FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS IN SOCIOLINGUISTICS

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INTENDED AUDIENCE :

- UG/PG students of Linguistics, Sociology, Literature, Mass Communication as Core Paper;

- BE/ME/MS/BSc/MSc/PhD etc. students as Elective Paper

COURSE OUTLINE :

Language encodes our inherited knowledge and helps us create meaning out of our everyday experiences. Language is instrumental in constructing meaning and defining associations with our world. As a social phenomenon, it shapes every aspect of our lives and binds us together. Language is a rule-governed system that allows us to communicate and socialize. It is a beautiful product of human mind. Understanding the formal properties of language allows us to produce appropriate utterances and understanding functional aspects of language allows us to make sense out of them. Language is used in a socio-cultural context and meanings are derived according to the speaker's situation in the social space. This course takes the learners on a journey where they get an opportunity to discover Language through various socio-cultural contours; such as: Identity, Gender, Social Class, Culture, Dialects, Bilingualism, Multilingualism, Language Variation and Change, Code-mixing and Hybridity, Language Policy and Planning, etc. and so many other concepts. This course underlines the role of language and its centrality in organizing our societies and demonstrates how language engages with such concepts. It does not require any prior knowledge and training and anyone and everyone can join this exploration of locating language within social and cultural spaces.

ABOUT INSTRUCTOR :

Prof. Rajesh Kumar is a professor of linguistics in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Indian Institute of Technology Madras, Chennai. He obtained his PhD in linguistics from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Prior to joining IIT Madras, he taught at IIT Kanpur and IIT Patna in India and at the University of Texas at Austin in the USA. He has been a visiting faculty at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Mumbai in India. His book on Syntax of Negation and Licensing of Negative Polarity Items was published by Routledge in their prestigious series Outstanding Dissertations in Linguistics in 2006. He has been associate editor of the journal Language and Language Teaching. He has been part of the language teaching program at all the institutions he has been affiliated with. The broad goal of his research is uncovering regularities underlying both the structural form (what language is) and sociolinguistic functions (what language does) of natural language. He works on structure of South Asian Languages. He is keenly interested in issues related to language (multilingualism) in education; politics; human cognition; and landscape.

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Prof.Om Prakash teaches courses in the areas of Linguistics, English Language Teaching, and Communication Theories in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Gautam Buddha University. He received his M.A., M.Phil., and PhD in linguistics from University of Delhi, India. He has published in journals of national and international repute. He conducts workshops in language teaching and communication for school teachers. His broader areas of research include emerging fields in Applied Linguistics and an interface of Language, Media and Contemporary Society. He seeks to explore changing forms and functions of language in the context of ever-emerging network society.

COURSE PLAN:

Week 1: Introduction to Fundamental Concepts in Sociolinguistics ; Language as a System ; Design Features ; Linguistic Relativity ; Language and Culture ; Language and Gender

Week 2: Behaviuorist Paradigm in Language Acquisition ; Innateness Hypothesis in Language Acquisition ; Key Concepts in Language Acquisition ; Linguistic Competence ; Communicative Competence ; Critical Period Hypothesis

Week 3: Language and Dialect ; Speech Community ; Diglossia ; Systemic Functions of Language ; The S P E A K I N G Model ; Register and Style

Week 4: Bilingualism-I ; Bilingualism-II ; Code Mixing and Code Switching ; Language Hybridity: The Case of Hindi-English Mixing ; Pidgin and Creole ; Creolization Process and Birth of a New Language ; Mixing and Switching: Creative Outcome of Bi/Multilingual Mind

Week 5: Language Planning ; Types of Language Planning ; Official Language(s) of India ; The Process of Standardization of Language ; Three Language Formula ; The Eighth Schedule

Week 6: Mother Tongue ; Linguistic Diversity of India ; Scheduled and Non-Schedued Languages ; Multilingualism in India ; Language and Education Policy ; English in India

Week 7: Emergence of Sociolinguistics ; Language and Variations ; Labov-Martha Vinyad Study ; Social Stratification of English in New York City ; Observers Paradox and Sociolinguistic Variable ; Dell Hymes and His Work

Week 8: Basil Bernstein and His Work ; John J. Gumperz and His Work ; Joshua Fishman and His Work ; Uriel Weinriech and his work ; Susan Ervin M Tripp and her work ; Charlse A Ferguson and his Work

Week 9: William Bright and his work ; Allen D Grimshaw and his work ; Einar Hugen and his work ; MAK Halliday and His Work ; Significant Studies in Language Variation

Week 10: Indian English ; Multilingual Societies and Multilingual Discourse ; Language Endangerment ; Linguistic Tension and Language Movements ; Language Movements in India

Week 11: Structuralism: Ferdinand de Saussure ; Saussure's Key Concepts ; 20th Century Theoretical Developments in Linguistics ; Varieties of Language ; Linguistic Landscape

Week 12: Linguistic Allegiance, Identity, and Socialization in Digital Space ; Importance of Culture in Second Language Learning-Teaching ; A Brief Account of Language Teaching Methods ; Recapitulating language acquisition ; Review and Concluding Remarks