**Lecture Six: Language Contact Phenomena**

1. **Code Switching**
   1. **Definition**

Code switching is the use and alternation between two systems at the same conversation or while communicating a message. It is deliberate and intentional, that is to say, the person who code switches does it for purpose.

For bilingual or multilingual individuals, the code choice is affected by some social factors that include mainly:

* The participants; to whom the speech is addressed, the social distance between the interlocutors, and the status relationship between them.
* The setting; the place (home, beach, a friends’ place, school, holly place…), and the degree of formality it imposes.
* The topic; the type of the topic and the function or the goal of the interaction.
  1. **Reasons for Code Switching**

There are many reasons for code switching, these include:

* A change in the social situation; people sometimes switch code in case of change in the social situation to take account of the presence of a new/ particular participant or addressee. Different kinds of relationships are often expressed via different codes. In this sense, formal relationships are expressed in the H variety or code while relationships with minimal social distance are expressed in L code.
* To show group membership; a speaker may shift to another language to show belonging to a particular group, or assert particular social status
* To show solidarity with the addressee; the switch in this case is simply an interjection, a tag, or a sentence filler in the other language which serves as an identity marker.
* To fill in a linguistic gap; when speakers fail to find appropriate words to convey a message or express an idea, they tend to shift to another code. Code switching, in this case, facilitates communication and makes it more fluent.
* To quote a person, a proverb or a well-known saying in another language.
* Switching for affective functions; people may switch to impress people around, some people code switch to show off and attract attention, to show refusal, disagreement, anger, humour…
  1. **Code Switching and Code-Mixing**

Code mixing (sometimes called metaphorical switching),is the rapid shift and mixing of two or more codes indiscriminately or perhaps because of incompetence to convey information as well as affective meaning. It is closely related to code-switching, however, code-mixing takes place when bilinguals shift from one language to the other in the course of one utterance, it takes place without a change of topic, addressee or setting. It involves various levels of language such as phonology, morphology, grammatical structures and lexical elements (Waris, 2012).

1. **Borrowing**

When people speaking one language contact other people speaking another language, they tend to learn how to say at least some useful phrases in the other group’s language. However, one group will actually take into its language some words from the other group’s language to refer to objects, activities, or concepts that the other group has, largely for those things that are new to the first group. Still, this exchange is not equal; the group that takes the most is the one with less prestige in some vital public area, such as socio-economic status or political control. The borrowing of words is the most common type of structural change and which results from such a contact.

**Borrowing (**loan words)is the process by which the speakers of one language take words from another language and use them in their native language or mother tongue. It is a one-way street; one language is the donor and the other is the recipient. It is referred to as ‘lexical borrowing’ since the borrowed words are content words such as nouns and verbs. Although people who get involved in contact with speakers of other languages may become bilingual, those who use some borrowed words are not necessarily bilinguals.

There are two main types of borrowed words, cultural borrowings and core borrowings. Cultural borrowings stand for objects or concepts that are new to the recipient culture and they are much more frequent than core borrowings. Core borrowings duplicate already existing words in the recipient culture’s language and only seem to appear after long or intensive contact.

Generally, languages that are widely spoken as second languages become the source of borrowed words for other languages. Both French and English are good examples of donor languages, but so are other languages that have been lingua francas in other parts of the world. Arabic in areas where there are many Moslems and Russian, especially during the USSR regime, also have been the source of many loan words.

However, **reverse-borrowing** is the opposite process, it refers to replacing existing borrowings with native words. Speakers of a particular language tend to rid their languages of borrowings for a variety of reasons, namely to preserve the group’s unique identity. A famous case is Turkey. When Turkey became independent of the Ottoman dynasty in the 1920s and under reforms introduced by Atatürk, Arabic script was replaced by the Latin alphabet in 1928. Atatürk also created the Turkish Language Society for the Purification of the Language which replaced Arabic words with Turkish-based words.

**Borrowing** should be distinguished from **interference.** The latterrefers to the use of words, structures or language rules from the speakers’ first language (or a second language) while speaking in another language. Interference has a negative connotation, in other words, it is not desirable because it is perceived as a source of error.

**Borrowing** should also be distinguished from **convergence.**  The latter refers to the situation where the borrowed words are adapted to the speakers’ first language; their pronunciation and grammar changed following the speakers’ mother tongue rules.

**References**

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