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## SOCIOLOGY

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At the end of this lesson, students are going to learn:

- What is meant by Sociology?
- The Topic of Sociology
- Origins of Sociology
- Famous Names in Sociology
- Goals of Sociological Studies
- Theories of Sociology
- Language and Sociological Studies
- The importance of Sociology to Language Learners

### 1. What is meant by Sociology?

The word **sociology** (or "sociologie") is derived from both Latin and Greek origins. The Latin word: socius, "companion"; the suffix -logy, "the study of" from Greek. It was first coined in 1780 by the French essayist Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès from 1748–1836. It is the study of human social behaviour and its origins, development, organizations and institutions. Sociology is a social science which uses various methods of empirical investigation and critical analysis to develop a body of knowledge about human social actions (order, disorder, change), social structure and functions.

### 2. The Topic of Sociology:

It is everything related to people;

- Where they collect,
- How they socialize and organize,
- Whom they include in and exclude from their groups,
- What do they do to their environment,
- Why they change, etc.

### 3. Origins of Sociology:

Social analysis has origins in the common stock of western knowledge and philosophy and has been carried out as far back as the time of the ancient Greek philosopher Plato if not before. There is evidence of early sociology in medieval Islam, some consider the Arab Islamic Scholar Ibn Khaldoun, 14th century as the first sociologist, his Mu'ggaḍimah was perhaps the first work to advance social scientific reasoning on social cohesion and social conflict.

## 4. Famous Names in Sociology :

We find many sociologists all over the world such as Auguste Comte 1798-1857, Karl Marx 1818-1883, Herbert Spencer 1820-1903, Emile Durkheim 1858-1917, and Max Weber (1864-1920), etc.

## 5. Goals of Sociological Studies:

Many sociologists have one main goal which is:

1. to conduct research which may be applied directly to social policy and welfare, While others,
2. Focus primarily on refining the theoretical understanding of social processes.

## 6. Theories of Sociology:

There are many theories in sociology such as:

1. **Symbolic Interactionism Theory** is a social theoretical framework associated with George Herbert Mead (1863–1931) and Max Weber (1864-1920). It is a perspective that sees society as the product of shared symbols, such as language. The social world is therefore constructed by the meanings that individuals attach to events and social interactions, and these symbols are transmitted across the generations through language.
2. **Conflict Theory**: It is first developed by Karl Marx; it is a theory that society is in a state of perpetual conflict because of competition for limited resources. Conflict theory draws attention to power differentials, such as class conflict, and generally contrasts historically dominant ideologies. Conflict theory holds that social order is maintained by domination and power, rather than by consensus and conformity.
3. **Functional Social Theory**: Functionalism views society as a social system of interconnected parts- a bit like a human body with each part of the body depending on the other to function. In the same way, the body needs the heart, lungs and brain to work together for the body to survive. Instead of a heart and brain, society has social institutions like schools, families and the police that work together so the social body can survive.

It has its origins in the works of Emile Durkheim, who was especially interested in how social order is possible or how society remains relatively stable. Functionalism posits that society is more than the sum of its parts; rather, each aspect of it works for the stability of the whole.

## 7. Language and Sociological Studies:

### a) **The sociology of language:**

It is the study of the relationship between language and society. It ‘focuses upon the entire gamut of topics related to the social organization of language behaviour, including not only language usage per se but also language attitudes and overt behaviours toward language and toward language users’ (Fishman, 1971, p. 217).

### b) **The sociology of education:**

It is the study of how social institutions and individual experiences affect education and its outcome. It is relatively a new branch and two great sociologists Émile Durkheim and Max Weber were the father of the sociology of education. Émile

Durkheim's work on moral education as a basis for social solidarity is considered the beginning of the sociology of education.

- c) **Sociolinguistics:** Sociolinguistics is concerned with how language use interacts with, or is affected by, social factors such as gender, ethnicity, age or social class, for instance. As Coulmas defines it: "it is the study of choice and the principal task of Sociolinguistics is to uncover, describe and interpret the socially motivated" choices an individual makes.

Sociolinguists are interested in how we speak differently in varying social contexts, and how we may also use specific functions of language to convey social meaning or aspects of our identity. It can overlap with the sociology of language, which focuses on the effect of language on society.

## 8. Difference between the sociology of language and sociolinguistics:

The sociology of language is the study of the relations between language and society. The sociology of language studies society in relation to language, whereas sociolinguistics studies language in relation to society.

For the former, society is the object of study, whereas, for the latter, language is the object of study. In other words, sociolinguistics studies language and how it varies based on the user's sociological background, such as gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic class. On the other hand, the sociology of language (also known as macro sociolinguistics) studies society and how it is impacted by language.

## 9. Importance of sociology to language learners:

Any language must be treated in a social context, for a language learner or teacher, it is important to relate language to society because languages are taught and learnt to establish contact and communication across language boundaries. Society and culture represent people with whom the learners eventually must make contact.

Sociolinguistics has a major role to play in second language pedagogy., profoundly influencing the quality of language programmes. Sociological researches focus on social structures and processes that range from the micro to the macro level. In studying social interaction, for example, "entering the other's world" is an important cognitive tool for developing an understanding that is valid and reliable. Without access to languages other than one's native tongue, this can be a difficult task.

### **Social sciences have a major role to play in second language pedagogy:**

- Language teaching can be looked upon as a deliberate intervention into ethnolinguistic relations which can be planned more or less effectively and which can contribute to the bilingualism of a society.
- Socio-cultural factors that affect motivation, such as the relative social status of the first language and the second language, the instrumental value of the second language, the cultural value of the second language and political factors should be considered,