CHALIMBANA UNIVERSITY

DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

ELE 4400: PSYCHO - SOCIOLINGUISTICS

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Table of Contents

Introduction

Psycho-sociolinguistics is a compulsory course to students majoring in English Linguistics. Of course, it can still be taken by those who take English as their minor. The course is a combination of Psycholinguistics and Sociolinguistics, thus, Psycho-sociolinguistics. The first part, Psycholinguistics deals with the study of language acquisition as well as language learning in general. The second part, Sociolinguistics is a developing branch of linguistics and sociology which investigates the individual and social variation of language. Sociolinguistics as a branch of sociology reveals the relationship between language use and the social basis for such use.

Rationale

The course is designed to equip students with psychological aspects of human language, language processing and major experimental techniques used in psycholinguistics. The course will also expose students to the concept of sociolinguistics. Not only that but to also help students to be aware of language dynamics so as to have much understanding of how speakers package their talk and how they relate to each other. This knowledge will in-turn help the students manage their use of language in social contexts.

Aim

The course is aimed at enhancing students' knowledge of language acquisition and, the relationships between language and mental processes in general and in language acquisition and development in particular

Course Outcomes

Having successfully completed this course, students are expected to:

- discuss the psychological facts and processes relevant to language acquisition and language learning in both first and second language contexts;
- demonstrate an understanding of the arguments forming the various theories of language acquisition.
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how humans understand and produce language
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the neurological basis of language in the brain
- discuss, based on empirical evidence about the organisation of language in the brain

- discuss the nature of the relationship between language, mental and physical processes, and the context of reality
- investigate some of the causes and effects of language disorders.
- investigate children's language and language processing
- Critically evaluate theories of language in light or empirical evidence
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the current debates about the modularity of the human mind
- express understanding of concepts used in Sociolinguistics
- explain the sociolinguistic patterns prevailing in their communities
- explain the impact of some aspects of language dynamics in society
- outline and explain the stages of language planning
- trace the language-in-education policy in Zambia
- demonstrate evidence for the sociolinguistic gender pattern.

Summary Module

Psycho-sociolinguistics is a compulsory course to students majoring in English Linguistics. Of course, it can still be taken by those who take English as their minor. The course is a combination of Psycholinguistics and Sociolinguistics, thus, Psycho-sociolinguistics. The first part, Psycholinguistics deals with the study of language acquisition as well as language learning in general. By extension, it explores the relationships between language and mental and physical processes in general and in language acquisition and development in particular. Psycholinguistics pays special attention to the way language is acquired, stored and used. The second part, Sociolinguistics is a developing branch of linguistics and sociology which investigates the individual and social variation of language. Sociolinguistics as a branch of sociology reveals the relationship between language use and the social basis for such use. Sociolinguistics differs from sociology of language in that the focus of sociolinguistics is the effect of the society on the language, while the latter's focus is on the language's effect on the society. Sociolinguistics is a practical, scientific discipline which researches into the language that is actually used, either by native speakers or foreigners, in order to formulate theories about language change. There are numerous factors influencing the way people speak which are investigated by sociolinguistics.

Study Skills

As an adult learner your approach to learning will be different to that from your school days: you will choose what you want to study, you will have professional and/or personal motivation for doing so and you will most likely be fitting your study activities around other professional or domestic responsibilities.

Essentially, you will be taking control of your learning environment. As a consequence, you will need to consider performance issues related to time management, goal setting, stress management, etc. Perhaps you will also need to reacquaint yourself in areas such as essay planning, coping with exams and using the web as a learning resource.

Your most significant considerations will be *time* and *space* i.e. the time you dedicate to your learning and the environment in which you engage in that learning.

We recommend that you take time now - before starting your self-study - to familiarize yourself with these issues. There are a number of excellent resources on the web.

Time frame

This module is to be covered in the period of **9** months. You will be expected to spend at least 60 contact hours with the lecturer and 60 hours of self-study.

Course material

The main course materials in this course are:

- Study units
- Text books
- Dictionaries & Charts
- Pre-recorded Audio lessons
- DVDs

Need help (contacts)

If you should need help, you can contact email **jimaimahandili@gmail.com** You may also see us physically at the Chalimbana Literature and Languages department.

Recommended readings

Andrade, J. (2001). Working memory in perspective. New York: Psychology Press

Atkinson, R. C. & Shiffron, R.M. (1968). Human memory: a proposed system and its

Bruner, J. (1983). Child's Talk: Learning to Use Language. New York: Norton,.

Chomsky, N. (1968). Language and Mind. New York: Harcourt, Brace.

Fasold, R. H. 1984. Sociolinguistics of Language. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Trudgill, Peter. (1995). Sociolinguistics: An introduction to language and society. London: Penguin Books.

Wardhaugh, Ronald. (1992). An introduction to sociolinguistics. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

Slobin, P.I. (1979). Psycholinguistics. (2nd Edition) London: Scott, Foreman.

Warren, P. (2013). Introducing Psycholinguistics. UK: Cambridge University Press

De Villiers, J.G. and P.A. De Villiers. (1978). Language Acquisition. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Coulmas, Florian, (ed.) (1997). The Handbook of Sociolinguistics. Oxford: Blackwell.

David, D. W. (2007). Psychology and language. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Assessment

Assessment	Percentage
Continuous Assessment	**50%**
One Assignment	25%
One Test	25%
Final exam	**50%**
Final Mark	**100%**

UNIT 1: INTRODUCING PSYCHOLINGUISTICS

1.0 Introduction

This unit is a general introduction to the field of psycholinguistics. It attempts to define psycholinguistics by giving you an overview of the field. It looks at different definitions that had been propounded over time in the field as well as traces its history. The link that psycholinguistics has to the human life is discussed. In particular, this unit introduces you to the concept of psycholinguistics. It attempts to give a definitive form to the field. It thus brings to our understanding the reality of the way psychology and linguistics come together to create a new field – psycholinguistics.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define psycholinguistics
- state some definitions given by different scholars of psycholinguistics
- discuss the start point of psycholinguistics
- outline the factors that led to the emergence of the psycholinguistic field
- identify the scholars at the forefront of the emergence of the field of psycholinguistics

1.1 What is Psycholinguistics?

As its name implies, psycholinguistics has its roots in two disciplines of psychology and linguistics, and particularly in Chomsky's approach to linguistics. When one looks at the word psycholinguistics, one notices that it is made up of two morphemes; 'Psycho' which refers to the mind, thus, by implication, to psychology. The other morpheme (the root) 'linguistics' refers to the study of language. Loosely speaking, therefore, we could say psycholinguistics is the study of language from the psychological stand point. It is the study of the psychological and neurological factors that enable humans to acquire, use, comprehend and produce language.

Some scholars have argued that psycholinguistics is the study of language as it relates to the human mind. Other scholars, especially those with the psychological bias, see psycholinguistics in terms of the experimental form of study of human mind within the laboratory and its ability to comprehend language. It studies how language influences the mind and how language is influenced by the human mind. Aitchison (1990) defines psycholinguistics as the study of language and mind, which aims to model the way the mind works in relation to language. Looking at this definition, it is obvious that Aitchison's view of psycholinguistics is that which maps out the strategizing of language usage as well as language comprehension.

It should be obvious that psycholinguistics is not an easy concept to define, but it is clear that an important link between psychological and linguistic studies has been successfully forged to create the field of psycholinguistics.

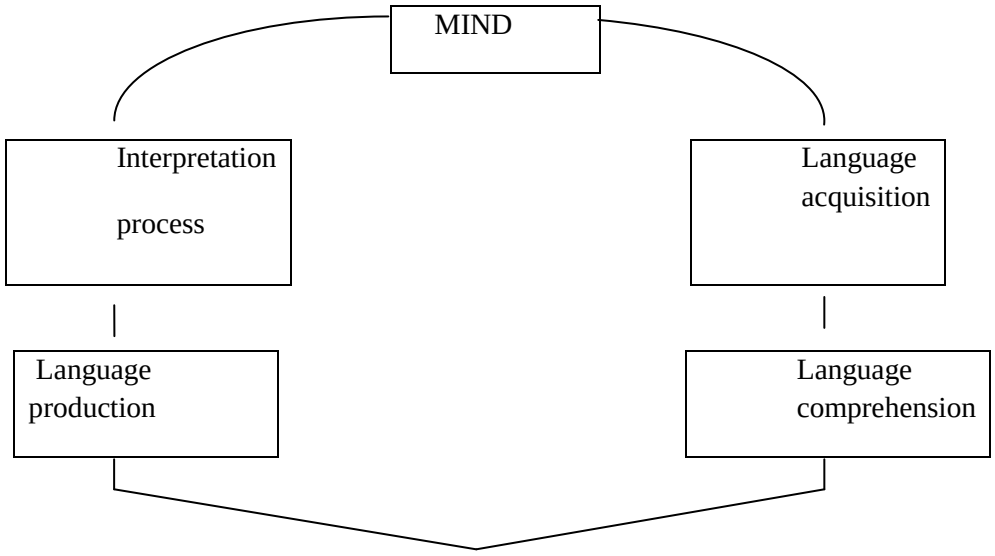


Fig. 1 A non-directional circle of language link with the mind

In this sense, the mind is involved in the acquisition of language, in comprehending what has been said, in producing what is to be said, in processing what is heard or to be said.

1.2 A Brief History of Psycholinguistics

As a scientific endeavour, psycholinguistics started as far back as the 18th century. According to Aitchison (1990), the first ever known experiment in psycholinguistics was conducted by the German philosopher, Dietrich Tiedemann. Tiedemann used his son as experiment by carefully recording the linguistic development of his son along with other developmental characteristics that he exhibited. Of course, the first experimental record in psycholinguistics is credited to the British psycholinguist Francis Galton (1822-1911).

This field got serious attention from the scholars recently, precisely in the middle of the 20th century. It is believed that Noam Chomsky is the father of psycholinguistics. Aitchison (1990) argues that the field grew out of the research efforts of Noam Chomsky in linguistics and philosophy of language.

Agreeing with Aitchison, Rebez (1987) asserts that psycholinguistics began in pre-20th century, but re-invented itself in the middle of the century. By the 1950s and 1960s the field grew in leaps owing to the works of such scholars as Noam Chomsky,

Zellig Harris, George Miller, Karl Lashley, Charles Osgood, John Carroll, Thomas Sebeok, and Herbert Simon among others.

1.3 Factors Responsible for the Emergence of Psycholinguistics

Necessity is the mother of invention. All fields of human endeavour are always created out of a need to be met. One major factor is the work of Noam Chomsky. Aitchison (1990) asserts that a direct factor that affected the development of psycholinguistics is the impactful work of Noam Chomsky in linguistics. Chomsky's work in cognitive linguistics greatly affected the way the field of psycholinguistics developed. The growth of TGG, with its focus on the cognitive ability of the native speaker to properly use their language brought the psychological basis of linguistic performance in great focus. Because of the TGG, many scholars got inspired to research into child language usage. Psycholinguists, however, got disillusioned with the fact that psycholinguistic focus tested hypothesis advanced by theoretical linguistics.

1.4 Some Scholars Credited with the Development of Psycholinguistics

It is important for a scholar to acknowledge the contribution of other scholars to a particular matter. Doing otherwise would be considered stealing. Noam Chomsky takes the lead, for his works on Transformational Generative Grammar easily form a basis for the development of the psycholinguistic field. Even if Chomsky's mentalist natures of propositions have suffered critique by some scholars, they still form a firm base of psycholinguistics which cannot be wished away. Vygostky, with his study of the mind and its relation to communication makes scholars add him to the list.

1.5 Linguistics and Psycholinguistics Interface

From your previous studies/readings of phonetics and phonology, you have probably recalled that linguistics is the scientific study of language. Linguists (people that study language scientifically) are thus pre-occupied with the issue of language – that is, its structure among other things. To that effect, based on empirical data, linguists have identified different levels of linguistic analysis; namely: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics discourse analysis, pragmatics etc. Mostly, linguistics studies natural languages, i.e. languages spoken or written in natural settings. Linguistics in its truest sense restricts itself to the description of the physically manifested language, and not the underlying psychological process that lead to both production and comprehension of language.

Linguistics, thus, in order to be objective, shares concerns with other sciences. It aims at collecting data, tests hypothesis, devise models and construct theories. It deals with unique subject matter; at one extreme, it overlaps with hard sciences such as physics and anatomy; and at the other extreme, it involves such traditional arts as philosophy

and literary criticism. The fact that anatomy has been incorporated in linguistics, it is not surprising that linguists ponder over the role, for example of the brain in language processing, language production and comprehension; language acquisition and language learning. It is linguistics which studies, for example, how sounds are produced (articulatory phonetics), and how they are perceived (auditory phonetics). Linguistics describes the phonological shape and form of a word, and its syntactic category thereby providing its semantic content. This is all linguistics can do – describing the spoken or written linguistic structure; not the mental process that lead to both production and comprehension of both spoken and written language. Production and comprehension of language require a domain that is more multifaceted, a domain that draws on both linguistics and psychology. Psycholinguistics, thus, is that domain.

It is true, in this connection therefore, that most scientific experiments used by psycholinguists in order to find out how humans deal with linguistic information are drawn from psychology. Linguistics by itself, as pointed out earlier, may not successfully access the mental process at play when interlocutors use language. What happens for example, when a speech sound ***/p/*** is produced, or perceived in the brain cannot be fully understood by one who has no knowledge of both psychological and linguistic knowledge. We can therefore; safely say both disciplines are indispensable to the understanding of language in the brain.

1.6 Other Fields that interact with Psycholinguistics

The field of psycholinguistics does not work in isolation in the study of language, but interacts with other fields. Neurolinguistics is one example of the many fields that work alongside with psycholinguistics in study of language. Neurolinguists, for example, have recently made reasonably successful efforts to discover which parts of the brain have a role to play in language processing as well as finding out the function of each of these parts.

The methods commonly used in the study of language and brain are brain imaging and through the study of brain trauma and abnormalities (study of aphasic patients).

Apart from the field of Neurolinguistics, psycholinguistics interacts with other fields such as; anthropological linguistics, applied linguistics, biological and clinical linguistics. As earlier alluded to, Neurolinguistics is a very important field in psycholinguistics because for a psycholinguist to know the neurological basis of language development, especially of the brain's control over the process of speech and understanding, Neurolinguistics is indispensable. Experiments such as brain imaging and interpretation of speech disorders are the mainstay of Neurolinguistics. This is largely so because psycholinguistics as a branch of linguistics does not have enough equipment for such challenging mental investigations.

Biological linguistics (Biolinguistics) provides psycholinguistics with the biological conditions necessary for language development and use in humans, with reference both to the history of language in the human race and to child development. As we shall see under physiological foundation of language, the human anatomy (physical structure) plays a crucial role in language development and language acquisition and/or language learning. The existence of the language acquisition device (LAD), now language faculty, shows in part, the importance of biological linguistics where upon psycholinguistics draws.

Anthropological linguistics, the study of language variation and use in relation to the cultural patterns and beliefs of human race, provides psycholinguistics with the cultural factors that help account for second language learning. It is argued that one's attitude towards the culture of the target language influences the rate at which language learning/acquisition can occur.

Clinical linguistics is another field upon which psycholinguists fall back for evidence, especially about the existence of language centres in the brain. Clinical linguistics applies linguistic theories and methods to the analysis of disorders of spoken, written, or signed language. Thus, such disorders as aphasia, dyslexia, calculia, alexia and spoonerisms are all drawn from clinical linguistics.

1.7 Physiological Foundations of Language

1.7.1 The Human Anatomy and Language

Looking at the human body parts, one would be quick to include the ears, the mouth and the tongue to the list of the parts that one thinks facilitate language acquisition and language use by humans. Of course, these are simply some of the parts that facilitate in the production and perception of the already developed language. Humans are anatomically and physiologically equipped to acquire/learn, produce and perceive language.

1.7.2 The Human Brain

When one looks at the human anatomy, especially the brain, one realises that it has several anatomically distinct regions specialised for language development. Research has focused on the structure and function of the cerebrum. On the surface layer of grey matter, made up of billions of nerve cells (neurons) is the cerebral cortex, an area primarily involved in the control of voluntary movement and intellectual functions, and in the decoding of information from the senses.

The cerebral cortex is the highest level of the brain (found only in mammals, and humans have the greatest proportion of cortex). Language representation and processing resides in the cortex.

1.7.3 Modularity of the Brain (Anatomy of the Brain)

Overview

The brain is an amazing three-pound organ that controls all functions of the body, interprets information from the outside world, and embodies the essence of the mind and soul. Intelligence, creativity, emotion and memory are few of the many things governed by the brain. The brainstem acts as a relay centre connecting the cerebrum, cerebellum to the spinal cord. The brain receives information through our five senses: sight, smell, touch, taste, and hearing – often many at one time. It assembles the messages in a way that has meaning for us, and can store that information in our memory. The brain controls our thoughts, memory and speech, movement of the arms and legs, and functions of many organs within our body. The brain also determines how we respond to stressful situations (such as taking a test, losing a job, or suffering an illness) by regulating our heart and breathing rate.

The brain is composed of three parts: the brainstem, cerebrum, and cerebellum. The cerebrum is divided into four lobes: frontal, parietal, temporal, and occipital. The cerebrum is the largest part of the brain and is composed of the right and left hemispheres. It performs functions like interpreting touch, vision and hearing, as well as speech, reasoning, emotions, learning, and fine control of movement.

The cerebellum is located under the cerebrum. Its function is to coordinate muscle movements, maintain posture, and balance.

The brainstem includes the midbrain, pons and medulla. (pons are whitish brain nerve fibres on the surface of the brainstem between the medulla oblongata and the midbrain). The brainstem performs many automatic functions such as breathing, heart rate, body temperature, wake and sleep cycles, digestion, sneezing, coughing, vomiting, and swallowing. Ten of the twelve cranial nerves originate in the brainstem.

The surface of the cerebrum has a folded appearance called the cortex. The cortex contains about 70% of the 100 billion nerve cells. The nerve cell bodies colour the cortex grey-brown giving it its name – gray matter. Beneath the cortex are long connecting fibres between neurons, called axons, which make up the white matter. The cortex too has a folded appearance.

The folding of the cortex increases the brain's surface area allowing more neurons to fit inside the skull and enabling higher functions. Each fold is called a gyrus and each groove between folds is called a sulcus. There are names for the folds and grooves that help define specific brain regions.

Right brain – Left brain

The right and the left brain hemispheres of the brain are joined by a bundle of fibres called the corpus callosum that delivers messages from one side to the other. Each

hemisphere controls the opposite of the body. If the brain tumor is located on the right side of the brain, the left arm or leg may be weak or paralysed.

Not all functions of the hemispheres are shared. In general, the left hemisphere controls speech, comprehension, arithmetic, and writing. The right hemisphere controls creativity, special ability, artistic and musical skills. The left hemisphere is dominant in hand use and language in about 92% of people.

Lobes of the brain

The cerebral hemispheres have distinct fissures (narrow openings), which divide the brain into lobes. Each hemisphere has four (4) lobes: frontal, temporal, parietal, and occipital. Each lobe may be divided, once again, into areas that serve very specific functions. It is important to understand that each lobe of the brain does not function alone. There are very complex relationships between the lobes of the brain and between the right and left hemispheres.

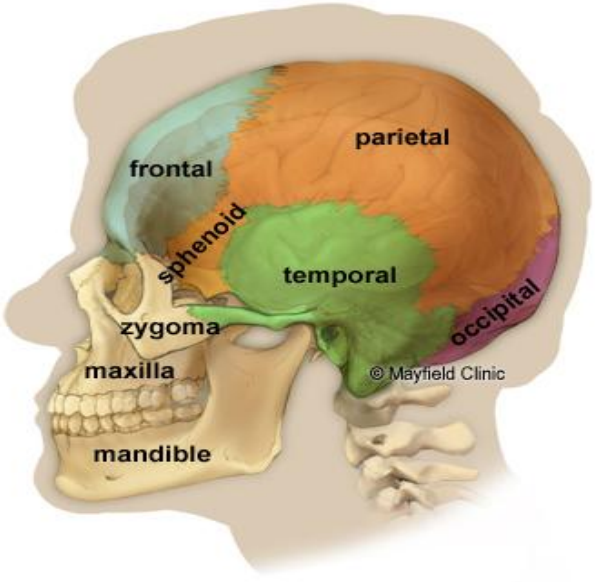


Image of brain showing the four (4) lobes

Fig 2.1

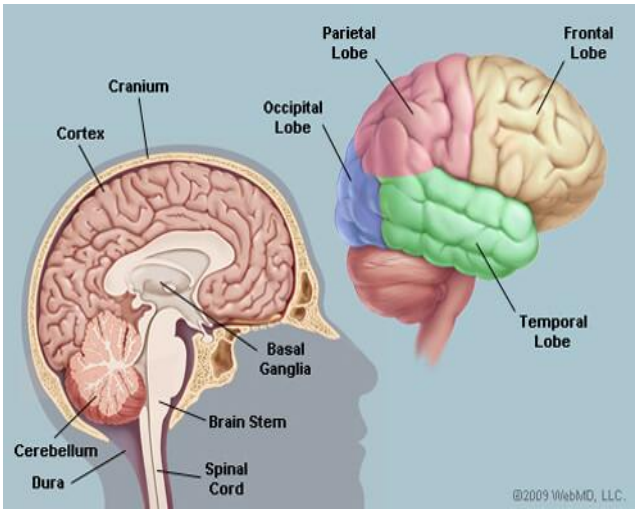


Fig 2.2

Frontal lobe

Personality, behaviour, emotions
Judgment, planning, problem solving
Speech: speaking & writing (Broca's area)
Body movement (motor strip)
Intelligence, concentration, self awareness

Parietal lobe

Interprets language, words
Sense touch, pain, temperature (sensory strip)
Interprets signals from vision, hearing, motor, sensory and memory
Spatial and visual perception

Occipital lobe

Interprets vision (colour, light, movement)
Temporal lobe
Understanding language (Wernicke's area)
Memory
Hearing
Sequencing and organisation

The brain is composed of cerebral hemispheres; the right hemisphere which supervises the left side of the body and the left hemisphere which supervises the right side of the body. We refer to this as the cerebral brain function. In between the two hemispheres is the Corpus-Callosum, a thick band of nerve fibres (two million fibres) that connects two hemispheres of the brain in higher mammals and allows them to communicate. The left hemisphere based on data from aphasics, is dominant for

language in most right handed people. The evidence for this assertion stems from cases of aphasia, where damage to the left side of the brain may cause both language handicap and a right-sided paralysis.

The brain is divided into distinct anatomical faculties that are directly responsible for specific cognitive functions. On where language is to be found in the brain, (Lynn 2008) argues that it is not fully known. However, it is thought the following areas of the brain are to a greater or lesser extent involved in language processing; Broca's area, Wernick's area, supramarginal Gyrus, Angular Gyrus and the Primary Auditory Cortex. We can argue generally that language is centred in the temporal lobes of the brain. In short, the human brain is structured in such a way that language development, and subsequent language acquisition are possible. Note that other parts of the body with primary functions of breathing (lungs), eating (mouth, teeth, tongue) play a critical role in language production. The ears (auditory system) aid in language comprehension. The acoustic nature of speech can only be perceived through the ear-drum which is intricately connected to the Wernick's area, the area in the brain involved in language comprehension. Speech is produced by the Broca's area which is somehow linked, physiologically, to the vocal cords.

On the basis of the said afore, psycholinguists argue that human physiology is predetermined to handle language. Therefore, the biological foundations of language, that is, the child being born with the ability to acquire language, can only be discussed in the context of the human physiology. We conclude therefore, that the human anatomy of a biologically normal person is readily prepared to facilitate language development and language acquisition. So when/if all the language centres in the brain are normal and have developed well enough for the functions for which they were made, then language should naturally develop in such a human being.

1.7.4 Language and the Brain

Definition of language

In spite of the non-agreement position on what language is, it is generally an accepted notion that language is a system/method of communication irrespective of whether one is referring to the written or spoken system/form. Regardless of the inadequacies there are concerning the definition of language, one thing that is true is that language centres are in the brain; the brain is the seat for language processing, (Chomsky, 1980). Chomsky sees the brain as containing the device for language acquisition-(LAD).

Bright (1992), commenting on language in the brain, states that whereas the brain is the centre for the language skills, the matter is not so simple when one considers how language is stored and areas involved in language processing.

1.7.5 Overview of the Brain and detail

The brain is understood to be an enlarged and highly developed mass of nervous tissue that forms the upper end of the central nervous system (Oxford Concise medical Dictionary). Most neurologists and other related neuroscientists agree that the brain is the control centre of the nervous system and is located in the head close to the primary sensory apparatus and the mouth. The brain is extremely complex. Crystal (1989), to that effect puts the weight of the brain of an average adult at about 400g, which is approximately 2% of the total body weight. The brain has divisions based of form and function. Crystal (1989) for example, states that in terms of structure, the brain is divided into hind-brain consisting of the medulla Oblongata, and Cerebellum; the midbrain, the forebrain, which is subdivided into the cerebrum and the diencephalons including the thalamus and hypothalamus.

The brain also has two important/central parts, namely the left cerebral hemisphere and the right cerebral hemisphere, each linked (as earlier stated) to the other by the corpus callosum. The two hemispheres look the same as regards their physical structure. However, they are different in terms of functions as already alluded to. Linked to the idea of hemispheric functional specialisation is the contra lateral relationship between the left and right hemispheres. Further on the structure of the brain, the four lobes have been identified as: the parietal lobe, frontal lobe, occipital lobe and the temporal lobe. Coda (1987) argues that the four lobes into which each hemisphere divides perform specific functions. Each lobe's input in terms of function soundly spearheads coordination of bodily organs. The brain controls both voluntary and involuntary activities, of which language is not an exception. That each part of the brain performs specific functions, one wonders how language is stored and which specific parts are involved in, for example, language production and comprehension.

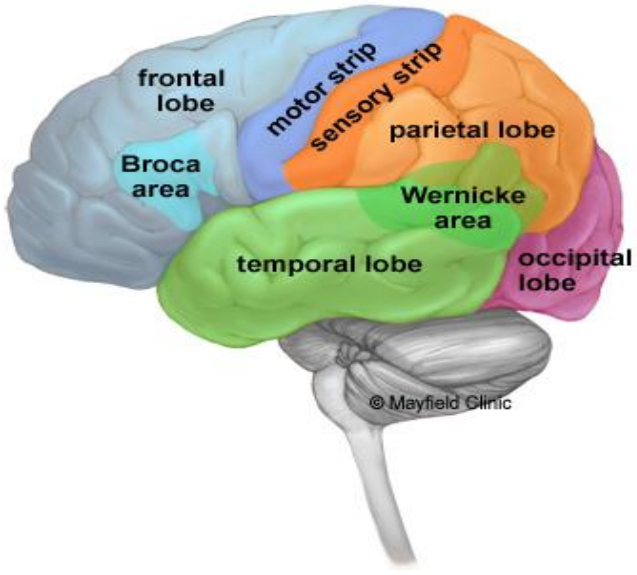


Fig. 3 showing the four brain lobes

1.8 Language Lateralisation and Localization

Way back, nearly everyone thought that one hemisphere, usually the left in most people, was superior to the other in the control of most activities (Asher, 1994). It is however known today that each hemisphere has its own role, "being involved in the performance of some activities and less involved in others (Crystal, 1987)." It has been proven that a given hemisphere can be said to be dominant or leading for certain functions. The development of these specific functions in each hemisphere is known as lateralisation. (This could be said to be the localisation of certain functions primarily in one side of the brain). Language lateralisation is complete approximately at puberty. Evidence comes from the fact that hemispherectomy is possible in young children but not in adults, for it may cause severe language disorder. (Hemispherectomy is the surgical removal of the hemisphere).

Asher (1994), commenting on language laterality argues that evidence from aphasics holds that the brain does have some dominance enjoyed by each hemisphere. The evidence, according to Asher that supports the view that, in the vast majority of right-handed individuals (and clear majority of left handlers) is that the left hemisphere is the neuronal substrate for core language skills.

1.8.1 How localised is language in the brain?

One question one would ask is: Is there a particular area in the brain responsible for the development of language or is it only particularly localised? The truth is that there isn't a lot of consensus and therefore, there is a lot of research still being done on this question. But the point is that, there are specific areas in the brain where language can be said to be localised.

1.8.2 The Distributed language Faculty

On the one hand, language involves coordinating and integrating a large number of diverse abilities, functions and skills. Language involves hearing; it involves assigning meaning to signs, it involves motor control of the mouth, not to mention the hands, and so it therefore can involve vision; it involves concentrating and attention and effort; it involves discerning fine differences in spectral properties of speech (e.g. perceiving vs. talking) as well as imputing meaning from gross changes in pitch combined with vast amounts of contextual and cultural information (i.e. intonation) and so on. So at one level, language requires pretty much every part of our brain, from Broca's and Wernicke's (supposed "language areas") to motor regions (and thus pre-motor regions) to semantic regions, to visual cortex and frontal regions. Research done shows that sub-cortical regions, including the basal ganglia, and even the cellebellum are crucially involved in language.

Conclusively, there is a general hypothesis, supported by some research that the centre of the brain is involved in all activities and every individual has a very well distributed network supporting language.

1.8.3 The Localised Language Faculty

It must be noted that language is localised in certain important ways. There is the well known left brain lateralisation where word processing and recognition is more reliant on the left hemisphere. This can be seen in brain imaging studies as well as in behavioural phenomena like the right-ear advantage in terms of speed of word recognition and differences in the influence of colour on colour perception between the two eyes. Bright (1992) on the question of hemispheric dominance contends that since apraxia (inaction) (this is the total or partial loss of the ability to perform coordinated movements or manipulate objects) patients also have aphasia. This is evidence that language must surely be found in the left cerebral hemisphere. What is clear, therefore, is the fact that the left hemisphere has been proved to be dominant in such activities as analytical tasks, categorization, calculation, logical organizational, information sequence, complex motor functions, and language.

The right hemisphere is said to be dominant in perception and matching of global patterns, part-whole relationship, spatial orientation, creativity, sensibility, musical patterns and emotional expression or recognition. In addition, Asher (1994) states that, "the sole component of language that seems to be fairly reliably impaired after the right hemisphere lesion is prosody, and especially prosody in the service of affective tone. Even more, lexical semantics is at least partially represented in the right hemisphere although the left hemisphere lexicon contains a more detailed representation of word meaning (Asher 1994).

It is also become common knowledge that certain parts of the brain are predominantly associated with certain aspects of language. The simplest example is that damage to the part of the brain involved in lip movement would impact one's ability to make sounds involving the lips and one may suffer from some form of ataxia and apraxia. At a more complicated level, brain damage to regions like Broca's area and Wernicke's area can result in very specific language deficits and aphasias. For example, a person may have perfect intonation, intact comprehension and number counting spared, but may have no ability to access words for production. So clearly his brain damage suggests a very specific relationship between Broca's area and specific aspects of language. Generally, language uses the whole brain, but specific aspects of language seem to be associated with specific parts of the brain.

1.9 Language areas

Despite a few exceptions, it would appear that the Broca's and the Wernicke's areas are the key language areas. Crystal to this effect states that: to the vast majority of cases where linguistic symptoms have been the result of brain damage, implying that the lesion is on or around the areas originally identified by Brocas and Wernicke. It seems there may be other primary areas contributing to language skills.

1.9.1 The Broca's Area

The first language area within the left hemisphere to be discovered is called the Broca's Area, after Paul Broca a French neurologist who had a patient with severe language problems: Although this patient could understand the speech of others with little difficulty, the only word he could produce was "tan." Owing to this, Broca gave him the pseudonym "Tan." After the patient died, Broca performed an autopsy, and discovered that an area of the frontal lobe, just ahead of the motor cortex controlling the mouth, had been seriously damaged. He correctly hypothesized that this area was responsible for speech production.

Physicians called the inability to speak aphasia, and the inability to produce speech was therefore called Broca's aphasia, expressive aphasia. Someone with this kind of aphasia has little problem understanding speech. But when trying to speak they are capable only of slow, laborious, often (indistinct speech) slurred sequences of words. They don't produce complete sentences, seldom use regular grammatical endings such as –ed for the past tense, and tend to leave out small grammatical words.

It turns out that the Broca's area is not just a matter of getting language out in a motor sense, though. It seems to be more generally involved in the ability to deal with grammar itself, at least the more complex aspects of grammar. For example, when they hear sentences that are put in the passive form, they often misunderstand: If you say "The boy was slapped by the girl," they may understand you as communicating that the boy slapped the girl.

1.9.2 The Wernicke's Area

The second language area to be discovered is called Wernicke's Area, after Carl Wernicke, a German neurologist. Wernicke had a patient who could speak quite well, but was unable to understand the speech of others. After the patient's death, Wernicke performed an autopsy and found damage to the area at the upper portion of the temporal lobe, just behind the auditory cortex. He correctly hypothesised that this area was responsible for speech comprehension. This kind of aphasia is known as Wernicke's aphasia, or receptive aphasia. When you ask a person with this problem a question, they will respond with a sentence that is more or less grammatical, but which contains words that have little to do with the question or, for that matter, with each other. Strange, meaningless, but grammatical sentences come forth, a phenomenon called "word salad." (chronically incoherent speech).

Like the Broca's area is not just about speech production, Wernicke's is not just about speech comprehension. People with Wernicke's Aphasia also have difficulty naming things, often responding with words that sound similar, or the names of related things, as if they having a very hard time with their mental "dictionaries."

Despite the fact that Broca's and Wernicke's Areas are in different lobes, they are actually quite near each other and intimately connected by a tract of nerves called the arcuate fasciculus. There are also people who have damage to the arcuate fasciculus, which results in an aphasia known as conduction aphasia. These people have it better than other aphasias: They understand speech, and they can (although with difficulty) produce coherent speech, they cannot repeat words or sentences that they hear.

Reading and writing are part of language as well, of course. But since these skills have only been around a few thousand years, they are not as clearly marked in terms of brain functioning as the basic comprehension and production areas. But there is an area of the brain called the angular gyrus that lies about half way between Wernicke's area and the visual cortex of the occipital lobe. It was discovered, after a young patient with reading problems died and his brain was examined during autopsy. The angular gyrus showed significant abnormalities.

The following are some other identified language areas:- firstly, there are areas proposed for processing; speaking, listening, reading, writing and signing. These are mainly located in the Sylvian and Rolandic fissure. In other words, the front part of the parietal lobe may be connected with the speech and auditory areas at a deeper level. The area in front of the fissure of Rolando, within the motor cortex is mainly involved in motor functioning, thus relevant to the study of speaking and writing.

The Bodman's number, an area in the upper back part of the temporal lobe, extending into the parietal lobe, plays a major role in comprehension of speech. This is traditionally the Wernicke's area.

Observably, the Wernicke's area is closer to the primary auditory cortex, visual cortex and parietal lobe. Thus, all the three regions are tangentially involved in both production and comprehension of spoken and written language. In the upper part of the temporal lobe are the Heschl's gyri, (identified by an American pathologist Heschl, R. L.) the main areas involved in auditory reception. The Heschl gyri is said to be directly or indirectly connected with the Wernicke's area, the central area for comprehension. An insult to the Heschl's gyri may not necessarily trigger Wernicke's aphasia. This suggests that these two areas though both are involved in auditory perception, enjoy their independence, in spite of their interaction from time to time. The lower back part of the frontal lobe (the broca's area in most literature) is identified to be primarily involved in speech encoding. The broca's area however, is not part of the brain key to speech production. The visual cortex on the other hand first receives the written form, and then transmits it via the angular gyrus to Wernicke's area, where it is thought to be associated with auditory representation. The utterance structure is then sent to broca's area for production when one reads aloud.

1.9.3 Language Localization in the Bilingual

The question of language laterality is rendered sensitive to detail when one turns to the neurology of the bilingual; research has however shown that some polyglots have specific areas for language. That is, different languages are said to be stored in different areas of the brain. Evidence for this position comes from a 27 year old polish soldier who had a cerebral trauma to the left cerebral hemisphere in 1915. Polish was his first language (L1) and most used language until the insult/injury occurred. German and Russia were his two second languages (L2s). The aphasic insult resulted in the total loss of all the languages. The account maintains that ten months after the injury, he started to understand words in Russia but could not produce them. Two and half years after, there was a sign of neurolinguistic understanding and repeating of Polish, but extremely difficult to speak, read or write it. The knowledge of German was gone. With much difficulty, he was able to write Russian.

The discoveries in the foregoing research are evidence that different languages, or languages learnt at different times seem to be sub-served by cerebral structures that are to some extent different. In this connection, it has been observed that bilingual's two languages are to be found in the same cortex, but there is, it is argued, a marked difference in anatomic distribution of the two languages. That is, L2 is only found in posterior temporal and posterior parietal area. L1 on the other hand is located everywhere in the cortical language area. More so, it has been proven that the bilingual has seven (7) peri-sylvian language areas where L2 sites are pretty reduced compared to monolinguals that make much more use of the peri-sylvian language areas.

Furthermore, the recovery patterns of language in a bilingual roughly show how languages are stored. Paradis (1977, 1978) has described 6 types of recovery from aphasia and other literature review eight (8) types (***discussed in detail in unit 4***) of recovery from aphasia in bilinguals: parallel, differential, successive, antagonistic, mixed or mutual, selective, alternating and antagonistic. The discrepancies in all but the parallel form suggest that there is at least partially differentiated organization in the brain of the two or more languages.

Against this view, some linguists argue that it is possible that representation of the languages themselves is not differentially impaired, but rather that access to one of them is worse. Researchers to that effect "have posited a 'switch mechanism' that might itself be damaged, resulting in the common pattern of differential recovery, which one language is nearly impossible to produce, while the other is produced in aphasic fashion". However, efforts to localize the switch have proven fruitless, as damage in the clearest cases ranges throughout the language and non-language areas of the brain, from frontal through parietal to temporal lobes.

To this end, two views seem to be acceptable concerning language localization in the brain; either it can be argued that language can be found in the left cerebral hemisphere or few distinct parts of the brain, or that language ability is diffused throughout the whole brain. As argued earlier, the strict localisationists have been supported by the discovery of Broca's and Wernicke's areas. But this is a simplistic account of language localization in the brain. Today, it has been brought to light that aphasia is not only restricted to Broca's and Wernicke's areas; there are among other types of aphasia, thalamus and conduction aphasias, which are not a result of damage to either Broca's or Wernicke's areas, but to other different parts of the brain.

It is safer, therefore, going by recent research, to contend that language is distributed in the brain, and language areas are highly interconnected. This can be seen in the fact that though Broca's and Wernicke's areas deal with different language activities, they, at the same time, come together for language processing; this is only because of the presence of the arcuate fasciculus that links up the two areas. Thus, during speech production, the basic structure of the utterance is thought to be generated in Wernicke's area and is then sent to Broca's area for encoding. The motor programme is then passed on to the adjacent motor area, which governs the articulatory organs.

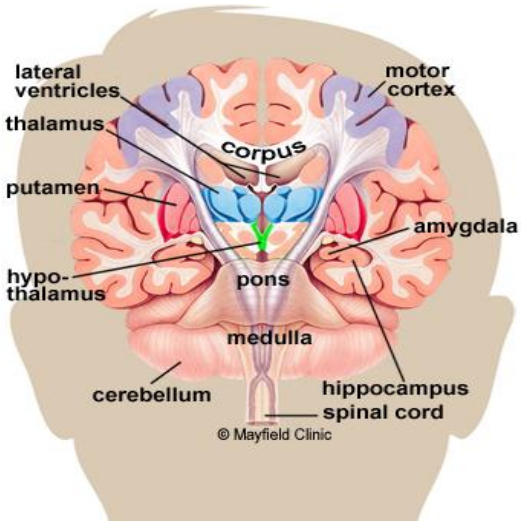


Fig. 4 Coronal cross-section showing the basal ganglia

1.9.4 Conclusion

This unit has discussed the history of psycholinguistics and has provided the definition of psycholinguistics as well as bringing out factors that led to its emergency. Other aspects covered are fields that interact with psycholinguistics, localisation and lateralisation of language areas in the brain.

1.9.5 Reflection

Is possible for humans to socialise without language?

Self Assessment Exercise

1. Provide an elaborate history of psycholinguistics
2. Discuss the language areas of in the brain
3. What do you understand by localization and lateralization of language?
4. Describe the fields that interact with psycholinguistics

1.9.6 Summary

Discussed in this unit is the definition of psycholinguistics, its brief history and factors that led to its emergency. In addition to the aforesaid, the unit has dealt with the physiological foundation of language, language areas, lateralisation and localisation of language, fields that interact with psycholinguistics and scholars that are attributed to the emergency of psycholinguistics.

UNIT 2: CHILD LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

2.0 Introduction

This unit looks at child language acquisition, focusing on the following: investigating children's language; the research paradigms; theories of language acquisition; nature of language; the chronology in language development. The unit concludes with the discussion of the critical or sensitive period. The unit begins with a look at some of the approaches and methods that have been used to investigate children's language diaries, recordings, experiments, tests profiles and other procedures. The result of this enquiry has been an explosion of information about many details of language acquisition and an increased awareness of such general issues as the nature of developmental stages and the relationship between speech production and comprehension in the course of early learning.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- show familiarity with approaches to child language investigation
- demonstrate understanding of some research paradigms concerning child language acquisition;
- demonstrate appreciation of some theories of language acquisition;
- show awareness about the nature of language; and
- demonstrate familiarity with the chronology in child language development.
- State the meaning of 'cognition'
- describe the relationship between language and thought
- discuss the cognitive process involved in language acquisition and learning
- appreciate the form of language behaviour in children
- explain the nature of language errors of language acquirers

2.1 Investigating Children's Language

You must at this point have known that the study of how children learn to speak has proven to be one of the most fascinating, important and complicated branches of language study in recent years. The fascination of the subject stems from the natural interest people take in the developing abilities of young children. Its importance lies in the way that language acquisition research can assist our understanding of language as a whole, and also in the many applications of research - especially in the field of child language handicap. The complexity arises from the enormous difficulties that are encountered as soon as anyone attempts to establish and explain the facts of language development, especially in a very young child.

For many years, scholars have shown interest in the way children learn to speak and understand their first language. Crystal (1987:228) argues that towards the end of the 19^{th} century, scholars conducted several small-scale investigations using data

recorded in parental diaries. By the turn of the 20th century, however, systematic studies with the use of tape recorders were institutionalized. As a result of this rather advanced technique, a permanent record of samples of child speech could be kept to enable repeatedly examination by analysts. Analysts could listen to the recording repeatedly for thorough investigation of child speech. Linguists and psychologists were later added to the list of investigators, obviously because of the unique interest to study the process of language acquisition in depth.

The success of this rapidly emerging discipline has always been based on the ability of researchers to devise suitable methods for eliciting linguistic data from children. As you may be aware, not all the linguists' routine techniques of enquiry can be used with children. Some experiments go with one's cognitive development such as their ability to pay attention, or remember instructions may not be sufficiently advanced. Nor is it easy to get children to make systematic judgments about language a task that is virtually impossible below the age of 3. And anyone who has tried to obtain even the most basic kind of data- a tape recording of a representative sample of a child's speech- knows how frustrating this can be. Some children, it seems are innately programmed to switch off as soon as they notice a tape recorder being switched on.

Since the 1960s, however, several sophisticated recording techniques and experimental designs have been devised. Children can be observed and recorded through one-way-vision windows or using radio microphones, so that the effects of having an investigator in the same room as the child can be eliminated. Large-scale sampling programmes have been carried out, with children sometimes being recorded for several years. Particular attentions has been paid to devising experimental techniques, that fall well within a child's intellectual level and social experience. Even pre-linguistic infants have been brought into the research: acoustic techniques are used to analyze their vocalizations, and their ability to perceive the world around them is monitored using special recording equipment. The result has been a growing body of reliable data on the stages of language acquisition from birth until puberty.

2.2 Research Paradigms

The study of children's language cannot be achieved by using a single approach. As a result, linguists and psychologists have each provided its own methodological approach to the study subject. In order to cope with the diverse activities in which children engage, many variations have been introduced. The two main research paradigms that researchers fall upon are:

Naturalistic sampling: a sample of a child's spontaneous use of language is recorded in familiar and comfortable surroundings. As you may probably envisage, the child's own home provides such an environment. Other places of similar conditions are used such as the research centres since it is not always easy to maintain good acoustic quality at home. The child is allowed to play, without interference, with toys while talking to parents or other children. The observers and their equipment are not

noticeable. Crystal argues that a good quality, representative naturalistic sample is generally considered an ideal datum for child language study. Note that this approach does have limitations. While these samples are informative about speech production, they give little guidance about the way children understand what they hear around them. More so, samples cannot contain everything, and they can easily miss some important features of a child's linguistic ability. They may also not provide enough instances of a developing feature to enable the analyst to make a decision about the way the child is learning. For such reasons, the description of samples of child speech has to be supplemented by other methods.

2.3 Theories of Language Acquisition

(Jean Aitchison 2008. The Articulate Mammal: An introduction to psycholinguistics)

You will note that several theories and approaches have emerged over the years to study and analyze the process of language acquisition. The main schools of thought, which provide theoretical paradigms in guiding the course of language acquisition are, innatist theory, cognitivist theory and immitation theory. The Innate theory asserts that language is an innate capacity and that a child's brain contains special language-learning mechanisms at birth in which the main proponent of this theory is Chomsky (Pinker, 1994). On the other hand, the cognitive theory by Jean Piaget (Wilburg, 2010) claims that language is just one aspect of a child's overall intellectual development. Sassonian (2009) asserts that language is a symbolic representation which allows the children to abstract the world.

It must be noted that every normal human being can talk, so the average person tends to think that there is little or nothing mysterious about language. But the mysterious nature of human language becomes apparent when one realizes that no one has yet managed to stimulate the language ability of human beings. Even though humans have gone ahead to insert equipment and machinery that can play games or compute figures, they have failed to construct any machinery that can without aid sustain a conversation on any topic. This goes to show the complexity of language, and indeed humans that use it. Three theories have been popularised with regard to language acquisition, namely; imitation theory, the innateness theory and the cognitive theory.

2.3.1 Imitation theory

According to the imitation theory, language acquisition is a long process of imitation whereby the child copies or imitates the utterances heard from adults. However, this theory has received a lot of criticism. Crystal (1993:234) for example pin points lack of explanation about the children's grammatical ability. He states that it is easy to recount for children's ability to imitate sounds and vocabulary, but not their grammatical ability and that children seem unable to imitate adult grammatical constructions exactly, even when invited to do so. Obviously if imitation was the only way children acquired language, the following would have been apparent:

Since adults use language correctly in terms of grammaticality, no children could have been heard to speak ungrammatically. Those children that would listen to ungrammatical structures would never produce grammatical structures. Novel situations would require someone to explain before children could say anything about them. Creativity as a crucial design feature of language would be compromised.

2.3.2 Innateness theory

The proponents of this theory of whom Chomsky was not an exception, believe that every child is born with the ability to acquire language. The Innateness theory by Noam Chomsky (Pinker, 1994) shows the innatist limitations of behaviourist view of language acquisition in 1960s to the alternative "generative" account of language. The main Argument in this theory is that children are born with an innate knowledge which guides them in the language acquisition task. The children's ability makes the task of learning a first language easier than it otherwise would be. Chomsky theorized that children were born with a hard-wired language acquisition device (hereafter, LAD) in their brains (Pinker, 1994). LAD is a set of language learning tools, intuitive at birth in all children (Pinker, 1994). Pinker (1994) further expands this idea into that of universal grammar, a set of innate principles and adjustable parameters that is common to all human languages. The language acquisition Device (LAD) is a postulated organ of the brain that is supposed to function as a congenital device for learning symbolic language (Chomsky, 2009). To Chomsky (1977) all children share the same innateness; all children share the same internal constraints which characterize narrowly the grammar they are going to construct"

Chomsky pointed out that all languages are essentially innate and they share the same universal principles. He stated that human beings are biologically endowed with language and children acquire language exactly similar to the development of other biological functions. Chomsky challenged behaviourism view in a way that their theory has no justification for logical problem of language acquisition. In fact in comparison to the instances of language expressed around them children confirm to know more about the construction of their language. Universal grammar is one passionately debated issue in which the biological donation includes capacity specific to language acquisition. Noam Chomsky and the late Eric Lenneberg for fifty years have argued for the hypothesis that children have innate, language-specific knacks that make easy and restrain language learning. As a result Chomsky hypothesized a universal grammar which is an innate linguistic knowledge which contains a set of common principles underlies all languages and he also referred to Language acquisition device as inborn knack to acquire language and to apply it productively Lightbown and Spada (2000).

2.3.3 Cognitive Theory

Crystal (1993: 234-5) states the following about the cognitive theory:

The main alternative account argues that language acquisition must be viewed within the context of a child's intellectual development. Linguistic structures will emerge only if there is an already established cognitive foundation. For example, before children can use structures of comparison (e.g. this car is bigger than that), they need first to develop the conceptual ability to make relative judgments of size. However, it is difficult to show precise correlation between specific cognitive behaviours and linguistic features at this early age. The issue is a highly controversial one, which increases in complexity as children become linguistically and cognitively more advanced.

The cognitive theory is said to be a learning theory which is based on cognitive psychology and encompasses the manner in which people think and ultimately acquire knowledge and skills. This theory was developed by Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget (1896-1980) and focus on exploring the links between the stages of cognitive development and language skills. In other words, cognitive thinking is therefore concerned with the mental changes in a person's mind and these changes are as a result of the cognitive processes. The processes involved in learning are outlined by Wilburg (2010) namely: observing, categorizing, forming generalizations, decision making and problem solving which allows the learners to make sense of the information provided.

According to the cognitive theorist all aspects that are learnt by an individual are as a result of what learners have constructed or discovered their own mental process and not through observable behaviour (Warren, 2012). The main argument in cognitive theory is that language acquisition must be viewed within the context of a child's intellectual development and linguistic structures will emerge only if there is an already established cognitive foundation (Sassonian, 2009). For a child to be able to use linguistic structures, they need to first develop the conceptual ability to make relative judgments.

2.3.4 Nature or Nurture

The question that begs an answer is whether language is a natural phenomenon to humans or man. Obviously, snorting is natural to pigs, bleating is natural to sheep and lowing is natural to cows. This is to say, whether a pig is born in Cameroon or America, it will grant not talk or speak nor bleat. Does man learn language, just as dogs may learn to beg, or elephants may learn to walk or humans may learn to play the guitar?

Aitchison (2008) points out in one sense, children learn whatever language they are exposed to, be it Chinese, Tonga or English. That obviously suggests that learning is

very important. This claim is supported by bilingual children - they usually pick up language which is frequently used but at the same time learn the other language. But the crucial question is whether children are born with 'blank sheets' in their head as far as language is concerned, or whether humans are programmed with an outline knowledge of the structure of language in general. This question is partly due to nature or wholly due to learning or nurture controversy or Chomsky-Skinner hypothesis. You may be interested to know that this debate is a historical one because scholars such as Plato did discuss the same topic centuries ago. To link it or restrict it to Chomsky- skinner's time is to be academically unfair. But it must be noted by all here that the subject received much attention in the 50s. Notable scholars at the time were Skinner, the Harvard Psychologist and Chomsky. Skinner's keystone input to the subject was his verbal behaviour (1957), a book which Chomsky reviewed in 1959. This book viewed language as a set of habits gradually built up over the years. According to skinner, no complicated innate or mental mechanisms were needed. All that was necessary was the systematic observation of the events in the external world which prompt the speaker to utter sounds.

Excerpt

Skinner's claim to understand language was based on his work with rats and pigeons. He proved that given time rats and pigeons could be trained to perform an amazing variety of seemingly complex tasks, provided two basic principles were followed. First the task must be broken down into a number of carefully graduated steps. Second, the animals must be repeatedly rewarded.

In a typical experiment, a rat was put in a box containing a bar. If it pressed the bar, it was rewarded with a pellet of food. Nothing forced it to press the bar. The first time it possibly did so accidentally. When the rat found that food arrived, it pressed the bar again. Eventually, it learned that if it was hungry, it could obtain food by pressing the bar. Then the task was made more difficult. The rat only got rewarded if it pressed the bar while the light was flashing. At first the rat was puzzled. Eventually it learned the trick. The task was again made more difficult. This time the rat only received food if it pressed the bar certain number of times. After initial confusion, it learned to do this also.

This type of 'trial and error' learning was called operant conditioning by skinner, which can be translated as 'training by means of voluntary responses'. Skinner suggested that it is by means of this mechanism that the vast majority of human learning takes place, including language learning: The basic process and relations which give verbal behaviours its special characters are now fairly well understood. Much of the experimental work responsible for this advance has been carried out on other species, but the results have proved to be surprising free of species restrictions. Recent work has shown that the methods can be extended to human behaviour without serious modification; (skinner 1957:3).

Based on these controlled experiments, skinner argued that all one needed to do in order to understand language was to identify the controlling variables,' which would enable us to predict specific utterances. In skinner's view, in the same way as it was possible to say that a rat's bar pressing behaviour was partly 'under the control' of a flashing light, so a feeling of hunger might control or predict a human utterance such as please pass the bread and butter' or the presence of a beautiful painting might call forth the exclamation, 'oh how beautiful', or a bad smell might cause one to exclaim 'Oh what a terrible smell'. In theory, skinner saw no difficulty in linking up any particular set of words which a human might wish to produce with an identifiable external happening.

Chomsky made two major criticism of skinner's work. First, the behaviour of rats in boxes is irrelevant to human language. Secondly skinner fundamentally misunderstood the nature of language. Obviously, as you might have concluded from your own knowledge of the nature of language, the simple and well-defined sequence of events observed in the boxes of rats is first not applicable to language. And the terminology used in the rat experiments cannot be re-applied to human language without becoming hopelessly vague.

For example, how do you know that someone is likely to say 'Oh what a beautiful picture' when looking at a beautiful painting? They might say instead, 'it clashes with the wallpaper', it's hanging too low, it's hideous'. As can be seen, language is not always based on stimuli. Nor are these responses predictable. People go past a beautiful painting without saying anything. More so, most times people discuss abstract concepts, the stimulus of which may not be obvious or direct.

Another problem was that the rats were repeatedly rewarded. It is quite clear that children do not receive pellets of food when they make a correct utterance. Nonetheless, the idea of reward or reinforcement can in humans be naturally extended to approval or disapproval. One might suppose that a parent smiles and says 'yes dear, that's right' when a child makes a correct utterance. Even if this were so, what happens to this idea of approval when there is nobody around, since children are frequently observed to talk to themselves? Skinner suggested that in these cases, children automatically reinforce themselves because they know they are producing sounds which they have heard in the speech of others. This explains why a poet who may be uttering words in an empty room may continue to do so by the knowledge that others will be influenced by the poetry in future. So reinforcement seems a very woolly notion since an actual reward need not exist, it need only be imaginable or hoped for. Such a notion is certainly not comparable to the food pellets given to rats when they make a correct response.

Scholars like Roger Brown provide even more problems for Skinner's notion of reinforcement. They found out that in mother - child interactions, parents tend to approve statements which are true rather than those which are grammatically correct.

Put another way, if approval and disapproval worked in the way Skinner suggested, you would expect children to grow up telling the truth, but speaking ungrammatically. In fact the opposite seems to happen (Brown et.al 1968). May be we need to show credit though in limited way to Skinner; since there are areas of language where habit forming works. For example, some people invariably say 'Good night' when they are going to bed, or 'sorry' when the hurt somebody.

Apart from these trivial exceptions, Aitchison (2008) argues that "language is infinitely more complex and less predictable than Skinner's theory would suggest."Of course, just because Skinner's ideas were over-simplified does not automatically mean that Chomsky's ideas were right. May be both Skinner's and Chomsky's view are outdated.

2.3.5 Nature of Language

One fascinating thing about language is that a child may not be good at Mathematics or drawing, yet always good at language acquisition. This leads Chomsky to suggest that humans may have an innate knowledge of language. To this he adds: "Given such facts, it is natural to postulate that the idea of structure - dependent operations is part of the innate schematization applied by the mind to the data of experience" (Chomsky 1972:30). This led Chomsky to conclude that this knowledge about language, i.e. structure - dependent operations, was part of the child's biological endowment, part of the structure of the language faculty. It becomes clear therefore that there is much more to language than merely stringing words together. And, in order to speak, a human possesses a highly complex internalized set of instructions or rules, which enable him or her to utter any of the permissible sequences of any given language - though they are unlikely to have any conscious knowledge of these rules. The rules are said to be both complex and stringent.

It is amazing how children account for all and only the permissible sequences of words in languages. It is a truism that in a remarkably short period, children are able to acquire a complex set of internalized rules. And as you may be aware, children have considerably less data to work from, than the linguists who have failed to produce 'automatic grammatizators'. Children are often restricted to hearing their parents and relatives talking – and, according to Chomsky, this speech is likely to be full of unfinished sentences, mistakes and slips of the tongue. We must therefore explain how we know so much, given that the evidence available to us is so spare.

Note here also that, according to Chomsky, the acquisition of one's native language seems to be largely independent of intelligence. It is observable that the language ability of dim children is not noticeably inferior to that of bright children yet in most other areas of human activity, such as playing the piano, the gap between different children is enormous.

With regard to the issue of language acquisition, two possibilities exist:

Possibility1

Human infants know in advance what languages are like. This is the possibility preferred by Chomsky: given the richness and complexity of the system of grammar for a human language and the uniformity of its acquisition on the basis of limited and often degenerate evidence, there can be little doubt that highly restrictive universal principles must exist determining the general framework of each human language and perhaps much of its specific structure as well. (Chomsky 1980: 232)

Possibility2

No special advance knowledge is needed, because children are highly efficient puzzle - solvers in all areas of human behaviour. Language is just one type of puzzle which their high level of general intelligence enables them to solve fast and well. In the words of the linguist Geoffrey Sampson: "Individual humans inherit no knowledge of language….They succeed in mastering the language spoken in their environment only by applying the same general intelligence which they use to grapple with all the other diverse and unpredictable problems that come their way" (Sampson 1980: 178).

It may not be necessary to choose between these possibilities. As the answer may well lie somewhere between these two extremes. In this controversy, it is important to keep an open mind, and not be swayed by the fashion of moment. In the 1960s, it was fashionable to follow Chomsky .in the 1970s it was equally fashionable to hold the view of his opponents. Both views were found in the 1990s and are still found in the twenty-first-century.

Chomsky's claim that children are pre-programmed to speak requires serious attention. As the nineteenth-century American philosopher C.S Peirce pointed out: if men had not come with special aptitudes for guessing right, it may well be doubted whether, the greatest mind would have attained the amount of knowledge which is actually possessed by the lowest idiot (Pierce 9132:476). As you may have already noted, Chomsky's belief that humans are genetically imprinted with knowledge about language is often referred to as the innateness hypothesis. Unfortunately, the word 'innate' has given rise to a considerable amount of confusion. Misunderstandings have arisen in two ways. First, to call Chomsky an 'innatist' wrongly implies that those who disagree with him are 'non-innatists'. Yet his opponents have never asserted that nothing is innate. All human skills, even apparently unnatural ones, make use of innate predispositions. For example, driving a car is an 'unnatural' acquired skill, yet it makes use of innate propensities, such as the ability to see, and to coordinate arm and leg movements. The issue under discussion is whether an inbuilt language acquisition skill exists independently of other innate inabilities. The point is expressed well by two Philosophers:

It is beyond dispute that some innate equipment figures in the acquisition of language (otherwise the baby's rattle would learn language as well as the baby, since they have

comparable linguistic environment). The only question at issue is whether this innate structure has significant components that sub-serve the development of no other faculty than language. (Osherson and Wasow 1976:208) Chomsky claims that the mind is constituted of "mental organs" just as specialized and differentiated as these of the body (1979:83), and that language is a system…. Easy to isolate among the various mental faculties' (1979: 46)

The second misunderstanding involves a mistaken belief by some people that 'innate' means ready - made for use. By innate, Chomsky simply means 'genetically programmed'. He does not literally think that children are born with language in their heads ready to be spoken. He merely claims that a 'blueprint' is there, which is brought into use when the child reaches a certain point in its general development. With the help of this 'blueprint', it analyses the language it hears around it more readily than it would if it were totally unprepared for the strange gabbling sounds which emerge from human mouths. Or perhaps a better metaphor would be that of a seed, which contains within itself the intrinsic ability to become a mango or rose, provided it is planted and tended. Chomsky argues that language grows in the mind or brain (Chomsky, 1988:55). He explains the situation by quoting the 18th century thinker James Harris: "The growth of knowledge… [rather resembles]… the growth of fruit, however, external causes may in some degree cooperate, it is the internal vigour, and virtue of the tree, that must ripen the juices to their maturity, (Chomsky1986:2).

Anderson (2004:34) adds that language as we know it is a uniquely human capacity, determined by our biological nature, just as the ability to detect prey on the basis of radiated heat is a biological property of (some) snakes. (qv Biological foundation of Language)

2.3.6 Language Acquisition Device (LAD)

The term language acquisition device (LAD) was devised or coined by Chomsky to refer to an infant's predisposition to acquire linguistic structure (Crystal 1992:6). The postulation of LAD is opposed to the view that language acquisition is a mere process of imitation, learning or a reflex of cognitive development. To that end, Hartmann and Stork (1972:125) explain LAD as follows:

Linguists and psychologists study the process of language learning by comparing the language an infant is exposed to with the language an infant produces. Exactly how the brain acquires language competence is unknown, but the term language acquisition device is applied to the unknown quantity in the model roughly as below:

INPUT → LAD→OUTPUT

Chomsky viewed LAD as a processor. In today's literature, Chomsky has replaced the term with Language Faculty, obviously seen as the centre where linguistic activities are processed. Within this processor are such principles about language as structure-dependent operators. Crystal on this matter states that:

There have been many differences of opinion over how best to characterize LAD. Some have argued that LAD provides children with knowledge of linguistic universals, such as the existence of word orders and word classes, others, that it provides only general procedures for discovering how language is to be learned. But all of its supporters are agreed that some such notice is needed in order to explain the remarkable speed with which children learn to speak, and the considerable similarity in the way grammatical patterns are acquired across different children and languages. Adult speech, it is felt, cannot of itself provide a means of enabling children to work out the regularities of language for themselves, because it is too complex and disorganized. However, it has proved difficult to formulate the detailed properties of LAD in an uncontroversial manner, in the light of the changes in generative linguistic theory that have taken place in recent years, and meanwhile, alternative accounts of the acquisition process have evolved" (Crystal 1993:234).

2.4 Child language Development

Chronological stages in child language development and their characteristics

Activity: reflect on how children progress in language acquisition. Do they seem to follow a similar pattern? Obviously, you have a general picture about language development, and its chronological stages. Aitchison (2008:70) points out that, language emerges at the same time in children all over the world". Lenneberg (1967: 125) a renowned scholar and researcher on child language acquisition adds that: Surely it is not because all mothers on earth initiate language training at that (1 year 6) time. There is, in fact no evidence that any conscious and systematic teaching of language takes place, just as there is no special training for stance or gait. Linguists like Aitchison (2008) believe that this regularity of onset suggests that language may be set in motion by a biological clock, similar to the one which causes kittens to open their eyes when they are a few days old, Chrysalises to change into butterflies after several weeks and learns to become sexually mature at around 13 years of age. However, until relatively recently, few people had considered language within the framework of biological maturation. But in 1967, Eric Lenneberg, then a biologist at the Harvard Medical School, published an important book - The Biological Foundations of Language.

Aitchison (2008: 79) states that: All children seem to pass through a series of similar 'stages' as they acquire language. The age at which different children reach each stage or 'milestone' varies considerably, but the relative chronology remains the same. The milestones are normally reached in the same order though they may be nearer together for some children and farther apart for others. The subsequent part provides a

simplified chart on language developmental phases as theorised by Aitchison. The stages are later discussed in detail based on Hartmann's description. One thing you ought to note is that these stages overlap.

Language stage	Beginning Age
Crying	Birth
Cooing	6 weeks
Babbling	6 months
Intonation patterns	8 months
One- word utterances	1 year
Two- words	18 months
Word inflections	2 years
Questions, negatives	2 ½ years
Rare or complex constructions	5 years
Mature speech	10 years

Crying: Birth. Strictly speaking, it is inaccurate to speak of crying as a 'language phase' because crying seems to be instinctive communication and may be in more like an animal call system than a true language. By 6 weeks: Cooing- cooing is difficult to describe. Some text books call it 'gurgling' or 'mewing'. The sound is superficially vowel-like, but the tracings produced on a sound spectrogram show that it is quite unlike vowels produced by adults. Cooing seems to be universal. It may help the baby to gain control over their vocal apparatus. At this point, we discuss the six stages in the child language development as distinguished by Hartmann and Stork (1972:124).

2.5 Hartmann's description

Between 3-6 months: Babbling or word play. Children understand facial expressions and tones of voice; they exercise organs of speech to produce a wide variety of sounds, but no coherent utterance. Note that to babble means "to speak quickly in a way that is difficult to understand or sound silly." (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 1995). Matthews defines babbling as the vocal sounds of very young children, especially involving repeated syllable like forms, before the development of anything recognizable as speech. (Oxford Concise Dictionary of Linguistics 2005:33).

Between 6-9 months: Halation: during this stage, the child reacts to gestures and single commands; continuation of self –stimulated combination of sounds. Note that halation is the production of more or less articulated sounds by the child in such a way that the child tends to combine repeated syllable - like combinations of sounds such as lalala, tatata, and so on.

At 12 months: imitation. Active response to outside influence, first ‘word’ (one-word sentences) and repetitive verbal play imitation is used here to emphasize the fact that the child strives and manages to imitate not only the individual sounds but also sounds produced by adults. The kind of speech produced by the child during this period is called holophrastic speech. This is a kind of speech in which single words express complex ideas which are normally expressed by more words especially full sentences (McNeil, 1970).

15 months: Jargon. Incorporating elements of the talk of environment into flow of uncontrolled speech, vocabulary rises to over 20 words, communication through two-word phrases. Here the term Jargon is simply used metaphorically to emphasize the fact that the child is able to produce (two-word) utterances, but these utterances are difficult to understand. During this period, the child manages to produce two-word utterances which match up in the child speech to the full sentence from which some words have been omitted ; for this reason this kind of speech is termed telegraphic speech.

At 2 years – Talking: The child fully understands instructions. It is at this stage that the beginning of verbalization of wants in phrases occurs- The child has gone past telegraphic speech and the speech at this stage is nearer to that of an adult language.

4 years-Loquacity: full understanding of adult speech, directed at him and almost complete mastery of patterns.

2.6 Critical or Sensitive Period

Intimately linked with the complex interaction between nature and nurture, the term critical period stems from processes identified in developmental psychology and developmental biology. A critical period can be characterized as a maturational time frame during which an organism’s nervous system has heightened sensitivity to external stimuli that are necessary for the full unfolding of a particular skill. Functions that are indispensable to an organism's survival, such as vision, are particularly likely to develop during critical periods. During this time period, if for some reason, the organism is not exposed to the appropriate stimuli, to learn a given skill or trait then the dependent skill may be suboptimal or, in extreme cases, even unattainable. This simply means that it may be difficult, ultimately less successful, or even impossible to develop certain associated functions later in life.

Critical periods have been observed in all species studied, from fruit flies to humans. The notion of a critical period was first used by ethnologists studying the origin of species - specific behaviour. It was found that with certain species (e.g. rats, goslings) there were periods in which a particular kind of stimulus had to be presented if the baby was to develop normal behaviour (Crystal 1987: 263). Critical period also relates to the ability to acquire one's first language. Researchers found that people who passed the "critical period" would not acquire their first language fluently. The

critical period hypothesis holds that first language acquisition must occur before cerebral lateralisation is complete, at about the age of puberty. One prediction of this hypothesis is that second language acquisition will be relatively fast, successful and qualitatively similar to first language only if it occurs before the age of puberty.

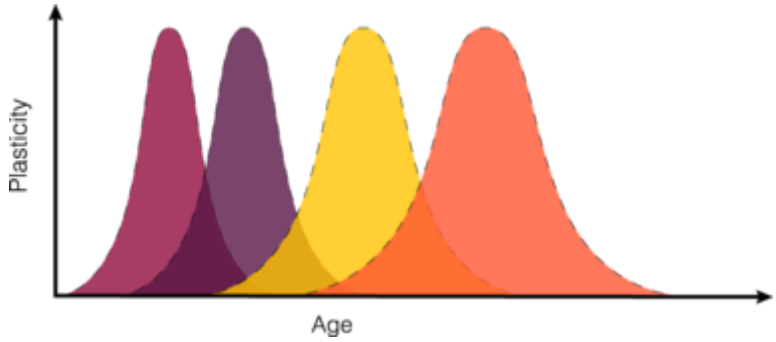


Fig 5

Critical period graph

The critical period hypothesis (CPH) states that the first few years of life constitute the time during which language develops readily and after which (sometime between age 5 and puberty) language acquisition is much more difficult and ultimately less successful. The hypothesis that language is acquired during a critical period was first proposed by neurologists Wilder Penfield and Lamar Roberts in 1959 and popularized by linguist Eric Lenneberg in 1967. Lenneberg argued for the hypothesis based on evidence that children who experience brain injury early in life develop far better language skills than adults with similar injuries. Dr. Maria Montessori was one of the earlier educators who brought attention to this phenomenon and called it "Sensitive Periods", which is one of the pillars of her philosophy of education.

The two most famous cases of feral children who failed to acquire language after the critical period are Genie and the feral child Victor of Aveyron. However, the tragic circumstances of these cases and the moral and ethical impermissibility of replicating them make it difficult to draw conclusions about them. The children may have been cognitively disabled from infancy, or their inability to develop language may have resulted from the profound neglect and abuse they suffered. The question was therefore raised whether there were critical periods in human maturation also. The American Psychologist Eric Lenneberg (1921-75) argued that such a period existed in the case of language acquisition. The development of language was said to be the result of brain maturation. The hemispheres were equipotential at birth, with language gradually becoming lateralized in the left hemisphere. The process began at around the age of 2 and ended at puberty, when the brain was fully developed and lateralization was complete. At this point, there was no longer any neural ‘plasticity’

which would enable the right hemisphere to take over the language function if the left hemisphere was damaged.

2.7 Feral Children Phenomenon

Feral children are those that have had no exposure to language in their 'critical period' have helped to credit Lenneberg's theory. Genie is an example. She was kept in appallingly deprived conditions, with almost no social contact or exposure to language until she was found at age thirteen. Attempts were made to teach her language. Although she progressed to the two-word and three-word stages like most children, her lack of morphology was never remedied. She only grasped simple grammatical concepts. 'Had' and 'gave' where her only past tenses which were used rarely and her only auxiliary was 'be'; never 'have' or 'must'. She never used the demonstratives 'there' or 'it' although there were attempts at the definite article 'the'.

Genie demonstrates that after the critical period, pragmatic skills can still be developed but the structural knowledge of language is lost. She suggests that a child must be exposed to language during the critical period, and that after puberty language acquisition cannot reach its normal end point (Snow, & Hoefnagel, 1978).

About Genie's case, De Villiers is of the opinion that "It is unnecessary to explain that such circumstances did not leave Genie intact in body and mind. However, although she was malnourished, there was no evidence of physical abnormalities sufficient to account for her behaviour, for she had adequate hearing, vision and eye-hand coordination. She was severely disturbed emotionally, having frequent but silent tantrums, yet there were no other symptoms of childhood autism. The most likely explanation was the chronic social deprivation she had suffered for those twelve years" (De Villiers & De Villiers 1978, p.215).

The argument in favour of critical period was based largely on claims about the patterns of recovery in brain damage in adults and children. If adults with left hemisphere damage failed to recover language within a few months, it was argued, they would never do so. Children, however, showed an ability to recover over a longer period and could make a complete recovery if they were very young at the time of the damage. In such cases, even total removal of the left hemisphere did not preclude the reacquisition of language.

2.8 Second Language Acquisition/Learning (SLA)

This part of the module discusses second language acquisition and learning. Discussed here is the nature of learning, the biological factors, acculturation and the psycho-social factors.

2.8.1 Overview – Nature of Learning

There are various controversies surrounding the acquisition/learning of the second language. While it is true that many young children whose parents speak different languages can acquire a second language in circumstances similar to that of first language acquisition, the vast majority of people are not exposed to a second language until much later. The main purpose, therefore, of this section is to discuss the acquisition/learning of the second language. Different hypotheses of the second language acquisition shall be discussed. The critical-period hypothesis and social and psychological factors amongst other hypotheses will be considered. Krashen (1981) distinguished between 'acquisition' and 'learning'. The former refers to the subconscious process of 'picking up' a language through exposure and the latter to the conscious process of studying it. In this section/unit the two words will be 'loosely' used interchangeably.

One must from the onset indicate that second language acquisition is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon. For this reason there appears to be no conclusive and encompassing theory or explanation of how the second language is acquired. In fact, Klein (1986:11) argues that: "The inevitable conclusion…is that second language acquisition is a process of enormous complexity in which a variety of factors are at work and which evades description, let alone explanation." Therefore, with this background, many explanations have been presented by different schools of thought, running from neurolinguistics to psycholinguistics, about second language acquisition. Despite the attempts made to explain the acquisition of the second language, a great many problems still surround the subject.

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) refers both to the study of individuals and groups who are learning a language subsequent to learning their first one as young children, and to the process of learning that language. The additional language is called a second language (L2), even though it may actually be the third, fourth, or tenth to be acquired.

The scope of SLA includes informal L2 learning that takes place in naturalistic contexts, formal L2 learning that takes place in classrooms, and L2 learning that involves a mixture of these settings and circumstances. For example, "informal learning" happens when a child from Japan is brought to the US and "picks up" English in the course of playing and attending school with native English-speaking children without any specialized language instruction, or when an adult Guatemalan immigrant in Canada learns English as a result of interacting with native English speakers or with co-workers who speak English as a second language. "Formal learning" occurs when a high school student in England takes a class in French, when an undergraduate student in Russia takes a course in Arabic, or when an attorney in Colombia takes a night class in English. A combination of formal and informal learning takes place when a student from the USA takes Chinese language classes in

Taipei or Beijing while also using Chinese outside of class for social interaction and daily living experiences, or when an adult immigrant from Ethiopia in Israel learns Hebrew both from attending special classes and from interacting with co-workers and other residents in Hebrew.

2.8.2 Critical period

To understand the acquisition of the second language, Yule (1996:190) points out that the solution to the full understanding of the problem lies within Lenneberg's critical period hypothesis. Lenneberg proposed that the development of language is as a consequence of brain maturation. The assumption being that, at birth the hemispheres were equipotential with language, but gradually becoming lateralized in the left hemisphere. Lenneberg stresses further that, the process of lateralisation starts at the age of two (2) and ends at puberty when the brain is fully developed. Lateralization at this stage is thus complete leaving the brain without any plasticity, Crystal (1987:265). The core arguments of Lenneberg are that, (Ellis 1994:484) there is fixed span of years within which language learning can occur naturally and effortlessly, and after which it is not possible to be completely successful. Yule (1996:190) is equally of the view that the left hemisphere, which is dominant for language, at the end of lateralization is strongly taken over by the features of the first language, with a resulting loss of flexibility or openness to receive the features of another language.

Krashen, however, (Ellis, 1989:263) differed somewhat with Lenneberg's hypothesis. He concluded that the completion of lateralization is not associated with Lenneberg's critical period. More to the point, second language acquisition is possible even after puberty. This, to some extent, seems to correlate with the "Joseph Conrad Syndrome". It is argued that although Joseph Conrad is a classic English literature novel writer, his English speech still retained the strong polish accent of his first language. This might suggest that some features, for example, vocabulary and grammar, of the second language are easier to acquire than others; in this case phonology, after the critical period. It is no wonder we hear some aspects of mother tongue influence in some people who try to learn a second language after puberty.

Conceivably, the effect of age on the acquisition of second language pronunciation and second language grammar need to be considered separately. Ellis (1994:264) quoted Krashen, Long and Scarcella (1979) who argued that with regard to morphology and syntax the adolescents did best, followed by the adults, with the children last. However, overtime the children began to catch up. One may conclude that adults outperform children only in the short-term. As regards pronunciation, adults do not always progress more swiftly than children. Hence, the assumption that, adults learn faster than children appears only to be more applicable to grammar, and not to pronunciation. And this is only in formal learning situations, not in the natural situation.

2.8.3 Psycho-social factors

Crystal (1987:371) advises that, to acquire a language, empathy and adaptability, assertiveness, with a good drive and power of application are needed for someone who has passed the critical age. In this connection, adults generally seem to lack these qualities as opposed to young children. Usually, adults lack the willingness to attempt to articulate the 'different' sounds of the second language and this negatively overrides whatever physical and cognitive abilities there are. Yule (1996: 1920) to this effect proposes that because of adults' limited communication, their second language tend to fossilize. Adult's limited communication comes from the fact that they, unlike children do not need the second language for social identification nor to express personal attitude. Thus, the effect of not wanting to sound like a native speaker of a second language may strongly inhibit the acquisition process.

2.8.4 Acculturation

Beardsmore (1982) proposes that learning a second language in particular involves acquiring the values and attitudes of the community of the second language. A look at the forms of acculturation may help to explain why it is difficult for an adult to acquire the second language. The concept of acculturation refers to the process of becoming adapted to a new culture. Schumann (1978:34) adds that:'Second language acquisition is just one aspect of acculturation and the degree to which a learner acculturates to the target language group will control the degree to which he acquires the second language'. Schumann advocated the two types of acculturation, assimilation and integration as being effective in promoting second language acquisition. The hypothesis is that, the greater the contact with the culture of the target language, the more acquisition of the target language. This in essence reduces the social distance, giving the learner of the second language maximum interaction with native speakers of the target language.

Beardsmore (1982:128) argues that unfortunately a great many adults have greater difficulty in reconciling new behaviour patterns with older acquired ones since an adult, unlike a child, has already established personal identity, it comes difficult to integrate the new language skills and rules in the already existing linguistic system. This assertion suggests that in order to acquire a second language, the learner must have complete cultural acculturation, assimilations and integration of the culture of the target language. The problem is rendered acute if the culture of target language is extremely different. This hypothesis was arrived at after an empirical study carried out by Svans. Ellis (1994:207) states that Svans investigated on the second language Norwegian by three ethnic groups in Norway. One group consisted of learners from Europe and America who shared a common western culture. The second group had learners from the Middle East and Africa, all of whom had contact with western culture. The third group contained students from Asian countries. The results were as follows: The western students had the best grades; the Middle Eastern and western

students had the next best grades, the Middle Eastern and African students and the next best, the Asians the poorest results. This, therefore, demonstrate a clear relationship between similar cultures and second language acquisition.

Discussing further the acquisition of the second language, Crystal (1987) argues that second language acquisition can only take place when the learner has access to input in the second language. In the natural situation, input may occur in the context of interaction with the native speaker. Here, too, the adult learner is disadvantaged since as one gets older the social interaction tends to diminish. The decline in social interaction means less input which in turn lowers the acquisition level of the second language. Children, it is postulated, appear to have open-ended social Interaction process for the acquisition of the second language.

The process of acculturation was defined by Brown as "the process of being adapted to a new culture" which involves a new orientation of thinking and feeling on the part of an L2 learner. According to Brown, as culture is an integral part of a human being, the process of acculturation takes a deeper turn when the issue of language is brought on the scene. Schumann based his Acculturation Model on two sets of factors: social and psychological. Schumann asserts that the degree to which the second-language learners acculturate themselves towards the culture of target-language (TL) group generally depends on social and psychological factors; and these two sorts of factors will determine respectively the level of social distance and psychological distance an L2 learner is having in course of his learning the target-language. Social distance, as Ellis notes, concerns the extent to which individual learners can identify themselves with members of TL group and, thereby, can achieve contact with them. Psychological distance is the extent to which individual learners are at ease with their target-language learning task. Schumann identifies eight factors that influence social distance: social dominance, integration pattern, enclosure, cohesiveness, size factor, cultural congruence, attitude factor, and intended length of residence. He also identifies three factors that influence psychological distance: motivation, attitude, and culture shock. Schumann later sought to extend the acculturation model by assessing contemporary cognitive models for second language acquisition, including McLaughlin’s cognitive theory, Hatch and Hawkins’ experiential approach, Bialystok and Ryan’s model of knowledge and control dimensions, Anderson’s active control of thought framework, and Gasser's connectionist lexical memory framework.

In second-language acquisition, the Acculturation Model is a theory proposed by John Schumann to describe the acquisition process of a second language (L2) by members of ethnic minorities that typically include immigrants, migrant workers, or the children of such groups. This acquisition process takes place in natural contexts of majority language setting. The main suggestion of the theory is that the acquisition of a second language is directly linked to the acculturation process, and learners’ success is determined by the extent to which they can orient themselves to the target language culture.

2.8.5 The logical problem of language learning

For a long time, people thought that children learned language by imitating those around them. More recent points of view claim that children have an innate language ability. There are three major arguments supporting this notion.

First of all, children often say things that adults do not. This is especially true of children's tendency to use regular patterns to form plurals or past tenses on words that would have irregular formation. Children frequently say things like ***goed***, (go - went) mans (man -men), ***mouses*** (mouse - mice), and ***sheeps*** (sheep - sheep), even though it is highly unlikely that any adult around them ever produced such forms in front of them. We also know that children do not learn language simply by imitation because they do not imitate adult language well when asked to do so. For example (adapted from Crystal 1997b:236):

CHILD:	He taked my toy!
MOTHER:	No, say "he took my toy."
CHILD:	He taked my toy! (Dialogue repeated seven times.)
MOTHER:	No, now listen carefully: say "He took my toy."
CHILD:	Oh! He taked my toy!

Next, children use language in accordance with general universal rules of language even though they have not yet developed the cognitive ability necessary to understand these rules. Therefore, we know that these rules are not learned from deduction or imitation. Finally, patterns of children's language development are not directly determined by the input they receive. The age at which children begin to produce particular language elements does not correspond to their frequency in input. Thus, we must assume that something besides input triggers the developmental order in children's language.

2.8.6 Cognitive factors

Ellis (1994) further points out that acquisition of the second language by the cognitive interactionist theorists is seen as a production of the complex interaction of linguistic environment and the learner's internal mechanism. The argument is that the acquisition of the second language is based on the learner's inductive power. This psychological factor holds that the learner uses the input to form general rules on his own. Alongside induction is explication. This involves a second person who explains rules of the target language to the learner. However, these two intellectual processes cannot yield much success if the memory of the learner is impaired. Therefore a learner of the second language, irrespective of age, should for example, be able to remember that the following sounds /d/o/g/ make up the word 'Dog'. More so, learning grammatical structure and rules require retention in the mental lexicon. And

young children seem to be excellent at memorization and can easily absorb large amount of data. This explains, in part, why children under 12 years acquire the second language faster than adults. In short, a successful second language learner requires a sound memory system that can promote retention of information, retrieval of information, organization of knowledge and storing of knowledge, Crystal (1987).

Klein (1994) points out that second language acquisition demands developed motor skills. It is argued that good pronunciation is related to the way the vocal cords function. And vocal cords are monitored by the active motor skills in the brain. It should be remembered here that motor skills are determined by the critical period as demonstrated by Lenneberg (Crystal 1987).

With this background, one must hasten to mention that, after puberty the motor skills begin to decline because of the development of the brain. It is, therefore, not wrong to assert that adults find it difficult, when compared to the children, to acquire proficiency in the second language because after puberty the monitoring system (motor skills) of speech pronunciation declines.

2.8.7 Linguistic factors

As if this was not enough, Crystal (1987) postulates that the structural closeness of languages to each other is said to be an important factor in second language acquisition. It has been thought that if the second language is structurally similar to the first language, the learner of the second language is very likely to find it easier to learn than where the second language is very different - for example, SOV and SVO languages. This argument, however, is not free from criticism. However, the structural closeness of languages facilitates the acquisition of the target language.

2.8.8 Other Factors Influencing Language Acquisition and Language Learning

In this section of the module, provided is a summary of some of the factors that can enhance or inhibit language acquisition. We have used acquisition and learning of language interchangeably, since the focus is on the second language. These are some of the instances of Language acquisition:

Simultaneously

This is an instance where a child is born to parents with different L1. In this particular situation, the child may acquire language simultaneously. Evidence shows that there is no mix up of the two languages - a child grows to handle these two languages however similar or different there may be, linguistically speaking. How the two languages are stored in the mental lexicon is another matter (see section on language store). Here we are concerned with how the L2 could be acquired. Note that under simultaneous language acquisition, L2 is picked up in the same way as L1 - it only

requires a rich linguistic environment, a condition under which L1 is acquired. This phenomenon gives rise to compound bilingualism.

Sequentially

This is where a child or an adult acquires his L1 first and then L2 later in life. For a child it may be a factor of relocation – the assumption being that L1 has been acquired from the parents or home environment while L2 is acquired after relocating to a different linguistic society. Adults too, learn language sequentially; L1 first and L2 later in life. This process of language acquisition produces non compound bilinguals – bilinguals with different mastery of their two languages. But this need not be for a child: a child may succeed in becoming a compound bilingual.

Forced Education

Here the immersion programme at school is the best example of forced education. In Canada, for example, children are forced to learn French and English. Similar, or should we say the opposite of this situation is the voluntary foreign language learning in schools or private institutions or at language centres. One example, is the Department of Literature and Languages at UNZA, which through the University language centre, teaches several languages to people with interest in these languages, languages such as English, Japanese, Chinese, German, and Tonga etc.

Informal Exposure

Later on in life a child or indeed an adult may through informal contact pick or learn a second language. The migrant workers, refugees or tourists are such examples of people that learn language under such conditions.

Routine Experience

In some countries you just have to be a bilingual especially in cases of multilingual societies. What we note here is that only a severely subnormal person would fail to acquire language whether before or after the proposed critical period. Some linguists argue that in fact, even subnormal children acquire language. However, it is only a small number that have the fluency in the second language. And so we have the question: why is it difficult to acquire the second language?

They are 'maturationally' constrained: it is a biological reason. It is argued that it is the brain which diminishes the older learner's ability to easily acquire an L2.

2.9 Language and Thought

The relationship between language, thought and reality has occupied philosophers, linguists, anthropologists and psychologists for centuries. Dating back to Plato and his theory of forms, in which Plato described the idea of thought and language having meaning as stemming from abstract definitions or concepts called "forms" and which

all the entities and qualities designated thereby can be subsumed (Gill, 1997). Along with the standard western thought Plato ultimately describes language as being based on reality. Similarly John Locke of a more recent time describes the relationship between reality and language:

Our senses, conversant about particular sensible object, do convey into the mind several distinct perceptions of things according to those various ways wherein those objects affect them. And thus we come by those ideas we have of yellow, white, heat, cold, soft, hard, bitter, sweet and all those which we call sensible qualities; which when I say the senses convey into the mind, I mean, they from external objects convey into the mind what produces those perceptions (Essay Concerning Human Understanding, book 2, chapter 1)

Locke exemplifies in this statement what many philosophers and psychologists felt about how we think and how we perceive reality and how that is then reflected in our language. Contrary to these common beliefs among philosophers concerning language, a well-known German scholar and diplomat from the 18th century, Wilhelm von Humboldt equated language and thought as inseparable, as language completely determining thought, in a hypothesis known as the Weltanschauung (***world view***) hypothesis (Brown, 1968). Humboldt also emphasized "profound semantic" differences between languages which lead to varying "cognitive perspectives," an idea commonly known as cultural relativity (Wierzbika).

Although little attention was given to this extreme view at the time, this same idea drew much interest and criticism in the 1930's in the emergence of a hypothesis known as the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis (Linguistic Relativity). This hypothesis was rooted in Sapir's study of Native American Languages, which later drew the particular attention of Sapir's student Benjamin Lee Whorf. What caught the attention of many scholars and non-scholars alike and has stimulated comparative research among many different languages was a paragraph that Sapir read to a group of anthropologists and linguists in 1928.

Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society… The fact of the matter is that the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built upon the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached (Salzmann, 1993).

This statement and similar ones by Whorf, attempting to illustrate that language is the medium by which one views the world, culture, reality and thought have aroused an intense desire in not only scholars but also for non-scholars to validate of disprove this hypothesis. Most researchers today currently argue one of the following three

positions in relation to the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis or Linguistic Relativity: language heavily influences thought (strong interpretation), language does not influence thought or language partially influences thought (weak interpretation).

2.9.1 Language Strongly Influences Thought

Benjamin Whorf, like Sapir studied Native American languages. Whorf sites several examples from the Native American language, Hopi, to support his hypothesis that thought is strongly based on language. According to Whorf the Hopi language does not contain any words, grammatical constructions or expressions that refer to the English concept of 'time.' Whorf goes on to explain that it is possible in the Hopi language to express the world or reality in ways other than what many languages refer to as 'time.' The Hopi view of reality is specific to the language and can only be best expressed if one is familiar with the language (Carroll, 1956). In this example where Whorf feels language strongly influences thought, he is often criticized with circularity because he "infers cognitive differences between two speakers from an examination of their respective languages," (Hopi and English). His proof of cognitive differences is only "based on reiteration of the linguistic differences" (Harre, 1990).

The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis has remained a divisive topic for many years because many researchers feel that Whorf's examples failed to show a real relationship between language and thought while others agree with Whorf that thought is truly dependent on language. Similarly researchers find it difficult to find a set of variables that fit a valid research and do not come under the same criticism as Whorf's alleged circularity. Although these constraints continue to make it difficult for researchers, many continue to look for ways to prove or disprove the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis.

A common argument for the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis is the perception of colour across languages. According to the hypothesis, if one language categorizes colour differently than another language, then the different groups should perceive it differently also. In a study done in the 1970's a group of researchers studied the difference in perception of colour in English compared with a small tribe from Papua New Guinea called Berinmo. The Berinmo were given a sample of 160 different colours and asked to categorize them. The Berinmo not only had less categories, they did not differentiate between the English colours blue and green, however, they did draw a category between colours in their language nol and wor which in English would both be perceived in the category of yellow. The researchers found that the Berinmo speakers were better at matching colours across their nol, wor categories than across the English blue and green categories and English speakers were better at matching colours across blue and green than across the Berinmo nol and wor (Sawyer, 1999). According to the researchers by showing that the colour perception of the two language groups is dependent on the categorization in the language the results support the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis.

2.9.2 Language Does Not Influence Thought

There are three main points that researchers use to dispute the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis: translatability, differences between linguistic and non-linguistic events and universals. Translatability is a common argument scholars use against the hypothesis, for although language may differ considerably in the way they express certain details, it is still quite possible to translate those details from one language to another (Fishman, 1976:273).

The argument made by Eric Lenneberg against the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis is that "linguistic and non-linguistic events must be separately observed and described before they can be correlated" (Carroll, 1956:28). He argues that there is no way to define language as influencing thought when there is no distinction between these two events and that the evidence which supports language as influencing thought is based purely on linguistic differences.

The third argument that gives evidence against language influencing thought is the concept of universals. The idea of universals can be traced back to the Port Royale:

There are in the grammar observations that apply to all languages; these observations constitute what one calls general grammar. Grammar, which has for its object the expression of thought by the help of speed, spoken or written, thus admits of two sorts of rules. One kind are immutably true and universally followed, they apply to the form of thought itself, they follow from the analysis of it and are only the consequence of it… (Cowie, 1999). The theory of Universals, commonly attributed to Chomsky and generative grammar, is the claim that there are deep structures that are common to all languages (Fishmann, 1976:13). In examining this thought in relation to linguistic relativity all cultures would be related and have similar realities which is in deep contrast with Whorf's ideas that all cultures see the world differently because of their language.

2.9.3 Language Partially Influences Thought

The writings of Sapir and Whorf brought about a huge change in the way scholars view language and thought. Researchers scurried to find evidence that would give the hypothesis validity. Although the research is easy to formulate, the problem lies in finding a set of variables that accurately test the hypothesis. Most researchers up to this time have found it hard to conclude that language determines thought, however through examples from Whorf's studies in Hopi and other observations from researchers it is valid to suggest that language does partially determine thought. In determining linguistic relativity the question is not whether a language affects ones thoughts but to what degree (Wierzbicka, 1992:7).

Many examples are given to support a weak interpretation of linguistic relativity. One experiment done by Linda Rogers gives evidence to support a weak interpretation. Rogers read a story to a group of bilingual children while recording their brain-wave patterns. She first read the story in English while observing that the children's brains were active in the left hemisphere and then read the story in Navaho and observed their brain activity in the right hemisphere. This according to Rogers gave evidence to the fact that English as a noun-centered language was processed in the left side of the brain and the Navaho as a verb-centered language was processed in the right side of the brain. This gave evidence to the fact that although the same story was told to the same children they processed the story differently according to which language it was told in (Gill, 1997:140).

Another example is a study contrasting Japanese and English passive constructions done by Agnes Niyekawa-Howard in 1968. The study explains that Japanese has two types of passive constructions in which when one is combined with the other the meaning changes so that the subject of the sentence was "caused" to take the action that is found in the verb. In translating stories from Japanese to English this construction was not seen, however, in the translation from English to Japanese the Japanese translators included this construction. Similarly when asked to interpret cartoons that dealt with interpersonal conflict, the Japanese "were found to attribute responsibility for the negative outcome to others" more that did the English. The study's purpose was to show that although not consciously seen by native Japanese, this construction of grammar contributes to a "perceptual habit or cultural outlook" in the Japanese culture (Salzmann, 1993:163).

Support for the idea that language partially influences thought can also be seen in the concept of codability. Codability is the ability to translate a word, phrase or idea from one language to another. Anyone that speaks two languages would agree that some ideas are easier said in one language over the other. Many times in language there are words that explain a thought, location, emotion etc. that in other languages could take up to a paragraph long to describe. An Eskimo tribe in Alaska called the Dena'ina Athabaskans has an entire lexicon that describes different kinds of streams and trails. In one word the Dena'ina are able to describe the following phrases: "a place of fast or slow current, covered with slush ice or overflow ice, a packed snow trail or a trail with snow drifted over, an animal trail, or a trail used for getting wood" (Lord, 1996). The concept of codability, the ability to code in one language a word or phrase in another, exemplifies the idea of language partially influencing thought because in one language a speaker may be able to perceive a lexical category better than another but that in no way limits another language from being able to perceive the same category.

Linguists and Anthropologists have been concerned with the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis and the implications that surround the claims made by Sapir in 1928 and continue to look for ways to prove or disprove the idea that language directly influences the way reality is perceived. Because the perfect research situation to completely prove or

disprove this hypothesis does not exist, researchers are left to examine small examples of specific registers in which language can be seen to affect thought and reality and through research in these registers most researchers agree with the weak interpretation of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis.

2.9.5 The Role of Cognition in Language Acquisition and Learning

In this part of the unit, we will be examining the role of cognition in language acquisition and learning. We will look at the concept 'cognition', and how it fashions and refashions language behaviour. We shall look at the interface between language and thought and how one complements the other. You will appreciate what goes on in the human mind as children language acquisition process suggests a system of remarkable complexity which has generated high degree of attention in psycholinguistics. What happens when a person begins to acquire language? Is there a black box or a mental organ in what Chomsky (1965) referred to as Language Acquisition Device (LAD)? The Unit will give you an insight into children's creative input into language acquisition and learning as novel utterances labelled 'child grammar' which characterizes the cognitive and linguistic repertoire of the child will be discussed. The cognitive process in language acquisition will be described and we shall explain to you psycholinguistic terms such as 'competence', 'performance' and 'Mean Length of Utterance' (MLU).

Cognition' is the process involved in knowing or the act of knowing, which in its completeness includes perception and judgment. Cognition involves all processes of consciousness by which knowledge is accumulated such as perceiving, recognizing, conceiving and reasoning. It is one of the only words that refer to the brain as well as the mind (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2010). This definition underscores the complexity involved in the role of cognition in language acquisition and learning. While we do not know everything about how the brain processes language, much is known and much more is being discovered about the mental faculty that affects language intuition and perception. Language is the centre of human existence and life without it would be meaningless and inconceivable. In this regard therefore cognition in language acquisition is one of the most fascinating phases of human development. You can imagine how life without language would be. Language acquisition remains a central topic in cognitive science. Every theory tried to explain it but it is still steeped in controversy. Language is essentially speciespecific to man as all normal human beings speak. Language is the tool for thought and both language and thought are interlinked.

Earlier theories look back at the total dependence of language on thought. Whorf (1956) in the popular Whorfian hypothesis claims that we categorise the world around us through our particular language and that speakers of different languages perceive the world in different ways. Rigorous researches have clearly shown that such a view is an extreme position as far as cognition is concerned because children can think

before they talk (Pinker, 1995). The role of cognition in language acquisition and learning affirms that people think not only in words but also in images. Some branches of linguistics like semantics and pragmatics have also proved that human languages are varied and complex because one word can correspond to two thoughts; for example 'bow' when thinking about hunting is not usually confused with 'bow' in a salutation posture showing respect. You will see that from the foregoing it is tempting to confuse language and thought because we verbalize our thought using language. However, there are individuals who can think but cannot communicate through language. These are infants and people who suffer from neurological disorder like language impairment (aphasia). Any thought can be conveyed in any human language.

Fodor (1975) submits that general intelligence is the system responsible for generating the language of thought and this in turn is translated into speech by our linguistic system. Babies are born with a biological structure, including a brain that is genetically prepared to organize linguistic information. All human languages close to 7000 spoken in the world today though differ greatly on the surface, are profoundly similar in what psycholinguists term language universals. A person's ability to acquire and use a language is as natural as their ability to walk or a bird's ability to fly. All languages have phonology, morphology, syntax and a lexicon. A person acquiring language possesses recursive mechanism, which allows them to generate an infinite set of utterances as in "… the house that jack built." (Fernandez & Cairns, 2011:54). This is a multi-line poem beginning with: "This is the farmer sowing his corn… that kept the cock that crowed in the morning" …that (children add new thoughts and ideas until they get to the last line) "…that lay in the house that jack built."

Chomsky (1965) also claims that the child's capacity to generate this endless set of sentences is because of Language Acquisition Device (LAD), a property of the child's brain that endows it with a predisposition for acquiring language. Please, note that this is a type of in-built mechanism whereby input from the environment activates internal processes that lead to acquisition of language. The child uses this facility for language acquisition - the outcome is grammar and lexicon. When the environment provides multiple linguistic stimuli, e.g. English and Tonga, more than one grammar and lexicon will develop. Lukkomano is a child whose mother interacts with in English while the grandmother speaks Tonga to the girl. At the age of three, she greets her mother in English but says '**mwalibizya**'(***good evening***) to the old woman. The child now knows intuitively that the language behaviour of the two parents differs.

Secondly, child grammar never violates the universal principles of language. It follows a pattern that is structure-dependent. Even when an adult utters a sentence the child cognitively produces a child's version of it e.g. a caregiver who says "this is a big blue ball" was reported to get a response "blue ball" (Farnadez & Cairns, 2011). This study queries the wholesale role of imitation in language behaviour. Many

studies show a great deal of individual variation during language acquisition and learning.

2.9.6 Language, Cognition and Language Development

The claim of the Chomskyan School is not that human beings acquire language without experience. Cognitive system requires environmental input to trigger and stimulate language development. Infants born deaf cannot develop their cognition linguistically. They cannot experience speech therefore possess no spoken language. Language acquisition will not happen in a vacuum. The child requires exposure and stimulation to formulate grammar and lexicon including all the properties associated with human language. Children learn language that are governed by highly subtle and abstract principles and do so without explicit instruction. Language acquisition is therefore dependent on an innate, specie-specific module distinct from general intelligence.

Gleason and Ratner (1993:9) speak of a human condition language by quoting Bertrand Russel that "no matter how eloquently a dog may bark, he cannot tell you his parents were poor but honest" When children pick up a number of words spontaneously, they combine them in a structured sequence where every word has a definite role, respect the word order of the adult model and use them for a variety of purposes. We consciously know that a sentence like: * "bites the dog man" cannot be correct because we possess an abstract system of unconscious knowledge about English language. When people speak of a red car, it is the outside that is red, not the inside. This presupposes that there is nothing like a blank slate at birth. There is a Language Acquisition Device (LAD) which triggers the child's innateness to process a language and allows for creativity. This sentence and the preceding paragraphs may probably never have been produced anywhere in the world before. The same is true for much of what we say every day in so many places and contexts. Almost every sentence a person hears or says is a brand new event not previously experienced but understood without much difficulty. You will realize now that a tacit knowledge of a language is all we need to begin functioning effortlessly in the use of such language. We sometimes know how to do something without knowing explicitly how it happens. When we eat, many do not bother to know about the digestive system and we play football without knowing about the muscles involved in the shot that scores a goal!

2.9.7 The Cognitive Process

Psycholinguists are interested in the child's linguistic performance after the basic sentences have been processed and put into actual use. This occurs when a sentence stored in memory is combined with others to form conversation and narratives. This is termed linguistic Competence and Performance When a child possesses the knowledge of the components of language that pair sounds with meanings, whereby

the grammar and lexicon of the language is stored in its brain, then we can talk of linguistic competence e.g. Dog = Animal + 4 legs + barking. Linguistic performance on the other hand is the use of such stored linguistic knowledge in actual processing of words during comprehension and production e.g. "My brother is married to a dog."(Figurative use of 'dog' – flirting is connoted here).

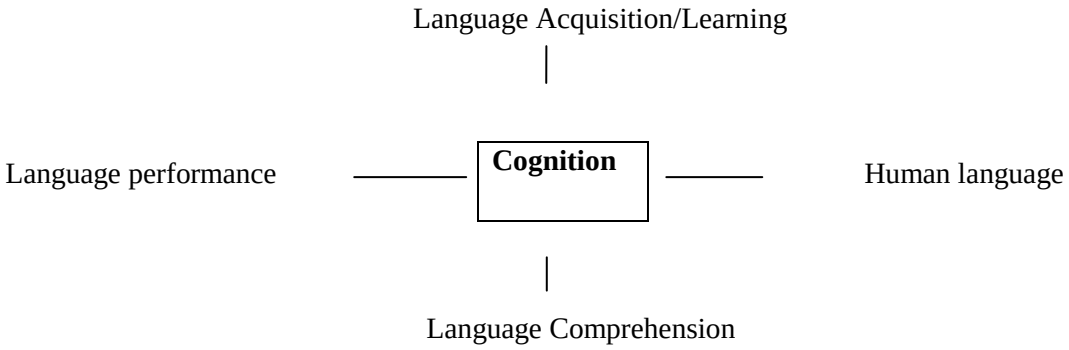


Fig 7: Schema showing the relationship between cognition and language variables

Cognitive process could therefore be described as the interlocking relationship between the language- related variables in the above schema. Studies have shown that some 3-4 years old pre-schoolers talk of scenes from pictures, respond to questions and even describe limited events. An intriguing example is the writer's child's report of a friend who slapped him during a play session. Instead of using the word 'slap' still dormant in his linguistic domain, he said "Ibrahim do like this" by repeatedly tapping himself on the cheek. This shows the dexterity and spontaneity in the cognitive process.

Children around 12 months attain one word stage when object naming develops (food, eye, nose, ball, toy, etc.).The child's first word remains controversial. Male chauvinists among the many languages of the world claim that a child's first utterance is 'ba-ba' meaning (father). This is debatable as the mother -child interaction at this stage is so crucial that many children are inclined to say 'Ma-ma' (mother). Even modifiers like 'all gone', 'more', 'finish', 'dirty', 'pupu', etc. are used. Here, they take umbrella or compass dimension as in 'all gone food', 'more more water', 'finish bread,' 'dirty dirty baby', 'pupu pupu sister', etc . At this stage, one word covers many expressions. The child uses 'milk' to say 'give me milk', 'milk has finished', 'I've spilled my milk', etc.

Surakat (2009), having carried out a study gives an insight into a Nigerian preschool child's cognitive process in her acquisition of English at age 47-62 months. In what he termed pedolinguistics (child language studies), audio and video data of a child named ***Mana*** were recorded and analyzed. Sample utterances of Mana include: 'I say I go come back' when asked for the whereabouts of the auntie. *"***_It is paiming me_**"

(touching her mouth) when asked what is wrong with her. When Mana scribbled on a paper, she explained '***I laite peibi like this'*** to mean (I draw baby like this).

Our concern here is that intelligibility is possible in the cognitive process of a child acquiring language. The data also shows that children engage in phonological sound redistribution e.g. *'I want to hear my noise' instead of 'voice' when a tape recorder was demonstrated for her. 'Paiming' instead of 'paining' 'peibi' (baby) 'lait' (like) 'anytin' (anything) 'stomas' (stomach).

At the morphological, syntactic and semantic levels, a lot of creativity was noticed:

*Mummy has spoil my toy (absence of tense marker)
*Dupe has finish his food (absence of tense gender marker)
*He goed away (inadequate knowledge of irregular verbs)
*She have two bag (plural morpheme marker is absent)

With age and cognitive maturity, children tend to master the correct forms. But at their level, communication still goes on all the same. It should be noted that even adult learners of a second language in the Zambian setting make such mistakes like the ones described above because of the Morpho - syntactic pattern of the target language e.g. *'house big' from a Bantu/English bilingual because in Bantu/Zambian Languages, the modifier is post posed; that is, it comes after the noun. At the semantic level, we also have cases like *'sweet stories' instead of 'interesting stories'. Moreover, a useful index of language development in cognition is the Mean Length of Utterance (MLU). This is computed by adding bound and free morphemes in a language sample. There is a high degree of correlation of MLU and age because the child's sentences become longer with age. The child's working memory allows the child to plan and execute longer sentences. Several utterances are considered and calculated based on the number of individual morphemes in each utterance. Let us take a particular child who may say the following:

(i) I+ like+ toy = 3 morphemes
(ii) Mummy+ like +s+ to+ sing = 5
(iii) Give+ me+ food = 3 morphemes

These morphemes give a total of 11 which you can now divide by the total number of utterances. These are three. 11/3 = 3.2. MLU = 3.2 Normal children may differ by a year or more in their rate of language development but the stages they pass seem generally the same despite varied exposure. The role of cognition is natural and developmental in language acquisition as all children progress through similar milestones in a similar fashion. The general trend in the cognitive process of a child's acquisition of language could not explain fully how children succeed. The role of

cognition is so complex that psycholinguists agree that more studies are required to fully comprehend the phenomenon of language acquisition and learning.

Conclusion

This unit has presented child language acquisition theories and language development stages. Presented also are matters of language and thought, cognition and factors influencing second language acquisition.

Self Assessment Exercise

1. Discuss the theories of language acquisition learnt in this unit
2. Comment of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis on language and thought
3. Outline the stages of language acquisition

Summary

In this unit discussed are child language acquisition theories, language development stages. Discussed also in the unit are matters of language and thought, cognition and factors influencing second language acquisition.

UNIT 3: LANGUAGE PROCESSING

3.0 Introduction

This unit looks at language processing and what it entails to produce and perceive speech. In the unit, you will learn how complex exercises speech production and speech comprehension are. The unit begins with language production and later in the course of the unit deals with speech comprehension.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- Discuss what speech production entails
- Explain the mechanism of speech production
- Identify the stages of speech production
- Describe the mechanism of speech comprehension
- Identify models in speech recognition
- Identify different levels of speech recognition
- Explain lexical selection in speech production
- Distinguish between cascade and discrete selection process
- Discuss the three levels of language production

3.1 The Mechanism of Speech Production

The psycholinguistic basis of the study of speech production is anchored on the biological foundation of language acquisition. When we produce speech the mental process and the organs of speech involved interact in a complex and one-to- many relationships. The mechanism of speech production has many levels, from the movement of the organs of speech to the articulation of sound, rhythm and intonation of the utterance.

3.2 Language Production

Language production can be defined as the process of creating and expressing meaning through language, either written or spoken, it is abstract and physical. (Richards & Schmidt, 2013). Nonetheless, sometimes we tend to confuse the concept of language production with speech production. Therefore, a distinction should be clearly established. As has been stated above, language production refers to both speaking and writing forms, while speech production refers solely to the articulation of language, that is, it is physical, to put it simply, it refers to the speech form of language.

Many a people have wondered about how humans generate spoken words. What are the mental and psychological realities that govern the production of speech? Sometimes we pause to appreciate that human beings are born talkers and find it

important to examine the processes involved in the articulation of speech. Even though important language organs like lips, tongue, jaws and the lungs are involved in the complex mechanism of speech production, we tend to perform the operation spontaneously because speech making is so natural. However our study of speech production will help us to understand better how the brain processes information by which we interact with ourselves.

Levelt (1999) proposes that humans produce two to three words per second in normal fluent conversation. These words come from a huge repository known as the mental lexicon which contains 50 to 100 thousand words in a normal literate adult. It is remarkable however that the biological basis for language production makes words processing inexhaustible through what is psycholinguistically termed recursive mechanism. The expression "The man is good" can be reproduced endlessly through human capacity for creativity in speech production. We can have "We all agree that the man is good." It is also possible to say "My teacher informed us during our lecture that the man is good." Such an endless way of novel utterances being generated and added to the trigger sentence is a species-specific trait of human speech production.

The high speed and complexity in word production does not make it error free. It is reported that we err once or twice in 1000words. In an average of 40 minutes of talking per day, we will have produced some 50 million word tokens by the time we reach adulthood (Levelt 1999). Study on speech production has its basis on psycholinguistic attempt to know the pattern of errors during utterances. When we speak, our intention is to convey a message. The message to be relayed has diverse concepts and the mental lexicon is a reservoir of words from which only those needed for the intended message need be retrieved. These words have syntactic properties which contain morphological and phonological segments. All the distinct linguistic properties will be energized into the articulatory processes for each of the syllables, words, phrases and sentences contained in the utterance. According to Levelt (1999) the following are the underlying processes of speech production:

1. The speaker selects a word that is semantically and syntactically appropriate.
2. Retrieval of the word phonological properties
3. Rapid syllabification of the words in context
4. Preparation of the corresponding articulatory gestures.

From the foregoing arguments, it certain that you have now come to know that speech production entails a complex but highly organized and systematized operation. It involves the speaker encoding an idea into an utterance. This utterance will carry the information the hearer will use to decode the speech signals by building the linguistic representations that will lead to the recovery of the intended message. The speaker formulates the message into a set of words well organized to convey meaning which is transformed into intelligible speech using articulatory mechanism. The hearer must reconstruct the intended meaning from the speech produced by the speaker because

encoding and decoding are essential mirror images of one another (Fernandez & Cairns 2011).

3.2.1 The Process of Speech Production

The process of speech production starts when a conversation takes place and participants take turns as they interact. One of the interlocutors will want to communicate an idea or give some item of information. There is always an initializing procedure known as pre- verbal message because at this point the idea has not yet been cast into linguistic form (Fernandez & Cairns, 2011). The mental operations followed some steps in turning an idea into a linguistic representation. The process requires that both the speaker and the hearer must share the same lexicon and grammar. The mental representation must be transformed into a speech signal that will be produced fluently at an appropriate rate with correct intonation.

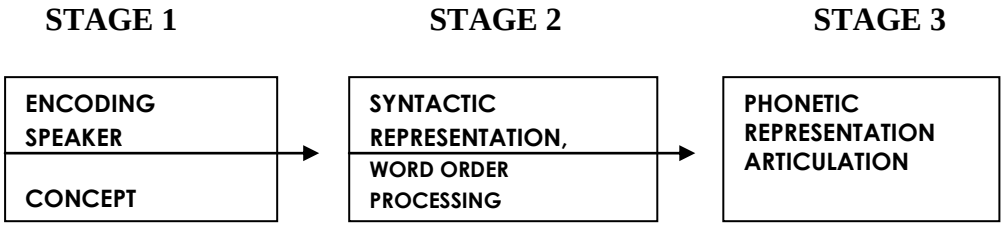


Fig 8. ***Schema showing stages in the production of speech***

Stage 1: Speech production is activated by the idea of a message to be passed by the speaker. This is the conceptualization stage whereby lexical selection takes place. The semantic representation triggers a lexical search for words that best convey the intended meaning. For example, in a sentence like "the boy draws a picture", activation will centre on 'boy' 'draws' and picture'. These concepts came from the mental lexicon of the speaker.

Stage2: For any sentence to be meaningful there must be a systemic link between the string and its structural organization. In other words, a sentence like "The boy draws a picture." cannot be understood when restructured as *"picture draws boy the" because it has no acceptable pattern of the English grammar. At this stage, the speaker assigns the correct syntactic structure to the word retrieved from the lexicon. Words are arranged into hierarchically organized constituents whereby the subject and its verb must agree in number. Tenses and gender markers must be correct.

Stage 3: This stage creates the phonological representation of the utterance. Here, the utterance is given its phonetic qualities by spelling out the words as phonemes. When the appropriate morphophonological rules have been applied, a final string that will specify the way the sentences will be uttered will be produced. This representation is then translated into instructions to the vocal apparatus from the motor control areas of

the brain. Being a biological operation, neural signals are activated and sent out to the lips, tongue, larynx, mandible and the respiratory system to produce actual speech.

Bock and Levelt (1994) give a broader but similar perspective of the processes of speech production. The first stage is termed Conceptual Preparation where the speaker is pre-occupied with the Linearization of the information to be expressed. He then decides on what to say first, what next and so on. The next stage is called Grammatical Encoding where lexical selection is done and assigned in the correct syntactic order. This is followed by Morphophonological Encoding where phonological codes are assigned to the speech produced. When a morpheme is successfully activated, the code becomes available. The fourth stage is described as Phonetic Encoding where the corresponding articulatory gesture is prepared. Next is Articulation where articulatory gestures are executed by an intricate apparatus consisting of the respiratory system providing the acoustic energy. The last stage termed Self-Monitoring is a control stage for speakers to attend to their own overt and internal speech. When errors are detected which may constitute obstacle to intended communicative effect, speakers can effect corrections and make a repair.

Furthermore, a number of theories in psycholinguistics and cognitive psychology attempts to account for the different processes involved in language production. Thereby, in this unit we are going to focus on theory proposed by Levelt (1989). Scovel (1997), mentions four major processes involved in language production, such as; **conceptualisation**, **formulation**, **self-monitoring**, and **articulation**. **Conceptualisation:** According to David McNeil, conceptualisation is the very beginning of spoken utterance. In addition, he claims that there are two concurrent and parallel modes of thought, which are; syntactic thinking and imagistic thinking. Furthermore, this stage is also known as message level where the speaker decides what to express. Traditionally, considered pre-linguistic and language neutral (Garret, 1975; Levelt, 1988).

What is more, it is the first and most abstract stage of language production, where a speaker makes the decision about how to frame an idea into language. Basically, this level involves determining what to say, the intention to be conceived, selection of relevant information in preparation for construction of intended utterance, and the product is a preverbal message. Thus, message level is solely concept not word yet, and in this stage the concept of referent is activated, that is, whom and what to mention (Menn, 2017).

Formulation: This is the second stage of speech production, when the messages are framed into words, phrases, and clauses by the speaker. Essentially, this process involves translating the conceptual representation into a linguistic form. Additionally, this stage includes the process of lexicalisation; where the words that the speaker intends to say are selected, includes the process of syntax planning; where words are combined to make a sentence, involves detailed phonetic and articulatory planning,

and includes the process of phonological encoding; where words are turned into sounds. In short, this process involves; grammatical encoding, morphological encoding, and phonetic encoding.

Articulation: This is the third and very important stage of speech production, that is, the physical stage of sounds speech, where words are translated into the sounds and syllables of actual speech. In addition, in this stage our thoughts and linguistic plan are sent from the brain to the speech systems in order to execute the required movements and produce the desired sounds. Therefore, this is however the starting point for the speech comprehension.

Self-monitoring or self-repair: This is the final stage of speech production, when the speaker edits his/her message and corrects any errors. In this stage the speaker checks their language production to ensure that they are; accurate in terms of syntax, lexes and phonology, appropriateness in terms of register, loudness and precision, and likelihood to be perceived by the listener/reader, and likely to have the desired rhetorical impact. To illustrate, ´the last I ***knowed*** about it (I mean knew about it), she was so drank (I mean drunk), that we decided to drive her home.

3.2.2 Lexical Selection and Assemblage of Words

In the process of speech production, it is important for the speaker to be able to select lexical items corresponding to the intended message. The processes by which the speaker selects words from the mental lexicon have been labelled under the term lexical selection. During the process of this selection, psycholinguistic studies are concerned with those factors affecting the efficiency and speed with which lexical selection takes place. We are to determine how word frequency can influence lexical selection. A significant problem in lexical selection is how well the concept to be generated matches the desired lexical output.

Lexical selection is determined to some extent by the activation level of the target node. This means the higher the activation of a target lexical node at the moment of selection, the easier the retrieval (Dell, 1990). Word frequency and context constraint are quite important in lexical selection. Words that are high infrequency are processed with greater speed and accuracy than those of low frequency. This is because those words that are more predictable are identified more rapidly and successfully than less predictable words. A speaker's lexical selection is somehow driven by the thought to be conveyed than by the store of words in his lexicon. During word production, there is need for lexical selection and phonological encoding to express any meaning. Theories of word production examine the relationship between lexical frequency and word selection including assemblage of words. Retrieving a word during normal speech requires at least two lexically specific steps:

1. Lexical, semantic and syntactic information (meaning/word order)
2. Phonological information (sounds)

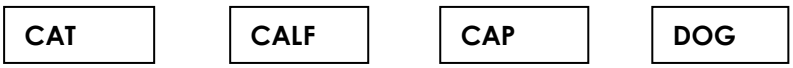
Dell et al (1997) corroborate that speech production involves a step in which lexical entries for words called lemmas are selected based on message specification and making grammatical information available. The second step is that in which phonological information is retrieved and assembled. However, the relationship between these two steps is controversial. One school argues that phonological encoding can begin before word selection is completed though the two stages are not mutually exclusive. This is termed the cascade theory (Dell et al, 1997). For example, upholstery can be called a 'couch' or a 'sofa'.

The second school posits that selection and phonological encoding takes place in discrete stages (Roelofs, 1992). Word selection precedes phonological encoding with selection completed before encoding begins. There is no influence from activity during lemma selection on phonological encoding. For example, in a picture naming experiment, the word 'sheep' was not interfered with even though a phonologically related word 'sheet' was presented to the subjects. At no point was there simultaneous sensitivity to both semantically and phonologically related distractors. This is consistent with the idea of independent processing stages. However, it is still debatable to determine the extent to which lexical selection is affected by word frequency in speech production (Ferreira & Griffin, 2003).

Features of Cascade and Discrete Models Many studies on lexical selection and assemblage of words tend to agree on the existence of two functional stages described above. However, there are divergent views on the relationship between them. Two prominent theories have emerged: The cascade lexical selection model and the discrete lexical selection model. These two models have some features that need to be considered. The discrete model:- According to Dell (1997) the following features have been identified as typical of the discrete model of lexical selection:

1. Only one word is activated
2. The grammatical features are selected prior to word form encoding
3. Lemmas compete for selection because there are no links of the lexical entries.
4. Effects at different levels shouldn't affect one another.

For example, in a picture naming experiment containing the labels:



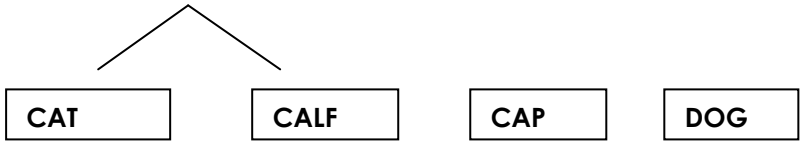
The frequency rate of retrieving CAT to match the correct picture was high.

The Cascade Model:

1. All active lemmas spread activation to their respective word forms
2. Word forms also compete for selection

3. Semantic and phonological effects are predicted to interact.

In the experiment, the word frequency rate was slow because word forms compete for selection e.g.



You are expected to take note here that studies in the area of speech production are not exhaustive and that these models are not mutually exclusive. Mahon et al (2007) in their experiment report that frequency of words is determined according to their semantic familiarity or otherwise.

	Picture	Semantically Close	Semantically far	Unrelated
1	Bottle	Jar	Saucer	Corn
2	Dress	Skirt	Glove	Fence
3	Cow	Goat	Seal	Pearl
4	Arrow	Spear	Grenade	Saucer
5	Stool	Chair	Futon	Caption

3.2.3 The Processes of Lexical Selection

During speech production, the speaker undergoes two processes. The first one being the stage he creates the skeleton of the utterance to be spoken and the second stage is where he puts flesh to the skeleton. The former is referred to as lexical selection entries in the speaker's vocabularies and assemblage of words while the latter is phonological encoding which is the assembly of sound forms and the generation of intonation (Bock & Levelt, 1994).

A speaker who intends to say "meals on wheels" but says "wheels on meals" usually knows that the lexical selection and the way those words were assembled is faulty. It is however through the analysis of speech errors that appropriate lexical selection is determined because it is intended to account for normal speech production model. For example, how do speakers choose the correct words corresponding to intended message?

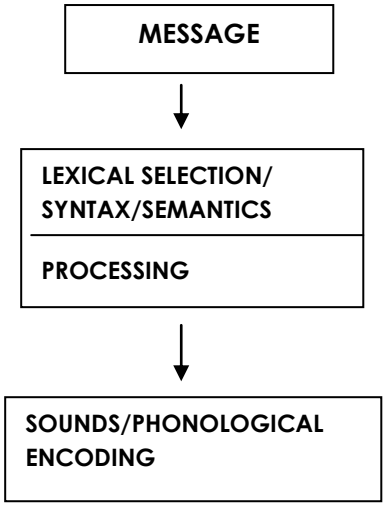


Fig. 9 ***Scheme showing process of lexical selection***

In Figure above, you can see the three levels of speech production being described. These are the message level, the processing level and the phonological level. The message captures the features from the speaker's intended meaning and provides the raw materials for the processing of lexical selection. The lexical selection level deals with identification of lexical concepts that are suitable for conveying the speaker's meaning. Processing at this level involves the creation of a well arranged set of word order items and assemblage of words. The third level is phonological encoding which spells out the phonological structure of the utterance and the prosody of the large units. For instance, when you say:

"Mundiwa will go to Mujika. He will also visit Mwaka." The first step in lexical selection involves identifying the lexical concepts such as form class, nouns pronouns, verbs etc. since Mundiwa is male, any selection of 'she' for the second sentence will be wrong.

Bock and Levelt (1994) exemplify the process of lexical selection in their explanation of a network model of lexical selection.

First stage: sheep (domestic animals, wool pelt, produce milk)

Second stage: sheep (syntactic properties noun)

Third stage: sheep = (Phonological encoding) /ʃi: p/

This description differs from semantic properties of 'goat' even though the two are animals. Related words that bear similar description may come to mind but there is a distinction between lemmas and lexemes. This could be likened to a situation when you try to remember the name of someone you met before. If wrong names are proposed you ignore then because they will not fit into the mould. As you try to recall

someone named ‘Musa’ people might suggest ‘Moses’ but you will be able to discern that it doesn’t fill the gap. This implies that appropriate lexical selection must fit the intended message. Consider the following errors of lexical selection. Where the speakers became conscious of such errors, they attempt to correct them:

“Get out of the **clark** (car)”

“A branch fell on the **tree** (roof)”

“He’s a man to **emanate** (emulate)”

“Release the hostages **unarmed** (unharmed)”

3.3 Speech Comprehension

This part of the unit examines what is speech comprehension and the processes involved in decoding the meaning of an utterance. When we use language properly and it is well understood people are able to communicate and convey information as well as interact among themselves. When we are not able to understand the import of a message we get frustrated and irritable. Some of you will appreciate the response of Casca in Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar when asked about what transpired at the capitol when Caesar was thrice offered the crown. “Those that understand him smiled at one another and shook their heads, but for mine own part, it was Greek to me” This statement underscores the importance of speech comprehension in conversation. It is the interplay of linguistic knowledge and the processes involved in language use that underlie speech comprehension.

3.3.1 Speech Perception and Comprehension

Listening to speech, by which we mean processing and comprehending spoken language, is an amazing skill that takes place quickly and efficiently. We process some seven to ten sounds a second, and about 175 words a minute, often in a noisy environment that contains other sounds, and yet we do so effectively and rather effortlessly. The listening process is highly complex, and researchers over the years have tried to understand the processing stages that are involved from perceiving the acoustic wave all the way to building an enriched mental representation of what has been said. The challenge to understand this communication skill is even greater when the listeners, adults and children, have to process two or more spoken languages in their everyday lives.

Speech Recognition is an important area of study in psycholinguistics. It is concerned with how we perceive speech, interpret and then derive meaning from the message. Sometimes, many people confuse Speech Recognition (S. R.) in natural language with Automatic Speech Recognition (A. S. R.) which deals with computational linguistics. It should be clear from the outset that the latter is an offshoot of the former. Automatic Speech Recognition is the translation of spoken words into text or speech

to text (STT). Someone reads sections of a text into the speech recognition system which is analyzed, fine-tuned, processed and interpreted to decode a message. Instances are seen in voice dialling and robotized communication system. However, speech recognition in natural language looks at a fundamental problem of how the continuously varying acoustic stimulus produced by a speaker is converted into a sequence of discrete linguistic units by the listener so that the intended message can be understood. This unit will examine the features of speech recognition and explain the various theories and models. You will also learn that despite useful contributions of the various studies by specialists on the field, efforts are still on to actually produce an all encompassing and empirically more acceptable model of Speech Recognition (S. R.).

The ease with which we perceive speech belies the complexity involved. There are cognitive and neural mechanisms at play which enable us to decode the linguistic signal of the speaker as well as information about their identity such as accent, age, gender and emotional state. In speech recognition, there is no one to one relationship between a speech segment and its acoustic qualities. Wikipedia (2012) explains that Speech Recognition otherwise described as speech perception is the process, by which the sounds of language are heard, interpreted and understood. Studies in the area of speech recognition attempt to explain how human listeners recognize speech sounds and use the information to understand spoken language. Findings from such researches are coded and used to build computer systems that can recognize speech. Results are also helpful to language-impaired listeners and foreign language teachers.

Speech recognition begins as a process of perceiving speech at the level of sound signal where the initial auditory signals are processed to extract cues and phonetic information up to word recognition. Bond (1999) asserts that listeners are faced with a phonetic stream termed the rumble of speech. Because of the continuous, rapid and successive pattern of words, there are assimilations and deletions in the speaker's utterance. Most of the time, the listener needs to untangle the rumble of speech and recover the speaker's intended message. They do this by applying strategies based on their extensive knowledge of the structure of their language. Both speaker and listener are sometimes engaged in other tasks while carrying out conversations. They are often distracted or occupied with their own ideas. Listeners also vary in the amount of attention they pay to speech. Such distractions have been noticed when we talk of 'slips of the ear'. A famous poem which contained lines such as:

'They have slain the Earl of Murray

And laid him on the green'

It is possible for the second line to be wrongly perceived as "And Lady Mondegreen" (Bond 1999). Aslin and Pisoni (1986) quoted in Pisoni and Renex (2005) propose that infants come pre-wired with general auditory and processing skills that are then modified selectively by experience and activities in the language learning

environment. Hocket (1958) corroborates that infants at one month are capable of making fine discriminations among a number of distinctive attributes of speech sounds but the course of development of phonetic competence is one characterized by a loss of abilities overtime if specific experience is not forthcoming.

To any casual observer, the speech recognition process often appears to be carried out almost automatically with little conscious effort. However, a complex mechanism is involved. The speech signal is well structured and constrained that even large distortions can be tolerated without lost of intelligibility. You will see here that sometimes when you get incomplete information you can piece together the missing bit and still get the desired result. Many of us are now familiar with missing text on our mobile phone which often suffers from word loss. However, communication can still be carried out reasonably without much damage. Remember your works in Discourse Analysis on "***Missing Links***" and "***Pragmatic Inferencing***" Consider a situation where you receive a text message like this:

"Come … urgently, mama … hospital … money … treatment … bill"

It is evident here that you can easily decode the message because you are already familiar with the nuances and linguistic properties of the English language. The speech signal is not entirely new to you. As a speaker of natural language, the listener has available a good deal of knowledge about the structure of an utterance even before it is over produced (Pisoni, 1976). He identified two reasons why a listener can easily decode the import of an utterance. The first explanation is that the listener knows something about the context in which an utterance is produced. He is aware of the facts, events and all that is related to the world of discourse. All these will be used to generate hypothesis and draw inferences from the little bits of information the speaker gives. Secondly, the listener possesses the knowledge of the phonological, syntactic and semantic structures of the language which provide the means for constructing an internal representation or recognition of the message.

3.3.2 Features of Speech Recognition

Hocket (1958) reveals that human language has a distinctive characteristic that set it apart from other communication systems. It is symbolic and entails a dual patterning of sound and meaning. It is also grammatical thus allowing the generation of an infinite set of utterances. During the normal course of linguistic communication, we are conscious of the words and sentences spoken to us but rarely note the sounds. Most of the listener's awareness of spoken language is based on meanings not sounds. An utterance consists of a sequence of discrete elements. These are the segments a listener perceives, which are based on the functional sound category of their speech community. According to Hocket (1958), all morphemes have a complex internal structure which consists of a sequence of phonemes arranged in a particular order. Differences between morphemes result in differences in meanings which are

expressed by variations in the sequencing and arrangement of the constituent phonemes and their features. Consider the following: ‘tale’ could be re-ordered as ‘late’ and ‘life’ could be re-arranged and ‘file’. The sequence and arrangement in one order gives a particular meaning and once it is altered, it signals a change in meaning. When people are presented with speech signals, they respond to them as linguistic entitles rather than auditory events. Speech signals are categorized and labeled almost immediately with reference to the listener’s linguistic background.

Masoro (1972) in Pisoni (1976) contends that syllables should be the basis of speech recognition. The claim is that phonemes are more abstract entities than syllables because some phonemes cannot exist independently as articulators and acoustic unity whereas syllables can. Phonemes cannot therefore be regarded as recognizable units. Major findings in speech recognition assert that words presented in sentential contexts are more intelligible that the same words presented in isolation. More information than a phonetic sequence is necessary to establish the identity of a phoneme. This implies that there is need for the contribution of syntactic and semantic variables to the speech recognition process. For example, the sound of ‘ough’ exists in six different realizations in ‘cough’, ‘bough’, ‘through’, through’, ‘rough’ and ‘thought’. It will therefore be misleading to use the phonemic segment alone for speech recognition. This corroborates Marslen-Wilson (1975) assertion that the listener analyses the incoming information at all levels of linguistic importance so that decisions at any level can affect processing at other levels. The recognition of connected speech does not rely exclusively on the analysis and recognition of segmental acoustic features.

Fernandez and Cairns (2011) exemplify that when information is given in abstract sense without contextual clues, it will make no meaning and therefore comprehension becomes difficult. They go further to explain by talking of Bottom-up and Top down information in speech recognition. The bottom-up information gives all the required representation and guides your processing but you still cannot achieve comprehension. For example, you hear your friend say ‘baby toy’ clearly and unambiguously. You can decode the message at the phonological level and even retrieve it from your lexicon. Yet, in the absence of any contextual clue, it is not meaningful. On the other hand, if you have a baby recently and you are going for shopping and your friend makes a long speech but you can only pick ‘baby toy’, you only need to add the missing link and still achieve comprehension. This is top down information which is not part of the acoustic signal. When bottom-up information specifies a word or phrase inappropriately or inadequately, the listener is expected to use top-down information to select among a range of possibilities. However, if bottom-up information is adequate top down information will not be necessary.

3.3.3 Levels of Processing in Speech Recognition

1. **Auditory Level:** It is the first stage in speech recognition when the acoustic waveform is transformed or recorded into some neural representation in the nervous system. All the information for speech recognition including the frequency, duration and intensity of the linguistic signals is extracted and coded by the auditory system. The linguistic information stored in the sensory memory will enable subsequent operations to be carried out to facilitate speech recognition.

2. **Phonetic Level:** The features and signal required for phonetic classification are obtained from the auditory representations of the acoustic signal. It is at this stage that sounds which represent phonetic segments are perceived in discrete form. The listener will match these representations with what is stored in the long term memory and pick the relevant ones that match the target language.

3. **Phonological Level:** Here, the listener will convert the linguistic signals in the phonetic segment into phonological segments. The phonological components will give the required information about the sound structure of a given language. Processing at this stage involves the application of phonological rules to the phonetic input to determine the extent to which the phonological segment functions as a distinctive element in the language. It is at this level that linguistic variations at the phonetic level are eliminated and only phonologically distinctive information is coded for further processing.

4. **Higher Level Processing:** This is the last stage of processing which involves lexical, syntactic and semantic interpretation of the original input. Here, the listener will generate the structure into which the phonological segments are placed and specify the grammatical organization of the input. This information will guide the listener in the correct interpretation of the speech and subsequent word verification processing.

3.4 Models of Speech Recognition

Though no model is presently acceptable as conclusive in determining what goes on in the Speech Recognition process, some models have been identified as good enough to give us some insight into the mechanism involved in a listener's attempt at speech recognition. A few of them will be examined in our discussion below:

3.4.1 The Motor Theory Model:

This states that speech can be recognized by processes that are also involved in its production. Liberman et al (1967) argued that since the listener is also a speaker, it is assumed that the speaker-hearer uses only one common process for language processing instead of two independent processes. This theory remains controversial

because its evidence is based on logic and faith and not on any strong empirical foundation. Opponents of the model say that the problem of the motor theory rests on the failure to specify the level of analysis where articulatory knowledge is employed in speech recognition.

3.4.2 Trace Model:

This model was propounded by McClelland & Elman (1986). It is one of the earlier and popular models based on the principles of interactive activation. The theory argued that all the components of speech recognition like features, phonemes and words have their own role in creating intelligible speech and using TRACE to form them before achieving comprehension. This will enable the listener to complete a stream of speech instead of looking at speech as individual components. The listener uses the model as a framework in which the primary function is to take all the various sources of information found in speech and integrate them to identify single words. Wikiversity (2012) explains that the TRACE model is bi-directional in operation. It allows for either words or phonemes to be derived from a spoken message. By segmenting the individual sounds, phonemes can be determined from spoken words. By combining the phonemes, words can be perceived by the listener.

3.4.3 Cohort Model:

If you check your dictionary for the word ‘cohort’, it means group of related items, ally, or associate. Marslen–Wilson (1980) proposes the model as a representation for lexical retrieval. An individual’s lexicon is his mental dictionary of all the words they are familiar with. In using the cohort model, a listener maps out auditory information onto words that already exist in their lexicon to interpret new word. Each part of an utterance can be broken down into segments. The listener pays attention to the individual segments and maps these unto pre-existing words in the stock of vocabulary. As more and more segments are identified for recognition, the listener discards those that do not match or ally with the pattern in their mental lexicon. For example, when the listener encounters the word ‘English’. The listener first recognizes ‘En’ and begins thinking about words they have in their lexicon which begins with ‘En’ and all other words following this pattern are considered. These include: ‘Engage’, ‘Engine’, ‘Engrave’, ‘Engraft’, ‘Engross’, and ‘Engulf’.

The next level of processing when the sound ‘l’ is added leaves the listener with the word ‘English’, when he has run out of speech segments which consist of discrete linguistic items that make sense of the representation in his memory. This principle has been adapted in the design of computer search engines like Google, Yahoo, My Web Search and Ask.com. When you decide to search for a word like ‘language’, the search machine keeps guessing the next segment after your entry of ‘lan’, it may even suggest other words in its memory like ‘land’. When you add ‘g’ it keeps on accepting such entries in cohort until ‘language’ is suggested or accepted by either you or the

machine. An attempt to input an entry in conflict with words stored in the memory will be met with "No items match your search". This implies that your word is not in the cohort. Apart from those discussed above, there are other emerging models being used to explain speech recognition but not a single one is self-contained. What is important is to consider the aspect of speech and the purpose for you to select a particular model. There are limitations to each model and there are no perfect models for speech recognition. Each model functions in a unique manner and circumstances will determine which one should be adopted.

3.5 From the Speech Wave to the Mental Representation

Listening to speech and processing what is being said – something we do every minute of the day and rather effortlessly is a very complex process that research has investigated over the years.

In this part of the module, therefore, we examine the basic components needed for it to occur, the processing mechanisms that are involved, and various general aspects of processing that make it so efficient.

Figure 10.1 presents the basic components needed for speech processing to take place. First, we have the speech input (or speech wave), which is produced by the speaker. It is presented at the bottom of the figure with an arrow pointing upwards and is often referred to as the "bottom-up" information. In the center part of the figure, we depict "linguistic knowledge", which represents the knowledge a listener has of the language in question (its grammar and lexicon), as well as the "processing mechanisms" that are needed to process the input.

In what follows, we will concentrate on the processing mechanisms – also referred to as "processing levels" – that are involved in going from the acoustic wave to the mental representation: speech perception and prosodic analysis, word recognition, syntactic and semantic processing, and pragmatic processing. We will deal with each in turn, and as we do so, we will refer to an utterance spoken by a person to another person concerning their common friend Mary: "***The librarian gave the book to Mary!***", said with a tone of surprise.

Finally, there are "other sources of information" that listeners use to perceive and understand what is being said. These correspond to the context in which the speech situation is taking place, information about what has been heard so far, knowledge about the world, and so on. These sources are often referred to as "top-down" information (note the downward arrow in the figure) and they play a crucial role in processing, as we will see below. The final outcome of perception and comprehension is referred to as the mental (or interpretative) representation, in other words, the enriched meaning of what has been said.

Speech perception and prosodic analysis start as soon as the beginning of the utterance is heard. In speech perception, the phonetic units that make up the utterance are identified, first the "th" (/ð/) of "the", then the "e" (/ə/), the "l" of "librarian" (/l/), followed by the "i" (/aɪ/), the "b" (/b/), and so on. Several acoustic cues allow us to identify these sounds and categorize them as elements of the language being processed, in this case English. As for the analysis of the prosody – those aspects of the speech that are not phonetic segments, hence the label often used for them, "suprasegmentals" – we process several acoustic characteristics of the input such as the evolution of the fundamental frequency over the utterance, the duration and the intensity of the phonetic elements, etc. These are combined in various ways to produce percepts such as pitch, length, loudness, rhythm, speech rate, etc. These prosodic variables help us identify phrase and sentence boundaries, specify the type of utterance being uttered (statement, question, etc.), point to words of importance in the utterance, signal the current emotional state of the person speaking, and so on. In the case of our example, "The librarian gave the book to Mary!", we perceive a slightly stronger stress on "gave" and a pitch that corresponds to surprise throughout the utterance.

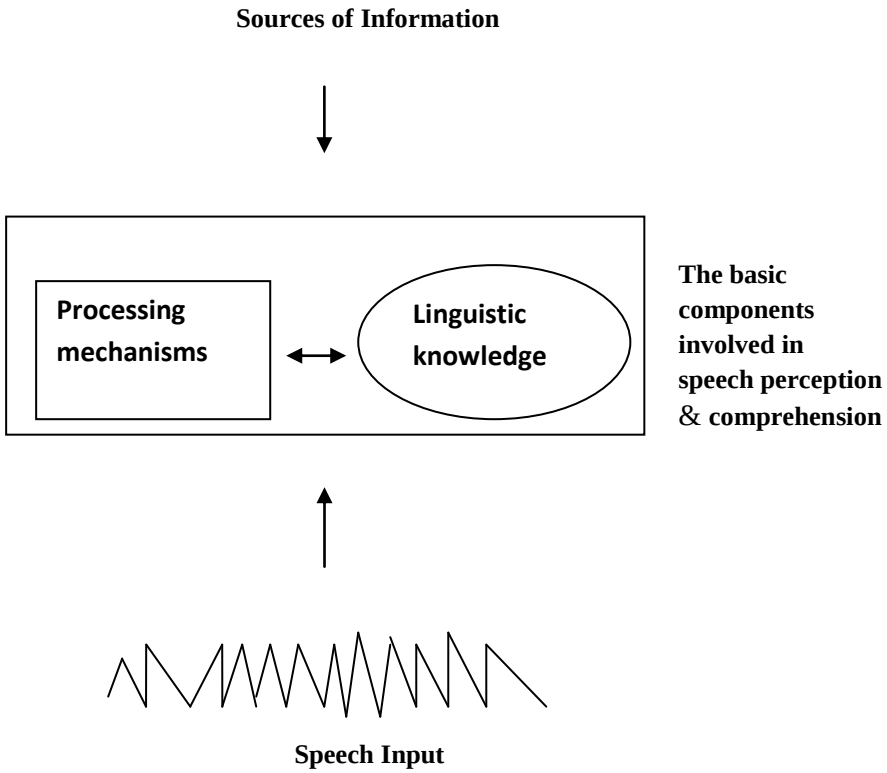


Fig 10.1 as adapted from Grosjean, François & Ping (2013). The Psycholinguistics of Bilingualism, 30. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.

As soon as the first sounds of the speech wave have been identified, word recognition begins. Based on just a few milliseconds of a word being uttered, that word is

activated in our internal vocabulary (our lexicon), along with other words that match the speech signal. These candidates compete with one another and, little by little, as more information arrives, the recognition system narrows down the possibilities and finally selects the word in question. Along with this activation and selection process, various acoustic- phonetic and lexical cues help us identify such things as the beginning and end of the word, and hence they modulate the competition process. Many other factors will speed up or slow down word recognition, such as the frequency and familiarity of a word, the number of competing candidates, and top-down information given by the syntax, semantics, and pragmatics of the utterance. Once words have been recognized, we gain access to the information about them contained in our lexicon – their meaning or meanings (for example, a "book" is a written text), their morphology ("gave" is the past tense of "give"), their grammatical categories ("the" is a determiner, "librarian" is a noun, etc.), as well as the syntactic and semantic structures they can occur in.

With the information obtained during word recognition, syntactic and semantic processing can take place. We compute the syntactic structure of a sentence, a process known as parsing. Thus, "the" and "librarian" are grouped into a noun phrase, as are "the" and "book"; "to" and "Mary" make up a prepositional phrase; "gave", "the book", and "to Mary" are grouped into a verb phrase; and, finally, the first noun phrase ("the librarian") is grouped with this verb phrase to form a sentence. Thematic roles are also assigned, that is, the semantic roles that phrases have in relation to a verb. Thus, the verb "give" has the structure "AGENT give THEME to RECIPIENT". In our example, "The librarian" is the agent (the instigator of an action), "the book" is the theme (the entity that is moved), and "Mary" is the recipient (the person receiving the theme). The outcome of both syntactic and semantic processing is the literal mental representation of the utterance. In our case, an object (the book) was transferred from one person (the librarian) to another (Mary). Finally, pragmatic processing will use everything that we know about the context, the speaker, the people referred to, as well as what has been said before, our knowledge of the world, and of the rules of communication, to compute the utterance's enriched representation. In our example, to really understand it fully, we need to know that Mary had tried repeatedly to obtain that specific book from the library but had been told that it could not be borrowed. The fact that the librarian had finally given her the book–hence the tone of surprise detected during the prosodic analysis – means that something happened to make this possible. The final representation that we retain, therefore, is that Mary obtained the book from the librarian and that this was a very surprising event.

In this short description of how we go from the acoustic wave all the way to the enriched mental representation, we have inevitably simplified what takes place at each processing level. The operations are in fact highly complex and each of them, studied

by different branches of psycholinguistics, are the object of much research and theorising.

On this note, we can safely say; during speech perception and comprehension, we construct a mental representation incrementally. The system processes the information as it comes in – from the speech sounds all the way to the syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic elements–and progressively builds a mental representation.

3.6 The Interactive process of Perception and Comprehension

The aspect, of how interactive the perception and comprehension process really has been hotly debated by two schools of thought. Those who defend interactivity, originally proposed in the pioneering work of Marslen-Wilson (1975), state that all levels of processing influence one another from the very start. On the other hand, there are those who propose that certain processes take place independently of others, at least initially. Here are two examples to understand these positions. The first concerns phoneme perception and word recognition, and the question asked over the years is whether lexical processing can influence the speech perception level. A model like TRACE (McClelland and Elman 1986) is highly interactive in that the word level can influence the phoneme level. Other models such as Shortlist (Norris 1994) are basically data- driven, at least when the first list of lexical candidates is proposed. The second example concerns syntactic and semantic processing and when it is that the latter intervenes. In a number of models (e.g., Frazier 1987; Friederici 2002), the first stage builds the syntactic structure and it is only in a second stage that semantic information can be processed. However, in more interactive models such as constraint-based models (e.g., Boland, Tanenhaus, and Garnsey 1990) the system uses numerous sources of information – syntactic, semantic, pragmatic – to do its work. Harley (2014), the author of The Psychology of Language and a recognized authority in psycholinguistics, leans towards the fact that language processing is strongly interactive, although there are constraints to this.

As a final point, processing is predictive, that is, listeners anticipate what is coming next. Quite early on, Grosjean (1983) listed a number of aspects in the structure of language that facilitates prediction: at the level of discourse, old information usually precedes new information, and definite items often come before non-definite items. At the level of syntax, some verbs are followed by specific types of phrases. At the level of the word, the sequence of sounds, from beginning to end, will often allow a word to be distinguished from other words long before its end, making the last part predictable. And, at levels below the word, phonological and morphological rules often give cues as to the next phoneme or next morpheme. Prediction is helpful in a number of ways: it reduces the set of possibilities and therefore helps focus the attention of the listener, it helps demarcate domains of processing, and it gives the listener time for other activities such as integrating the information that has been processed, storing it, and preparing a response if needed.

3.6.1 Processing in Bilingual Adults

Everything that has been said so far concerning the perception and comprehension of speech also pertains to bilinguals. They too analyze the speech signal with a number of processing mechanisms or levels – phonetic and prosodic, lexical, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic. They too have linguistic knowledge that they use during processing as well as other sources of information, such as what has been said so far, knowledge of the world, the context they are in, etc. And, of course, speech processing in bilinguals, like in monolinguals, is incremental, largely interactive, and predictive. However, bilinguals perceive and comprehend two or more languages in their everyday life and hence the components depicted in Figure 10.1 are multiplied by the number of languages concerned. In Figure 10.2, to simplify things, we present the processing components involved when only two languages are present – the listener is just bilingual – but any number of languages could be added. In the diagram, the person is listening to speech input that is monolingual – the language being heard is Language a (La) – and the linguistic knowledge and the processing mechanisms of that language are active, as is seen by the black rim around the left-hand box. The other language, Lb, is present but is deactivated, shown by the light gray rim. Note that the speech input is transmitted to both language systems and that the other sources of information feed into both systems. If bilinguals find themselves in a bilingual mode, that is, they are speaking to people who share their languages, and code-switching and borrowing is taking place, then the guest language (Lb here) will also be active but less so than the base language (La), which is the main language of the exchange. This is depicted by making the light gray rim darker for Lb, showing greater activation, but it does not reach the level shown for La.

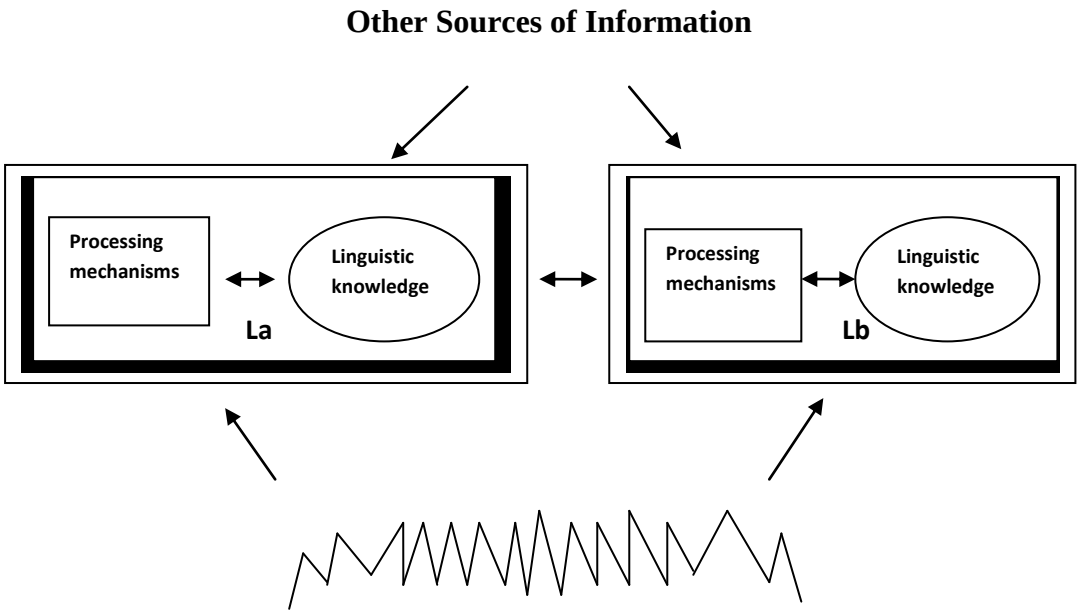


Figure 10.2 The components involved in speech perception and comprehension in bilinguals Adapted from Grosjean, François, and Ping Li. 2013. The Psycholinguistics of Bilingualism, 33. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell

3.6.2 Issues Common to All Processing Levels

The language history of bilinguals as well as the use they make of their languages, and their proficiency in them, are crucial in how well processing takes place. A bilingual's language history and language configuration is complex and covers such things as the languages acquired, when and how they were acquired, the pattern of proficiency and use over the years, the language that is dominant at the present time, how well is (are) the other language(s) known and used, and which language(s) is (are) written and read. The actual languages known by the bilingual will have an impact on processing. Issues such as the phonetic categories that are developed in a language, the segmentation cues that will be used during word processing, the syntactic representations that will be shared or not, and so on, all have their origin, in part at least, in how similar or different the bilingual's languages are from one another. A situation that has been studied quite extensively is when the first language has only one sound category and the second language two, which are assimilated to just one category under the influence of the stronger first language. This may then lead to the activation of spurious word candidates during the word recognition process.

Note that it can also be the case that, in addition to categories not existing, some processing mechanisms and strategies are not acquired because the first language does not have them and/or the second language may have been acquired later. We will see examples of this in domains such as the use of gender, or case information or the use of word segmentation cues such as allophonic variation (different phones are used to pronounce a given phoneme in different contexts). Of course, how well bilinguals

know each language, and how much they use it, will also be critical. For example, at the speech perception level, we will learn that bilinguals who use their first language often are more likely to exhibit first language influence during the perception of their second language, even when the latter was acquired early in life. We will also see that greater language proficiency and more language use result in improved use of segmentation cues. As for syntactic processing it would appear that when listening to a second language, bilinguals will make use of representations shared with their first language as long as the corresponding structures are similar enough, as stated above for example, they have the same word order, but also that the bilinguals are sufficiently proficient in their second language.

3.7 Conclusion

Speech Recognition deals with how the various linguistic segments perceived by the listener can be converted into a meaningful unit so that they can achieve comprehension. Despite the distortions, deletions and omissions involved in the structure of the utterance, the listener will impose a unity by relying on the highly organized pattern of their language and interpret accordingly the phonological, syntactic and semantic variables of the message. The four levels of processing in speech recognition should be noted. These are: Auditory, phonetic, phonological and higher analysis levels. Some theories of speech recognition have been propounded but they are still at the exploratory stages and no single model has been able to account for all that goes on during the process of speech recognition.

Self Assessment Exercise

1. Explain the role of speech recognition in communication.
2. Discuss the models of Speech Recognition.
3. Describe the lexical and assemblage of words
4. Account for the process of lexical selection and word assemblage

3.8 Summary

This unit has unit has covered language processing. In the unit, covered are speech production and speech comprehension. The unit has also brought out issues on interactive process of perception and comprehension. In addition to these, the unit has also discussed models of speech recognition and lexical selection and assemblage of words.

UNIT 4: THE HUMAN BRAIN AND APHASIA

4.0 Introduction

This Unit discusses the role of the human brain in speech production and the causes of aphasia. You will be exposed to the limitless capacity of the human brain in processing and producing speech and how any serious damage to this essential organ of the body could cause irreparable word loss and language impairment. The unit looks at the types of aphasia from the mild to the serious types and identify the causes of Aphasia and how aphasics can be helped to enable them use language in spite of their situation.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- Appreciate the role of the human brain in speech production
- Explain the regions of the human brain responsible for language
- Discuss the causes of Aphasia
- State the different types of Aphasia
- Distinguish between Broca's aphasia and Wernicke's Aphasia.

4.1 Language Areas in General

Research concerning the human brain has pre-occupied scientists for years on end and reports have raised the following questions: Where is language?, How did it get where it is found?, Can language be separated from speech?, How many forms can language take?, Can language disorder be cured?

These and many other unexplored areas continue to intrigue linguists, psychologists, sociologists, neurologists and psycholinguists. The human brain has been described as one of the marvels of creations. It is so outstanding that every second, millions of information pour into your brain from various sources. It is wonderful to imagine how you handle all these with ease.

Studies are still being carried out to determine how the human brain processes language and all that goes on in the production of speech. Findings reveal that what is known is little compared to what is still unknown. A flurry of activities goes on in our head every second. It is a big place is a small place.

Encarta (2010) explains that the human brain is more powerful than a supercomputer. It is made of about 100 billion nerve cells. The surface of the brain is wrinkled and deep grooves divide it into sections. Your brain is protected by bone called the skull. The human brain (as was stated in unit 1) has three sections namely: - the cerebrum, the cerebellum and the brain stem. The cerebrum covers the largest part of the brain and it controls your speech, language and emotion. The auditory and visual nerves are

also controlled by the cerebrum. The cerebellum coordinates your movements and gives you a sense of balance while the brain stem controls your automation and things you carry out without being aware of them like heart pumping blood, blinking eyelids and reflexes.

Research argues that in human beings it is the left hemisphere that usually contains the specialized language areas. The brain acts as the command centre for language and communication which controls both the physical and mental components of speech.

Note that an area of great interest in psycholinguistics is the complexity of the human brain and how it understands, accesses, processes and produces language. Researchers have however made great stride in identifying the regions of the brain involved in speech (As alluded to in unit 1). Of course, this came accidentally by a French neurologist, Paul Broca, in 1861 when he discovered patients who could understand spoken language but had difficulty speaking. He later observed that damage has occurred in a certain part of the brain on the left hemisphere. This became known as Broca area.

Thirteen years later in 1874, a German physician Carl Wernicke found patients with fluent speech but severe comprehension problems. A close observation showed that there was damage to another part of the left hemisphere which later was known as Wernicke's area. (*Refer to unit 1*).

4.2 The Causes of Aphasia

To understand the causes of aphasia, you need to fully understand the term 'aphasia'. Lingraphica (2012) defines aphasia as a disorder that results from damage to portions of the brain that are responsible for language. This occurs on the left side (hemisphere) of the brain. Usually this disorder begins suddenly as a result of stroke or head (insult) injury but it could also develop slowly if a patient suffers from brain tumour or infection.

Association Internationale Aphasie (2012) reports that Aphasia is a two-syllable word 'a' (non) and 'phasia'(speaking), which means someone can no longer say what they want to say. Aphasia is as a result of brain damage. The origin of such brain damage is mostly a blood vessel disorder called a stroke cerebral haemorrhage, cerebral infraction or apoplexy. In medical term, this is called Cerebral (brain) Vascular (blood vessel) Accident (CVA). Other causes for the development of aphasia are trauma injury to brain as a result of road accident or a brain tumour. Our brains need glucose and oxygen to function. If as a result of CVA, circulation of blood is disrupted, brain cells die in that location. For most people, the area for the use of language is located at the left hemisphere of the brain. When injury occurs in this area, then we speak of aphasia.

Aphasia habitually impairs the expression and understanding of language as well as reading and writing. A person suffering from aphasia is called an Aphasic. The neurological nature of aphasia makes it a very challenging experience as sufferers find it difficult to get their message across. Even if aphasia gets in the way of a person's ability to use or understand words, it does not impair the person's intelligence. Please, note that aphasics should be treated with patience and understanding when they have difficulty in finding the right words to complete their thought. Before you can determine whether a person is an aphasic, you will need to look out for the followings symptoms or indeed ask the following questions:

1. Is the patient having trouble speaking?
2. Is the patient struggling to find the appropriate term or word?
3. Is the patient using strange or inappropriate expressions in conversation?

Some people who suffer from aphasia have problems understanding what others are saying and this may be due to tiredness or overcrowded environment. Some aphasiacs are known to have difficulty in using numbers and doing simple calculations.

The language disorder experienced by aphasiacs could be diagnosed by a specialist using a series of neurological tests. When the patient is subjected to questions or given some tasks to perform by naming different object and items, the doctor will be able to determine if the person has aphasia. The doctor will also establish the severity of the disorder.

When a case of aphasia has been properly diagnosed it is better managed by a speech therapist that will meet the patient regularly and encourage them to communicate. Sessions will also train the patient in ways to interact without speech commonly called sign language.

4.3 Types of Aphasia

Psycholinguistic studies have tried to classify aphasia into different types to enable specialists determine their levels of severity. This is to enable speech therapists assist sufferers and encourage them in producing speech. Lingraphica (2012) identified the following types of aphasia

4.3.1 Anomic Aphasia

It is the least severe form of aphasia. Sufferers are unable to use the correct word for the concept they intend to describe. These could be people, objects, places or events. The patients usually understand speech very well but writing ability is poor.

4.3.2 Global Aphasia

This occurs from damage to extensive portions of the speech processing areas of the brain. It is described as the most severe of the speech disorders. It occurs immediately after a stroke. The patient loses almost all language functions and has difficulty understanding as well as forming words and sentences. The condition is so critical that it is quite difficult to communicate with the individual. They can only produce a few recognizable words understand little or no spoken speech and are unable to read or write.

4.3.3 Broca's Aphasia

This is also referred to as non-fluent or expressive Aphasia. The patient is able to understand speech and know what they want to say but are not able to find the words needed to form a complete sentence. Patient's access to vocabulary is restricted and formation of sound is extremely challenging which result in poor speech quality. Broca aphasics often omit small words such as 'is', 'and' and 'the'. Full length sentences like "I will take the dog for a walk" and "there are two books on the table" are expressed as "walk dog" and "book book two table". However, the patient has no difficulty in understanding the speech of others fairly well.

4.3.4 Wernicke's Aphasia

This is also known as fluent or receptive aphasia. The patient experiences serious comprehension difficulties and is unable to grasp the meaning of spoken words. The person will be able to produce fluent connected speech which however will be full of meaningless words that sound like sentence but make no sense. They tend to add unnecessary words and even create their own. In a sentence like " *you know that smoodlepinkered and that I want to get him round and take care of him like you went before*" Instead of "the dog needs to go out, so I will take him for a walk". It is difficult to follow what the patient means. Wernicke's aphasiacs are often unaware of their mistakes and have great difficulties understanding speech.

4.3.5 Conduction Aphasia

The patient has difficulty in the connection between the speech comprehension and production areas. This may be due to damage to areas that transmit information between Werincke's areas and Broca's area. Auditory Comprehension is near normal and oral expression is fluent with occasional expression errors leaving the person with poor repetition ability.

4.3.6 Primary Progressive Aphasia

(PPA). This is described as a rare degenerative brain and nervous system disorder which makes speech and language skills decline overtime. Sufferers have problem

naming objects and misuse word endings, verb tenses, conjunctions and pronouns. PPA is a progressive type of speech loss in which the frontal and temporal lobes of the brain shrink.

The classification above could not be said to be mutually exclusive as they are bound to overlap depending on the region of the brain affected by the injury and the extent of the damage.

Aphasia Taxonomy and Characteristics

Type of Aphasia	Repetition	Naming	Auditory comprehension	Fluency
Anatomic	Mild	Moderate	Mild	Fluent
Global	Poor	Poor	Poor	Non-fluent
Broca	Mod--severe	Mod-severe	Mild-difficulty	Non-fluent, Effortful slow
Wernicke	Mild	Mild	Defective	Fluent
Conduction	Poor	Poor	Relatively good	Fluent
Primary Progressive	Moderate	Poor	Poor	Non-fluent

Fig. 11- showing Taxonomy and characteristics

Becky and Spivey (2008) argue that one should endeavour to help persons suffering from aphasia. They are intelligent and capable of learning like other normal human beings. They therefore need a lot of encouragement. You should try and assist anyone suffering from aphasia in the following ways:

- Strengthen the remaining language skills
- Find ways to compensate for the skills that are lost
- Improve memory of object names with pictures and flash cards
- Learn to interact with them through sign language
- Simplify your own language by using short, uncomplicated sentences.
- Allow aphasiacs plenty of time to think and speak.
- Avoid correcting the person's speech
- Encourage any type of communication like gestures, pointing, drawing and using signs

4.4 Language Loss and Recovery Patterns

A variety of recovery patterns in bilingual aphasia have been reported, and the diversity of possible patterns is almost unlimited. However, some form of classification and description of the most frequently encountered recovery patterns is needed to assure coherence for researchers and clinicians. Clinical studies have since shown that bilingual aphasics do not necessarily manifest the same language disorders

with the same degree of severity in both languages. Superficially, different case findings indicate instances of shared and divergent representation of components of language in the bilingual brain (Ansaldo, 2008:545).

How the polyglot or bilingual aphasic recovers various aspects and patterns of language has caused controversy. Many studies have presented individual cases, culminating in Pitres' law (1895): recovery of the most familiar language. This stated:

In acquired aphasia with a multilingual patient, recovery comes first and most completely in the language most used just before the injury, whether or not it is the patient's mother tongue (Ansaldo, 2008:545).

By contrast, according to Ribot's law concerning the recovery of the native language,

In a multilingual patient with aphasia, recovery comes first in the person's mother tongue.

However, Ribot's law was applied to the seemingly related problem of older memories in retrograde amnesia. It has been found to be true only in patients who are not truly fluent in the subsequently acquired languages. On clinical examination, public or personal events occurring in close proximity to the onset of amnesia may seem to be disproportionately impaired, and older memories may seem to be more deeply entrenched and consequently spared (Ansaldo, 2008:545).

Pitres proposed that this recovery pattern could occur only if the lesion had not destroyed language centers, but had temporarily inhibited them. He stated that the patient generally recovered the most familiar language because the neural elements subserving it were more firmly associated. But no clear evidence supports the rule being applicable to all cases.

Paradis (1998:417-430) identified six recovery patterns. Other literature however, show that there are eight recovery patterns from aphasia in bilinguals: parallel, differential, successive, antagonistic, mixed or mutual, selective, alternating and antagonistic.

4.4.1Parallel Recovery Pattern

This recovery pattern occurs when languages recover differentially relative to their premorbid levels.

4.4.2 Selective Recovery Pattern

This type of recovery pattern occurs when one language is not recovered. In blended recovery, patients inappropriately mix their languages. Nearly 30% of cases show a selective pattern of recovery (the patient did not regain one or more of his languages). Paradis cites some of the cases reported by Pitres (1895). One patient of Pitres

recovered French and Spanish, but lost the ability even to comprehend Italian. Another patient regained some of his proficiency in French but not in German, English, Spanish or Arabic, all of which he spoke fluently before the injury.

4.4.3 An antagonistic

Type of recovery pattern occurs when one language recovers to a certain extent first, but begins to regress when the other language begins to recover. The antagonistic pattern of recovery is seen to be the least common. As reported by Paradis (1987), sometimes, the first language deteriorates several times in succession, so that each language is only alternately available. Both languages may eventually recover, but the recovery of the second language may only begin after the first has recovered, which is called the **successive recovery** of one language after the other. Less often, there are mixed patterns or mutual interference between the languages seen in the process of recovery (Paradis, 1993). These patterns of recovery change over time. It remains impossible to determine the frequency of occurrence of nonparallel recoveries, since information relating to parallel recovery is not generally published. Moreover, it is often difficult to compare the various published cases with each other because of the lack of standardization of assessments, sometimes even between the two languages of the same patient. Only the administration of the Bilingual Aphasia Test makes it possible to measure with much more precision than ever before the residual language capacities of bilingual aphasic patients in each of their languages.

Whatever the characteristics of the recovered language, whether it is the first acquired, the most frequently used, or the language of the hospital environment, an important question requires an answer: Why is one language recovered and not the other? This question has given rise to three hypotheses (Paradis, 1987:34):

Each language may be represented in a different locus in the brain, and thus a circumscribed injury may concern one language and not the other, or one more than the other. There is an area in the brain that seems to act as a switch mechanism, which allows the bilingual to shift from one language to the other; an injury in this area, which is believed to be located in the supramarginal gyrus, either blocks the switch in one position and the patient can speak only one language, or causes the switch to become loose, and the patient keeps switching back and forth uncontrollably between languages.

The unrecovered language may be inhibited, rather than lost. Non-parallel recoveries are not caused by the organic destruction of physiologically specialized centers, but due to the functional disturbances, and selective injury is not caused by damage to the stored language itself, but by the incapacity to retrieve what is stored (Paradis 1993).

A possible interpretation of the first hypothesis is that, while it seems unlikely that languages would be represented in different neuroanatomical areas, it does not seem so implausible for each language to be subserved by neural circuits which are diverse, though inextricably interwoven, within the same general anatomical area. The organic injury in a given area of the brain would contribute to deficits in both languages stored within its limits; a functional disturbance would result in selective recovery when only one of the circuits is affected, in differential recovery when one is affected more than the other, in antagonistic recovery when each is alternately affected, and in parallel recovery when both circuits are equally affected. A mixed recovery, then, would be the result of a failure of inhibition/disinhibition between the two circuits (Paradis, 1987).

The second has been countered by with two types of clinical evidence – selective and mixed recoveries with no damage to the temporal-parietal area, and injuries to that region with no selective or mixed recovery. It may not be necessary to postulate an anatomically localized switch mechanism at all. The capacity to switch is not specific as far as the bilingual speaker is concerned. As stated by Paradis (1987), language switching does not even require any psychological skills peculiar to bilingualism, but is rather a skill that is equally applicable in a large number of operations in which a person asked to switch between modes of response. The third hypothesis accounts for shifting from one language to the other by the phenomenon of inhibition and disinhibition (Paradis, 1987). In accordance with the general principle that whenever a mechanism necessary for the accomplishment of a given function is activated, the antagonistic mechanism is concurrently inhibited, it is not unreasonable to suppose that when an element of the language is activated, those elements that are in direct competition with it are simultaneously inhibited. In case of the selection of a word, this entails the inhibition of all synonyms, of all the words within the same semantic field, and eventually, of all other words (Paradis, 1987).

Furthermore, in the bilingual speaker, not only must synonyms within one language be inhibited, but also their equivalents in the other language as well. A differential pattern may occur due to preference for one language over the other. As stated by Paradis (1987:15).

The progressive use of a single language may functionally enhance its network and progressively isolate it from the alternative language. Or, damage to the mechanism for choice or selection of the language, or a disconnection of the link connecting the meanings of words and the coding of language, may cause selective improvement.

Another possibility explaining differential recovery is that the control of one language is impaired if its lexico-semantic system is more impaired than that of the other language; there may be access to the meaning but an inability to select lexical concepts in the non-recovered language, causing reduced control. In order to gain a

better anatomical comprehension of how multiple languages are represented in the human brain, Roux and Trémoulet examined 12 bilingual patients who underwent surgery for brain tumours. The results of the study showed overlapping of language areas in 5 patients, whereas the remaining 7 had at least one area that was language specific and sometimes task specific. More detailed study made it possible to determine that there did indeed exist specific areas for a particular language, that is differential impairment (Paradis, 1987:13). Interestingly, Lucas found language-specific sites, as well as shared sites supporting both L1 and L2.

A bilingual patient with aphasia may experience a differential recovery due to a preference for one language over the other, which, consequently, promotes better functional neural recovery. Also, the progressive use of one language may functionally enhance its network and progressively isolate it from the alternative language, or damage the mechanism for choice or selection of the language. Similarly, the disconnection of the association between the meanings of words and the coding of language may stimulate a selective improvement. Furthermore, as suggested by Ribot, both the environment surrounding the patient and the therapist may influence immensely the process of language recovery. Paradis (1987) claims that there are two patterns of language deficit and language recovery in bilingual and multilingual aphasics determined in the literature namely, parallel and nonparallel. As for parallel recovery, both (or all) languages reveal alike deficits and recover at a similar rate. However, in case of a nonparallel pattern of recovery, one language undergoes better recovery as the language is less disturbed than the other language.

4.5 Conclusion

The human brain remains the most complex language processing and producing organ for human beings. This powerful organ is however very sensitive and complicated that any damage or injury to it may lead to language impairment with severe consequences for the patient. When such injury occurs, a disorder known as aphasia may result. We can however lessen the suffering of these people by giving them therapy session and showing a lot of understanding in our interaction with them.

4.6 Reflection

Do you think being patient with aphasics would help them recover from their language disorder?

Evaluation

1. What are the causes of aphasia?
2. Describe the different types of aphasia and their manifestations
3. Account for the various language recovery patters

4.7 Summary

In this unit, an attempt has been made to expose you to the role of the human brain in language comprehension and production. It has also been established that the human brain is a complex but delicate organ gifted of storing a wonderful amount of information. However, when an individual suffers an injury or damage to the left hemisphere responsible for language processing, they will lose the ability to speak coherently and experience speech disorders. The unit taught you about the different type of aphasia depending on the severity and extent of damage to the brain. It closes by giving you some useful tips to help people who suffer from aphasia.

UNIT 5: MEMORY

5.0 Introduction

This unit exposes you to memory and you will look at different types of memory. In the unit, you will also get to know the role for each type of memory and how memory relates to language acquisition and learning.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of unit, you should be able to:

- State what memory is
- Describe the different types of memory
- Appreciate the roles of the different types of memory
- Appreciate memory and language learning

5.1 Memory Defined

The construct of memory has been studied by researchers from a variety of fields such as psychology, education, cognitive science, and speech-language pathology. Terminology describing memory varies across fields and authors. However; thus it is necessary to provide definitions that will be used for the purpose of this course.

Memory is the faculty of the brain by which data or information is encoded, stored, and retrieved when needed. It is the retention of information over time for the purpose of influencing future action. If past events could not be remembered, it would be impossible for language, relationships, or personal identity to develop. Memory loss is usually described as forgetfulness or amnesia. Memory is also said to be the ability of the brain to record information or impressions with the facility of recalling them later at will.

Memory is often understood as an informational processing system with explicit and implicit functioning that is made up of a sensory processor, short-term (or working) memory, and long-term memory. This can be related to the neuron. The sensory processor allows information from the outside world to be sensed in the form of chemical and physical stimuli and attended to various levels of focus and intent. Working memory serves as an encoding and retrieval processor. Information in the form of stimuli is encoded in accordance with explicit or implicit functions by the working memory processor. The working memory also retrieves information from previously stored material. Finally, the function of long-term memory is to store data through various categorical models or systems.

It is important to state here that memory is not a perfect processor, and is affected by many factors. The ways by which information is encoded, stored, and retrieved can all be corrupted. The amount of attention given new stimuli can diminish the amount of

information that becomes encoded for storage. Also, the storage process can become corrupted by physical damage to areas of the brain that are associated with memory storage, such as the hippocampus. Finally, the retrieval of information from long-term memory can be disrupted because of decay within long-term memory. Normal functioning, decay over time, and brain damage all affect the accuracy and capacity of the memory.

5.2 Types of Memory

5.2.1 Sensory Memory

Sensory memory holds information, derived from the senses, less than one second after an item is perceived. The ability to look at an item and remember what it looked like with just a split second of observation, or memorization, is the example of sensory memory. It is out of cognitive control and is an automatic response. With very short presentations, participants often report that they seem to "see" more than they can actually report. The first precise experiments exploring this form of sensory memory were conducted by George Sperling (1963) using the "partial report paradigm." Subjects were presented with a grid of 12 letters, arranged into three rows of four.

After a brief presentation, subjects were then played either a high, medium or low tone, cuing them which of the rows to report. Based on these partial report experiments, Sperling was able to show that the capacity of sensory memory was approximately 12 items, but that it degraded very quickly (within a few hundred milliseconds). Because this form of memory degrades so quickly, participants would see the display but be unable to report all of the items (12 in the "whole report" procedure) before they decayed. This type of memory cannot be prolonged via rehearsal.

Three types of sensory memories exist. **Iconic memory** is a fast decaying store of visual information, a type of sensory memory that briefly stores an image that has been perceived for a small duration. **Echoic memory** is a fast decaying store of auditory information, also a sensory memory that briefly stores sounds that have been perceived for short durations. **Haptic memory** is a type of sensory memory that represents a database for touch stimuli.

5.2.2 Short-term Memory

Short-term memory is also known as **working memory**. Short-term memory allows recall for a period of several seconds to a minute without rehearsal. Its capacity, however, is very limited. In 1956, George A. Miller (1920-2012), conducted experiments showing that the store of short-term memory was 7±2 items. (Hence, the title of his famous paper, "The Magical Number 7±2.") Modern estimates of the capacity of short-term memory are lower, typically of the order of 4–5 items; however, memory capacity can be increased through a process

called ***chunking***. For example, in recalling a ten-digit telephone number, a person could chunk the digits into three groups: first, the area code (such as **0977**), then a three-digit chunk (**508**), and, last, a three-digit chunk (**566**). This method of remembering telephone numbers is far more effective than attempting to remember a string of 10 digits; this is because we are able to chunk the information into meaningful groups of numbers. This is reflected in some countries' tendencies to display telephone numbers as several chunks of two to four numbers.

Short-term memory is believed to rely mostly on an acoustic code for storing information, and to a lesser extent on a visual code. Conrad (1964 found that test subjects had more difficulty recalling collections of letters that were acoustically similar, e.g., E, P, D. Confusion with recalling acoustically similar letters rather than visually similar letters implies that the letters were encoded acoustically. Conrad's (1964) study, however, deals with the encoding of written text; thus, while memory of written language may rely on acoustic components, generalizations to all forms of memory cannot be made.

5.2.3 Long-term Memory

You will note that the storage in sensory memory and short-term memory generally has a strictly limited capacity and duration, which means that information is not retained indefinitely. By contrast, long-term memory can store much larger quantities of information for potentially unlimited duration (sometimes a whole life span). Its capacity is immeasurable. For example, given a random seven-digit number, one may remember it for only a few seconds before forgetting, suggesting it was stored in short-term memory. On the other hand, one can remember telephone numbers for many years through repetition; this information is said to be stored in long-term memory.

While short-term memory encodes information acoustically, long-term memory encodes it semantically: Baddeley (1966) discovered that, after 20 minutes, test subjects had the most difficulty recalling a collection of words that had similar meanings (e.g. big, large, great, huge) long-term. Another part of long-term memory is episodic memory, "which attempts to capture information such as 'what', 'when' and 'where'". With episodic memory, individuals are able to recall specific events such as birthday parties and weddings.

Short-term memory is supported by transient patterns of neuronal communication, dependent on regions of the frontal lobe (especially dorsolateral prefrontal cortex) and the parietal lobe. Long-term memory, on the other hand, is maintained by more stable and permanent changes in neural connections widely spread throughout the brain. The hippocampus is essential (for learning new information) to the consolidation of information from short-term to long-term memory, although it does not seem to store information itself. It was thought that without the hippocampus new memories were unable to be stored into long-term memory and that there would be a very short attention span, as first gleaned from patient Henry Molaison after what was

thought to be the full removal of both his hippocampi. More recent examination of his brain, post-mortem, shows that the hippocampus was more intact than first thought, throwing theories drawn from the initial data into question. The hippocampus may be involved in changing neural connections for a period of three months or more after the initial learning. Research has suggested that long-term memory storage in humans may be maintained by DNA methylation, and the 'prion' gene.

5.3 Other Types of Memory

There is what is called **Declarative memory** which requires conscious recall, in that some conscious process must call back the information. It is sometimes called ***explicit memory,*** since it consists of information that is explicitly stored and retrieved.

Declarative memory can be further sub-divided into ***semantic memory***, the memory which concerns principles and facts taken independent of context; and ***episodic memory***, concerning information specific to a particular context, such as a time and place. Semantic memory allows the encoding of abstract knowledge about the world, such as "Lusaka is the capital of Zambia". Episodic memory, on the other hand, is used for more personal memories, such as the sensations, emotions, and personal associations of a particular place or time. Episodic memories often reflect the "***firsts***" in life such as a ***first kiss***, first day of school or first time winning a championship. These are key events in one's life that can be remembered clearly. Research suggests that declarative memory is supported by several functions of the medial temporal lobe system which includes the hippocampus.

5.3.1 Autobiographical memory

This is the memory for particular events within one's own life – is generally viewed as either equivalent to, or a subset of, episodic memory while **Visual memory** is part of memory preserving some characteristics of our senses pertaining to visual experience. One is able to place in memory information that resembles objects, places, animals or people in sort of a mental image. Visual memory can result in priming and it is assumed some kind of perceptual representational system underlies this phenomenon.

5.4 Memory and Language Learning

Language Learning Strategies are fundamental for developing language skills because they act as tools for active, self-directed involvement. Appropriate language learning strategies result in improved proficiency and greater self-confidence in the learners. It is recently observed that there is an increasing number of language learners beginning to recognize the power of the use of strategies in the learning process. It is the role of the good teachers to conduct learning strategy training with students giving them the awareness about its benefits. They can make the training valuable by introducing its application in the regular classroom activities of language learning.

5.4.1 Memory Strategy and Language Learning

Memory strategy requires mental processing of the new information. Learning vocabulary is not an automatic and easy process, but it is an unmanageable component in any language learning process. Its varied meanings in context and pronunciation demand structured learning and review for vocabulary acquisition. The different strategies of memory make use of almost all the senses to achieve the target level of vocabulary. The memory strategies inclusive of the four strategy types suggested by Oxford (1990) are adopted by the researchers to study the impact of Memory strategy training on language learners. Creating Mental Linkages - Grouping of vocabulary under its functions, topic, similarity or dissimilarity and acronyms helps the learners retain them in memory. New information can be associated with its related field or an elaborate network can be created to increase the vocabulary store. The method of linking phrases or clauses in the context of an event in one‘s own life or a story much cherished would prove to be valuable in the learning process. Applying Images and Sounds- Vocabulary can be observed or learned consciously or unconsciously with visual and sound sources.

The strategies of using relevant pictures or visual coding, meaningful mapping of the new concept, linking the keywords with auditory effects, and combining the rhyming words help to increase the retention of the vocabulary. Reviewing Well- If the purpose of any learning to be stored in the long-term memory, it entails a systematic review. The review conducted after regular intervals leads to the familiarity of the word and the usage of the same happens automatically. Employing Action-Involvement of meaningful actions such as physical response instigating the senses and using mechanical techniques with cards, letters, words, etc., provide the kinesthetic mode of learning of language for improved acquisition of vocabulary.

5.4.2 Memory in Second Language Learning

Ellis (2001) described the types of memory used in second language learning. He proposed a Working Memory (WM) Model, in which a Supervisory Attentional System (SAS) regulates information flow within the working memory. Ellis applied a constructivist approach to second language acquisition, which holds that general processes of human inductive reasoning lead to language learning. “There is no language acquisition device specifiable in terms of linguistic universals, principles and parameters, or language-specific learning mechanisms” (Ellis, 2001).

Bates, Thal, and Marchman, as referenced by Ellis (2001), found that “learners’ language comes not directly from their genes, but rather from the structure of adult language, and from the constraints on communication inherent in expressing non-linear cognition into the linear channel provided by the human vocal-auditory apparatus”. Chunking is a major principle of human cognition. Its essence, which is bringing together a set of already formed chunks in memory and welding them

together into a larger unit, represents a fundamental associative learning process occurring in all representational systems.

5.4.3 Working Memory and Language Skills Integrated in the Classroom

Many forms of classroom communication require children to integrate auditory verbal input with visual spatial concepts. A prime example of this is the language of directions. Children's inability to follow verbal directions may be a concern of educators. In formal classroom discourse, as much as 13-15% of what the teacher says is in the form of procedural instructional language (Sturm & Nelson, 1997). In order to follow a teacher's directions, a student must understand the teacher's words and syntactic structures and retain their essence in verbal short-term or working memory while completing step-by-step procedures, often involving visual spatial representation of concepts processed through auditory verbal systems (e.g., completing art projects or turning to a particular page in a text book and completing a set of problems).

Word-level processing skills also are in high demand in curricular language tasks, particularly when literacy skills are being developed, including reading decoding and spelling single words to dictation. Assessment tasks for measuring word level skills often use non-word tasks to avoid the influence of knowledge of specific vocabulary from longterm memory. Novel words, called "non-words" or pseudo words, bear resemblance to English words but are not real words. Although vocabulary knowledge may influence the processing of non-words (Edwards, Beckman, & Munson, 2004), it is not the primary trait assessed in non-word reading and spelling tasks. Non-word spelling tasks are considered a measure of a student's ability to process the phonological and orthographic structure of words (Holmes & Quinn, 2009). In addition, however, non-word repetition tasks assess the latent trait of phonological short-term memory (Gathercole, Tiffany, Briscoe, Thorn & ALSPAC Team, 2005).

Comprehension of new material through language is a primary goal and also a primary tool of formal education. Sturm and Nelson (1997) found that 12-16% of teacher talk is used to convey content. Comprehension is clearly a language processing skill, but reading and listening comprehension both place heavy demands on working memory as well. Reading and listening comprehension require more than short-term memory for a stream of incoming words (Daneman & Merikle, 1996); students must construct meaning actively from the semantic and syntactic relationships of the words within and across sentence boundaries as they listen to spoken discourse or read written discourse. Working memory is required to support processing of current incoming language symbols while accessing recently stored information and drawing from language knowledge in longterm memory to support the construction of meaning (Ericsson & Kintsch, 1995).

5.5 Working Memory and Language Impairment

Studies have shown that working memory supports the normal development of reading and writing (Hoskyn & Swanson, 2003; Swanson & Berninger, 1995, 1996). The nature of the relationship between impaired language and limited working memory, however, is a matter of debate. Some view children's impairments in short-term or working memory as somewhat, but not completely, separate from their language problems (Cowan, 1996; Hoffman & Gillam, 2004; Towse et al., 2002). Others view working memory deficits as significant contributors to language problems, possibly underpinning the language-learning difficulties of children with specific language impairment rather than reflecting them (Archibald & Gathercole, 2006; Leonard et al., 2007; Montgomery, 2002).

Archibald and Joanisse (2009) conducted a study of 88 children ranging in age from 5 to 9 years of age in which they found support for profiles of deficits. This study was unusual because, rather than starting with a group of children with language impairments and then measuring their memory, Archibald and Joanisse started with a large group of children who were identified in a widespread study on the basis of their deficits in memory. Thus, they were able to identify groups of children who showed a pattern of either specific working memory impairments, specific language impairments, or combined. Some children's deficits were specific to language or working memory, but a subset of children had deficits in both. Archibald and Joanisse concluded that working memory and language skills may have an additive, rather than a unidirectional or causal pathway.

Archibald and Joanisse (2009) interpreted their findings to mean that working memory problems do not always cause language problems and language problems do not always cause working memory problems. The presence of a working memory problem in the verbal domain—but not the visual domain—which co-occurred in children with the most severely impaired language skills, suggests that impaired verbal working memory constrained performance in language skills. In addition, the results from their study showed specific working memory deficits to be a discrete category of impairment for a subgroup of children who demonstrated language skills that were within functional limits. Further study is needed to determine if more complex language skills, such as narration and discourse comprehension, require storage and processing demands that cannot be supported by the weaker working memory of students with a relatively specific deficit in memory, but with intact basic language skills.

5.6 Conclusion

Memory plays a significant role in all human learning and more so in language acquisition and learning.

Reflection

In your opinion, what do you think would happen to human learning without memory?

Self Assessment Exercise

1. What do you understand by the expression memory?
2. Describe the different kinds of memory learnt in this unit and their role
3. What role does memory play in second language learning?

5.9 Summary

In this unit, you have looked at memory, various kinds of memory and the different kinds of roles they play in relation to language learning, language skills and language impairment.

UNIT 6: SOCIOLINGUISTICS

6.0 Introduction

This unit introduces sociolinguistics, the second part of the course. In this unit, sociolinguistics has been discussed. The unit has further discussed micro and macro-sociolinguistics, distinguishing the two concepts. Apart from these, the unit has also looked at sociolinguistic research and the principles that go with it.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Define sociolinguistics
- Distinguish between macro and micro-sociolinguistics
- Describe the principles guiding sociolinguistics
- Comment on the scope of sociolinguistics

6.1 General Overview

The term sociolinguistics has been looked at differently by different scholars. Sociolinguistics therefore, has a number of definitions. However, each of these definitions does not fail to acknowledge that sociolinguistics has to do with language use and a society's response to it. Let us examine them.

Gumperz (1971) has observed that sociolinguistics is an attempt to find correlations between social structure and linguistic structure and to observe any changes that occur.

Chambers (2002) is even more direct: 'Sociolinguistics is the study of the social uses of language.

- The study of the relationship between language and society, of language variation, and of attitudes about language.
- A branch of anthropological linguistics that studies how language and culture are related, and how language is used in different social contexts.
- A study of the relationship between language and social factors such as class, ethnicity, age and sex.
- The study of language in social contexts.
- The study of the sociological factors involved in the use of language, including gender, race, class, etc.
- The study of stylistic and social variation of language (vernacular).
- The study of language in relation to its socio-cultural context.
- Sociolinguistics is the study of the effect of any and all aspects of society, including cultural norms, expectations, and context on the way language is used.

- The study of social and cultural effects on language.

In all these definitions, you can infer that sociolinguistics is a discipline that yokes sociology with linguistics. It is a branch of sociology and as a concept; it is concerned with how language use is a determinant of a given society's linguistic requirements. Every society has linguistic codes acceptable for communication and interaction. Sociolinguistics shows how groups in a given society are separated by certain social variables like ethnicity, religion, status, gender, level of education, age, etc. and how adherence to these variables is used to categorise individuals in social class or socio-economic classes. The social study of language is a modern linguistic paradigm because it was the modern linguists who first acknowledged and accepted that language by its nature is totally a social phenomenon. All the definitions here acknowledge that sociolinguistics has to do with language use and a society's response to it. Note that the term socio-linguistics can be traced back to a paper presented in 1949, and published three years later (Currie 1952; cf. Currie 1984). Subsequent use of the term, with and without the hyphen, is found in a number of books (e.g., Weinreich 1953) and articles.

6.2 Simple definition

Sociolinguistics is the study of the relationship between language and society; it focuses on how language is used by the individual speaker and groups of speakers in its social context.

Sociolinguistics (formal definition) "A term used to describe all areas of the study of the relationship between language and society other than those which are purely social scientific in their objectives, such as ethno methodology. Sociolinguistic research is thus work which is intended to achieve a better understanding of the nature of human language by studying language in its social context and/or to achieve a better understanding of the nature of the relationship and interaction between language and society. "Sociolinguistics includes anthropological linguistics, dialectology, and discourse analysis, ethnography of speaking, geolinguistics, language contact studies, secular linguistics, the social psychology of language and the sociology of language." Trudgill (2003:123).

6.3 Other definitions of sociolinguistics include the following

Sociolinguistics is the study between language and society. It is the study of inter relationships of language and social structure, linguistics variation and attitudes toward language. It is any set of linguistics form which pattern according to social factors. The study of sociolinguistics also focuses on the language variations that emerge in the society. For example, the way of how to speak of a group of students is different from the way of a group of bus drivers.

Sociolinguistics is the study of the effect of any and all aspects of society, including cultural norms, expectations, and context, on the way language is used.

Put simply, sociolinguistics is the study of language in social use. Its special focus is on the relationships between language and society, and its principal concerns address the form and function of linguistic variation across social groups and across the range of communicative situations in which women and men deploy their verbal repertoires. In short, Sociolinguists examine discourse as it is constructed and co-constructed, shaped and reshaped, in the interactions of everyday life, and as it reflects and creates the social realities of that life. In short, sociolinguistics studies the relationship between language and society. The terms of language and society have a variety of definitions. Wardhaugh defines language as what members of a particular group of people speak. He considers society as a group of people drawn together for a particular purpose or purposes. Language therefore, can be defined as a set of linguistic items arranged in a way determined by its speakers and governed by norms of expectations of that particular society. It is therefore clear that there is an obvious relationship between and society and this relationship is always clear.

Wardhaugh (2002) and Hudson (1980) identify four possibilities for the interaction between language and society. The following are the possibilities:

1. The social structure may either influence or determine linguistic structure or behaviour. The evidence is that the way people use language generally reflects a lot of social factors such as gender, religion, ethnic origin etc.

2. The linguistic structure and or behaviour may either influence or determine the social structure (Bernstein, 1971).

3. Linguistic structure and or behaviour and social structure influence each other (There is mutual influence between them).

4. There is absolutely no relationship between linguistic structure and social structure; that is, the two exist independently.

6.4 The Scope of Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is the descriptive study of the effect of any and all aspects of society, including cultural norms, expectations, and context, on the way language is used, and society's effect on language. It differs from sociology of language, which focuses on the effect of language on society. Sociolinguistics overlaps considerably with pragmatics and is closely related to linguistic anthropology.

6.4.1 First Generalization

The scope of sociolinguistics encompasses who says what to whom, when, where, how, and why.

6.4.2 Focus of Sociolinguistics - Second generalization

Sociolinguistics focuses on the linguistic variation of the individual speaker and the speech community (society), i.e. their use of two or more ways of saying the same thing.

6.4.3 Methods of Sociolinguistics Third generalization

Sociolinguistics makes use of scientific methods to observe and measure the individual speaker's and the speech community's (society's) linguistic variation, i.e. their use of two or more ways of saying the same thing.

6.4.4 Objective of Sociolinguistics - Fourth Generalization

The major objective of sociolinguistics is to explain how speakers' linguistic variations (i.e. their variable linguistic behaviours) are correlated with variation in the speakers' social characteristics (i.e. their variable social backgrounds).

6.5 Some theoretical Position in Sociolinguistics

In literature, we normally distinguish between micro-sociolinguistics (sociolinguistics proper) and macro-sociolinguistics (the sociology of language)

6.5.1 Micro-sociolinguistics - sociolinguistics proper

Micro-sociolinguistics is sometimes understood to be the study of linguistic variation. Some scholars argue that this area of sociolinguistics investigates the relationships between language society with a goal being a better understanding of the structure of language and how language functions in communication. Hudson (1980) says micro-linguistics is the study of language in relation to society. Coulmas (Handbook of Sociolinguistics) argues that micro-linguistics investigates how social structure influences the way people talk and how language varieties and patterns of use correlate to/with (social structure) attributes such as class, sex, and age. The focus in sociolinguistics is usually on the individual; that is how this individual chooses words or how he fits in the society.

6.5.2 Macro-sociolinguistics - Sociology of Language

Macro-sociolinguistics is sometimes referred to as the study of the impact of society upon language and language upon society. This area of sociolinguistics is interested in establishing how social structure can better be understood through the use of language. Coulmas (1997) states that the sociology of language studies what societies do with their language. It deals with broader themes of language such as:

i. Language planning
ii. Language contact

iii. Language attitudes and so on.

If you are keen at reading, you must have established that some researchers into the relationship between language and society have found it socially correct (appropriate) to try to introduce a distinction between sociolinguistics or micro-sociolinguistics and the sociology of language or macro-sociolinguistics.

In this distinction, *micro-sociolinguistics* (sociolinguistics) is concerned with investigating the relationships between language and society with the goal being that of a better understanding of the structure of language and of how languages function in communication; the equivalent goal in *macro-linguistics* (the sociology of language) is trying to discover how social structure can be better understood through the study of language, e.g., how certain linguistic features serve to characterize particular social arrangements.

Hudson (1996) has described the difference as follows: micro-sociolinguistics is 'the study of language in relation to society,' whereas the sociology of language is 'the study of society in relation to language.' The argument, in other words is that, in sociolinguistics we study language and society in order to establish as much as we can about what kind of thing language is, and in the sociology of language we reverse the direction of our interest.

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, the delimitation and interaction of speech communities.'

In short, the argument is that sociolinguistics does not simply use concepts from linguistics and sociology , but it is aimed at providing a theoretical account of how language is used in society and the choices people make in using the languages and so in sociolinguistics we aware that language is used differently by different people in different contexts. Language use, therefore, varies according to different factors. Therefore, one of the most important topics in sociolinguistics today is language variations.

6.6 Sociolinguistics Research

In terms of methodological concern, sociolinguistics brings together linguistics and scholars from different fields who in one way or another are interested in that intricate relationship between language and society. Scholars such as; educationists, psychologists, anthropologists and many others are often involved in such. Joshua Fishman, father of modern sociolinguistics argues that the main question that

sociolinguistics tries to answer is: who speaks what language, to whom, when, and to what end or for what purpose.

Note that, in general terms, sociolinguistics requires to be viewed towards data and theory. It is important to note that sociolinguistics aims at providing evidence for any observations or conclusions made on any phenomenon. Hudson argues that sociolinguistics research has or must be based on questions that can be answered in a reliable and approved scientific manner. So, we have to ask good questions and the data that bear those questions. It must also be noted that sociolinguistics is empirical and it is founded on adequate data bases and this data base is drawn from various sources which include surveys, interviews, census, experiments, and so on.

As a science, sociolinguistics sets strict standards with regard to data collection and interpretation or analysis. In other words, all sociolinguistics research is based on a sound theoretical framework. To this, Bell (1976) proposes some principles which all sociolinguistics research must follow. He says these principles are applicable to any other science. Thus bell provides the following principles as key to scientific research:

a) **The cumulative Principle**: The more that we know about language, the more we can find out about it, and we should not be surprised if our search for new knowledge takes us into new areas of study and into areas in which scholars from other disciplines are already working.

b) **The uniformation Principle:** The linguistic processes which we observe to be taking place around us are the same as those which have operated in the past, so that there can be no clean break between synchronic (i.e., descriptive and contemporary) matters and diachronic (i.e., historical) ones.

c) **The principle of convergence:** The value of new data for confirming or interpreting old findings is directly proportional to the differences in the ways in which the new data are gathered; particularly useful are linguistic data gathered through procedures needed in other areas of scientific investigation.

d) **The principle of subordinate shift**: This principle says when speakers of a non-standard variety of language speak to those they consider to be natives of the language (those who speak the standard variety) they shift in an irregular way toward or away from the standard variety.

e) **The principle of style shift:**

   There are no ‘single-style’ speakers of a language, because each individual controls and uses a variety of linguistic styles and no one speaks in exactly the same way in all circumstances. This principle states that every individual possesses several styles and no one speaks in exactly the same way always. Rather, a speaker may use different styles depending on context. Additionally, speakers often incorporate elements of multiple styles into their speech, either

consciously or subconsciously, thereby creating a new style. Style-shifting occurs in all speakers to a different degree; interlocutors regularly and consistently change their linguistic forms according to context. Style-shifting correlates strongly with the amount of attention paid to speech. According to studies conducted by Labov, this was one of the single most important factors that determined whether or not an interlocutor would make a style-shift.

f) **The principle of attention:**

'Styles' of speech can be ordered along a single dimension measured by the amount of attention speakers are giving to their speech, so that the more 'aware' they are of what they are saying, the more 'formal' the style will be.

g) **The vernacular principle:**

The style which is most regular in its structure and in its relation to the history of the language is the vernacular, that relaxed, spoken style in which the least conscious attention is being paid to speech.

h) The principle of formality:

Any systematic observation of speech defines a context in which some conscious attention will be paid to that speech, so that it will be difficult, without great ingenuity, to observe the genuine 'vernacular.'

6.7 Conclusion

The unit has introduced sociolinguistics, bringing out the concepts of micro-sociolinguistics and macro-sociolinguistics. In addition to these, the unit has also discussed the scope of sociolinguistics and the concept of sociolinguistics research and its principles.

Self Assessment Exercise

1. What is sociolinguistics?
2. Discuss the concepts of micro-sociolinguistics and macro-sociolinguistics
3. Outline the principles of sociolinguistics research

6.8 Summary

Covered in this unit are the definition of sociolinguistics, its scope, the two divisions of sociolinguistics and the principles that guide in sociolinguistics research

UNIT 7: LANGUAGES AND COMMUNITIES

7.0 Introduction

In this unit, you are being exposed to language, dialect and varieties. Discussed are criteria used to distinguish some languages from others.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Distinguish between language and dialect
- Appreciate the criteria used in distinguishing between one language and another
- Discuss the meaning of the expression variety
- Discuss regional and social dialects

7.1 Languages, Dialects, and Varieties

All languages exhibit internal variation, that is, each language exists in a number of varieties and is in one sense the sum total of those varieties. But what do we mean by variety?

Hudson (1996: 22) defines a variety of language as 'a set of linguistic items with similar distribution.'

According to Hudson, this definition also allows us 'to treat all the languages of some multilingual speaker, or community, as a single variety, since all the linguistic items concerned have a similar social distribution.' For example, Canadian English, London English, the English of football commentaries, and so on are all varieties.

A variety can therefore be something greater than a single language as well as something less, less even than something traditionally referred to as a dialect. Ferguson (1972, p. 30) offers another definition of variety:

'Any body of human speech patterns which is *sufficiently homogeneous* to be analyzed by available techniques of synchronic description and which has a sufficiently large repertory of elements and their arrangements or processes with broad enough semantic scope to function in all formal contexts of communication.'

Note the words *'sufficiently homogeneous'* in this last quotation. Complete homogeneity is not required; there is always some variation whether we consider a language as a whole, a dialect of that language, the speech of a group within that dialect, or, ultimately, each individual in that group. Such variation is a basic fact of linguistic life.

Hudson and Ferguson agree in defining variety in terms of a specific set of 'linguistic items' or 'human speech patterns' (presumably, sounds, words, grammatical features, etc.) which we can uniquely associate with some external factor (presumably, a geographical area or a social group).

Consequently, if we can identify such a unique set of items or patterns for each group in question, it might be possible to say there are such varieties as Standard English, Cockney, lower-class New York City speech, Oxford English, legalese, cocktail party talk, and so on. One important task, then, in sociolinguistics is to determine if such unique sets of items or patterns do exist. As we proceed we will encounter certain difficulties, but it is unlikely that we will easily abandon the concept of 'variety,' no matter how serious these difficulties prove to be.

Although a concept like 'variety' is difficult to define, it may still be useful in sociolinguistic work. Linguists have found such concepts as 'sound,' 'syllable,' 'word,' and 'sentence' equally difficult to define (in contrast to lay usage, in which they are just assumed to be obvious and uncontroversial).

In one sense, linguistics is all about trying to provide adequate definitions for words such as sound, syllable, word, sentence, and language. Hymes (1974, p. 123) has observed that language boundaries between groups are drawn not on the basis of the use of linguistic items alone, because attitudes and social meanings attached to those items also count.

7.2 Language and Dialect

For many people there can be no confusion at all about what language they speak. For example, they are Chinese, Japanese, or Korean and they speak Chinese, Japanese, and Korean respectively. It is as simple as that; language and ethnicity are virtually synonymous (Coulmas, 1999). A Chinese, for example, may be surprised to find that another person who appears to be Chinese does not speak Chinese. It is argued that there is a strong connection between language and ethnicity even though this may prove to be invaluable in nation-building. Many Americans seem particularly reluctant to equate language with ethnicity in their own case: although they regard English as the 'natural' language of Americans, they do not consider American to be an ethnic label. While people do usually know what language they speak, they may not always lay claim to be fully qualified speakers of that language. They may experience difficulty in deciding whether what they speak should be called a language proper or merely a dialect of some language**.** Inability to decide whether what they speak is a language or dialect is not surprising: but the question is; exactly how do you decide what is a language and what is a dialect of a language? What criteria can you possibly use to determine that, whereas variety X is a language, variety Y is only a dialect of a language? What are the essential differences between a language and a dialect?

Haugen (1966) has pointed out that language and dialect are ambiguous terms. Ordinary people use these terms quite freely in speech; for them a dialect is almost certainly no more than a local non-prestigious (therefore powerless) variety of a real language. In contrast, scholars often experience considerable difficulty in deciding whether one term should be used rather than the other in certain situations. For example, Haugen says, the terms (language and dialect) 'represent a simple dichotomy in a situation that is almost infinitely complex.' He points out that the confusion goes back to the Ancient Greeks. According to Haugen, the Greek language that we associate with Ancient Greece was actually a group of distinct local varieties (Ionic, Doric, and Attic) which descended by divergence from a common spoken source with each variety having its own literary traditions and uses, e.g., Ionic was used for works in history, Doric for choral and lyric works, and Attic for tragedy. Haugen points out that the Greek situation has provided the model for all later usages of the two terms with the resulting ambiguity.

Language can be used to refer either to a single linguistic norm or to a group of related norms, and dialect to refer to one of the norms. Haugen points out that speakers of English have tried to employ both language and dialect in a number of conflicting senses. Dialect is used both for local varieties of English, e.g., /**jɔːkʃə**/ Yorkshire dialect, and for various types of informal, lower-class, or rural speech. 'In general usage, therefore, it remains quite undefined whether such dialects are part of the "language" or not. In fact, the dialect is often thought of as standing outside the language. As a social norm, then, a dialect is a language that is excluded from polite society'. It is often equivalent to nonstandard or even substandard, when such terms are applied to language, and can connote various degrees of inferiority, with that connotation of inferiority carried over to those who speak a dialect. We can observe too that questions such as 'Which language do you speak?' or 'Which dialect do you speak?' may be answered quite differently by people who appear to speak in an identical manner.

As Gumperz (1982) has pointed out, many regions of the world provide plenty of evidence for what he calls 'a bewildering array of language and dialect divisions.' He adds that socio-historical factors play a crucial role in determining boundaries between language and dialect. Gumperz proposes that Hindi and Urdu in India, Serbian and Croatian in Yugoslavia [of that date], Fanti and Twi in West Africa, Kechwa and Aimara in Peru, are recognized as discrete languages both popularly and in law, yet they are almost identical at the level of grammar. On the other hand, the literary and colloquial forms of Arabic used in Iraq, Morocco, and Egypt, or the Welsh of North and South Wales, the local dialects of Rajasthan and Bihar in North India are grammatically quite separate, yet only one language is recognized in each case.' Gumperz has suggested some of the confusions that result from popular uses of the terms language and dialect.

To these we can add the situation in Scandinavia as further evidence. Danish, Norwegian (actually two varieties), and Swedish are recognized as different languages, yet if you speak any one of them you will experience little difficulty in communicating while travelling in Scandinavia (excluding, of course, Finland, or at least the non-Swedish-speaking parts of that country). Danish and Norwegian share much vocabulary but differ considerably in pronunciation. In contrast, there are considerable vocabulary differences between Swedish and Norwegian but they are similar in pronunciation. The situation can become even more confused. A speaker of *Cockney*, a highly restricted London variety of English, may find it difficult to communicate with natives of the Ozark Mountains in the United States. Do they therefore speak separate languages? Is there one English language spoken in Britain and another, American, spoken in the New World?

We undoubtedly agree that [this book is written] I am speaking in English and that English is a language, but we may be less certain that various other things we see written or hear spoken in what is called English should properly be regarded as English rather than as dialects or varieties of English, perhaps variously described as Zambian English, Indian English, Australian English, New York English, West Country English, African American Vernacular English, nonstandard English, BBC English, and so on.

A language then would be some unitary system of linguistic communication which subsumes a number of mutually intelligible varieties. It would therefore be bigger than a single dialect or a single variety. However, that cannot always be the case, for some such systems used by very small numbers of speakers may have very little internal variation. Yet each of these must be a language, for it is quite unlike any other existing system. Actually, neither the requirement that there be internal variation nor the 'numbers game,' i.e., that a language must somehow be 'bigger' than a dialect, offers much help. Many languages have only a handful of speakers; several have actually been known to have had only a single remaining speaker at a particular point in time and the language has 'died' with that speaker.

Still another difficulty arises from the fact that the terms language and dialect are also used in an historical sense. It is possible to speak of languages such as English, German, French, Russian, and Hindi as Indo-European dialects. In this case the assumption is that there was once a single language, Indo-European, that the speakers of that language (which may have had various dialects) spread to different parts of the world, and that the original language eventually diverged into the various languages we subsume today under the Indo-European family of languages. However, we should also be aware that this process of divergence was not as clean-cut as this classical neo-grammarian model of language differentiation suggests.

Perhaps some of the difficulties we have with trying to define the term language arise from trying to subsume various different types of systems of communication under

that one label. An alternative approach might be to acknowledge the fact that there are different kinds of languages and attempt to discover how languages can differ from one another yet still be entities that most of us would want to call languages rather than dialects. It might then be possible to define a dialect as some sub-variety of one or more of these entities. One such attempt has been made by Bell, (1976) who has listed seven criteria that may be useful in discussing different kinds of languages.

7.3 Criteria used to distinguish certain languages from others

According to Bell, such criteria as (**standardization, vitality, historicity, autonomy, reduction, mixture, and de facto norms**) may be used to distinguish certain languages from others. These criteria also make it possible to **s**peak of some languages as being more 'developed' in certain ways than others, thus addressing a key issue in the language–dialect distinction, since speakers usually feel that languages are generally 'better' than dialects in some sense.

7.3.1 Standardization

Standardization refers to the process by which a language has been codified in some way. That process usually involves the systematic development of such things as grammars, spelling books, and dictionaries, and possibly a literature. We can often associate specific items or events with standardization, e.g., Wycliffe's and Luther's translations of the Bible into English and German. Standardization also requires that a measure of agreement be achieved about what is in the language and what is not. Once we have such a codification of the language we tend to see it as almost inevitable, the result of some process come to fruition, one that has also reached a fixed end point. Milroy (2001) characterizes the resulting ideology as follows: 'The canonical form of the language is a precious inheritance that has been built up over the generations, not by the millions of native speakers, but by a select few who have lavished loving care upon it, polishing, refining, and enriching it until it has become a fine instrument of expression (often these are thought to be literary figures, such as Shakespeare).

This is a view held by people in many walks of life, including plumbers, politicians and professors of literature. It is believed that if the canonical variety is not universally supported and protected, the language will inevitably decline and decay.' Once a language is standardized it becomes possible to teach it in a deliberate manner. It takes on ideological dimensions – social, cultural, and sometimes political – beyond the purely linguistic ones.

In Fairclough's words (2001:47) it becomes 'part of a much wider process of economic, political and cultural unification . . . of great . . . importance in the establishment of nationhood, and the nation-state is the favoured form of capitalism.' According to these criteria, both English and French are quite obviously standardized,

Italian somewhat less so, and the variety known as African American Vernacular English not at all.

Haugen (1966) has indicated certain steps that must be followed if one variety of a language is to become the standard for that language. In addition to what he calls the 'formal' matters of codification and elaboration, the former referring to the development of such things as grammars and dictionaries and the latter referring to the use of the standard in such areas as literature, the courts, education, administration, and commerce, Haugen says there are important matters to do with 'function.' For example, a norm must be selected and accepted because neither codification nor elaboration is likely to proceed very far if the community cannot agree on some kind of model to act as a norm. That norm is also likely to be – or to become – an idealized norm, one that users of the language are asked to aspire to rather than one that actually accords with their observed behaviour.

Selection of the norm may prove difficult because choosing one vernacular as a norm means favouring those who speak that variety. It also diminishes all the other varieties and possible competing norms, and those who use those varieties. The chosen norm inevitably becomes associated with power and the rejected alternatives with lack of power. Not surprisingly, it usually happens that a variety associated with an elite is chosen.

Attitudes are all-important, however. A group that feels intense solidarity may be willing to overcome great linguistic differences in establishing a norm, whereas one that does not have this feeling may be unable to overcome relatively small differences and be unable to agree on a single variety and norm. Serbs and Croats were never able to agree on a norm, particularly as other differences reinforced linguistic ones.

In contrast, we can see how Indonesia and Malaysia are looking for ways to reduce the differences between their languages, with their common Islamic bond a strong incentive. The standardization process itself performs a variety of functions (Mathiot and Garvin, 1975). It unifies individuals and groups within a larger community while at the same time separating the community that results from other communities. Therefore, it can be employed to reflect and symbolize some kind of identity: regional, social, ethnic, or religious. A standardized variety can also be used to give prestige to speakers, marking off those who employ it from those who do not, i.e., those who continue to speak a nonstandard variety. It can therefore serve as a kind of goal for those who have somewhat different norms; Standard English and Standard French are such goals for many whose norms are dialects of these languages.

However, as we will see (particularly in chapters 6 – 8), these goals are not always pursued and may even be resisted. It still may not be at all easy for us to define Standard English because of a failure to agree about the norm or norms that should apply. For example, Trudgill (1995, pp. 5–6) defines Standard English as follows (note his use of 'usually' and 'normally' in this definition):

> Standard English is that variety of English which is usually used in print, and which is normally taught in schools and to non-native speakers learning the language. It is also the variety which is normally spoken by educated people and used in news broadcasts and other similar situations. The difference between standard and nonstandard, it should be noted, has nothing in principle to do with differences between formal and colloquial language, or with concepts such as 'bad language.' Standard English has colloquial as well as formal variants, and Standard English speakers swear as much as others.

Governments sometimes very deliberately involve themselves in the standardization process by establishing official bodies of one kind or another to regulate language matters or to encourage changes felt to be desirable. Standardization is sometimes deliberately undertaken quite rapidly for political reasons. In the nineteenth century Finns developed their spoken language to make it serve a complete set of functions. They needed a standardized language to assert their independence from both Swedes and Russians. They succeeded in their task so that now the Finnish language has become a strong force in the nation's political life and a strong marker of Finnish identity among Germanic tongues on the one side and Slavic tongues on the other hand. The standardization process occasionally results in some languages actually achieving more than one standardized variety. Norwegian is a good example with its two standards, Nynorsk and Bokmål. In this case there is a special problem, that of trying to unify the two varieties in a way that pleases everyone. Some kind of unification or amalgamation is now official government policy.

Countries with two or more competing languages that cannot possibly be unified may tear themselves apart, as we saw in Yugoslavia, or periodically seem to come very close to doing that, as with Belgium and Canada. Standardization is also an ongoing matter, for only 'dead' languages like Latin and Classical Greek are standardized for all time. Living languages change and the standardization process is necessarily an ongoing one. It is also one that may be described as more advanced in languages like French or German and less advanced in languages like Bahasa Indonesia and Swahili.

7.3.2 Vitality

Vitality, the second of Bell's seven criteria, refers to the existence of a living community of speakers. This criterion can be used to distinguish languages that are '**alive**' from those that are '**dead.**' Once a language dies it is gone for all time and not even the so-called revival of Hebrew contradicts that assertion. Many languages, while not dead yet, nevertheless, are palpably dying: the number of people who speak them diminishes drastically each year and the process seems irreversible, so that the best one can say of their vitality is that it is flagging. For example, the French dialects spoken in the Channel Islands of Jersey, Guernsey, and Sark are rapidly on their way to extinction.

We should note that a language can remain a considerable force even after it is dead, that is, even after it is no longer spoken as anyone's first language and exists almost exclusively in one or more written forms, knowledge of which is acquired only through formal education. Classical Greek and Latin still have considerable prestige in the Western world, and speakers of many modern languages continue to draw on them in a variety of ways.

7.3.3 Historicity

Historicity refers to the fact that a particular group of people finds a sense of identity through using a particular language: it belongs to them. Social, political, religious, or ethnic ties may also be important for the group, but the bond provided by a common language may prove to be the strongest tie of all. In the nineteenth century a German nation was unified around the German language just as in the previous century Russians had unified around a revitalized Russian language. Historicity can be long-standing: speakers of the different varieties of colloquial Arabic make much of a common linguistic ancestry, as obviously do speakers of Chinese. It can also, as with Hebrew, be appealed to as a unifying force among a threatened people.

7.3.4 Autonomy

Autonomy is an interesting concept because it is really one of feeling. A language must be felt by its speakers to be different from other languages. However, this is a very subjective criterion. Ukrainians say their language is quite different from Russian and deplored its Russification when they were part of the Soviet Union. Some speakers of African American Vernacular English maintain that their language is not a variety of English but is a separate language in its own right and refer to it as Ebonics. In contrast, speakers of Cantonese and Mandarin deny that they speak different languages: they maintain that Cantonese and Mandarin are not autonomous languages but are just two dialects of Chinese. As we will see later, **creole and pidgin** languages cause us not a few problems when we try to apply this criterion: how autonomous are such languages?

7.3.5 Reduction

Reduction refers to the fact that a particular variety may be regarded as a sub-variety rather than as an independent entity. Speakers of Cockney will almost certainly say that they speak a variety of English, admit that they are not representative speakers of English, and recognize the existence of other varieties with equivalent subordinate status. Sometimes the reduction is in the kinds of opportunities afforded to users of the variety. For example, there may be a reduction of resources; that is, the variety may lack a writing system. Or there may be considerable restrictions in use; e.g., pidgin languages are very much reduced in the functions they serve in society in contrast to standardized languages especially in multilingual societies.

7.3.6 Mixture

Mixture refers to feelings speakers have about the 'purity' of the variety they speak. This criterion appears to be more important to speakers of some languages than of others, e.g., more important to speakers of French and German than to speakers of English. However, it partly explains why speakers of pidgins and creoles have difficulty in classifying what they speak as full languages: these varieties are, in certain respects, quite obviously 'mixed,' and the people who speak them often feel that the varieties are neither one thing nor another, but rather are debased, deficient, degenerate, or marginal varieties of some other standard language.

7.3.8 de facto norms

Finally, having de facto norms refers to the feeling that many speakers have that there are both 'good' speakers and 'poor' speakers and that the good speakers represent the norms of proper usage. Sometimes this means focusing on one particular sub-variety as representing the 'best' usage, **e.g., Parisian French or the Florentine variety of Italian**. Standards must not only be established (by the first criterion above), they must also be observed. When all the speakers of a language feel that it is badly spoken or badly written almost everywhere, that language may have considerable difficulty in surviving; in fact, such a feeling is often associated with a language that is dying. Concern with the norms of linguistic behaviour, 'linguistic purism' (see Thomas, 1991), may become very important among specific segments of society. For example, so far as English is concerned, there is a very profitable industry devoted to telling people how they should behave linguistically, what it is 'correct' to say, what to avoid saying, and so on (see Baron, 1982, Cameron, 1995, and Wardhaugh, 1999). It is important to note that people's feelings about norms have important consequences for an understanding of both variation and change in language.

If we apply the above criteria to the different varieties of speech we observe in the world, we will see that not every variety we may want to call a language has the same status as every other variety. English is a language, but so are Dogrib, Haitian Creole, Ukrainian, Latin, Tok Pisin, and Chinese. Each satisfies a different sub-set of criteria from our list. Although there are important differences among them, we would be loath to deny that any one of them is a language. They are all equals as languages, but that does not necessarily mean that all languages are equal! The first is a linguistic judgment, the second a social one. As we have just seen, trying to decide whether something is or is not a language or in what ways languages are alike and different can be quite troublesome. However, we usually experience fewer problems of the same kind with regard to dialects. There is usually little controversy over the fact that they are either regional or social varieties of something that is widely acknowledged to be a language. That is true even of the relationship of Cantonese and Mandarin to Chinese if the latter is given a 'generous' interpretation as a language. Some people

are also aware that the standard variety of any language is actually only the preferred dialect of that language:

It is the variety that has been chosen for some reason, perhaps political, social, religious, or economic, or some combination of reasons, to serve as either the model or norm for other varieties. It is the empowered variety. As a result, the standard is often not called a dialect at all, but is regarded as the language itself. It takes on an ideological dimension and becomes the 'right' and 'proper' language of the group of people, the very expression of their being. One consequence is that all other varieties become related to that standard and are regarded as dialects of that standard with none of the power of that standard. Of course, this process usually involves a complete restructuring of the historical facts.

We see a good instance of this process in Modern English. The new standard is based on the dialect of the area surrounding London, which was just one of several dialects of Old English, and not the most important for both the western and northern dialects were once at least equally as important. However, in the modern period, having provided the base for Standard English, this dialect exerts a strong influence over all the other dialects of England so that it is not just first among equals but rather represents the modern language itself to the extent that the varieties spoken in the west and north are generally regarded as its local variants. Historically, these varieties arise from different sources, but now they are viewed only in relation to the standardized variety.

A final comment seems called for with regard to the terms language and dialect. A dialect is a subordinate variety of a language. The language name (i.e., English or German) is the superordinate term. We can also say of some languages that they contain more than one dialect; e.g., English, French, and Italian are spoken in various dialects. If a language is spoken by so few people, or so uniformly, that it has only one variety, we might be tempted to say that language and dialect become synonymous in such a case. However, another view is that it is inappropriate to use dialect in such a situation because the requirement of subordination is not met. Consequently, to say that we have dialect A of language X must imply also the existence of dialect B of language X, but to say we have language Y is to make no claim about the number of dialect varieties in which it exists: it may exist in only a single variety, or it may have two (or more) subordinate dialects: dialects A, B, and so on.

Finally, two other terms are important in connection with some of the issues discussed above: ***vernacular*** and ***koiné***. Petyt (1980) defines vernacular as 'the speech of a particular country or region,' or, more technically, 'a form of speech transmitted from parent to child as a primary medium of communication.' If that form of speech is Standard English, then Standard English is the vernacular for that particular child; if it is a regional dialect, then that dialect is the child's vernacular. A koiné is 'a form of

speech shared by people of different vernaculars – though for some of them the koiné itself may be their vernacular.' A koiné is a common language, but not necessarily a standard one.

7.4 Regional Dialects

Regional variation in the way a language is spoken is likely to provide one of the easiest ways of observing variety in language. As you travel throughout a wide geographical area in which a language is spoken, and particularly if that language has been spoken in that area for many hundreds of years, you are almost certain to notice differences in pronunciation, in the choices and forms of words, and in syntax. There may even be very distinctive local colourings in the language which you notice as you move from one location to another. Such distinctive varieties are usually called regional dialects of the language. As we saw earlier, the term dialect is sometimes used only if there is a strong tradition of writing in the local variety. Old English and to a lesser extent Middle English had dialects in this sense. In the absence of such a tradition of writing the term patois may be used to describe the variety. However, many linguists writing in English tend to use dialect to describe both situations and rarely, if at all, use patois as a scientific term.

Note that there are some further interesting differences in the use of the terms dialect and patois (Petyt, 1980, pp. 24–5). Patois is usually used to describe only rural forms of speech; we may talk about an urban dialect, but to talk about an urban patois seems strange. Patois also seems to refer only to the speech of the lower strata in society; again, we may talk about a middle-class dialect but not, apparently, about a middle-class patois. Finally, a dialect usually has a wider geographical distribution than a patois, so that, whereas regional dialect and village patois seem unobjectionable, the same cannot be said for regional patois and village dialect.

This use of the term dialect to differentiate among regional varieties of specific languages is perhaps more readily applicable to contemporary conditions in Europe and some other developed countries than it would have been in medieval or Renaissance Europe or today in certain other parts of the world, where it was (and still is) possible to travel long distances and, by making only small changes in speech from location to location, continue to communicate with the inhabitants.

It is possible to conclude that the traveller 'perceives phonological distance indirectly' and that there are or would be 'unsharp borders between dialect areas'. Such a situation is often referred to as a dialect continuum. What you have is a continuum of dialects sequentially arranged over space: A, B, C, D, and so on. Over large distances the dialects at each end of the continuum may well be mutually unintelligible, and also some of the intermediate dialects may be unintelligible with one or both ends, or even with certain other intermediate ones. In such a distribution, which dialects can be classified together under one language, and how many such languages are there?

The hardening of political boundaries in the modern world as a result of the growth of states, particularly nation-states rather than multinational or multi-ethnic states, has led to the hardening of language boundaries.

Various pressures – political, social, cultural, and educational – serve to harden current state boundaries and to make the linguistic differences among states more, not less, pronounced. Dialects continue therefore to disappear as national languages arise. They are subject to two kinds of pressure: one from within, to conform to a national standard and one from without, to become different from standards elsewhere. When a language is recognized as being spoken in different varieties, the issue becomes one of deciding how many varieties and how to classify each variety.

Dialect geography is the term used to describe attempts made to map the distributions of various linguistic features so as to show their geographical provenance. For example, in seeking to determine features of the dialects of English and to show their distributions, dialect geographers try to find answers to questions such as the following. Is this an received-pronouncing area of English, as in words like car and cart, or is it not? What past tense form of drink do speakers prefer? What names do people give to particular objects in the environment, e.g., elevator or lift, petrol or gas, carousel or roundabout? Sometimes maps are drawn to show actual boundaries around such features, boundaries called isoglosses, so as to distinguish an area in which a certain feature is found from areas in which it is absent. When several such isoglosses coincide, the result is sometimes called a dialect boundary. Then we may be tempted to say that speakers on one side of that boundary speak one dialect and speakers on the other side speak a different dialect.

Finally, the term dialect, particularly when it is used in reference to regional variation, should not be confused with the term accent. Standard English, for example, is spoken in a variety of accents, often with clear regional and social associations: there are accents associated with North America, Singapore, India, Liverpool (Scouse), Tyneside (Geordie), Boston, New York, and so on.

7.5 Social Dialects

The term dialect can also be used to describe differences in speech associated with various social groups or classes. There are social dialects as well as regional ones. An immediate problem is that of defining social group giving proper weight to the various factors that can be used to determine social position, e.g., occupation, place of residence, education, ‘new’ versus ‘old’ money, income, racial or ethnic origin, cultural background, caste, religion, and so on. Such factors as these do appear to be related fairly directly to how people speak. There is a British ‘public-school’ dialect, and there is an ‘African American Vernacular English’ dialect found in cities such as New York, Detroit, and Buffalo. Labov and Trudgill argue that social dialects can indeed be described systematically. Whereas regional dialects are geographically

based, social dialects originate among social groups and are related to a variety of factors, the principal ones apparently being social class, religion, and ethnicity.

Conclusion

Language, dialect and variety have been looked at in this unit. Tangential to these, social and regional dialects have been discussed.

Self Assessment Exercise

1. State the difference between language and dialect
2. Comment on the criteria to distinguish between one language from another
3. What is the difference between social and regional dialect?

Summary

This unit has endeavoured to discuss language, dialect and variety. Criteria to distinguish one language from another have also been discussed. In addition to these, regional and social dialects have been discussed.

UNIT 8: MAJOR AND MINORITY LANGUAGES

8.0 Introduction

In this unit of the module, you are introduced to major and minor languages and what features distinguish them. The unit has also looked at marginalised languages, comparing them to major languages. Register, style, beliefs, pidgins and creoles have also been discussed in the unit.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Distinguish between major and minority languages
- Discuss marginalised languages in light of minority languages
- Appreciate the emergence of pidgins and creoles
- Identify features that distinguish major and minority languages
- Describe ecological factors that affect languages

8.1 Majority Language

A majority language is the language that is usually spoken by a majority of the population in a country or in a region of a country. In a multilingual society, the majority language is generally considered the high-status language. It is also called the *dominant language* or *killer language*, in contrast with *minority language*.

As Dr. Lenore Grenoble points out in the *Concise Encyclopedia of Languages of the World* (2009), "The respective terms 'majority' and 'minority' for Languages A and B are not always accurate; speakers of Language B may be numerically greater but in a disadvantaged social or economic position which makes the use of the language of wider communication attractive."

8.2 Minority language

A minority language on the other hand is a language spoken by a minority of the population of a territory. Such people are termed linguistic minorities or language minorities. With a total number of 196 sovereign states recognized internationally (as of 2019) and an estimated number of roughly 5,000 to 7,000 languages spoken worldwide, the vast majority of languages are minority languages in every country in which they are spoken. Some minority languages are simultaneously also official languages, such as Irish in Ireland or the numerous indigenous languages of Bolivia. Likewise, some national languages are often considered minority languages, insofar as they are the national language of a stateless nation.

8.3 The distinction between major and minor languages

It is very difficult to use the terms major and minor clearly because their definitions are not clear. The use of these terms may produce emotional reactions. Kangas and Phillipson (1990) give characters/ groups which can be regarded as minor languages by giving their characteristics. The following are the characteristics used:

1) A minority group lacks dominance. It does not dominate another group.

2) Minority groups possess ethnic, religious and cultural attributes that are different from those of others.

3) Minority groups have a desire to maintain their languages and cultural identity.

Looking at the three (3) foregoing parameters, Kangas defines a minor language as a group which is smaller in number than the rest of the population, whose members have ethnic, religious and linguistic features that are different from those of the rest of the population and are guided, if not implicitly, by the will to safe guard the culture, traditions or language.

Scholars argue that distinguishing between minority groups and major languages depends on a variety of social, political, economic, historical and other factors. Bambogse argues that the distinction between these two notions (major and minor languages) is usually arbitrary. Further, the classification of language as of a language as major or minor depends on the environment in which that language or group exists. For example, what may be a major language in one environment may be a minor language in another.

8.3.1 Some features used to distinguish major and minor languages

1) **Number of speakers:**

   A major language has more speakers than a minor language. Adegbija (1994) argues that a language is often considered small or big (major or minor) in relation to other languages with which it has to keep in company. Speaker number, when considered large in a particular context tends to confer power on languages. Conversely, smallness of speaker numbers without favourable ecological factors places a language and its speakers in disadvantaged position. These labels, major and minor have a lot to do between the languages and the speakers concerned.

2) **Ecological factors:**

   The ecology of a language is a set of factors that relate to the interaction between the language and the physical environment. The ecology of language

points to the historical, social, psychological and other factors that may have been part of a language's diachronic and synchronic character.

8.4 Some ecological factors that affect a language

- The relationship between a language and other languages

- The classification of a given language. It must be noted that languages belong to families. e.g. English belongs to the Indo-European family. Within these families, there are further classifications.
- The identification of varieties of language as well as their sociolinguistic significance.
- The amount and nature of its institutional support. Does government support the publication of literature in this language? Is it used in education? In what other domains is the language used?
- Level of standardisation: to what extent has the language been codified?
- Attitudes of speakers toward the language as well as other languages.
- The range of domains in which the language is used and the functions it performs.

8.5 Minority, Marginalised and Major language

A minority language is that language whose speakers have little influence in national right because they are being denied their right. Minority languages can be seen as marginalised languages.

In a key note speech given by a linguistic associate of SADC universities, Kashoki used minority/marginalised languages to refer to languages within the boundaries of the nation which were in a disadvantaged position as a result of being dominated either numerically, or in other words by more numerous segments of the nation's population. These may include those marginalise due to prevailing policies.

The final report of the language Task Force in South Africa in 1996 distinguishes minority from both major and marginalised languages. It defines major language as the language of the most powerful group in an area or nation. The report further argues that such a language need not be spoken by the majority of the population. A majority language has a feature of power whether the number of speakers is big or not. A minority language is devoid of power and numbers.

The language planning Task Force defines a minority language as a language whose speakers form the minority within the country. The task force defines minority language as devoid of quantum/number.

And marginalised language is defined as a language considered to be official but which in practice is excluded from official use or whose use in certain forum, function or domains is discouraged.

8.6 Styles, Registers, and Beliefs

The study of dialects is further complicated by the fact that speakers can adopt different styles of speaking. You can speak very formally or very informally, your choice being governed by circumstances. So, the way you choose to speak is referred to as style. Ceremonial occasions almost invariably require very formal speech, public lectures somewhat less formal, casual conversation quite informal, and conversations between intimates on matters of little importance may be extremely informal and casual.

We may try to relate the level of formality chosen to a variety of factors: the kind of occasion; the various social, age, and other differences that exist between the participants; the particular task that is involved, e.g., writing or speaking; the emotional involvement of one or more of the participants; and so on.

We appreciate that such distinctions exist when we recognize the stylistic appropriateness of ***What do you intend to do, your majesty?*** and the inappropriateness of ***Waddya intend doin', Biemba?*** While it may be difficult to characterize discrete levels of formality, it is nevertheless possible to show that native speakers of all languages control a range of stylistic varieties. It is also quite possible to predict with considerable confidence the stylistic features that a native speaker will tend to employ on certain occasions.

8.6.1 Register

Register is another complicating factor in any study of language varieties. Registers are sets of language items associated with discrete occupational or social groups. Surgeons, airline pilots, bank managers, sales clerks, jazz fans, and pimps employ different registers. As Ferguson (1994, p. 20) says, 'People participating in recurrent communication situations tend to develop similar vocabularies, similar features of intonation, and characteristic bits of syntax and phonology that they use in these situations.' This kind of variety is a register. Ferguson adds that its 'special terms for recurrent objects and events, and formulaic sequences or "routines," seem to facilitate speedy communication; other features apparently serve to mark the register, establish feelings of rapport, and serve other purposes similar to the accommodation that influences dialect formation.

There is no mistaking the strong tendency for individuals and co-communicators to develop register variation along many dimensions.' Of course, one person may control a variety of registers: you can be a stockbroker and an archaeologist, or a mountain climber and an economist. Each register helps you to express your identity

at a specific time or place, i.e., how you seek to present yourself to others. Hudson (1996, p. 46) says 'your dialect shows who (or what) you are, whilst your register shows what you are doing.' He acknowledges that 'these concepts are much less distinct.

8.6.2 Beliefs

Many people hold strong beliefs on various issues having to do with language and are quite willing to offer their judgments on issues. They believe such things as certain languages lack grammar, that you can speak English without an accent, that French is more logical than English, that parents teach their children to speak, that primitive languages exist, that English is degenerating and language standards are slipping, that pronunciation should be based on spelling, and so on and so on. Much discussion of language matters in the media concerns such 'issues' and there are periodic attempts to 'clean up' various bits and pieces, attempts that Cameron (1995) calls 'verbal hygiene.' Most linguists studiously avoid getting involved in such issues having witnessed the failure of various attempts to influence received opinions on such matters. It must be noted that 'Linguists . . . know that many popular beliefs about language are false and that much we are taught about language is misdirected. They also know how difficult it is to effect change.' Language beliefs are well entrenched as are language attitudes and language behaviours. Sociolinguists should strive for an understanding of all three because all affect how people behave toward others.

8.7 Pidgins and Creoles

If you are keen, you must have noted that among the many languages of the world are a few often assigned to a somewhat marginal position: the various lingua francas, 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,' e.g., 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!) He points out that pidgins and creoles 'are marginal, in the circumstances of their origin, and in the attitudes towards them on the part of those who speak one of the languages from which they derive.' They are also marginal 'in

terms of knowledge about them,' even though 'these languages are of central importance to our understanding of language, and central too in the lives of some millions of people.

Because of their origins, however, their association with poorer and darker members of a society, and through perpetuation of misleading stereotypes . . . most interest, even where positive, has considered them merely curiosities.' He adds that much 'interest and information, scholarly as well as public, has been prejudicial. These languages have been considered, not creative adaptations, but degenerations; not systems in their own right, but deviations from other systems. Their origins have been explained, not by historical and social forces, but by inherent ignorance, indolence, and inferiority.' As languages of those without political and social power, literatures, and 'culture,' they could be safely and properly ignored.

8.7.1 Pidgin

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, i.e., 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, pp. 4–5) 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.'

> Pidgin has also been defined as a trade language that arises when people speaking different languages come into contact for purposes of trade and other economic activities. It is during such times that they create a code to facilitate that activity. Such a code is not a developed language. It has no grammar but just a mixture of words. We call this pidgin. Pidgin is never acquired as first language.

The process of pidginization probably requires a situation that involves at least three languages (Whinnom, 1971), one of which is clearly dominant over the others. If only two languages are involved, there is likely to be a direct struggle for dominance, as between English and French in England after 1066, a struggle won in that case by the

socially inferior language but only after more than two centuries of co-existence. When three or more languages are involved and one is dominant, the speakers of the two or more that are inferior appear to play a critical role in the development of a pidgin. They must not only speak to those who are in the dominant position, but they must also speak to each other. To do this, they must simplify the dominant language in certain ways, and this process of simplification may or may not have certain universal characteristics.

We may argue, therefore, that a pidgin arises from the simplification of a language when that language comes to dominate groups of speakers separated from each other by language differences. This hypothesis partially explains not only the origin of pidgins in slave societies, in which the slaves were deliberately drawn from a variety of language backgrounds, but also their origin on sea coasts, where a variety of languages might be spoken but the language of trade is a pidgin. It also helps to explain why pidginized varieties of languages are used much more as lingua francas by people who cannot speak the corresponding standard languages than they are used between such people and speakers of the standard varieties.

A common view of a pidginized variety of a language, for example, Nigerian Pidgin English, is that it is some kind of 'bad' English, that is, English imperfectly learned and therefore of no possible interest. Consequently, those who speak a pidgin are likely to be regarded as deficient in some way, almost certainly socially and culturally, and sometimes even cognitively. Such a view is quite untenable. Pidgins are not a kind of 'baby-talk' used among adults because the simplified forms are the best that such people can manage. Pidgins have their own special rules, and, as we will see, very different pidgins have a number of similarities that raise important theoretical issues having to do with their origin.

8.7.2 Creole

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, p. 3177) says, 'creoles arise when pidgins become mother tongues.' A creole, therefore, is a 'normal' language in almost every sense. Holmes (1992, p. 95) says that '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.' Put simply, a creole is a a pidgin that has matured to a level where is now spoken as the first language by a given community. 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.

Just like a pidgin, a creole has no simple relationship to the usually standardized language with which it is associated.

We can see that they are almost diametrically opposed to each other in certain important ways. Pidginization generally involves some kind of 'simplification' of a language, e.g., reduction in morphology (word structure) and syntax (grammatical structure), tolerance of considerable phonological variation (pronunciation), reduction in the number of functions for which the pidgin is used (e.g., you usually do not attempt to write novels in a pidgin), and extensive borrowing of words from local mother tongues. Winford (2003, p. 302) points out that 'pidginization is really a complex combination of different processes of change, including reduction and simplification of input materials, internal innovation, and regularization of structure, with L1 influence also playing a role.' On the other hand, creolization involves expansion of the morphology and syntax, regularization of the phonology, deliberate increase in the number of functions in which the language is used, and development of a rational and stable system for increasing vocabulary.

8.7.3 Distribution and Characteristics

Pidgin and creole languages are distributed mainly, though not exclusively, in the equatorial belt around the world, usually in places with direct or easy access to the oceans. Consequently, they are found mainly in the Caribbean and around the north and east coasts of South America, around the coasts of Africa, particularly the west coast, and across the Indian and Pacific Oceans. They are fairly uncommon in the more extreme northern and southern areas of the world and in the interiors of continents. Their distribution appears to be fairly closely related to long-standing patterns of trade, including trade in slaves.

In describing the linguistic ***characteristics*** of a pidgin or creole it is difficult to resist the temptation to compare it with the standard language with which it is associated. Each pidgin or creole is a well-organized linguistic system and must be treated as such: you cannot speak Tok Pisin by just 'simplifying' English quite arbitrarily: you will be virtually incomprehensible to those who actually do speak it, nor will you comprehend them.

The sounds of a pidgin or creole are likely to be fewer and less complicated in their possible arrangements than those of the corresponding standard language. While the numbers of sounds used in pidgins and creoles may be smaller than in the corresponding standard languages, they also tend to 'vary' more as to their precise quality.

One additional point is worth stressing. A language like English often has complicated phonological relationships between words (or morphemes, the small bits of meaning in words) that are closely related, e.g., the first vowel in type and typical, the c in space and spacious, and the different sounds of the 'plural' ending in cats,

dogs, and boxes. The technical term for this is morphophonemic variation. Such variation is not found in pidgins, but the development of such variation may be one characteristic of creolization, the process by which a pidgin becomes a creole.

In pidgins and creoles there is likely to be a complete lack of inflection in nouns, pronouns, verbs, and adjectives. Nouns are not marked for number and gender, and verbs lack tense markers. Transitive verbs, that is, verbs that take objects, may, however, be distinguished from intransitive verbs. In short, there is such a complete reduction of inflection in pidgins. Pidgins do comfortably without inflections, but it is not surprising that some people view their absence as a sign of deficiency and inferiority in both languages and speakers in much the same way as they view acquisition of a set which is dispreferred.

Syntactically, sentences are likely to be uncomplicated in clausal structure. The development of embedded clauses, e.g., of relative clauses, is one characteristic of the process of creolization: pidgins do not have such embedding. The use of particles, that is, usually small isolated words, is also quite frequent. Negation may be achieved through use of a simple negative particle no in the English-based.

The vocabulary of a pidgin or a creole has a great many similarities to that of the standard language with which it is associated. However, it will be much more limited, and phonological and morphological simplification often leads to words assuming somewhat different shapes.

8.7.4 Origins

Linguists who have studied pidgins and creoles have long been intrigued by the similarities they have found among them. Pidgins from very different parts of the world exhibit remarkable similarities in structure even when the standard languages with which they are associated are quite different. Furthermore, pidgins and creoles based on the same standard language but found in places far distant from one another may have a high degree of mutual intelligibility, e.g., the various pidginized and creolized varieties of French found geographically as far apart as the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean, and the South Pacific. How can we account for these similarities?

One theory about the origins of pidgins is easily dismissed. This is the idea that pidgins arise because the people among whom they are found lack the ability to learn the standard languages with which the pidgins are associated.

There is no evidence either for any ‘foreigner-talk’ or ‘baby-talk’ theory (see Bloomfield, 1933, pp. 472–3) for the origin of pidgins and creoles, i.e., that they result from Europeans deliberately simplifying their languages in order to communicate with others. According to this theory, these simplified forms then serve to provide pidgins with their basic structures and vocabularies. There are too many structural similarities among pidgins and creoles associated with very different

European languages to make such a theory of origin plausible, e.g., between the English-based creole of Jamaica and the French-based one of Haiti.

One theory, the theory of polygenesis, is that pidgins and creoles have a variety of origins; any similarities among them arise from the shared circumstances of their origins. For example, speakers of English have had to make themselves understood for the purposes of trade and those trading with them have had to be understood. Consequently, certain simplified forms of English have developed independently in a number of places, giving rise to varieties of pidgin English. Because in every case the target language is English, these local varieties will have certain similarities. In this view a 'pidgin X' or 'creolized Y' is a variety of X or Y, much as Cockney English is a variety of English.

8.7.5 From Pidgin to Creole

Whatever their origins, it is generally acknowledged that a pidgin is almost always involved in the earliest stage of a creole. The pidgin comes about from the need to communicate, particularly when those who need to communicate speak a variety of languages and the speakers of the 'target' language are 'superior' in some sense and perhaps transient too. Thus, pidginization seems to have happened – and seems still to happen – repeatedly, for it is one of the basic means by which linguistic contact is made among speakers of different languages who find themselves in an asymmetrical social relationship, i.e., one in which there is a serious imbalance of power. The fact that is especially interesting is how similar the results are from place to place and from time to time. Not every pidgin eventually becomes a creole, i.e., undergoes the process of creolization. In fact, very few do. Most pidgins are lingua francas, existing to meet temporary local needs. They are spoken by people who use another language or other languages to serve most of their needs and the needs of their children. If a pidgin is no longer needed, it dies out. It may also be the case that the pidgin in a particular area must constantly be 'reinvented'; there is no reason to believe, for example, that either Cameroonian Pidgin English or Hawaiian Pidgin English have had uninterrupted histories.

Creolization occurs only when a pidgin for some reason becomes the variety of language that children must use in situations in which use of a 'full' language is effectively denied them. A creole is the native language of some of its speakers. We can see how this must have happened in Haiti when French was effectively denied to the masses and the African languages brought by the slaves fell into disuse. We can also see how, while many of the guest workers in Germany developed pidginized varieties of German to communicate when necessary with one another, their children did not creolize these varieties but, with varying success, acquired Standard German, since they had to go to school and be educated in German.

8.7.6 Lingua Francas

People who speak different languages who are forced into contact with each other must find some way of communicating, a lingua franca. In a publication concerned with the use of vernacular languages in education published in Paris in 1953, UNESCO defined a lingua franca as 'a language which is used habitually by people whose mother tongues are different in order to facilitate communication between them.' A lingua franca can simply be said to be a language that usually emerges as a major means of communication in a multilingual community. A lingua franca can be spoken in a variety of ways. English serves today as a lingua franca in many parts of the world: for some speakers it is a native language, for others a second language, and for still others a foreign language. However, in the last two categories abilities in the language may vary widely from native-like to knowledge of only some bare rudiments.

8.7.7 Idiolect

Idiolect refers to the linguistic system of each individual speaker as uniquely expressed through his or her own way of speaking. This means that each speaker speaks an idiolect.

An idiolect is a variety of a language unique to an individual. It is manifested by patterns of word selection and grammar, or words, phrases, idioms, or pronunciations that are unique to that individual. Every individual has an idiolect; the grouping of words and phrases is unique, rather than an individual using specific words that nobody else uses. An idiolect can easily evolve into an 'ecolect' – a dialect variant specific to a household.

Forensic linguists can use idiolects to decide if a certain person did or did not produce a given piece of writing (or transcribed speech). While often passing unnoticed in speech, some idiolects, particularly unusual ones employed by famous individuals, are immortalised in the form of nicknames.

Idiolects change through contact with other idiolects, and change throughout their lifetime as well as from generation to generation. Overall, languages must select for compatibility with the learning capacity of immature human brains. Idiolects, however, have such a large capacity for change, particularly in the current era, with increasing contact between many different people, that the systematic aspects of language that are the traditional arena of linguistic study are constantly in flux.

8.7.8 Sociolect

The issue of social dialects is extremely complex. Each social dialect is adequate as a functional and effective variety of English or other languages. Each serves a communication function as well as a social solidarity function. It maintains the

communication network and the social construct of the community of speakers who use it. Furthermore, each is a symbolic representation of the historical, social, and cultural background of the speakers. For example, there is strong evidence that many of the features of Black English represent linguistic Africanisms. However, society has adopted the linguistic idealisation model that Standard English is the linguistic archetype.

In linguistics, a sociolect is the variety of language characteristic of a social background or status. It is a portmanteau term combining the morphemes "socio-," meaning social and "***-lect***," meaning a variety of language. A dialect which evolves from regional speech may also have sociolectical implications. For example, Standard British English is a dialect in that it is particular to Britain; yet, being the national language of Nigeria, it is also a sociolect in that it carries a certain prestige from being the lingua franca throughout the country – both in broadcasting, in the press, and by people of high social status.

8.8 Conclusion

Issues of major, minor, marginalised, style, register, beliefs, pidgins, creoles, idiolect and sociolect are very serious sociolinguistic phenomena. They are real and cannot be ignored. This unit has endeavoured to discuss them.

Self Assessment Exercise

1. Outline features that distinguish major from minor languages
2. Comment on the nature of marginalised languages
3. Trace the emergence of pidgins and Creole
4. What do you understand by the concepts; style, beliefs, sociolect and idiolect

8.9 Summary

In this unit of the module, you have been introduced to major and minor languages and what features distinguish them. The unit has also looked at marginalised languages, comparing them to major languages. Register, style, beliefs, pidgins, idiolect, sociolect and creoles have also been discussed in the unit.

UNIT 9: DIGLOSSIA, BILINGUALISM AND MULTILINGUALISM

9.0 Introduction

In this unit, we discuss diglossia, bilingualism and multilingualism and aspects that go with these phenomena.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of unit, you should be able to:

- Discuss diglossic situations
- State what is mean by the expression diglossia in relation to real life situations
- Describe situations of bilingualism and multilingualism

9.1 Diglossic Situation and Diglossia

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. Ferguson (1959, p. 336) has defined diglossia as follows:

> Diglossia is a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), 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 each situation there is a **'high' variety** (H) of language and a '**low' variety** (L). Each variety has its own specialized functions, and each is viewed differently by those who are aware of both. A key defining characteristic of diglossia is that the two varieties are kept quite apart in their functions. One is used in one set of circumstances and the other in an entirely different set. For example, the H varieties may be used for delivering sermons and formal lectures, especially in a parliament or legislative body, for giving political speeches, for broadcasting the news on radio and television, and for writing poetry, fine literature, and editorials in newspapers. In contrast, the L varieties may be used in giving instructions to workers in low prestige occupations or to household servants, in conversation with familiars, in 'soap operas' and popular programs on the radio, in captions on political cartoons in newspapers, and in 'folk literature.' On occasion, a person may lecture in an H variety but answer

questions about its contents or explain parts of it in an L variety so as to ensure understanding.

Note that you do not use an H variety in circumstances calling for an L variety, e.g., for addressing a servant; nor do you usually use an L variety when an H is called for, e.g., for writing a 'serious' work of literature. You may indeed do the latter, but it may be a risky endeavour; it is the kind of thing that Chaucer did for the English of his day, and it requires a certain willingness, on the part of both the writer and others, to break away from a diglossic situation by extending the L variety into functions normally associated only with the H. For about three centuries after the Norman Conquest of 1066, English and Norman French coexisted in England in a diglossic situation with Norman French the H variety and English the L. However, gradually the L variety assumed more and more functions associated with the H so that by Chaucer's time it had become possible to use the L variety for a major literary work.

The H variety is the prestigious, powerful variety; the L variety lacks prestige and power. In fact, there may be so little prestige attached to the L variety that people may even deny that they know it although they may be observed to use it far more frequently than the H variety. Associated with this prestige valuation for the H variety, there is likely to be a strong feeling that the prestige is deserved because the H variety is more beautiful, logical, and expressive than the L variety. That is why it is deemed appropriate for literary use, for religious purposes, and so on. There may also be considerable and widespread resistance to translating certain books into the L variety, e.g., the Qur'an into one or other colloquial varieties of Arabic or the Bible into Haitian Creole or Demotic Greek. (We should note that even today many speakers of English resist the Bible in any form other than the King James version.)

This last feeling concerning the natural superiority of the H variety is likely to be reinforced by the fact that a considerable body of literature will be found to exist in that variety and almost none in the other. That literature may also be regarded as reflecting essential values about the culture and, when parts of it are classical literature, deemed worthy of recalling by allusion and quotations on occasions suitable for the employment of H. Speakers of Arabic in particular gain prestige from being able to allude to classical sources. The folk literature associated with the L variety will have none of the same prestige; it may interest folklorists and it may be transmuted into an H variety by writers skilled in H, but it is unlikely to be the stuff of which literary histories and traditions are made in its 'raw' form.

Another important difference between the H and L varieties is that all children learn the L variety. Some may concurrently learn the H variety, but many do not learn it at all; e.g., most Haitians have no knowledge at all of Standard French but all can speak some variety of Haitian Creole, although some, as I have said, may deny that they have this ability. The H variety is also likely to be learned in some kind of formal setting, e.g., in classrooms or as part of a religious or cultural indoctrination. To that

extent, the H variety is ‘taught,’ whereas the L variety is ‘learned.’ Teaching requires the availability of grammars, dictionaries, standardized texts, and some widely accepted view about the nature of what is being taught and how it is most effectively to be taught. There are usually no comparable grammars, dictionaries, and standardized texts for the L variety, and any view of that variety is likely to be highly pejorative in nature. When such grammars and other aids do exist, they have in many cases been written by outsiders, e.g., ‘foreign’ linguists. They are also likely to be neither well known to the people whose linguistic usage they describe nor well received by those people, since such works are unlikely to support some of the myths that accompany diglossia, particularly the myth that the L variety lacks any kind of ‘grammar.’

The L variety often shows a tendency to borrow learned words from the H variety, particularly when speakers try to use the L variety in more formal ways. The result is a certain admixture of H vocabulary into the L. On other occasions, though, there may be distinctly different pairs of words, i.e., doublets, in the H and L varieties to refer to very common objects and concepts. Since the domains of use of the two varieties do not intersect, there will be an L word for use in L situations and an H word for use in H situations with no possibility of transferring the one to the other. So far as the pronunciation of the two varieties is concerned, the L system will often appear to be the more ‘basic.’ However, actual circumstances can vary.

9.2 Diglossic Coverage

Diglossia is a widespread phenomenon in the world, well attested in both space (e.g., varieties of Tamil in the south of India) and time (e.g., Latin in Europe in the Middle Ages). According to Ferguson (1959, p. 338), it is likely to come into being when (1) ‘there is a sizable body of literature in a language closely related to (or even identical with) the natural language of the community . . . [and when (2)] literacy in the community is limited to a small elite, [and] . . . a suitable period of time, of the order of several centuries, passes from the establishment of (1) and (2).’ People living in a diglossic community do not usually regard diglossia as a ‘problem.’ It becomes a problem only when there is a growth of literacy, or when there is a desire to decrease regional and/or social barriers, or when a need is seen for a unified ‘national’ language.

What Ferguson describes are ‘narrow’ or ‘classic’ diglossic situations. They require the use of very divergent varieties of the same language and there are few good examples. Fishman has broadened or extended the term to include a wider variety of language situations. For Fishman (1980, p. 3) diglossia is ‘an enduring societal arrangement, extending at least beyond a three generation period, such that two “languages” each have their secure, phenomenologically legitimate and widely implemented functions.’ By acknowledging that his use of the term language also includes sub-varieties of one language, Fishman includes Ferguson’s examples. He

does add, though, that in the case of two varieties of the same language, they be 'sufficiently different from one another that, without schooling, the elevated variety cannot be understood by speakers of the vernacular.

Fishman's proposal extends the concept of 'diglossia' to include bilingual and multilingual situations in which the different languages have quite different functions. For example, one language is used in one set of circumstances and the other in an entirely different set and such difference is felt to be normal and proper.

9.3 Bilingualism and Multilingualism

Monolingualism, that is, the ability to use only one language is such a widely accepted norm in so many parts of the Western world that it is often assumed to be a world-wide phenomenon, to the extent that bilingual and multilingual individuals may appear to be 'unusual.' Note that you often have mixed feelings when you discover that someone you meet is fluent in several languages: perhaps a mixture of admiration and envy but also, occasionally, a feeling of superiority in that many such people are not 'native' to the culture in which we function. Such people are likely to be immigrants, visitors, or children of 'mixed' marriages and in that respect 'marked' in some way, and such marking is not always regarded favourably.

However, in many parts of the world an ability to speak more than one language is not at all remarkable. In fact, a monolingual individual would be regarded as a misfit, lacking an important skill in society, the skill of being able to interact freely with the speakers of other languages with whom regular contact is made in the ordinary business of living. In many parts of the world it is just a normal requirement of daily living that people speak several languages: perhaps one or more at home, another in the village, still another for purposes of trade, and yet another for contact with the outside world of wider social or political organization. These various languages are usually acquired naturally and unselfconsciously, and the shifts from one to another are made without hesitation.

9.4 Competence and Bilingualism

People who are bilingual or multilingual do not necessarily have exactly the same abilities in the languages (or varieties); in fact, that kind of parity may be exceptional. As Sridhar (1996) says, 'multilingualism involving balanced, native like 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 specialized register and styles.' Sridhar adds: 'Multilinguals develop competence in each of the codes to the extent that they need it and for the contexts in which each of the languages is used.' Context determines language choice. In a society in which more

than one language (or variety) is used you must find out who uses what, when, and for what purpose if you are to be socially competent. Your language choices are part of the social identity you claim for yourself.

9.5 Bilingualism or Bidialectal

Attempts to distinguish people who are bilingual from those who are bidialectal may prove difficult. There may be some doubt that very many people are actually bi- or even multi-dialectal. They may speak varieties which are distinctly different, but whether each separate variety is genuinely a dialect depends on how one defines dialect. So it sometimes is too difficult with deciding who is or who is not bilingual. Is someone who speaks the following a bilingual?; speaking both Plateau Tonga and Valley Tonga; Nsenga and Chewa; Bemba and Bisa, or Russian and Ukrainian? Such speakers may well tell you they are. But, on the other hand, a Chinese who speaks both Mandarin and Cantonese will almost certainly insist that he or she speaks only two dialects of Chinese, just as an Arab who knows both a colloquial variety and the classical, literary variety of Arabic will insist that they are only different varieties of the same language.

In some cases, then, the bilingual – bidialectal distinction that speakers make reflects social, cultural, and political aspirations or realities rather than any linguistic reality. What we will concern ourselves with, then, are unequivocal cases in which there can be no doubt that the two languages, or codes, are mutually unintelligible.

This section stresses that bilingualism and multilingualism are normal in many parts of the world and that people in those parts would view any other situation as strange and limiting. There is a long history in certain Western societies of people actually ‘looking down’ on those who are bilingual. We give prestige to only a certain few classical languages (e.g., Greek and Latin) or modern languages of high culture (e.g., English, French, Italian, and German). You generally get little credit for speaking Swahili and, until recently at least, not much more for speaking Russian, Japanese, Arabic, or Chinese. Bilingualism is actually sometimes regarded as a problem in that many bilingual individuals tend to occupy rather low positions in society and knowledge of another language becomes associated with ‘inferiority.’ Bilingualism is sometimes seen as a personal and social problem, not something that has strong positive connotations.

One unfortunate consequence is that some Western societies go to great lengths to downgrade, even eradicate, the languages that immigrants bring with them while at the same time trying to teach foreign languages in schools.

A bilingual, or multilingual, situation can produce still other effects on one or more of the languages involved. As we have just seen, it can lead to loss, e.g., language loss among immigrants. But sometimes it leads to diffusion; that is, certain features spread from one language to the other (or others) as a result of the contact situation,

particularly certain kinds of syntactic features. One linguistic consequence, however, is that there has been some convergence of the languages that are spoken in the village so far as syntax is concerned, but vocabulary differences have been maintained (McMahon, 1994). It is vocabulary rather than syntax which now serves to distinguish the groups, and the variety of multilingualism that has resulted is a special local variety which has developed in response to local needs.

9.6 Conclusion

Diglossia, bilingualism and multilingualism are real-life situations and cannot be ignored in the study of language and society. Their occurrences are tangible and this unit has demonstrated this.

Self Assessment Exercise

1. What do understand by the expression diglossia?
2. What is your comment on diglossia in relation to bilingualism?
3. Discuss the high variety and low variety in diglossia

9.7 Summary

This unit has endeavoured to discuss diglossia, bilingualism and multilingualism and their effects on society. Covered also in the unit are instances or examples of these phenomena.

UNIT 10: CODE SWITCHING AND CODE MIXING

10.0 Introduction

In this unit, you are introduced to the concepts of code-switching and code-mixing. Covered in the unit are the benefits of code-switching, the difference between code-switching and code-mixing. Further, the unit has covered levels of code-switching and code-switching as interference to language in a classroom situation.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- Distinguish between code-switching and code-mixing
- Describe reasons for code-switching
- State the levels of code-switching
- Identify kind of people that use code-switching

10.1 Code-switching (CS)

The ability to communicate our thoughts, emotions, and opinions to others is truly a remarkable skill. But not only does our language communicate who we are, but our use of language can influence our self-concept and identity. It goes both ways: Cultural influences are reflected in our language and also influence how we conceptualize who we are and where we come from.

Bilingual communities use certain strategies to make communication more effective and meaningful. One of these tricks is "code switching," which we can observe mostly in second- or foreign-language classes.

Code switching is when a speaker alternates between two or more languages (or dialects or varieties of language) in one conversation.

10.2 Who Uses Code Switching?

Code switching occurs mostly in bilingual communities. Speakers of more than one language are known for their ability to code switch or mix their language during their communication. As Aranoff and Miller (2003) indicate, many linguists have stressed the point that switching between languages is a communicative option available to a bilingual member of a speech community, just as switching between styles or dialects is an option for the monolingual speaker.

10.3 Code Switching in Speech and Action

Since its inception, the term "code switching" has expanded to encapsulate any situation in which speakers finds themselves switching from one accepted vocabulary, cadence, style, or set of rules to another. For example, you would probably speak to a potential employer differently than you would address a close friend. So, you might

switch from casual language to professional-speak in certain settings. Another example is how many African Americans describe playing different roles in different settings and with different micro-cultures, and talk about how they must be very careful to speak with an academic vocabulary and cadence in any interaction with a police officer.

In her introductory text book to bilingualism, Myers-Scotton (2006) provided a general definition of code-switching (CS) as "the use of two language varieties in the same conversation" Other scholars have also identified this language phenomenon and labelled it likewise. Silva-Corvalán (1982) defined CS "as the use of two or more languages by one speaker in the same turn of speech or at turn-taking points" (p. 73). Muysken (2000) echoed Myers-Scotton's and Silva-Corvalán's definitions of CS by using the term to mean "the rapid succession of several languages in a single speech event" He also pointed out the importance of identifying the occurrence of multiple languages in one sentence and used the term "code-mixing to refer to all cases where lexical items and grammatical features from two [or more] languages appear in one sentence."

Making a similar distinction but using different labels, Myers-Scotton continued her explanation of CS by making a distinction between intersentential and intra-sentential switches, that is, alternations occurring between sentences and within sentences, respectively. While analyzing English-Spanish CS, Lipski (1985) also made this distinction and explained it by saying intersentential switching consists of shifting languages at sentence boundaries which are frequently principal discourse markers. . . [while] intra-sentential language shifting involves the shift from L1 to L2 in the middle of a sentence, often with no interruptions, hesitations, pauses, or other indications of a major categorical shift.

Code-switching is the inevitable consequence of bilingualism and multilingualism. A person who speaks more than one language chooses between them according to circumstances. The main consideration in code- switching is selection of the language known to the person addressed. In a community where everyone speaks the same range of languages (community multilingualism) the choice of the code is done according to social rules. Quite often one language is reserved for use at home, and another for the wider community.

The choice of language is controlled by rules, which the members of the community learn from experience. Hudson gives the example of the village of Sauris, in Northern Italy where people speak one language at home, another among themselves in the village and a third one while talking to outsiders and in more formal village settings. This kind of code-witching is called Situational code-switching. Because of this particular situation prevailing in the place every one is generally seen to switch codes many times a day. The question arises here as to why the speakers of a whole community take pains to study many languages when just one language would serve

the purpose of communication. The answer they give is that they find it wrong or improper to speak at home the language they speak to outsiders. In fact each language has a social function to fulfil and using the wrong language, as determined by social rules, fails to fulfil this social function.

In the code-switching of the kind just discussed, it is clearly the situation that decides language. But in certain circumstances, the speaker concentrates on the less observable characteristics of the listeners and changes his language to direct the situation along his lines. Such cases where the choice of language determines the situation are called as metaphorical code- switching

10.4 Code Mixing

The term code-switching denotes switching from one code to another as the situation demands. But sometimes a fluent bilingual is seen to change his code while talking to another bilingual without any change in the situation. This kind of change is generally called as code-mixing (a1so conversational code-switching). As Hudson views it:

> The purpose of code-mixing seems to be to symbolize a somewhat ambiguous situation for which neither language on its own would be quite right. To get the right effect the speakers balance the two languages against each other as a kind of linguistic cocktail - a few words of one language, then a few words of the other, then back to the first for a few more words and so on. The changes generally take place more or less randomly.

Code-mixing refers to any admixture of linguistic elements of two or more language systems in the same utterance at various levels: phonological, lexical, grammatical and orthographical. In essence, code mixing may be more adequately seen as occurring as a kind of intra-sentential switching where code-switching more readily describes the phenomenon that occurs at the inter-sentential level of linguistic usage. Code-switching is thus a term in linguistics referring to the use of more than one language or variety in conversation. Bilinguals, who can speak at least two languages, have the ability to use elements of both languages when conversing with another bilingual. Code-switching is the syntactically and phonologically appropriate use of multiple varieties. Code mixing occurs at four levels as subsequently exemplified.

1. Inter-sentential switching is switching outside the sentence or clause level, for example at sentence or clause boundaries. Example, He came here *cifukwa namutumila foni*. [He came because I called him on phone].
2. Intra-sentential switching is switching within a sentence or clause. Example, He came *kuno cifukwa* I called him on phone. [‘He came because I called him on phone].

3. Tag-switching is switching a tag phrase or word from language B into language A. (This is a common intra-sentential switch.) Example, ***Anabwera*** because ***ninafuna kumupisha***. [He came because I wanted to sack him from work].
4. Intra-word switching is switching within a word itself, such as at a morpheme boundary. Examples for kind of switching are quite rare in our languages but could be common in some others. See if you could come up with some examples.

10.5 Reasons Speakers Use Code Switching

There are a number of possible reasons for switching from one language to another; three are described below.

10.5.1 To Fulfill a Need:

A speaker who may not be able to express him/herself in one language might switch to another to compensate for the deficiency. As a result, the speaker may be triggered into speaking in the other language for a while. This type of code switching tends to occur when the speaker is upset, tired, or distracted in some manner, or when they are less fluent in one language.

10.5.2 To Express Solidarity:

Switching also commonly occurs when an individual wishes to express solidarity with a particular social group. Rapport is established between the speaker and the listener when the listener responds with a similar switch.

10.5.3 To Exclude Other:

Code switching may also be used to exclude others from a conversation who do not speak the second language. For example, if two people in an elevator in an English-speaking place spoke Spanish, then not only would the others on that elevator who do not speak Spanish would be excluded from the conversation, but also a degree of comfort and intimacy would be established between the Spanish-speakers due to the fact that not all those present in the elevator can listen to their conversation.

10.6 Is Code Switching a Bad Thing?

As Skiba (1997) comments, code switching is not a language interference on the basis that it supplements speech. Where it is used due to an inability of expression, code switching provides continuity in speech rather than presenting an interference in language.

10.6.1 When is code switching helpful?

- The socio-linguistic benefits of code switching include communicating solidarity with or affiliation to a particular social group, so code switching can be viewed as a means of providing a linguistic advantage rather than an obstruction to communication.

- Furthermore, code switching allows a speaker to convey more nuanced attitudes and emotions by choosing from a bigger pool of words that is available to a bilingual person, much like how one might use font, bolding, or underlining in a text document to emphasize points.

- Utilizing the second language, then, allows speakers to increase the impact of their speech and use it in a more effective manner.

10.6.2 Code Switching as a Language Interference

In certain settings, code switching might be a barrier to communication rather than an aid. In the classroom, for example, code switching can be seen as language interference since it might impede learning. Although students may see code switching as an acceptable form of communication in society and may feel comfortable switching languages in everyday normal conversation, in some other settings, this type of communication would put those who are not bilingual at a disadvantage, because they would not be able to understand. Therefore, code switching can be both beneficial and a possible language interference, depending on the situation and the context in which it occurs.

10.6.3 Is Code Switching Deliberate or Accidental?

Sometimes, speakers flip from one language to another accidentally, but in many situations, code switching is done deliberately to both create unity or to exclude someone from a conversation. It is seen as a sign of solidarity within a group, and it is also assumed that all speakers in a conversation must be bilingual in order for code switching to occur. Bilinguals do not usually translate from the weaker language to the stronger one. Code switching is used most often when a word doesn't "come."

10.7 Speech Community

Language is both an individual possession and a social possession. We would expect, therefore, that certain individuals would behave linguistically like other individuals: they might be said to speak the same language or the same dialect or the same variety, i.e., to employ the same code, and in that respect to be members of the same speech community, a term probably derived from the German *Sprachgemeinschaft*. Indeed,

much work in sociolinguistics is based on the assumption that it is possible to use the concept of 'speech community' without much difficulty.

Hudson (1996, p. 29) rejects that view: 'our sociolinguistic world is not organized in terms of objective "speech communities," even though we like to think subjectively in terms of communities or social types such as "Londoner" and "American." This means that the search for a "true" definition of the speech community, or for the "true" boundaries around some speech community, is just a wild goose chase.' We will indeed discover that just as it is difficult to define such terms as language, dialect, and variety, it is also difficult to define speech community, and for many of the same reasons. That difficulty, however, will not prevent us from using the term: the concept has proved to be invaluable in sociolinguistic work in spite of a certain '***fuzziness***' as to its precise characteristics. It remains so even if we decide that a speech community is no more than some kind of social group whose speech characteristics are of interest and can be described in a coherent manner.

Sociolinguistics is the study of language use within or among groups of speakers. What are groups? 'Group' is a difficult concept to define but one we must try to grasp. For our purposes, a group must have at least two members but there is really no upper limit to group membership. People can group together for one or more reasons: social, religious, political, cultural, familial, vocational, avocational, etc. The group may be temporary or quasi-permanent and the purposes of its members may change, i.e., its raison d'être. A group is also more than its members for they may come and go. They may also belong to other groups and may or may not meet face-to-face. The organization of the group may be tight or loose and the importance of group membership is likely to vary among individuals within the group, being extremely important to some and of little consequence to others. An individual's feelings of identity are closely related to that person's feelings about groups in which he or she is a member, feels strong (or weak) commitment (or rejection), and finds some kind of success (or failure).

The kind of group that sociolinguists have generally attempted to study is called the speech community. For purely theoretical purposes, some linguists have hypothesized the existence of an 'ideal' speech community. However, such a speech community cannot be our concern: it is a theoretical construct employed for a narrow purpose. Our speech communities, whatever they are, exist in a 'real' world. Consequently, we must try to find some alternative view of speech community, one helpful to investigations of language in society rather than necessitated by abstract linguistic theorizing.

Lyons (1970, p. 326) offers a definition of what he calls a 'real' speech community: 'all the people who use a given language (or dialect).' It is really quite easy to demonstrate that a speech community is not coterminous with a language: while the

English language is spoken in many places throughout the world, we must certainly recognize that it is also spoken in a wide variety of ways, in speech communities that are almost entirely isolated from one another, e.g., in South Africa, in New Zealand, and among expatriates in China. Alternatively, a recognizably single speech community can employ more than one language: Switzerland, Canada, Papua New Guinea, many African states, and New York City.

Furthermore, if speech communities are defined solely by their linguistic characteristics, we must acknowledge the inherent circularity of any such definition in that language itself is a communal possession. We must also acknowledge that using linguistic characteristics alone to determine what is or is not a speech community has proved so far to be quite impossible because people do not necessarily feel any such direct relationship between linguistic characteristics A, B, C, and so on, and speech community X. What we can be sure of is that speakers do use linguistic characteristics to achieve group identity with, and group differentiation from, other speakers, but they use other characteristics as well: social, cultural, political and ethnic, to name a few.

For very specific sociolinguistic purposes we might want to try to draw quite narrow and extremely precise bounds around what we consider to be a speech community. We might require that only a single language be spoken (and employ a very restrictive definition of language in doing so), and that the speakers in the community share some kind of common feeling about linguistic behaviour in the community, that is, observe certain linguistic norms.

Labov's definition of speech community (1972b, pp. 120–1):

> The speech community is not defined by any marked agreement in the use of language elements, so much as by participation in a set of shared norms; these norms may be observed in overt types of evaluative behaviour, and by the uniformity of abstract patterns of variation which are invariant in respect to particular levels of usage.

This definition shifts the emphasis away from an exclusive use of linguistic criteria to a search for the various characteristics which make individuals feel that they are members of the same community. Milroy (1987a, p. 13) has indicated some consequences of such a view:

Gumperz (1969) identifies two important components of the speech community: members share both a set of linguistics forms and a set of social norms Gumperz also sought to set up a typological framework for describing how linguistic systems can be in use within a single speech community.

Gumperz introduced the concept of linguistic range, the degree to which the linguistic systems of the community differ so that speech communities can be multilingual, diglossic, multidialectal (including sociolectal stratification), or homogeneous - depending on the degree of difference among the different language systems used in the community. Secondly the notion of compartmentalization described the degree to which the use of different varieties were either set off from each other as discrete systems in interaction (e.g. diglossia where varieties correspond to specific social contexts, or multilingualism where varieties correspond to discrete social groups within the community) or whether they are habitually mixed in interaction (e.g. code-switching, bilingualism, syncretic language).

10.7.1 Speech Communities in Zambia

In Zambia, speech communities subsist in several forms. We have different groups with similar means of communication restricted to them. These groups are like cults and associations with the same goals. We have such groups as Rotary Club, Lyons Club, and Women Groups, etc. All these groups have similar language patterns that are used in communicating common interests. The communication patterns include both symbolic and verbal forms. They have patterns of greetings (that is, phatic greetings, general greetings of well-being), patterns of handshake, patterns of movement, and patterns of response, etc. You will note that each of these groups constitutes a speech community. Even schools with a unique curriculum constitute a speech community because they do not use the forms and patterns that are conversant in the other schools. In a particular University system, there are different terms, courses and academic procedures that are not found in other universities. For this reason, Chalimbana University (CHAU) is a speech community with a unique curriculum, language patterns, and communication procedures that are restricted to it.

In Zambia, we have different groups, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), religious bodies, political parties and pressure groups that constitute speech communities. Each of these groups has internal communication procedures which mark them out and which people outside the group do not know. Zambia, like other countries around the world, is made up of hybrids of speech communities that form parts of the larger populace and which are recognised for their positive or negative impacts in the country. One obvious thing about Zambian speech communities is that they have language forms and other means of communication recognised by the larger populace but are used as references in describing these groups and their operations.

10.8 Conclusion

Code switching is a phenomenon that is inevitable in bilingual communities. It occurs naturally in second- or foreign-language classrooms and it can be used beneficially in many classroom activities. Although it is sometimes seen as a sloppy or presumptive way to speak, it is natural and can be turned to a purposeful and useful activity in

language classes. The concept of speech communities in sociolinguistics has also been discussed. The concept of speech community gives insight into small language use in minority group based on certain unifying linguistic harmonies.

Self Assessment Exercise

1. Explain the phenomenon of code - switching
2. State reasons for code switching
3. State the different levels of code – switching
4. Distinguish between code-switching and code-mixing
5. In your opinion, is code-switching helpful? If so, justify your answer.
6. Discuss the concept of speech community

10.8 Summary

This unit has discussed the occurrence of code-switching as an inevitable phenomenon in a bilingual community. The unit has pointed out why individuals code-switch, levels of code-switching and also the difference between code-switching and code-mixing. Speech community as a concept in sociolinguistics has also been discussed. It is recognised as language use within static groups has a unifying interest effect. Sociolinguistic studies have proved that speech communities reveal the complexities of language use in society as every individual within the larger society belong consciously or unconsciously to several speech communities which make up the society.

UNIT 11: ETHNOGRAPHY OF COMMUNICATION

11.0 Introduction

In this unit, you are introduced to ethnography of communication, showing different ways in which different linguistic groupings behave. Examples of how different groups of people use speech in their daily life. Included in the unit are the origins and aims of ethnography of communication.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Trace the origins of ethnography of communication
- Discuss the aims of ethnography of communication
- Appreciate varieties of talk among different linguistic groupings

11.1 The ethnography of communication (EOC)

The ethnography of communication (EOC), originally called the ethnography of speaking, is the analysis of communication within the wider context of the social and cultural practices and beliefs of the members of a particular culture or speech community. It comes from ethnographic research. It is a method of discourse analysis in linguistics that draws on the anthropological field of ethnography. Unlike ethnography proper, though, EOC takes into account both the communicative form, which may include but is not limited to spoken language, and its function within the given culture.

11.2 Aims of ethnography of communication studies

General aims of ethnography of communication studies include being able to discern which communication acts and/or codes are important to different groups, what types of meanings groups apply to different communication events, and how group members learn these codes, in order to provide insight into particular communities. This additional insight may be used to enhance communication with group members, make sense of group members' decisions, and distinguish groups from one another, among other things.

Dell Hymes proposed the ethnography of communication as an approach towards analyzing patterns of language use within speech communities, in order to provide support for his idea of communicative competence, which itself was a reaction to Noam Chomsky's distinction between linguistic competence and linguistic performance.

Originally coined "*ethnography of speaking*" in Dell Hymes' eponymous 1962 paper, it was redefined in his 1964 paper, *Introduction: Toward Ethnographies of*

Communication to accommodate for the non-vocal and non-verbal characteristics of communication, although most EOC researchers still tend to focus upon speaking as it is generally considered "to be a prominent - even primordial - means of communication."

11.3 Origins

The term "ethnography of communication" is meant to be descriptive of the characteristics that an approach towards language from an anthropological standpoint must take. Namely, according to Dell Hymes, it must 1) "investigate directly the use of language in contexts of situations so as to discern patterns proper to speech activity" and 2) "take as context a community, investigating its communicative habits as a whole." In other words, rather than divorcing linguistic form from its function, the analysis of a culture's or community's communication, linguistic and otherwise, must occur with respect to the sociocultural context of its use and the functions of the meanings conveyed. As Deborah Cameron puts it, "If you are mainly concerned with the way a certain speech event fits into a whole network of cultural beliefs and practices, you will spend more time describing things that are external to the talk itself: who the speakers are, where they are, what beliefs and customs are important in their lives."

11.4 Use of Speech among groups of People

Speech is used in different ways among different groups of people. Each group has its own norms of linguistic behaviour. You will note that a particular group may not encourage talking for the sake of talking, and members of such a group may appear to be quite taciturn to outsiders who relish talk, or they may feel overwhelmed by the demands made on them if those others insist on talking. In contrast, in another group talk may be encouraged to the extent that it may even appear to be quite disorderly to an observer who has internalized a different set of ‘rules’ for the conduct of talk.

We must try to understand how different groups of people use their language (or languages) if we are to achieve a comprehensive understanding of how that language (or those languages) is related to the society that uses it. A society that encourages a wide variety of kinds of talk is likely to be rather different in many non-linguistic ways from one in which speakers are expected neither to waste words nor to use words lightly.

This part of the module, therefore, looks at how we can talk about the various ways in which people communicate with one another, in an attempt to see what factors are involved.

However, the part will also be concerned with the fact that much of that communication is directed toward keeping an individual society going; that is, an important function of communication is social maintenance. Language is used to

sustain reality. Consequently, a second purpose of this part is to look at ways in which individuals cooperate with one another to sustain the reality of everyday life and at how they use language as one of the means to do so.

11.5 Varieties of Talk

It must e pointed out from the outset that talk is used differently by various people as demonstrated by research. The subsequent section shows some communication among some linguistic groupings.

11.5.1 Communication among the 'Kung

It is enlightening to look at some of the ways in which various people in the world use talk, or sometimes the absence of talk, i.e., silence, to communicate. For example, Marshall (1961) has indicated how the 'Kung, a bush-dwelling people of South West Africa, have certain customs which help them either to avoid or to reduce friction and hostility within bands and between bands. The 'Kung lead a very harsh life as hunters and gatherers, a life which requires a considerable amount of cooperation and the companionship of a larger group if survival is to be guaranteed. Many of the customs of the 'Kung support their social need for cooperativeness and the individual need for personal acceptance. The 'Kung are talkative people. Talk keeps communication open among them; it offers an emotional release; and it can also be used to alert individuals that they are stepping out of bounds, so heading off potentially dangerous conflicts between individuals.

The 'Kung talk about all kinds of things, but principally about food and gift-giving. However, they avoid mentioning the names of their gods aloud, and men and women do not openly discuss sexual matters together. Such subjects are taboo. They have their own styles of joking, and story-telling, but, in the latter case, they do not ‘make up’ stories, finding no interest at all in that activity. They have one kind of talk to resolve disputes; another, which Marshall calls a ‘shout,’ to resolve the kinds of tension that arise when some sudden, dangerous event occurs, such as the burning down of a grass hut in a village; and still another, a repetitive trance-like type of speech, to indicate a feeling of some kind of deprivation concerning food.

According to Marshall, speech among the 'Kung helps to maintain peaceful social relationships by allowing people to keep in touch with one another about how they are thinking and feeling. It helps the 'Kung to relieve their tensions, and it prevents pressures from building up and finding their release in aggression. We can contrast the need the 'Kung have to talk in order to ensure that tensions do not build up with the Western Apache view of silence (Basso, 1972).

Whereas the 'Kung speak to prevent uncertainty in human relationships, the Western Apache of east-central Arizona choose to be silent when there is a strong possibility that such uncertainty exists. They are silent on ‘meeting strangers,’ whether these are

fellow Western Apache or complete outsiders; and strangers, too, are expected to be silent. The Western Apache do not easily enter into new social relationships, and silence is deemed appropriate to a new relationship, because such a relationship is felt to be inherently uncertain. Children returning from government boarding schools are greeted with silence and the children themselves are expected to be silent. Silence is maintained until each person once again becomes accustomed to the presence of the others. When one is 'cussed out,' i.e., disciplined verbally, silence is again the appropriate response, even though the cussing out may be undeserved; the Western Apache believe that responding will make matters worse. The initial stages of courting behaviour also require silence; in this case, silence is taken to be a proper indication of the shyness that is expected between two people attempting to enter into a close relationship. They regard talkativeness in such a situation, especially in the female of the pair, as immodest.

Silence is also used as a kind of sympathizing device after someone dies: you are silent in the presence of 'people who are sad,' and you should not further disturb those who are already disturbed by grief. Silence is also required during curing ceremonials if you are not to be considered disrespectful or to be interfering either with the curing process or with the person conducting the ceremonial. According to Basso, the Western Apache resort to silence when they are confronted with ambiguity and uncertainty in their social relationships: they do not try to talk their way out of difficulty or uncertainty as people with other cultural backgrounds sometimes try to do.

Silence is often communicative and its appropriate uses must be learned. Among other things it can communicate respect, comfort, support, disagreement, or uncertainty. In many societies people do not talk unless they have something important to say. As Gardner (1966) has observed, the Puliyanese of south India are neither particularly cooperative nor competitive, and individuals tend to do their own thing. They do not find much to talk about, and by the time they are 40 or so they hardly seem to talk at all. The Aritama of Colombia are described as being not only taciturn, but also, when they do speak, deliberately evasive. Several reports have recounted how Danes appreciate silence, being able to sit in one another's presence for long periods of time without feeling any need to talk and, indeed, finding visitors who insist on talking constantly too demanding. They feel no urge to fill up silences with idle chatter. In other societies, e.g., among certain aboriginal peoples in North America, an acceptable social visit is to arrive at someone's house, sit around for a while, and then leave with hardly a word spoken all the while. If you have nothing to say, you do not need to speak, and there is no obligation to make 'small talk.'

In contrast, other people talk for the sheer pleasure of talking. Fox (1974) has described how the Roti, the residents of the South-western tip of the island of Timor in eastern Indonesia, consider talk one of the great pleasures of life – not just idle chatter, but disputing, arguing, showing off various verbal skills, and, in general,

indulging in verbal activity. Silence is interpreted as a sign of some kind of distress, possibly confusion or dejection. So social encounters are talk filled. The Bella Coola of British Columbia are said to talk constantly and to prize wittiness. Among the Araucanians of Chile the men take great pride in their oratorical skills, but women maintain silence in the presence of their husbands. Even communities located physically quite near each other can be quite different in this respect. In his Laws, Plato described how the Athenians were great talkers whereas the Spartans were known for their brevity and the Cretans were reputed to have more wit than words.

11.5.2 The social situation in Antigua

The social situation in Antigua in the West Indies requires another kind of indulgence in talk. Talk is expected of people. Reisman (1974) describes what happens when someone enters a casual group:

> No opening is necessarily made for him; nor is there any pause or other formal signal that he is being included. No one appears to pay any attention. When he feels ready he will simply begin speaking. He may be heard, he may not. That is, the other voices may eventually stop and listen, or some of them may not; eyes may or may not turn to him. If he is not heard the first time he will try again, and yet again (often with the same remark). Eventually he will be heard or give up. In such a system it is also true that there is no particular reason to find out what is going on or who is talking before one starts oneself. There is little pressure to relate one's subject to any state of the group. Therefore it is also quite reasonable to arrive talking, so to speak, and the louder one does so the greater the chances that one is heard.

In Antigua a conversation is multi-faceted in that it freely mixes a variety of activities that in certain other groups would be kept quite apart. Reisman (1974) points out how, 'in a brief conversation with me, about three minutes, a girl called to someone on the street, made a remark to a small boy, sang a little, told a child to go to school, sang some more, told a child to go buy bread, etc., all the while continuing the thread of her conversation about her sister.' In Antigua people speak because they must assert themselves through language. They do not consider as interruptions behaviour that we would consider being either interruptive or even disruptive. Reisman (1974) says that in Antigua 'to enter a conversation one must assert one's presence rather than participate in something formalized as an exchange.' In a restaurant or store:

> One says aloud what one wants, nobody asks you. Neither is any sign given that your request has been heard. If you feel your request is not getting attention you may repeat it (how often depending on your character, how big a noise you like to make generally). But one must not assume in the remarks one makes that one has not been heard the first time or one will be rebuked. One is listened to.

Talk in Antigua is therefore quite a different kind of activity from talk in Denmark. Nor can one kind be said to be 'better' than the other. Each arises from certain needs in the society and each responds to those needs.

As a final example of another special use of languages, we can mention the importance of a certain kind of talk among the Subanun of the Philippines, who employ certain kinds of speech in drinking encounters. Such encounters are very important for gaining prestige and for resolving disputes. Frake (1964) has described how talk, what he calls '***drinking talk***,' proceeds in such encounters, from the initial invitation to partake of drink, to the selection of the proper topics for discussion and problems for resolution as drinking proceeds competitively, and finally to the displays of verbal art that accompany heavy, '***successful***' drinking. Each of these stages has its own characteristics. Those who are the most accomplished at drinking talk become the de facto leaders among the Subanun because successful talk during drinking may be used to claim or assert social leadership. It gives one a certain right to manipulate others, because it is during such talk that important disputes are settled, e.g., disputes which in other societies would have to be settled in the courts. ***Drinking talk*** among the Subanun, is therefore, far removed from '***cocktail party chatter***,' as many Westerners know the latter: it is serious business.

As can be seen, various examples have been given to provide some insight into how speech, or talk, is used in certain societies very differently from the ways we might be accustomed to hearing it used. Those ways, of course, derive entirely from the norms we have internalized or from others with which we have become familiar. We should be prepared to acknowledge that some of our own uses of language would undoubtedly strike a 'Kung, a Western Apache, an Antiguan, or a Subanun as strange, if not bizarre. Just think how often we talk about the weather but to no consequence! What we need is some kind of general scheme, or framework, to help us make systematic observations about the different ways people use talk.

11.6 The Ethnography of Speaking

Hymes (1974) has proposed an ethnographic framework which takes into account the various factors that are involved in speaking. It is obvious that at this point, you could be wondering what an ethnography of a communicative event is. First of all, remember that talk is always engaged into with intent by the speakers. Put simply, there is always a purpose which the speaker wishes to convey to the hearer each time they engage in talk. Well, an ethnography of a communicative event is simply a description of all the factors that are relevant in understanding how that particular communicative event achieves its objectives. For convenience, Hymes uses the word ***SPEAKING*** as an acronym for the various factors he deems to be relevant. These factors have been considered one by one in the subsequent section.

The **S** represents the **Setting** and **Scene**. The Setting and Scene (S) of speech are important. Setting refers to the time and place, i.e., the concrete physical circumstances in which speech takes place. Scene refers to the abstract psychological setting, or the cultural definition of the occasion. The Queen's Christmas message has its own unique setting and scene, as has the President of the United States' annual State of the Union Address. A particular bit of speech may actually serve to define a scene, whereas another bit of speech may be deemed to be quite inappropriate in certain circumstances. Within a particular setting, of course, participants are free to change scenes, as they change the level of formality (e.g., go from serious to joyful) or as they change the kind of activity in which they are involved (e.g., begin to drink or to recite poetry).

The Participants (**P**) include various combinations of speaker–listener, addressor–addressee, or sender–receiver. They generally fill certain socially specified roles. A two-person conversation involves a speaker and hearer whose roles change; a 'dressing down' involves a speaker and hearer with no role change; a political speech involves an addressor and addressees (the audience); and a telephone message involves a sender and a receiver. A prayer obviously makes a deity a participant. In a classroom a teacher's question and a student's response involve not just those two as speaker and listener but also the rest of the class as audience, since they too are expected to benefit from the exchange.

Ends (**E**) refers to the conventionally recognized and expected outcomes of an exchange as well as to the personal goals that participants seek to accomplish on particular occasions. A trial in a courtroom has a recognizable social end in view, but the various participants, i.e., the judge, jury, prosecution, defense, accused, and witnesses, have different personal goals. Likewise, a marriage ceremony serves a certain social end, but each of the various participants may have his or her own unique goals in getting married or in seeing a particular couple married.

Act sequence (**A**) refers to the actual form and content of what is said: the precise words used, how they are used, and the relationship of what is said to the actual topic at hand. This is one aspect of speaking in which linguists have long shown an interest, particularly those who study discourse and conversation, and it is one about which I will have more to say in chapter 12. Others too, e.g., psychologists and communication theorists concerned with content analysis, have shown a similar interest. Public lectures, casual conversations, and cocktail party chatter are all different forms of speaking; with each go different kinds of language and things talked about.

Key (**K**), the fifth term, refers to the tone, manner, or spirit in which a particular message is conveyed: light-hearted, serious, precise, pedantic, mocking, sarcastic, pompous, and so on. The key may also be marked nonverbally by certain kinds of behaviour, gesture, posture, or even deportment. When there is a lack of fit between

what a person is actually saying and the key that the person is using, listeners are likely to pay more attention to the key than to the actual content, e.g., to the burlesque of a ritual rather than to the ritual itself.

Instrumentalities (**I**) refers to the choice of channel, e.g., oral, written, or telegraphic, and to the actual forms of speech employed, such as the language, dialect, code, or register that is chosen. Formal, written, legal language is one instrumentality; spoken Newfoundland English is another; code-switching between English and Italian in Toronto is a third; and the use of Pig Latin is still another. In Suriname a high government official addresses a Bush Negro chief in Dutch and has his words translated into the local tribal language. The chief does the opposite. Each speaks this way although both could use a common instrumentality, Sranan. You may employ different instrumentalities in the course of a single verbal exchange of some length: first read something, then tell a dialect joke, then quote Shakespeare, then use an expression from another language, and so on. You also need not necessarily change topic to do any of these.

Norms of interaction and interpretation (**N**) refers to the specific behaviours and properties that attach to speaking and also to how these may be viewed by someone who does not share them, e.g., loudness, silence, gaze return, and so on. For example, there are certain norms of interaction with regard to church services and conversing with strangers. However, these norms may vary from social group to social group, so the kind of behaviour expected in congregations that practice 'talking in tongues' or the group encouragement of a preacher in others would be deemed abnormal and unacceptable in a 'high' Anglican setting. Likewise, an Arab and an Anglo-Saxon meeting for the first time are unlikely to find a conversational distance that each finds comfortable.

Genre (**G**), the final term, refers to clearly demarcated types of utterance; such things as poems, proverbs, riddles, sermons, prayers, lectures, and editorials. These are all marked in specific ways in contrast to casual speech. Of course, in the middle of a prayer, a casual aside would be marked too. While particular genres seem more appropriate on certain occasions than on others, e.g., sermons inserted into church services, they can be independent: we can ask someone to stop 'sermonizing'; that is, we can recognize a genre of sermons when an instance of it, or something closely resembling an instance, occurs outside its usual setting.

What Hymes offers in his ***SPEAKING*** formula is a very fundamental reminder that talk is a complex activity, and that any particular bit of talk is actually a piece of '***skilled work***.' It is skilled in the sense that, if it is to be successful, the speaker must reveal a sensitivity to and awareness of each of the eight factors discussed. Speakers and listeners must also work to see that nothing goes wrong. When speaking goes wrong, as it sometimes does, that going-wrong is often clearly describable in terms of some neglect of one or more of the factors. Since we acknowledge that there are

'better' speakers and 'poorer' speakers, we may also assume that individuals vary in their ability to manage and exploit the total array of factors. Note that ethnographies are based on first-hand observations of behaviour in a group of people in their natural setting. Investigators report on what they see and hear as they observe what is going on around them. As Duranti (1997, p. 85) says, 'an ethnography is the written description of the social organisation, social activities, symbolic and material resources, and interpretive practices characteristic of a particular group of people.'

Ethnographers thus ask themselves what is happening and they try to provide accounts which show how the behaviour that is being observed makes sense within the community that is being observed. As Johnstone (2004) says, ethnography 'presupposes . . . that the best explanations of human behaviour are particular and culturally relative' rather than general and universal. Such studies are also qualitative rather than quantitative. In ethnographies of speaking the focus is on the language the participants are using and the cultural practices such language reflects. They very often deal with issues of identity and power.

11.6.1 The Kuna of Panama

Sherzer describes how the Kuna of Panama use language: their public language of the gathering house, and their use of language in curing and music, in rites and festivities, and in everyday conversation. Sherzer points out that the Kuna wait very patiently to take their turns in speaking so that interruptions and overlaps in conversation are rare events.

11.6.2 The Malinche of Central Mexico

Hill and Hill describe how the ***Malinche*** of Central Mexico use language in their daily lives and continuing struggle, and Lindenfeld offers an account of the language of a dozen long-standing urban marketplaces in Paris, Rouen, and Grenoble: the talk of vendors, vendor–customer talk, politeness routines, small talk, jokes, insults, etc. She shows how such talk helps to sustain the markets as places where goods are bought and sold while at the same time allowing people to associate with one another, an important function in an increasingly urbanizing society in which interpersonal relationships appear to be difficult to maintain.

11.6.3 Speech in Warren County

Hazen's (2002) study of speech in Warren County, North Carolina, required a year and a half of residence in the community as well as visits over a seven year period. This participation in the community enabled Hazen to look closely at factors affecting the cultural identity of residents and their expression of that identity through linguistic choices. He looked at three local groups (African Americans, European Americans, and Native Americans) and whether speakers identified only with Warren County or with both Warren County and areas outside the county. He called this their cultural

identity. Hazen concludes that while 'linguistic variation in Warren County correlates with several categories, including gender, age, and ethnicity . . . the cultural identity of speakers should be considered for both large-scale studies of social factors and more ethnographic studies of individual speakers' (p. 253). Cultural identity – a qualitative factor – turned out to be the one that most clearly accounted for the linguistic behaviours that Hazen observed. (The studies by Gal (see pp. 205–6), the Milroys (pp. 181–3), Eckert (p. 212), Kiesling (p. 177), and Marshall (p. 211) also have major ethnographic components.)

An alternative approach to devising ethnographies is to attempt to describe the different functions of language in communication. Various linguists have proposed different categorizations of the functions of language, e.g., Jakobson (1960), Halliday (1973), and Robinson (1972). Halliday's list covers the following functions: instrumental (satisfying some material need); regulatory (regulating the behaviour of people); interactional (maintaining social relationships); personal (expressing personality); heuristic (investigating the environment); imaginative (playing and creating); and representational (expressing propositions). Robinson's list (pp. 50–1) covers many of the same functions but names them differently and, of course, divides them differently: avoidance, conformity to norms, aesthetics, encounter regulation, performative, regulation (of self and others), affective, marking of emitter (e.g., emotional state, personality, or identity), role relationship marking, referential, instruction, inquiry, and metalanguage functions.

What is clear from any such list is that there is more to understanding how language is used than describing the syntactic composition of sentences or specifying their propositional content. When you learn to use a language, you learn how to use it in order to do certain things that people do with that language. The term communicative competence is sometimes used to describe this kind of ability. Gumperz (1972, p. 205) explains that term as follows: 'Whereas linguistic competence covers the speaker's ability to produce grammatically correct sentences, communicative competence describes his ability to select, from the totality of grammatically correct expressions available to him, forms which appropriately reflect the social norms governing behaviour in specific encounters.' Working with an ethnographic or functional approach, we may attempt to specify just what it means to be a competent speaker of a particular language. It is one thing to learn the language of the Subanun, but quite another to learn how to ask for a drink in Subanun. To do the first you need a certain linguistic competence; to do the latter you need communicative competence. As Saville Troike (1996, p. 363) says:

> Communicative competence extends to both knowledge and expectation of who may or may not speak in certain settings, when to speak and when to remain silent, whom one may speak to, how one may talk to persons of different statuses and roles, what nonverbal behaviours are appropriate in various contexts, what the routines for turn-taking are in conversation, how to

> ask for and give information, how to request, how to offer or decline assistance or cooperation, how to give commands, how to enforce discipline, and the like – in short, everything involving the use of language and other communicative dimensions in particular social settings.

Hymes (1972, p. 279) has argued that, in learning a language, children must learn not only how to construct sentences in that language but also must 'acquire knowledge of a set of ways in which sentences are used. From a finite experience of speech acts and their interdependence with sociocultural features, they develop a general theory of the speaking appropriate in their community, which they employ, like other forms of tacit cultural knowledge (competence), in conducting and interpreting social life.' Hymes provides some examples of the kinds of learning that are involved:

> They come to be able to recognize, for example, appropriate and inappropriate interrogative behavior (e.g., among the Araucanians of Chile, that to repeat a question is to insult; among the Tzeltal of Chiapas, Mexico, that a direct question is not properly asked (and to be answered 'nothing'); among the Cahinahua of Brazil, that a direct answer to a first question implies that the answerer has not time to talk, a vague answer, that the question will be answered directly the second time, and that talk can continue).

Another often-cited example is the different ways in which American and Japanese children are indoctrinated into appropriate language use (see Tobin et al., 1989). In contrast to the American encouragement of individual assertiveness the Japanese favor developing social awareness and 'harmony.' A misbehaving Japanese child will be told ***hito ni warawareru*** **'you'll be laughed at by others'** and instructed in polite ways of declining and, especially, of avoiding categorical refusals. Such behavior is appropriate within Japanese culture and it is learned very early in life. In learning to speak we are also learning to 'talk,' in the sense of communicating in those ways appropriate to the group in which we are doing that learning. These ways differ from group to group; consequently, as we move from one group to another or from one language to another, we must learn the new ways if we are to fit into that new group or to use that new language properly. Communicative competence is therefore a key component of social competence.

11.6.4 Usage

You ought to note that in their book *Qualitative Communication Research Methods*, communications scholars Thomas R. Lindlof and Bryan C. Taylor explain, "Ethnography of communication conceptualizes communication as a continuous flow of information, rather than as a segmented exchange of messages." According to Deborah Cameron, EOC can be thought of as the application of ethnographic methods to the communication patterns of a group. Littlejohn and Foss recall that Dell Hymes suggests that "cultures communicate in different ways, but all forms of

communication require a shared code, communicators who know and use the code, a channel, a setting, a message form, a topic, and an event created by transmission of the message." "EOC studies," according to Lindlof and Taylor, "produce highly detailed analysis of communication codes and their moment-to-moment functions in various contexts. In these analyses, speech communities are constituted in local and continuous performances of cultural and moral matters."

EOC can be used as a means by which to study the interactions among members of a specific culture or "speech community," which is any group of people that creates and establishes its own speaking codes and norms. Gerry Philipsen explained, "Each community has its own cultural values about speaking and these are linked to judgments of situational appropriateness."

The meaning and the understanding of the presence or absence of speech within different communities will vary. Local cultural patterns and norms must be understood to analyze and interpret the appropriateness of speech act within specific communities. Thus, "the statement that talk is not anywhere valued equally in all social contexts suggests a research strategy for discovering and describing cultural or sub-cultural differences in the value of speaking. Speaking is one among other symbolic resources which are allocated and distributed in social situations according to distinctive culture patterns."

Hymes also used EOC to argue against the strong view of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, the idea that one's language determines one's cognitive ability. While Hymes believed that one's language affected one's world view, he argued that the extent of that effect depended "on the circumstances of its acquisition, and its place in the linguistic repertoire of a person and a community."

11.6.5 Conclusion

Ethnography of communication is quite a significant phenomenon in the study of sociolinguistics. It brings out different ways I which various linguist groupings use speech, how they choose to speak or remain silent, yet still communicate something.

Self Assessment Exercise

1. Is there any justification for the claim that different ethnic and social groups in society sometimes exhibit quite different ways of speaking, even that a bilingual person may sometimes behave quite differently, depending on which language he or she is using? If there are such differences, are there any consequences for that society as a whole?
2. Discuss the relevant factors in communication as expressed in SPEAKING

11.6.6 Summary

The unit has discussed Ethnography of communication, showing different ways in which different linguistic groupings behave. Examples of how different groups of people use speech in their daily life have been. Included in the unit are the origins and aims of ethnography of communication.

UNIT 12: LANGUAGE CONTACT

12.0 Introduction

In this unit you are introduced to language contact, types of contact situations and effects of language contact.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should e able to:

- Describe language contact
- Discuss the types of language contact situations
- Discuss the effects of language contact

12.1 Language contact

Language contact is a social and linguistic phenomenon by which speakers of different languages (or different dialects of the same language) interact with one another, leading to a transfer of linguistic features. Note that language contact is major factor in language change. Language contact occurs when speakers of two or more languages or varieties interact and influence each other.

You need to know from the onset that the study of language contact is called ***contact linguistics***. When speakers of different languages interact closely, it is typical for their languages to influence each other. You must have noted that language can occur at language boarders, between adstratum languages, or as a result of migration, with an intrusive language acting as either a superstratum or substratum. Language contact occurs in a variety of phenomena, including convergence, borrowing and relexification. The most common products of language contact are pidgins, creoles, code switching and mixed languages.

12.2 Different Types of Language Contact Situations

Language contact is not, of course, a homogeneous phenomenon. Contact may occur between languages which are genetically related or unrelated, speakers may have similar or vastly different social structures, and patterns of multilingualism may also vary greatly. In some cases the entire community speaks more than one variety, while in other cases only a subset of the population is multilingual. Lingualism and lectalism may vary by age, by ethnicity, by gender, by social class, by education level, or by one or more of a number of other factors. In some communities there are few constraints on the situations in which more than one language can be used, while in others there is heavy diglossia, and each language is confirmed to a particular type of social interaction while there are a great number of different language situations, a few come up frequently in areas where linguists do field work. One is dialect contact, for example between standard varieties of a language and regional varieties (e.g., in

France or the Arab world)… A further type of language contact involves exogamous communities where more than one language might be used within the community because its members come from different areas. The converse of such communities where exogamy leads to multilingualism is an endoterogeneous community which maintains its own language for the purpose of excluding outsiders.

12.3 Effects of Language Contact

As stated in already, when languages get into contact, they influence with each other in so many ways. Some of the ways in which this happens is as discussed in the subsequent section.

12.3.1 Borrowing of vocabulary

If you are keen at observing during your social intercourse, you must have noted that the most common way that languages influence each other is the exchange of words. A lot is said about the contemporary borrowing of English words into other languages, but what is true is that this phenomenon is not new, nor is it very large by historical standards. The large-scale importation of words from Latin, French and other languages into English in the 16^{th} and 17^{th} centuries was more significant. You may wish to know that some languages have borrowed to such an extent that they have become scarcely recognisable. A good example is Armenian which borrowed so many words from Iranian languages so much so that it was at first considered a branch of the Idon-Iranian languages. And for many decades, it was not recognized as an independent branch of the Indo-Iranian languages.

12.3.2 Adoption of other Language features

Note that the influence of languages during language contact has a possibility of even going deeper, extending even to the extent of exchanging basic characteristics of a language such as morphology and grammar. A good example of such languages is ***Nepal Bhasa***, a language spoken in Nepal. It is a ***Sino-Tibetan*** language that is distantly related to Chinese but has had so many centuries of contact with neighbouring Indo-Iranian languages that it has even developed noun inflection, a trait that is typical of Indo-European family but rare in Sino-Tibetan. Nepal-Bhasa has absorbed features of grammar as well as verb tenses. Would you at this point think of any language you know that may have exchanged basic characteristics of another?

Another good example of a language that has been largely influenced by other languages is Romanian. This language was influenced by Slavic languages spoken by neighbouring tribes in the centuries after the fall of the Roman Empire not only I vocabulary but also in the phonology. English too has phrases adapted from French, in which the adjective immediately follows the noun. For example, ***Court-martial, Attorney-general, Lake-superior, Festival-proper, Princess-royal*** and many more. By now it can be taken for granted that you can easily see how a word can diffuse

from one language to another, but it is not as obvious how more basic features can do the same even if the latter phenomenon is not rare.

12.3.3 Language Shift

Another effect of the contact of two languages can be the replacement of one by the other. This happens most when one language has a higher social position (***prestige***). This sometimes leads to language endangerment or ***extinction***.

12.3.4 Strata Influence

When language shift occurs, the language that is replaced (known as substratum) can leave a profound impression on the replacing language (known as superstratum), when people retain features of the substratum as they learn the new language and pass these features on to their children, leading to the development of a new variety. For example, the Latin that came to replace local languages in present day France during Roman times was influenced by Gaulish and Germaic.

12.3.5 Creation of new Languages: Creolisation and Mixed Languages

Apart from what has already been stated Language contact can also lead to the development of new languages when people without a common language interact closely. And so, resulting from this contact a pidgin may develop, which may eventually become a full-fledged creole language through the process creolisation (though some linguists assert that a creole need not emerge from a pidgin). Prime examples of this are Aukan and Saramaccan, spoken in Suriname, which have vocabulary mainly from Portuguese, English and Dutch.

12.3.6 Mixed languages

Note that a much rare but still observed process, according to some linguistics, is the formation of mixed languages. Whereas creoles are formed by communities lacking a common language, mixed languages are formed by communities fluent in both languages. They tend to inherit much more of complexity (grammatical, phonological, etc.) of their parent languages, whereas creoles begin as simple languages then develop in complexity more independently. It is sometimes explained as bilingual communities that no longer identify with the cultures of either of the languages they speak, and seek to develop their own language as an expression of their own cultural uniqueness.

12.3.7 Mutual and non-mutual influence

By the way, change as a result of contact is habitually one-sided. Chinese, for instance, has had a profound effect on the development of Japanese, but Chinese remains relatively free of Japanese influence other than some modern terms that were

re-borrowed after they were coined in Japan and based on Chinese characters. In India, Hindi and other native languages have been influenced by English, and loanwords from English are part of everyday vocabulary. However, in some cases, language contact may lead to mutual exchange though that may be confined to a particular geographic region. For example, in Switzerland, the local French has been influenced by German and vice-versa. In Scotland too, Scots has been heavily influenced by English, and many Scots terms have been adopted into regional English dialect.

12.3.8 Linguistic Hegemony

Note here that any language's influence widens as its speakers grow in power. Languages like Chinese, Latin, Portuguese, French, Spanish, Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, Russian, German and English have each seen periods of widespread importance and have had varying degrees of influence on the native languages spoken in the areas over which they have held sway. Of course, this influence could be seen during and since the 1990s. This influence is vivid on the internet, along with previous influences such as radio and television, telephone communication and printed materials, and these have expanded and changed the many ways in which languages can be influenced by each other and by technology.

12.3.9 Dialectal and sub-cultural change

Language contact may impact the whole speech community of a language involved but some language contact affect only a particular segment of a speech community. As a result of this, change may be manifested only in particular dialects, jargons, or registers. South African English, for example, has been significantly affected by Afrikaans in terms of lexis and pronunciation, but the other dialects of English have remained almost totally unaffected by Afrikaans other than a few loanwords. Note that in some cases, a language develops an acrolect that contains elements of a more prestigious language. For instance, in England during a large part of the Middle Ages, upper-class speech was dramatically influenced by French to the point that it often resembled a French dialect.

Conclusion

Language contact is a very highly discussed phenomenon in sociolinguistics. It involves various types and affects the speech community.

Self Assessment Exercise

1. So much happens as a result of language contact. Discuss.

Summary

This unit has discussed language contact ad its various types as well as the impact of language contact on the speech community.

UNIT 13: LANGUAGE AND GENDER

13.0 Introduction

This unit discusses language and gender, demonstrating that there is a difference in which male and female speak ad use language.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of unit, you should be able:

- Trace the history of language and gender
- Appreciate gender differences in language use
- Describe the kind of topics preferred by each gender

13.1 Overview

Certainly, women's speech differs from men's speech; and women and men use language differently due to the styles, registers, and the way of using language, interaction, thought, culture, and linguistic attitudes gender, politeness and stereotypes. In fact, there is a number of close relationships between Gender and language. Another word, men's way of using language and women's way of using language is different. It is because of structure of the language, norm of the society or people of the society who use the language. Moreover, gender (male-female) is socially constructed. Because of the social institution or taboo, we find variations/differences between men and women. In addition to, men's style of speaking and women style of speaking are deeply rooted in power structure. In the following passages, some arguments have been give in favour of the assertion that me and women do not use language in the same way.

13.2 Studies of language and gender

The study of gender and language in sociolinguistics is often said to have begun with Robin Lakoff's 1975 book, Language and Woman's Place, as well as some earlier studies by Lakoff. The study of language and gender has developed greatly since the 1970s. Prominent scholars include Deborah Cameron, Penelope Eckert, Janet Holmes, Deborah Tannen, and others. Women's Language, Confidence and Status Conscious Women, according to some social dialectologists' suggestions, are status conscious and that this is reflected in their use of standard speech form. Robin Lakoff, an American linguist, suggests almost the opposite. She argues that women are using language which reinforces their subordinate status; they are 'colluding in their own subordination' by the way they speak. In fact, it is English language and patriarchal society is responsible for colluding women status and confidence.

13.2.1 Pronunciation

Social dialect research focuses on difference between women's and men's speech in the areas of pronunciation and morphology with some attention to syntactic constructions (such as multiple negations). Brend (1975) claims that the intonation pattern of men and women vary. Robin Lakoff shifts the focus of research on gender difference to syntax, semantics, and style. She suggests that women's subordinate social status in American society is reflected in the language used about them. She identifies a number of linguistics features which she claims are used more often by women than men, and which in her opinion express uncertainty and lack of confidence. According to Robin Lakoff, Women's use of both Hedging and boosting devices present the lack of confidence. Lakoff suggests that women's speech is characterized by linguistic features such as following:

1. Lexical hedges or fillers, e.g. you know, you see, sort of, well.
2. Tag questions, e.g. She's very nice, isn't she?
3. Rising intonation on declaratives, e.g. it's really good?
4. 'Empty' adjectives, e.g. divine, charming, cute.
5. Precise colour terms, e.g. magenta, aquamarine.
6. Intensifiers such as just, and so, e.g. I like him so much.
7. 'Hypercorrect' grammar, e.g. consistent use of standard verb forms
8. Avoidance of strong swears words, e.g. fudge, my goodness.
9. Emphatic stress, e.g. it is a BRILLANT performance. Here, all are hedging devices except the boosting devices –intensifiers and emphatics stress. Lakoff argues that women's use hedging device to express uncertainty, and they use boosting devices to persuade their addressee to take them seriously. Women boost the force of their utterances because they think that otherwise they will not be heard or paid attention to. So, according to Lakoff, both hedges and boosters reflect women's lack of confidence. Lakoff also says that women may answer a question with a statement employing the rising intonation pattern usually associated with making a question rather than the falling intonation pattern associated with making a firm statement.

13.2.2 Politeness

Women use certain patterns associated with surprise and politeness more often than men. Women's language was described as weak, unassertive, tentative, and women were presented as losers, as victims (Coates 1998:413). Holmes (1995) characterizes women's speech as more polite than men's. Researchers argue that the women use more tags than the men. But they do not use them for the same purposes as the men. Women put more emphasis than men on the polite or affective functions of tags, using them as facilitative positive politeness devices. Men, on the other hand, use tags for the expression of uncertainty. In a study of Mayan community in Mexico, for

instance, overall the women used more politeness device than the men, so the pattern seemed to resemble the Western pattern. But, increasingly, the men used far fewer politeness forms to each other than to women. So, male talk to males was relatively plain an unmodified. In this community, 'men's talk' could be seen as the unusual variety rather than women's talk.

13.2.3 Interruptions

There are many features of interaction which differentiate the talk of women and men. Women tend to interrupt less in conversation and "to be more attentive listeners, concerned to ensure others get a chance to contribute" than men (Holmes 1995: 67). Despite the widespread stereotype of women as the talkative sex, and proverbs which characterize women as garrulous. Women's tongues are like lambs' tails, they never still' most of the research evidence points outs the other way. In a wide range of contexts, particularly non-private ones such as television interviews, staff meetings and conference discussions, where talking may increase your status, men dominate the talking time. In the same gender interruptions are pretty evenly distributed between speakers. In same-sex pairs: a) Men argue more with other men, b) Women are more dramatic with other women. A number of studies show that in cross-sex interactions, men frequently interrupt women but women much less frequently interrupt men. In cross-sex conversation, women ask more questions, encourage others to speak, use more signals like- 'mm hmm' to encourage others to continue speaking, use more instances of you and we, and do not protest as much as men when interrupted. Men interrupt more, challenge more, dispute, and ignore more, try to control what topics are discussed, and make categorical statement. That is, in the cross-sex interactional patterns in conversation, men and women seem to exhibit the power relationship that exists in society, with men dominating and women subservient. There is no doubt that men are still doing most of the interrupting. In other contexts, too, it has been found that men interrupt others more than women do. In departmental meetings and doctor-patient interactions, for instance, the pattern holds. Women get interrupted more than men, regardless of whether they are the doctors or the patients. In exchanges between patients and children, fathers do most of the interrupting, and daughters are interrupted most- both by their mothers and their fathers. However, most of the men speak more often and for longer than most of the women. Most of men interrupt more than the women. While men and women are both guilty of interrupting, there are some significant differences:

- Men interrupt, overall, more often than women.
- Men interrupt other women more often than they interrupt men.
- Men are more successful at taking and maintaining the floor.
- Women's interruptions take the form of questions and/or supportive statements (yeah, right, I see, is that so, etc.).

Holmes (1992), on the other hand, found that in doctor-patient conversations female doctors were interrupted more often than male physicians. In addition, in business organizations, men but not women tended to dominate the interactions. West (1998) came to similar conclusions in her study of interaction between doctors and patients.

13.2.4 Competitive vs. cooperative

It has been found that women are more supportive and cooperative conversationalists; and men are more competitive conventionalists. A research on the Malagasy community, women's speech is more direct than men's. It is women who handle the bargaining necessary in the market-place, and it is the women who deal with family arguments and disagreements. Men's speech in this community is indirect and circumlocutionary. In general, research on conversational interactional reveals women as cooperative conversationalists, whereas men tend to be more competitive and less supportive of others.

13.3 Topic of conversations between Men and Women

In conversations involving members of both sexes, men speak more than women. The topics of the conversations also vary. Men-men: competition and teasing, sports, aggression, business, politics, legal matters, taxes. Women - women: self feeling, affiliation with others, family and social life, books, food and drink, life's troubles, and lifestyle. Adjectives such as adorable, charming, divine, lovely, and sweet are commonly used by women than by men. They also add tag questions very often for the same reasons: the sense of being unsure and insecurity. There is a widespread belief that women talk more than men. 'Men have been shown to talk more than women in settings as diverse as staff meetings' (Eakins and Eakins 1978), television panel discussions (Bernard 1972) and husband-and-wife pairs in spontaneous conversation (Soskin and John 1963).Evidence suggests that men and women tend to discuss different topics (Aries and Johnson 1983; Seidler 1989). For example, men tend to talk about sport, politics and cars, whereas women tend to talk about child-rearing and personal relationships.

13.3.1 Questions

Men and women differ in their use of questions in conversations. For men, a question is usually a genuine request for information whereas with women it can often be a rhetorical means of engaging the other's conversational contribution or of acquiring attention from others conversationally involved, techniques associated with a collaborative approach to language use. Therefore women use questions more frequently. In writing, however, both genders use rhetorical questions as literary devices. For example, Mark Twain used them in "A War Prayer" to provoke the reader to question his actions and beliefs. Tag questions are frequently used to verify

or confirm information; though in women's language they may also be used to avoid making strong statements.

13.3.2 Turn-taking

As the work of Victoria DeFrancisco shows, female linguistic behaviour characteristically encompasses a desire to take turns in conversation with others, which is opposed to men's tendency towards centring on their own point or remaining silent when presented with such implicit offers of conversational turn-taking as are provided by hedges such as "y' know" and "isn't it". This desire for turn-taking gives rises to complex forms of interaction in relation to the more regimented form of turn-taking commonly exhibited by men.

13.3.3 Changing the topic of conversation

According to Bruce Dorval in his study of same-sex friend interaction, males tend to change subject more frequently than females. This difference may well be at the root of the conception that women chatter and talk too much. Goodwin (1990) observes that girls and women link their utterances to previous speakers and develop each other topics, rather than introducing new topics. However, a study of young American couples and their interactions reveal that while women raise twice as many topics as men, it is the men's topics that are usually taken up and subsequently elaborated in the conversation.

13.3.4 Self-disclosure

Female tendencies toward self-disclosure, i.e., sharing their problems and experiences with others, often to offer sympathy, contrasts with male tendencies to non-self disclosure and professing advice or offering a solution when confronted with another's problems. In studies conducted, female-only discussion groups displayed more self-disclosure and coalition language than did male-only or mixed-gender groups (Savicki, Kelley, & Oesterreich, 1998, cited in Eun-Ju Lee 2007, p-517). According to expectation states theory (Berger, Fisek, Norman, & Zelditch, 1977; Wagner & Berger, 1997), men enjoy greater advantage over women in exerting social influence due to the differential performance expectations (cited in Eun-Ju Lee 2007, p-519). Both men and women have completely different views of self-disclosure. Developing a close relationship with another person requires a certain level of intimacy, or self-disclosure. It typically is much easier to get to know a woman than it is to get to know a man. It has been proven that women get to know someone on a more personal level and they are more likely to desire to share their feelings.

13.3.6 Listening and attentiveness

It appears that women attach more load than men to the importance of listening in conversation, with its connotations of power to the listener as confidant of the speaker. This attachment of import by women to listening is inferred by women's normally lower rate of interruption — i.e., disrupting the flow of conversation with a topic unrelated to the previous one and by their largely increased use of minimal responses in relation to men. Men, however, interrupt far more frequently with non-related topics, especially in the mixed sex setting and, far from rendering a female speaker's responses minimal, are apt to greet her conversational spotlights with silence, as the work of Victoria DeFrancisco demonstrates. When men talk, women listen and agree. However men tend to misinterpret this agreement, which was intended in a spirit of connection, as a reflection of status and power. A man might conclude that a woman is indecisive or insecure as a result of her listening and attempts of acknowledgment. When in all actuality, a woman's reasons for behaving this way have nothing to do with her attitudes toward her knowledge, but are a result of her attitudes toward her relationships. The act of giving information frames the speaker with a higher status, while the act of listening frames the listener as lower. However, when women listen to men, they are not necessarily thinking in terms of status, but in terms of connection and support.

13.3.7 Difference

Maltz/Borker conclude that the differences between men's and women's speech can be explained using an anthropological approach in the study of "culture and social organization." Holmes (1998) points out this approach to formulate a set of sociolinguistic universals. Among these are:

1. Women and men develop different patterns of language use. (1998: 462)
2. Women tend to focus on the affective functions of an interaction more often than men do. (1998: 463)
3. Women tend to use linguistic devices that stress solidarity more often than men do. (1998: 468)
4. Women tend to interact in ways which will maintain and increase solidarity. (1998: 472)
5. Women are stylistically more flexible than men. (1998: 475)

Whereas Maltz/Borker and Holmes see the difference approach from a cultural point of view, Chambers (1992) gives a biological explanation. Claiming an innate, albeit small, neurological advantage for women, Chambers assumes that this advantage is realized in the use of verbal skills and transferred to other behavioural skills. Using data from studies in Detroit and Belfast, from Japan and the Middle East, Chambers argues for a sex-based analysis of variability. Although pointing to the tentative nature of this explanation he claims that female precocity in verbal skills beginning in

infancy predisposes them to apply their verbal skills to all kinds of situations as they grow up (Chambers 1992: 201).

Gender Differences Verbal Qualities: In verbal communication, there are differences in the quality of speech used by men and women.

Men	**Women**
Talk loudly	Talk softly
Deep pitch	High pitch
Slow rate	Fast rate
Downward inflection	Upward inflection
Relaxed tone	Strident tone
Powerful style	Powerless style

Non-Verbal Qualities: Similarly, there are differences in the quality of non-verbal communication used by men and women.

Men	**Women**
Use more physical space	Yield physical space
Stare	Use moderate eye contact
Use commanding gestures	Use acquiescent gestures
Hold their head straight	Tilt their heads
Keep a "poker face"	Use more facial expressions

13.3.6.1 Reasons of Difference

There are some reasons of gender differences in language use. Three claims can be offered on this: first, that men and women are biologically different and that this differences has serious consequences for gender differences in language use. Women are predisposed psychologically to be involved with one another and to be mutually supportive and non-competitive. Men are innately predisposed to independence and power rather than to solidarity. Second, social organizations are built up on hierarchical set of power relationships. Men have the ascendency in such a system, which women usually do not. Language behaviour reflects the social dominance of men. They try to take control, to specify topics, to interrupt, and so on. They do it with each other and they do it with women. Women feeling powerless, let them get away with it. Third, men and women are social beings who have learned to act in certain ways. Language behaviour is largely learned behaviour. Men learn to be men and women learn to be women. Most of the studies show that the differences between men and women in ways of interacting may be the result of different socialization and acculturation patterns and various gender assigned activities. It would be a stereotype to call women's style as 'cooperative' and men's style 'competitive'. Most of the evidences suggest that men and women differ in the kinds of language they use

because of their distinct roles in society. The more distinct the roles will be, the greater the differences. In societies that are less rigidly stratified and in which men and women's roles are less clearly differentiated, the reflection can be found in language also. Changes in society also reflect change in language.

13.4 Dominance versus subjection, Status and Power

Most studies find that in mixed talks men tend to be more dominating than women. The dominance approach is supported mainly by variability on the basis of power. Power, on the other hand, is derived from social, economic and socio-historical status. Helena Leet-Pellegrini suggests a dichotomy between a male desire for conversational dominance with reference to male experts speaking more verbosely than their female counterparts – and a female aspiration to group conversational participation. According to Jennifer Coates, males are afforded more attention in the context of the classroom and that this can lead to their gaining more attention in scientific and technical subjects, which in turn can lead to their achieving better success in those areas, ultimately leading to their having more power in a technocratic society. Conversation is not the only area where power is an important aspect of the male/female dynamic. Power is reflected in every aspect of communication from what the actual topic of the communication, to the ways in which it is communicated. Women are typically less concerned with power more concerned with forming and maintaining relationships, whereas men are more concerned with their status. A woman's communication will tend to be more focused on building and maintaining relationships. Men on the other hand, will place a higher priority on power; their communication styles will reflect their desire to maintain their status in the relationship. According to Tannen's research, men tend to tell stories as another way to maintain their status. Primarily, men tell jokes, or stories that focus on themselves. Women on the other hand, are less concerned with their own power, and therefore their stories revolve not around themselves, but around others. By putting themselves on the same level as those around them, women attempt to downplay their part in their own stories, which strengthens their connections to those around them.

13.5 The Use of Questions as a Controlling Strategy

Zimmerman/West (1975) and others state that just as male dominance is exhibited through male control of macro-institutions in society, it is also exhibited through male control of at least a part of micro-institutions (Zimmerman/ West 1975: 125). We see that one of the controlling mechanisms in micro-institutions is related to the strategy of interrupting. As men are interrupting more often than women, male dominance can be established in conversations. Thus, turns are claimed, topics are initiated and maintained by men or abandoned by women. In some cultures, on the other hand, questions may also be used as controlling mechanisms. Similar to the pressure by the no-gap-rule mentioned above exerted on the participants in a speech situation in these cultures, questions require answers in many conversational situations. When questions

in form of facilitative rather than polite or modal tag-questions, therefore, are combined with a specific statement they can be used to maintain or to control the direction of the conversation. As women use this type of question more often than men, female dominance can be established.

13.6 Construction of gender

Sex is biologically determined. Sex differences are the differences based on biological/physical organs. Gender is a social construct involving the whole display of psychological, social and cultural differences between males and females. Differences between sexes are well recognized: Female: more fat, less muscle, not as strong, and weigh less compared to men. They are mature more rapidly and live longer. They have different voice quality and different vocal skill. But most of the differences may result from the different socialization process: longevity, voice quality. Phonological differences between men and women in almost all languages of the world, for example, Hindi language-differences in word choice in various languages. Japanese women show they are women when they speak, with the use of the morphological inflections ne or wa. According to Sapir (1929), the Yana language of California contains special forms for use in speech either by or to women. Some other sex-based distinctions such as actor-actress, waiter-waitress, and master-mistress are found in language. Some of these distinctions are reinforced by entrenched patterns of usage and semantic development. Master-mistress have quite different ranges of use and meaning Another pair of differentiation: boy-girl, manwoman, gentleman-lady, bachelor-spinster, widower-widow. Widower-widow has different use and meaning from the others. Lakoff cites that there are 'equivalent' words referring to men and women do have quite different associations in English language. "He's a professional" and "She's a professional".

13.6.1 Gender as a Social Construct

Gender is a construct that owes its creation to a number of social institutions. Some of these include family, educational institutions, judiciary, religion, etc. In recent times, the media has emerged as a powerful constitutive agent of gender-related ideas and notions. Gender, unlike sex, which is based on biological division and is specific in character, is more amorphous in nature and is subject to change with reference to context and time.

13.6.2 Sexist language

Who is 'sexist'? The people who use language or the language itself? Lakoff claims that English language is sexist language. That is why; women appear to be more submissive to men in respect of the use of language. For example, women are also often named, titled, and addressed differently from men. Women are more likely than men to be addressed by their first names when everything else is equal, or, if not by first names, by such terms as lady, miss, or dear and even baby, or babe. Women are

said to be subject to a wider range of address terms than men, and men are familiar with them than with other men. Languages differ in whether they include gender distinctions for words referring to entities without biological sex (cited in Vigliocco 2005, p-515). Language is accommodating enough for any kind of change and space so that any sex-biased expression or utterance can be made sex-neutral: chairman-chairperson, salesman-salesclerk, actor, etc. The extreme power structure of dominance in the structure and use of language can also be avoided by initiating some changes in language. So language itself is not sexist. It is the people who use languages may be sexist or not. Feminist movement demands the elimination of all kinds of discriminations – social, economic, linguistic, and so on done against women. There are many suggestions for avoiding sexist language. Morphological changes: Salesman/lady –salesperson/sales associate, Chairman – chairperson, craftsman-craft worker, fireman-fire-fighter, watchman-guard/security, mankind-humanity, manmade-artificial, and so on. Recently some women have tried to assert their solidarity going so far as wanting to 'reclaim' language for themselves. Spender has declared: "males, as the dominant group, have produced language, thought and reality". Penelope argues that women should be aware of 'the lies of the fathers' tongues' and of the 'Patriarchal Universe of Discourse'. She holds that women should reinvent language to their own purposes. Many feminists have tried to develop their own linguistics conventions, non-competitive, non-interruptive speech, in order to liberate 'women'. The emergence of "***Écriture feminine***" (women's writing), which creates awareness among men and women.

13.6.3 Gender and Sex

Gender is a social construct whereas Sex is a biological term referring to the anatomical difference between a male and female. Gender is a political view of sex that is based on the binary division of male and female. This binary division apparently looks natural. The problem with this division, however, starts when one thing is considered inferior to the other which is regarded as superior. Chanter (2006) states: "That is, biology, anatomy, physiology, nature, DNA structure, genetics, materiality, ‗the body'— or however one expresses it – comes before, logically or chronologically. Social structures, gendered roles, historically gendered expectations and preconceptions, cultural mores, prescriptions and taboos on sexual behaviour, and so on . Chanter, 2006, p - 43). So, we may say that, a biological given, sex (i.e., boy, girl, man and woman) provides the basis for constructing a social category which is called gender (attributes of masculinity and femininity). According to Tannen (1991:77), the language of conversation between women, is foremost a language of rapport (Tannen 1991:77). The purpose of it is to establish connections and negotiating relationships. Women tend to display similarities and matching experiences with each other, and in meetings, women tend to argue by using their own experience as evidence. For most men on the other hand, language is a way to preserve independence and negotiate and maintain status in the hierarchy. According

to Tannen (1991:92), men do this by exhibiting their knowledge and skill. And men also do it through "holding centre stage" by for example telling stories, joking or conveying information. Men in meetings for example, tend to argue by making categorical statements about right and wrong.

13.6.4 Women, power and taboo language

Gender identity is a set of beliefs, behaviours and norms that permeate human activity. Each culture seeks to transform infants into masculine and feminine adults. Gender identity is a set of cultural prescriptions and expectations that specify how men and women, gays and lesbians, should behave. Gender identity, another word, is a person's private sense of, and subjective experience of, their own gender. This is generally described as one's private sense of being a man or a woman, consisting primarily of the acceptance of membership into a category of people: male or female. All societies have a set of gender categories that can serve as the basis of the formation of a social identity in relation to other members of society. In most societies, there is a basic division between gender attributes assigned to males and females. In all societies, however, some individuals do not identify with some (or all) of the aspects of gender that are assigned to their biological sex. In the past, cursing and aggression have been most closely identified with masculinity. Our cultures constrain how speakers communicate about sexuality. Sexuality is a taboo topic in the United States and words denoting sexual activity are avoided. Sexual speech is taboo because sexuality is taboo, not vice versa. Historically, American women have been expected to repress sexual thoughts, while men have been freer to use sexual speech. Research on gender and cursing reveals three recurrent findings, men curse more than women; men use a larger vocabulary of curse words than women; and men use more offensive curse words than women (Jay, 1992, 2000, cited in Jule 2005).

13.6.5 Gender-Culture-power

Gender relations of power are maintained through a set of institutional and cultural practices. The domination of men over women is a historical phenomenon. Whilst in recent decades, the feminist movement has sought to equalize the gender bias, there are still factors, both institutional and cultural, that serve to maintain this long standing imbalance. Cultural practices breed institutional barriers and vice-versa. It is necessary to make a distinction between sex and gender. In accordance with Oakley (1972), sex is a physical difference whereas gender operates on a psychological level. We are thus concerned with the factors in society that fuel people's attitude toward not just the physical difference but psychological differences between men and women. Furthermore, we are concerned with the knock-on effect this has for the institutional practices that cause gender relations of power to remain so pervasive. Dahlerup (1986), who defines feminism as the ideologies, activities and policies whose goal it is to remove discrimination against women and the male domination of society. It has problems because women (and even men) who would be classified as feminists

according to this description explicitly refuse to be labelled as feminists. This may be because the media have succeeded in caricaturing feminism as an extreme form of men hating by unlovable, unattractive, humourless women. This point about the media is an important one. It raises the issues of the cultural practices as mentioned in the title. Cultural practices are very important for maintaining gender relations of power. In many cases, these practices begin when children are very young. This occurs in many different forms such as language, toys and general stereotypes. Children receive preverbal clues as to their gender identity before they actually understand the difference. Differences in hair, clothes and scent provide children with this distinction from an early age. These differences set children up to develop into their specific gender.

13.7 Conclusion

There is a number of close relationships between Gender and language. In other words, men's way of using language and women's way of using language is different. It is because of structure of the language, norm of the society or people of the society who use the language. Moreover, gender (male-female) is socially constructed. Because of the social institution or taboo, we find variations/differences between men and women. In addition to, men's style of speaking and women style of speaking are deeply rooted in power structure. In addition, the personality of the individual and the vitality of the group are also involved in the explanation of variability in language use. Therefore, there is a close connection between the structures, vocabularies and the ways of using language and the social roles of men and women who speak the language.

1. Identify some interruptions men make in conversations as opposed to women
2. Comment on gender and sex
3. Provide evidence for the variability of language use by male and female

13.8 Summary

The unit has shown that there are a number of close relationships between Gender and language. In other words, men's way of using language and women's way of using language is different. It is because of structure of the language, norm of the society or people of the society who use the language. The unit has also shown that men's style of speaking and women style of speaking are deeply rooted in power structure. Me's language indeed differs considerably from that of women contextually.

UNIT 14: LANGUAGE DEATH, LANGUAGE SHIFT AND LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE

14.0 Introduction

This unit introduces to you the concepts of language death, language shift and language maintenance. In the unit, you will be exposed to causes and types of language death. Further, the unit discusses factors leading to language shift and how language could be maintained.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Describe the different types of language death
- Distinguish between language shift and maintain
- Identify factors leading to language shift and language death
- Discuss structural levels in language death

14.1 Language Death

Language is essential in humans' lives; it is what takes to differentiate between animals and humans, it is what we use to understand ourselves. Upon all its status in human life, people are still crying of language disappearance, because many died and some are endangered. The phrase 'language death' sounds as stark and final as any other in which that word makes its unwelcome appearance. And it has similar implications and resonances. To say that a language is dead is like saying that a person is dead. It could be no other way – for languages have no existence without people.

A language dies when nobody speaks it any more. A dead language is a language which is no longer spoken by anyone as their main language, or a language, such as Latin, that is no longer learned as a native language by a speech community. When the last speaker of a language dies, the language too will die. Sometimes it is not necessary to wait for the last speaker to die before considering the language as dead because the last speaker has no one to speak to fluently or frequently. So, the language is extinct, as good as dead.

In linguistics, **language death** occurs when a language loses its last native speaker. By extension, **language extinction** is when the language is no longer known, including by second-language speakers. Other similar terms include **linguicide**, the death of a language from natural or political causes, and rarely **glottophagy**, the absorption or replacement of a minor language by a major language.

Language death is a process in which the level of a speech community's linguistic competence in their language variety decreases, eventually resulting in no native or

fluent speakers of the variety. Language death can affect any language form, including dialects. Language death should not be confused with language attrition (also called language loss), which describes the loss of proficiency in a first language of an individual.

14.2 Types of Language Death

Language death is typically the final outcome of language shift. Campbell and Muntzel (1989) identify four primary types of language death, each of which has linguistic and sociolinguistic consequences.

14.2.1 Sudden Language Death

Sudden language death occurs when a language abruptly disappears because its speakers die or are killed. In such cases (e.g. Tasmanian; Nicoleño, a Native American Indian language in California), the transitional phase is so abrupt that there are few if any structural consequences as the language dies. It is, of course, possible for an already-dying language to suddenly become extinct, so that this type of death is not necessarily mutually exclusive with other types, but it is also possible for sudden language death to affect a monolingual group of speakers.

14.2.2 Radical Language Death

Gradual language death imply slowly, over a period of time. This process resembles sudden language death in terms of the abruptness of the process, but is distinguished by the shift to another language rather than the complete disappearance of the speakers of a language. In radical language death, speakers simply stop speaking the language as a matter of survival in the face of political repression and genocide.

Campbell and Muntzel (1989) cite radical language death for several Native American languages in El Salvador after an Indian uprising in the 1930s. Those thought to be Indian by appearance, including language use, were rounded up and killed in wanton acts of genocide. Many speakers of indigenous languages simply abandoned their native languages to avoid recognition as Indians. In such cases of language abandonment, there are still speakers who were once productively competent in the language, so there may be linguistic consequences on speakers' use of the language after long-term non-use or covert use (Holloway 1997). For example Bereznak and Campbell (1996) note that speakers in this situation may retain good command of the phonology while losing productive use of some of the lexicon over years of non-productive language use. There are also reports of a "recovery process" as speakers may start to use the language productively again after a period of disuse (Torres 1989: 66) or even a type of recovery as native speakers consult intensively about their language with linguists (Hill 1979).

14.2.3 Gradual language Death

The most common type of language death is the case of language loss due to "the gradual shift to the dominant language in a contact situation" (Sasse 1992: 22). In such cases, there is often a continuum of language proficiency that correlates with different generations of speakers. For example, fewer younger speakers use the dying language variety and with less proficiency in more restricted contexts than their older cohorts within the community; speakers who do not have a full range of functional or structural competency in the language have often been labelled semi-speakers (Dorian 1977), though the label obviously covers a wide range of proficiency levels.

14.2.4 Bottom-to-top language Death

The distinguishing feature of bottom-to-top language death is the way in which the situational contraction of language use takes place. In many cases, a dying language will be retained in more casual and informal contexts while it is not used in more formal settings. In the case of bottom-to-top language death, the language loss takes place in everyday conversation and casual settings while the language is retained in more formal, ritualistic contexts. This contraction follows the Latinate pattern where the language was used in formal ecclesiastical contexts long after it died in everyday conversation.

14.2.5 Language attrition: the loss of proficiency in a language at the individual level

The most common process leading to language death is one in which a community of speakers of one language becomes bilingual with another language, and gradually shifts allegiance to the second language until they cease to use their original, heritage language. This is a process of assimilation which may be voluntary or may be forced upon a population. Speakers of some languages, particularly regional or minority languages may decide to abandon them based on economic or utilitarian grounds, in favour of languages regarded as having greater utility or prestige.

A language is often declared to be dead even before the last native speaker of the language has died. If there are only a few elderly speakers of a language remaining, and they no longer use that language for communication, then the language is effectively dead. A language that has reached such a reduced stage of use is generally considered moribund. Half of the spoken languages of the world are not being taught to new generations of children.[3] Once a language is no longer a native language—that is, if no children are being socialized into it as their primary language—the process of transmission is ended and the language itself will not survive past the current generations.

Language death is rarely a sudden event, but a slow process of each generation learning less and less of the language until its use is relegated to the domain of traditional use, such as in poetry and song. Typically the transmission of the language from adults to children becomes more and more restricted, to the final setting that adults speaking the language will raise children who never acquire fluency. One example of this process reaching its conclusion is that of the Dalmatian language.

14.3 Structural Levels in Language Death

Language death may affect all levels of language organization, from the formal structural properties of phonology and syntax to the contextual domains of language use. In the following sections, we discuss the consequences of language death on specific levels of language structure and use. While there are obviously shared characteristics, there are also peculiar manifestations associated with different levels of structure and function.

14.3.1 Phonology

Several phonological traits of dying languages have been highlighted in the research literature on language death. Among the prominent traits are (1) the reduction in inventorial and syllable structure distinctions (Dressler 1972, Andersen 1982, Cook 1989, Holloway 1997); (2) the loss of marked phonological features (Dressler 1972, Campbell and Muntzel 1989, Cook 1989, Holloway 1997, Bereznak and Campbell 1996); and (3) the increased variability of phonetic and phonemic variants (Cook 1989, Campbell 1985). None of these attributes, however, is without some important qualifications. For example, some marked features may be quite persistent and maintained during language loss under particular linguistic and sociolinguistic conditions. Thus, a marked phonological feature typologically shared by both the dying language and the replacement language tends to persist during the obsolescing process. There is no singular hierarchical path when languages do reduce their phonological distinctions, since the reduction is affected by both independent linguistic factors and external social and psychological variables.

14.3.2 Morphology

Several alternatives are available to obsolescing language varieties in their morphological change. Again, the most commonly cited pattern is a reduction in the number of morphologically marked categories and in the number of allomorphs (Elmendorf 1981, Schmidt 1985, Campbell and Muntzel 1989, Dressler 1988, Huffines 1989, Holloway 1997), along with increased variability in morphological marking. The number of morphologically marked grammatical categories is often reduced, and there may be a concomitant tendency to move from polysynthetic to analytic structures in the process (Schmidt 1985, Holloway 1997).

14.3.3 Syntax

The syntax of dying languages may reveal several different strategies that contract the number of syntactic devices available to speakers of a dying language, resulting in what Andersen (1982: 99) refers to as the tendency to "preserve and overuse syntactic constructions that more transparently reflect the underlying semantic and syntactic relations." One manifestation is the reduction of subordinate clauses (Voegelin and Voegelin 1977, Dorian 1981, Tsitsipis 1984 Schmidt 1985). Many innovative cases in the syntax may be attributable to a kind of syntactic calquing from the dominant language, but it is also possible that language varieties might independently add new structures as a by-product of other changes taking place in the syntax. Schmidt (1985), for example, documents the creation of a new purposive clause conjunction as it loses some morphosyntactic categories.

14.3.4 Lexicon

The decline in the lexicon is one of the most prominent traits noted with reference to language death. Both linguists (Miller 1971, Dorian 1973, Andersen 1982) and native speakers comment on the reduction in the lexicon in moribund language varieties. Despite the focus on lexical decline in language death, the processes affecting the lexicon are no different from those found in language contact situations existing in healthy languages. The asymmetries found in borrowing are also typical of asymmetrical social relations in other language contact situations. Thus, massive lexical loans from the dominant language may come into the obsolescing language whereas the converse never happens.

14.4 Causes of Language Death

The factors leading to language death are non-linguistic rather than linguistic, and may involve a wide array of variables. For example, Camp bell (1994) includes the following factors responsible for language death:

> Discrimination, repression, rapid population collapse, lack of economic opportunities, on-going industrialization, rapid economic transformation, work patterns, migrant labour, communication with outside regions, resettlement, dispersion, migration, literacy, compulsory education, official language policies, military service, marriage patterns, acculturation, cultural destruction, war, slavery, famine, epidemics, religious proselytizing, resource depletion and forced changes in subsistence patterns, lack of social cohesion, lack of physical proximity among speakers, symbolism of the dominant language . . . , stigmatization, low prestige of the dying variety, absence of institutions that establish norms (schools, academics, texts), particular historical events, etc. (Campbell 1994: 1963).

Taxonomies of the causes for language endangerment and death (e.g. Grenoble and Whaley 1998, based on a typology of minority languages by Edwards 1992) generally include both macro-variables referring to broader situations external to the community and micro-variables relating to specific factors affecting a particular speech community. On a macro-level, for example, general economic conditions and the emergence of telecommunications technology may affect different language groups in varied situations, whereas on a micro-level, the specific local economy and particular patterns of telecommunicative access impact the everyday life of the speech community in a distinctive way.

Most inventories of language endangerment include economic, political, ideological, ecological, and cultural factors. One of the most prominent factors is economics; in fact, Grenoble and Whaley (1998b: 31) point out that "for endangered languages one must take into account the potential of economic issues to outweigh all others combined." They note that over and over again, relinquishing a native language variety is tied to the belief that success in another language is crucial for economic survival and advantage. Furthermore, economics may impact a minority community's ability to maintain its indigenous language due to the cost of published materials, schools, and minority language media.

14.4.1 Political Factors

Political factors involve asymmetrical relations of power between different ethnic and social groups. Languages representing politically subordinate groups are more likely to undergo shift than those associated with dominant groups, although there are well-known exceptions where the language of the politically oppressed group has been retained while the language of the dominant group is lost (Fasold 1984: 217). Most notable is the shift to English by the Norman conquerors of England in the eleventh century (Kahane and Kahane 1979). Political power is also typically related to other important variables accounting for language loss, including economic advantage, cultural ethnocentrism, and ideological indoctrination.

14.4.2 Ideological Factors

Ideological factors include assumed belief systems and underlying values about language use and diversity. For example, one of the reasons that there is so little public concern for endangered languages in the USA is the widespread belief that language diversity only impedes communication and that world understanding would actually increase significantly if everyone spoke the same language – English. This ideology underscores the "unifying" function of a standard language (Garvin and Mathiot 1956) and justifies an attitude of monolingual ethnocentrism in the USA. In the process, it promotes general disregard for maintaining minority languages.

14.4.3 Ecological Factors

Ecological factors include geographical location and physical environment, as well as population demographics. The numbers and concentrations of speakers and their physical proximity to other groups are important factors in language maintenance and death (Thomason forthcoming). On a micro-level, the kinds of social networks within the community and the interactions of community members with outsiders are essential variables in the maintenance and recession of a language variety.

You ought to note that at the same time, cultural values have to be considered along with patterns of contact. Andersen (1988) observes that it is not uncommon for communities that are becoming more open in terms of increasing contacts with the outside world to remain psychologically closed; nor is it unheard of for relatively closed communities to be psychologically open, wholeheartedly embracing the cultural and linguistic innovations they happen to encounter. Thus, Andersen urges that a distinction be drawn between open vs. closed communities and endocentric vs. exocentric ones (1988), with the former distinction referring to levels of contact with the outside world and the latter referring to the degree to which the community is focused on its own internal norms or is more outwardly focused. Andersen maintains that community attitudes often play a far greater role in guiding the directionality of change in contact situations than levels of contact itself. Grenoble and Whaley (1998) state that "subjective attitudes of a speech community towards its own and other languages are paramount for predicting language shift" and Grinevald (1998) observes that "Language loss is . . . mostly a matter of shift in language loyalty."

Both broad-based macro- and micro-variables are involved in language death, and socio-political, sociocultural, sociopsychological, and sociodemographic variables must be factored into understanding the social context of language demise. Some of these factors may take precedence over others in a particular language contact situations, but most cases of language loss are framed by an interrelated, multidimensional set of social conditions.

14.5 Language Shift

Language shift is the process whereby a speech community of a language shifts to speaking another language. It is also known as language transfer and language replacement.

Language shift, the loss of language on the societal level, is the major mechanism underlying the loss of linguistic diversity that we are witnessing today across the world. In the most general terms, language shift denotes changing collective language choices as a result of the unsettling of language ecologies due to transformations of the political, economic and social ecology of their communities. Since language shift

is the effect of one language becoming preferred to another one, language shift inevitably involves two languages, the retreating and the replacing language.

Language shift has occurred throughout history whenever communities speaking different languages have come into contact and added new languages to their repertoires, but while language shift situations differ significantly across time and space, there is one feature common to all shift situations. Language shift always affects communities in contact with and under domination by a more powerful community. Language shift is a phenomenon occurring solely in dominated communities (Wendel & Heinrich 2012). Consequently, reversing language shift demands a redistribution of power between communities in contact, and this renders language maintenance and revitalization a political issue (May 2001). The acceptance of language shift and the reproduction of the power inequalities, which always underlie it, are similarly politically loaded (Heinrich 2012a: 179–182).

14.6 Factors Contributing to Language Shift

Factors contributing to language shift are economic, social and political factors; demographic factors; and attitudes and values.

14.6.1 The economic Factor

Obtaining work is the most obvious economic reason for learning another language. In English-dominated countries, for instance, people learn English in order to get good jobs. This results in bilingualism. The high demand from industries for employees with fluent English has successfully encouraged job seekers to equip themselves with English. After all, being competent in English leads to well-paid jobs.

14.6.2 Social Factor

Language shift occurs when the community sees no reason to take active steps to maintain their ethnic language. When a community of speakers moving to a region or country whose language is different from theirs, there is a tendency to shift to the new language. Every time an immigrant learns the native language of the new country and passes it down to children in place of the old country language. For example, when a migrant minority group moves to a predominately monolingual society dominated by one majority group language in all the major institutional domains – school, TV, radio, newspaper, government administration, courts, work – language shift will be unavoidable unless the community takes active steps to prevent it.

14.6.3 Political Factor

A rapid shift occurs when people are anxious to 'get on' in a society where knowledge of the second language is a prerequisite for success.

14.6.4 Demographic Factor

Resistance to language shift tends to last longer in rural than in urban areas because rural groups tend to be isolated from the centres of political power for longer. The rural people can meet most of their social needs in the ethnic or minority language.

14.6.5 Attitude and Values

Literature has shown that Language Shift is slower among communities where the minority language is highly valued. Therefore, when the language is seen as an important symbol of ethnic identity, it will be maintained longer and vice versa. People with other vernaculars like Javanese, Balinese, Sundanese, etc., should be proud in using their vernaculars as it tends to slow down the language shift.

14.7 Language Maintenance

Language maintenance is a complex area of sociolinguistic studies, which was first advanced by Fishman in the 1960s (Fishman, 1989). Language maintenance is one of the ultimate issues in language contact in the sense that when two languages or more come into contact, it is believed that, the minority language struggles, more often than not, to maintain itself in the face of the more dominant language.

A number of definitions have been advanced as regards language maintenance. The subsequent part of the unit provides a few of the many definitions there are. Fishman, for example, defines language maintenance as "the process and pursuit of intergenerational linguistic continuity". He (Fishman) also suggests that, when two or more languages are in contact, three alternatives can occur. First, the languages may be maintained without any change. Second, there may be shift of some form in the languages. Third, one of the languages may be leading to a form of non-use, called language loss or language death. Fishman (2001) later avers that language contact may lead to what he describes as language maintenance.

According to Adams et al (2012), language maintenance refers to language-contact situations where a minority group continues to use its language even under conditions that might support a language shift.

Hornberger & CoronelMolina (2004), claim that language maintenance "refers to relative stability in domains of use, number, distribution, and proficiency of speakers in a speech community". On the other hand, Fase et al (1992) define language

maintenance as" the retention, use and proficiency in the language". Sequel to or following above definitions/opinions, language maintenance can be said to reflect collective decision or volition. However, in this paper it is assumed that language maintenance is a reflection of the degree of language stability. That is, language maintenance is a situation where members of a community try to keep the languages they have always used, in other words, to retain the same patterns of language choice. In a multilingual community it may find expression in each group's conscious effort to protect its language and ensure its continued use.

Furthermore, in language maintenance, the languages in contact may have a co-existence of stable relationship (Hamde 2005). It is believed that, usually, the speakers of the lessprestigious language enhance a way of retaining it, transmitting it to the next generation, and use it appropriately in all domains. Hamde claims that most often speakers of a non-dominant language wish to keep their ethnic identity through language, religion or cultural heritage.

According to Baker (2000), language maintenance is the protection and promotion of the first or native language in an individual or within a speech community, particularly among language minorities (e.g. bilingual education). The term is often used with reference to policies that protect and promote minority languages. Put simply, language maintenance is a process where a speech community decides to continue speaking or using their vernaculars rather than abandon it for some other languages. With well-planned efforts in education, political, government and law institutions, minority languages can be maintained very well.

Apart from the foretasted efforts, there are other ways that could enhance the maintenance of minority languages. The following are some of them:

- A language can be maintained and preserved, when it is highly valued as an important symbol of ethnic identity for the minority group.
- If families from a minority group live near each other and see each other frequently, their interactions will help maintaining the language.
- For emigrate individuals from a minority group, the degree and frequency of contact with the homeland can contribute to language maintenance.
- Intermarriage within the same minority group is helpful enough to maintain the native language.
- Ensuring that the minority group language is used at formal setting such as schools or worship places will increase language maintenance.
- An extended normal family in which parents, children and grandchildren live together and use the same minority language can help maintaining it.
- Institutional support from some domains, such as education, law, administration, religion and the media can make a difference between the success and failure of maintaining a minority group language.

14.8 Conclusion

Language death, language shift and maintenance are significant sociolinguistic aspects. This unit has discussed them quite clearly.

Self Assessment Exercise

1. Describe the concepts language death, language shift and language maintenance
2. State factors that lead to language shift and language death
3. Discuss ways by which language could be maintained

14.9 Summary

The unit has endeavoured to discuss language death, language shift and language maintenance. Factors leading to both language shift and death have also been discussed in the unit.

UNIT 15: LANGUAGE PLANNING AND LANGUAGE POLICY

15.0 Introduction

This unit introduces to you concepts of language planning and language policy. Related issues covered in the unit are ideologies explaining motivations and decisions with regard to language planning and goals of language planning. In the unit, you will also be exposed to criteria of Language Choice in Language Planning, stages in language planning and areas of language affected in the process of language planning.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Distinguish between language planning and language policy
- Appreciate the interface of language planning and language policy
- Describe ideologies that influence decisions in language planning
- State the criteria of language choice in language planning
- Discuss the stages in language planning
- Discuss the types of language planning

15.1 Language planning

According to Weinstein (1980), 'Language planning is a government authorized long-term, sustained, and conscious effort to alter a language's function in a society for the purpose of solving communication problems.' It may involve assessing resources, complex decision-making, the assignment of different functions to different languages or varieties of a language in a community, and the commitment of valuable resources. As we will see, language planning can take a variety of forms and produce many different kinds of results. It is also not without its controversies. Language planning has become part of modern nation-building because a noticeable trend in the modern world is to make language and nation synonymous.

Language planning is an attempt to interfere deliberately with a language or one of its varieties: it is human intervention into natural processes of language change, diffusion, and erosion. That attempt may focus on either its status with regard to some other language or variety or its internal condition with a view to changing that condition, or on both of these since they are not mutually exclusive.

Language planning is often associated with government planning, but is also used by a variety of non-governmental organizations such as grass-roots organizations as well as individuals. Goals of such planning vary. Better communication through assimilation of a single dominant language can bring economic benefits to minorities but is also perceived to facilitate their political domination. It involves the establishment of language regulators, such as formal or informal agencies, committees, societies or academies to design or develop new structures to meet contemporary needs.

We must also note then that, just as planning may either be deliberate or proceed somewhat haphazardly, even accidentally, so its results may be deliberately intended or not at all as intended. Cobarrubias (1983) has described four typical ideologies that may motivate actual decision-making in language planning in a particular society: these are linguistic assimilation, linguistic pluralism, vernacularization, and internationalism.

15.2 Language Ideology

Note that four overarching language ideologies are purposed to explain motivations and decisions:

- **Internationalization:** the adoption of a non-indigenous language as a means of wider communication, as an official language or in a particular domain, such as the use of English in India, Singapore, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, and South Africa.
- **Linguistic assimilation:** the belief that every member of a society, irrespective of their native language, should learn and use the dominant language of the society in which they live. An example is the English-only movement of some residents of the United States.
- **Linguistic pluralism:** the recognition and support of many languages within one society. It can be territorially based or individually based or there may be some combination of the two. It can be complete or partial, so that all or only some aspects of life can be conducted in more than one language in a society. Examples include the coexistence of French, German, Italian, and Romansh in Switzerland English. The coexistence of many languages may not necessarily arise from a conscious language ideology but rather the relative efficiency of communicating in a shared language. Zambia has so much evidence of this situation in many societies.
- **Vernacularization:** the restoration and development of an indigenous language, along with its adoption by the state as an official language. Examples include the adoption of Regional languages such as Silozi, Chitonga, Icibemba, Cinyanja, Kikaonde, Luvale and Lunda.

15.3 Criteria of Language Choice in Language Planning

In language planning activity choice made from different languages and/or variants. Haugen (in Fasold, 1987) proposed three criteria for language choice decisions. These are:

1. **Efficiency** to refer the language's easiness to use and learn
2. **Adequacy** to refer the degree of the language's precision of linguistic forms to convey information

3. **Acceptability** connected with the local status of the language. This sociological component of evaluation deals with the acceptance of the language by the members of the society

15.4 Stages in Language Planning

The question 'how is language planning done?' is connected with the planning and implementation stages of a large planning process. Different scholars give different stages of planning. Rubin puts it (in Fasold, 1987) in four steps.

1. **Fact finding**- a substantial amount of background information should be available before any planning decisions are made.
2. **Planning**- here the actual decisions are made. The planner will establish goals, select the means (strategies), and predict the outcomes.
3. **Implementation-** the planning decisions are carried out
4. **Feedback** -at this step, the planner finds out how well the plan has worked.

Scholars who deal with Language Planning have their own particular approaches of listing the stages to be followed in Language Planning. Since it consumes time to discuss all in detail and this might not be relevant, they are briefly indicated. Based on the authors discussed in Chumbow (1987:17) the different stages of planning are the following. Haugen's (1969) puts four stapes in the planning model. These are:

- Selection of norms
- Codification of norms
- Elaboration of function
- Propagation

Fishman et al (1971) proposes three steps.

- Policy formation
- Codification and elaboration
- Implementation

Similarly Jerudd (1973) places the process in three steps model.

- Determination of policy
- Development of norms
- Implementation

After discussing all these, Chumboow (ibid) himself puts the process into two major stages. These are

- Policy formulation
- Policy implementation

In the policy formulation stage he includes fact finding, policy decision, outline of implementation, and cost benefit analysis. And in the implementation – codification, elaboration, reforms, dissemination and evaluation are included.

15.5 Goals of Language Planning

Eleven language planning goals have been recognized (Nahir 2003):

1. Language purification – prescription of usage norms in order to preserve the "linguistic purity" of language, protect language from foreign influences, and guard against perceived language deviation from within
2. Language revival – the attempt to restore to common use a language which has few or no surviving native speakers.
3. Language reform – deliberate change in specific aspects of language or extralinguistic elements, such as grammar and orthography, in order to facilitate use
4. Language standardization – the attempt to garner prestige for a regional language or dialect, developing it as the chosen standard language of a region
5. Language spread – the attempt to increase the number of speakers of a language
6. Lexical modernization – word coining or adaptation
7. Terminology unification – development of unified terminologies, mainly in technical domains
8. Stylistic simplification – simplification of language usage in lexicon, grammar, and style. That includes changing the use of language in social and formal contexts.
9. Interlingual communication – facilitation of linguistic communication between members of distinct speech communities
10. Language maintenance – preservation of a group's native language as a first or second language where pressures threaten or cause a decline in the status of the language
11. Auxiliary-code standardization – standardization of marginal, auxiliary aspects of language, such as signs for the deaf, place names, or rules of transliteration and transcription.

15.6 Types of Language Planning

Language planning has been divided into three types. The subsequent part discusses the three types of language planning.

15.6.1 Status Planning

Status planning is the allocation or reallocation of a language or dialect to functional domains within a society, thus affecting the status, or standing of that language. Status planning changes the function of a language or a variety of a language and the rights of those who use it. For example, when speakers of a minority language are denied the use of that language in educating their children, their language has no status. Alternatively, when a government declares that henceforth two languages rather than

one of these alone will be officially recognized in all functions, the newly recognized one has gained status. Status itself is a relative concept; it may also be improved or reduced by degrees, and usually is.

So far as languages and their varieties are concerned, status changes are nearly always very slow, are sometimes actively contested, and often leave strong residual feelings. Even relatively minor changes or proposals for changes can produce such effects.

15.6.2 Language status

When we hear of Language status, we ought to understand that is distinct from, though intertwined with, *language prestige* and *language function*.

Language status is the given position (or standing) of a language against other languages. A language garners status according to the fulfilment of four attributes, described in 1968 by two different authors, Heinz Kloss and William Stewart. Both Kloss and Stewart stipulated four qualities of a language that determine its status. Their respective frameworks differ slightly, but they emphasize four common attributes:

1. Language origin – whether a given language is indigenous or imported to the speech community
2. Degree of standardization – the extent of development of a formal set of norms that define 'correct' usage
3. Juridical status
4. Sole official language (e.g. French in France and Turkish in Turkey)
5. Joint official language (e.g. English and Afrikaans in South Africa; French, German, Italian and Romansh in Switzerland)
6. Regional official language (e.g. the seven regional languages in Zambia referred to earlier, Igbo in Nigeria; Marathi in Maharashtra, India).
7. Promoted language – lacks official status on a national or regional level but is promoted and sometimes used by public authorities for specific functions (e.g. Ila, and Toka-Leya of Southern province; Nsenga of Eastern province; West African Pidgin English in Cameroon)
8. Tolerated language – neither promoted nor proscribed; acknowledged but ignored (e.g. Native languages in the regions of the nation in the present day)
9. Proscribed language – discouraged by official sanction or restriction.
10. Vitality – the ratio, or percent, of users of a language to another variable, such as the total population. Kloss and Stewart both distinguish six classes of statistical distribution. However, they draw the line between classes at different percentages. According to Kloss, the first class, the highest level of vitality, is demarcated by 90% or more speakers. The five remaining classes in decreasing order are 70–89%, 40–69%, 20–39%, 3–19%, and less than 3%. Stewart defines the six classes are determined by the

following percentages of speakers: 75%, 50%, 25%, 10%, 5%, and less than 5%.

It must be pointed out here that, together, origin, degree of standardization, juridical status, and vitality express a language's status.

15.6.2.1 Functional Domains in Language Planning by William Stewart

William Stewart outlines ten functional domains in language planning as listed below.

1. Official – An official language "function[s] as a legally appropriate language for all politically and culturally representative purposes on a nationwide basis." The official function of a language is often specified in a constitution.
2. Provincial – A provincial language functions as an official language for a geographic area smaller than a nation, typically a province or region (e.g. Bemba in Luapula, Muchinga and Northern provinces, Silozi in Western province, Tonga in Southern province etc.).
3. Wider communication – A language of wider communication may be official or provincial, but more importantly, it functions as a medium of communication across language boundaries within a nation (e.g. Hindi in India; Swahili language in East Africa).
4. International – An international language functions as a medium of communication across national boundaries (e.g. English, formerly French as a diplomatic and international language).
5. Capital – A capital language functions as a prominent language in and around a national capital (e.g. Dutch and French in Brussels).
6. Group – A group language functions as a conventional language among the members of a single cultural or ethnic group (e.g. Hebrew amongst the Jews).
7. Educational – An educational language functions as a medium of instruction in primary and secondary schools on a regional or national basis. (English in Zambia).
8. School subject – A school subject language is taught as a subject in secondary school or higher education (e.g. Regional Languages in many schools across the nation - Zambia).
9. Literary – A literary language functions as a language for literary or scholarly purposes (Ancient Greek).
10. Religious – A religious language functions as a language for the ritual purposes of a particular religion (e.g. Latin for the Latin Rite within the Roman Catholic Church; Arabic for the reading of the Qur'an).

Robert Cooper, in reviewing Stewart's list, makes several additions. First, he defines three sub-types of official functions: statutory, working, and symbolic. A statutory language is a language that a government has declared official by law. A working language is used by a government for daily activities, and a symbolic language is used as a state symbol.

15.6.3 Corpus planning

Corpus planning refers to the prescriptive intervention in the forms of a language, whereby planning decisions are made to engineer changes in the structure of the language. Corpus planning activities often arise as the result of beliefs about the adequacy of the form of a language to serve desired functions. Unlike status planning, which is mostly undertaken by administrators and politicians, corpus planning is generally the work of individuals with greater linguistic expertise. There are three traditionally recognized types of corpus planning: graphization, standardization, and modernization.

Corpus planning seeks to develop a variety of a language or a language, usually to standardize it, that is, to provide it with the means for serving every possible language function in society (Clyne, 1997, for a collection of recent papers). Consequently, corpus planning may involve such matters as the development of an orthography, new sources of vocabulary, dictionaries, and a literature, together with the deliberate cultivation of new uses so that the language may extend its use into such areas as government, education, and trade.

15.6.3.1 Graphization

Graphization refers to development, selection and modification of scripts and orthographic conventions for a language. The use of writing in a speech community can have lasting sociocultural effects, which include easier transmission of material through generations, communication with greater numbers of people, and a standard against which varieties of spoken language are often compared. Linguist Charles A. Ferguson made two key observations about the results of adopting a writing system. First, the use of writing adds another form of the language to the community's repertory.

Although written language is often viewed as secondary to spoken language, the vocabulary, grammatical structures and phonological structures of a language often adopt characteristics in the written form that are distinct from the spoken form. Second, the use of writing often leads to a folk belief that the written language is the 'real' language, and speech is a corruption of it. Written language is viewed as more conservative, while the spoken form is more susceptible to language change. Isolated relic areas of the spoken language may be less innovative than the written form, or the written language may have been based on a divergent variety of the spoken language.

It is important to note here that in establishing a writing system for a language, corpus planners have the option of using an existing system or designing a new one.

15.6.3.2 Standardization

The process of standardization often involves one variety of a language taking precedence over other social and regional dialects of a language. Another approach, where dialects are mutually intelligible, is to introduce a poly-phonemic written form that is intended to represent all dialects of a language adequately but with no standard

spoken form. If one dialect is chosen, it comes to be perceived as supra-dialectal and the 'best' form of the language.

Choosing the standard language has important social consequences, as it benefits the speakers whose spoken and written dialect conforms closest to the chosen standard. The chosen standard is generally spoken by the most powerful social group within society, and it is imposed upon other groups as the form to emulate, making the standard norm necessary for socioeconomic mobility. In practice, standardization generally entails increasing the uniformity of the norm, as well as the codification of the norm.

The history of English provides an example of standardization over an extended time period, without formally recognized language planning. The standardizing process began when William Caxton introduced the printing press in England in 1476. This was followed by the adoption of the south-east Midlands dialect, spoken in London, as the print language. Because of the dialect's use for administrative, government, business, and literary purposes, it became entrenched as the prestigious variety of English. After the development of grammars and dictionaries in the 18th century, the rise of print capitalism, industrialization, urbanization, and mass education led to the dissemination of this dialect as the cultural norm for the English language.

15.6.3.3 Modernization

Modernization occurs when a language needs to expand its resources to meet functions. Modernization often occurs when a language undergoes a shift in status, such as when a country gains independence from a colonial power or when there is a change in the language education policy. The main force in modernization is the expansion of the lexicon, which allows the language to discuss topics in modern semantic domains.

Language planners generally develop new lists and glossaries to describe new technical terms, but it is also necessary to ensure that the new terms are consistently used by the appropriate sectors within society. While some languages, such as Japanese and Hungarian, have experienced rapid lexical expansion to meet the demands of modernization, other languages, such as Hindi and Arabic, have failed to do so. Such expansion is aided by the use of new terms in textbooks and professional publications. Issues of linguistic purism often play a significant role in lexical expansion, but technical vocabulary can be effective within a language, regardless of whether it comes from the language's own process of word formation or from extensive borrowing from another language. While Hungarian has almost exclusively used language-internal processes to coin new words, Japanese has borrowed extensively from English to derive new words as part of its modernization.

15.6.4 Specific Areas of Language Use affected by Stages of Language Planning

Language planning may affect all areas of language use but typically concentrates on the more observable ones such as the following:

- **Writing:** The written form of a language may have to be developed, modified, or standardized. For example, Turkish was written for centuries with the Arabic alphabet, which does not represent vowels. Since Turkish has eight vowels, writing with the Arabic alphabet was very difficult, and, in the 1920s, Ataturk responded to this problem by mandating that Turkish be written using the Roman alphabet.
- **Lexicon:** The vocabulary of a language may need to expand to keep pace with increasing technological development. For example, the primary function of institutions such as the Swedish Center for Technical Terminology is to coordinate standard spoken and written forms for new terminology in media, government, and industry.
- **Syntax:** The syntax of the language may need to expand as the language takes on a national function. Tok Pisin started as a pidgin in Papua New Guinea. However, as Tok Pisin became a lingua franca for the New Guinea area, the small vocabulary, restricted syntax, and lack of tense markings forced a necessary syntactic development of the former pidgin to accommodate the more widespread use of the language in legal documents and in governmental proceedings.

15.6.5 Acquisition Planning

Acquisition planning is a type of language planning in which a national, state or local government system aims to influence aspects of language, such as language status, distribution and literacy through education. Acquisition planning can also be used by non-governmental organizations, but it is more commonly associated with government planning. Acquisition planning is often integrated into a broader language planning process in which the statuses of languages are evaluated, corpuses are revised and the changes are finally introduced to society on a national, state or local level through education systems, ranging from primary schools to universities.

This process of change can entail an alteration in student textbook formatting, a change in methods of teaching an official language, or the development of a bilingual language program, only to name a few. For example, if a government chooses to raise the status level of a certain language or change its level of prestige, it can establish a law which requires teachers to teach only in this language or that textbooks are written using only this language's script. This, in turn, would support the elevation of the language's status or could increase its prestige. In this way,

acquisition planning is often used to promote language revitalization, which can change a language's status or reverse a language shift, or to promote linguistic purism. In a case where a government revises a corpus, new dictionaries and educational materials will need to be revised in schools in order to maintain effective language acquisition.

15.6.6 The education sector

The ministry of education or education sector of government is typically in charge of making national language acquisition choices based on state and local evaluation reports. The duties of education sectors vary by country; Robert B. Kaplan and Richard B. Baldauf describe the sectors' six principal goals:

1. To choose the languages which should be taught within the curriculum.
2. To determine the amount and quality of teacher training.
3. To involve local communities.
4. To determine what materials will be used and how they will be incorporated into syllabi.
5. To establish a local and state assessment system to monitor progress.
6. To determine financial costs.

15.7 Language Policy

Language policy has been defined in a number of ways. According to Kaplan and Baldauf (1997), a language policy is a body of ideas, laws, regulations, rules and practices intended to achieve the planned language change in the society, group or system. Only when such policy exists can any sort of serious evaluation of planning occur (Rubin, 1971); i.e., in the absence of a policy there cannot be a plan to be adjusted. Language policy may be realised at a number of levels, from very formal language planning documents and pronouncements to informal statements of intent (i.e., the discourse of language, politics and society) that may not at first glance seem like language policies at all. Indeed, as Peddie (1991) observed, policy statements commonly fall into two types: symbolic and substantive. The first articulates good feelings toward change (or perhaps ends up being so nebulous that it is difficult to understand what language specific concepts may be involved), while the latter articulates specific steps to be taken.

Lo Bianco defines the field as “a situated activity, whose specific history and local circumstances influence what is regarded as a language problem, and whose political dynamics determine which language problems are given policy treatment”. McCarty (2011) defines language policy as "a complex sociocultural process [and as] modes of human interaction, negotiation, and production mediated by relations of power. The ‘policy’ in these processes resides in their language-regulating power; that is, the ways in which they express normative claims about legitimate and illegitimate language forms and uses, thereby governing language statuses and uses".

Language policy is broad, but it can be categorized into three components. Spolsky (2004) argues, "A useful first step is to distinguish between the three components of the language policy of a speech community: (1) its language practices – the habitual pattern of selecting among the varieties that make up its linguistic repertoire; (2) its language beliefs or ideology – the beliefs about language and language use; and (3) any specific efforts to modify or influence that practice by any kind of language intervention, planning, or management" (p. 5).

The traditional scope of language policy concerns language regulation. This refers to what a government does either officially through legislation, court decisions or policy to determine how languages are used, cultivate language skills needed to meet national priorities or to establish the rights of individuals or groups to use and maintain languages.

15.7.1 Implementation

The implementation of language policy varies from one State to another. This may be explained by the fact that language policy is often based on contingent historical reasons. Likewise, States also differ as to the degree of explicitness with which they implement a given language policy. The French Toubon law is a good example of explicit language policy. The same may be said for the Charter of the French Language in Quebec.

Scholars such as Tollefson argue that language policy can create inequality, "language planning-policy means the institutionalization of language as a basis for distinctions among social groups (classes). That is, language policy is one mechanism for locating language within social structure so that language determines who has access to political power and economic resources. Language policy is one mechanism by which dominant groups establish hegemony in language use" (p. 16).

Many countries have a language policy designed to favour or discourage the use of a particular language or set of languages. Although nations historically have used language policies most often to promote one official language at the expense of others, many countries now have policies designed to protect and promote regional and ethnic languages whose viability is threatened. Indeed, whilst the existence of linguistic minorities within their jurisdiction has often been considered to be a potential threat to internal cohesion, States also understand that providing language rights to minorities may be more in their long term interest, as a means of gaining citizens' trust in the central government.

The preservation of cultural and linguistic diversity in today's world is a major concern to many scientists, artists, writers, politicians, leaders of linguistic communities, and defenders of linguistic human rights. More than half of the 6000 languages currently spoken in the world are estimated to be in danger of disappearing during the 21st century. Many factors affect the existence and usage of any given

human language, including the size of the native speaking population, its use in formal communication, and the geographical dispersion and the socio-economic weight of its speakers. National language policies can either mitigate or exacerbate the effects of some of these factors.

For example, according to Ghil'ad Zuckermann, "Native tongue title and language rights should be promoted. The government ought to define Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander vernaculars as official languages of Australia. We must change the linguistic landscape of Whyalla and elsewhere. Signs should be in both English and the local indigenous language. We ought to acknowledge intellectual property of indigenous knowledge including language, music and dance."

15.7.2 Conclusion

Covered in this unit are language planning and language policy. Included also are the types and stages of language planning. Not only have the aforementioned been presented in the unit but also the criteria of Language Choice in Language Planning and goals of language planning.

Self Assessment Exercise

1. Distinguish between language planning and language policy
2. Identify the stages of language planning
3. Discuss the criteria of language choice in language planning
4. What are the principle goals of the ministry of education?

15.7.3 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt what language planning and language policy are and you have also learnt other aspects involved in the two phenomena such as stages of language planning, types of language planning, criteria of language choice in planning and the principles goals of the ministry of education with regard to language policy.

UNIT 16: LINGUISTIC RIGHTS

16.0 Introduction

In this unit you are introduced to linguistic rights, another very important sociolinguistics phenomenon. Other aspects covered in are Individual Linguistics Rights, Private use of language, Linguistic rights in the public domain, Collective linguistic rights, Territoriality vs. personality principles and Language rights at international and regional levels.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able:

- Describe what linguistic rights are in general
- Distinguish between private and individual linguistic rights
- Compare various types of rights

16.1 Linguistic rights

Linguistic rights are the human and civil rights concerning the individual and collective right to choose the language or languages for communication in a private or public atmosphere. Other parameters for analyzing linguistic rights include the degree of territoriality, amount of positivity, orientation in terms of assimilation or maintenance, and overtness.

Linguistic rights include, among others, the right to one's own language in legal, administrative and judicial acts, language education, and media in a language understood and freely chosen by those concerned.

Linguistic rights in international law are usually dealt in the broader framework of cultural and educational rights.

Important documents for linguistic rights include the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights (1996), the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (1988), as well as Convention against Discrimination in Education[2] and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966).

16.2 History of Linguistic Rights

It is important to out that Linguistic rights became more and more prominent throughout the course of history as language came to be increasingly seen as a part of nationhood. Although policies and legislation involving language have been in effect in early European history, these were often cases where a language was being imposed upon people while other languages or dialects were neglected. Most of the initial literature on linguistic rights came from countries where linguistic and/or

national divisions grounded in linguistic diversity have resulted in linguistic rights playing a vital role in maintaining stability. However, it was not until the 1900s that linguistic rights gained official status in politics and international accords.

Linguistic rights were first included as an international human right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.

Formal treaty-based language rights are mostly concerned with minority rights. The history of such language rights can be split into five phases.

1. Pre-1815: Language rights are covered in bilateral agreements, but not in international treaties, e.g. Treaty of Lausanne (1923).

2. Final Act of the Congress of Vienna (1815): The conclusion to Napoleon I's empire-building was signed by 7 European major powers. It granted the right to use Polish to Poles in Poznan alongside German for official business. Also, some national constitutions protects the language rights of national minorities, e.g. Austrian Constitutional Law of 1867 grants ethnic minorities the right to develop their nationality and language.

3. Between World I and World War II: Under the aegis of the League of Nations, Peace Treaties and major multilateral and international conventions carried clauses protecting minorities in Central and Eastern Europe, e.g., the right to private use of any language, and provision for instruction in primary schools through medium of own language.[8] Many national constitutions followed this trend. But not all signatories provided rights to minority groups within their own borders such as United Kingdom, France, and US. Treaties also provided right of complaint to League of Nations and International Court of Justice.

4. 1945–1970s: International legislation for protection of human rights was undertaken within infrastructure of United Nations. Mainly for individual rights and collective rights to oppressed groups for self-determination.

5. Early 1970s onwards; there was a renewed interest in rights of minorities, including language rights of minorities. e.g. UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities.

16.3 Language rights + human rights = linguistic human rights (LHR)

Some scholars make a distinction between language rights and linguistic human rights because the former concept covers a much wider scope. Thus, not all language rights are LHR, although all LHR are language rights. One way of distinguishing language rights from LHR is between what is necessary, and what is enrichment-

oriented. Necessary rights, as in human rights, are those needed for basic needs and for living a dignified life, e.g. language-related identity, access to mother tongue(s), right of access to an official language, no enforced language shift, access to formal primary education based on language, and the right for minority groups to perpetuate as a distinct group, with own languages. Enrichment rights are above basic needs, e.g. right to learn foreign languages.

16.4 Individual Linguistic Rights

The most basic definition of linguistic rights is the right of individuals to use their language with other members of their linguistic group, regardless of the status of their language. They evolve from general human rights, in particular: non-discrimination, freedom of expression, right to private life, and the right of members of a linguistic minority to use their language with other members of their community.

Individual linguistic rights are provided for in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

- **Article 2** – all individuals are entitled to the rights declared without discrimination based on language.

- **Article 10** – individuals are entitled to a fair trial, and this is generally recognized to involve the right to an interpreter if an individual does not understand the language used in criminal court proceedings, or in a criminal accusation. The individual has the right to have the interpreter translate the proceedings, including court documents.

- **Article 19** – individuals have the right to freedom of expression, including the right to choose any language as the medium of expression.

- **Article 26** – everyone has the right to education, with relevance to the language of medium of instruction.

Linguistic rights can be applied to the private arena and the public domain

16.5 Private use of language

Most treaties or language rights documents distinguish between the private use of a language by individuals and the use of a language by public authorities. Existing international human rights mandate that all individuals have the right to private and family life, freedom of expression, non-discrimination and/or the right of persons belonging to a linguistic minority to use their language with other members of their group. The United Nations Human Rights Committee defines privacy as:

> "... the sphere of a person's life in which he or she can freely express his or her identity, be it by entering into relationships with others or

> alone. The Committee is of the view that a person's surname [and name] constitutes an important component of one's identity and that the protection against arbitrary or unlawful interference with one's privacy includes the protection against arbitrary or unlawful interference with the right to choose and change one's own name."

This means that individuals have the right to have their name or surname in their own language, regardless of whether the language is official or recognised, and state or public authorities cannot interfere with this right arbitrarily or unlawfully.

16.6 Linguistic rights in the public domain

The public domain, with respect to language use, can be divided into judicial proceedings and general use by public officials.

According to Article 10 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, individuals have the right to a fair trial. Therefore, in the name of fairness of judicial proceedings, it is an established linguistic right of an individual to an interpreter when he or she does not understand the language used in criminal court proceedings, or in a criminal accusation. The public authorities must either use the language which the individual understands, or hire an interpreter to translate the proceedings, including court cases.

General use by public officials can cover matters including public education, public radio and television broadcasting, the provision of services to the public, and so on. It is often accepted to be reasonable and justified for public officials to use the language of minorities, to an appropriate degree and level in their activities, when the numbers and geographic concentration of the speakers of a minority language are substantial enough. However, this is a contentious topic as the decision of substantiation is often arbitrary. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 26, does promise to protect all individuals from discrimination on the grounds of language. Following that, Article 27 declares, "minorities shall not be denied the right... to use their own language". The Convention against Discrimination in Education, Article 5, also does declares the rights for minorities to "use or teach their own language"

16.6.1 Collective linguistic rights

Collective linguistic rights are linguistic rights of a group, notably a language group or a state. Collective rights mean "the right of a linguistic group to ensure the survival of its language and to transmit the language to future generations". Language groups are complex and more difficult to demarcate than states. Part of this difficulty is that members within language groups assign different roles to their language, and there are also difficulties in defining a language. Some states have legal provisions for the safeguard of collective linguistic rights because there are clear-cut situations under particular historical and social circumstances.

Collective linguistic rights apply to states because they express themselves in one or more languages. Generally, the language régime of states, which is communicated through allocation of statuses to languages used within its boundaries, qualifies

linguistic rights claimed by groups and individuals in the name of efficient governance, in the best interest of the common good. States are held in check by international conventions and the demands of the citizens. Linguistic rights translate to laws differently from country to country, as there is no generally accepted standard legal definition.

16.6.2 Territoriality vs. personality principles

The principle of territoriality refers to linguistic rights being focused solely within a territory, whereas the principle of personality depends on the linguistic status of the person(s) involved. An example of the application of territoriality is the case of Switzerland, where linguistic rights are defined within clearly divided language-based cantons. An example of the application of personality is in federal Canadian legislation, which grants the right to services in French or English regardless of territory.

16.6.3 Negative vs. positive rights

Negative linguistic rights mean the right for the exercise of language without the interference of the State. Positive linguistic rights require positive action by the State involving the use of public money, such as public education in a specific language, or state-provided services in a particular language.

16.6.4 Assimilation-oriented vs. Maintenance-oriented

Assimilation-oriented types of language rights refer to the aim of the law to assimilate all citizens within the country, and range from prohibition to toleration. An example of prohibition type laws is the treatment of Kurds in Turkey as well as Turks in Iran, where they are forbidden to use the Kurdish and Turkish languages respectively. Assimilation-oriented approaches to language rights can also be seen as a form of focus on the individual's right to communicate with others inside a system. Many policies of linguistic assimilation being tied to the concept of nation building and facilitating communication between various groups inside of a singular state system.

Maintenance-oriented types of language rights refer to laws aiming to enable the maintenance of all languages within a country, and range from permission to promotion. An example of laws that promote language rights is the Basque Normalization Law, where the Basque language is promoted. Many maintenance-oriented approaches require both a framework of collective and positive rights with significant government funding in order for produce the desired outcomes of linguistic maintenance. As in Wales or Quebec there is significant debate over funding and the use of collective rights in building of an effective maintenance framework.

The neutral point between assimilation-orientation and maintenance-orientation is non-discrimination prescription, which forbids discrimination based on language. However the non-discrimination position has also been seen as just another form of

assimilationist policy as its primarily just leads to a more extended period of assimilation into the majority language rather than a perpetual continuation of the minority language.

16.7 Language rights at international and regional levels

16.7.1 International platform

The Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights was approved on 6 June 1996 in Barcelona, Spain. It was the culmination of work by a committee of 50 experts under the auspices of UNESCO. Signatories were 220 persons from over 90 states, representing NGOs and International PEN Clubs Centres. This Declaration was drawn up in response to calls for linguistic rights as a fundamental human right at the 12th Seminar of the International Association for the Development of Intercultural Communication and the Final Declaration of the General Assembly of the International Federation of Modern Language Teachers. Linguistic rights in this Declaration stems from the language community, i.e., collective rights, and explicitly includes both regional and immigrant minority languages.

Overall, this document is divided into sections including: Concepts, General Principles, Overall linguistic regime (which covers Public administration and official bodies, Education, Proper names, Communications media and new technologies, Culture, and The socioeconomic sphere), Additional Dispositions, and Final Dispositions. So for instance, linguistic rights are granted equally to all language communities under Article 10, and to everyone, the right to use any language of choice in the private and family sphere under Article 12. Other Articles details the right to use or choice of languages in education, public, and legal arenas.

There are a number of other documents on the international level granting linguistic rights. The UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1966 makes international law provision for protection of minorities. Article 27 states that individuals of linguistic minorities cannot be denied the right to use their own language.

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1992. Article 4 makes "certain modest obligations on states".[28] It states that states should provide individuals belonging to minority groups with sufficient opportunities for education in their mother tongue, or instruction with their mother tongue as the medium of instruction. However, this Declaration is non-binding.

A third document adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989, which makes provisions for linguistic rights is the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In this convention, Articles 29 and 30 declare respect for the child's own cultural identity, language and values, even when those are different from the country of residence, and the right for the child to use his or her own language, in spite of the child's minority or immigrant status.

16.7.2 Regional platform

16.7.2.1 Africa

Linguistic rights in Africa have only come into focus in recent years. In 1963, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was formed to help defend the fundamental human rights of all Africans. It adopted in 1981 the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which aims to promote and protect fundamental human rights, including language rights, in Africa. In 2004, fifteen member states ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights Establishing the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights. The Court is a regional, legal platform that monitors and promotes the AU states' compliance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. It is currently pending a merger with the Court of Justice of the African Union.

In 2001 the President of the Republic of Mali, in conjunction with the OAU, set up the foundation for the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN) to "work for the promotion and harmonisation of languages in Africa". Along with the inauguration of the Interim Governing Board of the ACALAN, the African Union declared 2006 as the Year of African Languages (YOAL).

In 2002, the OAU was disbanded and replaced by the African Union (AU). The AU adopted the Constitutive Act previously drawn up by the OAU in 2000. In Article 25, it is stated that the working languages of the Union and its institutions are Arabic, English, French and Portuguese, and if possible, all African languages. The AU also recognizes the national languages of each of its member institutions as stated in their national constitutions. In 2003, the AU adopted a protocol amending the Act such that working languages shall be renamed as official languages, and would encompass Spanish, Kiswahili and "any other African language" in addition to the four aforementioned languages. However, this Amendment has yet to be put into force, and the AU continues to use only the four working languages for its publications.

16.7.2.2 Europe

The Council of Europe adopted the European Convention on Human Rights in 1950, which makes some reference to linguistic rights. In Article 5.2, reasons for arrest and charges have to be communicated in a language understood by the person. Secondly, Article 6.3 grants an interpreter for free in a court, if the language used cannot be spoken or understood.

The Council for Local and Regional Authorities, part of the Council of Europe, formulated the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in 1992. This Charter grants recognition, protection, and promotion to regional and/or minority languages in European states, though explicitly not immigrant languages, in domains of "education, judicial authorities, administrative and public services, media, cultural activities, and socio-economic life" in Articles 8 to 13. Provisions under this Charter

are enforced every three years by a committee. States choose which regional and/or minority languages to include.

The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities was implemented by the Council of Europe in 1995 as a "parallel activity" to the Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. This Framework makes provisions for the right of national minorities to preserve their language in Article 5, for the encouragement of "mutual respect and understanding and co-operation among all persons living on their territory", regardless of language, especially in "fields of education, culture and the media" in Article 6. Article 6 also aims to protect persons from discrimination based on language.

Another document adopted by the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly in 1998 is the Recommendation 1383 on Linguistic Diversification. It encourages a wider variety of languages taught in Council of Europe member states in Article 5. It also recommends language education to include languages of non-native groups in Article 8.

Conclusion

Linguistic rights are the human and civil rights concerning the individual and collective right to choose the language or languages for communication in a private or public atmosphere. Linguistic rights include, among others, the right to one's own language in legal, administrative and judicial acts, language education, and media in a language understood and freely chosen by those concerned.

Self Assessment Exercise

1. Discuss linguistic rights in general
2. Compare linguistic rights at various levels
3. Comment o the importance of linguistics human rights

Summary

In this unit you have been introduced to linguistic rights, another very important sociolinguistics phenomenon. Other aspects covered in are Individual Linguistics Rights, Private use of language, Linguistic rights in the public domain, Collective linguistic rights, Territoriality vs. personality principles and Language rights at international and regional levels.

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