COURSE THREE: Varieties of Language
Introduction*:*

    Within each community or complex of overlapping and interacting communities there exist a number of different language codes and ways of speaking available to its members, which constitute its *communicative repertoire*. This includes "all varieties, dialects or styles used in a particular socially-defined population, and the constraints which govern the choice among them" (Gumperz 1977). Any one speaker also has a variety of codes and styles from which to choose, but it is very unlikely that any individual is able to produce the full range; different subgroups of the community may understand and use different subsets of its available codes. The means of communication used in a community thus may include different languages, different regional and social varieties of one or more of the languages, different registers (generally varying on a formal-informal dimension which cross-cuts regional and social dimensions), and different channels of communication (e.g. oral, written, manual). The nature and extent of this diversity is related to the social organization of the group, which is likely to include differences in age, sex, and social status, as well as differences in the relationship between speakers, their goals of interaction, and the settings in which communication takes place. The communicative repertoire may also include different occupational codes, specialized religious language, secret codes of various kinds, imitative speech, whistle or drum language, and varieties used for talking to foreigners, young children, and pets. Identification of the varieties which occur in any community requires observation and description of actual differences in pronunciation, grammar, lexicon, styles of speaking, and other communicative behaviors which are potentially available for differentiation, but it must ultimately depend on the discovery of which differences are recognized by members of the group as conveying social meaning of some kind. In addition, the communicative repertoire of a group includes the variety of possible interaction strategies available to it. These are most commonly used to establish, maintain, or manipulate role-relationships. Speakers' choices of interaction strategies provide a dynamic connection between the language code, speakers' goals, and the participant structure in specific situations.

Language Choice

  Given the multiple varieties of language available within the communicative repertoire of a community or complex, and the subset of varieties available to its subgroups and individuals, speakers must select the code and interaction strategy to be used in any specific context. Knowing the alternatives and the rules for appropriate choice are part of speakers' communicative competence. Accounting for the rules or system for such decision-making is part of the task of describing communication within any group, and of explaining communication more generally. The concept of *domain* developed by Fishman (1964, 1966, 1971, 1972) remains useful for both description and explanation of the distribution of means of

communication. He defines it as:

. . . a socio-cultural construct abstracted from topics of communication, relationships between communicators, and locales of communication, in accord with the institutions of a society and the spheres of activity of a speech community. (1971: 587)

Factors determining domains may thus include the general subject area under discussion (e.g. religion, family, work), the role-relationships between the participants (e.g. priest–parishioner, mother–daughter, boss–secretary), and the setting of the interaction (e.g. church, home, office). No fixed set of domains can be posited a priori for all speech communities,

since the set of activities which will constitute a cluster of purpose, rolerelations, and setting will be culture-specific. Different levels of *focus* have also proved to be salient in different communities: e.g. societal–institutional (family, school, church, government) versus social–psychological (intimate, informal, formal, intergroup). These levels tend to coincide (family with intimate, for instance, and religious institution with formal), but may provide an interesting additional dimension for investigation (Fishman 1971).

Topic is often a primary determinant of language choice in multilingual contexts; bilinguals have often learned about some topics through the medium of one language and other topics through the medium of the second, and thus only know the vocabulary to discuss a topic in one of their languages, or feel it is more "natural" to use one language for a particular topic. Linguists from non-English speaking countries who were trained in an English-medium university provide a good example: they sometimes continue to discuss, lecture, and publish about linguistics in English, often even when their students are not fluent in that language. This may be because they do not know the necessary terminology in their national language, or because they have come to believe it is more appropriate to use English to talk about such subjects as grammatical analysis, and even to use English examples rather than their own Chinese, Arabic, or Japanese. In bilingual education programs in the United States, native speakers of other languages frequently find it easier to teach in English if they themselves are products of English-only education. For this reason, university training programs are recognizing the need to teach methods and content area courses in the language the teachers will be using to teach the subject. Some teachers have asserted it is impossible to teach a subject like American History in languages other than English because "only English can be used to express American concepts." A similar belief is held even more strongly by many Navajo teachers, that Navajo history and culture cannot be taught adequately in English. In this case, the Navajo language is believed to be so integrally related to the culture that religious beliefs must be understood in order to know how to use the language correctly, and the beliefs can be fully expressed only in Navajo.

In addition to topic, appropriate language choice may depend on *setting* (including locale and time of day) and *participants* (including their age, sex, and social status). A bilingual child may regularly use English at school with a grandmother if she has come to observe the class, and English at home with the teacher if he or she has come to visit. Language choice is also importantly influenced by social and political *identity* , especially in areas of the world where regional or ethnic languages have become symbols for emerging nationalism (e.g., see Woolard 1987 on factors in speaker choice of Catalan versus Castilian in Spain).

Choice of varieties within a single language is governed by the same factors. Speakers may select from among regional varieties in their repertoire depending on which geographic area and subgroup of the population they wish to express identity with, or as they travel from one area to another. On a paralinguistic dimension, whispering is likely to be chosen for conversation in a church, or when the topic is one that should not be overheard by others, while shouting may be chosen for greeting out of doors, and from a distance. Shouting may be an appropriate choice even in this setting only for males under a certain age, and only when greeting other males of the same or lower age and status, or with other restrictions (including perhaps time of day).

Choice of channel may depend on environmental conditions: drums may be used in jungle regions, signal fires where there are barren bluffs, and whistle languages or horns where there

is low humidity. Choosing oral or written channels is usually
dependent on distance, or the need for a permanent record.

   Choice of register depends on the topic and setting, and also on the social distance between speakers. The possible complexity of levels of formality may be illustrated by different forms which would be chosen in a single speech event, in this case a Japanese woman offering tea in her home. According to Harumi Williams, the act of offering a cup of tea in upper- and middleclass homes demonstrates how Japanese place each other in society, and so requires careful choice of language forms and manner of speaking.

1 Ocha? (to own children) [tea]

2 Ocha dD? (to own children, friends who are younger than self, own younger brothers and sisters) [tea how-about]

3 Ocha ikaga? (to friends who are the same age, own older brothers and sisters) [tea howabout (polite)]

4 Ocha ikaga desu ka? (to husband, own parents, own aunts and uncles, husband's younger brothers and sisters) [tea how-about (polite) is Q]

5 Ocha wa ikaga desu ka? (to own grandparents) [tea topic how-about (polite) is Q]

6 Ocha ikaga deshD ka? (to husband's elder brothers and sisters) [tea how-about (polite) is (polite) Q]

7 Ocha wa ikaga deshD ka? (to teachers, husband's parents, husband's boss, husband's grandparents) [tea topic how-about (polite) is (polite) Q]

   Williams reports that ranking varies with such factors as how often she sees the people, and the level of respect form used for her husband would be different if the marriage were *miai* 'arranged marriage' rather than *renai* 'love marriage.' Nonverbal alternatives are also important in this event: when tea is offered in a Japanese *tatami* room it should not be offered standing, but standing is appropriate if the room is Western style. If there is a picture on the tea cup, the picture side should face the receiver; the cup should be held with the right hand on the body of the cup and the left supporting the base. When offering tea to people ranking higher than he own husband, a woman should bow slightly. Vocally, increased formality not only involves choice of higher level respect forms, but a higher pitched voice. In general, the longer the sentence, the more polite; but the most honorific expression is silence, which would be the appropriate choice when offering tea to a guest of a very high position in the society.

Diglossia and Dinomia

The clearest example of language choice according to domain is *diglossia*, a situation in which two or more languages (or varieties of the same language) in a speech community are allocated to different social functions and contexts. When Latin was the language of education and religious services in England, for example, English and Latin were in a diglossic relationship. The term was coined by Charles Ferguson (1959), who used it initially to refer only to the use of two or more varieties of the same language by speakers under different conditions. He exemplified it in the use of classical and colloquial varieties of Arabic, Katharevousa and Demotike varieties of Greek, Haitian Standard French and Creole, and Standard German and Swiss German. In each case, there is a high (H) and low (L) variety of a language used in the same society, and they have the following relationship:

1 There is a specialization of function for H and L.
2 H has a higher level of prestige than L, and is considered superior.
3 There is a literary heritage in H, but not in L.
4 There are different circumstances of acquisition; children learn L at home, and H in school.
5 The H variety is standardized, with a tradition of grammatical study and established norms and orthography.
6 The grammar of the H variety is more complex, more highly inflected.
7 H and L varieties share the bulk of their vocabularies, but there is some complementary distribution of terms.
8 The phonology of H and L is a single complex system.

Diglossia was extended by Fishman (1972) to include the use of more than one language, such as the situation in Paraguay where Spanish is the H language of school and government, and Guaraní is the L language of home (cf. Rubin 1968). Since the term diglossia refers to language distribution in the whole society and not in the usage of individuals, the fact that only a relatively small percentage of the population of Paraguay speaks both H and L does not affect the designation; only those who speak Spanish have traditionally participated in education and government, although this situation may be changing with the advent of bilingual education. To distinguish societal and individual language distribution, Fishman suggests a four-way designation: both bilingualism and diglossia, diglossia without bilingualism, bilingualism without diglossia, and neither bilingualism nor diglossia. Regional distribution is not a determining factor in identifying a diglossic society. French and Flemish are in complementary regional distribution in Belgium, but each is used for a full range of functions in each part of the country; this is characterized as bilingualism without diglossia. The situation in Paraguay is characterized as diglossia without bilingualism.

Most (but not all) of the features by which Ferguson characterized monolingual diglossia are also true of multilingual situations. There is a comparable specialization of function for H and L languages; the H language generally has more prestige; and L is learned at home and H at school. Also, although the L language in a multilingual society may well have a literary heritage, tradition of grammatical study and established norms and orthography, these often are not known to its speakers in a diglossic situation. The only clear differences between monolingual and multilingual diglossia are those that relate to the structures of the codes themselves: i.e. the relationship of their grammars, vocabularies, and phonological systems.

Because our interest in communicative behavior includes not only language structures, but also the social and cultural systems which govern how they are used, I have added the concept of *dinomia* (Saville-Troike 1978), which translates roughly from Greek as 'two systems of laws.' There are clear analogies between language domains and choice, and cultural domains and choice, and obvious parallels with language in the appropriate use of cultural rules, and in switching between alternative cultural systems. The minority culture first learned by many Spanish speakers in the United States, for instance, is comparable to the L variety of a language in a diglossic situation, and the dominant US "mainstream" culture is analogous to the H variety of a national language. Just as with L and H language varieties, the L culture is generally learned by children at home, and H at school; the H culture has more prestige in the society than the L; and there is a specialization of function for H and L. Dinomia may thus be defined as *the coexistence and complementary use within the same society of two cultural systems*, one of which is the dominant culture of the larger society and the other a subordinate and less prestigious subculture from within that same society. The relationship of these terms is shown in figure 3.1. As with diglossia, dinomia may apply to situations where there is an indigenous tradition of differences in sociocultural strata (often associated with urban/rural or social or occupational class distinctions) and to situations which result from migration or conquest.

Dinomia, like diglossia, is a societal state of affairs; biculturalism, like bilingualism, refers to individual distribution. A society in which an entirely different set of cultural norms governs behavior in home and school, for example, is considered dinomic. This is the case in many African and Asian communities where Western educational systems (often including Western teaching and administrative personnel, as well as curriculum and instructional material) have been incorporated without adaptation into the indigenous cultures. This is also the case in the Navajo community, where the dominant US culture governs behaviors in most educational contexts, but a different culture governs behaviors at home (even though one language – either English or Navajo – may be used in both domains). Individual Navajos who are both bilingual and bicultural and travel off the reservation may change ways of speaking as well as language codes, including greeting forms, nonverbal behavior, and timing between questions and responses. A complete switch of rules for appropriate communicative behavior involves more than language; otherwise, the switch is only a partial one which identifies speakers as bilingual, but not bicultural. Nonverbal aspects of communication are likely to prove more closely associated with dinomia and biculturalism than with bilingualism, since most individuals who can switch language codes with ease still use the gestures and proxemics of their native language, as well as its interactional strategies. Part of my intent in coining the term dinomia is to separate language code from patterns of use of the language code (and other means of communication) at the societal level; it is quite possible for language codes and rules of communicative behavior (as part of culture) to be distributed differently in the society. Fishman (1980) has accepted the analogy of *diglossia/ bilingualism: dinomia/biculturalism* given here, but suggests a narrower concept would be more useful, which he terms *di-ethnia*. However, a concept relating to ethnicity is not coordinate with the *language:culture* distinction envisioned here. To adapt his suggestion in turn, one may find cases of biculturalism with or without dinomia, as well as dinomia with and without either bilingualism or diglossia.

Code-Switching and Style-Shifting

Because of the proliferation of terms and inconsistent usage in the field, it is necessary to begin any discussion of this topic with definitions. I have been intentionally vague in using *varieties* to indicate any patterned or systematic differences in language forms and use which are recognized by native speakers as being distinct linguistic entities, or "different" from one another in some significant way. More precise distinctions must be made about types of varieties within any one speech community, but their nature cannot be presumed for all languages prior to investigation. We first require a definition of *codes*, by which I will mean different languages, or quite different varieties of the same language (comparable to classical versus colloquial Arabic, or Katharevousa versus Demotike Greek). *Code-alternation* (Gumperz 1976) refers to change in language according to domain, or at other major communication boundaries, and *code-switching* to change in languages within a single speech event. *Style-shifting* will refer to change in language varieties which involves changing only the *code-markers*; these are variable features which are associated with such social and cultural dimensions as age, sex, social class, and relationship between speakers The distinction among these three types of code-variation is illustrated in the following sequence of speech acts (reported by Silverio-Borges) at the Cuban interest section office in an embassy in Washington, DC prior to official political recognition of the Castro government and full embassy status. To begin with, the receptionist is talking to a visitor in Spanish when the telephone rings. This *summons* marks a major boundary point, a change in events, and the receptionist changes to English (an example of *code-alternation*). The conversation begins:

1   Receptionist (R): *Cuban Interest Section.*
2   Caller (C): *¿Es la embajada de Cuba?* (Is this the Cuban embassy?)
→3   R: *Sí. Dígame.* (Yes, may I help you?)

This is an example of the receptionist *code-switching* (→) from English to Spanish, changing languages within the same speech event, because she had identified the caller as a Spanish speaker.

4   C: *Es Rosa.* (This is Rosa.)
↓ 5 R: *¡Ah, Rosa! ¿Cóma anda eso?* (Oh, Rosa! How is it going?)

This is downward *style-shifting* (↓) from formal to informal Spanish as the receptionist identifies the caller as a friend, still in the same event. There is a shift to more marked intonation and faster speed, as well as use of the informal *¿Cóma anda eso?* rather than formal *¿Cómo le va?* or *¿Cómo está usted?* There is also a change to louder voice volume because the call is recognized as long distance, which may also be considered a kind of styleshifting. (I am introducing here an "arrow convention" to distinguish between code-switching (→) and style-shifting (↑) or (↓), indicating shifts to higher or lower level, respectively.) On another dimension, we may distinguish between *situational codeswitching* and *metaphorical code-switching* (Blom and Gumperz 1972), a distinction which applies to style-shifting as well Situational code-switching occurs when a language change accompanies a change of topics or participants, or any time the communicative situation is redefined. Within a single conversation,

Navajo teachers usually speak English to one another when discussing matters related to school, for instance, but may switch to Navajo to discuss their families, or rodeos and other community activities. They may also situationally switch into English if non-Navajo speakers join the conversation, so the new arrivals will not be excluded.

Metaphorical code-switching occurs within a single situation, but adds meaning to such components as the role-relationships which are being expressed. Since speaking different languages is an obvious marker of differential group membership, by switching languages bilinguals often have the option of choosing which group to identify with in a particular situation, and thus can convey the metaphorical meaning which goes along with such choice as well as whatever denotative meaning is conveyed by the code itself.

Another dimension to be distinguished is the scope of switching, or the nature of the juncture at which language change takes place. The basic distinction in scope is usually between *intersentential switching*, or change which occurs between sentences or speech acts, and *intrasentential switching*, or change which occurs within a single sentence. Some sociolinguists refer to the latter type as "code-mixing," but I avoid that term because of the pejorative connotation it carries that intrasentential switching involves a random or unprincipled combination of languages. When the two languages used in intrasentential switching do not share the same word order, an additional distinction is needed between *guest* and *host* languages in an utterance (e.g. Sridhar and Sridhar 1980), or between *matrix* and *embedded* languages in Myers-Scotton's (1993) model. The host or matrix language is the one to which the basic grammatical structure is assigned; elements of the guest or embedded language are switched into it following systematic rules and constraints.