

Aspects of multilingualism

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Abstract - This paper discusses the fundamental issues related to multilingualism. The first is the concept of multilingualism and the different perspectives on it. Multilingualism can refer to either the use of language or the competence of an individual or to the language situation in an entire nation or society. The multilingualism describes the co-existence, contact and interaction of different languages. The co-existence can take place on a social or individual level. A society can have many different languages spoken and used by different group of peoples. The people themselves do not necessarily have to be multilingual. Likewise, individuals in a community can be multilingual while only recognizes one language for public use through legislation and other form of regulatory control. For society or an individual to become multilingual, contacts and interaction between languages are essential. The coexistence of different languages in society or an individual presupposes fundamental things that are different languages, these different languages have the possibility to come into contact to each other and human being is able to learn and use several languages and also human societies are able to adapt and manage multiple languages. In the next issue we will look at how the choice between languages can be given the same social and affective meaning as the choice of style in a language and the vitality of linguistic diversity in a multilingual community. The selection of the appropriate diversity in multilingual communities depends on social factors and dimensions and the repertoire of the addressee. The factors influencing a speaker's or writer's choice of language vary, and they include the context surrounding the speaker or writer, age, gender, culture, etc. Very often, the choice of language is deliberate and deliberate speaker can change the choice depending on such factors. In the context of an increasingly diverse world, it is important to continue to study multilingualism from all perspectives. It is crucial to continue to explore questions about how, when, and why speakers use certain languages and languages. The effects are not relevant from a stylistic point of view. They can show differences in the relative position of speakers within their societies, indicate power struggles and inequalities.

Keywords: multilingualism, diglossia, polylingualism, modelling variety

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The concept of Multilingualism

Multilingualism is the process of speaking more than one language or using multiple languages, either by individual speakers or by a community of speakers. It is referred to as a speaker's ability to express himself in multiple languages with the same and native skills. When a person can speak two or more languages it is called multilingual and a phenomenon is called multilingualism.

According to Wikipedia, multilingualism can be defined as a state or condition or ability of an individual or a society in which a single speaker or a community of speakers uses two or more languages. This implies that man's ability to communicate multiple languages and knowledge of more than two languages become the necessity for communication between linguistic communities and individuals.

The existence and come up of multilingualism in the community is on account of globalization and a higher cultural communication. It is becoming a social process and phenomena which always regulated through the act of demanding globalization and cultural openness.

In many countries of Africa, and Latin America, many different kinds of languages of indigenous ethnic groups or nations coexist with one or more languages of wider communication. The majority of the people of these communities are also highly multilingual. Bull & Watson (1984) defines multilingualism as "those patterns or dispositions of human activity that achieve and sustain the primary goal of social life among mankind as a whole". This depicts that multilingual person can able to communicate within the community and increasing phenomenon in the present day society which can be studied from different perspectives.

Peoples may become multilingual either by acquiring three or variety of languages at the same time in childhood or learning a second language sometimes after acquiring their first language. The inconvenience that may have to be multilingual is that they may have smaller vocabularies in each language.

ò Laoire and Aronin (2004) have defined multilingualism as "... a personal characteristics that can be described as an individual store of language at any level of proficiency including partial competence or incomplete fluency as well as metalinguistics awareness learning strategies, opinions and preferences and passive or active knowledge of languages, language use and language learning or acquisitions'. This implies that a multilingual person, in a broad sense one who can communicate in more than one language whether actively which is speaking, writing and signed or passively in listening, reading or perceiving.

According to Franceschini (2011), the term multilingualism is to be understood as the capacity of societies, groups, individuals to engage on a regular basis in space and time with more than one language in everyday life. And else, it is a product of the fundamental human ability to communicate in a number of languages. Operational distinctions may be drawn between societal, institutional, discursive and individual multilingualism.

Multilingualism can be defined an occurrence regarding on individual speaker who uses two or more languages, a community of speakers where two or more languages are used, or between speakers of two languages.

Multilingualism arises on account of the need to communicate between speakers of more than two languages and across speech communities. It is not a recent phenomenon; it

was prevalent in the ancient time also. This need further resulted in *lingua francas*, pidgins, and phenomenon like code switching. Those are the product of multilingualism.

Multilingualism speakers outnumber monolingual speakers in the world population. Owing to the ease of access to the information facilitated by the internet, individual's exposure to multiple language is becoming increasingly frequent, thereby promoting a need to acquire additional language used in the print media.

The term polylingualism can be found as a synonym to the term multi-lingualism according to the American English dictionary. Another name used for multilingualism is bilingualism. A nice definition of bilingualism is as follows: bilingualism is a specific case of multilingualism, which has no limit on the number of languages a speaker may know.

According to von Bargen, this is characterized as a selective use of two or more languages by an individual. The causes of bilingualism or multilingualism are different; there are often personal reasons, but there can also be social, socio-economic or even political reasons. One can question whether multilingualism or the second language serves a specific purpose in society. Today, bilingualism or multilingualism is already a natural part of interpersonal communication, because today's globalized world is based on a co-existence between socio-cultural facts and the true entities.

Multilingualism has been universal in nature on account of most of the world population speaks more than one language which is purely based on the need of the community and it may be forced or voluntary.

Spolsky (2003; Mohlahlo & Ditsele, 2022) stated that many countries have mostly developed an implicit or explicit language policy as if they are monolingual. However, it is becoming rare for linguistics and national border not to overlap various complex ways. Most countries have more than one language that spoken a significant portion of the population and most languages have significant number of speakers in more than one country.

Soler and Zabrodska (2017; Kabongo, 2022), multilingualism speakers can make use of their different linguistic resource for different purposes, most notably to create different identities. As far as it is concerned this mobilisation of their repertoire can produce a playful outcome; other times, the result of it may be not so positive, with the use of different languages enhancing group boundaries and barriers. In principle, the higher the shared knowledge between multilingual speakers, the lesser the probability of negative outcomes in multilingual encounters.

1.2 Importance of Multilingualism

Multilingualism is complementary. Thus, an individual may use a particular language at home another in the neighbourhood, and still another in a certain formal domain such as education, administration and for communication. In today's global environment, there is a great need for multilingualism. It will help for individual's personal growth, communication for business, job mobility, study abroad, increase in vocabulary and speech, and tolerance and respect towards others culture. It enhances communication among communities. It solidifies emotional ties and makes things simpler for the people and the communities to become involved in the culture. On account of this, it enhances the community sense of cultural identity and belonging. People who speak more than one language benefit from working in different countries, understanding different cultures, and developing compassion for other ways of understanding the world.

Mohanty (1994), found an increased sensitivity of messages among peoples who speak various languages. This associate with sociolinguistic competence and suggests a heightened social awareness among multilingual of verbal and non-verbal message cues and clues in communication. This implies that multilingual or bilingual children may be more aware of

the need of the listeners. However, much more research is needed to define precisely the characteristics and the extent of the sensitivity to communication that bilingual and multilingual share (UNESCO, 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1.3 Historical Overviews of Multilingualism

Historically, the multilingual community has evolved in a variety of ways. One type of language contact occurs as a result of migration, which is the voluntary or involuntary movement of people speaking one language into the territory of people speaking another, as well as other issues of widespread multilingualism. Another type of language contact occurs as a result of trade or commercial exchange.

As documented in the Biblical tale of the Babylonian exile, involuntary migration or forced population movement was prevalent in the ancient Middle East, and has continued to be a significant force accounting for multilingual communities.

The British policy of introducing indentured Indian labourers to the Fijian sugar plantations in the nineteenth century resulted in the existing separation in Fiji between speakers of indigenous Fijian dialects and descendants of the original plantation workers who speak Hindi. Slavery from Africa brought a huge number of native speakers of several languages to the East and West Indies, resulting in the emergence of pidgins and creoles. The Soviet strategy of forcible population relocation in the twentieth century ensured that many newly independent post-Soviet countries faced a difficult multilingual situation. The challenge in the Baltic States is posed by Russian immigrants, who are one of the rulers.

Northern European countries, too, boosted their multilingualism in the years following WWII by encouraging guest workers from the Mediterranean region. Many European countries have significant Turkish minorities, and Greek, Spanish, Algerian, and Italian immigrants moved north in the same way. In response to the resulting social and linguistic issues, a New Norwegian multilingual policy is intended to deal with (and encourage the preservation of) nearly a hundred languages.

Voluntary migration has resulted in significant changes in the linguistic composition of many countries all over the world. While some of its multilingualism was created in other ways, the United States, as the world's leading recipient of voluntary immigrants and refugees, quickly became a multilingual society, constantly assimilating a large number of immigrants through a melting pot policy.

Another major cause of multilingual communities is migration from the countryside or small towns to the large metropolitan cities that have sprung up all over the world in the twentieth century. This migration to cities is creating huge megalopolises, conurbations with populations in the millions, attracting complex patterns of multilingualism, and causing major problems for social, economic, and political development both in developing and developed worlds. As African cities grow at an ever-increasing rate, so does their multilingualism.

Multilingualism can also result from political union between different linguistic groups: Switzerland includes German, Italian, Romansch, and French populations; Belgium unites (sometimes precariously) French and Flemish speakers; and Canada has English and French 'charter' groups. In addition to this type of political organization, there are multilingual federations based on more arbitrary arrangements, which are frequently the result of colonial boundary marking and country formation; modern examples can be found in Africa and Asia. Multilingualism is also common in border areas: two examples in North America can be found along the Mexican-American border in the south and the border between New England and Quebec in the north.

As a result, multilingualism realities spring up in a variety of ways. Immigrants, whether settlers or invaders, bring language into contact, and sometimes, as with imperialist and colonial expansions, it is unnecessary for many people to physically move; their language may make its presence felt through military, religious, or economic force, requiring relatively few soldiers, merchants, bureaucrats, and missionaries.

For multilingualism there are several different reasons, and therefore there are different types or kinds of multilingualism derived.

According to Riehl, there are: individual multilingualism which refers to the individual speaker and territorial multilingualism that the use of language in multilingual countries or regions and lastly institutional multilingualism which the use of multiple working languages in the institutions. Other linguists also include the category of so-called societal multilingualism; in this case it is about the mutual penetration of communities, like in cross-border territories.

The causes of multilingualism are different. However, in general they are based on political reasons (colonialism, globalization), on socio-economic reasons (migration) and personal reasons (bilingualism which is natural multilingualism, one's own language learning or school or artificial multilingualism). The causes closely depend on the types of multilingualism mentioned above. This contribution deals with individual multilingualism, and treats the topic with respect to the existing forms of code-switching.

2. Language Use and Choice in a multilingual society

Ethiopia is a multilingual country in which over 85 languages are spoken. However, Amharic highly and Afan Oromo slightly dominate in all sphere of life in that they are given official recognition while indigenous ones or not.

Language choice in multilingual societies can be determined by the existence of a diglossic situation (Ferguson 1964; Fishman 1967, see Felice, 1994) or by the language attitudes shared by the population, which make language norms more flexible than diglossia but are shared in the language community.

Adams (2012), argue that the home domain is depended on by a multilingual society since it is common and has family sub divisions into role relation of family members. Within the domain of business the people have the sub domains of private business and marketing. The languages used when people are doing business are therefore important because it is used in transaction, and facilities exchange of goods and services. On account of this, in a multilingual community the multilingual speaker needs to make the right language choice which principally depends on the domain of usage and the linguistic repertoire of speech participants.

People who speak more than two languages are often confronted with making the right language choice within a particular domain. Language choice is informed by the kind of participants in a communication situation, the topic, social distance, and also location. Choosing the appropriate variety in multilingual communities depends on social factors and dimensions and the repertoire of the addressee.

The factors that influence a speaker's or writer's choice of language vary, and they include the context that surrounds the speaker or the writer, the age, gender, culture, etc. Very often, the choice of language is conscious, and the speaker can switch the choice depending on such factors. This example is adopted from introduction to sociolinguistics textbook by Holmes (2013).

Kalala is 16 years old. He lives in Bukavu, an African city in Eastern Zaire with a population about 240.000. It is a multicultural, multilingual city with more people coming and doing for work and business reasons than people who

live predominantly. Over 40 groups speaking different language can be found in the city. Kalala, like many of his friends is unemployed. He spends his days roaming the street, stopping offs periodically at regular meeting places in the market place, in the park, or at a friend's place. During a normal day he uses at least three different varieties or codes, and sometimes more.

On account of his linguistic repertoire, Kalala speaks an informal style of Shi, his tribal language, at home with his family, and he is familiar with the formal Shi used for weddings and funerals. He uses informal Shi in the market place when he deals with vendors from his own ethnic group. When he wants to communicate with people from a different tribal group, he uses the lingua franca of the area, Swahili. He learned standard (Zairean) Swahili at school, but the local market place variety is a little different. It has its own distinct linguistic features and even its own name is so called Kingwana. He uses Kingwana to younger children and to adults he meets in the streets, as well as to people in the market place. He listens to pop music in Lingala, although he doesn't speak it or understand it. He spends most of his time with his friends, and with them he uses another variety or code called Indoubil. This is a variety which is used among the young people in Bukavu, regardless of their ethnic backgrounds or tribal affiliations.

We understood from the above that he regularly uses different varieties or codes and his linguistic repertoire includes three varieties or codes of Swahili (standard Zairean, local Swahili, or Kingwana and Indoubil) and two varieties of his tribal language, Shi (one formal and an informal or casual style). The factors that cause Kalala to use one code in place of another are the types of social factors that have been identified that are relevant to language choice in language communities around the world.

The components of a domain don't always fit together. Individual interactions within a domain may not be the typical ones that are expected. People can choose a specific strain because it makes it easier to discuss a particular topic regardless of where they are speaking. For example, a student at home may discuss school using the language associated with the education area rather than that associated with the family area. This is known as leakage, which for simplicity uses the diversity of one particular domain in another domain. Domain is clearly a very general concept that relies on three important social factors related to the code choice participants, the setting and the topic. It is useful for making general generalizations about any language community. Using information about the areas of use in a community, it is possible to draw a very simple model that summarizes the norms of linguistic usage for the community. This is often particularly useful for bilingual and multilingual language communities.

Here is another example that adopts from introduction of sociolinguistics by Holmes (2013) p.19.

'Anahina is a bilingual Tongan New Zealander living in Auckland. At home with her family, she uses Tongan almost exclusively for a wide range of topics. She often talks to her grandmother about Tongan customs, for instance. With her mother she exchanges gossip about Tongan friends and relatives. Tongan is the language the family uses at meal times. They discuss what they have been doing; plan family outings and share information about Tongan social events. It is only with her older sisters that she uses some English words when they are talking about school or doing their homework.

As far as the example concerned the typical interactions between typical participants in the typical setting. The domain of the interaction is family in which we have typical participants (family members) in the typical setting (home) about typical topics (family activities). A number of such typical interactions have been identified as relevant in describing patterns of code choice in many speech communities. They are known as domains of language use, a term popularised by Joshua Fishman, an American sociolinguist. A domain involves typical interactions between typical participants in typical settings.

2.1 Modelling variety or code-choice

Domain is a particular concept involving social factors in code choice such as participants, settings, and topic. It is possible to draw a simple model summarizing language use in a community. Here is an example that adopt from introduction of sociolinguistics by Janet Holmes (2013) p. 23.

Maria is a teenager whose Portuguese parents came to London in the 1960s. She uses mainly Portuguese at home and to older people at the Portuguese Catholic Church and community centre, but English is the appropriate variety or code for her to use at school. She uses mostly English in her after-school job serving in a local café, though occasionally older customers greet her in Portuguese.

Based on the example above, the domain is clearly a very general concept that draws on three important social factors in code selection: participants, setting and topic. It is useful for making general generalizations about any language community. Using information about the domains of use in a community, it is possible to draw a very simple model that summarizes the norms of linguistic usage for the community. This is often particularly useful for bilingual and multilingual language communities. The domain-based approach therefore only allows one language selection per domain, namely the language that is used most frequently in this domain. Of course, there can be more than one language in each domain. Different people can use different languages in the same domain. The same person can use different languages in the same domain for different reasons (such as who they are talking to).

2.2 Diglossia

Diglossia is two distinct varieties of the same language used in the community with one regarded as a high variety (H) and the other a low variety (L). Each variety is used for distinct functions. No one uses the H variety in everyday conversation. Here is an example that adopt from introduction of sociolinguistics by Janet Holmes (2013) p. 27.

In Eggenwil, a town in the Aargau canton of Switzerland, Silvia, a bank-teller, knows two very distinct varieties of German. One is the local Swiss German dialect of her canton which she uses in her everyday interactions. The other is standard German which she learnt at school, and though she understands it very well indeed, she rarely uses it in speech. Newspapers are written in standard German, and when she occasionally goes to hear a lecture at the university it may be in standard German. The national TV news is broadcast in standard German, but weather broadcasts now use dialect. The sermons her mother listens to in church are generally in standard German too, though more radical clerics use Swiss German dialect. The novels Silvia reads also use standard German.

The situation in Eggenwil fits perfectly with these three criteria for narrow or classic diglossia. There are a number of other communities that also fit this narrow definition. Arabic-speaking countries use classical Arabic as the High variant and regional slang variants as the Low variant. In Greece there is, in addition to the L-variety is Dhimotiki, an H-variety is Katharvousa, which it is steadily displacing. Latin was once the High variant alongside daughter languages such as Italian, French and Spanish, which had developed from their colloquial form. While the two varieties have been linguistically related in these communities, the relationship is in some cases closer than in others. For example, the degree of pronunciation of High and Low varies from place to place. The sounds of Swiss German are very different from those of Standard German, while Greek Katharvousa is much closer to Dhimotiki in its pronunciation.

The pattern of code or variety selection in Eggenwil is described by the term diglossia. This term has been used in both a narrower and a much broader sense and I am going to describe both. In the narrower and original sense of the word, diglossia has three defining characteristics: These are two different varieties of the same language used in the community, one being a high (H) variety and the other being a low (L) variety, and each Variety is used

for very different functions; H and L complement each other. Nobody uses the H variant in everyday conversation.

Diglossia situation involves two contrasting varieties, H and L. Sometimes, however, a more sophisticated concept is needed describe the functional distribution of different varieties in a community. People like Kalala in Bukavu use a number of different codes for different purposes. The term **polyglossia** has been used for situations like this where a community regularly uses more than three languages. It is a useful term for describing situations where more than two distinct codes are used for clearly distinct purpose. For instance, a Chinese Singaporean speaks English and Chinese – (Mandarin Chinese-Cantonese -Hokkien).

2.3 Code switching and code mixing

Code switching is the simultaneous use of more than one language or language variety in a conversation. Code switching is the use of more than one linguistic variety in a way that is consistent with the syntax and phonology of each variety. In linguistics, code switching occurs when a speaker switches between two or more languages or language varieties in the context of a single conversation. Multilingual, speakers of multiple languages, sometimes use elements of multiple languages when conversing. Code switching, then, is the use of more than one linguistic variety in a way that is consistent with the syntax and phonology of each variety. Code-switching: Changing varieties across sentences boundaries. Code switching can be: domain-based (Situational): It depends on where we happen to be and addressee-based: When it is constrained by who we are talking to.

We code-switch because of Situation that has been done in the moment, when there is an obvious change in the situation so as to hide information from a third party. For instance, the arrival of someone. And also, we switch the topic achieve a better explanation of a certain concept. For example, when a teacher switches from English to L1 to make sure students understand what she says. Lastly, Social reasons lead us to switch in case of signal solidarity and reduce social distance, increase social distance, show off, impress or persuade an audience, and reflect one's ethnic identity.

Code mixing is a related term, but the use of the terms code switching and code mixing varies. Some scholars use both terms to denote the same practice, while others use code mixing to denote the formal linguistic properties of these language contact phenomena and code switching to denote actual spoken use by multilingual people.

CONCLUSION

Multilingualism has thus gradually become a natural trend in our globalized world and has probably been included as a natural part of social development among the logical circumstances.

Multilingualism has been universal in nature on account of most of the world population speaks more than one language which is purely based on the need of the community and it may be forced or voluntary. One type of language contact occurs as a result of migration, which is the voluntary or involuntary movement of people speaking one language into the territory of people speaking another, as well as other issues of widespread multilingualism. Slavery from Africa brought a huge number of native speakers of several languages to the East and West Indies, resulting in the emergence of pidgins and creoles. In response to the resulting social and linguistic issues, a New Norwegian multilingual policy is intended to deal with nearly a hundred languages.

On account of this, in a multilingual community the multilingual speaker needs to make the right language choice which principally depends on the domain of usage and the linguistic repertoire of speech participants. Language choice is informed by the kind of participants in

a communication situation, the topic, social distance, and also location. Code switching is the simultaneous use of more than one language or language variety in a conversation. In linguistics, code switching occurs when a speaker switches between two or more languages or language varieties in the context of a single conversation.

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