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LING 477.01: Bilingualism

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LING 477 BILINGUALISM FALL 2015 ROOM 258, Social Sciences

Instructor:

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Course Materials:

Textbook Readings

Mitchell, R., Myles, F., & Marsden, E. (2013). *Second Language Learning Theories*, 3rd Edition. New York: Routledge.

Towell, R., & Hawkins, R. (1994). *Approaches to Second Language Acquisition*. Bristol, PA: Multilingual Matters.

Supplementary Readings

Materials and related documents are presented on the Moodle internet supplement for this course.

A Course in Bilingualisms:

Student Learning Outcomes, or SLOs (including but not limited to)

1. define and distinguish **INDIVIDUAL** (or **PERSONAL**) bilingualism from **SOCIETAL** bilingualism
2. express in writing (about 500 words, two paragraphs) using an analytical pattern of exposition which type of the two bilingualisms in (1) ought to be considered primary in pursuing a program of study in Bilingualism
3. comprehend and discuss the extent that territorial bilingualism concerns a program of study in Bilingualism and describe different ways it can manifest itself in the form of "twinned unilingualisms."
4. comprehend, discuss and define in writing the similarities shared and the differences separating Bilingualism from Diglossia and explain the function of diglossic bilingualism and its affect on language maintenance
5. Capably associate a variety of labels for phenomena (e.g., interference/transfer/crosslinguistics influence, acculturation/assimilation-integration/deculturation) with either individual/personal or societal bilingualism, allowing for degrees of overlap, and explain how said phenomena affect language vitality or endangerment

Overview

Among various studies involving human language, **Bilingualism** is plausibly the most multidimensional, too diverse to suitably cover in only one course in a single semester, so course content is selected with the intent to concentrate the field. In order to shrink the search-space for content, participants may first consider the place of bilingual studies within Linguistics, briefly occupying a central location and affiliated with programs-of-study in Anthropology.

In 1953, the LSA, AAA and Joint Committee on American Native Languages convened, a one-time event concluding in a memoir. Therein, Roman Jakobson reported, "Bilingualism is for me the fundamental problem of linguistics."

Direct focus on bilingual studies by this community became keenly reinforced later that year by the publication of Uriel Weinreich's *Languages in Contact* and Einar Haugen's *Norwegian Language in America*, scholarship directing bilingual studies at mental inquiry: the former stating, "the locus of language contact is in the mind of the bilingual"; and the latter, "the locus of bilingualism is in the individual mind" (Lehiste, 1988, p. 28). By the end of the decade, however, bilingual studies grew increasingly marginal in Linguistics, which in turn continued to grow progressively less behavioral (i.e., anthropological/sociological) and acutely more formal (i.e., computational), starting about 1947.

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Description

Because this course in Bilingualism is aligned with Linguistics, course work and content moderately involve methods of language analysis applicable to the speech of people who maintain more than one language as a way of expressing "ideas, emotions and desires" (Sapir, 1921, p. 8), or human language at large practically defined. Bilingual speakers are typical of humanity, but they do not typically speak two or more languages natively: What typifies their speech is departure from a native norm of one language due to the influence from another, or **INTERFERENCE PHENOMENA** (Weinreich, 1968). This presence of **LINGUISTIC INTERINFLUENCING** (Sapir, 1921) affects languages' lexical level (e.g., borrowing) as well as phonological and morphosyntactic levels, but the impact is not always observed evenly; an element X in language L_A that alters L₁ behavior in might be exclusively unidirectional (e.g., equivalent element X in L₁ need not alter L_A behavior). Sapir attributed this incongruity to "a psychological attitude" (Sapir, 1921, p. 195).

Content

In the Overview, the tendency in describing studies of Bilingualism is obviously toward brain sciences (i.e., "mind" in Weinreich and Haugen; a "psycho-physical basis" in Sapir, 1921, p.11), but the course entails no neurolinguistics. Rather than the cerebral cortex, such content relates more to cognition, namely models of both (i) speech-processing (on-line behavior in real time) and (ii) information-processing (conversion of human experiences of the environment into mental representations, or knowledge). Broadly, to speak, humans employ knowledge (therefore psychology). While vital, speech alone (bilingual speech aside) as an object of study in Linguistics courses is not enough to fathom language as a system because, for speech to entail systematic properties, it must rise above articulatory, acoustic, and even cortical levels and be associated with **MEANING**: That is, we assume as essential to linguistic inquiry that **form x** maps onto **function y** for any psycho-physical processes to clearly be an element of human behavior (Sapir, 1921).

As we study bilingual speech as a consequence of a **grammar** (form-function mapping), we also consider instances in which experience of linguistic behavior cultivates grammatical elements, or properties of human language systems. Accordingly, content portrays the brain in terms of language development, the kind of psycholinguistic processing that leads to learning; additionally, we may consider to what extent learning might be guided by perceptual factors as well as by precursors (a priori knowledge) to human experience of percepts that we associate with language behavior.

For example, at the start of the term, we survey a research agenda concerning **secondary bilingualism**, or developing a non-native language typically through instruction (Baetens Beardsmore, 1982, p. 8), the native language existing as a precursor to learning and affecting behavior (e.g., accent) and knowledge (stages transited by a language system).

Initially, we commit some grammatical elements from two distinct language systems (L₁ and L_A) to an analysis that, at first, fits the linguistic data well as a grammar of a human language system (i.e., form-function) wherein a **form x** maps onto a **function y**: Later in the course, we will likely regard a general feature of human language, **variability** (wherein two **forms x** maps onto one **function y**), which introduces complications to initial analysis and necessitates an alternative method. This activity allows us to apply two methods for analyzing grammatical elements of L₁ and L_A and also steers us promptly toward both secondary bilingualism and interference phenomena, stereotypically referred

to as **negative transfer** in a field of study resulting from early bilingual studies¹.

From that point forward, we assess said models of speech- and information- processing and roles of general cognition (knowing/learning) in bilingual behavior to pursue **cross-linguistic influence** (Sharwood Smith & Kellerman, 1986), an flexible term useful for larger varieties of bilingual behavior possibly analyzed late in the term. One such variety of behavior includes a phenomenon called **code-switching**, feasibly similar to interference but concerned with speech that involves grammatical elements from L₁ and L_A (rather than one affecting another, they function simultaneously).

¹ Second Language Development is the most fully-fledged language-related science stemming from the varied lines of inquiry launched during the 1950s by a bilingual-studies research agenda.

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Should the course extend this far, these data will require some very basic knowledge of Turkish, so particular content (esp. respecting problem sets) will entail appropriate formal linguistic analysis.

Content: Addendum

The focus of your Bilingualism syllabus regards one general type, **INDIVIDUAL**, contrasting with another general type, **SOCIETIAL** (Baetens Beardsmore, 1982); in fact, one book (Hamers & Blanc, 2000) uses Bilingualism as a label only for the latter, the former labeled BILINGUALITY. Another, "The Handbook of Bilingualism" (Kroll & DeGroot, 2005) concentrates solely on psycholinguistic approaches (language processing in a bilingual brain); studies of Bilinguality involve psychological matters (involving diverse cognitive constructs and specific areas of the cerebral cortex).

While seemingly content for a Bilingualism course, it supposes a considerable background in psychology, neurobiology and research methods appreciably reliant on statistical analyses; rather than maintain such a presumption, let's engage in an introductory study of Bilinguality to serve as groundwork for potential future schoolwork taken from this book.

Regarding the latter type, societal BILINGUALISM, a core component connecting it to Bilinguality is bilingual speech as faced by models of accommodation/communication, where issues of attitude, identity and group membership are judged as equal or more primary factors when compared to cognitive ones related to language processes contributing to speaking and learning. Another book, also titled "The Handbook of Bilingualism" (Bhatia & Ritchie, 2004), is not fully given to (developmental) psycholinguistics like the other; rather, it approaches Bilingualism societally, crucially as a sense of "belonging" (in Edwards, p. 30). A majority of its contributions describe how sociolinguistic situations shape bilingual speech, such as a perceived need of one interlocutor speaking in a particular setting on a certain topic to either **converge on** or **diverge from** the speech behavior of the other participant(s) occupied by the conversation.

Our recourse is to regard bilingual data as emblematic of human speech and view specific circumstances as credibly responsible for it. Content first observes particular language forms indicative of Bilingualism and, once practicable, it examines settings where forms suggest a SPEAKING² model of *communicative competence* (Hymes, 1971/1974).

Assignments

To pass the course, you must complete a first-quarter, midterm and final exam and try submitting proficient analyses of some problem sets on time (provided in class and/or on Moodle). Also, write more than one position paper (undergraduates 2-3, graduates 3-4) assigned during the semester (see SLO #2) necessarily presenting an **analysis** of a position based on reading/lecture material and/or problem sets (a position-paper guide will be presented in class and posted on Moodle. (Students may write two designated journal-article summary in place of only one position paper).

Subject to class size, all students may choose to make in-class presentations, to be drawn from course exam materials: Undergraduate presentations may be done in small groups of 3 or 4, and graduates have a choice to present as a group or an individual. A final exam surely requires a written take-home portion on (reading) material(s) to be summarized, including analysis of some position related to exam reading(s); it might also very likely involve an in-class portion, consisting of either a very short group-presentation or problem-set discussion, whatever is occasioned by class size.

Assignment Breakdown

Exams

First-Quarter	10%	posted on Moodle about MW 21-23, due W 30 September
Mid-term	20%	data set & summary (grad position paper #2 or presentation), due W 28 October
Final	30%	data set, summary, position paper (#3 undergrads #4 grads),

² S, scene; P, participants; E, ends; A, act series; K, key; I, instrumentalities; N, norms; G, genre

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and in-class presentation or problem set @ 8-10 a.m.,
due finals week Thursday 17 December

Position Papers	24%	due dates announced in class and on Moodle
Problem Sets	16%	completed roughly every three to four weeks, often in class

Due Dates

Assignments are due on the day announced in class and/or on Moodle. Late assignments may not get assessed or returned; those that do receive (less than) partial credit. An assignment not turned in for a grade receives a zero. Absences are not excuses for submitting a late assignment or failing to turn one in, unless they concern major illness or personal emergency (documentation may be in order; please notify me of all expected absence in advance).

Grades

I assess final grades based on assessment of examinations, position papers and problem sets. Final grade breakdown for these three types of course work has been presented and weighted on the previous page (see ASSIGNMENTS).

I evaluate final grades based on points awarded to course work, including planned and impromptu in-class activities that contribute to it. I gauge points you earn according to (i) a percentage, or points earned divided by total points, (ii) a percentile, or points earned measured on a curve, and also (iii) a quartile (points earned distributed in quarters, e.g., top 25%, etc.). These measures help assessments using traditional letter grades with +/-.

The Graduate Increment

LING 477 is a **UG course**, enrolling undergraduate and graduate students who participate together; UG courses must include graduate increments reviewed by UM's Graduate Council (the body overseeing graduate curricula at UM). Graduate students in this course must consequently demonstrate a more advanced competency in their coursework than the undergraduate students exhibit.

This level of enhanced competence is principally gauged by the ensuing valuation procedure: Graduates' point totals are calculated statistically (i.e., on a **bell curve**) with undergraduates' in gauging graduates' final grades (point totals for undergraduates **only** are similarly *curved* for +/- ratings); that is, total scored by individual graduate students must be of equal/greater amount of undergraduates in order to be considered for the same/similar grade.

In addition, each graduate must summarize a journal article selected by the instructor concerning material associated with content covered during the first quarter or midterm (Secondary Bilingualism); also, one, some or all exams include a graduate-increment portion appended to the undergraduates' portion: However, graduates may be permitted to elect to substitute a position paper with a presentation, individually or in groups.

Course Guidelines and Policies

Late Policy

All activities, assignments or exams given to the instructor after its due-date are not guaranteed to be either graded (and entered into the grade record) or returned (i.e., students must keep track).

Attendance Policy

Perfect attendance is desired but not expected; excessive absences typically intersect adversely with **late policy** and affect final grades. Students who miss the first two class meetings must drop the course (see URL presented below):
(http://archive.umt.edu/catalog/14_15/academics/academic-policy-procedure.php: under the heading **Class Attendance/Absence Policy**)

Withdrawal Policy

To know more information about how to withdraw from your course, see the URL below:

Academic Honesty Policy

All students must observe academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to academic penalty by the instructor of the course and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. As a student in this course and at this university, you must be familiar with the Student Conduct Code (see URL presented below):

(http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php)

Special Accommodation Policy

If you believe you need special accommodation in this course due to some learning challenge that has been verified by Disability Services for Students, please talk to your instructor as soon as possible so that you can both resolve some appropriate accommodation.

Disability modifications

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction based on alliances among students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance and also have not previously registered with the DSS, then please contact the DSS staff in Lommasson Center Room 154 or call 406-243-2243. I intend working with you and Disability Services to offer an appropriate modification.

Technology Policy

You may, of course, take class notes on a laptop or iPad or the like. Aside from that, I expect that technology will not intrude during class time. Please turn your phones to “vibrate” or a similar setting that will not disturb the class.

Do not plan to receive phone calls during the class period