grade classroom, focusing on the intersections between language, society, and individual characteristics. The study investigates the linguistic diversity within a group of Uzbek and Russian pupils learning English as a foreign language, highlighting the role of factors such as language background, socioeconomic status, and cultural identity in shaping their learning experiences. Two distinct learner subgroups are identified: one group of bilingual Russian-speaking students from urban, educated backgrounds, and another group of Uzbek-speaking students from monolingual, low socioeconomic backgrounds. Through analysis of these subgroups, the paper examines the influence of sociocultural dynamics on language learning behaviors and challenges. The study provides pedagogical and assessment implications, aiming to offer educators insights into adapting instructional techniques to accommodate the diverse needs and backgrounds of their students. By addressing these sociolinguistic dimensions, this paper contributes to understanding how language variety and social context affect language education and the notion of pedagogical implications and assessment implications are discussed.

KEYWORDS

Sociolinguistics, language variation, learner diversity, language education, socioeconomic status, bilingualism, cultural identity, English as a foreign language, multifaceted environment, Task-based language teaching (TBLT), Communicative language teaching (CLT), gender or sexuality, race or ethnicity, code-switching, pedagogical implications, assessment implications.

INTRODUCTION

Sociolinguistics is the study of intricate interactions that exist between language and society that examines how linguistic variation results from a range of contextual factors, such as ethnicity, culture, location and socioeconomic class. My research paper in Sociolinguistics includes Sociolinguistic profile of a group of learners, Sociolinguistic profile of the learning context, Sociolinguistic profile of the context where English will be used, Pedagogical implications, Assessment implications and Conclusion sections. By this research paper language variations in different social circumstances and the development of sociocultural factors are clearly described. The purpose of this research is to provide guidance for instructional techniques that address the varied backgrounds and needs of learners by exploring the complex interactions that happen among culture, language, identity and social dynamics within various contexts. Through my study and observations, I tried to demonstrate the comprehension of linguistic variety and its meaningful effects on society and education.

Sociolinguistic Profile of a Group of Learners

My target group consists of ten learners who are sixth grade pupils of the secondary school – 45 in Fergana. Their age range spans from 12 to 13 years old, female and male learners. They are studying English as FL for over five years. This middle school classroom includes different nationalities, mainly Uzbek and Russian pupils. Accordingly, their L1 are different, based on their foundation of nationalities. These pupils obtained background knowledge of English language in their school, currently their level is A2 (elementary) and they are striving to get B1 (intermediate) level according to the Common European Framework of Reference(CEFR). Because of having different nationalities or different area, my students have different home language and linguistic background and their learning skills are also different. My target learners have various characteristics and behavior.

Usually I try to connect academic knowledge with interesting tasks and activities. According to Labov (1968), "Language learners vary from other learners in terms of race, ethnicity, place of origin, gender or socioeconomic positions". Teachers should have enough awareness of their learners' characteristics, behaviours, needs and experiences through learning and instructing period.

I divide the class into two subgroups based on language background and culture-socioeconomic status.

Subgroup 1

Subgroup 1: Nationality of five pupils are Russian and their L1 is also Russian. These pupils are from bilingual households and Russian is regularly used at their home in the community. They can understand Uzbek language and can speak some frequently used Uzbek words with some difficulty which is non- dominant home language II for them. "Non- dominant home language II is used in their living society, however, the parents speak in different language from the dominant language" (Romaine, 1995). Learners tend to speak in Russian, although they live in Uzbek language used society. According to Deumert (2011), "If children grow up the linguistic input which gathered substantially and this may result to decrease in proficiency of lesser used language skills by individuals". These learners went to Russian kindergarten and began to learn English with Russian translation and Russian is comprehensible language to learn different subjects. They have come from educated family and their parents are working class people. For example, one of my students Anna is a 13 years old Russian girl was raised in an educated family. Her father is an international journalist and her mother is an interpreter. Because of her parents work they can travel to many countries and can communicate with other nations and learn their life. Many times she travelled to English –speaking countries and could

communicate with natives. So her linguistic abilities are well-developed. She never worries to speak in English and always receive motivation surrounding people. Therefore, she is sociable, extrovert and outgoing girl. Most of this subgroup students are from urban areas, so they can communicate different people in different themes. Because, pupils of urban areas tend to be rather sociable, extrovert and inquisitive than pupils of rural areas. These learners attend to extra English tutoring classes and in summer majority of them have opportunity to travel abroad and communicate with native people with English or Russian. Therefore, they never meet any language fossilization and can easily adapt to learn them. But they sometimes meet difficulty to pronounce words incorrectly, mix some words' pronunciation and usually use code- switching in conversations. According to Myers- Scotton (1993a), "Code- switching is using of elements from more than a language during conversation, is usual among multilinguals". In order to improve their English pronunciation, I advice them to watch English cartoons and videos, listen to podcasts or learn other online tools. Additionally, during lessons I try to support bilingualism, if they may meet any misunderstanding. Another point of the 1st subgroup is related to their behaviours. They are naughtier than other classmates. They sometimes don't obey school rules, don't respect cultural traditions and sometimes don't pay attention to teachers' explanations during the lesson. Therefore I try to communicate with them regularly and tell interesting stories about politeness, cultural understanding, respect and kindness.

Subgroup 2

Subgroup 2: Five pupils in the class come from families with low socio-economic status. They come from monolingual family and their parents are unemployed or earn low salary. These pupils may have fewer resources at home to support their education, such as books or private tutoring. These learners have obtained their background knowledge of English language at the primary school, because their family had no opportunity to give them to the kindergarten and any extra tutoring courses. Some of them need to work in summer in order to help and support their family. Cause of their family condition, their character is different: they are shy and have no tolerance to communicate longer with others. For example, one of my pupil Farruh was raised in family with low incomes. Their parents divorced when Farruh was 5 years old. He lived with his mother far from the city center. His mother works as a babysitter and sometimes can't afford financial circumstances. In summer holidays and at the weekends Farruh need to work part time employment because of helping his mother. He usually carries people's luggage at the market or works as at the people's gardens. Farruh is a shy and introvert boy, he has some challenges to learn subjects. But he is eager to learn English and tries to participate during the classes. Their input knowledge is better than their output. They try to do reading and listening tasks, however they don't want to speak in speaking activities and share their ideas among their classmates. Also, they sometimes can't understand grammatical themes and their structures clearly, because their L1grammar is different from English grammar. For providing these learners clearly understanding I usually organize extra classes for them which avoiding socio-economic barriers. I try to teach them using simple and comprehensible structures and sentences connecting with their L1 and try to balance their participation to lessons with their peers.

These subgroup learners' background belongs to rural areas. Consequently, these learners are usually rather even-tempered and composed than their counterparts. Sometimes their reserved nature may influence their learning process as they hesitate to answer the questions or ask unfamiliar themes, even

sometimes embarrass to communicate with their peers.

Sociolinguistic Profile of the Learning Context

In the online learning context for acquiring the target language a dynamic and multifaceted environment influenced by a variety of sociolinguistic elements. For teachers to create inclusive, effective language education that fits the wide range of requirements of pupils, they must have a thorough understanding of these variables. In my target group every pupils differ from others in terms of their characters, backgrounds, experiences or learning styles in the particular setting. Learning results can be improved by using tailored strategies that take into account different capacities and styles. Some of my group learners began to learn English in the primary school and some of them began from kindergarten period. First subgroup learners have enough opportunity to acquire the target language. They can travel to other countries and communicate with native speakers. Their parents are educated and encourage and motivate their children to learn languages. Pupils of second subgroup haven't good opportunity to learn English, but they are eager to acquire the language. In classes they try to participate in activities with some challenges of their skills. Taking into consideration of these variables, I try to create meaningful and effective learning environment. I organize lessons based on four skills which is connected with each other. During lessons I use different methods and approaches which can ease language learning. Some pupils face difficulties with English grammar that is not similar with their L1 structure. According to Benati (2018), "instructors shouldn't give emphasis not only to know language rules or theories, but also they should learn to use the language for communication. I usually use direct techniques to enhance learners' listening and speaking skills. Task- based language teaching (TBLT) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) are very effective for pupils' language acquisition that focus on authentic language usage in doing meaningful tasks or learning the language through communication. My pupils are enthusiastic and inquisive to acquire English language. "Providing a wide range of recources and materials is essential during the period of L2 acquisition" (Darvin and Norton, 2017). According to Darvin and Norton (2017), "if learners meet challenges to participate in second language learning effectively, it may due to their social status, ethnicity, racism, gender or sexual orientation that instructors should encourage learners to make own investments". In order to improve their integrated skills, I usually organize extra classes after lessons and work on pupils' weak skills and problems.

Gender or sexuality

Scientists discuss about important studies, theoretical approaches or relationship between gender or sexuality and language in learning classes. In our area there is not permission to discuss some terms of sexuality and gender, because our country is Muslim country and some views of these topics are not appropriate to our mentality.

My class consists of 5 male and 5 female learners who has different behavior and characteristics. During the lessons I notice that girls' language is "weaker" than boys' language. According to Lakoff (2004), "Females' language is described as "weaker" than males, therefore she is frequently characterized as receiving a "deficit" approach". But it represents female students' weaker linguistic usages are because of social powerlessness of females. Although girls' language is weaker than boys, they can participate to the classes actively and can comprehend some grammatical or integrated themes faster. From my observations, girls frequently use "hypercorrect grammar" in classes and outside. They pronounce words completely and accurately and boys pronounce some words briefly, such as girls pronounce "doing, cannot, is not, are

not", boys pronounce there words like "doin, can't, isn't or aren't".

My target group girls communicate with their classmates and teachers politely and softly, respect other classmates in conversations, however my group boys sometimes speak to their classmates rudely and loudly. They tend to fight with each other easily. "When I give overall impression about women, they are rather "polite, soft-spoken, empathetic, gentle and non-assertive that various roles and statues of men and women are reflected by the gendered language forms" (Okamoto, 1995). Although I should consider about connection between gender and language learning, I try to fix equality in the class.

Race or ethnicity

Language plays an important role in the maintenance and construction of ethnic identity which is more essential than other factors: social class, age or gender. In my group there are Uzbek, Russian, Tadjik pupils and Uzbek, Tadjik and some of Russian pupils are belonged to Asian ethnicity and some Russian pupils are belonged to European ethnicity. Asian people, mainly Asian women are usually gentle and pretty. Russian people usually strong, attentive and strict. In their family they usually communicate with each other in their L1 and also sometimes use words of their "heritage" language in conversation. During the communication among their classmates, "code-switching" is beneficial to share their ideas clearly. According to Poplack (1980), "The multiple functions of code-switching have been shown as an element in identity construction". Our community of the group includes a wide range of varieties, identity and languages in a small space and using a "borrowed" variety phenomenon and different accents are occurred at the community, like in Wolfram's (1974) study.

In our school community Uzbek language is dominant language, but there are many minority ethnic groups, which use their particular linguistic features in their family or close community. My target learners are non-native English speakers, therefore their English language accents are based on their L1. For example, Russian pupils pronounce English words articulately and loudly, because Russian grammar structure has similarity with English grammar structure. Uzbek and Tadjik pupils pronounce words differently, they put stresses at the end of the words, because in these languages' grammar usually stresses are put at the end of words and this influence their accents.

My target learners' learning rate is like similar pace, their ethnicity can't influence their studies or character or behavior. As a language instructor I would offer students to respect their classmates' cultural and linguistic diversity, ethnicity and L1. Additionally, my target learners' races are mostly Mongoloid/ Asians and some of them are Caucasian/ Whites. However, the topics "race" and "sexuality" is not allowed to discuss in my instructional context, cause of avoiding discrimination, obeying school policy and of course, they are not appropriate topics to my target learners.

Sociolinguistic Profile of the Context where English will be used

The context in which English will be used has s sociolinguistic profile that involves a range of factors that impact language use, identity formation or social interactions. This profile is especially helpful for learners getting ready to transition to new cultural and linguistic environments or negotiate challenging sociolinguistic circumstances (Mesthrie et al, 2009). According to Wardhaugh and Fuller (2014), "Standard English proficiency is expected in many English-speaking contexts and is often linked to formal education, social mobility and career success". Students may face pressure in social, educational or professional contexts to adhere to established language norms. But learners' language learning differ

from others depending on social class, ethnicity, individual identity or regional factors.

My target learners learn English as a Foreign Language and for EFL students shifting from one school setting to another, a smooth transition requires a lot of support and considerable planning. For developing learners' English language proficiency, instructors should provide appropriate tutoring or extra English language classes. Smooth transition takes a crucial role in adaptation of new place or environment. Newcomers can receive benefit from extra direction or help of their classmate or instructors that they can adapt to new environment and can't face challenges in their language proficiency. Some of my students require specialized support techniques in order to address their unique needs and learning difficulties. For example, Anna wants to study at the foreign university where English is commonly used. So I often engage her to communicative speaking activities and extra speaking classes that can improve her speaking skill. Adapting to a new cultural and educational context is very necessary for her when she moves to a new educational setting. In order to support my students in transiting cultural differences and new educational environment, I often provide online discussions with intercultural students of foreign schools. It can help students to share their ideas in English freely and learn other cultures' traditions, customs and lifestyles. One of my learners Farruh came from distance region and his primary school couldn't provide enough English language classes to pupils. In initial period of his studying in our school Farrux didn't understand simple English grammar structures and he was shy and introvert boy, didn't want to communicate during language classes. After classes I try to teach him individually and engage to watch and describe short videos in his simple words. In order to overcome particular shortcomings of pupils, I should use scaffolding and differentiation methods and useful ways in and outside the classes.

Pedagogical Implications

Learners of the first subgroup are active and self-motivated learners. Their language proficiency is higher than subgroup 2nd learners. For organizing English classes effectively to the 1st Subgroup learners, I use Communicative language teaching and Task-based language teaching approaches, which focus on teaching English through communication and interesting games and activities. Because they are interested in communicate like native people and they are hyperactive, therefore these learners are able to easily engaged to discussions, debates or role plays that are beneficial for acquiring their L2 proficiency. In role play activities and discussions they can imitate natives or the teacher' pronunciation and can correct their pronunciation mistakes. In role play activities I sometimes use national and cultural stories which learn learners to respect others, understand different nations' traditions and learn politeness.

Through English classes I try to teach both English language integrated skills and behavior, respect or politeness by using different approaches.

For teaching 2nd Subgroup learners, I try to organize my classes with using Grammar translation and Communicative language teaching approaches. Subgroup 2 learners don't want to speak in communicative activities and they are hesitant to answer the question in the class. So I usually emphasize grammatical tasks, translating phrases and texts and reading exercises regarding their needs analysis. If a learners makes a mistake while answering the question, I never correct his/her mistake among peers, instead I try to explain relevant answers individually and this can release their self-conscious, increase their self-confident. This is important to teach the target language to both Subgroups equally, especially different multicultural learners. According to

Kymlichka (2001), "Language plays a beneficial role in the multicultural policies' enactment". In order to improve their speaking skill, I usually use CLT approaches in different ways in the classes. For example, I share papers with appropriate topics and their listening podcasts related to the next theme for hometask. During the lessons they should tell what they understand or even they may read their papers in the discussions. It can enhance learners' self-esteem and confident and help to improve their speaking and listening skills. Besides that, 2nd subgroup learners come from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. They differ from other classmate with their characteristics, passions, aptitudes and degrees. Therefore, I try to be flexible and imaginative. Every pupils have their particular learning styles, such as there are visual, auditorial and kinesthetic learners. It is important for me to introduce learners' families, educational and cultural backgrounds, because they are effective tools in the teaching process and guarantee to their successful language acquisition. In order to consider their learning styles, preferences and needs, I organize interactive and communicative activities which are beneficial in their language acquisition. According to Howkins (2009), "A lot of learners attend classes for acquiring the knowledge, acquiring the target language and becoming more socialized". The chosen activities, tasks and games for my learners can help to establish supportive environment, deliver the lessons clearly and can develop their integrated skills.

As an EFL teacher I try to support friendly atmosphere and interesting classes to my learners that they can learn English effectively, communicate in inter- group activities, pair-work, individual work or whole group discussions freely and clearly without any embarrassment.

Assessment Implications

I use peer, feedback evaluation, formative and summative assessments to assess learners' sociolinguistic and linguistic knowledge. According to Black and William (2010), "Formative assessment supplies with activities and feedback that can help learners to acquire the language more effectively". Their performance can be improved with formative assessments. Summative assessment is regarded as the final assessment of the lesson which is used to represent the progress and accomplishment of learners. In peer assessment learners provide feedback to other classmates. The aim of this feedback is to assist peers improve their learning. During the listening tasks I often use True/False or Multiple choices exercises. Listening activities is very beneficial to learn English pronunciation, speech and accents. I can assess learners' understanding of the listening task by using True/False or Multiple choices exercises. These tasks develop learners' concentration to the speech, differentiation of the accents and grasp the main ideas through the speech and also they can experience authentic environments during the process.

I provide a listening task for my A2 level learners in the theme "Feelings". There are several dialogues in it which are about children's feeling and they are represented in different situations. After listening to the audio, I can organize communicative activities and can check their understanding with relevant questions. For example: In this dialogue with whom John is speaking? Why John is worried about his exam? Why Lucy is angry? How do these pupils pronounce words? While assessing the learners I usually use analytic and holistic rubrics. And for this listening task I have chosen an analytic rubric. Hughes (2002) noted that "Analytic rubrics, develop awareness of overlooked performance elements, resolve uneven skill development". Instructors can tailor their instructions to the weaknesses and strengths of their learners' integrated language abilities by using the given task's

analytical rubric. I can use the accompanying criteria to assess the pupils' responses they have finished the exercises.

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Needs improvement
Comprehension	Demonstrates clear comprehension of the audio, accurately identifying expressed feeling.	Demonstrates mostly or comprehension of the audio, with minor inaccuracies in identifying feelings.	Demonstrates limited understanding of the audio, with frequent inaccuracies in identifying feelings
Vocabulary	Uses appropriate vocabulary related to feeling from the listening material.	Utilizes some relevant vocabulary, however may rely on less precise or simpler terms.	Uses inappropriate or limited vocabulary to describe feelings.
Grammar and Syntax	Shows accurate use of grammar and syntax, with few errors.	Demonstrates some control of grammar and syntax, with noticeable errors.	Demonstrates frequent errors or uses grammar and syntax incorrectly, hindering comprehension.

This analytic rubric is beneficial for evaluating learners' performance on the listening task "Feelings". Because, it divides into distict criteria, offering comprehensive and precise assessment of their abilities. This makes it possible to evaluate their listening comprehension, grammar proficiency and vocabulary use more precisely in all respects. Instructors can provide students focused feedback by allocating points to certain criteria, emphasizing their areas of growth and strength. Additionally, an analytic rubric helps guarantee uniformity in assessments in the field of education, which gives both teachers and learners clarity on what is expected of them for the assignment. The usage of analytic rubric improves the reliability and

validity of the evaluation procedure, resulting in improved learning results.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is impossible to overestimate the importance of language instructors in standing up for their learners in particular situations. Language instructors act as defenders of their learners' cultural, linguistic and social well-being. "A language teacher can create a welcoming and stimulating classroom environment that encourages language development and learners' interests to learning by customizing instruction to meet the specific preferences and needs of each learner, incorporating culturally relevant materials and encouraging collaborative learning experiences" (Kim & Richardson, 2018). Language teachers should encourage learners to reflect on their own teaching techniques and approaches that they may address the various needs and preferences. According to Bokor, 2018, "Language teachers have an important role in influencing language learning experiences of learners and creating an eqitable and inclusive educational system through empathy, advocacy or cultural responsiveness".

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