1. **Language in Contact**

Speakers of different languages do not live in isolation. Rather, they live in a world where the interaction between them is mostly inevitable. This interaction is known as language contact and can be defined as a situation whereby speakers from two different speech communities come into contact and their languages influence each other (Matras, 2009).

Most languages have some contact with each other, especially today where the entire world is globalized. Hickey (2010) argues that languages can come into contact in a variety of ways. Essentially, there are direct and indirect contacts. In the former, speakers of one language are known to interact directly with speakers of another because of invasion, expulsion, emigration, etc. This type, which Thomason (2001) calls ‘face to face interaction’, can be illustrated by the case of contact that occurred between the Scandinavians and the English during the Old English period. In the latter, speakers are not involved at all; the contact occurs through the mediation of literature, television, radio and more recently the internet. Indirect contact between languages is very common nowadays, especially with the rapid development of the mass media. The contact between English and Modern European languages these days is a good example of that (Hickey, 2010).

1. **The Outcomes of Language Contact**

Several outcomes can result from the phenomenon of language contact. These outcomes are basically grouped in three general categories which are: language maintenance, language shift and language creation. Language maintenance refers to a contact setting where the native language is preserved, despite the influence that the second language may have on it as a result of borrowing and code switching. Language shift results in the acquisition of the second language and the abandonment of the native language of a given group. Language creation involves the emergence of new varieties like pidgins and creoles. (Winford, 2003)

**2.1. Language Maintenance**

Language maintenance refers to the retention of a language and its transmission from generation to generation. Morandi (2008) claims that language maintenance occurs in contact situations where the minority language is affected by the dominant language, but is still retained. That is, there is a continuous use of the minority language by its speakers in the majority of language contexts. This implies that there is a preservation of a language by its speech community over several generations for the purpose of group and cultural identification (Kipp, Clyne& Pauwels, 1995). Hickey (2010, p.178) writes “Language loyalty, of course, goes hand in hand with preservations of group identity.” Preservation here means that “… language changes only by small degrees in the short run owing to internal developments and/or (limited) contact with other languages” ( Winford, 2003, p.12). Thus, the subsystems of language like phonology, morphology and core lexicon remain ‘relatively intact’ (Winford, 2003).

**2.1.1. Borrowing Situations**

According to Winford (2003), cases of language maintenance may include a situation in which the lexicon and structure of the endangered language are influenced by the foreign language with which it is in contact. This kind of influence is known as borrowing. Generally speaking, the term borrowing refers to a process whereby a linguistic item is imported from one language into another as a result of contact.

In borrowing situations, intensity of contact plays an important role in the influence that a maintained language may have as a result of contact with an external language. Clements (1996, p.47) claims that intensity of contact depends on time and the ‘level of bilingualism’ of the borrowing language speakers, he (ibid) writes

If few speakers of the borrowing language are bilingual in the potential source language, then normally only words will be borrowed. However, if there is extensive bilingualism on the part of the borrowing language speakers, and if this bilingualism persists over a long period of time, then substantial structural borrowing is a probability.

According to Winford (2003, p.12), borrowing can vary in type and degrees from casual to intensive lexical borrowing and from ‘slight to more or less significant incorporation of structural features.’ In cases where contact is not intense, lexical borrowing is perceived to occur (Clements, 1996). Speakers in this case borrow mainly open class lexical materials like nouns, adjectives and adverbs. Here, situations involving structural borrowing are somehow rare (Winford, 2003). However, in cases where contact is intense, significant structural borrowin like the borrowing of phonological, morphological and syntactic features is perceived to occur.

**2.1.2. Code Switching Situations**

Language maintenance may also involve a situation where two languages are maintained and used alternately by an individual or a speech community. The process involved here is called ‘bilingualism’ and the individuals are called ‘bilinguals’. Guzzetti (2002, p.52) defines bilingualism as the “ability, in an individual or a society, to speak two languages.” She adds that “Bilingualism can develop simultaneously, as when two languages are acquired in infancy (simultaneous bilingualism), or sequentially (sequential bilingualism), as in the case of second-language acquisition (SLA).” Thus, people may become bilinguals either by acquiring two languages at the same time during their childhood, or by learning a second language after acquiring their first language.

Winford (2003) claims that in many bilingual speech communities, the choice of one code or another depends on the ‘situation of use’. For example, in Algeria there are two distinct language varieties, namely Standard Arabic and Algerian dialect. Standard Arabic is used only in formal situations like writing, schooling and broadcasting; while Algerian dialect is used in informal situations including everyday interactions between friends and family. This situation is known as diglossia and is defined by Romaine (2001, p.519) as a situation in which “each language or variety in a multilingual community serves a specialized function and is used for particular purposes.” He (ibid) claims that diglossia typically describes a stable situation which includes an alternate use of two codes (languages or varieties) that are genetically related to each other. One of these codes tends to be superposed and referred to as ‘high’ variety, and the other one as the ‘low’ variety. The most important feature, then, of diglossia is the functional specialization of high and low variety. Where high variety is appropriate in one situation, low variety is not used and vice versa. Bright (1964, p.12) writes “Where sharp differences in form and function exist between formal and informal style, we speak of diglossia.”

One of the result of the two phenomena mentioned above-bilingualism and diglossia- is code switching which is the alternate use of more than one linguistic system by an individual bilingual in the same interaction. Thomason (2001, p.132) defines code switching as “… the use of material from two (or more) languages by a single speaker in the same conversation.” In code switching the speaker is able to switch from one language (or dialect) to another during his communication with other participants who are also supposed to speak and understand both languages.

**2.2. Language Shift**

Apple and Muysken (2006) refer to a linguistic phenomenon in Cornwall where there was a movement from using the Cornish language to the English language. This took place because the community of Cornish speakers failed in maintaining their language under the pressure of English.

The Cornish Society mentioned here is just one example. Many bilingual communities were subject to that kind of movement from their native language to another one. Speakers of the minority group adopt the majority group language as the one used in communication even in domains where the minority tongue was used. This process is known as language shift and can be defined as the “displacement of one language by another in the lives of the community members” (Dorian, 1982, p.44). So, there is an abandonment of the native language of a given group in favor of another more prestigious language (Winford, 2003). This does not, however, imply that the shift is always towards the majority and prestigious language. Shift may also be towards the minority language. In Quebec, for instance, French has strengthened its position at the expense of English (Apple& muysken, 2006). Generally, this occurs when the defenders of the minority language, often active members of cultural and political organizations, feel that this language is in danger and, hence, encourage its use.

Martinez (2006) claims that language shift occurs in a situation where there is bilingualism, but no social norms governing the use of one language or another are fixed. Here, it is the individual preferences and the communicative needs that influence the choice of one language over another. This, eventually, leads to a situation where one language loses most of its domains of use because speakers begin to use language ‘A’ instead of language ‘B’ in domains that they were once restricted to language ‘B’. This situation encourages young speakers not to use language ‘B’ since it has no value in society and communicative demands. Apple and Muysken (2006, p.41) write:

Language shift is in fact the redistribution of varieties of language over certain domains. If the shift is towards the majority language, this language seems to conquer domain after domain via the intermediate stage of bilingual language use. When the minority language is spoken in fewer domains, its value decreases. This in turn will lessen the motivation of younger people to learn and use it.

**2.3 Language Creation**

Winford’s third possible outcome of language contact setting is the creation of new languages. Such languages are known as Pidgins or Creoles.

**2.3.1 Pidgins**

Pidgins are reduced languages that result from extended contact between groups of people with no language in common. They are famous in trade situations where there is a need for rapid development of a new communication system to facilitate commercial exchanges between these groups. Pidgins usually combine elements of both native languages of their users and are typically simpler than those languages insofar as they use fewer words and simpler morphology and syntax. Winford (2003, p.20) claims that

Trading contacts between groups speaking different languages have often led to various types of linguistic compromise to facilitate communication. Such compromises often result in pidgins, highly reduced languages with minimal vocabulary and grammar who functions are restricted primarily to barter and exchange.

A good example to be mentioned here is the Pacific Pidgin English that had been developed during the nineteenth century as a result of English speakers and islanders attempts to communicate for trading purposes. Pidgins, then, can be argued to be mixed “bags” of languages (Winford, 2003).

Winford (2003) insists that trade is not the only situation where pidgin emerges. Military occupation contexts also help in the creation of pidgins. Bamboo English or Pidgin English in Japan is a good example here. It was used by American military personnel and the Japanese in occupied Japan after the Second World War. Plantation is another situation where pidgins have also arisen. For example, Hawaiian Pidgin English is a pidgin that has evolved in a plantation setting where immigrants came from different countries to work in sugar cane fields in Hawaii; they develop it as a means of communication with each other and the English-speaking plantation owners. Moreover, domestic settings where masters and servants of languages need to communicate result in the occurrence of pidgins. Bulter English, for instance, is a pidgin language that was emerged when Indian servants had to find a way to communicate with their English masters.

**2.3.2 Creole**

A Creole is a language that has come into existence as a result of contact between speakers of different languages. Its native speakers are those whose ancestors were displaced to other areas in the world so that their relations with their original language were partly broken. Holm (2000) gave an example of different ethnolinguistic Africans who were transplanted by European colonials between the 17th and the 19th century to the new world for sugar plantation. In such a setting, it is the pidgin that was produced for the purpose of communication between those speakers of ‘non-mutually’ intelligible languages. After the new locally born slaves came into existence, they were usually exposed to the pidgin rather than the native language of their parents. This pidgin was later organized and developed by this new generation into a full natural language, namely the Creole.

So, a Creole can be defined as a pidgin that has become the native language of a new generation of speakers. In addition, it is considered as a normal language in almost every sense. Holmes (1992, p.95) argues that “A creole is a pidgin which has expanded in structure and vocabulary to express the range of meanings and serve the range of functions required of a first language.” Creoles, therefore, are said to be more elaborated than pidgins. They are known to be expanded and evolved at the level of their grammar and lexicon as a result of their use for wider purposes. That is, Creoles typically have a larger vocabulary and more complex grammatical systems than pidgins. For instance, Creoles, as opposed to pidgins, involve tense and mood particles preceding the verbs, a system of articles, lexical internal innovations and relative clauses

Examples of this kind of language contact used in the world are: Haitian creole, Isle de France creole (a French lexical creole with varieties spoken in Mauritius and the Seychelles), Guinea Kriyol spoken in Guinea-Bissau, and Caribbean Creoles including Jamaican and Guyanese creole (Winford, 2003).

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