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ABSTRACT
                The study of the varieties of language usage in
social contexts can made a significant contribution to general
welfare if judgments of people's language are unshackled from
right-wrong presuppositions and a dispassionate approach is taken to
relating their language to the situations they must deal with in the
course of their lives. An understanding of code switching can be a
valuable tool to a literary critic, and, conversely, literature that
rings true in sociolinguistic terms can illuminate our understanding
of people's behavior in different language contexts. A failure to
take into account individual and group differences in language usage,
and pressures to maintain or avoid certain usages, has hampered
effective reading instruction. Both in terms of comprehension and
performance, reading instruction will benefit from a recognition of
the fact that a child's spoken language does affect his/her reading.
Finally, medical practitioners will find their communication with
patients much improved if they take into account not only dialectal
differences and unfamiliarity with jargon, but also patient
expectations from doctor language. The language of the doctor with an
effective bedside manner will be flexible for the sake of a
communicative dialogue, without being condescending or pretentiously
non-standard or common. (JB)

SOME RECENT APPLICATIONS OF SOCIOLINGUISTIC THEORY AND RESEARCH

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1.0 TOWARD A DEFINITION OF SOCIOLINGUISTICS

It has often been whispered but never, to my knowledge, uttered aloud, that sociolinguistics is a subfield of linguistics which is frantically searching for its own justification. If linguistics had not wandered into the wilderness of abstract self-centeredness, it would probably never have been necessary to create a label such as socio-linguistics as a rallying cry for examining language in realistic so-cial contexts.

Although any effort to define a broad field of study such as socio-linguistics is subject to question and criticism by some of its practi-tioners, it will be useful to attempt at least a broad definition of the term here. Three major characteristics tend to characterize the field:
1. A concern for viewing language *variation* rather than the sort of universals upon which grammars are usually based.
2. A concern for seeing language in real *social contexts* rather than as abstract representations.
3. A high potential for relationship and application to other fields such as education, sociology, anthropology, psychology and many others.

In a sense, the third characteristic is really an outgrowth of the first two, but, for our purposes here, these three aspects will be treated equally.

At the present time, a sociolinguist may be defined as a person who studies variation within a language or across languages with a view toward describing that variation or toward writing rules which incorpo-rate it (rather than, as in the past, ignoring it), relating such va-riation to some aspects of the cultures which use it, doing large scale language surveys (macroanalysis), doing intensive studies of discourse (microanalysis), studying language functions (in addition to language

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forms), discovering the comparative values of different varietes of
language or of different languages for the benefit of political or edu-
cational planning and decision-making, studying language attitudes, val-
ues and beliefs, and relating all the above to other fields which may
make use of it (including education).

Although there has been a recent flurry of interest in language in
real social settings, it would be foolish to claim that sociolinguistics
is a new concept. It is quite likely, in fact, that man been inter-
ested in the sorts of variation by which people set themselves off from
each other since the very beginnings of speech. Humans have always
lived with the cultural and linguistic paradox on needing to be like each
other while, at the same time, needing to establish their individuality.
These needs, coupled with the multitude of complexities involved in cul-
tural and linguistic change, motivations, attitudes, values and physio-
logical and psychological differences, present a vast laboratory for
sociolinguistic investigation.

1.1 THE CONCERN FOR VARIATION

In many ways, sociolinguistics involves a putting back together of
a number of separations that have taken place over the years within the
field of linguistics. For one thing, the separation of language uni-
versals from variability has proved very troublesome in recent years.
The more traditional view linguistics (common in the sixties) which ex-
cludes the variational and functional aspects of language from formal
linguistic analysis and describes such characteristics as mere trivial
performance is finding disfavor at a rapid pace. In a sense, the term
static may be used to refer to the frameworks of both structural and
transformational linguistics. A static grammar is one which excludes
variation of any sort, including time, function, socio-economic status,
sex and ethnicity, from the preview of formal linguistic analysis.

1.2 THE CONCERN FOR SOCIAL CONTEXT

The emphasis on social context by sociolinguistics was, of course,
old hat to anthropologists, especially ethnographers of communication.
Dell Hymes has been arguing for a realistic description of language for
many years, observing that institutions, settings, scenes, activities

and various sociocultural realities give order to such analysis.[1]
An ethnographic approach to speech requires that the analyst have infor-
mation about the relative statuses of the interlocutors, the setting of
the speech act, the message, the code (including gestures), the situa-
tion, the topic, the focus and the presuppositions that are paired with
the sentences. At long last, the ethnographers of communications are
beginning to get some help from linguists with other primary speciali-
zations. The upshot of all this ferment within the past few years has
been an almost entirely new set of attitudes within the field of lin-
guistics. It is difficult to describe linguistics at any point in its
history as being settled with an orthodoxy but some broad, general move-
ments can be discerned with hindsight. In the forties and fifties we
saw a structuralist emphasis with a focus on phonology, a concern for
the word and philosophical framework which was positivistic and empir-
ical. In the sixties we witnessed the transformationalist era, with a
focus on syntax, a concern for the sentence and a philosophical frame-
work which was rationalistic or idealistic, with innate knowledge and
intuition playing a prominent role in analysis.

Another clear separation which has been vigorously maintained in
linguistics over the years is the separation between synchronic and
diachronic studies. That is, the separation of the study of language
change from the analysis of a language at a given point in time. Such
a notion dates back many years.

1.3 THE CONCERN FOR CROSS-DISCIPLINARY SENSITIVITY

In addition, two factors outside the proper domain of linguistics
also contributed heavily to the development of sociolinguistics. One
was the general broadening of interests which began to develop in the
sixties, leading to new kinds of interdisciplinary studies. The second
was the development of interest in problems faced by minority peoples,
especially in the schools. Linguists began to take an interest in ur-

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[1]One might cite many references over a period of time. For a recent
overview, however, see Dell Hymes, The Scope of Sociolinguistics in
R. Shuy (ed.), Sociolinguistics: current trends and prospects, Washington,
D.C.: Georgetown University Press (1973).

ban language variation and to understand that past research methodolo-
gies were not viable for such investigation. New data-gathering tech-
niques were required and new modes of analysis were needed. Meanwhile,
linguists who had been interested in language variation as it is found
in the creolization and pidginization of language also began to apply
their knowledge to urban social dialect, particularly the urban, northern
Black, often providing important historical backgrounds for language
change and offering analytical insights brought about by their perspec-
tives. The general focus of course, was on variability, not abstract
uniformity and the critical measurement point was provided by the va-
riability offered by Vernacular Black English. It was thought of as an
area worthy of educational attention. Everything seemed ripe for this
focus on Black English except for one thing--nobody in the academic world
knew very much about it.

1.4 INTERNAL DISTINCTIONS

It should be apparent, therefore, that sociolinguistics arose out
of a number of factors within the field of linguistics itself. A con-
vergence of different avenues away from orthodox generative theory took
place among dialectologists, creolists, semanticians and antgropologiests.
Although the avenues were different, each shared a concern for variation,
social reality, larger units of analysis (discourse) and a sense of
continuum.

A focus of study which developed out of a diversity of interests
the way sociolinguistics has is likely to have an equally diverse lit-
erature. Yet there are some common threads which seem to help hold
sociolinguistics together. One such characteristic is the concept of
gradience.

1.4.1 GRADIENCE

As is often the case, personal experience provides a good first
example. When I was in college I had a part-time job in a wholesale
grocery warehouse loading and unloading trucks and boxcars. My fellow
teamsters knew that I was a college kid but also expected me to be one
of them in some sense of the word. As a native speaker of their local
version of non-standard English, I found it possible to use the locally

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acceptable "I seen him when he done it" forms but their linguistic ex-
pectations of a college kid made them suspicious of me every time &
tried. Years ago the novelist Thomas Wolfe wrote a novel called *You*
Can't Go Home Again. His thesis was that people are the products of
their changing environment and that this changing environment includes
the changing expectations of others. Translated to our situation this
means that no matter how uneducated a person's parents may be, they ex-
pect their child to speak something other than the non-standard English
they grew up with. The child who is sensitive to his parents' wishes
may respond by rattling off a locution that appears to be within the
range of his parents' expectations. On the other hand, some situations
may require him to not deny his heritage but to not appear uppity either.
Precious few linguistic situations will require him to preserve his non-
standard dialect exactly the way it was before he was educated and ele-
vated to some other level of expectations by those who love him. The
following sentences may serve as illustrations of some of the points on
such a continuum.

1. Hey! Don't bring no more a dem crates over here!
2. Hey! Don't bring no more a dose crates over here!
3. Hey! Don't bring no more a those crates over here!
4. Hey! Don't bring any more of those crates over here!
5. Hey! Please don't bring any more of those crates over here!
6. Gentlemen, will you kindly desist in your conveying those
containers in this general direction.

Number 6 is surely undesireable in most communications and it is included
only to extend the limits of the continuum as far as can be imagined.
Most of the adjustments that an educated speaker makes to his audience
are found in various modifications of numbers 3, 4, and 5. Most cer-
tainly, there are few opportunities for him to go home to the non-
standardness of numbers 1 and 2. Those who know him will think he is
patronizing them or, worse yet, making fun of them. Consequently, what
the speaker does is to make subtle adjustments to his vocabulary, gram-
mar and phonology depending on the informality of the situation, the
audience and the topic. One safe move is to standardize the grammar,
since grammar is the most stigmatizing aspect of American social dia-
lects, while occasionally preserving a few of the less stigmatizing pro-

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nunciations and leaving in some flavor of the lexicon. This is a highly
subtle and complicated linguistic maneuver which can hardly be over-
simplified or underestimated.

In no way should it be implied that the specific continuum given
as example above is meant to be a right to wrong slide. Each item of
the continuum has the potential for appropriateness and accurary if the
proper setting topic and person is discovered. But the schools would be
likely to take it as a right-wrong series with a sharp line between num-
bers 3 and 4 with *wrong* facing one direction and *right* facing the other.
Likewise, all of the *rights* would be considered good and all of the
wrongs would be thought bad. What such an oversimplification denies,
of course, are the following things:

1. That language use is more complex than a presupposed context or
pseudomoral code will permit.

2. That users of language may intentionally select so-called stigmatized
constructions.

3. That users of language may unintentionally select so-called con-
structions which, having been used, provide clear evidence of their hav-
ing learned part of the pattern though not all of it.

It has been argued by linguists that people tend to be unable to
perceive the fact they are using language as they use it. One might
ask, for example, if the fish see the water in which they are swimming.
Much rather clear evidece seems to indicate that users of language are
fairly unaware of how it is that they are giving themselves away as
they speak. Studies of social stratification using only language data
may well be the most accurate indices of socio-economic status yet de-
vised. Since people have such a hard time seeing the language they and
others use (for they are, after all, concentrating on understanding it,
not analyzing it), they remain relatively naive about the subtle com-
plexities they are able to engineer in using it. Contrastive norms in
language production and in subjective reactions to language are a clear
case in point. Many New Yorkers and Detroiters, for example, will re-
alize a high frequency of a stigmatized feature in their own speech
despite the fact that they can clearly recognize the same feature as
stigmatized in the speech of others.

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1.4.2 FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE

In addition to the complexities growing out of gradience and gen-
eral variability, another area of complexity to which linguists have
only recently attended is quantitative variability. As odd as it now
may sound, it has not been the practice of linguists to note the fre-
quency of occurrence of a given variable feature until very, very re-
cently. An amusing internal argument is still going on between linguists
who understand this principle and those who do not. It is said, for
example, that copula deletion is a characteristic of Vernacular Black
English as it is spoken in New York, Washington, D.C. and Detroit.
Certain linguists violently object to this idea, noting that Southern
Whites also say "he here" or "you gonna do it." And, of course, they
are quite correct. What they fail to see, however, is that those who
posit copula deletion as a characteristic of Vernacular Black English
are not comparing Southern Whites to Northern Blacks but are, quite the
contrary, concerned about what is considered Vernacular Black English
in those specific Northern contexts. But even there, we find that speakers
of that dialect do not delete every copula. The frequency of occurrence
of that deletion stratifies quite nicely according to socio-economic
status. Likewise, not very standard English speakers produce a copula
every time it might be expected in their speech, although the frequency of
occurrence is probably very high. An even clearer case is that of
multiple negation which is also said to characterize Vernacular Black
English, even though it is quite clear that many Whites also use the
form regularly. What, then, can it mean to call it Vernacular Black
English? Simply, that it is consistently found to occur in the contin-
uous, natural speech of Blacks at a much higher frequency than it
occurs in the speech of Whites from the same communities and of the same
socio-economic status. Strangely enough, this sort of finding is still
rather new in linguistics and, to some linguists, quite heretical.

An example of a display of such data on the frequency of occurrence
of a linguistic feature which is shared by all social groups (most of
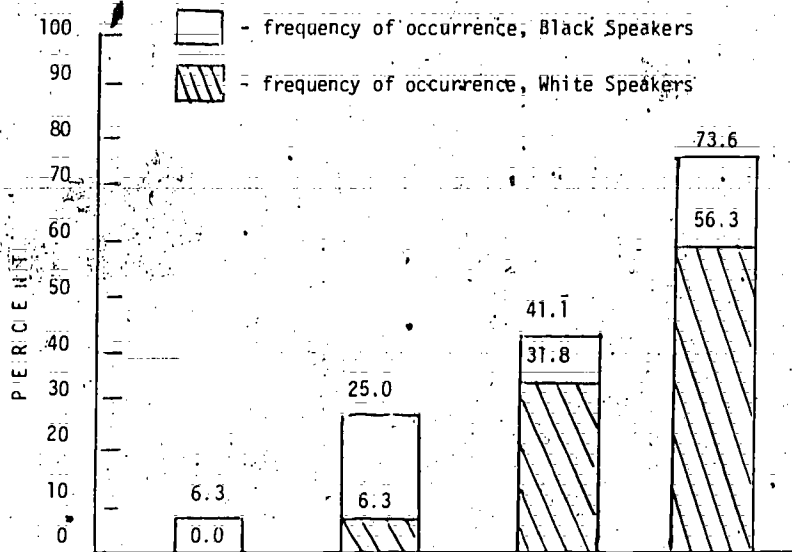them are shared) is the following:

Figure 1. Multiple negation: frequency of occurrence in Detroit, by SES group.

Note that the frequency of occurrence of the use of multiple ne-
gation across four SES groups in Detroit is maintained regardless of
the race of the speakers, but that Blacks use multiple negation at a
higher frequency than do Whites. Further information reveals that men
use them at a rate higher than women. Such data cannot tell us the
Blacks use multiple negatives and that Whites do not. Nor could it say
that men use them and women do not. But it *does* offer rich information
about the tendencies toward higher or lower variability usage than we
could ever obtain from a methodology which offered only a single in-
stance of such usage as evidence of its use or non-use. The figures
above represent a number of informants in each of the four SES groups
and a large quantity of occurrences of the feature for each informant
represented in the group. In the case of multiple nagation, in addition
to tabulating the occurrences, it was necessary to see them in relation-
ship to a meaningful touchstone. Thus, every single negative and every

multiple negative in each speaker's speech sample were added together
to form a universe of potential multiple negatives. The figures, tab-
ulated above, display the relationship of the occurrence of multiple
negatives in relationship to all potential multiple negatives.

It is reasonably safe to assume that the extent of language varia-
tion is much broader than previous research methodologies ever revealed.
If an informant is asked, for example, what he calls the stuff in the
London air, he may respond only once, /fag/. If he should happen to use
the /a/ vowel before a voiced velar stop only 50 of the time during all
the occasions in which he totally lost in this single representation in
the interview. If he talks continuously for thirty minutes or so, he
might use this pronunciation a dozen or more times, giving an increas-
ingly more probable representation of his actual usage. Of course, such
data gathering techniques work better for pronunciations in which the
inventory of possible occurrences is very high than they do for lexicon.
On the other hand, research in sociolinguistics indicates that pronuncia-
tion and grammar are more crucial indicators than vocabulary, a factor
which certainly justifies highlighting them for research.

1.4.3 SELECTIONAL OPTIONS.

Once we dispose of the notion of the right-wrong polarity evalua-
tion and conceive of language as a continuum which operates in realistic
contexts, the possibility of selectional options becomes meaningful.
It is conceivable, for example, that a speaker out of a number of possi-
ble motivations, may select forms which, in some other context, would be
considered stigmatized. Detailed studies of language variation have
only begun to scratch the surface of such continua but several examples
are suggestive of fruitful avenues of future research.

For example, I can clearly remember that as a child in a blue-col-
lar industrial community, certain language restrictions were operational
among pre-adolescent boys. To be an acceptable member of the peer
group it was necessary to learn and to execute appropriate rules for
marking masculinity. If a boy happened to be the toughest boy in the
class, he had few worries for whatever else he did would be offset by
this fact. Those of us who were not the toughest could establish our
masculinity in a number of ways, many of which are well recognized.

For example, the use of tough language, especially swearing, and adult
vices, such as smoking, were sometimes effective means of obtaining such
status. Likewise, if a boy were a good athlete, he could easily estab-
lish himself as masculine (in our society this was true only for foot-
ball, basketball and baseball and not for sports such as swimming, soc-
cer or tennis). On the other hand, a boy could clearly obtain negative
points by having a non-sex-object relationship with a girl, by liking
his sister, by playing certain musical instruments (especially piano
and violin) and by outwardly appearing to be intelligent in the class-
room. It is the latter avenue which is of interest to us here since
the major instrument for adjusting one's outward appearance or intelli-
gence was his use of oral language. Interestingly enough, what one did
with written language seemed less crucial, as long as it remained a
private communication between teacher and student. That is, a boy could
be as smart as he wanted to on a test or an essay as long as the written
document did not become public (i.e. become displayed on the bulletin
board).

1.4.4 PERCEPTUAL VIEWPOINT OF THE WHOLE

Still another characteristic of sociolinguistics is involved in the
very viewpoint from which language phenomena are perceived. It is log-
ical to believe that once the basics of language are understood, other
less central features will fall into place. It has been traditional in
linguistics to follow this logic. Thus linguists of various theoretical
persuasions have searched for the core, the basics and the universals of
language and have paid little attention to the peripheral, the surface
or the variables. Sociolinguists do not decry an interest in universals
or basics, but feel that the peripheral variables are much more impor-
tant than have ever been imagined. In fact, sociolinguists tend to
treat peripheral and basic components on a par, and they believe that
to understand one, they must also know a great deal about the other.
Sociolinguists, therefore, stress variation, especially as it is related
to sex, age, race, socio-economic status and stylistic varieties. They
feel that by paying attention to such variables, they can better under-
stand the exciting dynamics of language and see it as a whole.

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1:4.5 SUBJECTIVE REACTIONS

The development of sociolinguistics has also been paralleled by an interest in the subjective reactions of speakers to language. If speakers produce linguistic features with varying frequencies, if they make use of complex selectional options and if they shift back and forth along a base line continuum, they most certainly also react to language produced by others. In recent years, sociolinguists have become interested in three types of subjective reactions to variation in spoken and written language:

1. Studies which compare subjective reactions to more than one language.
2. Studies which compare subjective reactions to variation within the same language.
3. Studies which compare accented speech, the production of a language by non-native speakers.

It is felt that such studies will enable linguists to get at the threshold if not at the heart, of language values, beliefs and attitudes. From there it is a relatively short step to relating such attitudes to actual language teaching and planning. For example, research by Wallace Lambert and his associates (1960) attempted to determine how bilingual Canadians really felt about both English and French in that area. Therefore, several bilinguals were tape recorded speaking first one language, then the other. The segments were scrambled and a group of bilingual Canadians were asked to listen to the tape and rate the speakers on fourteen traits such as height, leadership ability, ambition, sociability, character and others. The listeners were not told that they were actually rating people twice--once in French and once in English. It was somewhat surprising to the researchers that the speakers were generally stigmatized when they spoke French and favored when they spoke English. This was interpreted as evidence of a community-wide stereotype of English-speaking Canadians as more powerful economically and socially.

An example of a study which compares listener reactions to variation within the same language was done in Detroit (Shuy, Baratz and Wolfram 1969). An equal number of Black and White, male, adult Detroiters from four known socio-economic groups were tape recorded in a relatively-free-conversation mode. These tapes were played to Detroiters

of three age groups (sixth grade, eleventh grade and adult). An equal number of males and females, Blacks and Whites listened to the tape. These judges represented the same four socio-economic groups as the speakers. The purpose of the study was to determine the effects which the race, sex, socio-economic status and age of the listener have on identifying the race and socio-economic status of the speaker. The results of the study showed that racial identity is quite accurate for every cell except for the upper-middle-class Black speakers, who were judged as White by 90% of the listeners, regardless of their race, age or sex. It also showed that the lower the class of the speaker, the more accurately he was identified by listeners, regardless of all other variables. The significance of this lies in the fact that listeners apparently react negatively to language more than favorably to it. That is, 'stigmatizing' features tend to count against a speaker more than favoring features tend to help him. Such information is, of course, useful in determining how to plan a language learning curriculum, among other things.

A recent study of accented speech was done by A. Rey (1974) and contrasted the subjective reactions of Miami teachers, employers and random adults to the accented speech of Cuban-born and Native White and Black Miamians. Rey's interest was in the extent to which accent played a role in both employability and school evaluation. He played tape recordings of various speakers to groups of listeners and concluded that the lower status Cuban born Miamians have the least chance for success, even when the employer or teacher is also Cuban born.

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To date, the study of sociolinguistics can be said to have hardly begun. Variation is a vast expanse of possibilities which should keep linguists busy for years to come. A very small dent has been made in the study of variation among certain minority groups. Through an accident of history a great deal has been learned about Vernacular Black English but very little is known about the variation used by standard English speakers, regardless of race. Little is known about the sort of variation which establishes a speaker as a solid citizen, a good guy or an insider. Despite some intensive research in the area, little

is known about how people shift from one register to another or, for
that matter, from one dialect or language to another. Only the barest
beginnings have been made in the study of special group characteristics
related to language (i.e. language and religion, law and medicine, etc.).
A great deal of research needs to be done on language attitudes, values
and beliefs. Although language change has received attention in a num-
ber of recent studies, sociolinguistic research still lacks knowledge
of a number of aspects of the exciting dynamics of language.

In short, the social contexts in which language can be studied
have almost as many variations as there are people to vary them. In
some fields of study, graduate students writing thesis or dissertations
often become discouraged over the fact that all the good topics for
research have already been used up. This dilemma is far from a reality
in sociolinguistics, where topics abound and where we are only at the
beginning.

As an example of the richness of the applicational possibilities,
we will cite three areas in which sociolinguistic theory and research
have shown promise: literary analysis, reading and medicine.

2.1 LITERARY ANALYSIS

The systematic study of code-switching by linguists usually involves
the following techniques: anonymous observations (Gumperz 1964:171-2;
Gumperz and Bloom 1971); individual informant interviews (Labov 1966;
Shuy, Wolfram and Riley 1968) and small-group elicitation or discussion
sessions (Gumperz 1970; Labov 1970:46-49). As far as can be determined,
little or no work has been done by linguists in studying the already
written observation of code-switching by sensitive authors. One hypoth-
esis of sociolinguistics is that a theory of code-switching can be
applied not only to the examination of real conversational data, whether
elicited surreptitiously or in interview contexts, but also to the
written representation of such real conversational data by competent
authors. By applying what is known about code-switching as a rule-
governed behavior we should be able to determine the degree to which
a given author consistently represents this rule-governed behavior
and, to the extent which he is consistent or inconsistent, evaluate
that author's innate sociolinguistic effectiveness. For the socio-

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linguist, the information being examined (a novel, a short story, or
a poem) may be little more than a new batch of data through which he
can crank and test his sociolinguistic theory and machinery. To the
literary critic, however, the results of recent research in communi-
cative competence in general, and in this case, code-switching in par-
ticular offer a new and objective instrument for analyzing an author's
consistency in representing reality, for examining a writer's subtle
shifts of intention or indications of characterization. It has long
been observed that great authors write better than they know. One
would assume from such a statement that writers not only internalize
sociolinguistic rules, language functions and formal language know-
ledge, but that they also make use of such features without really
being able to say what it is they are doing as they do it. This is
not surprising to linguists who have long marvelled at how well children
acquire their native language without having the foggiest notion of
how to describe this knowledge to others. It might be argued, of
course, that such behavior is not really writing better than an author
knows (depending on how *knows* is defined); it is, rather, writing better
than his ability to describe his ability to write. A sociolinguistic
analysis of literature promises nothing to the author in this case, but
it does offer a theory and methodology for discussing what it is that
a author does and how well he does it.

In order to illustrate the usefulness of the knowledge of code-
switching in a literary context, I have selected D.H. Lawrence's novel
Lady Chatterly's Lover, which contains one of the classic literary
instances of dialect shifting.[2] Mellors, the gamekeeper in the house-
hold of Lord and Lady Chatterly, speaks what Lawrence describes as
broad Derbyshire dialect on many occasions. On the other hand, he is
also known to speak a rather standard version of English, perhaps as a
result of his being ":..attached to some Indian colonel who took a
liking to him" when he served as a Lieutenant in the British Army.
We get a glimpse of this linguistic situation when Lady Chatterly asks

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[2] Roger W. Shuy, "Code Switching in Lady Chatterly's Lover" *Working
Papers in Sociolinguistics*, Number 22 (February, 1975)

her husband: "How could they make him an officer when he speaks broad
Derbyshire?". To this Sir Clifford replies: "He doesn't...except by
fits and starts. He can speak perfectly well, for him. I suppose he
has the idea if he's come down to the ranks again he'd better speak as
the ranks speak". This speech certainly reflects the observations of
sociolinguistic researchers on how social information is revealed by
language switching. It is also a strong indication that Lawrence was
probably consciously aware of this sociolinguistic principle. What
remains is to observe how well he carried it out in his representations
of the speech of his characters.

The codes involved in Lady Chatterly's Lover are assumed to be two—
homogeneous and clear-cut dialects of English. These raise theo-
retical and terminological problems for linguists, whose definition of
code historically has usually meant two separate non-mutually intelli-
gible language systems. It is not at all clear that Gumperz uses the
term this way, however, and a good case can be made for lumping code-
switching with dialect-switching (sometimes called style shifting) in
terms of their roles and effects. Regardless of exact terminological
precision, it appears that the two language systems in contrast are a
kind of standard English versus a broad Derbyshire dialect. Lawrence
is relatively clear in the instances in which he wishes his reader to
perceive the dialogue as being in the latter dialect. The accuracy of
his representation will not be at issue here but suffice it to say that
the phonology of this dialect is represented in spellings (yer for you,
waitin' for waiting, 'adn't for hadn't, a' for all, Ah for I, pleece
for place, ax for ask, abaht for about, ma'es for makes, etc.).
Occasionally, the orthographic representation appears to be mere eye
dialect as in th' for the, du for do and anuther for another, but gener-
ally speaking, Lawrence represents broad Derbyshire pronunciation rath-
er consistently. The grammar of the dialect is predictably non-standard,
with double negatives (Sir Clifford 'adn't got no other key their),
non-standard verb usages (Ah thowt it won ordinary.) and local syntac-
tic forms ("Appen Sir Clifford 'ud know"). The standard dialect is
characterized primarily by a regularity of orthography and
grammar but primarily by the absence of the marked forms of broad Der-
byshire such as those noted above. In the minds of writers, as appar-

ently, in the minds of most speakers, standard is primarily the ab-
sence of stigmatized forms (Shuy 1969).

In terms of the *settings* and *participants* involved in the switch-
ing, Mellors speaks only standard English to Sir Clifford, Sir Malcom
and Mrs. Bolton. He speaks standard English to Hilda until she insults
him at which point he answers her in dialect. He also speaks to Hilda
primarily when she is a visitor in his house. He speaks local dialect
consistently to his dog and to his penis on the occasions which he
addresses it as a person. It is only when Mellors switches in speak-
ing to Lady Chatterly that clarification is required.

As noted above, *topic*, also is an essential factor in code-switch-
ing. Consistently throughout the novel certain topics are discussed
by Mellors in standard English only. Whenever the topic of Lady
Chatterly's proposed trip to Venice is introduced (three separate occa-
sions,) Mellors discusses it only in standard. The same can be said
for the topics of sex (mutual orgasm, his libido and any memories of
their past sexual experiences), three discussions about their philos-
ophies of life, Mellors' personal background, the topic of divorce
(four times) and discussions about what constitutes good English.
Three times the topic of Mellor's first wife is discussed in standard
English and once in dialect. Likewise, once Mellors discusses his
work as gamekeeper in standard and once in dialect. More personal
topics, however, are generally discussed in dialect, including his
relationship with his daughter, the general topic of children and any
philosophical discussions relating to the hardship of the life of a
peasant.

In terms of *language situations* or functions, the consistent contrast
between standard English and dialects in Mellors' speech is maintained.
Introductions, conversational openings, conversational closings, insults,
invitations to sex and rejection of sexual overtures are in standard
English, while all representations of meal-time conversation, talk
during love-making and post-intercourse afterglow conversations were
in dialect.

It is not the purpose of this paper to detail all the ways in which
Lawrence made use of code-switching in his novel but suffice it to say
that he did it masterfully and, from what we know about code switching
in real-life research settings, realistically.

What this research hopes is that certain tasks of the literary critic
will be aided by recent theoretical developments in sociolinguistics.
Specifically, literary critics can be helped to ascertain how effectively
and how consistently an author portrays the language of his fictional
characters. Recent developments in conversational analysis can provide
a scientific touchstone (in well-defined contexts) for literary comparison.
One type of analysis might have been to match the orthographic repre-
sentation of broad Derbyshire dialect with the linguistic atlas research
which has been done in that area. In this case, we have chosen rather
to make use of a measurement point which is less concerned with the
surface manifestation of language representation (the phonology and
grammar) and more concerned with the meaning particularly the sort of
meaning which may or may not be consciously controlled by the author.
If we had analyzed the former question we could learn about how well the
author knew the dialect he represented. The latter question gets at
a much larger issue: How well does the author know how to make use of
the uses of language?

It should be clear, then, that recent developments in sociolinguistic
analysis can offer analytic assistance to the field of literary criticism.
Unfortunately, the analysis summarized here tells us little that we did
not already know about Lawrence's capturing and discussing that ability
in measurable terms, perhaps as a point for comparing that same ability
in other authors but at least a way of more concretely describing what it
is that Lawrence did so well. Perhaps this is all that science can ever
offer art.

2.2 READING

One of the more startling revelations which has become clear is
that many linguists have ignored the data of written language as a
fruitful source of inquiry and analysis. The major thrust of what I
have to say here is that the study of written language offers much of
the same exciting arena of study that can be found in linguistics
studies of the spoken word particularly in the study of how people read,
how they learn how to read, how they vary their reading, how they under-
stand what they read and how they use what they know about language to
learn more than the reading text which is in front of them.

Almost everything that the sociolinguists and ethnographers of
communication have been saying about the role of social context in the
production of language holds equally true for its role in reading.
Research on how the speech of people from different social classes
varies, how the speech of younger people differs from that of older
people, how women's speech differs from that of men, how social setting
affects speech are all relevant to the field of reading. Using such
interrelationships, sociolinguists construct grammatical theories to
explain language variation (and thereby, to explain language in its
fuller, dynamic sense of the term). In addition, however, linguists
are also interested in the manner in which these dialectal variation
plays in school performance, effectiveness in standardized tests, in
cognitive ability in employment, in the subjective reactions by other
speakers (especially by teachers).

At least two areas of sociolinguistics are of immediate interest
and application to the field of reading. These are: (1) the effect
of spoken language on the reading process and (2) approaches to
teaching reading to speakers of a non-standard variety. No pretention
of thoroughness will be made for the following overview of these three
areas. The point here will be to present them as areas of legitimate
concern for linguists and to reveal areas of research which linguists
will need to carry out.

1. *The Effect of Spoken Language on the Reading Process.* There are
several areas of immediate interest to linguists related to social
influences on the effect of spoken language in the reading process.
The child is often evaluated on his ability to read a passage aloud.
For inner city Black children, this often means that oral rendition,
"She go to de sto" for the written "She goes to the store" is considered
bad reading.

It is conceivable, furthermore, that a speaker, out of a number of
possible motivations, may select forms which, in some other context,
would be considered stigmatized. Detailed studies of language variation
have only begun to scratch the surface of such continua but several
examples are suggestive of fruitful avenues of future research.
It was noted earlier that horizontal or peer groups social

acceptability can be a critical factor in reading success, especially in the working classes. At least two strategies for reasonably intelligent males in this society are as follows:

   a. *Keep your mouth shut in class.* If the male is White, this might be interpreted as shyness. If he is Black, it usually is read as non-verbality. The strategy of keeping one's mouth shut in school is employed for different reasons at different times. In early elementary school the child soon learns that the name of the game is to be right as often as possible and wrong as seldom as possible. One way to prevent being criticized by the teacher is to keep one's mouth shut. By pre-adolescence, the male's strategy for keeping his mouth shut grows out of a complex set of pressures stemming from stereotyped expectations of masculine behavior (i.e. boys are less articulate than girls and less interested in school) and the inherent dangers of appearing unmasculine to one's peers.

   b. *If you give the right answer, counteract the "fink effect" by sprinkling your response with stigmatized language.* It is this strategy which boys who are to survive the education process in certain speech communities, must certainly master. Those who only keep their mouths shut tend to drop out ultimately for whatever reasons. But males who learn to adjust to the conflicting pressures of school and peer pressure are those who have learned to handle the sociolinguistic continuum effectively. In the proper context and with the proper timing, an intelligent male can learn how to give the answer that the teacher wants in such a way that his peers will not think him a sissy. In English class he will learn how to produce the accepted forms with the subtle nuisances of intonation and kinesics which signal to his peers that rather than copping out, he is merely playing the game, humoring the English teacher along. If he appears to be sufficiently bored, he can be allowed to utter the correct response. If he stresses the sentence improperly, he can be spared the criticism of selecting the accurate verb form.

   The deliberate selection of stigmatized language can also be seen in the diagnosis of reading problems in an affluent Washington, D.C., suburb. A well meaning third grade teacher has diagnosed one boy's reading problem as one of "small muscle motor coordination" and she

suggested that the parents send him to a neurologist at once. His
father, a physician, objected strenuously muttering something about teachers
practicing medicine without a license. Since I knew the family, I was
asked to help discover the child's real problem. After a quick and
dirty examination in which the boy evidenced little or no problem with
decoding or comprehending material which was unknown to him, the only
problem I discovered was that his reading was monotonous and mechanical.
In the school's terminology, he did not read with "expression". A hasty
survey of teachers revealed that boys tend to not read with expression,
a fact which is generally accepted along with their non-verbality and
dirty fingernails. Why didn't this boy read with expression? My hypoth-
esis is that he considers it sissy. This boy is the smallest male in
his class and he is using every means possible to establish his mascu-
linity. In athletics what he lacks in skill he more than makes up
with careless abandon. His voice is coarse, his demeanor is tough.
He swears regularly. And so on. It would behoove the schools to do
several things here. One might question the usefulness of reading with
expression at all, but teachers should certainly be able to distinguish
this presumed problem from other types of reading problems, particularly
neurological ones. But this seems to be evidence of the same sort of
pressure, this time in a middle-class community, which pits school norms
against peer norms, in this case masculine norms, to the extent that
the child is willing to deliberately select the non-standard forms.

Another area in which the social context of reading can be seen to
be of interest to the linguist involves the field of testing. Of
particular concern are standardized tests which are biased against
speakers of non-standard dialects or people with non-mainstream
experiences. Intelligence tests are the number one problem area, with
tests like the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test a prime culprit. The
major fallacies in such tests, from the viewpoint of linguistics, in
the basic test content is words. Reading people seem to think of
language as a bag of words. Therefore, if you want to measure verbal
intelligence, you devise a test that shows how many words a person knows.
Thus, if you know the meanings of osculation, humunculus, penile and
cryptogram, you are very intelligent. In addition, the vocabulary tested
is primarily from the middle class environment while the norming

population is often regionally focused (The Peabody is used on White
children in Nashville).

Reading tests are equally vulnerable to criticizing, particularly
for comprehension. The usual task is to extract the main idea, solve
a problem, draw an inference, separate fact from opinion or evaluate the
author's purpose. All of these depend on one's socialization and the
correct answers to all of them depend on the child's ability to match
his own socialization to that of the author of the printed page. Of
particular interest is the rather standard approach of reading compre-
hension questions to request the child to read a paragraph, then present
four sentences from which to select a best answer. Often such test
answers grow out of an obscure portion of the reading, the test assumption
being that careful readers are the best readers. The fallacy of this
assumption is that as a reader becomes better, he learns to process
only the important ideas and to ignore the unimportant. If he is truly
a good reader, he will conclude with a rather clear outline in his mind,
highlighting and retaining only that which is not considered clutter.
Consequently the reading test runs the clear risk of penalizing the
good reader. If the good reader manages to obtain a high score anyway,
it may be due only to the fact that good readers correlate nicely with
good test takers. Pilot research done at Indiana University, in fact,
has shown that good readers maintain their clear superiority over poor
readers even when the stimulus passage is given in Dutch and the
of answers are provided in English. In fact, the research went even
a step further, deleting the stimulus paragraph all together and
offering only a selection of answers to choose among. Good readers
continued to score significantly higher, even though they could not
have been measured on their ability to comprehend what they had read.

It should be clear, from the examples cited above, that a child's
spoken language *does* affect his reading particularly as it is perceived
by his teachers. He tends to read in his native dialect. At the
early stages, some children must learn that the word attack skills
(the relationship of letters to sounds) are in another dialect.
For example one Reading series explains that the letter *e* stands for
the sound /ε/ as in pen. For 50% of the speakers in the U.S., the
realization in that environment is /I/. If a child manages to

overcome the mismatch of the printed page to his oral language, he
often displays a reversion to dialects as he becomes a better reader.
What likely happens is that once he becomes immune to the decoding
strategies to the point that he decodes unconsciously, he attends to
the meaning of what he is reading and produces the noises in his native
pattern, discarding the instructions of his teacher. Any child who
learns to say store with an _r_ in the acquisitional literacy stages is
likely to produce 'sto' as soon as reading becomes automatic. What we
little understand is how various social variables effect this production,
especially as it is monitored by instructors and evaluated on tests.

2. _Teaching Reading to Speakers of Non-Standard Varieties._ As is often
the case in education, the most progress has been made in the area
nearest the surface of consumer visibility. Five different approaches
have been suggested during recent years. Starting with the assumption
that the reason minority children are not learning to read is related
to differences in language and culture (and not genetic), these approaches
differ in which aspect of the learning system must do the changing.
The child, the teacher or the reading materials.

   a. _Adjust the Child_
      Traditionally, the American educational system has called for
the child to bear the burden of changing. Some educators argue that if
a child's dialect is different from that of the literacy materials, it
is the child who must do the adjusting. He should first learn to speak
Standard English, then learn to read it. Such an argument is seldom
stated by the schools but often practiced. If publically stated, the
hue and cry of outraged parents, teachers and administrators would be
great. From the linguist's viewpoint, the argument is futile since we
cannot guarantee that we know how to teach a person to speak Standard
English even if it were desirable to do so.

   b. _Teacher Education_

      Another approach that has been suggested requires change on
the part of teachers. This view would have teachers learn enough about
the various non-standard dialects to avoid confusing the use of dialect
with reading problems. That is, the teacher would learn that a child

who reads *She goes to the store* as *She go to do sto'* is certainly not
misreading.

c. *Change Materials*

Two other approaches involving changes in the very materials
with which children learn to read. One approach would have beginning
reading materials avoid the mismatch with the printed page by bringing
the materials to the child's dialect. This approach has not been well
received, largely because of the inability of the public to tolerate
written versions of non-standard English. Technically, other problems
also obtain. How does one represent linguistic variability in written
form (is every third negative made multiple for example?). Still,
another problem grows out of the incredible good-bad assumption of
education. By this we mean that many educators do not perceive any
eventual good growing out of an initial written down non-standard
expression. That is, some educators are unable to defer their gratifi-
cation, to reverse the frequent accusation made against ghetto children.

d. *Avoidance Strategies*

The second approach which suggests changing teaching materials
is one which argues that extant good materials be modified so as to
avoid the grammatical mismatches between the spoken non-standard and
the written standard. Such materials would sequentially avoid negative
constructions, past tense, verb-third singular forms etc., in such a
way that the non-standard speaking child is not forced to deal with all
or many of them at once. Obviously he will need to learn them some
time, but he has no requirement to face them all at once.

e. *Language Experience Approach*

The fifth approach, embodying the principle of starting with the
individual child exactly where he is, is the language experience
approach. Usually this approach entails having the teacher write down
a story or description told by a child. The resultant written language,
it is assumed, must match the child's oral language since it is the
child's oral language. The major difficulty with this approach is that
of training the teachers to write down exactly what the child has said.

If the story is translated into a standard English, the point of using the language experience approach will be missed.

In summary, it should be clear that linguists who study the social dimension of language have a great deal to say, but a great deal more to learn, about the field of reading. The problems faced by linguists regarding the public awareness of their field are exacerbated with regard to reading. This is no problem for the average speaker, who might become tongue-tied if he were to think of what he was doing as he talked. To teachers and materials writers, however, it is apparent that educational sequencing, diagnosis, evaluation and the very content of readeng is inherently linked with language and with language which operates in well-defined social settings and contexts. Of what remains for socio-linguists to do, after the more immediate goal of bringing teachers and publishers to awareness of these matters, the following are suggestive:

1. Carry out research on the effect of masculinity and feminity on reading;
2. Correlate new language acquisition data and theory with actual practice in teaching reading;
3. Develop reading ability measures which demonstrate acquisition exclusive of cultural or linguistic interference;
4. Note, assess and disseminate the linguistic and cultural bias of extant reading tests, materials and training programs;
5. Evaluate the various strategies noted above for teaching reading to speakers of various non-standard varieties of English;
6. Carry out further research on the nature of language stereotyping in reading.

No easy plan exists for removing educational problems arising out of dialect differences. What linguists can do is to demonstrate that the various ways in which people speak are equally capable of expressing logical and humane thoughts. They can reveal bias in standardized reading tests and materials. They can expose unfair stereotyping. The variation within a language and the ways this variation is valued reflects the organization of the language community, the regional norms and the social structure. Linguists who will study such phenomena will find it

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rewarding to carry their research to the next level, the teaching level,
and relate what they know linguistically to reading. We cannot wait
for reading people to learn our field. What is more, the children
who are not learning to read can ill afford our avoiding this next
logical step.

2.3 MEDICINE

The third area of application of sociolinguistic theory and
research is the possibly unlikely field of medicine.

The field of medicine has been almost completely overlooked by
linguistics as a potential area in which to expand our work domain.
To be sure it is not easy to convince the profession which has perhaps
the greatest status in America that it needs help from anyone, much
less from linguistics, but there are signs that the armor is beginning
to crack. Part of our lack of success in convincing medical doctors
that we have anything to say to them stems from the strategy we have
taken. Typically we have begun with the assumption that doctors want
to know what linguistics. Not only is this a poor approach, but it is
also probably wrong. What the medical profession is usually interested
in are solutions to *their* problems. Most perceived problems relate
to medical technology. These we probably can't help much with.
Others relate to their relationships with their patients. Such relation-
ships are invariably carried out in language, either spoken or written.
The medical history is the first and usually the longest verbal inter-
action in which doctors and patients participate. This event is of
critical importance for the patient, since all future treatment hinges
on its accuracy and breadth. Yet little or no training is given the
medical student in the "field methods" of his profession, in the
"ethnography of interrogation", in the language of minorities, in
foreign language or in any sort of cross-cultural understandings. No
mention is made of the need for the medical student to develop at least
a receptive competence for the many varieties of language which a non-
suburban practice might produce and no teaching packages have been
developed to help accommodate this possibility.

Only a few linguists in this country are in dialogue with the
medical profession on these matters but there is reason to be optimistic

about its future development, provided that the focus of the relation-
ship has integrity. That is, there needs to be a genuine promise of
help in solving a real problem and there cannot be evidence of the over-
promise of applied linguistics which characterized the overzealous
blunders of our earlier history. The most optimistic result one can
visualize is a linguist in every medical school. Considerable effort is
being made today to get psychiatry to open its doors, a pressure brought
about largely by growing public suspicion and distrust. Medicine cannot
be far behind for the National Hospital Association has been studying
doctor-patient relationships and has compiled a list of the ten questions
most often asked by patients. Leading the list is the question "Why
don't doctors explain a medical problem in simple language that a patient
can understand?". In answer to this question, the famous heart surgeon
Michael E. DeBakey replied: "MOST doctors don't want their patients to
understand them! They prefer to keep their work a mystery. If patients
don't understand what a doctor is talking about, they won't ask him
questions. Then the doctor won't have to be bothered answering them."
(Robinson 1973:9-12)

   One purpose of a set of recent studies at Georgetown University was
to examine the extent of this behavior, to examine how much patients
feel or are led to feel that they must communicate with doctors in
doctor language. Conversely, we were also interested in those occasions
in which doctors showed a need to try to communicate with their patients
in patient language. One might hypothesize a continuum such as the
following:

Doctors talking only Doctor Language	Doctors talking Doctor Language but Understanding Patient Language	Doctors talking and speaking both Doctor and Patient Language	Patients talking and speaking both Patient and Doctor Language	Patients talking Patient Language but understanding Doctor Language	Patients talking only Patient Language

Figure 2. Doctor-Patient Language Continuum

By far the largest parts of the medical histories were conducted in doctor language and the patients tried very hard to operate in as close a version of doctor language as they could master. Most serious breakdowns came when patients could (or would) not speak doctor language and doctors could (or would) not understand patient language. Our data, though still brief and fragmentary, display evidences of success and failure at all points on the continuum. Our data show, for example, clear evidences of the patients' ability to acquire doctor talk during the interview. In some cases, the learning was purely social, the patient putting forth the best possible social dialect to meet the formality of the occasion. On other occasions, specific medical language was acquired during the interview:

> D: And have you every had any accidents, breaking an arm, break a leg...?
>
> P: Not broken, but I, when your arm is in a sling that means it's not broken. It's not always knocked out of place, but this was when I was a child.
>
> D: It was dislocated.
>
> P: Well, right, dislocated, OK? (nervous laughter)

Another instance of this learning can be seen on another occasion when a woman who had had six previous pregnancies learned the sequence and language of responding very quickly:

> D: OK, now your second child?
>
> P: 1959, Georgetown, normal pregnancy
>
> D: And how about the, uh, duration of labor?
>
> P: I'd say it was 1:00 when I came here that night and my son was born at 5:30 in the morning--5:30 a.m.--so I guess it must have been around 4 hours.
>
> D: And...
>
> P: Normal. They were all six pound babies.

This anticipatory response continued through the descriptions of the other four deliveries as well:

> D: And your fourth child?

P: 1961.

D: Where was she born?

P: Here, the same, and I don't remember.

D: (Laughs) We're getting this down pat now, aren't we?

Our data also reveal many evidences of the patient's ability to under-
stand doctor talk, even if they don't speak it. Surprisingly, patients
are frequently able to guess at the intention of the question even when
it is inelegantly stated:

D: Now did he have any problems during the pregnancy of the child?

P: No.

This question follows a discussion of the delivery of the patient's
second child during which no antecedent for the *he* exists. It can only
be assumed that the doctor meant *you* for *he*. Likewise, the doctor
obviously means *your pregnancy* for *pregnancy of the child*. This was a
terribly garbled sentence, yet the patient answered without the
slightest hesitation, apparently disambiguating as she went along.

The research also reveals instances in which doctors begin to under-
stand patient talk. It will take considerably more data than are now
available, for us to catalogue the types of misunderstandings doctors
have of patient language, primarily because the patient says so little
during the medical history, following a strategy so successfully used
by minority school children who learn very early that the name of the
game is to be right as often as possible and wrong as seldom as possible
and that the best way to avoid being wrong is to keep one's mouth shut.
Another reason why we have so few examples of doctor's misunderstanding
of patient language stems from the social structure of the speech event.
The doctor is simply not to be wrong. We have some recorded instances,
however, in which clear acquisition of patient talk by a doctor seem to
have taken place:

P: Oh, he did, uh, in last April he had a little touch of sugar when...

D: He has a little *what?*

P: You know, diabetic...

D: Oh, he had some sugar.   29

A more serious example occurred during an early observation during which
the doctor asked the patient if she had ever had an abortion. She
denied that she had, even though her chart clearly indicated two previous
abortions. In the doctor's mind, the patient had chosen to tell a lie
for the evidence was clearly before him. After the doctor had left, the
patient was asked by a linguist whether or not she had ever lost a baby.
She readily admitted to having lost two. In the ensuing conversation it
was determined that the patient was defining abortion as self-induced
while the doctor was using the term to refer to a wider range of possi-
bilities. It seems obvious here that the doctor has not learned
patient language either.

On the other hand, few doctors demonstrate ability to speak patient
talk. If evidence from our research and from the accounts in medical
journals is accurate, few doctors have mastered the ability to speak
the language of the working-class, minority or foreign-language-speaking
patient. Severe problems can result from miscommunication on all levels,
particularly for the non-English speaker. In fact, the clearest mandate
seems to be for hospitals, clinics and other medical facilities to
gear up for medical services for speakers of foreign languages.

A more cautious note must be sounded, however, for the need for
doctors to attempt to speak patient dialect, a practice which can lead
to serious problems. For example, one conscientious doctor, sensitive
to the fact that his patient was Black and poor, assumed that she would
be more comfortable with "homey" expressions, despite the fact that she
had already passed through such fine distinctions as flebitis, rheumatic
fever, transfusions and epilepsy. He was doing very well in his history
taking, giving the appearance of casual yet professional ease. He was
friendly and interested in the patient as a person. And then he blew
it with his liberal enthusiasm:

    D: What about *belly* pain?

    P: (pause, followed by recovery) No.

    D: (unperturbed and growing more dramatic) Have you had a problem
       with burning when you urinate or do you find you're running to
       the *john* every five minutes?

    P: (slowly) No.

D: (rising to cresendo) Or do you have an extreme urgency, like do
   you feel when you have to go urinate that, oh, the urge is just
   tremendous that you have to run and get there or else you'll wet
   your pants?

If these questions seem ludicrous to us, how much more ludicrous must
they have seemed to the patient. Here she was, working desperately to
speak doctor talk, with medical terminology and a minimum of vernacular
grammar and he uses words like belly, John, and wet your pants. The
effect must be similar to that of a fifty-five year old youth worker
trying to talk teen-age slang. It is also akin to the problem some of
us have who grew up speaking a non-standard dialect but, having gotten
educated, are no longer allowed to use it by the people we grew up with
and love. Their expectation of us simply won't allow it even though they
may continue to use it themselves.

As noted earlier, by far the largest part of the medical history,
from the data available to us so far, indicates a doctor dominance in
language and perspective. It is, in one sense at least, his native
country, his home grounds. The patient is the foreigner or intruder.
A great deal has been said in recent years about a similar situation in
education. For a long time we have made noises about starting with the
child where he is and yet, as mentioned earlier, massive programs have
been mounted to remake children in the eyes of the school norm so that
they can benefit from the teaching perspective. Such programs are
saying, in effect, that the child is simply not good enough, and that
in order to be taught he must become like the school, especially in
matters of language and culture. It appears that a similar situation
obtains in medicine. Our limited data show that almost 40% of the
patients surveyed feel extremely uncomfortable about understanding what
doctors are telling them and about making themselves clear to doctors.
An equal number feel that doctors are generally unfriendly and intimidating.
Our tape recorded data reveal startling instances to verify the commu-
nication breakdown and call to question the efficiency of the medical
history in cross-cultural settings. Add to this the fact that it is
the patient who is at the disadvantage. He is either in need of medical
attention or thinks he has such a need. Just as one might expect a
person with education to adjust to the needs of the person being taught,

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so-might one expect the healthy to adjust to the needs of the sick.
And yet, strong indication exists that such an adjustment is only
infrequently made. With the exceptions of the histories taken by the
private physicians in our study, we can safely generalize that the
doctors do not speak patient language and, much more seriously, that
they often give little evidence of understanding it. They are not
especially friendly, not very good at making the patient comfortable
and generally lack expertise at question-asking. The patient generally
adjusts to the doctor perstective, offering medical terms whenever
possible. When the patient cannot do this well, the history is slowed
and made less efficient. In short, the general expectation is for the
patient to learn doctor talk.

A great deal could be learned by the clinic doctors from the
contrastive technique of one private physician whose demeanor was relaxed,
congenial and enthusiastic. Some random quotations from his histories
will serve as examples:

...Here's an illustration of what I mean.

...Great! It'll probably work out fine for you.

...Let's watch that but don't worry too much about it.

...You look like a million dollars.

...Mrs. M, are there any questions I can answer for you?

...No problems here. And your last labor was much too easy..

...So what I'd like to say is that everything that's going on is
quite normal.

It takes a long time for this doctors' patients to learn to take advan-
tage of the openings he regularly provides them to ask any questions they
want. One of his patients confided:

I thought he was too busy so I didn't ask a lot of things until
I was in my ninth month. Then Dr. G realized that I, you know,
had been holding back. But we got everything straighted out in time.

This same doctor evidenced a clear appreciation of the language needs
of his patients. Although he never attempted to speak Vernacular Black
English himself (fully realizing how ludicrous it might sound) he was
sensitive to his obligation to help the patient understand his language
without being patronising or stuffy. For example, to a sixteen-year-
old patient he said:

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> It might be advisable to induce forced bleeding.
> Incidentally, Ann, you might have noticed that
> you have a lot of mucus in your flow and that's
> normal...and it's called lucorbea.

The approach was not, "You have lucorbea". Such a statement would either require the patient to ask what the term means, thus lowering her status even further or retreat to fearful and ignorant silence, a strategy which I suspect to be frequent in our data.

In summary, or the general points on the doctor-patient, medical history language continuum (Figure 2) the major breakdowns occur at the extremes. Some patients cannot or will not speak doctor language, Likewise, some doctors cannot or will not speak patient language. It has been suggested, in fact, that it is probably disastrous for them to try. The obvious area of hope lies in the central portions of the continuum. Historically, we have expected patients to carry all the burden here. Either they learn to understand doctors or they remain ignorant. Naturally this is a gross generalization but one which is generally supportable from our data. One would hope for considerably more from the medical profession.

At the very minimum one would hope that the medical profession would give some attention to the matters in the ethnography of interrogation. It is strange that of all professions, both teaching and medicine rely so heavily on the answers of their clients but pay so little attention to the vast complexities of question-asking.

Secondly, one would hope that the medical profession would give some attention to the matter of receptive competence of patient language on the part of their practitioners. It is patently absurd to run the risk of getting inaccurate information in the medical interview simply because the patient does not want to admit ignorance of the question or because the question was indelicately asked. There is far too much at stake for such a situation to be maintained. Despite the extant crowding in the medical school curriculum this situation is serious enough to merit change. Focus and time must be given to the language and culture of minorities in medicine.

3.0 CONCLUSIONS

The argument of this paper has been rather obvious. We have suggested that the major concerns of sociolinguistics (variation, social context, cross-disciplinary sensitivity and the various internal distinctions including gradience, frequency of occurrence, selectional options, the perceptual viewpoint of the whole and the importance of subjective reactions of language) are all fertile components of a developing sort of applied sociolinguistics. I have tried to illustrate the usefulness of these defining qualities of sociolinguistics in three discrete areas: literary analysis, reading and medicine. These are intended to be only suggestive of the broad areas in which the field might continue to develop. There is probably no academic field which intersects with so much of the rest of life as does linguistics. We have hardly begun to scratch the surface of its potential.