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## **A Review on The Routledge Companion to Sociolinguistics**

*(Carmen Llamas, Louise Mullany & Peter Stockwell (Eds.) Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London and Newyork, 2007).*

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This book can be named as a handbook for sociolinguistics edited by Carmen Llamas, Louise Mullany and Peter Stockwell including five parts with twenty-four articles each of which are written by various leading authors in the field. It is a reference guide and a resource for academics from new comers to more advanced researchers who are interested in the field of sociolinguistics. It also defines what language is and the place of variation and change in the field of language. One can find the view of the editors to sociolinguistics at the beginning of the book. As it is mentioned in the book, sociolinguistics can provide a critical support for spending and education policies of governments, social and constitutional issues, policy for international relations and discussions on the issues about ethnics, culture, and nationalism. To mention the layout of the book, it is organised in two main sections; first section is divided into five broad parts. Each part includes five articles presenting the main topics in sociolinguistics, followed by the second section which includes a glossary of common used terms with references and an index. It is claimed that the articles are produced with a very precise and full set of features and includes from classic studies to new ones to provide the most recent research findings. It is stated that the authors are asked for to write accessible and

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readable key concepts and to provide an argumentative dimension implying that sociolinguistics is an on-going debate. While presenting the topics, firstly presented phrases or terms are defined in meaning and written in bold characters. Following the overall review of the topic, related recent studies or surveys in the field are referred in each chapter.

The book starts to present methods of observation and analysis as a door to sociolinguistics in the first part. The handled issues in this part, variation and variable, field methods, techniques of analysis for phonological and morphosyntactic variation and discourse are related to methodology and common basic issues of sociolinguistic fieldwork. The first article (Art. 1) of this part, 'Variation and variable' is written by Watt and presents a research study on a phonetic variation in Berwick English. The second article focuses on field methods which are key steps to a successful research in the field. Placing this topic and focusing on field methods at the beginning plays a critical role in logical layout of the book. Llamas, the writer of the article clarifies the importance of the type of study, speaker, and data in deciding the method to be utilized for research studies in the field. The topics in subsequent articles; phonological variation (Art. 3), morphosyntactic variation (Art. 4) and discourse (Art. 5) offer illuminating examples of studies related to the techniques of sociolinguistic analysis. Following an article on field methods, the book aims to provide various points of views on how to analyse the linguistic issues in research studies. Gordon, the author of the third article, starts with how to define variables followed by the ways to measure variation and finalize the topic with factors for analysing linguistics. The limitation of this article is not to provide examples but mostly theoretical information about the topic. In the topic of morphosyntactic variation (Art. 4), Smith utilized not only theoretical approaches but also samples of speech related to the issue. Worthy suggestions not only from the field of sociolinguistics but also from narrative analysis and conversation analysis offered by Garner can be found in the last article (Art. 5) of the first part.

The topics discussed in the second part are social class (Art.6) by Kerswill, gender (Art.7) by Coates, age (Art.8) by Llamas, ethnic varieties (Art. 9) by Wofram and speech communities (Art.10) by Mullany. One can find cross-referenced issues and overlaps through the second part as the topics are closely interconnected. The part discusses the social correlates of language and the main idea which is strongly emphasised throughout the section is the relation between linguistic variation and social factors. Therefore, Kerswill discusses the relation between gender and social classes under a subheading providing sample sentences

related to both social class and gender in the sixth article. Kerswill also refers to previous chapters in order to present the links between discourse (Art.5), variationist sociolinguistics (Art.1) and social class. In the article of ethnic varieties(Art. 9), the author focuses on ethnic linguistics with examples from the communities in New Zealand and the USA.As the topics are relevant to the issues in the other parts of the book, one can observe references and links to them in the following articles, especially in gender and age. The authors of articles 7, 8, and 10 (age, gender, and speech communities) discuss the key characteristic of sociolinguistics with an approach providing critical knowledge for new comers to the area.

The third part presents the socio-psychological side of linguistic patterning, including the factors of individual differences in choice, effects of identity on style under the heading of style and the linguistic repertoire (Art. 11), the effect of language on identity or identity on language (Art. 12),influences of speakers' accommodation variety on their linguistic outputs (Art. 13), the negative effects of attitudes on behaviour in language (Art. 14), and critics on the issues of politeness and power in communication (Art.15). The topics covered in this part have relationship with current issues in society and the impacts of linguistic attitudes on some applied fields. For instance, in the article 11, Bell refers to a study conducted by Labov (1972), in New York City: Labov found that people might chose 'casual style' or 'careful style' according to the person or group they are talking to. The author of article 12 also presents the findings of some studies conducted in especially among students of high schools. She resulted that even in high school groups; people manipulate and exploit the language variation to display the minor group they belong to in the school. The author places these studies to display the effect of identity in language even in minor groups. In the article 14, politeness and power, the author refers to some studies resulting quite interesting role of attitude in forensic language in Australia, UK, Wales and USA. Garrett, the author, also mentions the substantial effects of attitudes in language perception on the evaluation of job applications.

For the previous articles, the main concern of the book can be thought as social factors but the fourth part focuses more on macro factors: media, education, policies on language and ideological approaches to language. This can also be seen as a shift in the approach of the book. The topic of the article 16 is the ideology behind a standard language by Milroy. Covering this issuer, one may have an idea for how to read the following articles. The author displays the attitudes towards the language to place in uniformity for political and economic

reasons. Moreover, he mentions the idealizations of standard languages through time. The topic of the article 17 by Stuart-Smith is on the influence of the media on linguistics. She refers to various studies discussing the impact of television on language change. The studies she referred resulted that the standard norm is spread and specific accents are adopted with the critical role of television. Gal, the author of the article 18, discusses the relation between language, territory and culture/ethnicity providing quite interesting models practised among and within the multilingual families living in Amazons. After discussing Eurocentrism, she goes far beyond it and presents the case of multilingual families. Families live in small groups and far from other family groups. The groups she mentioned practise their own language but create relation via marriages. The same case is also true for the multilingual families in the Congo territory in the middle of Africa. As it is illustrated in four maps displaying languages in Congo in *Encyclopaedia of Language & Linguistics* edited by Keith Brown, not so populated tribes living far from each other constitute the ethnicity of Congo territory. The members of each tribe may marry a person from another tribe. Therefore, including the official language of the country, French, people may interact in at least three languages within their families. One can easily monitor in Congo that this case positively affects the willingness and capacities of people for foreign language learning. Stuart-Smith also mentions the role of standardization, cultural differentiation, monolingual and multilingual speech communities in creation of boundaries of language. Maybin, in the article 19, focuses on language policy out of school and in formal educational contexts. She chooses the examples from Afro-American students speaking African-American Vernacular English and Native American children attending in language programs in the U.S. She also opens a dimension in relation between language and gender at school. She claims that boys have competitive role in language classroom rather than collaborative and are dominating the interaction and the use of computers in classroom. First in article 20, Wright, discusses the distinctive position of language planning and language policy (LPLP) in building a nation, and then in the changing socio-political settings. Discouraging these concepts, she states that for minor language maintenance, new directions in LPLP research are concerned with strategies for language acquisition.

The last part is about language including the birth of some language forms or variations to the death of languages. The articles are creoles and pidgins by Mufwene in the article 21, koineization, (the process of mixing of dialects that leads to the birth of a new dialect of a language, a koine) by Tuten in the article 22, colonial and post-colonial varieties

by Fennel in the article 23 and language death by Nelson in the article 24. The articles 21, 22, and 23 can be accepted interrelated and supporting the ideas of each other and one who covers one of the chapters can easily comprehend the others. In the article 21, Mufwene provides the theoretical, geographical, historical and demographical aspects of genetic linguistics. For instance, the common places where pidgins and creoles are observed, widely spoken ones and the relations of creoles and pidgins to their source languages. The following article (Art.22) is on koneization and reviews the basis of the term and notion. The social conditions, places where koneization mostly occurs and speaker activity leading to it, and the time schedule leading to the process are mainly discussed by the author. Fennel, in article 23, selects British colonial to discuss the historical background of language change through colonies. In the article, French, Spanish or Portuguese colonial histories and language change in these languages are not taken account although they had various colonies in history. The last article finalizes the book with the finalization of languages, language death. The types of language death are the starting point of the discussion in the article. Language change, the death of entire community of speakers of a language and language shift are successfully introduced and discussed by Nelson.

To conclude, for anyone who is interested in the connection between language and society, the book can be thought as a reference guide. In the layout of the book, the main parts and the topics in the parts seem to be sequenced logically and thematically. As the layout is quite ordered, one can easily access to any subject. The terms related to topic are written in bold and defined adequately; therefore even a new comer to the field can cover the terminology. The presented and referred studies and approaches related to the topics are selective and up-to-date. Although most of the research studies referred in the articles are clear and represent the general idea of the topic, some of the authors refer quite specific, rare case-oriented research studies which may not represent well the main idea of the topic. As aforementioned, the editors explain in the preface (p. xvii) overlaps and cross-references between parts and articles can be monitored but this is not a limitation but an advantage of the book that allows easy access to related articles or topics and provides opportunity for comprehensive understanding of the issues. Moreover, as it a companion book, although the editors draw an approach about how to write the articles and how to reflect the style of the book, one may monitor the differences in the writing way of each author. Thus, especially new comers to the field may have difficulty in the pace of reading and covering the topics one after another at once.

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