



# Sociolinguistic issues of the British Isles

Social and regional variation



**Sociolinguistics** –  
the study of the  
relationship  
between language  
and society.

The diagram features a central orange oval containing the word 'SOCIOLINGUISTICS'. Two large, light-orange arrows point downwards from this oval to two separate white rectangular boxes. The box on the left is labeled 'REGIONAL VARIATIONS' and the box on the right is labeled 'SOCIAL VARIATIONS'. The background is a vibrant, multi-colored gradient transitioning from red on the left to blue on the right, with yellow and green in the center. The entire graphic is set against a background of a green chalkboard and a stack of books on the left side.

# SOCIOLINGUISTICS

REGIONAL  
VARIATIONS

SOCIAL  
VARIATIONS

# Social variation

## Society affects a language:

- people belong to different social classes, perform different social roles, and carry on different occupations.
- Their use of language is affected by their sex, age, ethnic group, and educational background.



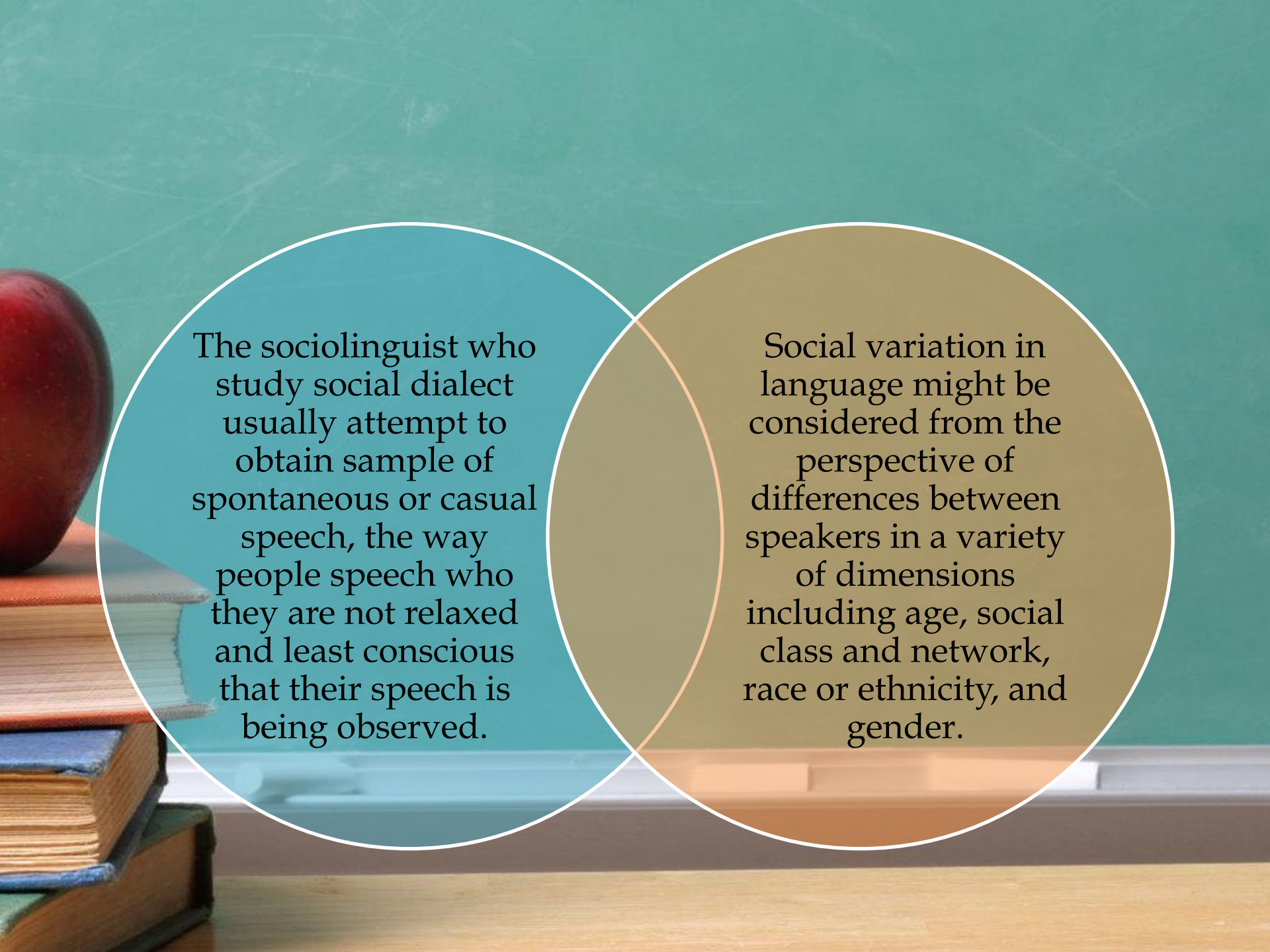
English is being increasingly affected by all these factors, because its developing role as a world language is bringing it more and more into contact with new cultures and social systems.



Sociolinguists today are generally more concerned with social variation in language than with regional variation. When we turn from regional variation to social variation, things get somewhat more complicated but also more interesting.



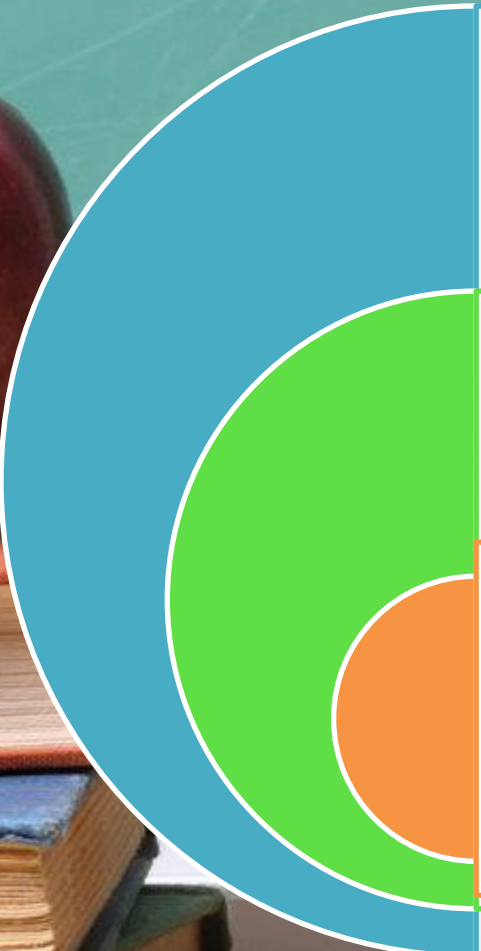
For, whereas individual may grow up exclusively or primarily in one region, they typically belong to many social groups simultaneously and their speech pattern reflects the intersections of their social experiences categories, and roles.



The sociolinguist who study social dialect usually attempt to obtain sample of spontaneous or casual speech, the way people speech who they are not relaxed and least conscious that their speech is being observed.

Social variation in language might be considered from the perspective of differences between speakers in a variety of dimensions including age, social class and network, race or ethnicity, and gender.

# Regional Variation



Another type of language variation is **regional variation**.

Regional variation is varieties of a language which is spoken in different geographical area.

Geography affects language, both within a country and between countries, giving rise to regional **accents** and **dialects**, and to the pidgins and Creoles which emerged around the world whenever English first came into contact with other languages



- **International** regional varieties have been observed within English from its earliest days, as seen in such labels as ‘Northern’, ‘London’, and ‘Scottish’.
- **International** varieties are more recent in origin, as seen in such labels as ‘American’, ‘Australian’, And Indian.



Regional language variation is studied by sociolinguists, geographical linguists, dialectologists, and others, the actual designation depending on the focus and emphasis of the study.

# Questions

- What is Sociolinguistics?
- What is regional variation?

