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SOCIOLINGUISTIC PROFILE RESEARCH PAPER

Abstract

The aim of this sociolinguistic research paper is to explore the implications of teaching two students, from different ethnic, gender, age, race, and socioeconomic backgrounds, in the same classroom. English language acquisition is investigated with regards to future contexts wherein the language is to be utilized. The focus is on the pedagogical and assessment implications since the two students will study English for General Purposes (EGP) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP), respectively, with one studying for general use and the other for academic use. The research aims to provide insight into the best practices for English language acquisition among students with diverse backgrounds.

Keywords: *regional dialectology, mutual intelligibility, dialect vs patois, vernacular, social dialect - occupational, monolingual D, isogloss, dialect levelling, semi communication, code-switching, language choice, home domain, diglossia, individual multilingualism, societal multilingualism, prestige, stigmatized, language shift, r-lessness.*

Introduction

One of the most predominant fields of linguistics is sociolinguistics. it investigates the relationship between language and society also it examines how different people use the same language in a diverse manner in various contexts., how language can be reflected with the impact of social identity and

culture, how language or dialect can form the social behavior and attitudes of language users. The major features that sociolinguistics finds out are age, gender, ethnicity, race, social class, and other individual and group identity markers that affect use of language. Sociolinguistics is a dynamic branch of the linguistics that searches to comprehend the complicated interactions between language and society and to develop strategies to enhance communication and language learning in various communities (Lippi-Green, 2004).

The main focus of this research paper is on the language learning experiences of two language learners come from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The first student is from Germany and the other is from Nigeria. The study is aimed to investigate their language learning needs, preferences and attitudes towards English. With the help of needs analysis, we will be able to examine their immediate linguistic and cultural contexts, the community they are dwelling and use of English in the long-term period, and their interpersonal and social skills linked to use of language. After that we will apply the methods that have been already developed and utilize technological devices which properly corresponds their linguistic and cultural backgrounds, interests and learning styles (Mesthrie et al., 2009).

The language teaching process includes integration of all four language skills, such as listening reading writing and speaking. There are also grammar and vocabulary as fundamentals. While and at the end of the teaching process, the students undertake formative and summative assessments that will check their knowledge of English and constructive feedback will be provided to both the students and teacher by experts. Eventually, the overall language teaching process difficulties arisen during the process will be recorded and the necessary conclusions will be provided in the reflection part of the research paper (Butler, 1988).

This research paper seeks to make a contribution to the growing body of knowledge around sociolinguistics, language learning and teaching and diversity in the classroom. By examining and analyzing learning experiences of students from diverse cultural backgrounds, hopefully we provide insights and strategies that might be applied to meet the needs and challenges of a range of language learners (Alim, 2016).

Sociolinguistic Profile of a Group of Learners

Usman, is a 16 year old boy who attends to school in Germany, comes from Poland and mother is Polish. His father is German so after his birth they moved back to Germany. Their heritage language is German and Usman studies science subjects, like physics and mathematics in German and he is also learning English language taking part in an online course, the level is pre-intermediate. Usman can speak German and Polish fluently but he rarely speaks in English. Depending on the audience there is code-switching occurs between German and Polish. The society speaks several languages like German, Swiss-German, Polish, French, Arabic and other people from other nationality will be speaking in small communities in those common languages. Usman's family is middle class family, where both parents do office work. He is also influenced by the peers at school. His schoolmates and other children around him try to acquire American accent while speaking in English (Mesthrie et al., 2009).

As for his personality, he is extroverted and he fits ESFJ (Myers Briggs personality types) – friendly, outgoing, reliable, conscientious, organized, practical, seeking to helpful, and eager to please others. His developing standard dialect of English is influenced by the regional dialects and the culture he is immersed into so he will learn English with combination of the historical and cultural features (Labov, 1963).

Overall, Usman's sociolinguistic profile underlines his linguistic diversity, strong language skills, his personality is also special as he desire to please others. His multicultural background and exposure to multiple languages and accents provide him with unique perspective, making him a precious member of his society (Lippi-Green, 2004).

Jenny, aged 14, is a schoolgirl from Nigeria. She was raised in orphanage home and now she is still there preparing to apply for university. After her birth, her parents left her in the orphanage home and moved to Europe as their condition was very poor. They had no job and they believed a bright future starting a new life in another more developed country. In spite of the challenges she faced, Jenny is a kind and caring person who appreciates inner harmony and personal growth, concentrating on dreams and opportunities. Her personality traits are considered as INFP (Myers Briggs), which shows her as sensitive, creative, idealistic, perceptive and loyal young girl (Alim, 2016).

Nigeria is a country rich in diverse languages spoken by different small and huge group of inhabitants. Major languages widely spread there are Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, Fulfulde, Ibibio Kanuri, and Tiv. In the area where Jenny lives Kanuri and Tiv are widely used by many individuals. Although the official language in the country is English, majority of the people have their own dialect of the native language. The code-switching occurs among native and language and English as the society is multilingual and also another good ability of the student (Mesthrie et al., 2009).

Jenny has a dark skin and this physical characteristic that may limit her social mobility. Ethnicity is frequently stigmatized in many communities that might lead to discrimination, but Jenny is lucky to be in studying in the orphanage home where there is always positive environment for everyone and their ethnicity is respected by others. It is not a big issue to build healthy relationships with other boys and girls. Social multilingualism is prevalent in

Jenny's current atmosphere, with some native language spoken within the orphanage home. Jenny has a strong strict way learning things and this helps her to build her English language pronunciation in her own way and it is not influenced by other peers (Labov, 1963).

Jenny is enthusiastic about learning English, and she hopes to pursue a degree at the university to become an English teacher. She aspires to attend the university where she inhabits in the campus and studies with other students. It is obvious that Jenny is trying to improve her social status and enhance her chances of achieving a successful academic life (Lippi-Green, 2004).

In conclusion, Jenny is a determined and focused young orphan who has faced significant life difficulties in her life by far. Despite this, she is setting her sights on a bright future by prioritizing educational goals combining with language acquisition. Her sociolinguistic profile underlines the significance of social multilingualism, code-switching, the need for creating a positive environment that encourages healthy relationships (Alim, 2016).

Sociolinguistic Profile of the Learning Context

The two language learners from Germany and Nigeria will embark on an exciting journey to acquire English language through online lessons. They are highly inspired to improve their language skills and want to get a place at university to study further majoring science and humanities. For pursuing an academic degree they will need to study English for academic purposes. They will be learning the language using tech tools and registered to distant learning mode. Their teacher is an expert teaching English as a second and foreign language. So, there will not any misunderstanding the course material (Mesthrie et al., 2009). It includes wide range of topics on pre-intermediate level. Students will be immersed into their own cultural environment, the teacher applies Natural Approach and also direct method since the only language communication is English. While teaching Grammar and vocabulary

bilingual dictionary will help them to understand certain grammar topics and they can also compare the differences and similarities of the grammar of their own native language (Kanuri and Tiv). In addition, according to the course book they will be learning, they will conduct little research and project work (Labov, 1963). The main topics for these independent tasks are native country, people, nature, family tree, historical places music, great ancestors and people's lifestyle in the country in the last century. All these topics can help students to produce the language orally and written. Furthermore, this sort of tasks encourages students to practice the language with members of the community as many people in the society speak not just their native language, but also English is the official language of the country (Labov, 1963).

Tourism is another important tool for language learning and these countries welcome millions of tourists from different English speaking countries. The student's parents and the authority of the orphanage home have already been informed about it. The students will have the chance to learn the language at their own pace. Each of the students' progress will be monitored by the teacher. After the regular formative and summative assessments, they are evaluated and then their strength and weaknesses are determined. They will receive guidance and in a welcoming and friendly environment, students are encouraged to improve language skills simultaneously (Mesthrie et al., 2009).

Sociolinguistic Profile of the Context where English will be Used

The students can use the language in different contexts and their goals are varied according to their professional and academic determinations. Firstly, Jenny will be a student and she wants to study social science which means in the long term she will need academic writing skills. She will write academic research papers, publications and articles. As a student she is expected to write essays, reports and theses. More than that they both will take numerous international exams that determine the language proficiency level of a student. Exams like IELTS, TOEFL, GRE and GMAT. In all these international exams

students' four language skills are examined. One of the students is expected to major in science program in the future. This also requires lots of reading, especially they must read a lot in order to learn and they need to gain enough theoretical and practical knowledge (Alim, 2016).

Moreover, during the time when they are at university studying different courses from professors they need to attend to seminars, lectures and conferences. They also can make a specialized translator or interpreter. As in the future in those social science and other fields there will be a huge demand for international language speakers (Lippi-Green, 2004).

Furthermore, social media and online communication is the next main purpose of learning an international language. They will travel while they are studying. If they want to take a gap year, they can get a job to take an interview (Labov, 1963).

In the long term if they can make a good teacher of those fields, they will teach those subjects at schools or at universities if they get their master's degree. In this case they will need to know much better how to integrate the culture with the field they are teaching (Bucholtz, 2005).

Pedagogical Implications

It is of huge importance to prepare students to interact in English with other people from various cultural backgrounds. Thus, I will put more emphasis on the significance of cultural sensitivity and awareness in my teaching process. I will apply wide range of teaching materials that reflect variety in cultures, races and ethnicities. Furthermore, I will provide more chances for L2 learners to share their own cultural heritage and traditions with their classmates, to encourage a sense of inclusivity and respect (Mesthrie et al., 2009).

In addition, I will differentiate my instruction to meet the a range needs of my students, like with the provision of extra support to a learner who is less proficient in English, offering more complex tasks for advanced learners and

modifying my teaching style to fit the learning styles of each student. I will also assure that my classroom is inclusive in terms of physical and emotional engagement. As a result every student will feel valued, respected, and heard (Alim, 2016).

Finally, I will foster students to take responsibility on their shoulders for their learning, to detect their goals and to observe and witness their progress. I will give permanent oral and written feedback and guidance to assist students to enhance their language proficiency, and celebrate their achievements. Overall, my pedagogical implication for a wide variety of students from diverse origin is to create a more supportive, inclusive and more engaging learning atmosphere that meets the distinctive needs and goals of each student (Lippi-Green, 2004).

Assessment Implications

The assessments are great tools to evaluate student's understanding and progress and to determine the areas that need improvement (Lippi-Green, 2004). Through applying a variety of assessment methods, like formative and summative assessments, learning-oriented tests and dynamic tests, and teacher-made, progress and stop and check tests, I will be able to understand better my students' strengths and weaknesses. According to those results, I will adjust those teaching tools into more efficient ones. Regular assessments also motivate those students who want to see progress in this process and they will be assessed by examining all those language skills. There are also international tests to examine their language proficiency. This kind of language proficiency test and certificates also opens the door of chances to other developed countries where they will have opportunities for further education and workplaces (Alim, 2016).

Overall, using diverse assessment types of helps them to achieve their goals quicker and after so many feedbacks provided they will become more proficient in English (Labov, 1963).

Conclusion

Within a certain society it is very common these days to face individuals who belong to a various race, ethnicity, age, gender, region and others. Regardless of those features of a language learners should be respected and treated equally. Therefore they will have the same chances to grow and to improve several other social and academic skills. Based on the results of this research students should be addressed individually in the classroom and all the factors that may affect this person in a negative way must be avoided (Mesthrie et al., 2009). As an educator, every language teacher should consider not only current and future goals and hopes of a student, but also all the past information is also of great significance. While teaching English as a second language, teachers should be nurturing a positive attitude towards language and create a safe space for students. This in turn could only be achieved by selecting particular materials that are culturally relevant, adopting methods and approaches to differentiate those learners with altering the learning styles, being more sensitive and inspiring all those students who want to communicate effectively in English (Alim, 2016).

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