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From the Selected Works of Kay T. Payne, Ph.D.

1989

Speech & Language Difference & Disorders of Multicultural Populations

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Available at: https://works.bepress.com/KayTPaynePhD/13/
Pathology versus Difference

- "Noema" is determined by culture.
- A dialect is any variety of language.
- The standard variety of a language:
  - Achieves artificial prestige
  - Is the currency for education and commerce
  - Has several versions.

Language as a Manifestation of Culture

- Elements of culture include:
  - Perceptions
  - Behaviors
  - Values
  - Preferences
  - World views
  - Technologies
  - Social organizations
  - Interpersonal interactional patterns
- Cultures are arbitrary and changeable.
  - They overlap with one another
  - They are subject to internal variation
  - Cultures are evident at different levels of conscious awareness
- Language is used to codify culture:
  - Language is the most overt representation of culture
  - Culture and language are linked intimately

Social and Cultural Factors that Influence Language Acquisition and Behavior

Basic Concepts and Terminology

- The ethnography of communication takes language as a socially situated cultural form.
- As a focus on the patterning of communicative behavior.
- What a speaker needs to know to communicate appropriately is the focus; how the knowledge is acquired is important.

In a speech community members interact by means of a shared set of verbal symbols and knowledge of the rules of production and interpretation.

- The linguistic repertoire is the range of linguistic codes existing in a speech community.
- Its extensiveness is related to motivation, exposure, social status, social mobility, and occupation.
- Several language varieties may comprise the repertoire.
- The ability to move effectively from one linguistic code to another is called code-switching.

- The standard dialect is the formal, public, prestigious variety used by the "establishment."
- A vernacular or colloquial variety of language is informal, casual, and increase.

Ethnicity

- Ethnic influence on language is associated with attitudes and values rather than biology or genetics.
- Ethnic membership does not preclude speakers from using other varieties of language.

Social Class, Education, Occupation

- Hollingshead pointed that social class status and mobility are highly correlated with educational achievement and occupation.
- Language variation has been attributed to:
  - Home environment and poverty
  - Ethnic interaction
  - Travel and experience
  - Code-switching.

- Bernstein has emphasized that lower classes use a more restricted, context-dependent code, and upper classes use a more elaborated, context-independent code.

Region

- Wardhaugh noted that distribution of linguistic forms is related to:
  - Geographical feature
  - Trade routes
  - Settlement pattern
  - Religion
  - History
• Edwards noted that maintenance of regional dialects is related to:
  o Local pride
  o Local activities
  o Deliberate rejection of other varieties.
• Individuals may use regional dialects for:
  o Occupational aspirations
  o Social aspirations
  o Political reasons.

Gender

• Some variations are due to culture rather than biology.
• Tholp found that males may use more non-standard features.
• Wardworth found that female speech contains:
  o More precision
  o Appeal tags
  o More words for color
  o Intensifiers.

Situation or Context

• Variables include:
  o Setting
  o Location
  o Occasion
  o Participants
  o Topic
  o Purpose
  o Spatial position
  o Dyadic interactions
  o Roles.

Age

• What is acceptable varies according to the age group.
• There is debate concerning the importance of peer and sibling influence in language acquisition.

First Language Community or Culture

• Bilingual and bidialectal speakers show code-switching ability.
• Code-switching ability is related to age, education, and situation.
• Facility with the second language is related to the level of interaction and nature of interaction.
Descriptions of Selected Dialects of American English

Black English

- The linguistic features are associated with social and historical factors not biological factors.
- These features overlap with standard English, Southern English, and Southern nonstandard English.
- Black English evolved through the processes of creolization and pidginization.
- The controversy over the existence of black English relates to the fact that:
  - It is difficult to associate one variety to many varied cultural groups based on race.
  - Descriptions are related to working class blacks.
  - Most studies are based only on structure.

Spanish Influenced English

- It is based on influences of one language upon the other.
- The knowledge of interferences reduces the probability of confusing the language variety with a pathology.

Cultural Issues in Pragmatic and Discourse Behavior

- In the area of pragmatics, literature suggests universal patterns of acquisition among children.
  - Stockman and Vaugh-Young note similar patterns of semantic development for black and white children.
  - Peters found no differences in speech act behaviors as a result of socioeconomic status.
  - Pragmatic data dispel some myths about language deficiencies in lower-socioeconomic children.
- Data on discourse narratives present a dimension of communication that is subject to cultural variation.
  - Discourse strategies may be related to cultural differences in approaches to conceptualization, social interaction, and problem solving.
  - Tannen noted that oral cultures tend to have traditions of essay and essay-influenced speech.
  - Michaels cited two basic narrative styles including topic-centered and topic-associating.
  - Topic-centered style is most commonly used by Anglo middle-class children and is the preferred style for the classroom.
  - Topic-associating stories are used most often by black working class children.

Application of Sociolinguistic Data and Theory to the Practice of Speech-Language Pathology

- Speech-language pathologists must view language variation as normal and not pathological.
- A cultural orientation must be used in defining and diagnosing disorders.
• Culturally valid assessment measures must be used.
  o Possible sources of cultural bias in tests include:
    1. Social situational
    2. Value
    3. Phonologic
    4. Grammatic
    5. Vocabulary
    6. Pragmatic
  7. Directions or format.
    o The exam must engage in preassessment activities to eliminate bias. These include:
      1. Familiarization with cultural norms
      2. Familiarization with speech community norms
      3. Selection of appropriate unbiased tests
      4. Preparation of natural elicitation procedures.
  o Culturally valid procedures must be employed to obtain a sample of the client's communicative behavior. These include:
    1. Administration of unbiased evaluation
    2. Collection of nonsystematic sociocultural behavior
    3. Observation of spontaneous communication in a variety of settings.
  o The speech-language pathologist must engage in several post-assessment activities to eliminate bias. These include:
    1. Scoring and error analysis
    2. Consideration of perspective and community definitions
    3. Test and community collaboration

Teaching Standard English as a Second Dialect

• Traditional methods of teaching have failed because:
  o They are prescriptive and corrective.
  o The focus is only on language structure.
  o They have not been culturally based.
  o They have made little use of indigenous, nonstandard dialects.
• Taylor’s model for teaching standard English as a second dialect makes use of and recognizes the importance of maintaining the speaker's native dialect.
  o The focus is communicative rather than structural.
  o Concern for structure, situation, and thought are included.
  o It is linked to tangible products.
  o Linkage to a developmental teaching model is made.
  o A positive attitude toward native dialect is stressed.
  o Awareness of language varieties is promoted.
  o Tasks for recognizing, labeling, and contrasting language varieties are involved.
  o Recognition of differences in meaning is involved.
  o Recognition of the requirements for different communication situations is involved.
  o Production in structured situations is taught.
  o Production in spontaneous situations is taught.
REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Standard American English emerged as the normative variety in the U.S.:  
a. Due to its aesthetic qualities.  
b. Because it is the only correct form.  
c. Due to the prestige of its speakers.  
d. Because it could be understood by all members of the society.  
e. Because it was spoken by the majority of persons.

2. Which of the following is true of dialects?  
a. Standard English is a dialect.  
b. All dialects are nonstandard English.  
c. They are arranged hierarchically.  
d. There is only one standard dialect.  
e. They represent misuse of the language.

3. Which of the following is not true of culture?  
a. It exists at an unconscious level.  
b. It is learned through direct teaching, observation, and socialization.  
c. It is dynamic.  
d. It is uniform among all members of the group.  
e. Features of one culture may overlap with features of another culture.

4. Dialect differences are the result of:  
a. Random differences that arise in language.  
b. A set of systematic historical and social changes that language undergoes.  
c. Inadequate language learning strategies.  
d. Ignorance of the rules of grammar and pronunciation.  
e. Geographic isolation.

5. The social factor which appears to be most prominent in accounting for a sentence such as "You're such a dear" is which of the following?  
a. Region  
b. Context  
c. Gender  
d. Socioeconomic status  
e. Age

6. In Spanish influenced English, the production of "Juan left yesterday. I think is coming back tomorrow" is due to:  
a. The operation of a morphological rule.  
b. The operation of a stylistic rule.  
c. The operation of a syntactic rule.  
d. The operation of a phonological rule.  
e. Narrative style.

7. Code-switching is related to which of the following?  
a. Social constraints  
b. Motoric constraints  
c. Perceptual constraints  
d. Auditory constraints  
e. Cognitive constraints
8. There is a higher probability that a black English speaker will not delete "s" for which of the following? 
   a. He has two pencils. 
   b. That’s John’s book. 
   c. That’s John’s book. 
   d. The tea is yellow. 
   e. The boy walks alone. 

9. A clinician is most likely to obtain naturalistic communication patterns in which of the following communicative settings? 
   a. Observing the child reading in class. 
   b. Observing the child at play with peers. 
   c. Observing the child in direct interview. 
   d. Observing the child’s responses to standardized language tests. 
   e. Observing the child in a parent-child dyad. 

10. The concept of ethnography of communication: 
    a. Concentrates on form versus function of language. 
    b. Controls the language environment for experimental study. 
    c. Isolates specific linguistic events for study. 
    d. Concentrates on language as it functions within the context of cultures. 
    e. Employs the speech act as the basic unit of analysis. 

11. Which statement does not describe the topic-associating narrative style? 
    a. It is associated with the pattern to which stories are read to children. 
    b. It is linked to a topic, event, or theme with no explicit theme or point. 
    c. It is associated with writing more than children. 
    d. It is associated with lower reading scores and academic success. 
    e. There is no persituation of shared knowledge between speaker and listener. 

12. Which of the following is not a stage in Taylor’s model for teaching standard English as a second dialect? 
    a. Developing a positive attitude toward the native dialect. 
    b. Correcting the speaker’s production of features in the native dialect. 
    c. Fostering recognition of differences in meaning. 
    d. Contrasting language varieties. 
    e. Production in structured situations.