

Socioeconomic Status and Gender Influence on Linguistic Change: A Case Study on Language Competence and Confidence of Multilingual Minority Language Speakers

Authors : Stefanie Siebenhütter

Abstract : Male and female speakers use language differently and with varying confidence levels. This paper contrasts gendered differences in language use with socioeconomic status and age factors. It specifically examines how Kui minority language use and competence are conditioned by the variable of gender and discusses potential reasons for this variation by examining gendered language awareness and sociolinguistic attitudes. Moreover, it discusses whether women in Kui society function as 'leaders of linguistic change', as represented in Labov's sociolinguistic model. It discusses whether societal role expectations in collectivistic cultures influence the model of linguistic change. The findings reveal current Kui speaking preferences and give predictions on the prospective language use, which is a stable situation of multilingualism because the current Kui speakers will socialize and teach the prospective Kui speakers in the near future. It further confirms that Lao is losing importance in Kui speaker's (female's) daily life.

Keywords : gender, identity construction, language change, minority language, multilingualism, sociolinguistics, social Networks

Conference Title : ICSLA 2020 : International Conference on Sociolinguistics and Language Acquisition

Conference Location : Tokyo, Japan

Conference Dates : October 05-06, 2020