

THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF SPEAKING

- Chomsky

linguistics → the description of the ideal speaker-hearer's competence, his knowledge of grammaticality, or whether or not putative sentences are part of his language.

- Concern: grammatical, instead of appropriate

- He hit me.
- It was me that he hit.
- It was him that hit me.

- Hymes (1971)

Linguistics → communicative competence

“ the speaker’s ability to produce appropriate utterances not grammatical sentences”

Four aspects of competence

- Systematic potential
- Appropriateness
- Occurrence
- feasibility

- Systematic potential → whether and to what extent something is not yet realized
- Appropriateness → whether and to what extent something is in some context suitable, effective, or the like

- occurrence → whether and to what extent something is done
- Feasibility → whether and to what extent something is possible

- Hymes → the ethnography of speaking

“concerned not simply with language structure, but with language use, with ‘rules of speaking ... the ways in which speakers associate particular modes of speaking, topics, or message forms, with particular settings and activities.’”

Four interrelated dimensions in any description of “ways of speaking”

1. The linguistic resources available to a speaker – how many different styles he can choose from
2. Supra-sentential structuring – how many differently structured linguistic events, like trials, religious ceremonies, debates, songs, are recognized

3. The rules of interpretation by which a given set of linguistic items comes to have a given communicative value

4. The norms which govern different types of interaction

THE SPEECH COMMUNITY

- Any group which shares both linguistic resources and rules for interaction and interpretation
- Criterion → the sharing of one linguistic variety

- Corder

speech community → people who regard themselves as speaking the same language

■ Labov

“the speech community is not defined by any marked agreement in the use of language elements so much as by participation in a set of shared norms; these norms may be observed in overt types of evaluative behaviour and by the uniformity of abstract patterns of variation which are invariant in respect to particular levels of usage”

SPEECH STYLES

■ STYLE

variation in a person's speech or writing. Style usually varies from casual to formal according to the type of situation, the person or persons addressed, the location, the topic discussed, etc

■ REGISTER

a speech variety used by a particular group of people, usually sharing the same occupation (eg doctors, lawyers) or the same interests (eg stamp collectors, baseball fans)

A particular register often distinguishes itself from other registers by having a number of distinctive words, by using words or phrases in a particular way, and sometimes by special grammatical constructions

SPEECH EVENTS

■ COMPONENTS

1. setting
2. participants
3. ends (purposes)
4. act sequences (message form & message content)
5. key (tone, manner, or spirit)
6. instrumentalities
7. norms
8. genre

■ Hymes

1. structure
2. setting
3. participants
4. purposes
5. key
6. topic
7. channel
8. message form