

Language and Society (CL2.203)

Monsoon 2021, IIIT Hyderabad
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Diglossia, Code Switching and Code Mixing

Diglossia is a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language, there is a very divergent, highly codified, often grammatically more complex, superposed variety; the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation.

Polyglossia is also possible, in which there are multiple such varieties which split the functions among them.

When two or more languages coexist which are acquired with proficiency by a large group of people, the code is often switched depending on the situation. Code switching can be metaphorical (topic-based) or situational (function-based).