Book Review

An Introduction to Sociolinguistics (7th ed.), Ronald Wardhaugh & Janet M. Fuller (2015), Wiley-Blackwell, ISBN 978-1-118-73229-8

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1. Introduction

Those who have ever tried to read something of an academic character about the role of culture and language, would hardly deny the deep rooted and profound nature of the language employed by Wardhaugh (2006) to illustrate the effect of culture and its interaction with language as well as the underlying themes and categories. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* was co-authored by Janet M. Fuller, right after Wardhaugh's fifth edition (2006). This textbook opens the door to new and numerous insights for language teachers to get to know what works in the classroom and what does not. This is in line with what Wardhaugh (2015) clearly believes in by highlighting that sociolinguistics is still clearly unified through its concern with how people use language to create and express identities, relate to one another in groups, and seek to resist, protect, or increase various kinds of power.

In his latest edition (i.e., 7th ed.), *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (2015), Wardhaugh, along with Fuller, puts forward the layout of the book as containing four general topics/parts (Language and Communities, Inherent Variety, Language and

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Interaction, and Sociolinguistics and Social Justice) each embracing three up to four chapters which all result in a rich 447 page textbook. On a wider scope, the themes will recur across the discussions of dialects, multilingualism, discourse, and social justice.

The book largely begins with a short introduction provided by the authors mainly focusing on the key concepts in the study of sociolinguistics as well as the general layout of the book. They portray this through a short explanation of notions such as competence and performance, variation, language and culture, the Whorfian hypothesis, and finally the methodological concerns in this area.

2. Chapter 2: Language, Dialects, and Varieties

In the second chapter, 'Languages, Dialects and Varieties', the central issues move around the notion of standard language which depicts the difference between a language and a dialect by talking about style, register, and genre and brings the idea to an end by highlighting the fact that "particular ways of speaking are considered distinct languages or subordinated dialects because of sociopolitical ideologies and identities, not because of linguistic differences between varieties" (p. 54). And also stress the fact that each language has got its own regional, and social dialects as well as style, register, and genre.

3. Chapter 3: Defining Groups

'Defining Groups' is the bulk of attention in chapter 3. Speech communities, language boundaries, and shared norms constitute part of the discussions in this chapter. The authors also try to well define the term 'Social Identities' by stressing the fact that identity is not what you have, it is absolutely what you do! It is something that finds its basis in interaction. They further and finally discuss what some beliefs about language and social groups are, and how a person's identity can be linked to social group membership.

4. Chapter 4: Languages in Contact: Multilingual Societies and Multilingual Discourse

Chapter 4 attempts to explain that, multilingualism is an upcoming issue in many

societies and the different ideologies we have about languages surround this issue. They also softly pick up the idea of 'Linguistic Landscape' and define it as "the display of languages in public spaces, including signs, billboards, advertisements, and graffiti" (p. 86). They strongly put this belief forward that how languages appear in public space provides evidence about underlying ideologies concerning particular codes and their speakers. Moreover, one pattern of language use they explore is diglossia, in which the two languages differ in terms of their status in society; one is considered more prestigious and is used in more formal contexts, the other is reserved for more casual events and interactions. Finally, what is discussed as the end point of this chapter, are the three approaches to the study of multilingual discourse which include Communication Accommodation theory, the Markedness Model, and the study of language choice as part of the social construction of identity.

5. Chapter 5: Contact Languages: Structural Consequences of Social Factors

Contact languages and the underlying issues are discussed in chapter 5. The authors firstly talk about the ever well-known issue of Lingua Francas, as "a language which is used habitually by people whose mother tongues are different in order to facilitate communication between them" (p. 115). What surfaces in the chapter is a reference given to pidgin and creole. They claim that, most of the linguists in this area often use the terms superstrate and substrate to refer to the different roles languages play in the development of a contact language. Right after this, the formation of pidgins and creoles is discussed as well as their geographical distribution, and finally, their linguistic characteristics such as phonology, morphosyntax, and vocabulary are explained in detail. All in all the focus of the chapter is on how languages change.

6. Chapter 6: Language Variation

An old saying from William Cowper gives a nice taste to the beginning of part two of this book (chapter 6). He pictures language variation by uttering that, "Variety is the spice of life. Constance alone is strange" (p. 139).

Through talking about regional variation, he mentions mapping dialects and attempts to refer to dialect mixture and free variation in this way: dialect mixture "is the existence in one locality of two or more dialects which allow a speaker or speakers to draw now on one dialect and then on the other" (p. 147). An alternative explanation is free variation, that is, variation of no social significance. The authors further define a linguistic item having identifiable variants, which are the different forms used in an environment as Linguistic Variable (For example, words like singing and fishing are sometimes pronounced as singin' and fishin'). What comes highlighted in the analysis of variants is the principle of accountability.

7. Chapter 7: Three Waves of Variation Studies

Continuing the ideas presented in chapter 6, different waves of variation are put for a debate in chapter 7. The first wave includes gender variation, and the fourth floor. Wardhaugh and his co-author, refer to hypercorrection as an event which "occurs when individuals consciously try to speak like people they regard as socially superior but actually go too far and overdo the particular linguistic behavior they are attempting to match" (p. 147).The second wave includes social networks in Belfast (Northern Ireland), and gender variation. Finally, in the third wave, they discuss issues such as stance.

8. Chapter 8: Language Variation and Change

The central idea in chapter 8 is to discuss how variation can lead to language change. To do so, firstly the traditional view of change is explained (changes that result in structural consequences) as well as externally motivated changes (changes brought about through language contact). Further on, the chapter depicts and explains some of the changes in progress such as vowel shift. Change over time or age-grading (i.e., using speech appropriate to your age group, features which you may no longer use when you are older) is the next issue being illustrated in the chapter. The relation between gender and language change is then explained with the help of a reference given to a generalization that has been made,

claiming that changes toward more vernacular forms tend to be led by men, while changes toward the standard forms tend to be led by women. They also make use of the term Linguistic Marketplace to state the fact that, there are some forces at work including what individuals want and what they will accept or reject linguistically to satisfy these wants? Having discussed the changes in progress, the authors point out two main kinds of changes: change from above (change brought about consciously, containing issues of prestige) and below (change from below conscious awareness, which is systematic). Finally, the relation between lifestyle and language change is explained through what Eckert calls 'jocks' and 'burnouts' ("Jocks tend to be college-bound and white-collaroriented; burnouts will leave school for the blue-collar workplace" (p. 217)).

9. Chapter 9: Ethnographic Approaches in Sociolinguistics

The crucial importance of language for interaction in chapter 9, is revealed through a very touching sentence by Robert Southey: "My never-failing friends are they, with whom I converse day by day". This chapter largely focuses on ethnography approaches from a sociolinguistic perspective. This kind of research is mostly carried out through participant observation. The ethnography of communication is firstly discussed through the notion of communicative competence (the knowledge of how to use language in culturally appropriate ways). There exists a very nice and tangible explanation of the issue at hand, to which a paragraph is dedicated and it is worth mentioning here:

> In learning to speak we are also learning to communicate in ways appropriate to the group in which we are doing that learning; this is sometimes called language socialization. These ways differ from group to group; consequently, as we move from one group to another or from one language to another, we must learn the new ways if we are to it into that new group or to use that new language properly. Communicative competence is therefore a key component of social competence. (p. 231)

They later bring up the topic of ethnomethodology to stress that, "they are interested in the processes and techniques that people use to interpret the world around them and to interact with that world" (p. 235). Finally, Linguistic ethnography, as a relatively new issue in sociolinguistics, is another area of interest to the authors in this chapter. They refer to it as "attempts to combine close detail of local action and interaction as embedded in a wider social world" (p. 241).

10. Chapter 10: Pragmatics

Pragmatics goes as the main category of discussion in chapter 10. To smoothly open the discussion in this chapter, speech acts and its sub categories (propositions, and phatic utterances) are put forward. Performative utterances are also described as the case in which "a person is not just saying something but is actually doing something if certain real-world conditions are met" (p. 249).

Locutions (the utterances we use are locutions.), illocutionary acts (the intent of a locution is called an illocutionary act.), and perlocutions (the effect on the listeners to do things). Later on, four conversation *maxims* by Grice are put forward (quality, quantity, relation, and manner) and the concept of politeness (positive and negative politeness, indirectness, and social distance) is explained in depth. Power and solidarity is the final feature of this chapter in which topics such as pronouns and positioning, naming and titles, and fluidity and change in address terms are discussed. In fact, the authors turn to pronouns and other terms of address to explore how these aspects of language are used to position the speaker and addressee in the interaction.

11. Chapter 11: Discourse Analysis

Chapter 11, discourse analysis (DA), largely tries to depict that we rarely use language monologically and such uses are clearly marked. The unmarked use is dialogical, and conversation analysis (CA) is another sub category, trying to point out that conversational analysts, working within the ethnomethodological tradition, point out that, regardless of how many speakers are involved in a conversation, speakers take turns of various lengths with very little overlap. They keep stressing the fact that, it is also

sometimes said that, conversations are locally managed; that is, "they proceed without any conscious plan and the participants simply rely on using the principles that are available to them to achieve any wider objectives they have" (p. 282) Later on in the chapter, they maintain that, one particularly important principle used in CA is the adjacency pair i.e., utterance types of certain kinds are found to co-occur. Finally, they shed light on interactional sociolinguistics, which is defined as "the search for replicable methods of qualitative analysis that account for our ability to interpret what participants intend to convey in everyday communicative practice" (p. 291). This is considered as one strand of linguistic ethnography according to Rampton (2007). The chapter is closed by critical discourse analysis as a method designed to show how social inequality is reproduced through language use.

12. Chapter 12: Language, Gender, and Sexuality

"It is hard for a woman to define her feelings in language which is chiefly made by men to express theirs" (p. 309), is the initiation of the 12th chapter: "language, gender and sexuality". To depict the relation between language and gender, the authors firstly maintain that, gender is a culturally constructed phenomenon and further refers to the terms Transgendor (people who have transitioned from one sex category to another) and cisgendor (people whose sex category matches their gender). The major discussion here centers around the fact that sexist language was mainly used to refer to the words that differentiated men from women, but later on more gender neutral words were used to lessen the discrimination and to shift the difference from a more masculine taste to a more neutral one. meanwhile, he puts forward the idea of gender preferential language mainly to say that, one way of speaking/language may be preferred by one gender but not by the other. Deficit language is used to depict the way women use the language and tend to act in serious social gatherings, due to the fact that, they feel less confident in some circumstances and they tend to show this in their utterances by using forms such as tag questions. What gives rise to their discussion throughout this chapter, is dominance, i.e., power relations give the

tendency to people from different communities to use language differently in different contexts to exercise and show their power relations. Thus, an individual's social status and power can also dominate their choice of language.

13. Chapter 13: Sociolinguistics and Education

'Sociolinguistics and Education' is the umbrella term for all the subcategories discussed in chapter 13. To begin with, they smoothly reveal the society's perspective about the fact that people educate in order to be able to use the standard variety. Through the idea of social dialects and education, the authors strongly exemplify the difference between elaborated (the standard, highly grammatical and complex language) and restricted (short, grammatically simple, and rather poor in meaning with a frequent use of idioms) codes. They claim that, the role of the home dialect in education is one of the key issues in designing curriculums. Explaining the dilemma that there are different viewpoints to the use of the home dialect at schools, they conclude that, there could be three ways assigned to the incorporation of the vernacular language into instructions: instrumental, accommodation, and awareness programs. Finally, by referring to inner, outer, and expanding circles, the authors attempt to argue that, "in all of these contexts, social inequalities are perpetuated by ideologies which privilege certain ways of speaking, and social structures which impede access to high-status codes for some portions of the population" (p. 360).

14. Chapter 14: Language Policy and Planning

'Language policy and planning (LPP)' is explored in the final chapter of this book. In order to fully address this issue, they point out status planning, and corpus planning as language planning types. An overview of the history of LPP, a study by Recento (2000), outlines three factors which have shaped research in this field: macro-sociopolitical and epistemological factors. To see some instances of planning, a variety of linguistic situations in Europe and the former Soviet Union are investigated under the category of LPP and nationalization. For example, orthography and

purity of LPP are examined in Turkey. Moving on, we see an eye catching notion "from Russifiication to nationalization" which is used to explain the changes and existing issues and factors of LPP from a very early time in the Soviet Union and the post-Soviet era. France as the only country which has a single national language and provides limited support to any other languages, goes among one of the other instances in LPP. LPP in post and neo colonial contexts such as Kenya and India is explored as well. Finally, LPP is studied in the United States and Canada and what we can see as the final products of this chapter are multilingual countries, LPP, an explanation of endangered languages, and the spread of English. All in all, the theme that is mostly observed in this very final chapter has to do with policies and planning with regard to multilingualism; it (policies and planning) is sometimes fostered, sometimes regulated, and sometimes discouraged, depending on the history and ideological stances in the country.

15. Concluding Remarks

All in all, what highlights the difference between this version and the previous one is the incorporation of studies reflecting the contemporary social theories which are all in line with the study of language in society. What also gives a tastier look to this new edition is an accompanying website, where students can find a review guide, vocabulary lists, and links to related websites for each chapter. There are also materials for instructors, including discussion topics and guides to the explorations and exercises that are provided in the textbook. Taken together, although each course book has got its own purposes and perspectives, when it comes to drawing a comparison between the present edition of *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* and other similar books in the area, like that of Spolsky (2004) or Van Herk (2012), the most immediate distinguishing advantage of Wardhaugh's is the simple and easy to understand language he has employed in illustrating and describing terms and sociocultural issues. Another motivating factor which may cause an inspiration for the reader to take the book up and start reading it all the way through, is the comprehensiveness of the book which includes almost all the relevant topics in the area accompanied by fruitful and

tangible exercises as well as further inferences, at the end of each chapter, for those who are interested to have additional information in the area!

Moreover, according to what Wardhaugh (2006) emphasizes on the cover of his book, as a comprehensive perspective for the interested readers, this classic in the field assumes little previous knowledge of linguistics, anthropology, or sociology and may be used as an introductory level or as a supplementary text in higher level courses. This course book will also give priority and highlight the fact that, the existence of language without culture and vice versa is absolutely impossible, because according to Wardhaugh (2006), language and culture are interrelated and they go hand in hand.

In conclusion, once a reader finds himself reading the final words of this rich book, he can, to an absolute point, feel the change of attitude which has deeply been caused by the versatile language Wardhaugh and his co-author have used to illustrate the interrelationship of language and culture. After all, *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* is a worthwhile book that will definitely inspire researchers, teachers, decision makers, and

stake holders, to see the challenges, as well as opportunities that language and society can bring along in language education.

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