

# Lec20: Language and Society-I

HUL 242

18/4

# Linguistic analysis

Move from the nuts-and-bolts of language analysis

Apply this knowledge towards understanding and predicting language in **use**

Real world data, collected from instances of language use

E.g. transcripts of conversation, naturally occurring utterances

Uncover interactions: between language and society, language and the mind

# Why do we use the language we use?

## Linguistic competence

Ability to produce grammatically correct sentences, in order to be understood

## Communicative competence

The ability to switch linguistically and appropriately according to situational changes (Verma, 1976)

# Why do we use the language we use?

# Why do we use the language we use?

- Unconscious phenomenon
- Socially acceptable
- Transactional purposes
- In order to lie/conceal a fact
- To express something that is unavailable

# Situationally determined shifts in language varieties

- Participants (behaviour, social positions)
- Socio cultural setting
- Topic of discourse

## Which language?

Choices based on a network of situational and cultural choices

It's not only what you say that's important but also which language to say it in

Bilingualism: the ability to speak more than one language

Multilingualism: use of two or more languages by a speaker or community of speakers

- We can choose between a language/dialect or a register.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VAFki9X-4WQ>



# Relationships between languages

## Diglossia (Fishman)

“Two (or more) varieties that coexist in a speech community; the domains of linguistic behavior are parceled out in a kind of complementary distribution”

These domains are usually ranked in a kind of hierarchy, from highly valued (H) to less valued (L) (Schiffman)

- Guaraní and Spanish in Paraguay: both are given national recognition
- Spanish is the language of education and government, spoken by a relative minority
- Guaraní is the language used at home, informal communication, spoken by a large number of people
- Spanish may be the language of power, but Guaraní is the language of solidarity

# Language relationships

- Classical-vernacular [Classical Arabic- Spoken Arabic]
- Genetically related or genetically unrelated [Standard German-Swiss German, Guarani-Spanish]

## Is bilingualism/multilingualism a disadvantage?

- Often does not have strong positive connotations
- 'Speak Good English Campaign' in Singapore against 'Singlish'
- Singlish contains influences of English, Malay, Hokkien, Teochew, Cantonese, Tamil



# Language contact

## Example (Gella et al, 2014)

love affection lekar salose se  
sunday ke din chali aarahi  
divine parampara ko age badhha  
rahe ho

## Fr-Eng

I mean, c'est un idiot, ce mec-là.  
Trans: I mean he's an idiot, that guy.

## Deu-Eng

*Johan hat mir gesagt* that you were going to leave.  
Johan told me that you were going to leave

Examples like these are common in the world's languages

# Code switching

## Gumperz (1982) definition

“juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or sub-systems”

- Bilinguals that are fluent in both languages will switch between or within sentences.
- Inter-sentential is code-switching, intra-sentential is code-mixing
- For this class, we will use the term code-switching for both types

## Data from 'Jab We Met' (P. Sailaja, 2011)

Geet: Ticket dikhaana please.

Geet: Hello...Aap se baat kar rahi hoon. Arey? Ye seat meri hai. Twenty three. Kamaal hai. O boss...

... Geet: Ye passage waali seats koi nahin lena chahta, magar main insist karti hoon ki bhaiya passage waali seat hi do. Reservation waale uncle bade hairaan pareshaan sa ho jaate hain magar mera funda ye hai..

# Characteristics

- there are judgements about what kind of code-switching is acceptable or not
- code switching is carried out without apparent hesitation/corrections (not fluke utterances)
- Not simply borrowing i.e. using words or terms from another language (e.g. *taxi*, *email* in Hindi)

# Code switching

Takes place even when equivalent meanings exist in the matrix language

## Matrix language and an embedded language

- based on the dominant morpho-syntactic frame of the utterance
- a word/category from the dominant or 'matrix' language is switched with the embedded language (but not vice versa)
- "overpowering judgement" that a given sentence 'comes from' a particular language



# Intra-sentential code-switching (Joshi, 1982)

## Constraints on the switching rule

- Only certain categories e.g. open class items can be switched
- Examples of closed class items that are usually not switched
  - ▶ Tense and auxiliary
  - ▶ Determiners, Quantifiers
  - ▶ Preposition/Postposition
  - ▶ Complementizer

## Switching constraints

ladke kursiyan rangaa rahe hai

\*ladke kursiyon ko paint rahe hai

ladke kursiyon ko **paint** kar rahe hai

Not possible to switch *kar rahe hai*, but the content *rang* is switched

\*ladke kursiyon ko **painting**

\*ladke **paint** kursiyan ('The boys paint the the chairs')

Entire V and tense cannot be switched

Entire VP cannot be switched

# Switching constraints

$X_m Y_e$  :m=matrix language, e=embedded language

## Determiners not switched

kuch kursiyan  $\text{Det}_m \text{N}_m$

kuch chairs  $\text{Det}_m \text{N}_e$

some chairs  $\text{Det}_e \text{N}_e$

\*some kursiyan \* $\text{Det}_e \text{N}_m$

# Switching constraints

## Prepositions and Postpositions

Not possible to switch these

kuch kursiyon par

kuch chairs par

\*kuch kursiyon on

\*par some chairs

## Switching constraints

### Pronouns not switched, nouns switched

Mes amigos finished first (subject noun switched)

\*Ellos finished first (Ellos=they; pronoun switched)

## Code switching vs. borrowing

Borrowed words or short expressions usually incorporated into to the second language morphology, phonology, or syntax.

vahan bahut saari taxiy**an** khadi hai  
I have biscottis with my coffee

## References

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- A.K. Joshi. Processing of Sentences with intra-sentential code-switching. *Proceedings of COLING 1982*.
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