



Dimension of bilingualism

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Annotation: As the great Uzbek writer Alisher Navoi said: "Knowing a language-knowing a nation" and without any doubt, it is true. It is an indisputable fact, being able to speak and comprehend different languages gives a good many opportunities to have a bright future. This article renders the varieties of bilingualism, manifests its role in society, also emphasizes its importance.

Key words: linguists, bilingualism, language, competence, code-switching, code mixing, society, variety, proficiency, minority.

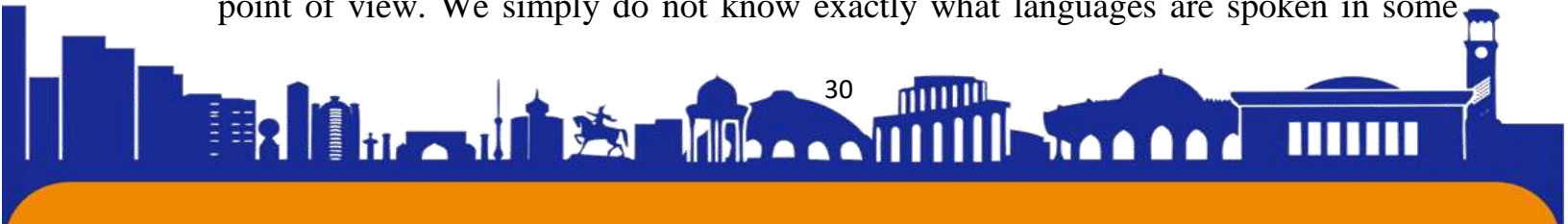
Annotatsiya: Ulug‘ o‘zbek adibi Alisher Navoiy aytganidek: “Tilga e‘tiborsiz- elga e‘tiborsiz”, degani hech shubhasiz haqiqatdir. Turli tillarda gaplasha olish va tushuna olish porloq kelajakka ega bo‘lish uchun juda ko‘p imkoniyatlar beradi. Ushbu maqolada ikki tillilikning xilma-xilligi, uning jamiyatdagi o‘rni namoyon bo‘ladi, uning ahamiyati ta’kidlanadi.

Kalit so‘zlar: tilshunoslar, ikki tillilik, til, kompetensiya, kod almashtirish, kodlarni aralashtirish, jamiyat, xilma-xillik, malaka, ozchilik.

Аннотация: Как говорил великий узбекский писатель Алишер Навои: «Знать язык - знать нацию» и, вне всякого сомнения, это правда. Это неоспоримый факт, способность говорить и понимать разные языки дает много возможностей для светлого будущего. В данной статье представлены разновидности билингвизма, проявляется его роль в жизни общества, а также подчеркивается его значение.

Ключевые слова: лингвисты, билингвизм, язык, компетентность, переключение кодов, смешение кодов, общество, разнообразие, владение, меньшинство.

Introduction Estimates vary as to how many languages are spoken in the world today. Most reference books give a figure of around 6,000. This is in fact a conservative estimate, as many parts of the world have been insufficiently studied from a linguistic point of view. We simply do not know exactly what languages are spoken in some





places. What we do know, however, is that there are fewer than 200 countries—that politico-geographic unit to which most of us belong—in the world. It is inevitable perhaps that an enormous amount of ‘language contact’ takes place. There is a popular metaphor in linguistics that language is a living organism, which is born, grows and dies. However, language is a human faculty: it coevolves with us, homo sapiens; and it is we who give language its life, change it and, if so desired, abandon it. When we speak of ‘language contact’, we are therefore talking about people speaking different languages coming into contact with one another. There are many reasons for speakers of different languages to come into contact. Some do so out of their own choosing, while others are forced by circumstances. Key external factors contributing to language contact include:

- **Politics:** Political or military acts such as colonisation, annexation, resettlement and federation can have immediate linguistic effects. People may become refugees, either in a new place or in their homeland, and have to learn the language of their new environment. After a successful military invasion, the indigenous population may have to learn the invader’s language in order to prosper. Colonisation is exemplified by the former British, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Dutch colonies in Africa, Asia and South America, most of which achieved independence in the nineteenth century. A modern example of annexation can be found in the absorption of the Baltic republics—Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia—into the Soviet Union after the Second World War. In the latter part of the twentieth century military conflicts in Central Africa and the former Yugoslavia have seen the resettlement of people of different ethnic backgrounds. Examples of federation where diverse ethnic groups or nationalities are united under the political control of one state include Switzerland, Belgium and Cameroon.
- **Natural disaster:** Famine, floods, volcanic eruptions and other such events can be the cause of major movements of population. New language contact situations then emerge as people are resettled. Some of the Irish and Chinese resettlements in North America were the result of natural disasters.
- **Religion:** People may wish to live in a country because of its religious significance, or to leave a country because of its religious oppression. In either case, a new language may have to be learned. The Russian speakers in Israel are a case in point.
- **Culture:** A desire to identify with a particular ethnic, cultural or social group usually means learning the language of that group. Minority ethnic and cultural groups may





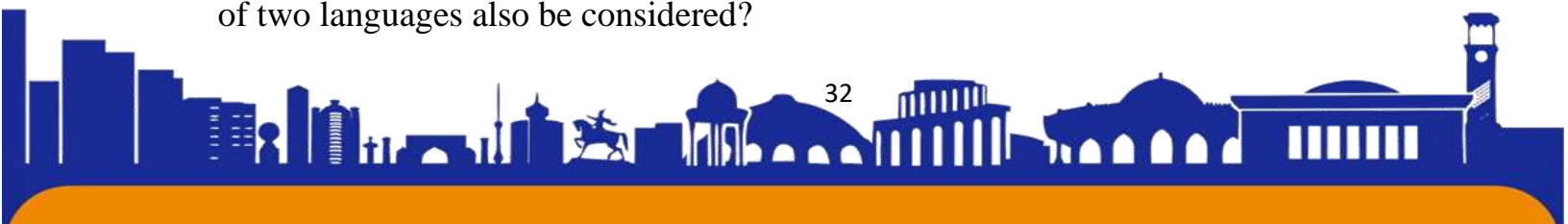
wish to maintain their own languages, which are different from the languages promoted by the governing state or institution. Nationalistic factors are particularly important.

- **Economy:** Very large numbers of people across the world have migrated to find work and to improve their standard of living. This factor accounts for most of the linguistic diversity of the US and an increasing proportion of the bilingualism in present-day Europe.
- **Education:** Learning another language may be the only means of obtaining access to knowledge. This factor led to the universal use of Latin in the Middle Ages, and today motivates the international use of English.
- **Technology:** The availability of information and communication technologies (ICT), such as the internet, has led to a further expansion of the use of English across the world. The vast majority of ICT users are non-native speakers of English.

From the above list we can see that one does not have to move to a different place to come into contact with people speaking a different language. There are plenty of opportunities for language contact in the same country, the same community, the same neighbourhood or even the same family. The usual consequence of language contact is bilingualism, or even multilingualism, which is most commonly found in an individual speaker.

People who are brought up in a society where monolingualism and uniculturalism are promoted as the normal way of life often think that bilingualism is only for a few ‘special’ people. In fact, one in three of the world’s population routinely uses two or more languages for work, family life and leisure. There are even more people who make irregular use of languages other than their native one; for example, many people have learnt foreign languages at school and only occasionally use them for specific purposes. If we count these people as bilinguals then monolingual speakers would be a tiny minority in the world today. The question of who is and who is not a bilingual is more difficult to answer than it first appears. The linguists Colin Baker and Sylvia Prys Jones suggest that in defining a bilingual person, we may wish to consider the following questions:

- Should bilingualism be measured by how fluent people are in two languages?
- Should bilinguals be only those people who have equal competence in both languages?
- Is language proficiency the only criterion for assessing bilingualism, or should the use of two languages also be considered?

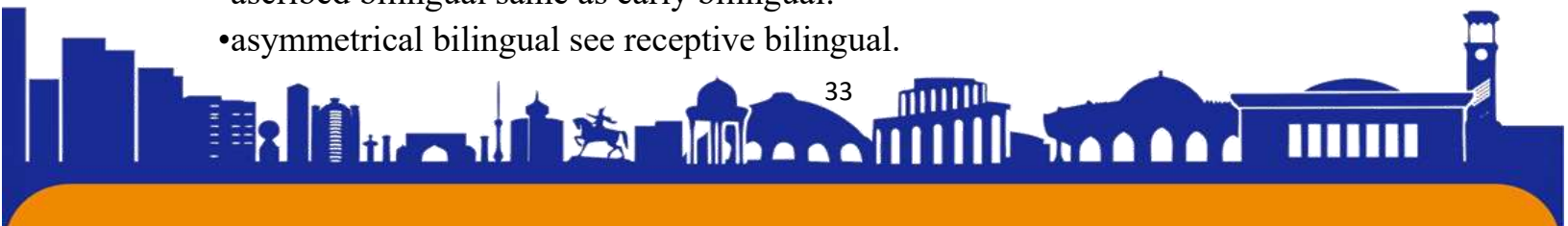




- Most people would define a bilingual as a person who can speak two languages. What about a person who can understand a second language perfectly but cannot speak it? What about a person who can speak a language but is not literate in it? What about an individual who cannot speak or understand speech in a second language but can read and write it? Should these categories of people be considered bilingual?
- Should self-perception and self-categorisation be considered in defining who suggest that in defining a bilingual person, we may wish to consider the following questions:
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- Should self-perception and self-categorisation be considered in defining who is a bilingual?
- Are there different degrees of bilingualism that can vary over time and with circumstances? For instance, a person may learn a minority language as a child at home and then later acquire another, majority language in the community or at school. Over time, the second language may become the stronger or dominant language. If that person moves away from the neighbourhood or area where the minority language is spoken, or loses contact with those who speak it, he or she may lose fluency in the minority language. Should bilingualism therefore be a relative term?

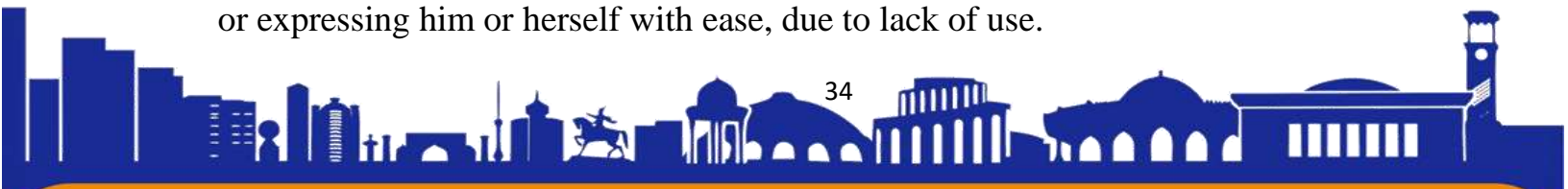
There is a variety of bilinguals such as

- achieved bilingual same as late bilingual.
- additive bilingual someone whose two languages combine in a complementary and enriching fashion.
- ambilingual same as balanced bilingual.
- ascendant bilingual someone whose ability to function in a second language is
- developing due to increased use.
- ascribed bilingual same as early bilingual.
- asymmetrical bilingual see receptive bilingual.





- balanced bilingual someone whose mastery of two languages is roughly equivalent.
- compound bilingual someone whose two languages are learnt at the same time, often in the same context.
- consecutive bilingual same as successive bilingual.
- co-ordinate bilingual someone whose two languages are learnt in distinctively separate contexts.
- covert bilingual someone who conceals his or her knowledge of a given language due to an attitudinal disposition.
- diagonal bilingual someone who is bilingual in a non-standard language or a dialect and an unrelated standard language.
- dominant bilingual someone with greater proficiency in one of his or her languages and uses it significantly more than the other language(s).
- dormant bilingual someone who has emigrated to a foreign country for a considerable period of time and has little opportunity to keep the first language actively in use.
- early bilingual someone who has acquired two languages early in childhood.
- equi lingual same as balanced bilingual.
- functional bilingual someone who can operate in two languages with or without full fluency for the task in hand.
- horizontal bilingual someone who is bilingual in two distinct languages which have a similar or equal status.
- incipient bilingual someone at the early stages of bilingualism where one language is not fully developed.
- late bilingual someone who has become a bilingual later than childhood.
- maximal bilingual someone with near native control of two or more languages.
- minimal bilingual someone with only a few words and phrases in a second language.
- natural bilingual someone who has not undergone any specific training and who is often not in a position to translate or interpret with facility between two languages.
- passive bilingual same as receptive bilingual.
- primary bilingual same as natural bilingual.
- productive bilingual someone who not only understands but also speaks and possibly writes in two or more languages.
- receptive bilingual someone who understands a second language, in either its spoken or written form, or both, but does not necessarily speak or write it.
- recessive bilingual someone who begins to feel some difficulty in either understanding or expressing him or herself with ease, due to lack of use.





- secondary bilingual someone whose second language has been added to a first language via instruction.
- semibilingual same as receptive bilingual.
- semilingual someone with insufficient knowledge of either language.
- simultaneous bilingual someone whose two languages are present from the onset of speech.
- subordinate bilingual someone who exhibits interference in his or her language usage by reducing the patterns of the second language to those of the first.
- subtractive bilingual someone whose second language is acquired at the expense of the aptitudes already acquired in the first language.
- successive bilingual someone whose second language is added at some stage after the first has begun to develop.
- symmetrical bilingual same as balanced bilingual.
- vertical bilingual someone who is bilingual in a standard language and a distinct but related language or dialect.

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