

Fundamental Concepts in Sociolinguistics
Professor Doctor Om Prakash
Gautam Buddha University, Greater Noida
Lecture 48

Susan M Ervin Tripp and Her Work

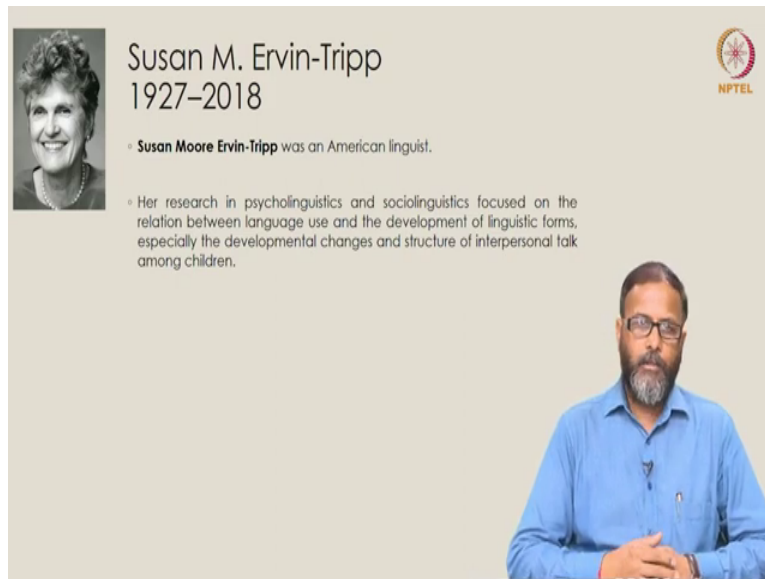
Welcome to class. In continuation to what we have already been doing about talking about pillars of modern sociolinguistics who shaped the disciplines. Among them, a very significant name is Susan Moore Ervin-Tripp. So, we are going to talk about Susan Ervin-Tripp today in our lecture.

The reason for bringing her in this galaxy of scholars who shaped the discipline is her original and major contribution in understanding language development among children, linguistic forms, their researches, patterns of usages, and development stages, linguistic development stages of children, bilingual children to be precise.

She is also credited for contributing in understanding the complex notions of coordinate bilingualism and compound bilingualism. She herself worked on her PhD thesis on verbal behavior of bilingual French children in the United States. Apart from that, she worked in various disciplines, I mean various areas and major themes like sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, ethnolinguistics, gender issues and a very significant contribution in pragmatics and understanding of language.

So, her major research was a groundbreaking contribution, and also, she was the one who brought new technology and techniques of researching in the field back in 1950s and '60s. So, Susan Ervin Tripp has been a significant contributor and a very solid, important pillar in shaping the discipline of sociolinguistics and it is important to bring her in this fold. So today, we are going to talk about Susan Ervin Tripp.

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Susan M. Ervin-Tripp
1927–2018

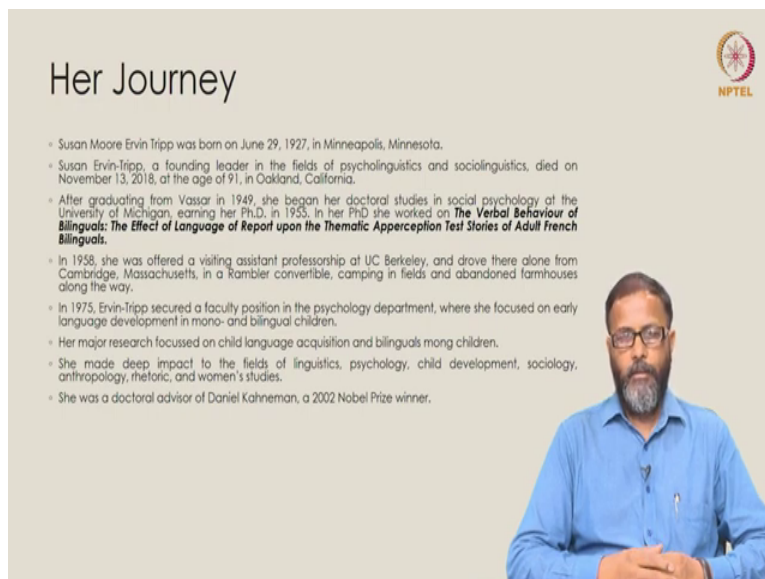
• Susan Moore Ervin-Tripp was an American linguist.

• Her research in psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics focused on the relation between language use and the development of linguistic forms, especially the developmental changes and structure of interpersonal talk among children.

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Susan Ervin Tripp was born in 1927. Her research in psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics focused on the relation between language use and the development of linguistic forms. Especially the developmental changes and the structure of interpersonal talk among children.

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Her Journey

• Susan Moore Ervin Tripp was born on June 29, 1927, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

• Susan Ervin-Tripp, a founding leader in the fields of psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics, died on November 13, 2018, at the age of 91, in Oakland, California.

• After graduating from Vassar in 1949, she began her doctoral studies in social psychology at the University of Michigan, earning her Ph.D. in 1955. In her PhD she worked on **The Verbal Behaviour of Bilinguals: The Effect of Language of Report upon the Thematic Apperception Test Stories of Adult French Bilinguals**.

• In 1958, she was offered a visiting assistant professorship at UC Berkeley, and drove there alone from Cambridge, Massachusetts, in a Rambler convertible, camping in fields and abandoned farmhouses along the way.

• In 1975, Ervin-Tripp secured a faculty position in the psychology department, where she focused on early language development in mono- and bilingual children.

• Her major research focused on child language acquisition and bilinguals among children.

• She made deep impact to the fields of linguistics, psychology, child development, sociology, anthropology, rhetoric, and women's studies.

• She was a doctoral advisor of Daniel Kahneman, a 2002 Nobel Prize winner.

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If you look at her illustrious journey full of accomplishments, I will just mention a few milestones in her journey as a linguist, as a psychologist, as a sociolinguist and as a person in pragmatics. Susan was born on June 29, 1927 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. A founding leader in

the field of psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics, she died on November 13, 2018 at the age of 91 in Oakland, California. After graduating from Vassar in 1949 in Art History, she began her doctoral studies in social psychology at the University of Michigan, earning her PhD degree in 1955.

In her PhD, she worked on a thesis titled ‘The Verbal Behavior of Bilinguals: The Effect of Language of Report upon the Thematic Apperception Test Stories of Adult French Bilinguals’. In 1958 she was offered a visiting Assistant Professorship at the University of California, Berkeley and drove there alone from Cambridge, Massachusetts in a Rambler convertible, camping in fields and abundant farm houses along the way during her research.

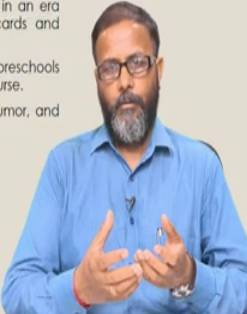
In 1975, Ervin Tripp secured a faculty position in the psychology department where she focused on early language development in mono and bilingual children. Her major research focused on child language acquisition and bilingualism among children. She made a deep impact on the field of linguistics, psychology, child development, sociology, anthropology, rhetoric and women's studies. She was a doctoral advisor of Daniel Kahneman who was a Nobel laureate who won the Nobel Prize in 2002.

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Research

- Beginning with her doctoral research on French-English bilinguals, and continuing with a study of Japanese war brides, Ervin-Tripp revealed differences in values and orientation—within a single individual—depending on the language being spoken.
- Her early child language research focused on acquisition of phonology and grammar—again, comparing children learning different types of languages.
- In the 1950s, she pioneered in tape recording children's interactions with parents in their homes, transcribing and coding speech for computer-aided analysis in an era when one had to devise search programs and deal with punched cards and voluminous printouts.
- In the 1970s, she brought the first available video cameras into homes and preschools to add patterns of activity and gaze direction to studies of language in discourse.
- She expanded her research to patterns of family interaction, peer play, humor, and politeness, combining her concerns with the individual and the group.



If you look at her major research, beginning with her doctoral research on French-English bilinguals and continuing with a study of Japanese war brides, Ervin-Tripp revealed differences


in values and orientation within a single individual depending on the language being spoken. Her early child language research focused on acquisition of phonology and grammar, again comparing children learning different types of languages.

In the 1950s, she pioneered in tape recording children's interaction with parents in their homes: transcribing and coding speech for computer aided analysis in an era when one had to devise such programs and deal with punched cards and voluminous printouts. She was the one who brought this technology in data collection and used tape recorders to record the conversation between children and parents. And mind you, it was the 1950s.


In the 1970s, she brought the first available video camera into homes and preschools to add patterns of activity and gaze directions to studies of language in discourse. So, bringing in tape recording, tape recorders and tape recording the conversation of parents and children to videotaping the activities in school, among pre-school children was a huge leap in integrating technology into research.

And Ervin Tripp was one of the very few researchers in the field who used technology so early and so effectively. She expanded her research to patterns of family interaction, peer play, humor and politeness and combining her concepts and concerns with the individual and the group and that gave a new direction to research in sociolinguistics.

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- All of these innovations led to new formats for transcribing data of multi-personal interaction. This window into everyday communication contributed to the development of the new field of sociolinguistics, extending study of the adult-child dyad to the family, and extending dialog to multiparty interactive discourse. Sociolinguistics went beyond parent-child dialog into the pragmatics of communication.
- In 1975, Ervin-Tripp secured a faculty position in the psychology department, where she focused on early language development in mono- and bilingual children.
- Among other honors, she received a Guggenheim fellowship in 1974 and a Cattell fellowship in psychology in 1985.
- She was also a dedicated research psychologist in the Institute of Human Development and the Institute for Cognitive and Brain Sciences.
- In 2000, she served as president of the International Pragmatics Association.




All of these innovations led to a new format for transcribing data of multi-personal interactions and this window into everyday communication contributed to the development of a new field of sociolinguistics, extending study of the adult-child dyad to the family, and extending dialogue to multi-party interactive discourse. Sociolinguistics went beyond parent-child dialogue into the pragmatics of communication and she published prolifically in this area as well.

In 1975, Ervin Tripp secured a faculty position in the Psychology Department. Among other honors, she received a Guggenheim fellowship in 1974 and a Cattell fellowship in Psychology in 1985. She was also a dedicated research psychologist in the Institute of Human Development and the Institute of Cognitive and Brain Sciences.

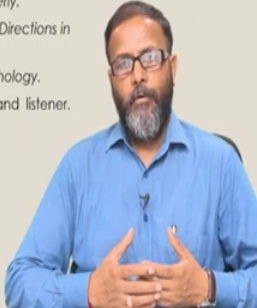
In 2000, she served as president of the International Pragmatics Association. So, this is such an illustrious journey of a psycholinguist, we also call her a sociolinguist, we call her a psychologist, we call her a cognitive psychologist or a person who was very effectively and significantly contributing to gender issues and empowerment of women.

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Major Works

- A. Kyratzis and S. Ervin-Tripp. 1999. The development of discourse markers in peer interaction. *Journal of pragmatics*.
- S. Ervin-Tripp. 1977. Wait for me, roller skate. *Child discourse*.
- S. Ervin-Tripp. 1976. Is Sybil there? The structure of some American English directives. *Language in society*.
- S.M. Ervin-Tripp. 1974. Is second language learning like the first? *TESOL quarterly*.
- S. Ervin-Tripp. 1972. On sociolinguistic rules: Alternation and co-occurrence. *Directions in sociolinguistics*.
- S.M. Ervin-Tripp. 1969. Sociolinguistics. *Advances in experimental social psychology*.
- S. Ervin-Tripp. 1964. An analysis of the interaction of language, topic, and listener. *American Anthropologist*.



If you look at major works because she has prolifically published in bilingualism in first or second language acquisition, in the areas like psycholinguistics, in the areas like sociolinguistics, in the areas like pragmatics, humor. So, a variety of work she has carried out and she was very

innovative in her data collection, very innovative in her transcription and analysis of the data, very innovative in designing experiments.

Some of the major publications of Susan Ervin Tripp, though the publication list is very long, a very few of them are mentioned here, just to give a glimpse of the kind of work she did. Because more than 40 publications in language acquisition alone, more than 50 publications, 60 publications in pragmatics alone, so a huge publication trajectory Ervin Susan Tripp has. But here we will refer to only select major works of Ervin Tripp.


And that is ‘An Analysis of the Interaction of Language, Topic and Listener’; it was published in 1964. Another major publication is ‘Sociolinguistics: Advances in Experimental Social Psychology’, which was published in 1969. ‘On Sociolinguistic Rules: Alternation and Co-occurrence, Directions in Sociolinguistics’ was published in 1972.

Yet another very important publication came in 1974, and that was ‘Is Second Language Learning like the First?’, which was a major publication that had implications for further research and people appreciated this work and she drew a lot of attention and appreciation for that. In 1976, a very important publication, ‘Is Sybil there? The Structure of Some American English Directives’ came out.


In 1977, another important work was published named ‘Wait for Me, Roller Skate’. It was a very deep account of child discourse. In 1999, yet another important publication came out and that was ‘The Development of Discourse Markers in Peer Interaction’ and this list is not exhaustive, she has more than 200 publications to her credit.

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HONORS



- Margaret Floy Washburn Fellow 1949-50
- Social Science Research Council Fellowship 1953-5
- Guggenheim Fellowship 1974-75
- Fellow of Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, 1974-75
- NAS China Delegation (applied linguistics) 1977
- US-France Scientific Exchange, Fulbright Fellow (European Science Foundation Project on Second
- Language in Migrant Workers) 1985-86
- Cattell Fellowship 1985-86
- University of California, Berkeley Faculty Research Lecture, 1994
- President, International Pragmatics Association, 2000



If you look at the honors she received, awards she received, fellowships she received, this list is also very long. Among them a few notable honors and fellowships she received are: Margaret Floy Washburn Fellow in 1949-50, Social Science Research Council Fellowship in 1953 to 1955, Guggenheim Fellowship 1974-75, and she was also Fellow of Center for Advanced Studies in Behavioral Sciences from 1974 to 75.

She was part of the NAS China Delegation in Applied Linguistics in 1977. She was a US-France Scientific Exchange Fulbright Fellow, did a European Science Foundation Project on ‘Second Language in Migrant Workers’ in 1985-86, Cattell Fellowship in 1985-86, University of California, Berkeley Faculty Research Lecture in 1994, and she became President of International Pragmatics Associations in 2000. These are some select honors she received in her career.

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Bilingualism

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• Bilingualism (or more generally: Multilingualism) is the phenomenon of speaking and understanding two or more languages. The term can refer to individuals (individual bilingualism) as well as to an entire society (social bilingualism).

In compound bilinguals, two sets of linguistic codes are stored in one meaning unit (i.e. they have one system of meaning for words which is used for both L1 and L2).

In coordinate bilinguals, each linguistic code is stored and organized separately in two meaning units and the bilinguals have two systems of meanings for words (i.e. one system of meaning is for words that the individuals know in the L1 and the other is for words they know in L2).

Now we have been talking about bilingualism. Though we have a detailed video on bilingualism, a series of lectures on bilingualism—you can go through those lectures to understand more on bilingualism. But let me quickly draw your attention towards this phenomena and also the two phenomena; coordinate and compound bilingualism where Susan Ervin Tripp made a significant contribution.

The basic idea, I will just present very-very briefly here. Bilingualism or more generally multilingualism, bi means two, so if the speaker has access to two linguistic codes, it is the phenomenon of speaking and understanding two or more languages, the term can refer to individuals, individual bilingualism as well as to the entire social group, it can be called social bilingualism.

And Susan Ervin Tripp, while working on French bilingual adults made a significant contribution in understanding the phenomenon, and what is that phenomenon? What is compound bilingualism? In compound bilinguals, two sets of linguistic codes are stored in one meaning unit; that is, they have one system of meaning for words which is used for both L1 and L2.

So, if you look at the semantic component of this, you hardly find any difference so in that sense these compound bilinguals have native-like competence in both the languages where the semantic system is unified and one. So, for one concept they have two different linguistic

structures, two different words. So, words are different in two different codes but the meaning or the semantic component remains the same, that is compound, difficult to separate.

So, they become native-like speakers of both the languages simultaneously. So, they have native-like competence in both the languages where the meaning component is just composite and single, the semantic component is single, but they have structures for two separate structures: one in L1, one in L2. So structurally, they have two sets and semantically it is composite and one. So that is compound bilingualism.

If you look at coordinate bilingualism, in coordinate bilingualism because there is a little delay in the process of acquiring a second language, by that time the first language is partially developed. So, I do not see the simultaneity in the acquisition process. So, the semantic system is also different.

So, two structures, two verbal (inaudible) and two semantic systems, so in coordinate bilinguals, each linguistic code is stored and organized separately in two meaning units and the bilinguals have two systems of meaning—one system of meaning, for words that individual know in L1, and the other system of meaning is there for words they know in L2. So that is the distinction between compound and coordinate bilingualism.

In compound bilingualism you have a single meaning unit, in coordinate bilingualism you have two separate units of meaning. So, in compound bilingualism, you have one meaning with two separate words, one in L1, one in L2. In coordinate bilingualism, you have two components of meaning units; a set of words in L1 and one meaning unit; a set of words in L2 and another meaning unit, so this is the basic concept.

But Susan Ervin Tripp made a huge contribution in understanding this concept and in the inter-cultural context she described this phenomena, specifically working on French bilinguals and Japanese war brides, lots of other things she also highlighted and brought into notice.

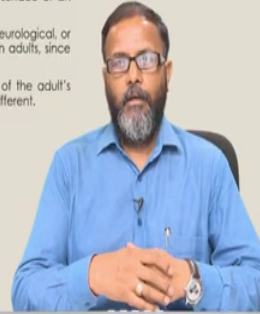
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Becoming a Bilingual



• ERVIN-TRIPP, SUSAN (1968-Mar)

- A Bilingual-in-process could be a child growing up in a bilingual adult milieu, or an adult who has moved to a different linguistic milieu. The learning process might be casual exposure or systematic pedagogy.
- There is strong evidence that for children under eleven language is sound and for adults, sense.
- Children attend more to the surface, just as they also connect speech more to the immediate situation in which it occurs. For adults, language is transparent, since adults rapidly penetrate the surface of an utterance to its meanings, to a network of connected thoughts.
- The basis for this difference between children and adults is unknown. If the difference is neurological, or lies in the loss of an ability, children must be exposed to different teaching methods than adults, since their abilities differ.
- If the difference in behavior is a consequence of shift of set or attention or the result of the adult's greater richness and skill in semantic association, the pedagogical implications are quite different.



If I quote her 1968 March statement in one of her publications, the entire proposition is directly quoted from her work and I will quote it for you. I quote, "a bilingual-in-process could be a child growing up in a bilingual adult milieu", she is talking about the growth of language and linguistic structures among bilingual children and she is comparing it with that of the adults.

I quote, "a bilingual in process could be a child growing up in a bilingual adult milieu or an adult who has moved to a different linguistic milieu. The learning process might be casual exposure or systematic pedagogy". There is strong evidence that for children under 11 years of age, she says, that language is sound and for adults it is sense.

Children attend more to the surface just as they also connect speech more to the immediate situation in which it occurs. For adults, language is transparent since adults rapidly penetrate the surface of an utterance to its meaning, to a network of connected thoughts. The basis for this difference between children and adults is unknown.

If the difference is neurological or lies in the loss of an ability children must be exposed to different teaching methods than adults since the abilities differ. If the difference in behavior is a consequence of shift of set or attention or the result of an adult's greater richness and skill in semantic association, the pedagogical implications are quite different. This is what she talks about while talking about becoming bilingual.

If you look at the contribution of Susan Ervin Tripp in shaping this discipline, it dates back to the early 50s and continues up to the 21st century. So late mid 19th- 20th century to early 21st century almost like 6 decades of dedicated research and work in the fields of psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, pragmatics and specifically among bilingual children and bilingual adults.

So, the reason for bringing in Susan Ervin Tripp to this fold which is of a galaxy of scholars who shaped the discipline is the rich trajectory of her research that contributed in understanding major themes in the interface of psychology and linguistics. So, she is a sociologist, sociolinguist as well as a psycholinguist in her own right.

We will continue our discussion on other scholars and researchers and contributors who contributed in shaping this discipline in our subsequent lectures and videos. So, keep tuned in and this is it for now. Thank you very much.