

article highlights the role of language in collective identity formation and its implications for intergroup dynamics. This sociolinguistic perspective offers valuable insights into the multifaceted ways in which language influences our sense of self and belonging within society, contributing to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between language and identity.

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LANGUAGE CHANGE AND VARIATION

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***Abstract.** This article focuses on the branch of sociolinguistics which has come to be recognized as “language variation and change or “variationist sociolinguistics”. It provides an overview by explaining its genesis and a number of crucial roles played by variation in language the notion of orderly heterogeneity; variation being functionally and socially meaningful; variation as an implicit necessity in the process of language change.*

Keywords. *Language variation, linguistic variability, language change, linguistic structure, age, gender, social class, constraints, style, register, stereotypes, awareness, sociolinguistic interviews, quantitative.*

When you start to study any language, it immediately becomes clear that it contains a lot of inconsistencies and irregularities. Sometimes different people in a group speakers use one pronunciation for a word, and sometimes they use another without changing its meaning. Sometimes speakers use different word orders without that difference contributing anything substantive to what the sentence means. Often where there is this kind of variation between speakers (interspeaker variation), we also find the same variation within speakers (intraspeaker variation), in other words, the same person may alternate between different pronunciations of a word, or different ways of ordering elements in a sentence. Variation like this is central to linguistics. Indeed, there would be very little for linguists to study if, for instance, a computer had designed language and made everything completely orderly. But languages aren't designed as perfectly regular systems. They take their shape in the way speakers use them in social and interpersonal contexts. The variation within and between speakers that we observe is partly the result of interactions between linguistic factors (that is, aspects of the grammar and phonology of the language) and partly the result of interactions between social factors and language (e.g. who the speaker and addressee are, whether the talk occurs in a formal or informal context). A close study variation involves taking all the social and linguistic factors into account, and for this reason the study of language variation is generally described as a form of sociolinguistics.

What does it mean to say a language takes its shape in social and interpersonal contexts? It means that speakers use it to explore and reflect their attitudes to themselves and others. Language can be a tool for negotiating and reflecting the relative importance of different social and personal qualities. In this article, we will consider some of the more important qualities that sociolinguists have found to constrain language variation. These include a speaker's identification with

different social groups, such as social class, friendship networks, gender and age. It will also review some of the more interpersonal factors that have been found to affect variation, such as the relative formality in which they are speaking, or their familiarity with others present. We will also see that variation may be studied in two ways. One way is synchronically (that is, at a single point in time), and this provides a snapshot of the social and linguistic features that show the most robust correlations with the variation observed. A second way is diachronically, that is, over a period of time.

Understanding language change and variation is crucial for linguists, educators, and policymakers as it impacts not only communication but also cultural identity and social integration. Language change and variation are important areas of study in sociolinguistics because they help us better understand the dynamic nature of language and its role in society. By examining how language changes and varies over time and among different groups, researchers can gain valuable insights into the complex relationship between language and society. All language is subject to variability: some is completely predictable, but some is not. What appears to be free and unconstrained variation between and within individuals often proves to be subject to non-categorical linguistic and/or social constraints. This structured variability may be an indication of changes taking place in the language, thus diachronic studies of change may be complemented by synchronic studies of variation. The research methods and the quantitative analysis of such variation are reviewed. Key findings in variationist linguistics are discussed: the systematic distribution of variants in different styles and across different social groups (age, class or social network, gender).

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2. Eckert, P. (2000). *Linguistic Variation as Social Practice*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. [Thorough exploration of the connections between qualitative and quantitative analysis of variation. The relationship between gender and social and linguistic practices is especially well developed.]²
3. Eckert, P. & J.R. Rickford (eds) (2001). *Style and Sociolinguistic Variation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [A collection of papers providing different perspectives on style from sociolinguists and anthropologists. Some are quite technical]³

REGIONAL VARIATION

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***Abstract.** The article highlights the national interests of the CIS countries in the process of regional economic integration and the main aspects of their implementation, the problems in this area and the prospects for the development of mutual economic cooperation.*

***Keywords.** Integration, national interest, strategy, cooperation, national security, regional, CIS*

The need for a theoretical understanding of the phenomenon of regional identity in political science is especially relevant when referring to Russian realities, which is one of the consequences of the change of the political system in the late 1980s and 1990s. was the regionalization of political space, accompanied by a sharp increase in regional self-awareness. At the level of scientific language, this was reflected in the emergence of research subjects such as "regional self-awareness", "regional mythology", "regional ideology" and "regional identity". Researchers have tried to explain the strengthening of the regional identity and its mobilization potential, which was accepted by the regional elite in the context of the weakness of the federal power and began to strengthen its position, from