

Multilingualism  
&  
Bilingualism

Group 1

# Definition of Bilingualism

## What is Bilingualism?

We define bilingualism as the ability to reasonably communicate in more than one language.

**Sequential Bilingualism:** learning one language after another, not at the same time

**Simultaneous Bilingualism:** learning two or more languages at the same time from birth

1.

## Brief Description of Interviewees

<b>Chong Hock</b>	<b>Anne-Marie</b>	<b>Maria</b>
61, Male, Chinese Singaporean	57, Female, White British	21, Female, White Russian
<p><b>L1:</b> English</p> <p><b>L2:</b> Bahasa Malaysia (learnt as compulsory language from age 7-16)</p> <p><b>L3:</b> Mandarin (optional class in primary school)</p>	<p><b>L1:</b> English</p> <p><b>L2:</b> Maltese</p>	<p><b>L1:</b> Russian</p> <p><b>L2:</b> English (Learned 11 years in immersion classes)</p> <p><b>L3:</b> French (Learned 1 year with tutor)</p>
Grew up in Malaysia, moved to Singapore when 24, worked in China for 7 months	Born and raised in England with one English and one Maltese parent	Born and raised in Russia, moved to France at 14, then Canada at 15 (spent 2 years in Quebec with both French/English influences, then 4 years in Toronto in English-speaking environment.



<b>Vitaly</b>	<b>Yannik</b>	<b>Barbara</b>
22, Male, White Russian	25, Male, White German	20, Female, White Czech
L1: Russian L2: English (Learned since 7 years old through immersion classes)	L1: German (native language) L2: English (learnt as a compulsory subject in primary school, then more intensively as an optional subject in high school.	L1: Czech L2: English (learnt when she was 10 and took her around 8 months to become fluent. She learnt it naturally in everyday life. She did not have extra support or English lessons.
Born and raised in Russia, moved to California, USA at age 16, then moved to Toronto, Canada age 18-present	Born and raised in Germany, studied abroad in Brazil (6 months) and had a work placement in England (6 months)	Born and raised in Czech Republic. Came to England - London when she was 10.

2.

Maximum &  
Minimum  
Continuum

# Relativity of Bilingualism

## What is a minimalist definition?

'Able to produce and understand the second or foreign language in limited activities with perhaps just a few set of grammatical rules and vocabularies' (Beardsmore, 1986)

## What is a maximalist definition?

'Able to produce and understand all the activities and capacities in two languages perfectly' (Beardsmore, 1986)

# Maximum & Minimum Continuum

"Bilingualism is the ability to speak to a reasonable level in another language. It is important to read and write too, but the ability to speak is vital to bilingualism." - Yannik Diekers

"A bilingual must know the culture and language of both languages and can go back to either lands and still operate there" - Vitally

Bilingualism is being able to speak and understand MOST things in more than one language. E.g. be able to communicate if you had to live in that particular country and no one spoke any English. - Anne - Marie

Minimalist

Maximalist

"Bilingualism is being able to reasonably speak, read and write more than one language" - Chong Hock

"A bilingual knows the culture of the different places that speak the languages and feels confident operating in the language and society" - Maria

"Bilingualism is having the ability to speak more than one language fluently. You should also have the ability to read as well" - Barbara



3.

Use of languages

# Proficiency & Use of Languages

Chong Hock	Anne-Marie	Maria
(L1) Uses English daily and confidently	(L1) Uses English daily and confidently for almost everything	(L1) Uses Russian daily when speaking to boyfriend or when skyping family. Sometimes forgets common words or may switch to English when speaking about University-related topics.
(L2) Use of Bahasa Malaysia dropped after moving to Singapore, so now less confident in speaking, listening and more so in reading and writing	(L2) Uses Maltese when speaking to relatives, mainly mother or when travelling to Malta. A need to speak Maltese as her Grandmother spoke no English. (Functional)	(L2) Uses English daily for everyday life, including at work and in University, as well as in her social life. Very confident. Occasional errors or uncertainties.
(L3) Use of basic Mandarin, improved slightly in China but disimproved when back in Singapore		(L3) Rarely uses French anymore. Occasionally will use in her job, but will often forget common words she once knew.

# Proficiency & Use of Languages

Vitaly	Yannik	Barbara
<p>(L1) Uses Russian daily when speaking to girlfriend or when skyping family. Sometimes forgets common words or may switch to English when speaking about University-related topics. .</p>	<p>(L1) Uses German proficiently in everyday life, including at work and at home. Confident usage in L1.</p>	<p>(L1) When she goes back to Czech as her family live there. Her mum lives in London also but she speaks a bit of Czech and a bit of English. She code-switches in conversation with her mum.</p>
<p>(L2) Uses English daily for everyday life, including in University, as well as in social situations. Fairly confident. Occasional errors or uncertainties.</p>	<p>(L2) Uses English mostly at work, usually around twice a week when communicating with English speaking clients. Also uses it when communicating with English speaking friends (quite frequently), so quite confident in English proficiency.</p>	<p>(L2) English - normal conversation, work, daily routine. Learnt English due to school, she was encouraged to learn english with no lessons it just came naturally.</p>

4.

Code-switching



# Code-switching

## What is code-switching?

When a speaker alternates between two or more languages in discourse (Treffers- Daller 2006, p.144). The psycholinguistic perspective defines it as “interference” but it is actually performed based on rules for personal or societal reasons.

## Participants who did code-switching

1. Chong Hock: situational code-switching (based on situation, interlocutor)
2. Maria: Both Inter- and Intrasentential code-switching, usually Intrasentential
3. Vitaly: Intrasentential code-switching
4. Yannik: Intrasentential code-switching - uses the English equivalent when he forgets a German word.
5. Barbara: situational code-switching
6. Anne-Marie: Intrasentential code-switching - when she forgets particular Maltese words.

5.  
Attrition

# Attrition

## What is first language attrition?

It is the “non-pathological, non-age related, structural loss of a first language within a late consecutive bilingual, assuming that the acquisition of the first language precedes its loss” (De Leeuw 2008:10)

## What is second language attrition?

“It is the decline of second language skills, which occurs when it is used to an insufficient degree” (de Bot & Weltens 1991:43).

Alternatively, the use of the second language may be limited due to environmental changes and another language becoming dominant (Olshtain 1989:151).



# Occurrence of attrition

	Chong Hock	Anne-Marie	Maria	Vitaly	Yannik	Barbara
<b>Attrition occurred?</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Why may attrition have occurred?</b>	(L1) Moved to Singapore, but English is the L1 in Singapore, so no L1 attrition as English continues to improve	L2 attrition as grandmother died (main functional of Maltese for the participant) she used it less and her proficiency declined, often forgets words and replaces with English words.	(L1) She has spent 7 years away from Russia, so does not get to use or hear it as often. In most situations, must use English. (L3) She no longer has much use for the language since moving to Toronto.	(L1) He has spent 6 years away from Russia, so does not get to use or hear it as often. Must use English in most situations.	Note: has experienced some cases of forgetting a German word and instead using the English alternative (code-switching)	(L1) She spent 10 years speaking only Czech but now she has spent another 10 years speaking mostly English so she does not hear Czech as much as she used to as her colleagues and friends all speak English.



6.

Perceptions of  
Languages

# Perceptions of Languages

- X **Anne-Marie** : L1 is a global Language therefore very important and useful. L2 important when speaking to older generations of Maltese people from remote towns. Functional when speaking to relatives who are more comfortable speaking Maltese. Preference of English as it was her first Language (sequential bilingual). Once grandmother died, there was less of a functional need/ importance for Maltese. Desire to maintain both languages as they are both 'heritage' languages.
- X **Yannik** : (sequential bilingual) Generally prefers L1 (German) as it is his native language and what he uses to mostly communicate with. However, he does believe that his L2 (English) is a more interesting language to learn and requires effort to use rather than (German) which requires no effort at all. Also he believes that English is a global language and therefore, will provide him with more and better job opportunities. Thus, he desires to maintain both languages.

Conclusion: We believe that the participants have a **positive perception of language** and that the **desire to maintain the language** influences proficiency of language

# References

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Thank you!

Any questions?

