

An introduction to sociolinguistics: ethnographies assignment

[Sociology](#)



The Ethnography of Speaking ; Ethnomusicology Introduction Speech Is used between different ways among deferent groups of people. As we will see, each group has Its own norms of linguistic behavior. A particular group may not encourage talking for the sake of talking, and members of such a group may appear quite taciturn to outsiders who relish talk , or they may feel overwhelmed by the demands made on them If those others Insist on talking.

In contrast, In another group talk may be encouraged to the extent that it may even appear to be quite disorderly to an observer who has Internalized a deferent set of ' rules' for the conduct of talk. For example: Listening to thunder or stones, as In the Ojibwa, may appear to be bizarre, even to those who ' Listen to their consciences'.

In this chapter, therefore, we will look at how we can talk about the various ways in which people communicate with one another, In an attempt to see what factors are involved in adherence to the fact that much of that communication is directed toward keeping an individual society going; that is, an important function of communication Is social maintenance. Language Is used to sustain reality. Consequently, a second purpose of this chapter is to look at ways in which individuals cooperate with one another to sustain the reality of everyday life and at how they use language as one of the means to do so. OFF It is instructive to look at some of the ways in which various people in the world use talk, or sometimes the absence of talk, I. E. , silence, to communicate. For example, Marshall (1961) has indicated how the ! Gung, a bush-dwelling people of South West Africa, have certain customs which help them either to avoid or to reduce friction and hostility

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within bands and between bands. The ! Gung lead a very harsh life as hunters and gatherers, a life which requires a considerable amount of cooperation and the companionship of a larger group if survival is to be guaranteed.

The ! Gung are talkative people. Reasons why the ! Gung are talkative people: ; Talk keeps communication open among them ; It offers an emotional release ; And it can also be used to alert individuals that they are stepping out of bounds, so heading off potentially dangerous conflicts between individuals. The ! Gung talk about all kinds of things, but principally about food and gifting. However, they avoid mentioning the names of their gods aloud, and men and women do not openly discuss sexual matters together.

Such subjects are taboo. They have their own styles of joking, and storytelling, but, in the latter case, they do not 'make up' stories, finding no interest at all in that activity. They have one kind of talk to resolve disputes; another, which Marshall calls a 'shout,' to resolve the kinds of tension that arise when some sudden, dangerous oaf grass hut in a village; and still another, a repetitive trance-like type of speech, to indicate a feeling of some kind of deprivation concerning food. According to Marshall, speech among the !

Gung helps to maintain peaceful social legislations by allowing people to keep in touch with one another about how they are thinking and feeling. It helps the ! Gung to relieve their tensions, and it prevents pressures from building up and finding their release in aggression. ! Gung in contrast with Western Apache view of silence (Basso, 1972). Whereas the ! Gung speak to

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prevent uncertainty in human relationships, the Western Apache of east-central Arizona choose to be silent when there is a strong possibility that such uncertainty exists.

Western Apache They are silent on 'meeting strangers,' whether these are fellow Western Apache or omelet outsiders; and strangers, too, are expected to be silent. The Western Apache do not easily enter into new social relationships, and silence is deemed appropriate to a new relationship, because such a relationship is felt to be inherently uncertain. When do Apache use silence? ; Children returning from government boarding schools are greeted with silence ; When one is 'cussed out,' I. E. Disciplined verbally, silence is again the appropriate response ; The initial stages of courting behavior also require silence ; Silence is also used as a kind of sympathizing device after someone dies Silence is also required during curing ceremonies Apache resort to silence when they are confronted with ambiguity and uncertainty in their social relationships. As a final example of another special use of languages, I can mention the importance of a certain kind of talk among the Suburban of the Philippines, who employ certain kinds of speech in drinking encounters.

Such encounters are very important for gaining prestige and for resolving disputes. The Ethnography of Speaking ; Homes (1974) has proposed an ethnographic framework which takes into account the various factors that are involved in speaking. An ethnography of a communicative event is a description of all the factors that are relevant in understanding how that particular communicative event achieves its objectives. For convenience,

Hymes uses the word SPEAKING as an acronym for the various factors he deems to be relevant.

S- Setting and Scene Setting refers to the time and place, I. E. , the concrete physical circumstances in which speech takes place. Scene refers to the abstract psychological setting, or the cultural definition of the occasion. P- Participants combinations of speaker-listener, addresser-addressee, sender-receiver. E- Ends Ends refers to the conventionally recognized and expected outcomes of an exchange as well as to the personal goals that participants seek to accomplish on particular occasions.

A- Act sequence Act sequence refers to the actual form and content of what is said: the precise words used, how they are used, and the relationship of what is said to the actual topic at hand. K- Key Key, the fifth term, refers to the tone, manner, or spirit in which a particular message is conveyed: light-hearted, serious, precise, pedantic, mocking, sarcastic, pompous, and so on.

L- Instrumentalities Instrumentalities refer to the choice of channel, e. G. Oral, written, or telegraphic, and to the actual forms of speech employed, such as the language, dialect, code, or register that is chosen.

N- Norms of interaction and interpretation Norms of interaction and interpretation refers to the specific behaviors and properties that attach to speaking and also to how these may be viewed by someone who does not share them, e. G. , loudness, silence, gaze return, and so on. Genre, the final term, refers to clearly demarcated types of utterance; such things as poems, proverbs, riddles, sermons, prayers, lectures, and editorials. These are all marked in specific ways in contrast to casual speech.

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