





Multilingualism and Bilingualism

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Research Methods

- Semi-Structured Interviews
 - 16 Questions asked about; Acquisition, Attitude, Proficiency, Attrition
 - 6 Case Studies of people with different levels of bilingualism in 8 Languages
(EN, ES, FR, DE, IT, TR, ARA, POL)
 - Proficiency level measured using the Likert Scale
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Definitions of Bilingualism

Minimalist

“Bilinguals do not necessarily need to have perfect knowledge of all the languages they know to be considered as such” (Fabbro, 2001: 201)

Maximalist

Bilingualism means having a “native-like control of two languages” (Bloomfield, 1933: 53)



Benedetta: A simultaneous bilingual

- Simultaneous Bilingual: “*simultaneous exposure to both languages during infancy*”. (Patterson, 2002:23)
- LA= Italian, LB= English.
- Maximalist attitude
- Type 6: “*Mixed Languages*” Early Childhood Bilingualism (Romaine, 1995:183-187):

Parents: Italian/American English bilinguals.

Community:* Rome, Italy, not bilingual.

Strategy: code-switch and mix languages.



Parameters of bilingualism

- Language Use:

English: Studies, works and lives with boyfriend from New Zealand in Brighton

Italian: More Italian than English speaking friends

- Age of Acquisition: From birth

- Proficiency:


English 6/6

Italian


6/6



Code-Switching

- *code-switching is “the lexical traffic from one language to another, for example the use of an item from one language in a stretch of speech predominantly framed in the other” (Schmidt, 2011:19).*
 - Type used: metaphorical switching: *“the use of two language varieties within a single social setting for communicative effect”*. (Bloom and Gumperz 1972:425).
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Metaphorical Switching

- (1) *"Allora mio padre, my dad's father was Dutch, but practically from New York, he managed to take one of the last ships to escape from the Holocaust and started a new life in New York".*
 - (2) *"mia madre ha questo mixed background, nata in America, mamma Americana e padre Italiano"*
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Benedetta's Attrition


- Language attrition is *“the non-pathological decrease in a language that had previously been acquired by an individual”* (Köpke & Schmid, 2004:5).
- Minimalist approach: *“as soon as a speaker becomes bilingual, there will be some degree of traffic from L2 to L1”*(Schmidt, 2011:12).
- Restructuring: *“the re-analysis of L1 items on the basis of the rules or the scope of corresponding L2 items”* (Schmidt, 2011:15).

(3) **“Sai Tom Misch?”**


 “You **know** Tom Misch?”



Angelica: A late Consecutive bilingual

- Late consecutive bilingual
“the fundamental structures of the first language have already been acquired before the child begins the second language” (Taeschner, 1983:3)
 - L1/LA = Italian, L2 = English
 - Parents: Italian monolingual, Italian/American English bilingual
 - Community: Rome, Italy
 - Maximalist view: Doesn't consider herself bilingual
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Parameters of Bilingualism

- Language use: Italian; family, friends
English; academic, professional
 - Proficiency: Italian; native; 6/6
English; proficiency 4/6
 - Age of Acquisition: Italian; from birth
English; 19
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Activation Threshold Hypothesis

- Has been living in London, England since 2015, prior to that she lived in Rome, Italy where she grew up.
- Currently *studies* and *works* in London where she *lives* with international students.
- Has both Italian and English speaking friends, but spends more time with the English speaking community.

Italian activation Threshold: high
English activation Threshold: low



Angelica and Benedetta compared

- Simultaneous vs Late consecutive bilingual
- Same LOR
- Code-Switching via Restructuring

“andiamo per cena” vs “andiamo a cena”

“Let’s go for dinner”



Celimar: A Simultaneous Bilingual

- L1= German and Spanish
- Late consecutive bilingual in L2 = French and L3 = English
- Maximalist approach
- Type 1: *'One person - One language'* (Romaine, 1995:183-187):

Parents: Dad is a German native speaker, mum is a Spanish native speaker and they both

have some degree of competence in the other's language.

Community: Basel, German part of Switzerland.

Strategy: Dad speaks German to Celimar and mum speaks

Spanish to her.

Parameters of Bilingualism

- Language use:

She works and has a British boyfriend in London. Studies in English and Spanish.

- Proficiency:

German and English 6/6 on Likert Scale

French and Spanish 5/6 on Likert Scale

- Age of acquisition:

German and Spanish: Birth

French: 11 years old

English: 14 years old



Activation Threshold Hypothesis

- Framework developed by Michel Paradis (2007): the more frequently a certain item has been used before, the less effort is needed to activate it again.
 - English, low AT, the most activated language in her brain.
 - Spanish, low AT.
 - French, medium-high AT = a false-friends: (*végétal* → vegetable)
 - German, highest AT, the least practiced language.




Fatima: A Simultaneous Bilingual

- LA=English, LB=Arabic
- Type 6: “*Mixed Languages*” Early Childhood Bilingualism
- Does not codeswitch and has not experienced attrition either; keeps LA and LB separate and proficiency levels have remained the same.



Fatima: A Simultaneous Bilingual

- Parents: Both English and Arabic simultaneously
 - Community: One of the languages of both parents is the community language (English)
 - Strategy: Was taught both English and Arabic at home, while English proficiency advanced even further at school
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Parameters of Bilingualism

- Language use:

LA= Academic, professional, daily

LB= Familial settings

- Proficiency:

6/6 for English

3/6 for Arabic

- Age of Acquisition:

LA and LB learnt from birth




Activation Threshold

Activation threshold differs between these two environments:

- English-speaking environment (education and other non-family interactions)
English AT: Low
- Arabic-speaking environment (family):
Arabic AT: High



Sera: A Simultaneous Circumstantial Bilingual

- Type 6: “*Mixed Languages*” Early Childhood Bilingualism
 - Parents: The parents have different native languages. Mother speaks Turkish and English and father is native in English.
 - Community: The language of both of the parents is the language of the community (English).
 - Strategy: Only mother speaks both English and Turkish to the child.
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Sera: A Simultaneous Circumstantial Bilingual

- Acquisition -> Attrition -> Reacquisition
- LA and LB rather than L1 and L2
- Simultaneous bilingual
- Proficiency level is not directly correlated with identification with the culture of X language
- Integrative motivation to reacquire Turkish
- Regardless of the environment, the AT for Turkish is always high and low for English



Parameters of Bilingualism

- Language use:
 - English: academic, professional, daily life
 - Turkish: family and occasional trips abroad
- Proficiency:
 - English 6/6
 - Turkish 3/6
- Age of acquisition:
 - Both from birth.



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