



People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

University – Ahmed SALHI – Naama –

Institute of Letters and Languages

Department of English Language



SOCIOLINGUISTICS

A Pedagogical Manual for Master One Students

Specialty: Linguistics



Prepared by: Dr. EL HADJ SAID Nabila

Email Address: el-hadj-said@cuniv-naama.dz

Academic Year 2025/2026



People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

University – Ahmed SALHI– Naama –

Institute of Letters and Languages

Department of English Language



SOCIOLINGUISTICS

A Pedagogical Manual for Master One Students

Specialty: Linguistics

Prepared by: Dr. EL HADJ SAID Nabila

Email Address: el-hadj-said@cuniv-naama.dz

Academic Year 2025/2026

List of Figures

Figure 1.1 Components of Micro-Linguistics	9
Figure 1.2 Components of Macro-Linguistics.....	10
Figure 2.1. Approaches of Sociolinguistics.....	17
Figure 3.1. Factors of Language Variation.....	24
Figure 3.2. Hymes' (1971) Idea of Communicative Competence	26
Figure 5.1 Dialect Continuum in Europe	46
Figure 5.2. Factors of Mutual Intelligibility	49
Figure 7.1 Types of Bilingualism	67
Figure 12.1 Kachru's (1985) Three Circles Model of World Englishes.....	98

List of Tables

Table 2-1 Illustrations of the Differences between the Approaches of Sociolinguistics	19
Table 5-1 Differences between Language and Dialect	44
Table 8-1 Examples of Borrowing.....	73
Table 10-1 Ferguson's Features of H and L Varieties.....	82
Table 10-2 Fishman's Extension of Diglossia. (Fishman,2000)	84

Table of contents

	List of Figures.....	1
	List of Tables	1
	Table of contents.....	2
1	Lecture 1: An Introduction to Sociolinguistics	6
1.1	Introduction	7
1.2	A synopsis of Modern Linguistics	7
1.3	Micro- and Macro-Linguistics.....	8
1.4	Definition of Sociolinguistics.....	11
1.5	Fundamental Goals of Sociolinguistics.....	13
1.6	Conclusion.....	14
2	Lecture 2: Approaches of Sociolinguistics	15
2.1	Introduction	16
2.2	Sociolinguistics at the Micro and Macro Levels	16
2.3	Definition of Micro- and Macro-Sociolinguistics	17
2.4	The Contrast between Micro- and Macro-Sociolinguistics	18
2.5	The Boundary between Micro- and Macro-Sociolinguistics	20
2.6	Conclusion.....	20
3	Lecture 3: Emergence of Sociolinguistics: Factors	22
3.1	Introduction	23
3.2	Language Variation.....	23
3.3	The Concept of Communicative Competence.....	25
3.4	Linguistic Relativity.....	27
3.5	Dialectology	28
3.6	Conclusion.....	29

4	Lecture 4: Language Varieties	31
4.1	Introduction	32
4.2	The Meaning of Language Varieties	32
4.3	Language Varieties	33
4.3.1	Dialect	33
4.3.2	Accent	34
4.3.3	Idiolect.....	36
4.3.4	Speech Style	36
4.3.5	Register.....	37
4.3.6	Jargon	38
4.3.7	Slang.....	38
4.4	Conclusion.....	39
5	Lecture 5: Language and Dialect.....	40
5.1	Introduction	41
5.1.1	Language vs. Dialect.....	41
5.1.2	Definitions of Language.....	41
5.1.3	Definition of Dialect	43
5.2	Mutual Intelligibility	44
5.3	Standardisation	49
5.4	Conclusion.....	52
6	Lecture 6: Multilingualism	54
6.1	Introduction	55
6.2	What is Multilingualism?.....	55
6.2.1	Individual Multilingualism.....	56
6.2.2	Societal Multilingualism	57
6.3	What Leads to Multilingualism?	58
6.4	Types of Multilingualism.....	59

6.5	Results of Language Contact.....	59
6.6	Language Choice	62
6.7	Conclusion.....	64
7	Lecture 7: Bilingualism	65
7.1	Introduction	66
7.2	Types of Bilingualism.....	67
7.2.1	Societal Bilingualism	67
7.2.2	Individual bilingualism	69
7.3	Conclusion:.....	70
8	Lecture 8: Borrowing.....	71
8.1	Introduction	71
8.2	Types of Borrowing.....	72
8.3	Borrowing vs. Codeswitching	73
8.4	Conclusion.....	73
9	Lecture 9: Code Switching.....	74
9.1	Introduction:	74
9.2	Code Switching Categories	75
9.3	Types of Code Switching.....	76
9.4	Functions of Code Switching	77
9.5	Conclusion:.....	78
10	Lecture 10: Diglossia.....	79
10.1	Introduction	80
10.2	Classical Definition.....	80
10.3	Extended Diglossia	83
10.3.1	Linguistic Characteristics	84
10.3.2	Sociocultural Characteristics	85
10.4	Conclusion.....	86

11	Lecture 11: Pidgins and Creoles.....	87
11.1	Introduction:	87
11.2	Pidgins and Pidginization.....	88
11.2.1	What is a Pidgin?	88
11.3	Creoles	91
11.4	Conclusion.....	92
12	Lecture 12: Globalisation.....	93
12.1	Introduction	94
12.2	Globalisation: A Definition.....	94
12.3	English as a Global Language	96
12.4	An Overview of World Englishes.....	97
12.5	Factors Contributing to the Global Expansion of English	98
12.6	Conclusion.....	99
13	Lecture 13: Language Planning.....	100
13.1	Introduction	101
13.2	What Does Language Planning Mean?	101
13.3	Types and Forms of Language Planning.....	102
13.3.1	Status Planning.....	102
13.3.2	Corpus Planning.....	103
13.3.3	Acquisition Planning.....	103
13.4	Ideological and Social Orientations toward Language	104
13.5	Language Planning in Education.....	105
13.6	Conclusion.....	105
14	References.....	106

Lecture 1: An Introduction to Sociolinguistics

Objectives and goals

By the end of the lecture, students will be able to:

- Comprehend the relationship between linguistics and sociolinguistics
- Distinguish between what is micro- and macro-linguistics
- Understand what is meant by sociolinguistics and its scope.

Lecture Content

- 1.1. Introduction
- 1.2. A synopsis of Modern Linguistics
- 1.3. Micro- and Macro-Linguistics
- 1.4. Definition of Sociolinguistics
- 1.5. Fundamental Goals of Sociolinguistics
- 1.6. Conclusion

1.1 Introduction

Language is considered one of the most complex phenomena, touching nearly every aspect of human life, including identity, culture, religion, history, economy, politics, education, technology, media, and communication. Because of this complexity, it is difficult to provide a single, definitive explanation of what language is. As linguistic studies continue to evolve, new insights and perspectives constantly reshape our understanding of it.

Despite its deep roots in human existence, the scientific study of language is relatively recent, having developed as an independent discipline only in the early twentieth century.

The first year of a Master's program in linguistics builds on the foundation laid during undergraduate studies. While the initial year offers a general introduction to language and linguistics, the second year concentrates on two main aspects: the differences between traditional language studies and modern linguistics, and the major theoretical approaches in the field, such as structuralism, functionalism, behaviourism, and generativism. As a result, the course goes beyond theory by also exploring key areas of sociolinguistics.

Lecture 1, titled “An Introduction to Sociolinguistics,” is designed to help students understand the link between linguistics and sociolinguistics. It starts with a brief overview of the development of modern linguistics since 1916, followed by a distinction between micro- and macro-linguistics to position sociolinguistics within the broader discipline. The lecture concludes by outlining sociolinguistics itself, including its definition, objectives, scope, and historical development.

1.2 A synopsis of Modern Linguistics

The release of *Cours de Linguistique Générale* by Ferdinand de Saussure in 1916 signaled the emergence of modern linguistics, a discipline focused on the scientific study of human language. This shift helped establish linguistics as an independent field, dedicated to analyzing all aspects of language using systematic, contemporary methods rather than examining it through the lenses of philosophy, religion, or history, as earlier grammarians had done. As a result, linguists have deepened our understanding of human language and clarified how it differs from other forms of communication.

The various levels of linguistics—phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics—have been thoroughly explored through the scientific work of

numerous linguists, whose contributions laid the foundation for the development of language study as a structured discipline.

Some of the most prominent figures in linguistics include Ferdinand de Saussure, Leonard Bloomfield, Franz Boas, Edward Sapir, Benjamin Lee Whorf, Roman Jakobson, and Noam Chomsky, among others. Their work not only advanced the study of the various levels of linguistics but also approached language from diverse perspectives, shedding light on its many dimensions. Since human language is an exceptionally complex phenomenon that resists simple definition, several major schools of thought—such as Structuralism, Functionalism, Behaviourism, and Generativism—have emerged. While each examines language in its own way, their insights are complementary, and a fuller understanding of language depends on considering the contributions of all these approaches.

As linguistics evolved, an increasing number of language aspects came under investigation, further enriching the field and revealing new characteristics of human language. Consequently, linguistics expanded to include numerous subfields that scientifically examine the relationship between language and external factors such as society, culture, history, geography, the human mind, education, politics, economy, and technology. Although early approaches to linguistics emphasized the autonomy of language—focusing on “language in itself and for itself” and excluding external influences—it has become clear that language does not exist in isolation. Instead, it is inherently connected to other dimensions of human life, reflecting the complexity of human nature.

1.3 Micro- and Macro-Linguistics

Based on the discussion above, the scientific study of language can be divided into two main categories. The first is micro-linguistics, which examines the language system independently of external factors. This approach was initially introduced by Ferdinand de Saussure as a response to earlier traditions that treated language as part of other disciplines such as philosophy, religion, and history. In contrast, micro-linguistics focuses on language “in itself”—its components, structure, and grammar—and “for itself,” aiming to understand the nature of human language rather than using it to explain other phenomena. This perspective has led to the development of what are commonly known as the levels of linguistics,

including phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics, all of which have deepened our understanding of human language.

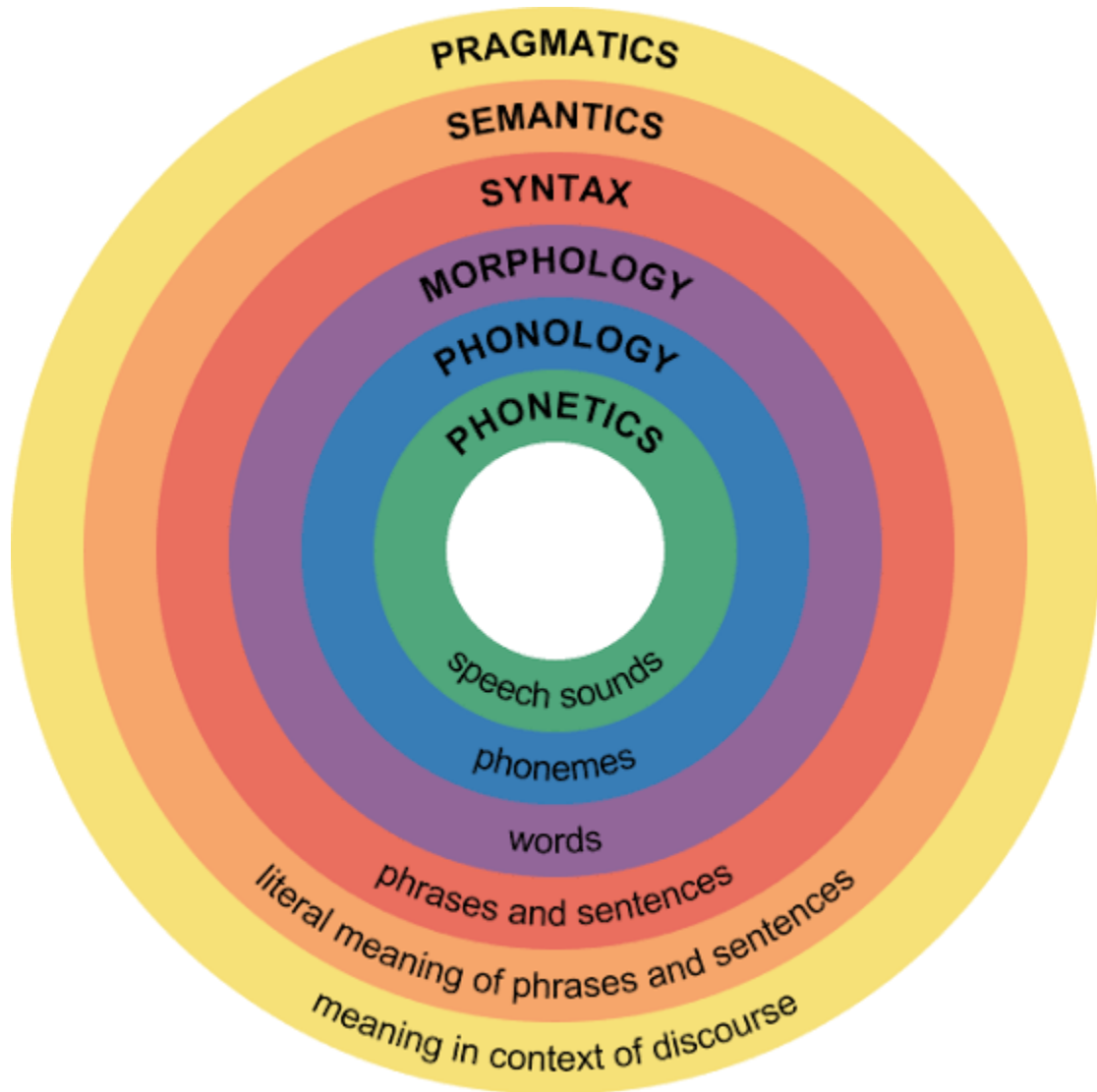


Figure 1.1 Components of Micro-Linguistics

- ❖ **Phonetics:** studies the production, the transmission and the reception of speech sounds.
- ❖ **Phonology:** studies the arrangement and the functions of speech sounds within structures.

- ❖ **Morphology:** the study of word structure.
- ❖ **Syntax:** the study of sentence structure.
- ❖ **Semantics:** studies meaning in words and sentences.
- ❖ **Pragmatics:** studies language use in communication / in its context.

Macro-linguistics, on the other hand, focuses on the relationship between language and various extra-linguistic factors. In this sense, the study of language is inherently interdisciplinary, as it goes beyond grammatical rules to connect with broader human phenomena. Language is shaped by external influences such as geography, society, history, technology, and politics. Consequently, a number of linguistic subfields have emerged to explore these connections, examining how language systems are affected by and interact with such external factors.

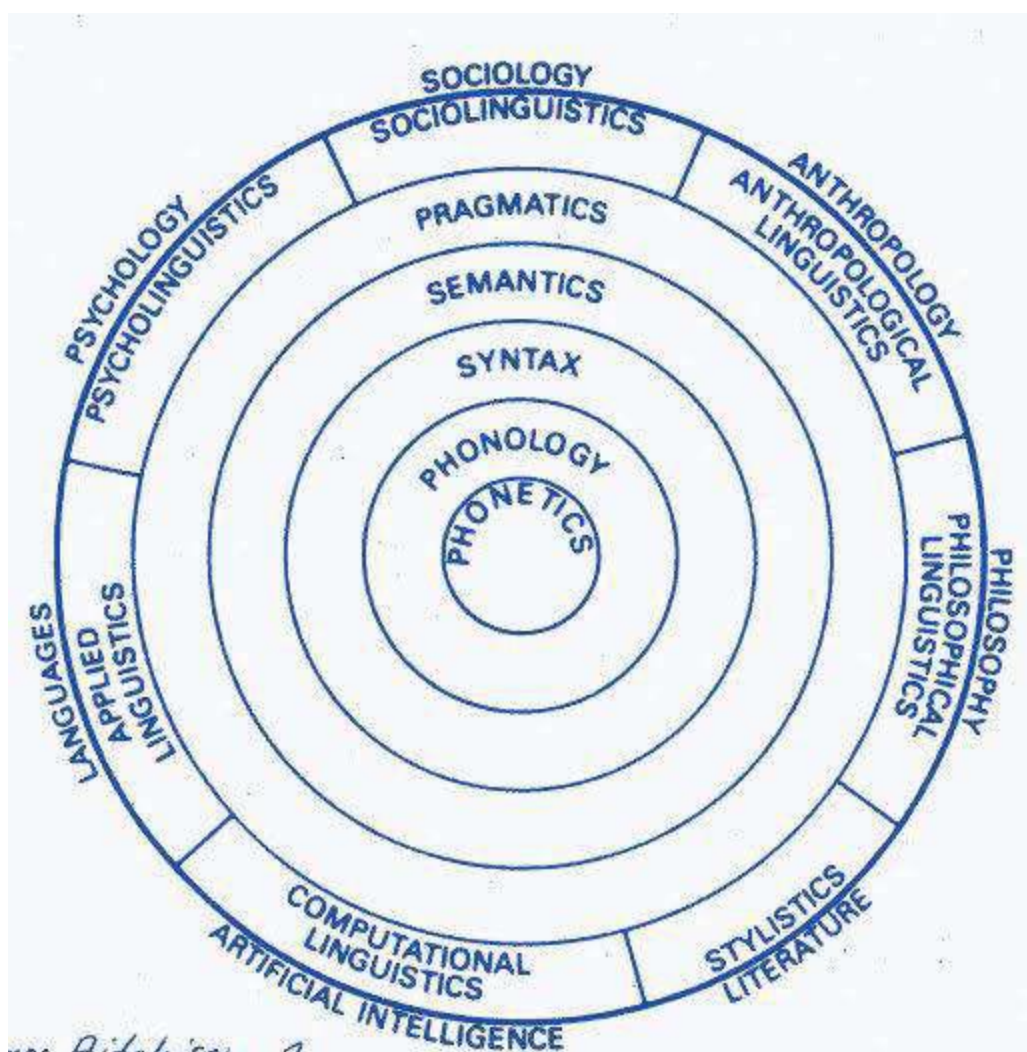


Figure 1.2 Components of Macro-Linguistics

Sociolinguistics, as the name implies, attempts to study the link between language and society. It is one of the branches of linguistics that enhanced our understanding of language as a social phenomenon, as it is actually used by people in different social situations rather than mere descriptions of its structures and rules that are not static but they vary because of the impact of social variables and contexts.

1.4 Definition of Sociolinguistics

According to the sociolinguist William Labov, understanding an الفرد's linguistic behavior requires knowledge of the community to which they belong. From this perspective, Noam Chomsky's concept of linguistic competence—focused on universal features of language—is not sufficient for a comprehensive understanding of language use. Instead, sociolinguists emphasize performance, or how language is actually used in real-life contexts, since speakers naturally vary their language across different situations.

Sociolinguists argue that language study should move beyond the analysis of idealized, homogeneous systems proposed by theoretical linguistics. They seek to explain how and why variation occurs, showing that it is systematically shaped by the norms of speech communities and influenced by social factors such as age, social class, and gender. In this view, knowing a language involves more than mastering its grammatical rules; it also includes the ability to use language appropriately in context, as highlighted by Ronald Wardhaugh and Janet M. Fuller.

This contrast reveals a clear divide between theoretical linguistics and sociolinguistics. While theoretical linguists often focus on uniform language systems and tend to exclude variation from their analyses, sociolinguists see variation not as flawed performance but as natural evidence of the relationship between language and society. Therefore, they maintain that any realistic study of human language must incorporate its social dimensions.

Sociolinguistics is an approach to language study that emphasizes the strong connection between language and social life, rather than focusing solely on linguistic structure. While other branches of linguistics often concentrate on areas such as grammar, phonetics, or meaning, sociolinguistics draws attention to speakers' communicative competence—their ability to make choices and adapt language to suit different purposes and social contexts. This field highlights the natural variation within a language, recognizing that speakers from diverse backgrounds use language not only to convey information but also to express and shape personal and group identities. Sociolinguistics is also marked by a wide range of approaches, reflecting the varied interests of researchers. These include the study of social context, speaker characteristics, interactional dynamics, language and dialect choice, marginalized languages, language in education, and the ideologies embedded in discourse, as outlined in *A Dictionary of Sociolinguistics*.

Sociolinguists examine the relationship between language and society, seeking to understand why people speak differently across various social contexts. They focus on identifying the social functions of language and how it is used to express social meaning. By analyzing language use in different situations, sociolinguists gain valuable insights into how language operates, the nature of social relationships within a community, and the ways individuals express and shape their social identities through language, as discussed by Janet Holmes.

- Holmes (1992) says that 'the sociolinguist's aim is to move towards a theory which provides a motivated account of the way language is used in a community, and of the choices people make when they use language.' For example, when we observe how varied language use is we must search for the causes.

Over the past four and a half decades, research on the relationship between language and society has developed into the academic field known as sociolinguistics. In 1952, Haver C. Currie published a paper—originally drafted in 1949—titled “Projection of Sociolinguistics: The Relationship of Speech to Social Status”, in which he claimed to have introduced the term “sociolinguistics.” Although the term took time to gain recognition, by the early 1960s the field had begun to establish itself, with the organization of the first sociolinguistic conferences and the publication of collections of studies emphasizing the importance of social factors in language analysis.

Since then, sociolinguistics has expanded significantly, producing a vast body of research on the social organization of language behavior. It is now a well-established branch of the social sciences, with its own journals, conferences, textbooks, and key collections of foundational works. As noted by Florian Coulmas, the field has grown so rapidly that keeping up with developments across its many subareas can be challenging, and comprehensive resources have been created to provide overviews of major trends and areas of inquiry.

- The field of Sociolinguistics was pioneered by many scholars such as Basil Bernstein in UK and William Labov in US.
- William Labov is an American sociolinguist. He is widely known as the founder of sociolinguistics. He introduced the quantitative study of language variation to explain the linguistic variation caused by social factors. His study illustrates the correlation between the social structure (social class) and the linguistic variation (ing pronunciation) in New York.
- Basil Bernstein made an important contribution to sociolinguistics through his code theory. This theory distinguishes between the “restricted code,” associated mainly with working-class speech, and the “elaborated code,” more commonly linked to middle-class language use. Bernstein used these concepts to explore how a child’s social class can influence their language development and patterns of communication, highlighting the relationship between social background and linguistic expression.

1.5 Fundamental Goals of Sociolinguistics

- It explains the ways in which language and social contexts interact.
- It describes how linguistic forms relate to social variables such as socioeconomic status, gender, age, and other similar factors.
- It studies differences in language use according to people’s age, social class, ethnicity, gender, education, etc.
- It explains variation in language and its relationship with social factors.
- It explains how and why people speak differently in different social contexts.

- It identifies the influence of any and all aspects of society, including cultural norms, expectations, and context on the way language is used.
- It examines patterns of language use and attitudes towards language.
- It reveals the social relations in a community. For instance, a person probably would not speak the same way to a manager at work as s/he would do with friends, or to strangers like family members.
- It explains how shifts in speech contexts lead to variations in speaking styles.
- It explains why “standard” national dialects are considered problematic concepts.
- It investigates how people use language and the roles that different varieties are assigned within society.
- It explores the causes of multilingualism and the effects of language contact.
- It analyzes the factors that influence language choice.
- It examines globalization and its effects on languages worldwide.

1.6 Conclusion

In summary, sociolinguistics is a subfield of linguistics that has emerged as an independent discipline since the 1960s. It can be applied to any research area that connects everyday social life with language use. As William Bright states, “the sociolinguist’s task is then to show the systematic co-variance of linguistic structure and social structure” (1966).

As a result, sociolinguistics is considered a hybrid field, drawing on multiple disciplines such as linguistics, sociology, anthropology, history, and social psychology.

Assignment:

Discuss how sociolinguistics helps us understand the relationship between **language and society**. Provide real-life examples

Lecture 2: Approaches of Sociolinguistics

Objectives and Goals

By the end of the lecture, students will be able to:

- Understand the two approaches of sociolinguistics
- Differentiate between micro- and macro-sociolinguistics
- Understand the complementary nature of the two approaches
- Categorize and explore research issues according to the approach of study

Lecture Content

- 2.1. Introduction
- 2.2. Sociolinguistics at the Micro and Macro Levels
- 2.3. Definition of Micro- and Macro-Sociolinguistics
- 2.4. The Contrast between Micro- and Macro-Sociolinguistics
- 2.5. The Boundary between Micro- and Macro-Sociolinguistics
- 2.6. Conclusion

2.1 Introduction

As explained earlier, sociolinguistics is an interdisciplinary field that lies at the intersection of several disciplines, including linguistics, sociology, anthropology, and history. This combination of perspectives gives the field its hybrid nature, as it draws on insights from multiple sources and leads to two main dimensions in the study of language in relation to society. Depending on the research aims, studies may lean toward either the micro level or the macro level of sociolinguistics. However, scholars generally agree that it is not always possible to draw a strict boundary between the two, since they often overlap. To achieve the learning objectives, the lecture focuses on the following points:

- 1) definition of micro-and macro-sociolinguistics
- 2) differences between the two approaches, and
- 3) how they overlap.

2.2 Sociolinguistics at the Micro and Macro Levels

Since sociolinguistics sits at the intersection of linguistics and sociology, its topics can be approached from two different angles depending on the emphasis of the researcher. The study may focus more on language itself or more on society. In the first case, attention is given to the social dimensions of language use, with the primary focus remaining on language; this approach is often associated with linguists, dialectologists, and other language-oriented scholars. In the second case, the emphasis shifts to understanding the role of language within society, with society as the main focus; this perspective is more commonly adopted by sociologists and social psychologists.

These two orientations are generally referred to as micro- and macro-sociolinguistics, respectively, or alternatively as sociolinguistics in the narrow sense and the sociology of language in the broader sense

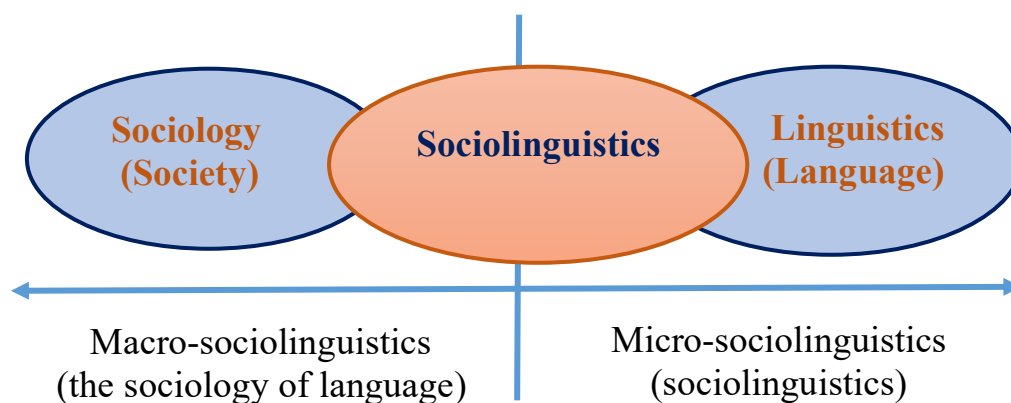


Figure 2.1. Approaches of Sociolinguistics

In other words, though sociolinguistics deals with the correlation between language and society, the study can either focus on linguistics variants (in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation) at a narrow scale or on broader social phenomena (such as culture, politics, economy, education, ethnicity) in relation to language. This discrepancy is often referred to as micro- and macro-sociolinguistics.

2.3 Definition of Micro- and Macro-Sociolinguistics

As mentioned earlier, sociolinguistics can be approached from two distinct perspectives depending on the focus of the study. One approach gives greater attention to language itself, while the other places more emphasis on society. The first is more language-oriented, whereas the second is more society-oriented. The following section presents a selection of definitions from key scholars in the field of sociolinguistics.

➤ According to Spolsky (1998):

At what is often called the micro end of sociolinguistics, the sociolinguist's goal might be to show how specific differences in pronunciation or grammar lead members of a speech community to make judgements about the education or economic status of a speaker (...). At the other – the macro – end of the spectrum, sometimes labelled the sociology of language as distinct from sociolinguistics, the scholar's primary attention turns from the specific linguistic phenomena to the whole of a language or variety (...). In macro-sociolinguistics, we treat language (and a specific language) alongside other human cultural phenomena.

➤ In the words of Coulmas' (1997) :

Micro-sociolinguistics investigates how social structure influences the way people talk and how language varies and patterns of use correlate with social attributes such as class, sex, and age. Macro-sociolinguistics, on the other hand, studies what societies do with their languages, that is, attitudes and attachments that account for the functional distribution of speech forms in society, language shift, maintenance, and replacement (...).

➤ According to Fishman (1972: 53-6):

The more linguistically oriented a particular study may be, the more likely it is to remain content with micro-level analysis (...). However, the more societally oriented a particular sociolinguistic study may be, the more concerned with investigating social processes and societal organisation per se, the more likely it is to seek successively more macro-level analyses.

Therefore, the definitions reveal clear opposition of the aims of both levels of sociolinguistics.

2.4 The Contrast between Micro- and Macro-Sociolinguistics

The definitions above highlight the distinction between two approaches within sociolinguistics. Micro-sociolinguistics, also known simply as sociolinguistics, examines patterns of linguistic variation—such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation—that arise from the influence of social factors including gender, age, social class, region, and ethnicity.

William Bright (1966) argues that “the sociolinguist’s task is then to show the systematic co-variance of linguistic structure and social structure.” In this view, the emphasis of micro-sociolinguistics is on language and the ways it is shaped by social influences.

For example, a sociolinguist might examine differences in vocabulary or language use between men and women. In such cases, the main goal is to analyze variation in linguistic behaviour influenced by gender. This type of study is therefore primarily linguistically oriented, rather than sociologically focused, since it concentrates on how social factors affect language use.

Macro-sociolinguistics, also known as the sociology of language, is primarily oriented toward society rather than language structure. It extends beyond purely linguistic analysis to

explore broader social explanations, including historical, political, economic factors, and people's attitudes.

Using the same example of gender-based language variation, macro-sociolinguistics does not focus on the linguistic forms themselves, but rather on the social reasons behind differences in male and female speech. From this perspective, it is suggested that language use varies across genders because women often tend to adopt more standard, prestigious, or polite forms as a way of navigating socially constructed gender roles, power relations, and stereotypes. In contrast, men may prefer more informal styles as a way of distancing themselves from what is socially associated with feminine speech.

Thus, this approach does not primarily focus on linguistic differences themselves, but rather on the social and cultural factors that may explain why such differences occur

Table 2-1 Illustrations of the Differences between the Approaches of Sociolinguistics

Micro-Sociolinguistics

- ✓ It identifies language variation amongst age groups (young and old people, for instance).
- ✓ It describes the structure, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation of Tamazight in Algeria.
- ✓ It studies differences in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation between language varieties. For instance, there are clear differences between American English (AE) and Ebonics/Afro-American English (AAE). Among the most commonly discussed features of Ebonics are:
 - 1) omission of (*to be*) in sentences like "*Larry sick*", "*Sharen gon home*";
 - 2) double negation as in "*she don wan nothing*";
 - 3) lack of subject-verb agreement, as in "*he do*";
 - 4) the use of (*steady*) to indicate persistence in constructions like "*she steady talking*" to mean "*she persists in talking*", etc. So, the focus in these examples is on language rather than on society.

Macro-Sociolinguistics

- It attempts to explain why young people speak differently from old people and what are the reasons behind language change.
- It explains why is Tamazight in Algeria still maintained in spite of all social changes and political policies.
- It studies people's attitudes towards language varieties: why some forms are viewed as "better" or "worse" than others and what impacts do such assumptions have on different types of people and language use itself. For instance, differences between AE and AAE date back to the history of slavery and descendants suffered from discrimination for a long time and so does their language variety as it has always been associated with their dark history and their dark skin. Therefore, AAE is often restricted to informal usages rather than being used as a language of instruction in education or in administration, official documents, and books.

Though the two approaches have clearly defined goals, some scholars claim that the distinction between them is not always possible, as they are arranged in a continuum that stretches from language-oriented to social-oriented studies in the field of sociolinguistics.

2.5 The Boundary between Micro- and Macro-Sociolinguistics

Despite the fact that the two approaches pursue different research goals, there is a general consensus that both are essential for a complete understanding of language as a social phenomenon. Florian Coulmas (1997) notes that “the divorce of sociolinguistics from the sociology of language is often one of appearance rather than substance. There is no sharp dividing line between the two.” In other words, most sociolinguistic research tends to combine elements from both perspectives rather than focusing exclusively on one, as explanations are typically accompanied by illustrations of linguistic data and real-world usage.

2.6 Conclusion

In summary, the topics addressed in sociolinguistics highlight its interdisciplinary and hybrid nature, where insights from linguistics, sociology, and other human sciences are combined to examine how language is shaped by the social structures in which it functions. The study of language as a form of social and cultural behavior does not belong exclusively to any single discipline; rather, it is an area where multiple fields intersect and share common data.

Understanding the development of sociolinguistics therefore involves recognizing how disciplines such as linguistics, anthropology, sociology, and dialectology have contributed to its theoretical foundations and paved the way for a field grounded in the empirical analysis of real language use in diverse social contexts. As a result, sociolinguistics can be seen as a convergence of disciplines that overlap in subject matter. This relatively recent branch of linguistics also offers the potential for a more systematic exploration of language variation and communicative competence.

Assignment:

“Sociolinguistic cannot be studied from only one perspective.”

Discuss this statement with reference to different approaches in sociolinguistics.

Lecture 3: Emergence of Sociolinguistics: Factors

Objectives and Goals

By the end of the lecture, students will be able to:

- Understand the different factors that led to the emergence of sociolinguistics.
- To understand the concept of language variation, along with its causes and its importance within the field of linguistics.
- Define what is meant by communicative competence.
- Distinguish between linguistic competence and communicative competence.
- Understand the theory of linguistic relativity and the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis.
- Understand what is dialectology, its characteristics, history, and how it has been integrated into sociolinguistics.

Lecture Content

3.1. Introduction

3.2. Language Variation

3.3. The Concept of Communicative Competence

3.4. Linguistic Relativity

3.5. Dialectology

3.6. Conclusion

3.1 Introduction

Sociolinguistics is generally considered to have emerged and developed as an independent branch of linguistics in the 1960s, largely due to the influential work of scholars such as Peter Trudgill, William Labov, Joshua Fishman, and Charles Ferguson. This field emphasizes the relationship between language and society, focusing on how language is actually used in everyday communication across different social contexts.

In this sense, sociolinguistics stands in contrast to theoretical linguistics, which developed earlier in the 20th century through the work of figures such as Ferdinand de Saussure, Franz Boas, Edward Sapir, Benjamin Lee Whorf, Roman Jakobson, Leonard Bloomfield, and Noam Chomsky, among others.

It is therefore important to identify the key factors that contributed to the rise of sociolinguistics. This course highlights four main elements that not only helped shape the field but also remain central to its concerns: (1) language variation, (2) communicative competence, (3) linguistic relativity, and (4) dialectology.

3.2 Language Variation

Language variation is a natural outcome of using language in specific social contexts, influenced both by the speaker and the situation in which communication takes place. In other words, language changes depending on factors such as a person's age, gender, level of education, economic background, regional origin, religion, and social class.

These aspects of social identity are often reflected in the way people speak, as speech patterns can reveal information about who they are and where they come from. For example, regional variation in language may indicate a speaker's geographical origin, while social variation can provide insight into their role or position within a community.

On the other hand, the way people speak is also shaped by the social context in which language is used. This includes the identity of the speaker (such as age, gender, regional background, social class, and education), the addressee (for example a spouse, friend, boss, or colleague), the setting (home, workplace, school, etc.), and the topic of conversation (such as politics, sports, religion, gossip, or cooking).

In other words, individuals can adjust their speech depending on the people they are interacting with and the situation they are in. This idea is known as the domain theory, introduced by the American sociolinguist Joshua Fishman. A domain of language use refers to typical patterns of interaction involving specific participants, settings, and topics. Common examples of domains include family, friendship, religion, education, and employment.

The notion of setting refers to the physical environment where communication takes place, and it is closely linked to code choice, meaning that language use varies depending on where interaction occurs, such as at home, in a mosque or church, at school, or in the workplace.

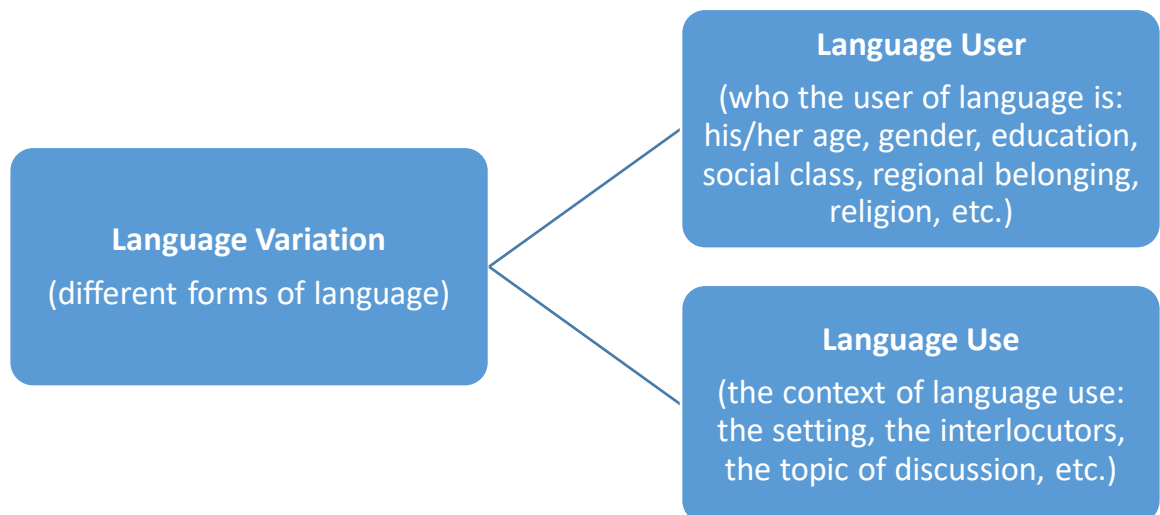


Figure 3.1. Factors of Language Variation

Thus, one of the most important factors that led to the emergence of sociolinguistics as an integral branch in linguistics is the fact that language variations did not constitute part of the theoretical linguists' agenda, though they claimed a descriptive research approach that aims primarily to describe objectively linguistic phenomena as they occur in real-life situations.

Moreover, they overlook the fact that when people communicate, they do not rely solely on their knowledge of language (linguistic competence), since their speech is also shaped by their understanding of social norms and context (communicative competence).

3.3 The Concept of Communicative Competence

In this vein, Dell Hymes (1972) states that "there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless". Language use, then, involves two complementary categories of rules: grammatical as well as social. We need to know, in addition to the innate grammatical rules, the social norms that determine the appropriate language use according to particular social situations. Hymes (1972: 277) asserts that:

We have to account for the fact that a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not to speak, and as what to talk about with whom, when, where in what manner.

In short, a child becomes able to accomplish a repertoire of speech acts, to take part in speech events and so evaluate their accomplishment by others. This competence, moreover, is integrated with attitudes, values, and motivations concerning language, its features, uses....

Given this new dimension of language appropriateness, Hymes (1972), suggests an expansion of Chomsky's competence to include contextual and social rules. He spreads the notion of communicative competence that stands in opposition with Chomsky's linguistic competence, marking the beginning of a new revolution in the field of language study.

Although Noam Chomsky introduced an alternative framework to earlier structural linguistics through transformational generative grammar, his ideas were later subject to criticism. This approach aimed to describe the system of knowledge in the mind/brain of a native speaker that enables them to produce and understand language. In other words, Chomsky's central goal in linguistics was to explain the innate linguistic capacity that allows

speakers to generate and comprehend an unlimited number of sentences using a finite set of rules.

In this context, Chomsky (1965) distinguished between competence and performance. Competence refers to a speaker's internal, abstract knowledge of grammatical rules, while performance refers to the actual use of language in real-life situations, which may be influenced by memory limitations, distractions, or errors. Thus, competence is seen as a systematic and idealized linguistic system, whereas performance is viewed as the variable and sometimes irregular realization of that system in actual speech.

However, this distinction was later challenged by Dell Hymes, who argued that it does not fully account for the complexity of real language use and is therefore insufficient for a complete understanding of human communication.

There are, thus, two complementary forms of competence (linguistic and communicative) which together guarantee the appropriate performance; that is, the appropriate use of language in concrete social situations. Such a relationship can be illustrated as follows:

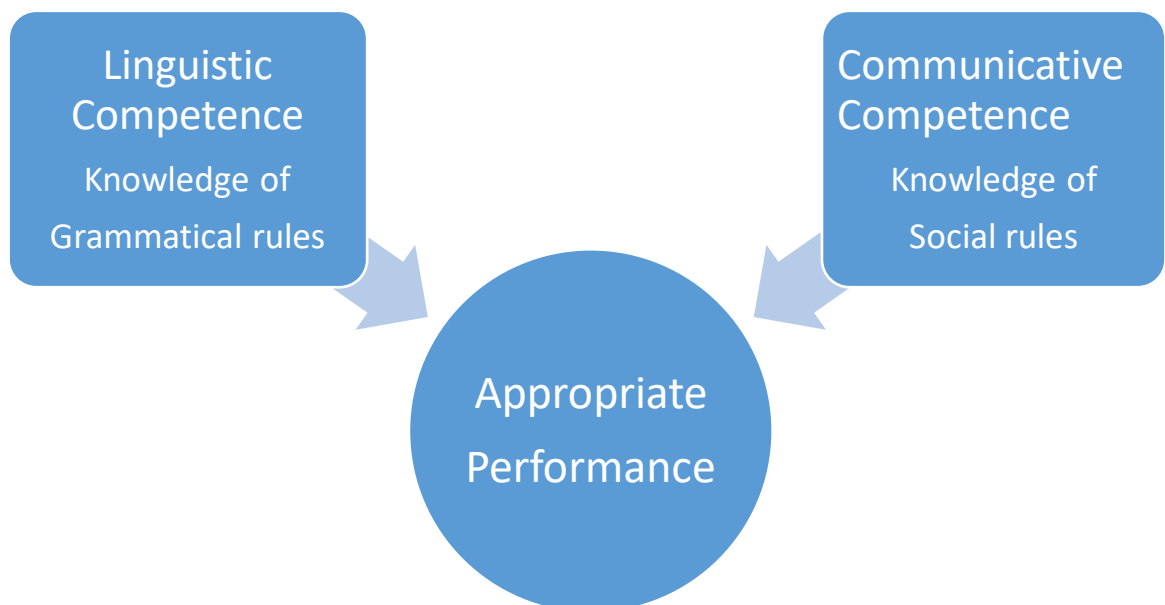


Figure 3.2. Hymes' (1971) Idea of Communicative Competence

In short, the scope of linguistics has expanded to include both linguistic competence, as described in generative grammar, and communicative competence, as emphasized in sociolinguistics.

Alongside the concepts of language variation and communicative competence, sociolinguistics is also strongly influenced by the theory of linguistic relativity, which was introduced by early 20th-century linguists interested in the relationship between language and culture.

3.4 Linguistic Relativity

Linguistic relativity refers to a set of ideas about the connection between language and culture. One view suggests that because linguistic representations of reality are arbitrary, each language forms a system that cannot be directly compared with others. Another version proposes that differences between languages can influence how people perceive and think about the world.

These ideas were first developed by the German philosopher and linguist Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835). They were later developed and popularized in the United States in the early 20th century by structuralist scholars such as Franz Boas, Edward Sapir, and Benjamin Lee Whorf. Their work became known as the Sapir–Whorf Hypothesis.

The theory of linguistic relativity became a central idea in linguistic anthropology. It views language as a key element of culture—serving as its expression, instrument, and foundation of human experience. In this sense, linguistic relativity highlights the differences among systems of human communication, arguing that each language is closely connected to the culture in which it exists.

Although early American anthropologists were influenced by structuralist ideas and modern linguistic methods, their approach to language differed from that of European structuralists. Two main distinctions can be noted: first, they studied language in close relation to culture; second, they emphasized differences between languages rather than overgeneralizing them. They argued that the meaning of words is largely language-specific, even though some grammatical categories may be universal across languages.

Thus, language systems are seen as different because they are deeply rooted in the cultures they reflect, which is the core idea of linguistic relativity.

In other words, sociolinguistics emphasizes language variation as a result of the relationship between language and society. This perspective was largely overlooked by theoretical linguists, who tended to focus on the uniformity of language systems. However, American structuralists drew attention to this connection by linking language to external cultural factors, helping to lay the groundwork for a field that studies how language changes according to social influences.

In addition, regional variation in language had already been the subject of scholarly interest even before the rise of modern linguistics. The field of dialectology, which developed in the 19th century, is now considered an important component of sociolinguistics.

3.5 Dialectology

Dialectology represents an early systematic approach to the study of dialectal variation, particularly regional dialects. Its main purpose is to examine how dialects change gradually from one geographical area to another and to map the distribution of linguistic features such as pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary.

As noted by Bernard Spolsky (1998), “dialectology is the search for spatially and geographically determined differences in various aspects of language. For each village or region that they study, dialectologists want to know the typical local vocabulary or pronunciation.” In other words, dialectologists investigate differences in linguistic features across regions that are generally considered to share the same language, but which vary due to geographical distance. Examples of this include the differences found among various Arabic or English dialects spoken in different areas.

Traditionally, dialectology focused on speakers who were typically older individuals who had spent their entire lives in one place and had received little formal education, as researchers believed they preserved a more “pure” or “original” form of language. In addition, early dialectologists were often interested in tracing the historical development of linguistic features.

Although dialectology addressed regional language variation, it was still influenced by traditional grammatical approaches, including subjectivity, selective data collection, a focus on historical (diachronic) analysis, and a lack of comprehensive coverage. As a result, its

findings did not represent the full range of language use, particularly overlooking varieties spoken by younger, educated, and urban speakers, which were often viewed as “impure” or as deviations from an assumed original form.

In contrast, modern linguistics aimed to establish a scientific study of language based on principles such as objectivity, systematic data collection, and consistency, and therefore rejected many of the methods used in traditional grammar and early dialectology.

In recent years, dialectology has been integrated into sociolinguistics and has increasingly focused on social variation rather than purely geographical differences. Today, factors such as age, gender, social class, and ethnicity are considered alongside regional variation as key influences on language use.

Nevertheless, the contributions of early dialectologists remain highly significant, even though they relied on relatively simple and traditional research methods. A notable example is the *Atlas Linguistique de la France*, published in 13 volumes between 1902 and 1910, which is regarded as one of the most influential works in the history of dialectology.

Modern dialectology has greatly benefited from technological and methodological advances, including the use of tape recorders, computers, and software for quantitative analysis, along with other empirical research tools. However, large-scale regional dialect surveys have become less common due to the high cost and complexity of data collection, analysis, and publication. This decline is also partly linked to a shift in focus toward social variation and urban rather than rural dialects.

Therefore, the study of language variation predates both modern linguistics (1916) and sociolinguistics (1960s). Regional variation, in particular, has long been examined in detail in many countries, especially in France and Germany. In contrast, social variation has only more recently become a focus of academic research, following growing interest in the social factors that shape how people use language.

3.6 Conclusion

To conclude, the lecture tackles the major factors that paved the way for the emergence of sociolinguistics. First, this field of study has developed mainly as a result of the shortcomings of twentieth-century theoretical linguistics, which focused primarily on

standard languages and neglected language variations that result from the impact of society. Consequently, many twentieth-century linguists focused their research on langue or linguistic competence—that is, abstract knowledge of language—without fully considering that grammatical knowledge alone is insufficient for real communication, which also requires communicative competence across different social situations.

Another important factor in the rise of sociolinguistics is the contribution of American structuralists in the early twentieth century, who developed theories linking language and culture. These ideas were later taken up and expanded by sociolinguists.

Finally, sociolinguistics has also benefited from the earlier work of traditional dialectologists, who made significant progress in the scientific study of regional dialects. Although dialectology predates modern linguistics, it is now considered an integral part of sociolinguistics.

Assignment:

Observe how people speak in different situations (home, school, social media, public places). Describe at least **three examples of variation** you notice

Lecture 4: Language Varieties

Objectives and Goals

By the end of the lecture, students will be able to:

- Understand the different factors that led to the emergence of sociolinguistics.
- Understand the concept of language variation and its reasons and importance in the field.
- Define what is meant by communicative competence.
- Differentiate between linguistic competence and communicative competence.
- Understand the theory of linguistic relativity and the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis.
- Understand what is dialectology, its characteristics, history, and how it has been integrated into sociolinguistics.

Lecture Content

- 4.1. Introduction
- 4.2. The Meaning of Language Varieties
- 4.3. Language Varieties
 - 4.3.1. Dialect
 - 4.3.2. Accent
 - 4.3.3. Idiolect
 - 4.3.4. Speech Style

4.3.5. Register

4.3.6. Jargon

4.3.7. Slang

4.4. Conclusion

4.1 Introduction

Language variation is a central concern in sociolinguistics, arising from the impact of social factors such as region, age, social class, and education on different aspects of language, including vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. These influences can lead to distinct patterns of speech that reflect the close relationship between language and social identity.

For instance, people from the same geographical area or those working in the same profession may use language differently from individuals in other regions or occupations. Similarly, variations can be observed between the speech of teenagers, adults, and older speakers. Overall, a single language exists in multiple forms or varieties, as it shifts according to both the context of use and the characteristics of its speakers.

4.2 The Meaning of Language Varieties

In sociolinguistics, language variety is a general term for any distinctive form of a language. Linguists commonly use language variety (or simply variety) as a cover term for any of the corresponding subdivisions of a language, including dialect, idiolect, register, and social dialect. Linguistic variety is used interchangeably with the term “lect”, i.e. they are used to refer to the same concept.

In *The Oxford Companion to the English Language* (1992), Tom McArthur identifies two broad types of language variety:

➤ User-related varieties are associated with a particular people (i.e. a variety can be determined by who the language user is: his/her age, gender, education, ethnicity, social class, regional belonging, etc.). A variety can also be related to a place or a community such

as American English (referring to the place where English is spoken) and Afro- American English (referring to the Afro-American community).

➤ Use-related varieties are associated with the functions performed by the variety, such as the language of courts, contracts, literary texts, Internet conversations, etc. like business English, advertising English, medical English, and so on.

Some scholars prefer using a more flexible term that can refer to any type of linguistic variety, whether it is defined geographically or socially. The term *lect* or *variety* is used to include all forms such as dialects, sociolects, idiolects, and others, covering differences based on region, social class, caste, age, gender, and similar factors, as noted by Lyle Campbell in *Historical Linguistics: An Introduction* (2004).

Similarly, Suzanne Romaine points out in *Language in Society* (2000) that many linguists now prefer the term *variety* or *lect* in order to avoid the sometimes negative or evaluative connotations associated with the term “dialect.” In this sense, *variety* is considered a more neutral term than “language” or “dialect,” which can carry positive or negative implications depending on usage. As a result, the term *variety* has become widely accepted because it allows linguists to:

- to avoid being too specific about kinds of speech and usage on occasions when being specific is not necessary and/or
- when there is a risk of being charged with discrimination against a group by calling its usage ‘a dialect’.

4.3 Language Varieties

This lecture covers seven different language varieties: dialect, accent, idiolect, speech style, register, jargon, and slang.

4.3.1 Dialect

The term *dialect* refers to a variety of language used by a specific group of people, which may be defined by region, ethnicity, social class, locality, or other social factors. It describes

particular features of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation that characterize that group and distinguish it from others.

Linguists generally distinguish between two main types of dialects:

- *Regional dialects* are varieties of language that are spoken by a particular group of people who belong to the same geographical location, like British and American English or Algerian and Egyptian Arabic.
- *Social Dialects*, on the other hand, refer to differences in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation across social groups, rather than regional groups. Upper class people speak a different dialect from lower class people even if they belong to the same region. This type of dialect is also often labelled as “sociolect”.

From a linguistic perspective, none of the varieties of a language is inherently superior to another; they are simply different forms. However, from a social perspective, certain varieties often acquire higher prestige. For instance, urban dialects are frequently regarded as more prestigious than rural ones, even though the differences between them are mainly in vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. Prestige, therefore, is not a linguistic property but a social judgment shaped by attitudes and beliefs.

As David Crystal (2006) explains, some people mistakenly view dialects as substandard forms spoken only by lower-status groups, as reflected in comments like “He speaks correct English, without a trace of dialect.” Such views overlook the fact that standard English is itself a dialect—one that has simply been granted greater social prestige. In reality, everyone speaks a dialect, whether it is urban or rural, standard or non-standard, upper-class or lower-class.

4.3.2 Accent

Accent is sometimes mistakenly used as if it were the same as dialect, although the two are not identical. An accent refers specifically to differences in pronunciation (phonological variation), whereas a dialect includes broader differences in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

In other words, an accent can be seen as one component of a dialect, since it is limited to how words are pronounced rather than how language is structured overall. An accent may indicate:

- The locality/region in which its speakers reside (for instance, you can recognise whether the person speaks American or British English from the way s/he pronounces words and expressions).
- The socioeconomic status or the social class of its speakers (e.g. accent of the working class and upper class is different).
- A speaker's native language, since the pronunciation of a foreign language is often influenced by features of the mother tongue. This is why it is sometimes easy to identify the first language of someone speaking another language. For example, Indian, French, Spanish, and Arabic speakers of English may have noticeably different accents, allowing their native language background to be recognized.

Speakers of different dialects typically also have different accents—for example, British, American, and Canadian English differ not only in pronunciation but also in grammar and vocabulary. However, even speakers who share the same dialect can still have distinct accents.

The variety known as “Standard English” is used internationally, but it is spoken with a wide range of regional accents. As a result, people from different countries may read the same Standard English text aloud, but each will do so using their own accent.

Thus, whether we think we speak a standard variety of English or not, we all speak with an accent. It is a myth that some speakers have accents while others do not. We might feel that some speakers have very different or easily recognised types of accent whereas others may have subtle or less noticeable accents but, still, every language user speaks with an accent.

4.3.3 Idiolect

No two individuals use language in exactly the same way. Small differences in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary are normal, meaning that each person, to some extent, has a “personal dialect.” The term *idiolect* is used to describe the unique linguistic system of an individual speaker—that is, their personal way of speaking.

An idiolect can be compared to a fingerprint because it is specific to one person and reflects their linguistic identity, distinguishing them from others. In linguistic analysis, the starting point is often the speech of individual speakers, making idiolects the basic units of study.

From this perspective, dialects can be seen as generalizations formed from the analysis of multiple idiolects, while languages themselves are broader abstractions derived from sets of dialects.

4.3.4 Speech Style

Speech style is a social aspect of language use. The most fundamental distinction is between formal and informal styles. A formal style involves greater attention to speech production, while an informal style involves less careful monitoring; these are often referred to as “careful” and “casual” styles, respectively. When a speaker moves from one style to another, this is known as style-shifting.

Individuals typically shift between styles multiple times a day, depending on the communicative situation, often without being consciously aware of it. Such variation is influenced by factors like the identity of the interlocutors, the setting of the interaction, and the topic being discussed. In other words, style variation depends on language use rather than the speaker themselves, since the same person may adopt different styles in different contexts.

Interestingly, people do not simply alternate between formal and informal styles; they can move across several levels of speech that form a continuum ranging from highly formal to highly informal styles:

- *Frozen or oratorical*: extremely formal way of discourse. It is frozen in the sense that it is not subject to variation. It is a style for print, street signs, warnings, notices in public places.
- *Formal*: a manner of discourse used in situations when the speaker is very cautious about pronunciation, choice of words, and sentence structure.
- *Consultative*: a style of participation and interaction. It is the norm for most conversations in English. Its main linguistic structures consist of less formal terms such as might, could, would.
- *Casual*: a style used amongst insiders, i.e. friends, colleagues, mates, etc.
- *Intimate*: as the name indicates, this style is used between people having very close and friendly relationship.

4.3.5 Register

Register refers to a variety of language used in a specific situation and for a particular purpose. It describes the conventional way language is appropriately used in a given context, which may be situational (for example, in a mosque) or occupational (for example, among lawyers). Distinct linguistic features can be identified in different registers, such as religious discourse, academic language, or legal language.

In this sense, register differs from social or regional dialects, which are defined by the identity of the speakers rather than the context of use. A clear example of register variation can be seen in the different types of English used across academic modules such as linguistics, civilization, literature, and methodology, each of which employs its own specialized vocabulary and style.

Although English is the shared language in these different contexts, it varies noticeably from one academic module to another. These varieties are referred to as different registers

because, while they differ significantly in style and usage, they do not constitute separate languages or dialects.

The main feature that distinguishes one register from another is the specialized vocabulary associated with each field of discourse.

4.3.6 Jargon

One key feature of a register is the presence of jargon, which refers to specialized technical vocabulary linked to a particular field of work or area of interest. From a social perspective, jargon helps strengthen bonds among “insiders” who share the same knowledge while also excluding “outsiders” who may not understand it. As a result, it consists of specialized terms used within specific professions, groups, or occupations, and it is often not easily understood outside its context.

Thus, jargon is an essential component of register and plays a role in distinguishing between different domains of discourse, since it mainly involves the technical vocabulary used in specific situations. For instance, the language of this handout is English, but its register belongs to linguistics. What differentiates it from other registers is its specialized terminology. In this sense, variation is determined by the field of use rather than the speaker, and it is primarily reflected in vocabulary rather than in grammar or pronunciation.

4.3.7 Slang

Whereas jargon refers to the specialized vocabulary used within established professional or institutional groups (such as doctors, lawyers, teachers, or politicians), slang is typically associated with informal use among people outside such formal or high-status contexts, often in everyday conversations between friends.

In this sense, both jargon and slang are lexical varieties, meaning they mainly involve vocabulary. However, they differ in the type of expressions they include: jargon is generally linked to formal settings and relies on technical terminology, while slang is characteristic of informal situations and uses casual, non-standard expressions. Slang, sometimes referred to as colloquial speech, often consists of words or phrases used in place of more neutral everyday terms, especially among younger speakers.

Slang is characterized by:

➤ Like clothing and music, slang is an aspect of a social life that is subject to fashion, especially amongst adolescents.

➤ It is often used within a group that shares common ideas and attitudes as a way of distinguishing itself from others.

-Slang expressions are typically created by members of a particular social group; they may remain limited to that group as a marker of identity, or they may spread and become more widely used.

-Most slang terms are temporary in nature; they tend to be used for a short period—months or a few years—before falling out of use and being replaced by newer expressions.

4.4 Conclusion

As a conclusion, language variation has been one of the major factors that led to the emergence of sociolinguistics because it has long been neglected by theoretical linguists in addition to the fact that it constitutes an indispensable part of the actual language use in people's everyday life. In other words, though linguistic theories, introduced in the beginning of the 20th century, revolutionized the ways of language study, they did not consider the fact that a language is used differently in different situations and by different people. The following figure clarifies the link between language, language variation, and varieties.

Assignment:

Explain the difference between **standard language** and **non-standard varieties**.

Lecture 5: Language and Dialect

Objectives and Goals

By the end of the lecture, students will be able to:

- To understand the criteria used to distinguish between a language and a dialect.
- Distinguish between language and dialect.
- To recognize that a language has no inherent linguistic superiority over a dialect
- Comprehend that language is not only a linguistic entity but it is rather tied to people's sociocultural identity.
- Understand that the difference between language and dialect is arbitrary as it depends on particular contexts of particular communities.
- Understand new concepts in sociolinguistics, namely mutual intelligibility and standardisation.
- To identify and explain the relationship between language and people's socio-cultural identity.

Lecture Content

5.2.1. Introduction

5.2. Language vs. Dialect

5.2.1. Definitions of Language

5.2.2. Definition of Dialect

5.3. Mutual Intelligibility

5.4. Standardisation

5.5. Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

One of the key concerns of sociolinguistics is explaining linguistic diversity, also known as language variation. This refers to the presence of multiple varieties of a single language within the same speech community, as well as the coexistence of different languages within one society. In this sense, sociolinguistics studies both internal variation within a language and the interaction between different languages in social settings.

This diversity raises a major challenge in classifying varieties as either “languages” or “dialects,” since making a clear distinction is often not straightforward. In most cases, however, the difference appears relatively clear, as in the case of Arabic, where Standard Arabic is generally considered the language, while regional forms such as Algerian Arabic, Egyptian Arabic, and Syrian Arabic are viewed as dialects.

This lecture addresses the issue of distinguishing between language and dialect by examining the various factors that make the boundary between them unclear. It begins by defining both concepts in order to identify their differences and understand why drawing a clear separation is often difficult.

In addition, to achieve the aims of the lecture, two key topics are discussed: mutual intelligibility and standardisation.

5.1.1 Language vs. Dialect

In order to understand the differences between language and dialect, we need first to define each one of them.

5.1.2 Definitions of Language

As discussed in earlier lectures, human language is highly complex, and no single definition can capture all its dimensions. It has therefore been defined in various ways across

different disciplines, depending on the perspective adopted. Below are some selected definitions proposed within the field of linguistics:

- Language, [is] a system of conventional spoken, manual (signed), or written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, express themselves. The functions of language include communication, the expression of identity, play, imaginative expression, and emotional release (Crystal, et al., 2021).
- Language is the expression of ideas by means of speech-sounds combined into words. Words are combined into sentences, this combination answering to that of ideas into thoughts (Henry Sweet).
- Language is the institution whereby humans communicate and interact with each other by means of habitually used oral-auditory arbitrary symbols (Hall, 1968).
- From now on I will consider a language to be a set (finite or infinite) of sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements (Chomsky, 1957).
- A language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates (Bernard Block and George L. Trager, 1942).
- Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of voluntarily produced symbols (Sapir, 1921).

The differences found in these definitions once again highlight the complexity of language as a human phenomenon, with each definition emphasizing particular aspects such as its nature (a system of symbols), structure (composed of sounds, words, and sentences), function (communication of ideas, emotions, identity, etc.), arbitrariness, and creativity (the ability to generate an infinite number of sentences from a finite set of rules).

Interestingly, these general characteristics of language can also be applied to dialect, since a dialect is likewise a human, non-instinctive system of communication used to express ideas, emotions, and other meanings. In these definitions, however, linguists often do not stress the socially constructed associations attached to the terms. Typically, “language” is equated with the standard variety used in education, official institutions, and formal communication, whereas “dialect” is used to refer to non-standard varieties that are often viewed as subordinate forms or subdivisions of a language.

So, is the distinction based only on linguistic basis? The answer to this question will be reached after analysing different cases in the world.

5.1.3 Definition of Dialect

At first glance, it appears that a language is made up of several sub-varieties used in specific regions or by particular social groups. For instance, British English, American English, Canadian English, and Australian English are commonly regarded as dialects of English. Likewise, Algerian Arabic, Moroccan Arabic, Tunisian Arabic, Egyptian Arabic, and Syrian Arabic are seen as dialects of Arabic.

In addition, speakers in Baghdad from different religious communities—such as Muslims, Christians, and Jews—may use distinct varieties of Arabic. Similarly, in the United States, different ethnic groups (including White Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Latino Americans) may speak different varieties of American English.

Accordingly, dialects of a language can be understood as distinct systems of communication that may make understanding more difficult, but do not completely prevent mutual comprehension, as noted by David Crystal (2021).

In other words, speakers of different dialects of the same language typically show systematic differences in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, yet they are still able to understand one another. From this perspective, “language” can be seen as a broader category, with dialects falling under it. Put differently, language functions as a parent category, from which various dialects emerge.

The following figure demonstrates some of the major differences between language and dialect.

Table 5-1 Differences between Language and Dialect

Language	Dialect
Language has a wide geographic reach Languages are so different at all levels: phonetic, phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic levels. Speakers of two languages have trouble understanding each other.	Dialect is more concentrated geographically. Dialects are closely related varieties of one language, though they have differences at different levels. Speakers of two dialects can understand each other.

However, there are many situations worldwide that blur the boundary between language and dialect, showing that the distinction is not purely linguistic. In fact, it is often difficult to clearly separate the two concepts. For example, Portuguese and Spanish are classified as different languages, yet a Portuguese speaker can often understand written Spanish. This raises the question of whether they should instead be considered dialects of the same language.

Similarly, in Italy, Standard Italian is the official language, while varieties such as Romanesco, Occitan, and Sicilian (recognized by UNESCO) are often labelled dialects. Likewise, countries such as Peru, Spain, and Colombia use the same language (Spanish), but their varieties differ considerably from one another.

As a result, mutual intelligibility—which is often used as a criterion for distinguishing between language and dialect—does not always provide a reliable boundary, since it varies across situations and is influenced by many factors.

5.2 Mutual Intelligibility

In many cases, mutual intelligibility is used as a key criterion for distinguishing between a language and a dialect. According to this view, if speakers can understand one another despite differences in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation without prior learning, they

are considered to be using different dialects of the same language. If they cannot understand each other, they are said to speak different languages.

However, in many situations this principle leads to contradictions. In numerous cases, different criteria do not align with one another. The most common conflicts arise when mutual intelligibility and national identity do not correspond. In other words:

- people may live in one country (they have the same national identity) but they do not understand each other (there is no mutual intelligibility) or
- people may belong to different countries (having different national identities) but they can understand each other (they are mutually intelligible).

The most common situation is one where two spoken varieties are mutually intelligible but for political and historical reasons, they are referred to as different languages, like:

- Scandinavia: Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian are said to be mutually intelligible though they are considered to be different languages not dialects,
- Yugoslavia: Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian are also said to be mutually intelligible though they are considered to be different languages not dialects, and
- India: Hindi and Urdu are also said to be mutually intelligible though they are considered to be different languages not dialects.

These languages may be mutually intelligible because they were once dialects of a single language and were later classified as separate languages following political division. In such cases, political boundaries play a major role in shaping linguistic identity, meaning that language status is often linked to national identity rather than purely linguistic criteria.

In other situations, different languages can also be mutually intelligible due to geographical proximity. When languages are spoken in neighbouring regions, they often influence one another through the borrowing of vocabulary, sounds, and grammatical structures. As a result, they may appear more similar than they actually are, leading observers to sometimes misclassify them as dialects of one language rather than separate languages.

This situation can lead to what is known as a dialect continuum, where a chain of neighbouring varieties is mutually intelligible, but varieties at opposite ends of the chain are not. In other words, mutual intelligibility gradually decreases as geographical distance

increases. For example, such a continuum is often described across dialects of German, Dutch, and Flemish, extending from Switzerland through Austria and Germany to the Netherlands and Belgium. A similar continuum has also been proposed for Romance varieties, linking Portuguese, Spanish, Catalan, French, and Italian.

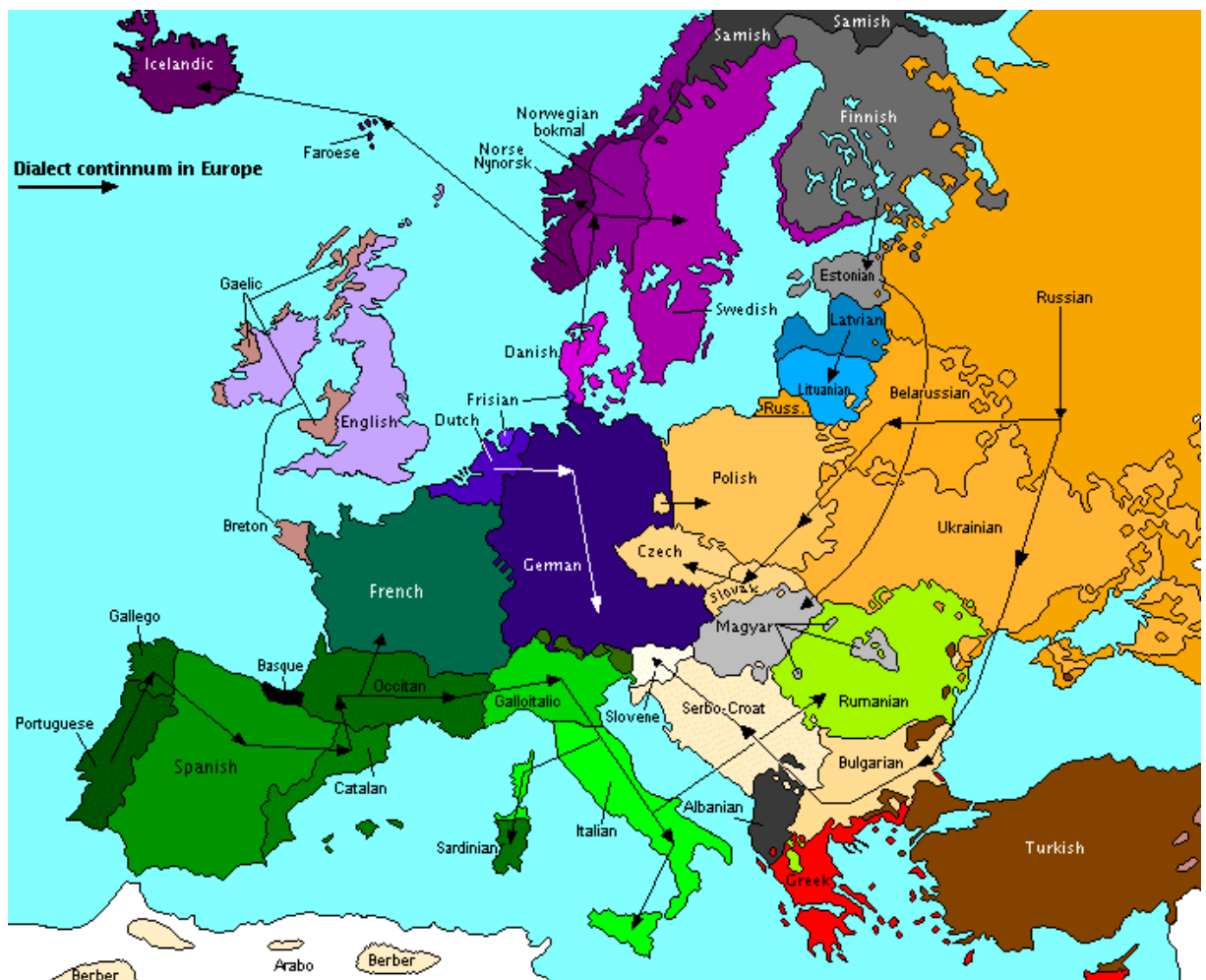


Figure 5.1 Dialect Continuum in Europe

The opposite situation is also quite common. In some cases, spoken varieties may be mutually unintelligible, yet they are still labelled as “dialects” for political, historical, or cultural reasons. For example, Mandarin and Cantonese are often described as dialects of Chinese, even though speakers are not always able to understand each other. A similar

situation can be found with the Berber varieties spoken across different regions of North Africa, which are also referred to as dialects despite limited mutual intelligibility among speakers.

Likewise, intelligibility among Arabic varieties is not always reciprocal. Some speakers, such as those in the Maghreb, may claim to understand other varieties, while speakers from the Middle East may not understand certain Maghrebi dialects.

This shows that mutual intelligibility is not simply a property of language varieties themselves, but rather of the speakers who use them. In other words, it is people who understand each other, not languages in isolation. The degree of intelligibility depends not only on linguistic similarity but also on social factors such as motivation and exposure. Individuals who have more contact with other varieties—often through education or media—tend to understand them more easily. Motivation also plays a role: speakers of non-standard varieties are often more willing to understand standard forms, while speakers of standard varieties may have less exposure or less incentive to adapt, and may even emphasize linguistic differences.

Haut du formulaire

Bas du formulaire

For example, African American speakers, who use a distinct variety from the dominant social group, are often more exposed to Standard American English through education and the media. In addition, they may have stronger motivation to acquire it for practical reasons, such as achieving success in education and improving social mobility, since African American English differs significantly from Standard American English, which is used in formal and institutional contexts.

By contrast, members of the dominant group do not necessarily have the same level of exposure to or motivation for learning African American English, especially since it has traditionally been associated with informal contexts and has not been widely used in domains such as education, administration, or media.

However, this situation has been changing in recent years due to social and political developments. Efforts to increase recognition of African American English, along with the influence of prominent cultural figures such as musicians and actors, have contributed to improving its social status and visibility.

Another clear example is found in Arabic varieties, where mutual intelligibility is not always reciprocal among speakers from different regions. It is often claimed that speakers from the Maghreb can understand varieties spoken in the Middle East more easily, largely because they are more exposed to these dialects through media.

Middle Eastern countries have a long-established and influential media industry, with television channels that appeared much earlier than those in the Maghreb. In addition, many foreign productions—especially popular Turkish series and other international films and soap operas—are frequently dubbed into Syrian and Lebanese Arabic, which increases their regional reach and familiarity among wider Arabic-speaking audiences.

However, Maghreb countries have historically had fewer television productions and broadcasts due to various social and political factors. As a result, they have largely been consumers of media produced in the Middle East, which has given them greater exposure to Eastern Arabic dialects. In contrast, Maghrebi dialects have not been as widely disseminated across other Arabic-speaking regions.

This imbalance in media exposure has contributed to widening the gap between Arabic dialects to the point where mutual intelligibility is sometimes limited. Nevertheless, this situation has begun to change in recent years, particularly with the rise of social media, digital platforms, and shifting attitudes toward linguistic diversity.

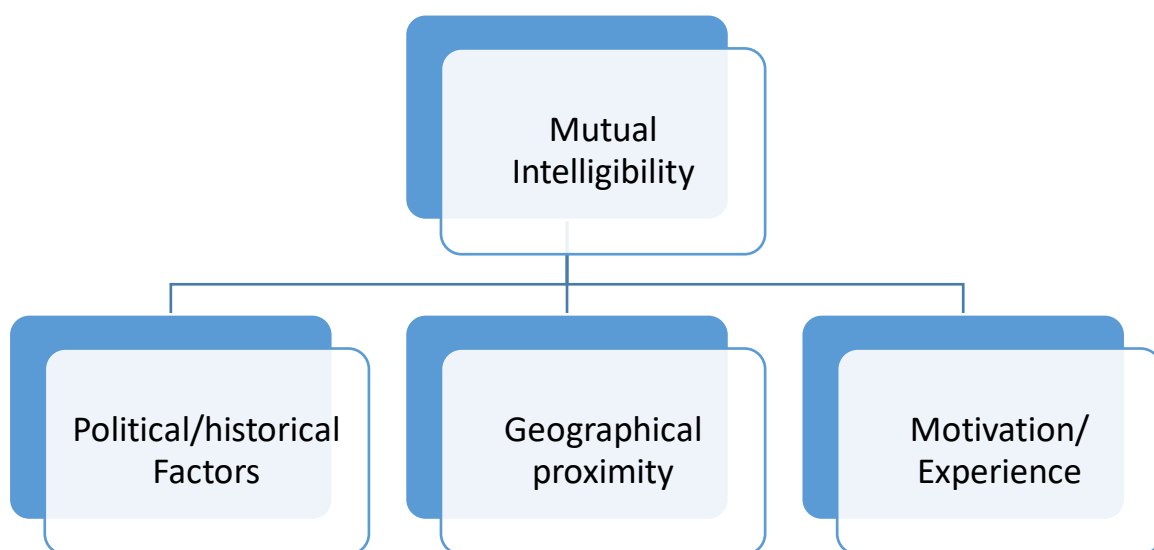


Figure 5.2. Factors of Mutual Intelligibility

Therefore, the cases discussed above clearly demonstrate the arbitrary nature of the distinction between “language” and “dialect,” since this classification is rarely based on purely linguistic features and is instead shaped by social, cultural, and political factors. This idea is often summarized in the saying: “a language is a dialect with an army and a navy.”

Moreover, because a language typically carries greater prestige, it is usually the variety that undergoes standardisation.

5.3 Standardisation

Standardisation refers to the process through which a particular dialect is developed into a standard language. It involves elevating a chosen linguistic variety to a normative status in two main ways.

First, the selected and accepted variety becomes the standard reference used above all other vernacular, dialectal, and colloquial forms in key domains such as literature, science, education, media, administration, and public institutions.

Second, it involves the creation of a regulated and codified system of rules, supported by a standardized writing system, grammar, and dictionaries, which serve as official references for correct language use.

Therefore, a standard variety is typically recognized across the entire speech community and often becomes a symbol of linguistic, and sometimes national or ethnic, identity. It also functions as a “high” variety, primarily used in written communication and formal contexts such as administration, education, and media at regional, national, or even international levels.

According to Haugen (1966), the process of standardisation contains:

- Selection of a norm: choosing a particular variety to serve as the standard form for everyone to follow.

- Acceptance by the community: ensuring that the selected variety is widely accepted by different social groups, otherwise disagreement and resistance may arise.

- Codification of form: fixing and standardizing its spelling system, vocabulary, and grammatical rules.

- Elaboration of function: expanding its use so that, once codified, it can serve practical purposes such as education, administration, and other official domains.

In other words, for a country to standardise one dialect among several existing varieties, the first step is selection. Governments must be cautious in making this choice, as an unsuccessful selection may lead to internal tensions or even division. Selection is therefore often guided by social, economic, political, and cultural considerations in order to ensure acceptance by the speech community. People’s attitudes, in this sense, play a crucial role in the process. Once a variety is selected and accepted, it is then codified for use.

In fact, the definition of standardisation has evolved over time. Early definitions focused mainly on the codified form of a variety that is selected, accepted, and used as a model within a speech community. More recent approaches, however, emphasize its functions and cultural dimensions. Once codified, the chosen variety is extended to different social and cultural domains to meet the communicative needs of a community that has either achieved modernisation or aspires to it, as noted by Helene Mejdell (2006).

Subsequent definitions emphasise on another important angle that is integrated in the selection of a variety to be codified for general social and cultural functions, as it is often the prestigious linguistic form used by a social or an educated elite.

[The] socially favoured variety of a language, often based on the speech of the educated population in and around the cultural and/or political centre of the language community. Such standard dialects are imitated and used as auxiliary language by speakers of other regional and social dialects for the purpose of formal discourse and writing as well as for teaching the language to foreigners. (The linguistic dictionary of Hartmann and Stork, 1976 [1772])

In other words, the selection of a variety for standardisation is often linked to prestige, since it is usually associated with the speech of socially, economically, and politically dominant groups. This prestigious variety is then frequently adopted or imitated by other groups who do not use it as a native form, particularly for formal and functional purposes such as official communication.

From this perspective, a standard language is essentially one dialect that has acquired a privileged status due to specific social, political, and historical circumstances. It does not possess inherent linguistic superiority in terms of vocabulary, grammar, or pronunciation. Rather, it reflects the speech of groups that hold power and prestige in society. Moreover, the criteria for selecting a standard variety differ from one community to another, since what is considered prestigious in one context may not be in another. This variation can be influenced by factors such as religion, as in the cases of Arabic and Hebrew, or by social class structures, as seen in many Western societies.

It is important to distinguish between a standard language and an official language. An official language is one that is used for governmental and administrative purposes, serving mainly practical functions in formal institutions. In this sense, an official language is generally expected to be standardized, whereas a standard language is not necessarily official.

For example, Standard Arabic is an official language in Algeria. By contrast, English is not an official language there, even though it is a standardized language and is widely used in education, business, international agreements, and sectors such as oil and gas.

The official language (اللغة الرسمية) is also contrasted to a national language (اللغة الوطنية)

The latter refers to the language of a political, cultural, and social unit. It is generally developed and used as a symbol of national unity (unlike the official language which has only utilitarian functions and does not symbolise unity and national identity). Its functions are to identify the nation and unite its people.

A further distinction is made between standard and non-standard languages or dialects, the latter often referred to as *vernaculars*. The term *vernacular* is used in several related senses, but it generally refers to a language variety that has not been standardized and does not have official status. It is also typically the first language acquired by individuals in the home environment.

Historically, the term has been in use since the Middle Ages, initially to describe local European languages that had low prestige in comparison with Latin, which held a high-status position. Over time, it came to refer more broadly to any non-standard spoken variety associated with lower-status groups. In this sense, the vernacular of a community is the everyday speech used by ordinary speakers, such as Algerian Arabic in its local contexts.

5.4 Conclusion

The discussion of language and dialect once again highlights the complexity of human language. Language is not merely a system of symbols used for communication; it is deeply embedded in all aspects of human life. Throughout this lecture, we have seen how language is closely connected to the sociocultural, political, historical, and geographical dimensions of community identity.

These factors should be carefully considered in governmental decision-making, since national identity is closely linked to linguistic identity among other elements. For this reason, linguistic marginalization can lead to tensions and conflicts in many parts of the world. Language, therefore, is not defined only by its grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, but also by the identity of its speakers. In other words, disregarding a language variety often means disregarding an entire community, along with its history, culture, civilization, and

existence. This explains the emergence of many cultural movements worldwide that advocate for linguistic rights.

Assignment:

Choose one case study (e.g., Arabic dialects, English varieties, Spanish varieties) and explain:

- Its dialectal variation
- Whether it is considered one language or multiple languages

Lecture 6: Multilingualism

Objectives and Goals

By the end of the lecture, students will be able to:

- Understand the concept of multilingualism from different viewpoints.
- Distinguish between individual and societal multilingualism.
- Recognise the difference between the various classifications of types of bilingualism and multilingualism.
- Comprehend the main causes of multilingualism.
- Understand some of the impact of multilingualism from both micro- as well as macro-approaches.
- Identify the reasons why multilinguals choose a particular code rather than another in different language situations.

Lecture Content

- 6.1. Introduction
- 6.2. What Is Multilingualism?
 - 6.2.1. Individual Multilingualism
 - 6.2.2. Societal Multilingualism
- 6.3. What Leads to Multilingualism?
- 6.4. Types of Multilingualism

6.5. Results of Language Contact

6.6. Language Choice

6.7. Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

As mentioned earlier, sociolinguistics examines the relationship between language and society. It not only studies variation within a single language but also investigates language contact in multilingual contexts. In this regard, it is important to consider what happens in communities where multiple languages coexist, especially since most of the world's population is bilingual or multilingual rather than monolingual. According to Rodolfo Stavenhagen (1990), between five and eight thousand ethnic groups exist within approximately 160 nation-states.

In addition, scholars estimate that more than 5,000 distinct languages are spoken across these countries. This means that very few nations are truly monolingual or mono-ethnic. As a result, it is important to examine the factors that lead to multilingualism, define multilingualism from a sociolinguistic perspective, and explore the effects of language contact in different contexts, as well as the factors that influence language choice.

6.2 What is Multilingualism?

Multilingualism has been defined in various ways depending on the perspective adopted by different scholars. According to Michael Clyne (2007), the term multilingualism may refer either to the language use or competence of an individual, or to the language situation of an entire nation or society.

This definition highlights, on the one hand, the distinction between language competence and language use. In some cases, individuals may be required to use a language in which they have limited competence, as in the case of older illiterate speakers in Algeria who may need to use Standard Arabic or French for official documents despite not fully mastering them. On the other hand, some individuals may possess competence in several languages that they do not regularly use in everyday communication, such as Algerians who

know languages like Turkish, Spanish, Chinese, or Russian but only use them occasionally, for instance when interacting with native speakers online.

On the other hand, multilingualism can be approached from both individual and societal perspectives. The following diagram summarizes the key aspects of multilingualism as presented in this lecture.

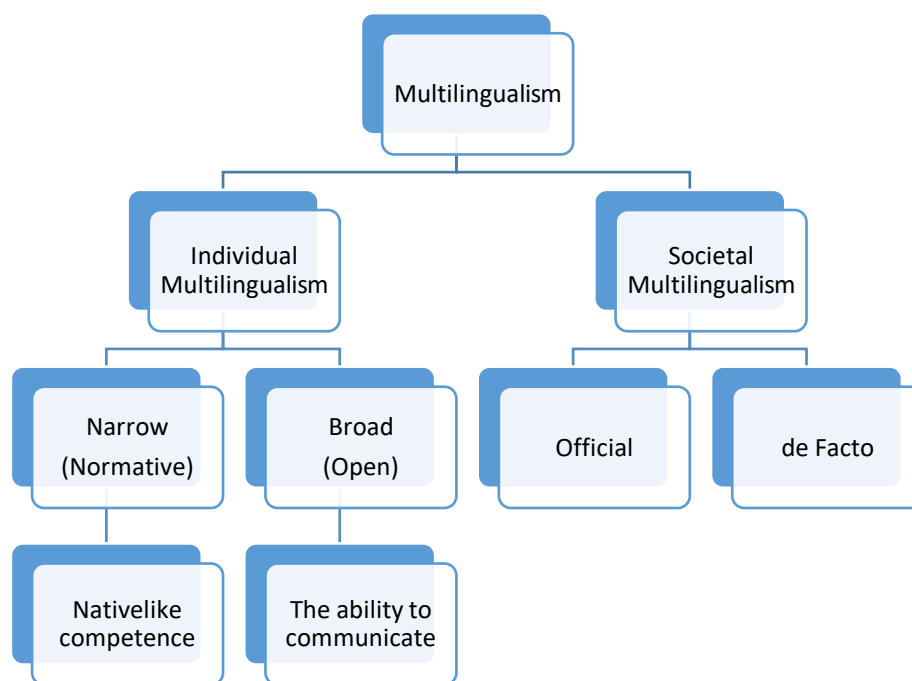


Figure 6.1. Aspects of Multilingualism

6.2.1 Individual Multilingualism

Early definitions of multilingualism and bilingualism stressed that individuals should have equal proficiency in the languages they speak and be able to use each language interchangeably in the same contexts. However, this view has been shown to be unrealistic, as argued by Hugo Van Overbeke (1972) and Einar Haugen (1973, cited in *ibid*).

Recent definitions, however, focus on language use rather than having equal competence in languages in defining the concept in question. Thus, definitions now are

becoming more general to include many cases as multi/bilingualism, which have been excluded from early definitions that have been very narrow and implied native-like competence in the languages. That is to say, definitions like: “the ability to use more than one language” or “competence in more than one language” are open to cover different levels of command (competence) or use of the various languages. In this respect, Sridhar (1996: 50 quoted in Wardhaugh, 2006: 96) says:

Multilingualism involving balanced, nativelike command of all the languages in the repertoire is rather uncommon. Typically, multilinguals have varying degrees of command of the different repertoires. The differences in competence in the various languages might range from command of a few lexical items, formulaic expressions such as greetings, and rudimentary conversational skills all the way to excellent command of the grammar and vocabulary and specialised register and styles.

In other words, an individual’s proficiency in two or more languages can be viewed as a continuum ranging from minimal ability to near-native competence. Bilingual or multilingual speakers may therefore show different levels of skill in each of the four language abilities: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

In this sense, the degree of bilingualism refers to the extent of linguistic proficiency a person attains in each of the languages they use.

6.2.2 Societal Multilingualism

At the societal level, multilingualism raises several important issues. Here, languages are examined at the level of the whole nation or speech community rather than at the level of individual speakers. This includes questions such as which languages are used, in which domains they are used, what factors influence language choice, and how language contact operates within society.

A key distinction is made between the official status of languages and the actual linguistic situation in a country. In many cases, multilingualism is not officially recognized, as in several European countries where minority and immigrant languages are often overlooked. Conversely, a country may be officially multilingual without its population

being fully multilingual in practice. For example, in Switzerland, multilingualism is organized on a territorial basis rather than being uniformly distributed among individuals.

This leads to a distinction between *de facto* and official multilingualism. Official multilingualism refers to languages whose status is recognized by the government and stated in official documents, even if this does not reflect everyday linguistic reality. In contrast, *de facto* multilingualism describes the actual language situation on the ground, regardless of constitutional recognition. Canada illustrates this distinction: it is officially bilingual in English and French, yet in practice it is also a multilingual country due to the widespread use of immigrant languages such as Chinese and various Indian languages, often maintained within communities that preserve their linguistic and cultural identities.

6.3 What Leads to Multilingualism?

Many factors contribute to the spread of multilingualism across the world, including international migration (as seen in regions such as America, Europe, and Australia), colonisation (for example in Africa, Latin America, and India), and the existence of international borders where different linguistic communities meet, such as between Austria and Slovenia. The global expansion of international languages like English and Arabic also plays a significant role.

Other contributing factors include religion, where the spread of Islam facilitated the diffusion of Arabic worldwide, as well as modern forms of communication and exchange such as media, television, and the Internet, which have helped spread languages like English. In addition, global business, trade, education, and intermarriage further encourage language contact and multilingualism.

As a result, languages often move beyond their original geographical origins, establishing themselves in new regions where they evolve over time through contact with other languages. This process leads to the development of various forms of bilingualism and multilingualism across different societies.

6.4 Types of Multilingualism

Because there are many different types of bilinguals and multilinguals, researchers in multilingualism have developed various classifications to better describe and measure these differences. These categories often reflect the particular aspects of bilingual experience that scholars choose to focus on.

One set of classifications is based on how languages are acquired. For example, bilingualism may be described as early or late depending on the age at which the second language is learned. It may also be classified as simultaneous or successive, depending on whether the languages are acquired at the same time or one after the other. In addition, some scholars distinguish between individuals who learn a second language through formal study (often called elite, academic, or elective bilinguals) and those who grow up in multilingual environments where multiple languages are naturally present (known as natural, folk, or circumstantial bilinguals).

Another set of classifications focuses on language competence. For instance, balanced bilingualism refers to individuals who have a high level of proficiency in both languages, while non-balanced bilingualism describes those who are more proficient in one language than the other. A further distinction is made between passive and active bilingualism: passive bilinguals can understand a second language but have difficulty producing it, whereas active bilinguals can both understand and use it effectively.

Finally, some classifications consider the psychological representation of languages in the mind, such as coordinate and compound bilingualism. Coordinate bilinguals are thought to store their languages separately, often because they are learned in different contexts and used for different purposes, whereas compound bilinguals are believed to have a shared conceptual system for both languages, allowing more fluid use across contexts.

Overall, the usefulness of these categories depends on the researcher's focus. In this lecture, emphasis is placed mainly on the social dimensions of multilingualism, particularly issues such as language contact and language choice.

6.5 Results of Language Contact

The different varieties used within the same speech community, across various communicative situations, do not remain completely separate from one another. Instead, they

tend to influence each other at different linguistic levels, including phonology, vocabulary, and grammar, especially in contexts of language contact. As a result, a range of sociolinguistic phenomena emerges from the interaction between coexisting languages and varieties.

Language contact can be examined from two main perspectives. On the one hand, the focus may be placed on linguistic structures themselves, leading to a micro-sociolinguistic approach that analyses the specific changes and variations occurring within language systems. On the other hand, a broader macro-sociolinguistic perspective considers the socio-cultural factors that shape and motivate these interactions, such as historical, political, and social conditions.

As far as linguistic consequences are concerned, the lecture highlights the way bilingual speakers alternate between two languages during communication, often within the same conversation. According to Peter Spolsky (1998: 49), such alternation “can take place between or even within sentences, involving phrases or words or even parts of words.”

Thus, language alternation can take several forms: (1) switching between sentences, (2) mixing languages within a single sentence while keeping the original forms of words or expressions, and (3) integrating elements within a sentence while adapting them to the structure of the other language. These processes are commonly referred to as code-switching, code-mixing, and linguistic borrowing respectively.

It should be noted, however, that there is no full agreement in the literature on the exact boundaries between these terms. In some cases, they are even used interchangeably or as broad umbrella terms. As Allan Edwards (1994: 76) observes, “whatever labels we apply – interference, code-switching, mixing, transference, etc. – it is clear that in all cases something is ‘borrowed’ from another language.” In other words, multilingual speech often involves the combination of elements from at least two languages within the same interaction.

In this lecture, the distinction proposed by Paul Herbert (2001, cited in Robert Gafaranga, 2007: 23) is adopted, which makes a three-way differentiation between these concepts.

Borrowings and code-mixed elements are both incorporated lexical items, but they differ according to temporal and spatial factors. Borrowed forms are generally well

established in a language, widely used by both bilingual and monolingual speakers, and distributed across the whole speech community. They usually reflect a historical process of long-term linguistic integration.

Code-mixing, by contrast, refers to the more immediate and synchronic insertion of lexical material from one language into another during interaction. It is more context-dependent and less fully integrated into the language system.

The term code-switching, however, is used when there is a shift in the grammatical system governing the conversation, meaning that speakers move from one language structure to another within discourse.

Thus, this definition clearly distinguishes between the three concepts. Both borrowing and code-mixing involve the insertion of lexical items (words or vocabulary), whereas code-switching involves a shift in the grammatical system of the language used in conversation.

A further distinction is made between borrowing and code-mixing, even though both concern the incorporation of words rather than full sentences. Borrowing typically refers to lexical items that have been fully adapted to the phonological, morphological, and semantic system of the recipient language. These loanwords are widely used across the entire speech community, known to both bilingual and monolingual speakers, and are generally the result of long-term historical processes of linguistic integration.

Code-mixing, on the other hand, refers to the more immediate, synchronic insertion of lexical items by bilingual speakers during conversation, without fully adapting them to the structure of the recipient language.

Another focus regarding the consequences of multilingualism concerns broader phenomena that arise from the interaction between languages in contact situations on the one hand, and various social, cultural, economic, political, and historical factors on the other.

Among the consequences of multilingualism that have been widely studied and investigated by sociolinguists are:

- language spread: when a language goes beyond its original borders (such as Arabic, French, Spanish, and English),

- language attrition: loss of language skills in the individual's first language (like the case of the children of immigrants),
- language shift: when people shift completely to other languages leaving behind their mother tongues; this happens through generations (like the case of some immigrants, or Berbers surrounded by Arabic-speaking communities in Algeria in areas like Tipaza),
- language change: a variation over time in a language's features (at the phonetic, phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic levels),
- language death: when a language ceases to be used as a mother tongue or to exist as a spoken language (like Latin), and
- language maintenance: when a language is preserved in spite of the many factors of eradication (like the case of Arabic during the period of European colonisations, Berbers throughout history in North Africa, or many immigrants in the world).
- Pidgins and creoles: these are systems of communication that emerge and develop in contact situations in which there is no lingua franca.

6.6 Language Choice

Bilingualism and multilingualism allow speakers to alternate between languages in various ways. This may involve inserting words, parts of words, sentences, or even speech sounds from one language into another. Borrowed elements may appear in their original form or may be adapted to fit the grammatical, phonological, and semantic rules of the recipient language.

In addition, language alternation can occur either within a sentence (intra-sentential) between sentences (inter-sentential). These linguistic practices are largely influenced by the context of communication, including the identity of the speaker, the interlocutor, the setting (time and place), and the topic of discussion. As Ronald Wardhaugh (2006) explains, various factors influence the choice of one code over another in multilingual interaction.

- Code-switching may result from an individual speaker's choice in a given communicative situation, or it may function as a key marker of identity for a group of speakers.
- Code-switching is a conversational strategy employed to establish, cross, or even break group boundaries, as well as to create, express, or modify interpersonal relationships.
- Choice of a particular code may become a form of political expression, a move either to resist some other power, or to gain power, or to express solidarity.
- The speaker's motivation is also an important factor in language choice, and this motivation is not necessarily fully conscious. In many cases, speakers adjust their language to accommodate their listeners or to reflect perceived social and cultural distance, such as when speaking to strangers or to a supervisor at work.
- Codeswitching is usually situational; one variety is used in a certain set of situations and another in an entirely different set.
- Your choice of code also reflects how you wish to present yourself to others; in other words, it expresses your identity and influences how others perceive you. Listeners are often affected by code choices when interpreting what speakers say. Certain codes are considered more suitable for particular messages than others, meaning that code and message are closely linked and often inseparable.

In many cases, speakers do not simply adapt to the style of their interlocutors or meet their expectations; instead, they may adjust their speech according to the self-image they wish to project in relation to others. Speaking, therefore, is not only a social act involving interaction with others, but also a personal act through which individuals construct and display the identity they wish to be associated with in a given situation.

Thus, codeswitching is not a uniform phenomenon; the norms vary from group to another, even within what might be regarded as a single community.

6.7 Conclusion

The concept of bi/multilingualism has long attracted the attention of not only linguists but also scholars and researchers from various fields, particularly philosophy and language education. This lecture highlighted how understandings of this phenomenon have shifted over time, moving from an emphasis on individual language competence to a focus on language use across different social contexts. In other words, attention is increasingly directed toward society rather than the individual.

Today, multilingualism is viewed from a wider perspective, considering what societies do with their languages and how languages influence social, cultural, political, and economic life. Furthermore, issues such as language contact and its effects at both micro and macro levels are also an important part of the discussion, whether examined in the short term or over longer periods.

Ultimately, it is essential to explore the relationship between language and society, as well as their mutual influence. Doing so contributes to a deeper understanding of identity and human psychology, and has proven valuable for professionals in diverse areas such as economics, business, politics, and education.

Assignment:

Define **multilingualism** and explain how it differs from bilingualism. Provide examples from real-life situations.

Lecture 7: Bilingualism

Objectives and Goals

By the end of the lecture, students will be able to:

- Understand bilingualism.
- Distinguish between societal and individual bilingualism

Lecture Content:

7.1 Introduction

7.2 Types of Bilingualism

7.2.1 Societal Bilingualism

7.2.2 Individual Bilingualism

7.3 Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

Monolingual societies are relatively uncommon worldwide. In contrast, most communities have access to more than one language variety, making multilingualism far more widespread than monolingualism on a global scale. As an illustration, Edwards (1994:44) notes that approximately 5,000 languages are spoken across only about 200 countries, which averages to roughly 25 languages per state.

Similarly, Crystal (1997) estimates that around two-thirds of children globally grow up in bilingual environments. Cortés (2013) further suggests that more than half of the world's population is bilingual or multilingual. He reports that 56% of Europeans are bilingual, compared to 38% in Great Britain, 35% in Canada, and 17% in the United States.

The definition of bilingualism has always been a matter of debate. The dimension of such contention is clearly captured in the definitions of two linguists which could best be described as paradoxical:

- Bloomfield (1933:56) defines multilingualism as “a native-like control of two languages,” which represents a rather strict interpretation. This view implies that a bilingual or multilingual individual must have equal and fluent mastery of both languages. As a result, it excludes, for example, early-stage learners of a foreign or second language. It also overlooks individuals who can understand a second language but are unable to actively produce speech in it.

Macnamara (1967a) proposes a broader understanding of multilingualism, suggesting that even minimal ability in any one of the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, or writing—in a language other than one's mother tongue is enough to consider a person bilingual.

Other scholars offer definitions that fall between these two extremes. Mackey (1957), for instance, describes bilingualism as the alternating use of two or more languages by the same individual. Similarly, Grosjean (1982) provides a more comprehensive perspective, arguing that the key criterion is the regular use of two languages.

7.2 Types of Bilingualism

Theory-builders often draw a distinction between two types of bilingualism:

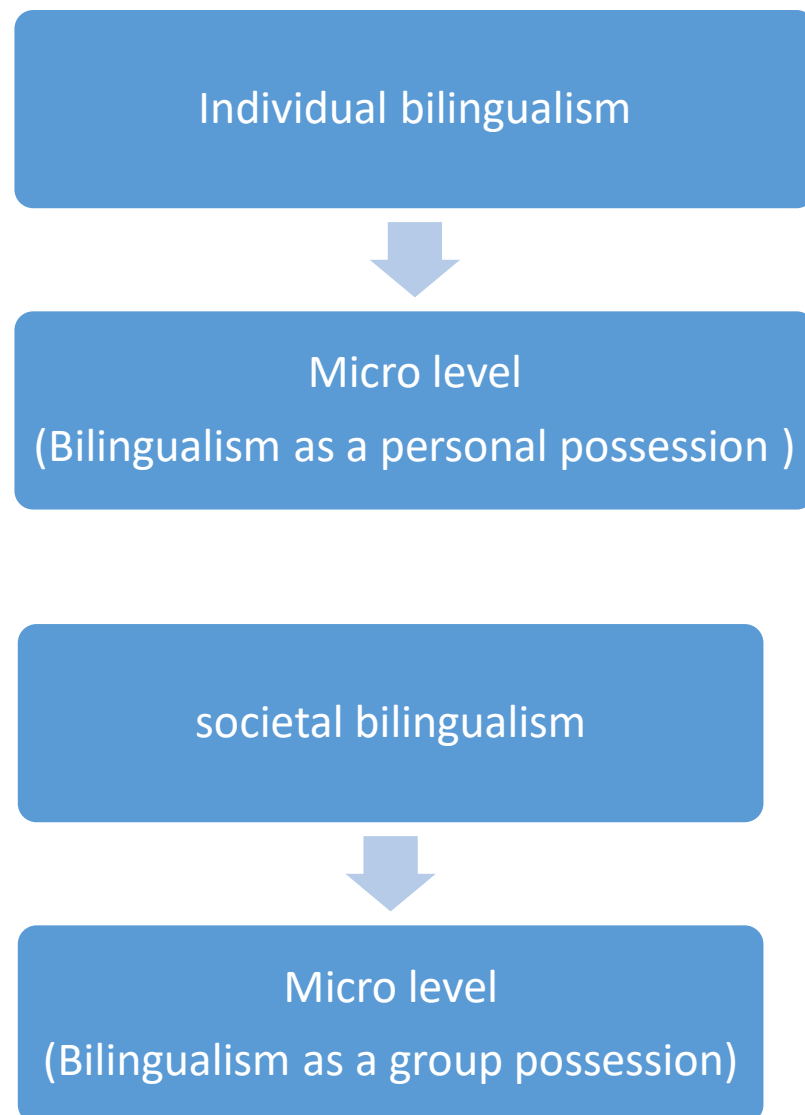


Figure 7.1 Types of Bilingualism

7.2.1 Societal Bilingualism

Bilingualism can be viewed as a feature of society, referring to communities or nations where more than one language is used and where many individuals are able to communicate in these languages. Sociolinguists such as Mackey (1967) distinguish between two forms of societal bilingualism: *de jure* (official) bilingualism and *de facto* (practical or actual) bilingualism.

De jure /,deɪ 'dʒʊəri/ bilingualism

Two or more languages are officially recognized within the speech community, generally by the constitution or linguistic laws. These languages are often supported by services of the central/local government (Media, public administration, schools, parliament, etc).

Examples of de jure multilingual communities:

- Switzerland: is a de jure multilingual speech community since 4 languages are considered official: German, French, Italian and Romansh.
- Morocco is a de jure bilingual speech community (Arabic and Berber are official languages)
- South Africa: 11 official languages; all of them are formally equal.
- Kenya: Swahili and English are official languages

De facto /,deɪ 'fæktəʊ/ bilingualism

This form of bilingualism occurs when a country's real linguistic situation reflects the use of more than one language, even if this is not officially recognized. In other words, a community may be officially monolingual while still having other languages in everyday use, often minority ones, that lack formal status. This situation results in what is known as *de facto* bilingualism..

Examples of de facto multilingual communities:

- France: is officially (de jure) a monolingual community since its constitution recognizes French as the sole official language of the country. But it is a de facto (in reality) multilingual country as some other minor languages (e.g. Alsatian, Breton, etc) in addition to immigrant languages (Portuguese, Arabic, etc) are used throughout the nation.
- Canada: de jure bilingual (English and French), but de facto multilingual country because other languages are also spoken in the country, like Mandarin, Italian, German, Penjabi, to count but a few.

7.2.2 Individual bilingualism

Individual bilingualism is seen as a personal characteristic that refers to a person's ability to function linguistically in more than one language. Hamers and Blanc (2000) use the term *bilinguality* to describe this individual aspect of bilingualism. It is influenced by various internal and external factors, including upbringing, education, place of residence, age, attitude, motivation, and others.

There are numerous ways to classify individual bilingualism, and researchers typically take four main dimensions into account when making such distinctions.

- Cognitive organisation of the two languages
- Age of acquisition/learning
- Language proficiency
- Sequence of acquisition

Examples:

Classification according to the age of acquisition/learning:

Early bilingualism refers to individuals who acquire two languages during childhood. This may occur either through simultaneous exposure to both languages from an early age (simultaneous or native bilingualism) or when a child has already developed some proficiency in a first language before learning a second one early in life (successive early bilingualism). In such cases, individuals often develop competence in both languages, a situation known as additive bilingualism.

Late bilingualism, on the other hand, refers to the acquisition of a second language after approximately the age of 6–7, often associated with the critical period hypothesis. In this case, the first language is already well established, and learners typically rely on their L1 knowledge and experience to support the learning of the second language.

Classification according to language proficiency:

Different distinctions are put forward. We mention what follows:

- balanced bilinguals: These people are equally competent in the two languages.
- unbalanced bilinguals: they do not use the two languages with equal ease.
- Active bilinguals: those individuals who can speak the two languages, i.e., their creative skills are developed in both languages.
- Passive bilinguals: those people who can understand the two languages. They will also speak one of these languages. Here only receptive skills are relatively developed in the second language.

7.3 Conclusion:

Bilingualism, viewed through a sociolinguistic lens, is far more than the ability to speak two languages—it is a dynamic social practice shaped by identity, power, culture, and context. It reflects how individuals and communities navigate multiple linguistic systems to express belonging, negotiate meaning, and adapt to changing social environments. From code-switching in everyday conversation to language policies at national levels, bilingualism reveals the deep connections between language and society.

Assignment:

1. Characterize societal bilingualism in Algeria
2. How would you qualify Algerians?

Lecture 8: Borrowing

Objectives and Goals

By the end of the lecture, students will be able to:

- Understand what is meant by borrowing.
- Differentiate between borrowing and Codeswitching

Lecture Content

8.1 Introduction

8.2 Types of Borrowing

8.3 Borrowing vs. Codeswitching

8.4 Conclusion:

8.1 Introduction

Borrowing is a natural outcome of language contact situations. According to Hoffer (2005:53), one of the most noticeable effects of intercultural contact and communication is the presence of loanwords that enter the vocabulary of the languages involved. In a similar way, Haugen (1989:197) defines borrowing as the commonly used term for the adoption into one language of a linguistic feature that originally belonged to another.

In this sense, all languages engage in borrowing, and the vocabulary of any language can be divided into native and borrowed elements. Lexical items are the most frequently borrowed, with nouns being the most common type of loanwords. However, this does not mean that other linguistic elements, such as morphemes or inflectional features, are never borrowed.

8.2 Types of Borrowing

Myers-Scotton (1993b; 2006) differentiates between cultural borrowings and core borrowings.

1. Cultural borrowings are adopted suddenly into a language and primarily serve to fill lexical gaps in the receiving language. They typically refer to new objects or concepts that were previously unknown in the target culture.

E.g: pizza and paella entered Arabic when the food to which they refer were adopted by the Arabic-speaking community.

2. Core borrowings are words that enter a language even when an existing native term already exists for the same object or concept. As a result, they are often considered redundant or unnecessary, since they simply duplicate meanings that are already available in the recipient language.

E.g: The media language, which is normally Standard Arabic, includes words like ‘reportage’, ‘mechanism’, ‘mondial’, etc. Such words, which are of a foreign origin (English or French), are of a gratuitous nature as Standard Arabic has viable equivalents (/taqri:r/, /ʔa:lijja:t/, /ʕa:lami:/, respectively).

Linguists also identify other types of borrowing, such as:

Calque (also called loan translation): in such a case, the linguistic unit has no foreign features. It is rather a word-for-word native version of the original.

e.g 1. English Skyscraper French gratte-ciel Arabic /na:tiħat saħa:b/

e.g 2. English ‘computer’ is calqued in Arabic as /ħa:su:b/

8.3 Borrowing vs. Codeswitching

In studies dealing with the distinction between code-switching and borrowing, the main difficulty is determining the status of single-word items—whether they should be classified as borrowings or as instances of code-switching. To address this issue, two principal but opposing approaches have been proposed, each relying on two main criteria.

- Degree of EL items integration in the host language;
- Degree of use by monolingual speakers.

According to Poplack and her associates (1981, 1987), loanwords are characterized by a certain level of morphological and syntactic integration into the recipient language, and sometimes also phonological adaptation. An example of such borrowing is:

Table 8-1 Examples of Borrowing

French word	Arabic loanword
table	[tabla(h)] التانييت تاء ('h' feminine marker)
la table	[aṭṭabla] 'al' (assimilated as 'at', def. article)
deux tables	[zu:ʒ ɥwa:bl] (dual form)
tables	[ɥa:bla:t] (femine plural)

8.4 Conclusion

Myers-Scotton (1993 b) and her associates discard the idea of morphosyntactic integration. Instead, they observe that frequency of use is the single reliable criterion to distinguish between code switching and borrowing, arguing that items that appear very frequently are regarded as loanwords, whereas those that appear only occasionally constitute instances of code switching. In this view, code switching is typically associated with bilingual speakers; borrowed words are used even by monolinguals.

Assignment:

Find **borrowed words** used in your native language or dialect. Identify their possible source language and explain their usage

Lecture 9: Code Switching

Objectives and Goals

By the end of the lecture, students will be able to:

- Understand what is code switching.
- Understand the types of code switching and its functions.

Lecture Content

9.1 Introduction

9.2 Code Switching Categories

9.3 Types of Code Switching

9.4 Functions of Code Switching

9.5 Conclusion

9.1 Introduction:

Code-switching is a key concept in sociolinguistics that refers to the alternation between two or more languages or language varieties within a single interaction. Common among bilingual and multilingual speakers, it is not random but shaped by social context, identity, and communicative intent. Through code-switching, speakers can signal group

membership, adjust to different audiences, and express nuanced meanings, making it an important lens for understanding the relationship between language and society.

- (i) One of the many forms of language contact phenomena.
- (ii) It can be understood by placing it in the double context of
 - a. verbal repertoires of a bilingual or multilingual community
 - b. verbal repertoires of individual members of the community
- (iii) A boundary-leveling (solidarity) or a boundary-maintaining (power) strategy.
- (iv) It contributes to the understanding of the relationship between social processes and linguistic forms.

Code-switching is often seen as a direct and natural result of language contact. Speakers who are proficient in more than one language frequently alternate between—or even blend—different linguistic codes within a single interaction. This behaviour, typical of bilingual individuals, is known as code-switching (also written as codeswitching or code switching, abbreviated as CS).

Gumperz defines code-switching as “the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems” (1982, p. 59). Similarly, Auer (1984, p. 1) describes it as “the alternating use of more than one language.”

9.2 Code Switching Categories

External (or cross-linguistic) code-switching takes place between two different languages, whereas internal code-switching occurs between different varieties or dialects of the same language.

It was not until the early 1970s that code-switching began to receive significant scholarly attention as a subject of interest in its own right. Previously, it was often regarded as a deviation from “correct” language use, even by prominent linguists, including structuralists such as Bloomfield and later Weinreich. However, following the influential work of Blom and Gumperz in 1972, research on code-switching expanded considerably, leading to a substantial growth in the literature on the topic.

9.3 Types of Code Switching

Blom and Gumperz (1972) distinguish between two types of code-switching.

Situational code-switching refers to the use of different language varieties depending on the social situation. In this case, linguistic choices reflect the context of interaction, including factors such as participants, status, and degree of formality. It is considered unmarked or expected, as speakers naturally switch codes according to the function of the speech event. For example, Chinese students may use Mandarin when interacting socially but switch to English when discussing academic matters.

Metaphorical code-switching, on the other hand, involves changing codes to introduce or frame a topic that would typically belong to a different conversational context.

The misuse of codes in contexts where they are not conventionally expected can lead to a sense of inappropriateness, since another language variety would normally be used. This form of switching is considered marked, meaning it is unexpected in that particular situation.

A marked choice in code-switching can function in different ways: it may be positive when it reduces social distance between speakers, or negative when it increases that distance.

According to Scotton (1989) in “Code-switching as indexical of social negotiations,” there is often no obvious practical reason for such switches. Instead, code-switching serves as a symbolic resource that conveys social meanings. Speakers rely on the associations linked to each language much like metaphors are used to express complex ideas and social identities.

Gumperz and Hymes (1986) summarize the difference this way:

An important distinction is made from situational switching, where alternation between varieties redefines a situation, being a change in governing norms, and metaphorical switching, where alternation enriches a situation, allowing for allusion to more than one social relationship within the situation.

Code-switching was initially understood as a full shift from one language or variety to another. This view is reflected in Weinreich’s (1953, p. 73) claim that the “ideal bilingual switches from one language to another according to appropriate changes in the speech situation [...] but not in an unchanged speech situation, and certainly not within a single

sentence.” Like many linguists of his time, Weinreich did not accept intra-sentential switching, which was often regarded as a form of linguistic corruption.

Later research, however, adopted a broader perspective. Myers-Scotton (1993a, p. vii), a key figure in code-switching studies, defines it as “the use of two or more languages in the same conversation.” Similarly, Milroy and Muysken (1995, p. 7) describe code-switching as “the alternative use by bilinguals of two or more languages in the same conversation.”

CS scholarship revolves around two basic questions:

1. Why do bilinguals code switch?
2. When do bilinguals switch code?

The first question deals primarily with the motivations for code switching, or simply the function of code switching. The second question considers CS from a syntactic standpoint, i.e., where switches are permitted and where they are not.

9.4 Functions of Code Switching

People alternate between languages for a variety of reasons, and several motivations have been identified in the literature.

One common reason is **lexical need**, where bilingual speakers switch codes to fill linguistic gaps, either temporarily or permanently, when a word or expression is unavailable in one of the languages.

Another motivation is **language skill showing**, in which speakers intentionally shift between languages to demonstrate their bilingual proficiency and control over both codes.

Quoting can also trigger code-switching, as speakers may change language in order to reproduce someone else’s speech more accurately or authentically.

Accommodation refers to the way speakers adjust their language choices in relation to their interlocutor. When a speaker aligns their language with that of the addressee, this is known as convergence, while maintaining a different language choice may signal divergence.

Finally, **euphemism** plays a role, as certain words or expressions may be socially inappropriate or taboo in specific contexts. Bilingual speakers can avoid such terms by

switching to another language in which the expressions are less offensive or carry less negative connotation.

9.5 Conclusion:

Code-switching highlights the fluid and dynamic nature of bilingual competence. Rather than indicating linguistic deficiency, it demonstrates a high level of communicative skill and cultural awareness. However, attitudes toward code-switching can vary—while it is celebrated in some communities, it may be stigmatized in others, especially in formal or institutional contexts.

In conclusion, code-switching illustrates how bilingual speakers actively negotiate meaning and identity through language. It underscores the idea that language use is deeply embedded in social life, making it a key phenomenon for understanding bilingualism within sociolinguistics.

Assignment:

Explain why speakers switch languages.

Lecture 10: Diglossia

Objectives and Goals

By the end of the lecture, students will be able to:

- Understand what is diglossia.
- Distinguish between the classical and extended definitions of diglossia.
- Discover the different defining features of diglossic situations.
- Know differences between diglossia and bilingualism.
- Understand the difference between diglossia, triglossia, and polyglossia.
- Understand different cases of diglossia in the world.

Lecture Content

- 10.1. Introduction
- 10.2. Classical Definition
 - 10.2.1. Linguistic Characteristics
 - 10.2.2. Sociocultural Characteristics
- 10.3. Extended Diglossia
- 10.4. Conclusion

10.1 Introduction

Diglossia was first introduced into sociolinguistics by Ferguson (1959). Since then, it has been widely accepted by sociolinguists and sociologists of language, and has undergone further development and refinement. This lecture therefore explores the evolving definitions of the concept since its introduction to the field, beginning with the classical definition and moving on to later extensions and revisions.

Through this discussion, students gain a clearer understanding of what diglossia means, its key characteristics, and the factors that contributed to significant changes in how the phenomenon is understood. In addition, the lecture aims to deepen awareness of the social dimension of language, showing how language varieties may be valued and used differently depending on socio-cultural contexts.

As a result, students are also guided toward a broader understanding of the relationship between language and society from a macro-level perspective, which in turn helps them develop more critical thinking skills regarding social phenomena.

10.2 Classical Definition

Ferguson's original definition is commonly referred to as the classical model of diglossia. It describes a stable linguistic situation in which two closely related varieties of the same language coexist within a single speech community, each fulfilling distinct but complementary social roles.

On one hand, the High (H) variety is used in formal and prestigious domains such as education, administration, the media, religion, and political discourse. On the other hand, the Low (L) variety is reserved for informal contexts, including everyday conversation at home, in the street, and in less formal work environments.

In Ferguson's (1959: 245) words:

Diglossia is a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (...), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely

by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation.

In this definition, Ferguson distinguishes between the two varieties involved in diglossic situations by identifying nine key differences, which are generally grouped into linguistic and sociocultural categories. The linguistic category includes variations in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, while the sociocultural category covers differences in prestige, standardisation, function, acquisition, literary tradition, and stability.

The classical model originally recognized only four diglossic communities: the Arabic-speaking world, German-speaking Switzerland, Haiti, and Greece. This limitation was due to its focus on genetically related varieties that perform complementary roles within the same society. However, later scholars introduced refinements to the concept, broadening its scope and allowing many more linguistic situations to be classified as cases of diglossia.

In this framework, Ferguson describes the diglossic situation through nine key dimensions, ranked in terms of importance: function, prestige, literary heritage, acquisition, standardization, stability, grammar, lexicon, and phonology. Among these, functional distribution—or the specialization of roles—is considered the defining characteristic of diglossia. This means that the High (H) and Low (L) varieties are used in different contexts and for different communicative purposes.

Wardhaugh (2006, p. 89) similarly states that “a diglossic situation exists in a society when it has two distinct codes which show clear functional separation; that is, one code is employed in one set of circumstances, and the other in an entirely different set.” In this respect, identifying the H and L varieties is generally straightforward, since, as Sebba (2011, p. 450) explains, “H and L have disjoint functions: where H is appropriate, L is inappropriate and vice versa.”

The following table is summary about Ferguson’s nine features that were cited by Britto (1986,p.58).

Table 10-1 Ferguson's Features of H and L Varieties

	Characteristics of H:	Characteristics of L:
Function	Used for formal speeches, writing, and high functions.	Used for informal conversations and low functions.
Prestige	More prestigious.	Less prestigious.
Acquisition	Learned formally at school, in addition to L.	Acquired naturally and informally at home or playground.
Standardization	Highly standardized by descriptive and normative studies.	Poorly standardized, though informal standards may exist.
Literary heritage	Vast amount. Highly esteemed literature	Small amount. Less highly esteemed literature.
Stability	Autonomous and stable, with some interference from L	Autonomous and stable, with some interference from H.
Lexicon	The bulk of the vocabulary is shared with L. But there are also words used exclusively or paired with L	The bulk of the vocabulary is shared with H. But there are also words used exclusively or paired with H
Phonology	With L constitutes a single phonological structure. Features divergent from L are a subsystem	With H constitutes a single phonological structure. L, however, is the basic system
Grammar	More complex.	Simpler

10.3 Extended Diglossia

Ferguson's classical definition of diglossia was later expanded by Joshua Fishman (1967). He proposed that diglossia can exist in any context where two language varieties are used in distinct functional roles, even if these varieties are not genetically related.

Fishman (1972, p. 92) argues that diglossia is not limited to multilingual societies that recognize multiple languages, nor only to situations involving a classical and vernacular variety. It can also be found in communities that use different dialects, registers, or any functionally differentiated linguistic forms. The case of widespread bilingualism in Paraguay, for example, led Fishman to suggest that diglossia may occur wherever two language varieties are distributed across different social functions, regardless of their linguistic relationship.

The key idea in Fishman's approach is that any society—monolingual or bilingual—in which two or more varieties are used in specific, functionally distinct situations can be considered diglossic.

There are two types of diglossia:

-*Intra-lingual diglossia* when the varieties are genetically related as it is the case in Algeria where Standard Arabic is H variety and Algerian is the L variety.

-*Inter-lingual diglossia* when the varieties are not genetically related as it is the case in Algeria where French is H variety and Berber is the L variety.

Fishman (1967) distinguishes between bilingualism, understood as an individual's ability to use more than one language, and diglossia, which refers to the patterned use of languages within a speech community. As he explains, "bilingualism is essentially a characterization of individual linguistic behaviour whereas diglossia is a characterization of linguistic organization at the sociocultural level" (Fishman, 1967, p. 34).

He further argues that the two phenomena are not necessarily dependent on each other. Bilingualism can exist without diglossia, and diglossia can also exist in the absence of widespread bilingualism (Fishman, 1967, p. 30).

Table 10-2 Fishman's Extension of Diglossia. (Fishman,2000)

Type1: both Diglossia and Bilingualism Description: every member of the speech community is fluent in both H and L Examples: German and Swiss German in Switzerland, Spanish, and Guarani in Paraguay	Type 2: Diglossia without Bilingualism Description: H and L speakers are two disjunctive groups living in the same area. Examples: Czarist Russia before W.W.I (Nobility speaks French, masses speak Russian).
Type 3: Bilingualism without Diglossia Description: H and L have merged; either language may be used for any purpose. Examples: Industrialized countries in the Western world, “westernized” African and Asian countries	Type 4: Neither Diglossia nor Bilingualism Description: Completely monolingual societies with no varieties. Examples: Isolated tribes, bands, or clans (hypothetical).

10.3.1 Linguistic Characteristics

➤ **Vocabulary:** Vocabulary of the high and low varieties is shared, but they exhibit considerable variation in form and in meaning. For example, the word “table” is (طاوله) in Standard Arabic and (طابله) in Algerian Arabic.

➤ **Grammar:** Grammatical structure is one of the most striking differences between the two varieties. The “H” variety has more complex grammatical categories at all levels: phonetic, phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic aspects. For instance,

words in standard Arabic have three marked ending cases (التتوين) like in:

((ب) كتا - ا ب كتا - ب كت), but all dialects of Arabic do not have this feature.

➤ **Pronunciation:** There are considerable differences between the two varieties at the

phonological level as well. For example, in Arabic the sound (ق) exhibits considerable variations across dialects; it is pronounced (ء), (ق), or (ك) depending on the regional or social belonging of the speaker.

10.3.2 Sociocultural Characteristics

➤ **Prestige:** In diglossic situations, speakers generally view the High (H) variety as more refined, elegant, and prestigious than the Low (L) variety. This difference in prestige is shaped by socio-cultural factors that vary from one community to another. For example, in Arabic-speaking societies, Standard Arabic is highly valued because it is closely linked to religion and cultural identity.

Standardisation: The High variety is typically fully standardised, unlike the Low variety. This is because the prestigious form is usually the one that undergoes codification and formal regulation. It is supported by dictionaries, grammar rules, pronunciation guides, and textbooks, and is taught and studied in formal educational contexts.

Function: A central feature of diglossia is the functional distribution between the two varieties. Although they are often closely related, each serves different but complementary roles. The High variety is used in formal or “high” domains such as politics, religion, education, administration, and the media. In contrast, the Low variety is used in informal settings, including family interactions, casual conversations, folk traditions, personal communication, and social media.

Literary heritage: The two varieties also differ in their literary traditions. The High variety is associated with a rich and extensive written literature, including genres such as prose, poetry, drama, and storytelling. The Low variety, by contrast, is mainly linked to oral traditions and informal forms of expression.

Acquisition: The Low (L) variety is typically acquired first by children as their mother tongue, since it is used in everyday, informal contexts. In contrast, the High (H) variety is usually learned later, mainly through formal education, because it is standardised and associated with formal domains of use.

Stability: Ferguson considers diglossia to be a relatively stable linguistic situation, as both the High and Low varieties tend to be maintained over long periods. The High variety remains stable due to its codification and standardisation, while the Low variety is preserved because it is the native language of the speech community and closely tied to speakers' identity. Even when a language loses its spoken function, its written form may persist for centuries, as in the case of Latin. Similarly, mother-tongue varieties are sustained through everyday use and cultural continuity. Arabic diglossia is often cited as a long-standing example of this stability, with roots predating the advent of Islam.

10.4 Conclusion

In summary, diglossia was initially defined as a situation in which two genetically related language varieties coexist within the same speech community without replacing one another, as each performs clearly defined social functions. However, this narrow interpretation proposed by Ferguson (1959) was later revised by scholars, particularly Fishman (1967, 1972), who expanded the concept to include bilingual contexts involving two different languages that are not treated equally within society. In this broader sense, the High and Low varieties may refer not only to dialects of the same language but also to distinct languages with different functional roles.

Moreover, multilingual settings can also be considered diglossic when the languages involved are functionally distributed across different social domains. The case of Arabic diglossia, in particular, has played a key role in stimulating research within Arabic-speaking communities, leading to significant scholarly work that has deepened understanding of Arabic diglossia and contributed to the development of Arabic sociolinguistics as a field.

Assignment: Describe diglossia in Algeria

Lecture 11: Pidgins and Creoles

Objectives and Goals

After completing the Unit, you should be able to:

- Give the meaning of a pidgin and a creole.
- Discuss in detail the pidginization and creolization processes.

Lecture content

- 11.1 Introduction
- 11.2 Pidgins and Pidginization
 - 11.2.1 What is a pidgin?
- 11.3 Creoles
- 11.4 Conclusion

11.1 Introduction:

Among the many languages of the world are a few often assigned to a somewhat marginal position: the various lingua franca, pidgins and creoles. To the best of our knowledge, all have existed since time immemorial, but, in comparison with what we know about many 'fully fledged languages, we know comparatively little about them. There is a paucity of historical records; the history of serious study of such languages goes back only a few decades; and, because of the circumstances of their use, they have often been regarded as being of little intrinsic value or interest. Until recently, pidgins and creoles have generally been viewed as uninteresting linguistic phenomena, being notable mainly for linguistic

features they have been said to lack, eg, articles, the copula, and grammatical inflections, rather than those they possess, and those who speak them have often been treated with disdain, even contempt.

Hymes (1971) has pointed out that before the 1930s, pidgins and creoles were largely ignored by Linguists, who regarded them as 'marginal languages' at best. Some Linguists were even advised to keep away from studying them, lest they jeopardize their careers! As languages of those without political and social power, literatures and 'culture,' they could be safely and properly ignored, for what could they possibly tell us about anything that English and French or even Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit could not?

Fortunately, in recent years, such attitudes have changed and, as serious attention has been given to pidgins and creoles, Linguists have discovered many interesting characteristics about them, characteristics that appear to bear on fundamental issues to do with all languages, fully fledged and 'marginal' alike. Moreover, pidgins and creoles are invaluable to those who use them. Not only are they essential to everyday living but they are also frequently important markers of identity.

11.2 Pidgins and Pidginization

The word pidgin, formerly also spelled pigion, derives from a Chinese Pidgin English pronunciation of business. Originally used to describe Chinese Pidgin English, it was later generalised to refer to any pidgin. Pidgin may also be used as the specific name for a local pidgin in places where they are spoken. For example, the name of "Tok Pisin" derives from the English words talk pidgin, and its speakers usually refer to it simply as "Pidgin" when speaking English.

11.2.1 What is a Pidgin?

In a people contact situations involving two groups speaking different languages, to communicate with each other, two or more people use a language in a variety whose grammar and vocabulary are very much reduced in extent and which is native to neither side. Such a language is a pidgin. That is to say, a pidgin is a form of language created by members of two or more linguistic groups in contact as a means of intercommunication, the most basic grammatical rules of which are common to all its habitual users regardless of their own

primary language, while at least one and perhaps all of the participating groups recognise that this means of intercommunication is not the primary language of any other.

A pidgin is a simplified language that develops as a means of communication between two or more groups that do not have a language in common in situations such as trade. Pidgins are not the native language of any speech community, but are, instead, learned as second languages. Pidgins usually have low prestige with respect to other languages. Not all simplified or "broken" forms of language are pidgins. Pidgins have their own norms of usage which must be learned to speak the pidgin well. Pidgins may start out as or become trade languages, such as "Tok Pisin"; but trade languages are often full blown languages in their own right such as Swahili, Persian, or English. Trade languages tend to be "vehicular languages", while pidgins can evolve into the vernacular.

There are identifiable common traits among pidgins. Since a Pidgin strives to be a simple and effective form of communication, the grammar, phonology, etc. are as simple as possible, and usually consist of:

1. A Subject-Verb-Object word order in a sentence
2. Uncomplicated clausal structure (ie, no embedded clauses, etc)
3. Reduction or elimination of syllable clusters
- 4 Reduction of consonant clusters or breaking them with epenthesis
5. Basic vowels, like /a//e//i//o//u//
6. No tones, such as those found in West African and Asian languages
7. Use of separate words to indicate tense, usually preceding the verb
8. Use of reduplication to represent plurals, superlatives, and other parts of speech that represent the concept being increased
9. A lack of morphophonemic variation

The process of pidginisation is usually assumed to begin when a language is used only for very limited communication between groups who speak different native languages. Sharply restricted in domains of use, it undergoes varying degrees of simplification and admixture. If a new stable variety of the language emerges from this process, it might be

described as a pidgin. Admittedly, pidginisation is a complex process of sociolinguistic change.

Pidginisation is a second-language learning process with restricted inputs. That is, pidgins are examples of partially targeted second-language learning and second-language creation, developing from simpler to more complex systems as communicative requirements become more demanding. Pidgin languages, by definition, have no native speakers – they are social rather than individual solutions--and hence are characterised by norms of acceptability. There are qualitatively different stages in the development of a pidgin

It begins by the speaker using his native tongue and re-lexifying first only a few key words. Even these will be thoroughly re-phonologised to accord with substrate sound system and phonotactics and slotted into syntactic surface structures drawn from the substrate. More so, pidginisation is the initial restructuring of a language by a group of learners; this entails structural reduction and substrate transfer.

To sum up, a pidgin is a language with no native speakers. It is no one's first language but is a contact language. That is, it is the product of a multilingual situation in which those who wish to communicate must find or improvise a simple language system that will enable them to do so. Very often too, that situation is one in which there is an imbalance of power among the languages as the speakers of one language dominate the speakers of the other languages economically and socially. A highly codified language often accompanies that dominant position.

A pidgin is therefore sometimes regarded as a 'reduced' variety of a 'normal' language, ie, one of the aforementioned dominant languages, with simplification of the grammar and vocabulary of that language, considerable phonological variation, and an admixture of local vocabulary to meet the special needs of the contact group. Holm (1988) defines a pidgin as a reduced language that results from extended contact between groups of people with no language in common. It evolves when they need some means of verbal communication, perhaps for trade, but no group learns the native language of any other group for social reasons that may include lack of trust or of close contact

11.3 Creoles

In contrast to a pidgin, a creole is often defined as a pidgin that has become the first language of a new generation of speakers. As Aitchison (1994) says, creoles arise when pidgins become mother tongues. A creole, therefore, is a 'normal' language in almost every sense. In Holmes' view (1992) a creole is a pidgin which has expanded in structure and vocabulary to express the range of meanings and serve the range of functions required of a first language.

In practice, it is not always easy to say whether we have a pidgin rather than a creole. Tok Pisin and some of the West African pidgins such as Nigerian Pidgin English probably exist as both pidgins and creoles. They have speakers who use them only as second languages in an expanded form and also speakers for whom they are first languages. Such expanded varieties are often characteristic of urban environments in which there is likely to be considerable contact among speakers of different languages and are sometimes referred to as extended pidgins.

Winford (2003) says that areoles constitute a modey assortment of contact vernaculars with different histories and lines of development, though of course they still have much in common. And, there are no structural characteristics that all creoles share. As well, there are no structural criteria that can distinguish creoles from other types of language.

Just like a pidgin, a creole has no simple relationship to the usually standardized language with which it is associated. If a variety of pidgin English has a complex relationship to Standard English, so Haitian Creole, which is French-based, has a complex relationship to Standard French. The latter relationship is quite different in still another way from the relationship between Jamaican Creole, which is English-based, and Standard English. However, speakers of creoles, like speakers of pidgins, may well feel that they speak something less than normal languages because of the way they and others view those languages when they compare them with languages such as French and English. The result is that the many millions of people who speak almost nothing but creole languages - the estimates range from a low of 6-7 million to as many as 10-17 million - are likely to feel a great sense of inferiority about their languages. In fact, as mentioned above, it was only very recently that Linguists themselves - those who try to be most objective and least oriented toward making value judgments on linguistic matters - have found creoles worthy of serious scholarly attention

11.4 Conclusion

Pidgins and creoles illustrate how languages can emerge, evolve, and stabilize in response to social contact and the need for communication across diverse groups. While pidgins develop as simplified contact languages with limited functions, creoles expand into fully developed systems with native speakers, capable of expressing the full range of human experience. Their development reflects histories of trade, migration, colonization, and cultural exchange.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, pidgins and creoles challenge traditional ideas about linguistic “purity” and hierarchy, demonstrating that all languages are equally complex and rule-governed when used as primary means of communication. They also highlight issues of identity, power, and social status, as creole-speaking communities have often faced stigmatization despite the richness of their languages.

In conclusion, pidgins and creoles are not merely transitional or marginal forms of speech but vital linguistic systems that embody resilience, creativity, and cultural identity. Recognizing their value deepens our understanding of language as a dynamic and socially embedded phenomenon.

Lecture 12: Globalisation

Objectives and Goals

By the end of the lecture, students will be able to:

- Understand the concept of globalisation from different perspectives and disciplines.
- Identify the factors of globalisation of English.
- Be aware of the different defining features of global English.
- Know the results of the globalisation of English.
- Understand what is meant by World Englishes.

Lecture Content

12.1. Introduction

12.2. Globalisation: A Definition

12.3. English as a Global Language

12.4. An Overview of World Englishes

12.5. Factors Contributing to the Global Expansion of English

12.6. Conclusion

12.1 Introduction

Across the previous lectures, we have seen how language and society interact in complex ways, giving rise to a range of phenomena that have drawn the attention of scholars from different disciplines. This relationship is not limited to individual communities; rather, it extends across borders, especially in today's context where the world is increasingly described as a "global village." Globalisation has therefore had a major impact and remains a key topic of discussion in sociolinguistics.

In this lecture, attention will be given to defining globalisation, along with its main causes and consequences. Particular focus will be placed on its sociolinguistic effects, especially the rise of English as a global language and its influence on other languages around the world.

12.2 Globalisation: A Definition

Globalisation is a concept that can be interpreted in different ways, as it is linked to multiple fields and disciplines, each offering its own definition. Nevertheless, there is general agreement that it refers to processes that go beyond national borders, leading to increasing interconnection between countries in economic, social, political, and cultural spheres.

At the same time, this idea of global interconnectedness is not entirely new. Similar dynamics can be traced back to ancient civilisations such as the Greek, Phoenician, Babylonian, Roman, and Islamic empires, which governed vast territories over long periods and displayed comparable patterns of exchange and influence. From this perspective, globalisation is not a completely modern phenomenon, since international relations have existed throughout much of human history.

However, academic interest in globalisation expanded significantly only in the 1990s. What distinguishes contemporary globalisation is the unprecedented speed at which interconnectedness has developed. The exchange of goods, people, and information has become much faster and easier due to advances in transportation and communication technologies.

Hence, globalisation is the process by which the world is becoming increasingly interconnected as a result of massively increased trade and cultural exchange. This has led to:

- Increased international trade,
- Companies operating in more than one country,
- Greater dependence on the global economy,
- World recognition of companies such as McDonalds, Starbucks and others,
- Rapid spread of information,
- Interconnection of nations, etc.

For example, the Russia–Ukraine war has had global repercussions, affecting countries worldwide both positively and negatively. Information about the conflict spreads almost instantly, thanks to modern communication technologies, allowing people everywhere to follow events in real time. At the same time, global markets react quickly, with prices of commodities such as gas, النفط (petroleum), and الذهب (gold) fluctuating in response to developments in the war.

Another clear example is the spread of COVID-19, which emerged at the end of 2019. The pandemic impacted the entire world across all domains, profoundly transforming everyday life. It reshaped how people live, study, work, and communicate, highlighting the deep level of global interconnectedness in today's world.

Globalisation today has had a far-reaching impact on virtually all aspects of life, including the economy, trade, business, culture, politics, and travel. This level of interconnectedness and interdependence is unprecedented, as no earlier civilisation experienced such rapid and extensive global integration.

Given the focus of sociolinguistics, attention is directed toward the linguistic consequences of globalisation. In particular, emphasis is placed on the rise of English as a global language and the effects this development has on other languages around the world.

12.3 English as a Global Language

English is widely regarded in the literature as a global language, as it has become the leading means of communication across most parts of the world. It is no longer seen as belonging solely to its native speakers, since those who use English as a second language now outnumber native users.

It plays a central role in international contexts, including business, trade, diplomacy, and global politics. In addition, it functions as a lingua franca of the Internet and dominates fields such as technology and global communication. English is also prominent in tourism, urban life, scientific research, education, literature, and modern forms of entertainment like video games, travel media, and digital content.

As a result, English can be viewed as a gateway to economic opportunity, since proficiency in it often provides access to better jobs and business prospects. Its global influence is not only due to its geographical spread but also to its dominance across multiple domains, contexts, functions, and modes of communication, both spoken and written.

The expansion of English into new regions, domains, and functions has significantly shaped its development and diversity. As it adapts to different contexts of use, English has generated new vocabulary, innovative ways of speaking and writing, and even new grammatical patterns.

Moreover, its contact with other languages and cultures across the world has further influenced its evolution, as it is continually adjusted to meet local linguistic and cultural needs. This process has led to the emergence of numerous varieties of English, including regional dialects and specialized registers. Some of these varieties differ so greatly that they may even become mutually unintelligible.

As a result, scholars have debated whether the notion of a global language refers to a single standardized form of English used worldwide or to this diverse set of evolving forms, commonly referred to as World Englishes.

12.4 An Overview of World Englishes

The term World Englishes was first coined by Kashru (1985) to refer to the different varieties of English spoken in different regions. He classified the spread of English worldwide into three categories, he called them the *Inner*, the *Outer*, and the *Expanding* Circles:

➤ **The Inner Circle:** includes countries where English is spoken as a native language like:

USA, UK, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia.

➤ The Outer Circle refers to countries that were formerly colonized by Britain, where English has been established as an official language and is commonly used as a second language. In these contexts, English often plays an important role in administration, education, law, and public life. Examples include countries such as India, Ghana, Singapore, Nigeria, and Namibia.

➤ The Expanding Circle refers to countries where English is widely taught as a foreign language and increasingly gains importance, even though it does not have official status. This includes nations such as China, Japan, Algeria, and Egypt, as well as many other parts of the world where English is learned primarily for international communication, education, and economic opportunities.

In Kachru's (1985) tripartite model, the Expanding Circle contrasts with the Inner Circle (where English is a native language) and the Outer Circle (where it has an institutional or historical role). The model as a whole illustrates how English functions differently across global contexts, highlighting its spread and variation worldwide.

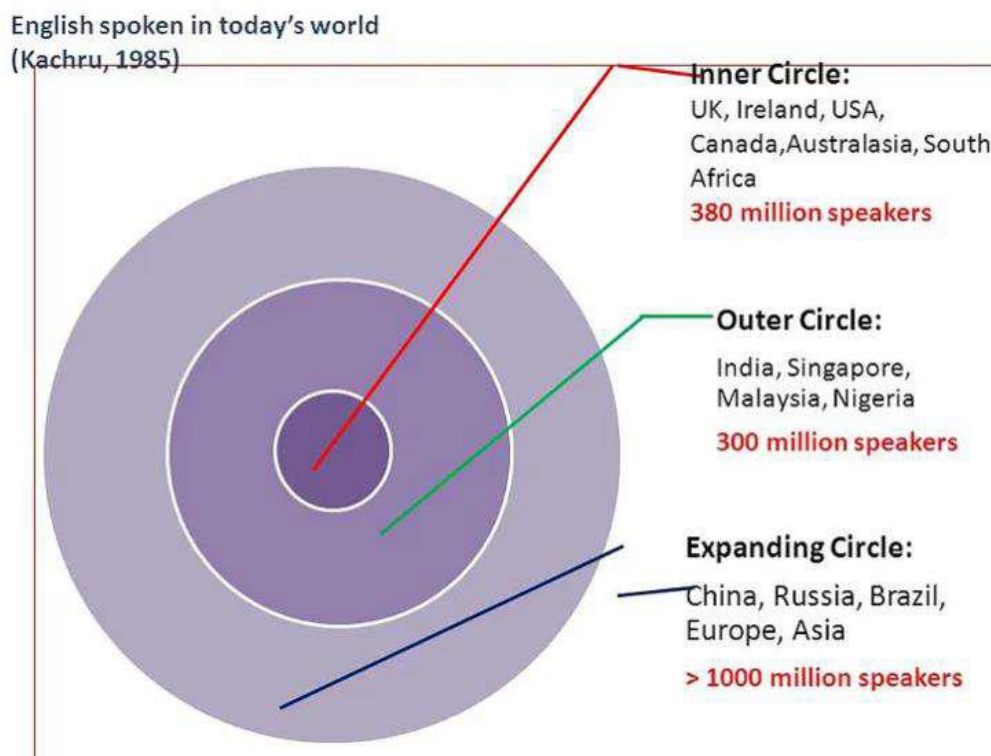


Figure 12.1 Kachru's (1985) Three Circles Model of World Englishes

12.5 Factors Contributing to the Global Expansion of English

One may ask why English, rather than other major languages like Chinese, Spanish, French, or Arabic, has achieved global status. A key explanation lies in historical factors. Due to Britain's colonial expansion, English spread far beyond its place of origin and became established in many parts of the world. Even after independence, many former colonies retained English because it functioned as a *lingua franca*—facilitating communication among populations with diverse native languages, particularly in multilingual regions such as Africa.

Another major factor is the rise of the United States as a global power in the twentieth century. Its economic, technological, political, and cultural influence significantly contributed to the further spread of English across the world.

According to David Crystal, the global status of a language is not primarily determined by the number of its speakers, but rather by the power and influence of those who speak it.

He argues that a language becomes international mainly because of the political power—especially military strength—of its users. However, he also emphasizes that while military power may help establish a language, sustained economic strength is essential for maintaining and expanding its global dominance.

12.6 Conclusion

From a sociolinguistic perspective, it is important for university students to understand the reasons behind studying English. The language has not only crossed geographical boundaries but has also become firmly established in key domains such as the economy, international relations, business, education, entertainment, tourism, and the Internet.

One of the most visible outcomes of globalisation is the rise of English as the dominant global language. Its widespread use across multiple domains has led some scholars to argue that it may overshadow or even marginalize other languages, both internationally and within local communities. For this reason, English is sometimes described as a “killer” language or viewed as a form of cultural and linguistic imperialism.

At the same time, English is not only a result of globalisation but also a driving force behind it. As a global lingua franca, it has greatly facilitated communication and interaction across borders. Instead of learning multiple languages for purposes such as business, tourism, research, or international communication, many people now rely primarily on English to access global opportunities and networks.

Lecture 13: Language Planning

Objectives and Goals

By the end of the lecture, students will be able to:

- Understand what is language planning.
- Understand the relationship between language and politics.
- Differentiate between the different types of language planning.
- Understand what are the causes and the orientations of language planning.
- Understand why different nations undertake different types of language planning.
- Understand the role of language planning in education and multilingual communities.

Lecture Content

13.1. Introduction

13.2. What Does Language Planning Mean?

13.3. Types of and Forms of Language Planning

13.3.1. Status Planning

13.3.2. Corpus Planning

13.3.3. Acquisition Planning

13.4. Ideological and Social Orientations toward Language

13.5. Language Planning in Education

13.6. Conclusion

13.1 Introduction

Language plays a central role in human life. It is not only a primary tool for communication, but also a key means through which identities, social values, and cultures are expressed. In addition, language is closely connected to history, civilisation, education, the economy, and politics, making it an integral part of the social structures in which it operates.

For this reason, governments often give special importance to language in the process of nation-building. In many countries, constitutions explicitly address language, clearly defining its role and functions within society.

This lecture first aims to explain the concept of language planning. It then explores its main types, including status planning, corpus planning, and acquisition planning. Attention is also given to the different orientations that shape language planning processes, as well as to the relationship between language planning and multilingualism.

13.2 What Does Language Planning Mean?

Language planning is a field concerned with studying how language is used within society. As such, it falls under applied linguistics, which focuses on language in real-life contexts rather than examining it in isolation from social factors, as was often the case in twentieth-century linguistic approaches. Notably, language planning is frequently viewed from a political perspective, since it is closely linked to decisions that shape the roles and functions of languages in society. At the same time, it also addresses issues related to language form and usage.

This field is inherently interdisciplinary, drawing on insights from linguistics, political science, anthropology, and other disciplines. As a result, definitions of language planning vary depending on the perspective adopted.

For example, Cooper (1989: 45) defines language planning as “deliberate efforts to influence the behaviour of others with respect to acquisition, structure, or functional allocation of their language codes.” Similarly, Rubin and Jernudd (1971, cited in Daoust, 1997: 438) describe it as “a future-oriented intervention in language which aims to influence language and language use.” In simpler terms, language planning involves intentional actions designed to bring about specific changes in language status, structure, acquisition,

and function. It is therefore a purposeful activity aimed at shaping linguistic behaviour in particular contexts, and it is generally divided into four main types.

13.3 Types and Forms of Language Planning

It is important so far to know what aspects of language and language use are involved in the different language planning activities. This paper discusses the three widely studied types in the literature: 1) status planning, 2) corpus planning, and 3) acquisition planning.

13.3.1 Status Planning

The status/corpus distinction introduced by Kloss (1969) provides valuable insight into the scope of language planning. Status planning refers to efforts aimed at regulating the functions, roles, and social position of a language within society. According to Spolsky, it involves establishing rules and norms that determine how a language is used and the status it holds in different social domains. In other words, it is primarily a governmental activity that seeks to modify the social standing of particular language varieties, either by raising or lowering their prestige (Kloss, 1969).

In this sense, status planning focuses on the official recognition of languages and includes the creation of constitutional laws and regulations governing their use in public administration (Bianco). Examples of status planning include decisions to grant a language official status or to restrict or exclude another language from educational institutions or other public domains (Spolsky).

This type of language planning can be observed in the Algerian context. During the colonial period (1830–1962), the French authorities restricted the use of Arabic, excluding it from education and administrative functions. After independence, the Algerian state implemented policies aimed at replacing French with Arabic in official domains. Later, following sustained cultural and linguistic activism by Amazigh communities, Tamazight was recognized as a national language alongside Arabic in 2002, and was subsequently granted official status in 2016.

13.3.2 Corpus Planning

Corpus planning, on the other hand, involves direct intervention in the internal structure of a language through its standardisation, regulation, or modification (ibid.). This type of planning is usually carried out after the status of a language has been determined for use in specific social or official contexts. Because it focuses on linguistic form rather than socio-political function, it is typically the responsibility of language experts and specialists who produce resources such as dictionaries, grammar books, and textbooks.

In other words, corpus planning refers to any deliberate effort aimed at modifying the language system itself (Kloss, 1969). Examples include the removal of Arabic loanwords from Turkish, the adoption of a new writing system for Turkish instead of the Arabic script, French attempts to reduce English borrowings, the modernisation of Arabic following the independence of Arab countries in the twentieth century, and the revival of Classical Hebrew after the establishment of the state of Israel.

13.3.3 Acquisition Planning

It is often referred to as language-in-education planning, as it mainly deals with situations where languages gain new educational roles and statuses. This typically occurs when individuals are required to learn an official language that is not their mother tongue.

In many cases, minority groups around the world must learn the dominant language of the state in addition to their own indigenous language, which is often not included in formal education because it lacks official recognition. Examples include the Berber communities in North Africa, the Māori in New Zealand, and the Basque people in the border regions of Spain and France.

Another important aspect of language-in-education planning concerns government policies on foreign language teaching. A clear example is the growing priority given to English in foreign language education systems across many countries worldwide. In Algeria, for instance, English is increasingly being introduced and, in some university contexts, is even replacing French.

13.4 Ideological and Social Orientations toward Language

Decisions and actions that influence the status, form, and function of languages in society are generally shaped by the socio-cultural context in which language planning takes place. In other words, such decisions are not universal but context-dependent, and they are guided by underlying language ideologies. These ideologies reflect particular beliefs and assumptions about language that are influenced by political, economic, and moral interests, as well as by cultural settings and lived social experiences. As a result, language planning is driven by specific goals and motivations.

Language ideologies can be defined as “morally and politically loaded representations of the nature, structure, and use of languages in a social world” (Irvin, 1989, cited in Woolard, 2020: 1). Therefore, language planning cannot be seen as a purely linguistic activity, since it involves an interaction of multiple dimensions. In this regard, Cooper (1989) argues that language planning is not only linguistic in nature but also a political and administrative activity aimed at addressing and managing language-related issues within society.

Thus, the nature of language planning in any given context reflects the government’s underlying orientation toward language and its role in society (Ruiz, 1984: 15). In practice, languages are interpreted differently depending on the context: they may be seen as a problem, a resource, or a right, and the type of language planning adopted is shaped by these perceptions.

As a result, assimilationist language planning emerges when multilingualism is viewed as a problem or a threat to national unity. This approach has been observed in language policies in twentieth-century Europe as well as in some post-independence Arabic-speaking countries. In contrast, other contexts, such as Australia, adopt policies that promote multilingualism, viewing it as a valuable resource rather than a threat.

At the same time, in settings where assimilationist policies dominate, minority groups often advocate for their linguistic rights as a form of cultural and linguistic resistance against marginalisation. Examples include Berber communities in North Africa, as well as Galician and Basque speakers in Spain.

13.5 Language Planning in Education

Education is a central component of language planning, as it serves as one of the main instruments for implementing planned linguistic goals. This is largely because schooling is compulsory and closely regulated by the state. As Ferguson (2006: 33–34) notes, “schools are one of the key agencies of socialisation; school pupils are a captive audience, and the curriculum affords the state unequal opportunities to shape the attitudes and behaviours of the next generation.”

As previously mentioned, language planning is guided by specific ideological orientations, and educational reforms often reflect these orientations. In assimilationist language policies, for example, governments typically adopt a single language as the medium of instruction in schools. In contrast, in more recent contexts influenced by globalisation, there has been a growing tendency to promote multilingualism through education.

Education therefore functions as a powerful tool capable of producing significant social, cultural, political, economic, and linguistic change. This is mainly because it reaches large populations at an early age and can have long-term effects. Within acquisition planning, possible outcomes include increasing the number of speakers of certain languages, marginalising or displacing others, redefining the role of mother tongues in education, and determining which second or foreign languages are taught as part of the curriculum.

13.6 Conclusion

Language planning and policy clearly demonstrate that language is not simply a tool for conveying information, but a complex phenomenon that extends into many aspects of human life. Therefore, language planning cannot be viewed solely as a linguistic activity; rather, it is a social, cultural, economic, and political process aimed at producing planned, future-oriented changes in society.

Assignment

Choose a country or region and describe how language planning is applied there. Discuss policies related to education, media, or government.

References

- Block, B. and Trager, G. L. (1942). *Outline of Linguistic Analysis*. Baltimore: Linguistic Society of America, Waverly Press.
- Bright, W. (1966). Language, Society Stratification and Cognitive Orientation. *Sociological Inquiry*. Vol. 36. N. 2. (p. 313-318).
- Brown, P. and Levinson, S.C. (1987) *Politeness: some universals in language use* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chambers, J. K (2004) *Sociolinguistic Theory* (2nd Edition), J. K. Blackwell.
- Chomsky, N. (1957). *Syntactic Structures*. The Hague : Mouton.
- Chomsky, N. (1965). *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Cooper, R. L. (1989). *Language Planning and Social Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Coulmas, F. (ed.). (1997). *The Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. Blackwell: Blackwell Publishing.
- Coulmas. F. (ed.). (2000) *The Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Coupland, N and Jaworski, J. (eds.) (1997) *Sociolinguistics: A Reader and Coursebook*. Basingstoke, Hants: Macmillan
- Crystal, D. (1997). *English as a Global Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, D. et all. (2021). *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*.
- Daoust, D. (1997). Language Planning and Language Reform. In: Coulmas, F. *The Handbook of Sociolinguistics*. Blackwell: Blackwell Publishing Ltd. (p 436-452).
- Edwards, J. (1994). *Multilingualism*. London: Routledge.

- Fasold, R. (1984) *The Sociolinguistics of Society*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Fasold, R. (1990) *The Sociolinguistics of Language*. Oxford: Blackwell
- Ferguson, C. A. (1959). Diglossia. *'Word'*. Vol. 15. (p. 325-340).
- Ferguson, G. (2006). *Language Planning and Education*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd.
- Fishman, J. A. (1967). Bilingualism with and without Diglossia, Diglossia with and without Bilingualism. *Journal of Social Issues*. Vol. 23. (p. 29-38).
- Fishman, J. A. (1972). *The Sociology of Language: An Interdisciplinary Social Science Approach to Language in Society*. Massachusetts: Newbury House Publishers.
- Gafaranga, J. (2007). *Talk in Two Languages*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hall, R. A. (1968). *An Essay on Language*. Philadelphia and New York: Chilton Books.
- Haugen, E. (1966). Linguistics and Language Planning. In: William Bright (Ed.), *Sociolinguistics: Proceedings of the UCLA Sociolinguistics Conference, 1964*. The Hague: Mouton. (p. 50-71).
- Holmes, J. (2013) *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* London: Longman.
- Hudson, R.A. (1996) *Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Labov, W. (1972) *Sociolinguistic Patterns*. Oxford: Blackwell
- Milroy, L. and Gordon, M. (2003) *Sociolinguistics: Method and Interpretation*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Pride, J.B. and Holmes, J. (eds.) (1972) *Sociolinguistics*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Romaine, S. (2000) *Language in Society: An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. (2nd edition) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Tannen, D. (2001) *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation*. Ballantine
- Trudgill, P. (2000) *Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and Society*. London: Penguin.
- Wardhaugh, R. (2005) *An introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Oxford: Blackwell.