1.4 Bilingualism and multilingualism

• Definition and description
• Degree of bilingualism
• Diglossia and bilingualism
• Code mixing and code switching: definition and types
• The sociolinguistic composition of multilingual countries
• Societal multilingualism
1.4.1 Bilingualism and multilingualism: definition and description
Monolingualism

**Monoglottism** or, more commonly, **monolingualism** or **unilingualism**, is the condition of being able to speak only a single language, as opposed to multilingualism.

Do you believe this situation in the 21st century’s globalized world?
Bilingualism

• Native-like control of two languages (Bloomfield, 1933).

• ...the ability to use two languages ... the skilled superior use of both languages at the level of the educated native speaker (Valdes, 2001).

  • Both definitions are concerned with the ability to do something perfectly in two languages.
  • Is it possible?

• ...begins when the speaker of one language can produce complete meaningful utterances in the other languages (Haugen, 1953).
Contd...

• Recently, the term bilingualism has been taken as a broad term and has many forms and configurations;

• ...the investigation of bilingualism is a broad and complex field including the study of the nature of the individual bilingual’s knowledge and use of two (or more) languages (Bhatia, 2006).

  • This definition include additional languages as well.
  • Include the full range of multilingualism.
Multilingualism

• Use of more than two languages either by individuals or by community members...

• Alternative terms:
  • Trilingualism
  • Plurilingualism
  • Poliglottism
  • Language diversity
  • Superdiversity (crossing of multiple languages)
Multilingualism is the act of using, or promoting the use of, multiple languages, either by an individual speaker or by a community of speakers.
A multilingual person is one who can communicate in more than one language, be it actively (through speaking, writing, or signing) or passively (through listening, reading, or perceiving).
Some group of academics argues for the maximal definition of multilingualism.

**Maximal**: Speakers are as proficient in one language as they are in others and have as much knowledge of and control over one language as they have of the others.
Another group of academics argues for the **minimal definition of multilingualism**, based on use.

**Minimal**: Tourists who can successfully communicate phrases and ideas even if not fluent in the native language of the foreign land can be considered as bilinguals.
Description...

- For proper description of bilingualism and multilingualism, Mackey (1968) suggests four questions to be addressed based on;
  - **Degree**: concerns the proficiency.
    - How well does the bilingual know each of the languages?
  - **Function**: focuses on the uses a bilingual speaker has for the languages and the different roles they have in the individual’s total repertoire.
  - **Alternation**: treats the extent to which the individual alternates between the languages.
  - **Interference**: concerns with the extent to which the individual manages to keep the languages separate, or whether they are fused.
Obviously, these questions cannot be treated in isolation from one another.

For the description of bilingualism or multilingualism, we can also consider the following elements;

- **Language skills like reading, writing, speaking and listening**
  - Reality is that people may not obtain equal competency in all skills.

- **Performance of certain internal functions**
  - Ability to use language in counting, doing arithmetic, dreaming, praying silently...
Contd...

- **Performance of external functions**
  - Reading newspaper, conversing, giving lectures ...

- **Domain**
  - Cluster consisting of location, a set of role relationships and a set of topics

- **A number of factors that influence the bilingual’s aptitude/ability:**
  - Age
  - Sex
  - Intelligence
  - Memory
  - Language attitude
  - motivation
Key readings

1.4.2 Degree of bilingualism

• Consider following questions:
  • How well do you need to speak both languages?
  • How many words you need to have in your vocabulary?
  • How often do you need to speak each language?
  • If you can read both, are you bilingual?
  • What about if you understand the spoken words but don’t speak it?
  • What if you can write both?
  • Where is the fine line when you stop being a monolingual and start being a bilingual?
• We have no clear demarcation lines to evaluate individuals’ bilingual ability or skill.
• i.e. ability or skills may not be same for both languages at all linguistic levels.
• One may be very good at one level but may not be good at another level both within and across the language.
• For example, one may be very good at phonological level in language ‘A’, and may not be good at same level of language ‘B’.
• Thus, proficiency and ability in two languages should be assessed based on a variety of areas.
For this, Mackey (1968) provides the following matrix which illustrates the skills and levels which must be assessed in languages A and B.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonological/</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semantic</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stylistic</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The chart explains that a bilingual individual may be good at some skills in language A and may be good at other skills in another language.

In other words, at phonological/graphic level, we may find people understand spoken form in one language but may not be able to read the written script.

For example, Panjabi speaker in Britain can well understand spoken Punjabi but is unable to read the Gurmukhi (Punjabi) script.

This kind of situation may exist at all levels of language.
• Similarly, Rai (2005) presents following criteria to assess the degree of bilingualism:

Degree of bilingualism
- Flawlessness
  - Fluency (Linguist)
- Effortlessness
  - Automatacity (Psychologist)
- Frequency
  - Number of hours spent (Sociologist)
- Repertoire size
  - Total command (Common people)
• **First criteria**
  • To be a good bilingual, when an individual uses one language, the other should not interfere.

• **Second criteria**
  • Using both languages automatically or effortlessly without any unnecessary delay or pause.

• **Third criteria**
  • Can spend equal hours for both languages

• **Fourth criteria**
  • One may be fluent in one situation but not in another, therefore holistic approach is to be considered.
Key readings


1.4.3 Diglossia and Bilingualism

• **Diglossia:**
  
  • A specific relationship between two or more varieties of the same language in use in a speech community in different functions (Ferguson, 1972).
  
  • When two distinct languages/varieties/codes are used to serve different purposes in different situations in a society (Rai, 2005).
  
  • No equal status.
  
  • The superposed variety ... High (H) and other variety/varieties ... Low (L).
  
  • Functional specialization of H and L varieties.
Contd...

• Three crucial features:

• Two distinct varieties of the same language are used in the community, with one as a H variety and the other L variety,
• Each variety is used for quite distinct functions.
• None uses the H variety in everyday conversation.

(Holmes, 2008)
Contd...

• H and L varieties differ in terms of:
  • Function
  • Prestige
  • Literary heritage
  • Acquisition
  • Standardization
  • Stability
  • Grammar
  • Lexican
  • phonology

Ferguson (1972) cited in Romaine (1989)
Contd...

Variation of Diglossia

Diglossia

High variety
Formal
Official
Professional

Low variety
Informal
Friendly, Slang, Vulgar
Contd...

### Function of Diglossia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard (High)</th>
<th>Non-Standard (Low)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Instruction of servants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech of Parliament</td>
<td>Conversation with friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Lecture</td>
<td>Conversation in tea-stall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers Editorial</td>
<td>Conversation With Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious work in literature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Linguistic relationships between H and L varieties;

1. H as classical and L as vernacular, where two are genetically related (eg. Sanskrit and Hindi)

2. H as classical and L as vernacular, where the two are not genetically related (eg. Hebrew and Yiddish)

3. H as written/formal spoken and L as vernacular, where the two are not genetically related (eg. Spanish and Gurani in Paraguay)

4. H as written/formal spoken and L as vernacular, where the two are genetically related (eg. Urdu and Panjabi).

(Fishman, 1980 cited in Romaine, 1989)
Contd...

• May also involve:

• Triglossia (eg. Classical Arabic, Tunisian Arabic and French in Tunisia)
• Polyglossia (Mandarin Chinese, Bahasa Malaysia, Malay and English in Malaysia)
### Relationship between diglossia & bilingualism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>BILINGUALISM</strong></th>
<th><strong>DIGLOSSIA</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Both diglossia &amp; bilingualism +</td>
<td>1. Both diglossia &amp; bilingualism +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Bilingualism without diglossia -</td>
<td>2. Bilingualism without diglossia -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Diglossia without bilingualism -</td>
<td>3. Diglossia without bilingualism -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Neither diglossia nor bilingualism</td>
<td>4. Neither diglossia nor bilingualism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Relationships...

• + bilingualism and + diglossia
  • A situation where the society is diglossic and most individuals are bilingual.

• + bilingualism and – diglossia
  • A situation where individuals are bilingual but there is no community-wide functional differentiation in the use of their languages
  • Many English speaking countries.

• - bilingualism and + diglossia
  • The situation of politically united groups where two languages are used for different functions, but by largely different speech communities.
  • Example from colonized countries with a clear-cut social class division where elites use colonial language and lower classes use their own language.
  • But individuals are monolingual.
Relationships...

- bilingualism and diglossia
  - The situation of monolingual group.
  - Typical of isolated ethnic communities where there is little or no contact with other linguistic groups.
  - Eg. Iceland before 20th century.
Key readings

1.4.4 Code mixing and/or code switching

• A common phenomenon in bi/multilingual situation.
• The alignment of elements from distinct grammatical systems.
• The juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems (Romaine, 1989).
• Code in general sense refers not only to different languages but also to varieties of the same language as well as styles within a language.
• A change by a speaker or writer from one language to another (Richard, 1985).
Contd...

• When individuals have repertoire of multiple codes, then they may choose a particular code to speak and they may also switch from one code to another or mix two codes together.
• If shift from one code to another is absolute, that is code switching.
• If the switch is in the middle of the sentence, it is code mixing (Rai, 2005).
Difference between code switching and code mixing

• **Code-mixing:**
  - the placing or mixing of various linguistic units from two different grammatical systems within the same sentence.

• **Code-switching:**
  - the placing or mixing of units from two codes within the same speech context.

• **Code-mixing:** intrasentential shift.

• **Code-switching:** intersentential shift.

• **Code-mixing:** a hybrid form, drawing from distinct grammars.

• **Code-switching:** a multilingual speaker's movement from one grammatical system to another.
Reasons of code switching

• Solidarity with listeners
• Choice of topic
• Perceived social cultural distance
Types of code switching

• Situational code switching
  • Switching occurs when a language shifted according to situation.
  • One language in one situation and another in a different one.
  • Eg. English classroom vs outside the classroom

• Conversational code switching
  • The speaker chooses one code but elements of another code are mixed up in the course of one single utterance.
  • Eg. although we are talking in Nepali, we are frequently choose words or phrases from English.
  • Wardhaugh calls it as code mixing since the code is not changed entirely from one to another but the elements of one code are mixed into another.
Types...

• Metaphorical code switching
  • Occurs when a change of topic requires a change in the language used.
  • When Nepali speakers switch from Nepali to English when they have to talk about scientific topics.
  • Holmes calls it as code-mixing.

• Romaine (1989) identifies following three types:

• Tag switching
  • The insertion of a tag in one language into an utterance which is otherwise entirely in the other language.
  • We often insert you know, I mean, ...
Types...

• Intersentential switching
  • A switch at a clause or sentence boundary, where each language or sentence is in one language or another.

• Intrasentential switching
  • Within clause or sentence boundary.
Key readings


1.4.5 The sociolinguistic composition of multilingual countries

• Related to societal bilingualism/multilingualism.

• Takes the nation-state as their reference point, and relies on census data and various typologies to determine the linguistic composition of these units.

• Taking nation-state as reference, the languages in multilingual countries may be categorized as either majority or minority on the basis of their status, roles, ...

• It is also that the same language may function different roles in different countries.

• For example, Chinese in China is majority but in Malaysia it is minority.
Thus, Ferguson (1966) has developed a formula to capture some general patterns of all languages in multilingual countries, where:

- **L**: Language
- **maj**: major
- **min**: minor
- **spec**: special status
- **C**: classical
- **S**: standard
- **V**: vernacular
- **G**: global
As example, Ferguson summed up the situation of multilingual country Spain as:

\[ 5L = 2L_{maj} + 1L_{min} + 2L_{spec}. \]

Ferguson also incorporated further distinctions by using Stewart’s (1962) typology of languages, which involved seven types (standard, classical, vernacular, pidgin, creole, artificial, and marginal).

Thus, based on this typology, Ferguson summed up the situation of Spain as

- \[ 5L = 2L_{maj} (2S) + 1L_{min} (V) + 2L_{spec} (C, S) \]
• This formula can be used in any multilingual countries.

• For example, the case of Nepal can be formulized as:
  • $123L = 1L_{maj} (S) + 120L_{min} (V) + 2L_{spec} (C, S, G)$
  • Among 123 languages, one (Nepali) is major and standard language, 120 are minority and vernacular, and 2 (Sanskrit and English) have especial status where Sanskrit is classical and standard and English is global and standard.
• Deals with how multiple languages are shaped and functioned in multicultural countries.

• How power influences in language in the society

• Information is obtained through:
  - census data
  - large scale research or survey
  - detailed ethnographic case studies

• Same language may function in a number of different roles in different countries.

• Majority people’s language and minority people’s language have given different roles

• Minoritity languages are always dominated
Problems

• Since such countries take reference to census which too is under limitation of time and money, it is difficult to include other facets of bilingualism such as interference, code-switching, ...

• Categorization is affected by prestige, ethnicity and political affiliation, ...

• Even difficult in definition of mother tongue (eg. the case second generation immigrants).

• Even difficult to differentiate between language and dialect.

• Linguistic conflict

• Degree of bilingualism
Cont..

• Minority languages are always dominated
• Majority language always remains in high position due to power, politics and other social factors
• Some dialects and the language may have little differences
Key readings

1.4.6 Societal Multilingualism

- **Multilingualism**: the situation where the speakers use more than two languages
- Multilingualism refers to the knowledge or use of more than one language by an individual or a community
- Multilingualism covers both societal and individual multilingualism
- **Societal multilingualism**: when multiple languages are spoken in society
- **Individual multilingual**: when a speaker uses more than one language
- Societal multilingualism is very common in many parts of the world
- In a society a language is used at home, another within the community, another for business and administration etc
- In such societies, the choice of the code is determined by context which consists of participants, settings and topics.
# Language Choice and Societal Determinants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>Addressee</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Language choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Parents, brothers etc</td>
<td>Home, party etc</td>
<td>Planning a family program</td>
<td>Language A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendship</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Park, garden etc</td>
<td>Holidays</td>
<td>Language A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Priest</td>
<td>Temple, church etc</td>
<td>How to pray</td>
<td>Language B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Scientific experiments</td>
<td>Language C or D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Employer</td>
<td>Department of an organization</td>
<td>Business promotion</td>
<td>Language C or D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A: vernacular variety, B: classic and standard variety, C: international language, D: national, official, standard and formal variety
# Reasons for Multilingualism

1. Migration
2. Cultural contact
3. Annexation (control of the country)
4. Commercial, scientific and technological dependence
1.5 Pidgins and creoles: pidginization and creolization

**Pidgins:**

- Created by people having different languages
- Contact language without native speakers
- Product of multilingual situation
- Are those languages which are not acquired and spoken by anyone as the mother tongue
- Created by mixing the words and utterances from different languages
- Created by the combined efforts of people who speak different languages.
- The structures are simplified and modified
- Also called the reduced variety of the dominant languages
- Used for specific purpose like trade, administration etc
- Serve a very narrow range of functions in a very restricted sets of domains (such as local trade, field, mines etc)
Cont...

• Words generally do not have inflections and the word order is not maintained
• For limited functions
• They may disappear when the short term functions disappear
• Have very short life
• They either die or develop to become Creole
• The language that supplies the most of the vocabulary is known as lexifier language
• The process of making/forming pidgin is called pidginization.

• Pidginization is a linguistic process that occurs when people who do not speak the same language come into contact.

• It involves the simplification of the contacting language and the exploitation of linguistic common denominators. It is essentially an oral process and limited communication.

• Pidginization seems to involve the use of base forms, a reduction in or elimination of case endings, inflections and prepositions, a simple unified method of indicating temporal distinctions, negation and interrogation, and the meaning of verbal communication is often reinforced by intonation, gesture and, on some occasions, mime.
## Characteristics of Pidgin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Related to structures          | • It has simplified structures compared to the source languages.  
• The words have no inflections  
• It has smaller vocabularies with restricted use  
• The word order is rather rigid |
| Related to functions           | • It has referential functions, based on transactions  
• It has no affective functions  
• It has very limited range of function  
• It is used in restricted domains of language functions, such as in trade domain, but not in family domain |
| Related to attitudes of the speakers | • It has no native speakers; so those who use a pidgin language take it as an ‘auxiliary language’  
• The speakers are not attached with it at all.  
• They have no identity of the group through this language. This is to say, the pidgin cannot be the ethnic or social identity of ones. |
Creole

• Has its roots in a pidgin
• Has native speakers
• Used in all domains of life
• A normal, natural language – with an unusual history
• A creole language is a stable natural language developed from a mixture of different languages.
• Unlike a pidgin (a simplified form that develops as a means of communication between two or more groups) a creole language is a complete language, used in a community and acquired by children as their native language.
• Creole languages therefore have a fully developed vocabulary and system of grammar.
• A creole is believed to arise when a pidgin, developed by adults for use as a second language, becomes the native and primary language of their children – a process known as nativization.
Cont..

• The pidgin-creole life cycle was studied by Hall in the 1960s.
• Creole developed in colonial European plantation settlements in the 17th and 18th centuries as a result of contact between groups that spoke mutually unintelligible languages.
• Since the 1930s some linguists have claimed that creoles emerged from pidgins.
1.6 Vernacular language, standard language, and standardization

# Vernacular Language

- A language or dialect spoken by the ordinary people of a country or region
- A language spoken as one’s mother tongue; not learnt or imposed as a second language.
- Language used in speech or written works, using the mother tongue of a country or region
- Everyday language, including slangs...... that is used by the people
- Vernacular is different from literary or official language,
• People talk with each other in informal conversation using this language
• Also refer to the local variety
• Generally a language which has not been standardized and which does not have official status.
• Usually the first languages learnt by people in multilingual communities
• They are often used for a relatively narrow range of informal function
Three main components of Vernacular Language

1. A vernacular language is an uncodified or unstandardized variety

(This component has most widely used as the defining criterion, but emphasis on one or other of the components has led to the use of the term vernacular with somewhat different meanings)

2. It is acquired at the home as a first variety

3. It is used for relatively circumscribed functions

(The term vernacular simply means a language which is not an official language in a particular context.)

• People communicate using this language at home and with close friends.
# Standard language

- Standard language is the influential and prestigious language that serves an elaborated range of functions, and is codified enough with literatures, dictionaries, grammar books, and so on.
- Have written form and which has undergone some degree of regularization of rules and systems
- Serves H functions alongside a diversity of L variety
- Has wider range of functions
- A language variety used by a group of people in their public discourses
- Used in offices, administration, education, government and so on
- Varieties become standard by undergoing a process of standardization
- English was standardized after the introduction of printing. (in 1476, William Caxton)
- Standard varieties often combine features of several dialects, and are usually considered to be neutral and unmarked, compared to other dialects of the same languages
Features of standard language

1. It is used for a wide range of functions for day to day communication, for business, education, politics and for any H function
2. It is used in media and in literature, in national and international level talks, in politics and trade etc
3. It is codified (grammars & dictionaries)
4. It is used for education and information
5. It is taught to non-native speakers when they learn it as a foreign language
6. It is prestigious, influential and stabilized language
7. Constitution gives that language as an official legal status in a country’s system of law
8. A canon of literature
9. Translation of important sacred texts such as Bible into that language
10. Serves as a lingua franca
11. Serves as a model
# Standardization

- Process of making a language standard
- Through writing (codification) and communication function
- Process not controlled by the language itself but by some power like government or authority
- Typically, varieties that become standardized are the local dialects spoken in the centers of commerce and government, where a need arises for a variety that will serve more than local needs.
Steps for standardization

1. Selection
• A particular variety is selected which is politically, socially or commercially important
• In some cases, the chosen variety has been one with no native speakers at all - for instance classical Hebrew in Israel.

2. Codification
• Includes writing of grammar and dictionaries
• By government or public agencies
• So that everyone agrees on what is correct
• To learn the correct forms

3. Elaboration of functions
• In all the functions associated with government and with writing
• For eg – in parliament, law courts, educational and scientific texts....... 

4. Acceptance
• The variety has to be accepted by the relevant population as the variety of the community
• Speakers need to have positive attitudes and attachment with it
• Then the language serves as a strong unifying force
1.7 Language and gender

• Gender is a social variable
• There are significant differences between male and female in the use of a language.
• They do not speak in the exactly same way.
• They differ in terms of pitch, choice of words, discourse patterns, choice of form (formal/informal), choice of varieties (standard/vernacular) etc
• Women use more standard, formal and polite forms and styles of language
• They use more information checks and confirmation checks
# Language change in terms of gender in different levels

1. Phonological level
   - Language varies in terms of phonological features like pronunciation, pitch etc
   - For eg: in Bengali language, the women use a word initial (l) but the men use (n) for the word initial (n)

2. Morphological level
   - In North American language YANA, the affixes used in the words vary according to the gender
   - The women use *ba* to mean *deer*, but the men use the term *bana*

3. Discourse and stylistic level
   - Polite and formal styles are found more on women’s
   - Their language is more prestigious
   - They use more hedges
Features of women’s language

• Women’s speech is more polite than men’s; women use super polite forms of language.
  
• Use more tag questions than men for conformation and information.
• Use ‘empty’ adjectives such as charming, divine, nice etc.
• Use question intonation (i.e. raising intonation) to express uncertainty.
• Use more hedges than men like – you know, sort of, well, you see etc.
• Tell jokes less than men
• Use hyper-correct grammar so that their language would seem more standard, formal and prestigious like a higher status variant
• Avoid strong swear words like fudge, my goodness, by god etc
# Explanations for women’s language

1. Social status explanation
   - More status conscious than men
   - Aware that the way they speak signals their social status, class, and background
   - Use more polite and formal standard to show higher status and better background

2. Social role explanation
   - The society expects the crucial roles of women to preserve the society’s values
   - Speak correctly and politely as even the model for learners and children
Continue....

3. Social group explanation

• Use standard language for the security and identity of their group
• Tend to save the face of self and others
• Argued that women are the subordinate group, and they must speak carefully and politely

4. Social function explanation

• Believe that informal language is attached to masculine identity
• Women feel strange to cut jokes, use slang words and informal style
• Talk on responsible and serious topics

Note: the explanation is too general, and are not extremely true in all cases. There are many stances where the women are rude and impolite, and men are more polite than women.