Eng124: Language and Society

Language Generation

Language Generation

- Another perspective on language variation

- Languages in contact

- What interaction between languages does to languages themselves

Code Switching

- Typically, characterizes everyday texts in a bilingual/multilingual repertoire
  - maine morning mein library se bahut saarii books issue karaa liin
  - yeh dil maange more
  - jab we met…
  - kitne saare bachches
  - nervasya gaye hain UP ke neta…

Code Switching

- The juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems (Gumperz).

- Speakers in conversational settings whose repertoires consist of more than one variety, produce stretches of speech interspersed in these varieties.

- Or alternatively, any one speaker can code-switch between sentences, intersententially or even intra-sententially.

- Conversational code-switching is rapid, largely unconscious, and used for communicative effect.

Mixing and Switching

- Some linguists use the terms code-mixing and code-switching interchangeably. In formal studies of syntax, morphology, etc., both terms are used to refer to utterances that draw from elements of two or more grammatical systems.

- For others, the term code-switching emphasizes a multilingual speaker's movement from one grammatical system to another, the term code-mixing suggests a hybrid form, drawing from distinct grammars -- inter-sentential and intra-sentential code alternation.

Two kinds of Questions

- How can we socially explain the switching from one code to another?

- How is the codes alternation done in linguistic terms?

- What are our code-mixing and code-switching patterns like?

- When and why do we mix and/or switch codes?

- Do we do this at all?

- Bollywood as a representation of popular culture exemplifies the behaviour best.

A Bollywood representation

- gopiyon sang ghoome kanhaiya, raas rachaiya, rahaa na jaaye re, ab saanwra na bhaaye
  Radha on the dance floor, radha likes to party, radha likes to move that sexy radha body
  panghat pe aake saiyyan marode baiyaan, and everybody crazy on radha; chhedde hai humka daiyaa bairi kanhaiya
  And everybody crazy on Radha; hoga woh laakhon dil ka chor humka to laage woh; hua hai aise baawla jo kehta jaaye:
  "O radha teri chunri, O radha tera Jhalla, O radha teri natkhat najariya, O radha tera jhumka, O radha tera thumka
  O peechhe peechhe saari nagariya"

- The two languages used in the song seem to enact two distinct sets of values.

- The traditional rural north Indian and the modern urban value systems

- Do we code mix/switch to reflect this multilayered sense of values?

- The answer may be a little more complex than that.

When and why do we switch codes?

- Lexicalising options
  - Embedded Language lexical choice appears more appropriate than the Matrix Language one
    - Colloquialisms (ladies instead of deviyaan, wife instead of patni or biwi)
  - EL lexical choice is the only choice available (lexical gaps)
    - Indigenised vocabulary (video, cigarette, flashback, furniture, dessert)
- Language attrition
  - Filling the gaps created by depleted control on one of the two languages
    - Food items, body parts
- Contextualisation cues
  - Signaling and interpreting speaker intention, e.g. change of topic or emphasis
- Economizing on expression
  - Text messaging, etc.

When and Why...

- Projecting a discourse persona
  - Personal identity statement; defining identities
- Neutrality strategy in inter-group interactions
  - Negotiating group identities; avoiding identity definitions
- Social meanings of code switching
  - Communicative intention: assimilation or distancing
- The constituent varieties encode different sets of social values.
  - The varieties are used to enact situations in which these values would be taken for granted.

Avoidance

- Self-conscious avoidance of Code Switching
  - The purist's concern about protecting each of the languages from external influences
  - Language loyalty
- Two schools of thought about English in India:
  - one that believes that a language belongs to those who speak it, hence the case for Indian English, and
  - the second, is the stance of the purists, who believe that a language must be spoken the way it is *meant* to be, upholding a singular norm or standard.

Code-Switching in Literature

Amir Khusro (Persian and Hindavi) (1253-1325)

Zehaal-e-miskeen makun taghaful,
    Duraye naina banaye batiyan.

Do not overlook my misery,
    by avoiding to meet my eyes and weaving tales,

Ke taab-e-hijran nadaram ay jaan,
    Na leho kahe lagaye chatiyan.

My patience has over-brimmed, O sweetheart!
    why do you not take me to your bosom.

Shaban-e-hijran daraz chun zulf,
    Wa roz-e-waslat cho umer kotah.

Long like curls in the night of separation
    short like life on the day of our union.

Sakhi piya ko jo main na dekhun,
    To kaise kaTun andheri ratiyan.

My dear, how will I pass the dark dungeon night
    without your face in front of me

Yakayak az dil do chashm-e-jadu,
    Basad farebam baburd taskin.

Suddenly, using a thousand tricks
    the enchanting eyes robbed me of my tranquil mind.

Kisay pari hai jo ja sunave,
    Piyare pi ko hamari batiyan,

Who would care to go and report
    these matters to my lover.

Cho shama sozan cho zaraa hairan,
  Hamesha giryan be ishq an meh.

Tossed and bewildered, like a flickering candle,
  I roam about in the fire of love.

Na nind naina na ang chaina,
  Na aap aaven na bhejen patiyan,

Sleepless eyes, restless body,
  neither comes she, nor any message.

Bahaq-e-roz-e-visaal-e-dilbar,
  Ke daad mara gharib Khusro.

In honour of the day I meet my beloved
  who has lured me so long, O Khusro!

Sapet man ke varaye rakhun,
  Jo jaye pauN piya ke khatiyan.

I shall keep my heart suppressed
  if ever I get a chance to get to her trick.

Language Generation

- Two ways in which new languages evolve
  - *Reification*
    - Gradual changes occurring over a period of time
  - *Creolization*
    - An abrupt, two stage process which reaches a culmination over two to three generations

Reification

- When a code-mixed variety achieves a more or less stable state over a period of time and is accepted by a community as a distinct language in its own right.
- Old Latin>Classical Latin>Vulgar Latin >Old French> Modern French
- Urdu in India

Pidgins and Creoles

- A pidgin is a contact variety restricted in form as well as function and *native to no one.*
  - Formed by members of at least two (and usually more) groups of different linguistic backgrounds
  - Structurally, simplified languages characterized by minimum lexicon, no morphology, and limited syntax
  - Functionally speaking, they are auxiliary languages.

- The Creole is a **nativized pidgin**.
  - Expansion in both structure and function to meet the communicative needs of a community of native speakers

Pidgins and Creoles

- Identifying pidgins and creoles:

- Three Criteria:

  - Linguistic
  - Social
  - Historical

Linguistic

- Pidgins are structurally simplified, characterized by minimal lexicon, little or no morphology, and very little syntax

- Creole is a nativised pidgin (etymology: Latin *creare* 'to create, produce'.

Social

- Pidgin: Limited function

- Creole: First language of a population

Historical

- Two of the relatively unhappy episodes in world history
  - Atlantic slave trade and servitude in South Pacific
  - Multi-ethnic work situations under colonial rulers
- Speakers need to communicate for day-to-day practical tasks but do not have a language to communicate with.

Historical antecedents

- The terms *criollo* and *crioulo* were originally used throughout the Spanish and Portuguese colonies to distinguish the members of an ethnic group who were born and raised locally from those who immigrated as adults.

- In Brazil the term was also used to distinguish between *negros crioulos* (blacks born in Brazil from African slave ancestors) and *negros africanos* (born in Africa).

- Over time, the term and its derivatives (Creole, Kréol, Kreyol, Kriol, Krio, etc.) became the proper name of many distinct ethnic groups that developed locally from immigrant communities.

- Originally, therefore, the term "creole language" meant the speech of any of those creole peoples.

Some well-known Pidgins and Creoles

- Hawaiian Pidgin English
- Madras pidgin English
- Nigerian pidgin English
- Chinese pidgin English
- New Guinea pidgin English

- Hawaiian Creole
- Jamaican Creole
- Mauritian Creole
- Haitian Creole (F)
- Tok Pisin (Papua New Guinea)

Creole

- The lexicon of a creole is largely supplied by the parent languages, particularly that of the most dominant group in the social context of the creole's construction (the lexifier language)

- But there are often clear phonetic and semantic shifts.

- The grammar of the creole often has original features that may differ substantially from those of the parent languages.

Lexification

Tok Pisin	English	Warapu
Gras	hair	pel
gras bilong fes	beard	
mausgras	moustache	
gras untop long ai	eyebrow	
gras bilong pisin	bird's feather	ndru pei
gras bilong dog	dog's fur	naki pei
gras nogut	weed	

Hawaiian Pidgin

- For tense marking, auxiliary verbs are employed:
  - To express past tense, Pidgin uses *wen* (went)
    - *Jesus wen cry.* (John 11:35) 'Jesus cried.'
  - To express future tense, Pidgin uses *goin* (going) in.
    - *God goin do plenny good kine stuff fo him.* (Mark 11:9)
      'God is going to do a lot of good things for him.'

Hawaiian Pidgin

- To express past tense negative, the Pidgin uses *neva* (never). *Neva* can also mean "never" as in normal English usage; context sometimes, but not always, makes the meaning clear.
  - *He neva like dat.*
  - He didn't want that. (or) He never wanted that. (or) He didn't like that.
- Use of *fo* (for) in place of the infinitive particle "to". Cf. dialectal form "Going for to carry me home."
  - *I tryin fo tink.*

    or
  - *I try fo tink.*

    'I'm trying to think.'

Popular phrases

- "I like try" or simply "I like" translates to "Could I have some?"
- "You like?" = "Do you want to try it?"
- "No can" = "I can't"
- "bumbai bachi" = "That could be bad luck." ("Bachi" is Japanese for bad luck)
- "Pau" = "It's finished"
- "Ho, da guy, he stay akamai" = "Wow! He is pretty smart"
- "Like beef?" = "Do you have a problem with me?" or "Do you want to fight me?"

- "Choke" = "numerous" or "lots"

- "Broke da mout'" = "delicious" or "tasty"

- "Brah" = "Bro" - used often in informal, everyday use. "You the man, brah," "Brah, I'm so sleepy, brah," "You like come to my barbecue, brah."

Bickerton's work on Hawaiian Pidgin and Creole

- A unique historical circumstance
  - An episode of creolization during the Hawiian sugar plantation boom
  - Workers from China, Japan, Korea, Portugal, Philippines and Puerto Rico
  - The principal players were still around when Bickerton undertook his project.
  - Emergence of Creoles an evidence for the bioprogramme hypothesis

A Creole Narrative from Bickerton

- Samtaim gud rod get, samtaim olsem ben get, enguru get no? enkain seim. Olsem hyuman laif, olsem, gud rod get enguru get, mountain get, no?awl, enikain stawmu get? Nais dei get – olsem enibadi mi olsem, smawl taim

- Sometimes there's good road, sometimes there is bends, corners, right? Everything is just like that. There's good roads, there's bends, there's mountains – right? All sorts of things, there's storms, nice days; it is like that for everybody, it was for me too, when I was young.

So far...

- Pidgins and creoles – an outcome of diverse processes and influences in situations of language contact where speakers of different languages have to work out a common means of communication.

- Linguistic, social and historical parameters

Where are Creole languages spoken?

- Mainly in the third world

  - More than 100 Pidgin and Creole languages across the world

  - Tok Pisin is one of the largest languages in south pacific with 2 million first language speakers (national language of Papua new Guinea)

- Creolists recognize two major groups of languages based on a historical criterion
  - The Atlantic Group
  - The Pacific Group
- The Atlantic group
  - Established primarily during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the Caribbean and West Africa
  - Slave trade in West Africa which dispersed large number of W.A. natives to the Caribbean
- The Pacific group
  - A somewhat different socio-cultural setting
  - Recruited and indentured labourers in colonized territories

The Standard View

- Mixed lgs with vocabulary of the superstrate (also known as the lexifier or base language) and the grammar of the substrate

- English based creoles, French based creoles, Portuguese based creoles etc.

Superstrates

- Primarily European languages such as English, French, Portuguese, Spanish and Dutch.
- Britains's three and a half centuries of colonial dominance over rest of the world
  - varieties of English as well as English-based pidgins and creoles

The Creole Continuum

- The boundary between Pidgin and Creole not to be defined in purely linguistic terms

  - Tok Pisin and the West African Pidgin English, spoken widely in West Africa, display different degrees of structural expansion and stability depending on whether they are being used by the first or second language speakers.

  - Creolization can take place any time in the life cycle of a pidgin

The pidgin life cycle: Three types of Creolization

	1	2	3
	Jargon	Jargon	Jargon
	---	stablized pidgin	stablized pidgin
	---	---	expanded pidgin
	Creole	Creole	Creole
	WI English Creole	Torres Straits Creole	Tok Pisin

Creole vs. Language

- Because of the relatively lower social standing of the Creole speaking populations in the eyes of prior European colonial powers, creole languages have long been regarded as "degenerate" languages, or at best as rudimentary "dialects" of the politically dominant parent languages.

- This prejudice was compounded by the inherent instability of the colonial system, often leading to the disappearance of creole languages, mainly due to dispersion or assimilation of their speech communities.

Beyond the Creole

- A dominant language + many vernacular(s) > Pidgin > Creole
- The Creole overthrows the vernacular, itself becomes the vernacular – undergoes a large scale expansion in linguistic resources
- Resistance from the dominant language group (the superstrate or lexifier language) which has prestige and power both
- Creole has neither prestige nor power, with its roots in a history of subservience and slavery
- Resistance from the dominant language leading to decreolisation
- Reaction against the dominant language group by the Creole speaking population leading to hypercreolisation

Beyond the Creole

Pidgin > Creole > decreolization > hypercreolization

- Continuing cycle of reduction, expansion, reduction and expansion

- Encapsulating the history of colonization

- Black English Vernacular (BEV) currently claimed to be in the phase of decreolization

- A constant tension between varieties

- A post-Creole speech continuum characterized by large scale variation and hypercorrection in the language

Social Context of Creoles

- Language hegemony at its worst
  - Legitimacy given to the dominant language institutions "makes discrimination on linguistic grounds publicly acceptable where the corresponding ethnic or racial discrimination is not." (Bourdieu, 1998)
- Creoles seen as corruption of the superstrate both by the dominant groups and the dominated ones
  - No official status or recognition

- Tok Pisin
  - A de facto official language in Papua New Guinea
  - *Independen Stet bilong Papua Niugini*
  - Spoken by more than half of the population of 4 million.
  - English is still the most widely used medium of education
- Bislana
  - Recognised by the constitution of Vanuatu (a group of islands neighbouring New Guinea) as the national language of the country
  - Forbidden in schools!

…in no case do the future leaders of a country talk "a mixture in which all tenses are thrown to the wind, and words are picked from far and wide, making no sense to the listener…"

Creoles and Literacy

- The UNESCO monograph of 1950s

  - Ambivalence towards the use of pidgins and creoles in schools

  - "…Every illiterate should be made literate. We take it as axiomatic, too, that, the best medium of teaching is the mother tongue of the pupil…all languages…are capable of becoming media of school teaching…"

  - "take energetic steps to stop use of Tok Pisin in schools" – directive to the administrators in New Guinea

Devising Orthographies

- Tok Pisin has an orthography which closely follows the superstrate (lexifier) language

- Total resistance to script for the Hawai'in Creole – some isolated attempts to write reflect the same reductionist tendency as is to be seen in the case of Tok Pisin.

Devising Orthographies

- Resistance to devising orthographies which would follow the Creole rather than the superstrate is strongest among those literate in the superstrate.

- Nonavailability of literature which can be reduced to writing – proselytizing literature in Tok Pisin

Quest for a voice

- The act of writing in a marginalized language
  - A symbolic act of appropriating the power vested in written word
  - An act of identity
- Oral narrative traditions
  - Hawaiian Creole, Tok Pisin, BEV
- Uses speech based genres such as drama and poetry and song
  - Jamaican dub poets such as Michael Smith and Kwesi Johnson, whose poems were on the British reggae music charts in the late 70s and early 80s.
  - The so called Yard theatre in the Caribbean

Haitian Creole

- A language spoken by about twelve million people, Haitian Creole is one of Haiti's two official languages, along with French.

- Haitian Creole is the language of 90-95% of the country, while the remaining population is bilingual in Creole and French.

- It is a creole based largely on 18th-century French with some influences from Portuguese, Spanish, Taíno, and West African languages.

WORLD
LOCATION OF HAITI

ARCTIC OCEAN

Arctic Circle

Arctic Circle

ATLANTIC OCEAN

PACIFIC OCEAN

Tropic of Cancer

HAITI

Tropic of Cancer

PACIFIC OCEAN

Equator

Equator

Tropic of Capricorn

INDIAN OCEAN

Tropic of Capricorn

0   3000   6000 Km

0   3000 Miles

SOUTHERN OCEAN

Antarctic Circle

- Haitians are the largest Creole community in the world.

- Haitian Creole emerged from contact between French settlers and African slaves during the Atlantic Slave Trade in the French colony of Saint-Domingue.

- Its vocabulary is primarily derived from French, but its grammar and pronunciation display influences from some West African, Taino, Spanish, and Portuguese languages

- Despite Haiti's political instability, some significant steps have been taken to raise the status of the Creole language.

Standardising the Creole

- In the early 1940s, attempts were made to standardize the language and to develop a standardized Creole orthography. However, the orthography was not very well received.

- The official orthography of Haitian was eventually standardized in 1979.

- The Constitution of 1979 classified French as the "langue d'instruction" (language of instruction) and Creole was classified as an "outil d'enseignement" (a tool of education).

- The more recent Constitution of 1987 recognizes Creole as the "sole language that unites all Haitians." It is in this Constitution that Creole and French are both recognized as the official languages of Haiti.

- The use of Haitian Creole in literature has been sparse but is increasing.
- Félix Morisseau-Leroy is one of the first and most celebrated writers in Haitian Creole. Since the 1980s, many educators, writers and activists have written in Haitian Creole.
- More recently, in 2004 on the country's newly initiated "Creole Day", Haiti's official newspaper "Le Matin" published its first paper entirely in Haitian Creole. Today numerous newspapers, as well as radio and television programmming is done in Haitian Creole.

Indo-portuguese Creoles

- **Daman Portuguese creole**, known to its speakers as *Língua da Casa* (Portuguese for "Home language"), is a Portuguese-based creole spoken in Daman. It is one of the few Portuguese creoles still spoken in South Asia.

- The Daman creole is a descendant of the Norteiro creole, spoken originally by the *Norteiros* on the Coast from Chaul, Bombay, Daman and Diu.

Indo-portuguese creoles

- Since the *Norteiros* are ethnic Konkani people, the substrate of the Daman creole is likely to be Konkani. Gujarati has also been suggested as a possible substrate, but this is doubtful, since the Gujaratis moved into the region only *after* the Portuguese arrived.

- The superstrate language is Portuguese. Before the Indian annexation of the territory, the Daman creole had become more similar to standard Portuguese. The language is spoken by an estimated number of 2,000 Damanese.

Indo-portuguese creoles

- The **Diu Indo-Portuguese creole** is spoken in Diu, India. It is a creole language based mainly on Portuguese and Gujarati. There is a considerably vital oral tradition in this language, with songs regularly performed in Diu and among Indo-Portuguese communities abroad.

- Widely spoken in the past, it was first documented in the 19th-century. At present, the language is spoken natively by most of the local Catholics, numbering about 180, but is potentially endangered by the pressure of other languages such as Gujarati, English and standard Portuguese.

Indo-portuguese creoles

- **Korlai Indo-Portuguese** is the language of some 1,000 Luso-Indian Christians in an isolated area around the village of Korlai in Raigad District of Maharashtra. More commonly, the language is known as Korlai Creole Portuguese, Korlai Portuguese, or *Nou Ling* ("our language" in the language itself).