



SOCIAL PSYCHOLINGUISTICS AS MODERN BRANCH OF CONTEMPRORY LINGUISTICS

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the emergence of sociopsycholinguistics as a new interdisciplinary field that integrates sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics. While sharing its object of study with related disciplines, it focuses on how linguistic competence develops and functions in relation to psychological traits, social factors, and communicative context. By offering this perspective, sociopsycholinguistics expands the study of language and speech and addresses practical needs in areas such as linguocriminology, particularly in predicting personality traits through speech analysis.

KEYWORDS

sociopsycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, interdisciplinary studies, linguocriminology.

INTRODUCTION

Recently, new fields have emerged at the intersection of scientific disciplines. This scientific approach makes it possible to address many unanswered questions within a specific field and consider the subject of research in a more complex and in-depth way, from a multidimensional perspective. This approach has led to the emergence of new disciplines such as psycholinguistics, ethnopsychology, sociolinguistics, and social psychology. Sociopsycholinguistics, at the intersection of psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics, aims to continue this tradition. The need for a new field of research arises when there is a need to address issues that cannot be fully understood within the boundaries of existing disciplines.

There are questions that cannot be answered within the scope of a research subject or by changing the aspect of a traditional scientific subject. This situation has occurred before, for example when social psychology emerged at the intersection of sociology and psychology [10,4]. By combining the subject matter of sociology (groups) and psychology (individuals), social psychology provided a new and unique perspective on its analysis. If psychology looked at individuals with already established motives, needs, and attitudes, social psychology had to address the question of how exactly a person behaves in real-life groups, and why exactly these motives, needs, or attitudes were formed. It also had to consider how much influence the group has on the individual, and in what conditions these influences occur.

The emergence of psycholinguistics, which occurred around the same time, was due to the realization that scientists no longer wanted to take for granted the linguistic abilities of individuals - children, adults, healthy individuals, or those with developmental disabilities [5,11]. It became clear that it was time to explain the causes of language phenomena and explore the connections between language and thought, as well as study language as a mental process. Although the object of study remained the same - language and speech - the focus



shifted to questions about how adult language abilities are formed, how children learn language (and how their personality and linguistic abilities develop), and how a person's mental characteristics and conditions affect their speech production and comprehension.. Interestingly, linguists and psychologists were currently interested in material that had been previously rejected by linguists: speech errors, or "negative linguistic material." [1,9,11]

Sociolinguistics, which emerged in the 1920s and was further developed in the 1950s and 1970s, offers a new perspective on the traditional study of language. It focuses on the relationship between language and the social conditions in which it is used. Instead of focusing on the internal structure of language, sociolinguistic studies examine how language is used by people in different social contexts. These contexts include characteristics such as gender, age, education, occupation, and social status [2]. The subject of sociolinguistics includes the social differentiation of languages, the relationship between linguistic and social structures, and issues such as the role of language in forming national identities and the challenges of multilingual societies.

The place of sociopsychology in a number of related scientific disciplines: sociopsychological linguistics, sociology, psychology, linguistics [4]. Currently, several scientific disciplines can be mentioned, the objects of research and tasks of which are related to sociopsycholinguistics. These include sociology and psychology. The study of how social characteristics influence a speaker's speech is the focus of sociology (in the broadest sense), while psychology is also relevant.

Both fields of study are interested in the mechanisms of code-switching, but for different reasons. Psycholinguistic research aims to understand the psychological factors that lead to this phenomenon, whereas sociolinguistic analysis focuses on the social contexts and communicative situations that trigger code-switching [6,10]. One important aspect of psycholinguistic research is the study of linguistic socialization, which is the process by which children learn their native language. This also forms part of sociolinguistic interest, as it examines the social aspects of language acquisition. "Psycholinguistics, which analyzes a person's choice of linguistic structure to communicate a particular idea, must consider the social context in which communication occurs." These social conditions, roles of participants, and communicative goals all influence the formation of a message's intent and structure. In other words, psycholinguistics is not just about language, but also about social psychology.

The appeal of psychologists and linguists to the social aspects of language and the connection between language and mental processes indicates a need for a new field of study based on psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics [9,11]. This new field would focus on the intersection of these two disciplines and their shared object and subject. Some time ago, there was a discussion about the separation of sociopsychology into a separate field of study. At first, the names of the discipline seemed to be synonymous, referring to the same area of knowledge. However, this is not the case. All aspects of personality have a socio-psychological dimension. Therefore, it has been recognized that speech is influenced by not only biological gender, but also socio-psychological gender or gender identity. While essentialism was prevalent in science, where it was believed that language and communication were determined solely by biological sex at birth, the relationship between gender and other personality traits was ignored, and linguistic research findings were not accurate. It was only after considering the influence of socio-psychological gender on language use that linguistic research gained scientific credibility.

Age is a complex and multidimensional category that includes not only biological aspects (such as calendar or chronological age) but also social and psychological elements. The presence of these components in the concepts of social status, ethnic and cultural affiliation is undeniable. The social status of an individual is determined by the groups they belong to, their position within those groups, and their relationships with other members [2,7]. This diversity of social relationships is reflected in the concept of social status, which encompasses factors such as social origin, educational background, professional affiliation, and membership in various groups or associations. As for race and ethnicity, psychologists emphasize the importance of studying the psychological aspect of ethnic identity. They believe that "awareness of belonging to a particular nation and the search for characteristics, including those of the psyche, plays a significant role. These factors also have a serious impact on human relationships, from interpersonal to international."

Within the fields of psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics, several personality-centered issues are traditionally explored. These include the impact on communicative competence, its development, and its implementation in speech. In the speech behavior, there are several personality characteristics such as gender, age, ethnic and cultural affiliation, and social (professional, educational, etc.) status that influence the process of communication [5,6]. These characteristics are determined by a person's biological, psychological, and social qualities. It is important to note that a person's identity is a combination of individual and group properties that interact and are inseparable from each other. Therefore, it is impossible to isolate individual characteristics from group characteristics or consider their impact on speech in isolation.

It is now clear that when studying the influence of certain social identities (gender, ethnicity, etc.) on speech [8,2,3], it is not possible to simply remove them from the analysis. The personality as a whole must be considered, as a unity of all social identities. Sociopsycholinguistics aims to do this. Another important aspect of the communication process that should not be ignored is the context of interaction. It is possible to interpret a person's speech correctly only in a specific communicative situation.

Another aspect of the relationship between age and identity is the influence of cultural norms on the periodization of life stages. The stratification of society based on age also indicates a connection between age and social standing. Both gender and age can directly influence a person's social status [3,8]. At a certain stage in life, a person inevitably acquires a particular social status - education-related. An individual's gender can also influence the attainment of professional status, as these factors are even legally recognized. Meanwhile, gender, age, and social standing are closely linked to race and ethnic identity [2]. A fascinating example of the interplay between gender, age, and social position can be seen in studies of linguistic behavior. We can observe the impact of gender on the choice of dialect or standard language in the workplace and in interactions between men and women, whether within or outside the community.

Sociopsycholinguistics, like proper psycholinguistics, focuses on the study of the real processes of speech production and comprehension. It is the "personality in language", analogous to the famous expression "man in language" and should be the subject of research in sociopsycholinguistics. More precisely, it is language (speech) seen through the lens of the personality using it. The subject may also include the peculiarities of the formation,

development, and implementation of communicative competence in speech, as well as the speech behavior of an individual in all its psychological and social aspects, social conditions for speech use, and communicative situations.

Thus, while sharing the object of study with other linguistic disciplines such as sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics, sociopsycholinguistics provides its own unique perspective on research. The component of the "socio-" in "sociopsycholinguistics" should be understood broadly. Sociopsycholinguistics includes social linguistics, gender linguistics, age linguistics, and ethnopsycholinguistics. The formation of sociopsychology is also due to practical necessity. The development of linguocriminalism as an applied field of linguistic research has set specialists the task of predicting the social and psychological characteristics of an individual based on their speech. Although the term "sociopsychology" has been used in scientific literature for a long time, there have been no attempts to clearly define its object, subject, and objectives, which is necessary for the establishment of a new branch of scientific knowledge.

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