

Multilingualism & Mediation



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- ✦ Bilingualism –
multilingualism –
plurilingualism
- ✦ Historical outlines of
multilingualism
- ✦ Mother tongue VS native
Speakers
- ✦ Multilanguage
Mediation
- ✦ Reasons for Mediation
- ✦ The mediator

What is ?



✦ Bilingualism – Bilinguisme

✦ Multilingualism - Multilinguisme

✦ Plurilingualism - Plurilinguisme

What is bilingualism?



- ✦ *Bilingual* literally means “having two tongues.”
- ✦ **So bilingualism** is defined as the ability to build understandable utterances in any of the two languages known.
- ✦ But **in each single language similar words may have different meaning nuances**
 - a) Qui use “couramment” deux langues / Le bilinguisme c’est **pratiquer deux langues** / une personne qui parle aussi bien le français que l’anglais dans sa vie quotidienne.
 - b) Capacità di dominare contemporaneamente due lingue - Chi padroneggia due lingue
 - c) A person speaking two languages « fluently » / able to use two languages « equally well » / The ability of speaking two languages with the facility of a native speaker.

What is bilingualism?



But not everybody agree

Certains linguistes plaident pour **la définition maximale** qui signifie que les « vrais » bilingues sont aussi bien capables de s'exprimer dans une langue que dans l'autre et ont une connaissance identique des deux langues.

D'autres plaident pour **la définition minimale**, basée sur l'utilisation correcte de phrases dans les deux langues pour la communication courante. Encore d'autres considèrent bilingues ceux capables de penser naturellement dans une langue comme une autre.

Bilinguisme individuel, pratiqué dès tout-petit en écoutant ses parents parler deux langues différentes.

Bilinguisme acquis par l'apprentissage d'une ou de plusieurs langues étrangères à l'école, au lycée, à l'université.

FAQ:

So who is a bilingual ?

Are language learners considered bilingual too?

Answer: A bilingual is not a person who knows two languages equally well. Such people are rare: perfect bilingual speakers.

What is multilingualism?



✧ **Multilingualism**

1. implies a mutual interaction of languages in societies where more languages coexist.
2. is the ability to use several languages (not perfectly well), as well as the bulk of linguistic and cultural experience shared by different people of different cultures .

What is plurilingualism?



- ✧ **Plurilingualism is a term** used in EU documents.
- ✧ Plurilingualism does not mean a perfect command of several languages but the attempt to use one's linguistic knowledge and skills to communicate with others in many different situations.
- French linguists state:
 - Le plurilinguisme regroupe les individus qui communiquent dans des langues différentes pour différentes activités:
 - par exemple, **un grec qui parlerait le français dans sa vie professionnelle, le grec en famille, et l'espagnol dans sa vie sociale du fait qu'il vit en Espagne**
- ✧ In practice, it means the ability to effectively function in a multinational and multicultural community thanks to a sensitivity to similarities and differences between languages and cultures.
 - Aujourd'hui nous sommes le parfait exemple d'une communauté plurilingue composée par bilingues, trilingues et multilingues dans une situation plurilingue.
 - L'UE a déclaré: l'équivalence des langues doit être maintenue.

Historical outlines of multilingual mediations



✧ Greek Mythology

- ✧ Hermes the first mediator between gods and mortals.

✧ Roman Empire History:

- ✧ Roman and Egyptian Military interpreters;
- ✧ Barbarians latinisation;
- ✧ Charle Magne: “To have a second language is to have a second soul”

✧ Bible the holy Scriptures

- ✧ Babel tower – la porte du ciel
- ✧ Moses the interpreter of God
- ✧ The Holy Spirit

Historical outlines of multilingualism mediation



- ✧ Discovery of Americas

- ✧ Christopher Columbus: The yellow parrots

- ✧ Monks:

- ✧ Anglo-Saxon latinisation

- ✧ Normans

- ✧ Language register

- ✧ Cultural mediation

- ✧ Nuremberg trial

- ✧ Birth of simultaneous interpreting and modern mediation

Mother tong VS Native language



- ✧ "Mother tongue" and "native language" are set phrases that both refer to the language one has started learning from birth.
- ✧ One generally associates "mother" with "tongue" and "native" with "language" but it is sometimes found the other way round.
- ✧ "Language" and "tongue" are here synonyms.

Mother tong VS Native language



"native" or "mother" is not identical though.

- ✦ When using "native" the reference is more to the country/nation.
- ✦ When using "mother" the reference is to the parent (mother or father), which gives it a warmth and personal relationship that the word "native" doesn't have.

Mother tong VS Native language



- ✦ As a parent living far from my native country I have often experienced the fear that my children would not learn their mother tong well.

SO

- ✦ Native language refers to the language of the area the person grows up in. For example, growing up in the United States, your native language would be English. It's the language used every day everywhere you go by the vast majority of the people there.

Mother tong VS Native language



- ✧ "One can be both native English speaker and a mother tong French speaker, thus being a native bilingual or indeed multilingual.
- ✧ The order in which these languages are learned is not necessarily the order of proficiency.
- ✧ For instance, a French-speaking couple might have a daughter who learned French first, then English; but if she were to grow up in an English-speaking country, she would likely be most proficient in English."

Multilanguage Mediation



- ✧ In its broadest sense 'to mediate' means to act as an intermediary in a conflict between parties in order to help bring about agreement.
- ✧ Language mediation is employed as a possible solution for problems of migrants' inclusion in institutional services, within multilingual and multicultural societies.
- ✧ Language mediation can enhance change within other communication systems, promoting dialogue across differences.

Reasons for Mediation



- ✦ Difficulty in communicating may result from, among other factors, language- or terminological differences;
- ✦ Lack of proficiency in the other language or register (for example, between speakers of different languages, or between experts in a given field and non-experts);
- ✦ Cognitive gaps, i.e. unfamiliarity with certain concepts or processes (e.g. caused by insufficient access to education, low literacy, or cognitive development); lack of relevant information (e.g. about how to apply for housing);
- ✦ cultural differences (e.g. relating to concepts of politeness or punctuality); or disability (e.g. partial sightedness, hearing impairment).

Reasons for Mediation



- ✧ Mediation is therefore very important for them and for anyone (migrants arriving or settling in a new host country) who is new to a country, its language and its culture. Indeed, some of these difficulties are common to all of us.
- ✧ Thus mediation is a normal part of education, of most kinds of learning, and of life.

Reasons for Mediation



- ✧ While linguistic communication is the most useful, the most frequently used and most versatile means of mediation, non-linguistic elements such as pointing/gestures, using signs (e.g. on roads) and drawing maps may also be useful ways of mediating information and understanding in certain situations.
- ✧ Moreover, electronic devices with internet access offer various - often interactive - means of coping with gaps in understanding through written text, images and automatic translation.

What and who is a mediator.



- ✦ **Natural mediators:** bilingual children, parents, teachers, school mates, common people, any one able to speak more than a language and being or not aware of cultural differences amongst the several languages he/she can speak. No special education is needed.
- ✦ **Professional mediators.** Specialized and trained multilingual adults who have previously attended academic courses and acquired deep knowledge of the language (language and terminology for special purposes) and special skills in mastering consciously the languages and the different cultures involved in the languages themselves.
- ✦ **Guided self-mediators.** Those who thanks to school services attends formal language courses or receive informal language support that can contribute greatly to adult migrants' ability to seek linguistic and cultural mediation for themselves when it is needed