Language Contact and Multilingualism

Spring Semester 2014-2015

LIN6932 – section 17BC

Wednesdays 3-6 pm

syllabus

Jacomine Nortier

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1. The Course

In this course the central topic is language contact, bilingualism and language change as far as it is related to language contact. When people who speak different languages get in contact with each other, their languages are in contact as well. Usually at least one of the languages involved will be more or less affected by the other. This is a very common reason for language change.

In order to understand what is going on, multidisciplinarity is necessary. In this course you will be confronted with linguistic, socio-cultural and to a lesser degree with psychological perspectives on language contact and change.

The first two classes will be taught by Fiona MacLaughlin (…) and from 21 January on Jacomine Nortier will be the teacher. She is teaching this course as part of an exchange program between the universities of Florida and Utrecht in The Netherlands, Europe. Jacomine Nortier is working as a sociolinguist at the Utrecht University Department of Dutch Language and Culture, and specialized in multilingualism and language contact. Her native language is Dutch and English is a second language learned at school.

You will get acquainted with a variety of aspects of language contact and bilingualism[1]. You will see how the outcome of language contact depends on both linguistic and social structures and how a government can give directions to linguistic developments by means of language planning measures. Patterns of dominance and the status of languages (in terms of majority versus minority) determine the type and direction of linguistic change, shift and influence. Furthermore, the interface between multilingualism on the one hand, and ethnicity and identity on the other, will play a major role in the course.

We will also study how people become bilinguals and we will study the linguistic consequences of language contact. You are probably familiar with Foreigner Talk: the way native speakers talk to foreigners in order to make themselves understood (not always with the desired effect). We will look into linguistic borrowing and code-switching (the use of more than one language in a conversational setting or even within one sentence). Furthermore we will focus on the emergence of new languages. Examples of such languages are creole languages, as a result of slavery and contact between a large number of languages that are mutually not understandable.

We will use this book:
Yaron Matras (2009): *Language Contact*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
For presentations, articles will be used and made available by the teacher.

2. Aim

After completing this course students are able to:

- interpret language contact phenomena in the appropriate social context,
- explain advanced literature in the field of language contact and bilingualism, and the interface with the field of ethnicity and identity,
- deliver oral and written presentations defending their viewpoint on a topic within language contact and change,
- apply and test the studied theories in new situations to solve problems making use of suitable research methods and techniques.

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[1] The terms bilingual(ism) and multilingual(ism) will be used as equivalents.

- read in a reflexive and critical manner; student were introduced to the genre and task of writing a book review and practice in communicating critical thoughts in a modest and concise manner.

3. Requirements:

You are required to complete the readings in advance of the class for which they are assigned. In practice this will be one chapter from the book (Matras) plus a related article most weeks.

Every student will bring at least one written eye opener to class: between a half and full page. Eye openers will form the basis of our discussion during the first hour (more details: below under 5a). After class the eye openers will be handed in.

Every student will give two presentations, see below under 5c.

Finally you will write a book review (2000-2500 words). This assignment will not only introduce you to a book of your choice related to one of the course topics but also to the genre and task of writing a book review. Writing a book review is not merely a means to report on a book you have read, it is a good way to develop your analytical skills, improve your writing skills, and practice communicating your critical thoughts in a modest and concise manner.

It is important you choose a title you find intriguing since you do need to spend some time with this book. Write your review for a general socio-linguistic audience. In the book review you will give a summary of the content and discuss it critically in the light of what you learned in the course.

The book reviews (in progress) will be presented during the last two class meetings on April 15 and 22 (or only on April 15, depending on the number of students). Feedback and critical comments from your fellow students and the teacher will help you to improve the quality of your review.

4. Assignments/Grading:

Active participation, eye openers	First presentation (in couples)	Second presentation (alone)	Oral presentation of book review	Book review	Total
20%	20%	20%	10%	30%	100%

5. Class meetings will be structured according to this scheme:

a. The first hour: every student is asked to write down what s/he thinks was an eye opener in the literature central in that particular week. This may be something you liked, surprised you, something you don't agree with, anything that struck you. In your eye opener you indicate how this observation changes your view on the field and how this relates to your own experience. 300-400 words. Print your eye opener and bring it to class. Your observations will form the basis of our class discussion. Besides, students are asked to look up the background of some concepts and how they are related to this week's central topic.

b. The second hour the teacher will elaborate on topics from- or related to the literature. Depending on the nature of the eye openers there may be overlap between the first two hours (time wise or content wise)

c. The third hour a student will give a presentation on a selected article/book chapter. Student presentations consist of three parts: first the content of the article is presented. This may concern the whole article or a selected part of it. In the second part, the student presents a critical review found in the literature, or if not available, s/he gives an elaboration on the topic. And finally the student has to use his/her phantasy and involve the other students by, for example, making a quiz, interviewing someone from outside, showing a video, everything is allowed as long as it relates to the topic. The presentations are judged by the teacher and two students. All students present twice: the first time together with another student; the second time alone.

6. Academic honesty

Academic dishonesty, including cheating on exams and plagiarism, will not be tolerated. Any student engaging in such activities will be dealt with in accordance with University policy and receive a failing grade for the course (www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/academicguide.php) It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism. If you have any questions about it, please consult the professor.

7. Students with disabilities

If you have a disability that may affect your performance in this class, you should contact the Dean of Students Office (www.dso.ufl.edu/drp/) and let me know in any way that you are comfortable with so that I can make arrangements to accommodate you.

8. Schematic overview

Date	Topic/readings	Other activities	Student presentations:
7 January	Introduction Matras Chapter 1	Schedule and judging of presentations	Check terms: linguistic knowledge
14 January	t.b.a.		
21 January	Matras Chapter 2	First time with Jacomine Nortier; getting acquainted.	For example: Jens Normann Jorgensen: article on polylanguaging
28 January	- Matras Chapter 3 - Ferguson on diglossia		For example: Myers-Scotton: Chapter on diglossia from *Multiple Voices*
4 February	- Matras Chapter 4 (acquisition) - Mitchell & Myles		Choose article on SLA research
11 February	- Matras Chapter 4 (processing)	Debate: two parties: one defending the generative approach, the other one defending the transfer/interference approach in SLA	Choose article on psycholinguistic approach to SLA
18 February	- Matras Chapter 5; codeswitching ; structural aspects - Poplack 1980		Choose chapter/article on structural aspects, e.g. by Muysken
25 February	- Matras Chapter 5		Choose a chapter from

	(cont.); conversational aspects - Myers-Scotton on markedness		Auer (ed.) (1998) or an equivalent
11 March	- Matras Chapter 6 and 7	Choice of books for review assignment	On the distinction code-switching/borrowing
18 March	- Matras Chapter 8 and 9		For example an article or chapter by Thomason (& Kaufmann) or Sebba.
25 March	- Matras Chapter 10(pidgins, creoles and mixed Ls) - Meakins (2013) on mixed Ls.		For example Rickford on the creole origin of AAVE
1 April	Nortier and Dorleijn (2013) on Multi-ethnolects		For example: Cutler & Royneland on hip-hop in NY and Oslo (Nortier & Svendsen, eds.)
8 April	On the advantages of multilingualism: read toolkits.		City report: local study on multilingualism
15 April	Presentations by students on book reviews		
22 April	Symposium on Language Contact organized by the students		

9. The course from week to week

7 January:

Today during the first meeting a schedule of presentations will be made. Every student will be involved in two presentations: together with a fellow student and the second time alone.

During class the grading procedure of the presentations will be discussed. What do you consider important? An example is given below, but please read critically and add or remove whatever you think is necessary. Use this list as a reminder when you prepare your presentation. After each presentation, two students and the teacher do the grading together according to the criteria below (and developed by the whole group).

1. Was it easy to understand; was the text read? Did they use key words?
2. (in case of two presenters:) How did they divide the tasks? Was it more or less even?
3. How was the interaction with the audience? Were they challenged to participate, to ask questions?
4. Was the structure made clear in the beginning? Did the audience know what to expect?
5. Was the presentation itself well-structured?
6. Was it clear what sources were used (literature)? How?
7. How was the content brought to you? Did they use powerpoint or other audio-visual aids? And was it helpful?
8. Did you learn something? Specify what.
9. What was special about this presentation and what would you take over/advise others to take over?
10. Was there anything you would have done differently?
11. How would you grade this presentation? Form/content

Terms and concepts:

In order to be sure that we have shared basic knowledge, some of the terms and concepts that will play a role in this course will be central in this first meeting.

Students are divided in small groups (3 or 4, depending on the total number) and each group will get a number of terms from the list below, to explain and discuss. The student(s) who is (are) more familiar with the terms will explain to the other student(s) what they mean. After a minute or 10, 15 the students for whom the terms/concepts were new will explain to the whole group what is meant by it. Group and teacher will comment.

These are the terms and concepts:

1. Word order types: SOV - SVO - VSO order
2. Morphological types : Isolating, agglutinative, fusional, (polysynthetic) languages
3. (Is there a) Language Acquisition Device
4. Superstrate/Substrate languages; Substrate influence
5. Critical Period Hypothesis
6. Codeswitching

7. Definite/Indefinite Articles
8. L1 and L2
9. V2-rule (verb second)
10. Phonemes vs. Allophones
11. Free vs. bound morphemes
12. Language change
13. Language shift
14. Grammatical gender distinctions
15. Hypercorrection
16. Parameter
17. Inflectional/derivational morphology
18. (Phonological) assimilation
19. Function words vs. content words
20. Types vs. tokens

The teacher will elaborate and show how there concepts are relevant to the field of language contact.

14 January:

To be announced.

21 January:

- Matras, chapter 2. Central topic: repertoires.
- Instead of reading an article, students are asked to look for literature on *repertoires*. What is problematic about it?
- Student presentation: choose between (whatever you can get hold of)
  - Jørgensen, J. (2008): Poly-lingual languaging. Evidence from Turkish-speaking youth. In: V. Lytra and J Jørgensen (eds.): *Multilingualism and identities across contexts.* Copenhagen Studies in Bilingualism 45, University of Copenhagen. Pages 120-150.
  - Jørgensen, J. (2008). Polylingual Languaging Around and Among Children and Adolescents. *International Journal of Multilingualism, 5:3, 161-176.*
  - Jørgensen, J. et al. (2011). Polylanguaging in Superdiversity. *Diversities, 13:2, 23-37*.

28 January:

- Matras, chapter 3. Central topic: societal multilingualism; diglossia
- Read: C. Ferguson (1959): Diglossia, *Word* 15, pages 325-340.
- Student presentation on Myers-Scotton, Carol (2006): *Multiple Voices*. Oxford: Blackwell; Chapter 4 (or an equivalent).

4 February:

Prepare the debate for next week. One group will represent the UG and generative approach to SLA and the other group will defend the statement that SLA is dependent on what the learner's L1 is. Look for arguments to convince the other party.

- Matras, chapter 4 (first and second part, 4.1 and 4.2): 1st and 2nd language acquisition
- Mitchell, R. and F. Myles (1998): Second Language Learning theories. Edward Arnold. Chapter 3 'The UG Approach'.

- Student presentation: choose an article on SLA research and find links with Matras´ chapter 4.2.

11 February:

- Today we will debate on approaches towards SLA.
- Read the third part (4.3) of Matras' chapter 4.
- Student presentation: choose an article on psycholinguistic aspects of SLA and find links with Matras´ chapter 4.3.

18 February:

Today we will focus on structural aspects of codeswitching

- Matras: chapter 5
- Poplack: Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish y termino en Español
- Student presentation: for example a (grammatical) chapter from Muysken, P. (2000): *Bilingual Speech. A Typology of Code-Mixing*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press,

25 February:

Today we will focus on conversational aspects of codeswitching

- Matras: chapter 5 (continued)
- Myers-Scotton, C. (2006): *Multiple Voices*. Oxford: Blackwell. chapter 6
- Student presentation: choose an article on conversational aspects of codeswitching, e.g. from Auer, P. (ed.) 1998) *Code-switching in Conversation*. London/New York: Routledge. (as long as you don't choose the Introduction!)

11 March:

- Matras: chapters 6 and 7 on borrowing
- No extra article
- Student presentation: choose an article on the problem of distinguishing borrowing from codeswitching, for example by Poplack et al (to be obtained from Jacomine)

18 March:

- Matras: chapter 8 and 9 on grammatical borrowing and convergence.
- No extra article
- Student presentation: choose a relevant article or chapter, for example by Sarah Thomason or Mark Sebba, or perhaps a chapter from Thomason & Kaufmann.

25 March:

- Matras chapter 10 on contact languages
- Meakins, F. (2013), Mixed Languages, in P. Bakker and Y. Matras (eds.): *Contact Languages*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton. Pages 159-228
- Student presentation on the creole origin of AAVE, for example Rickford, J. in Mufwene et al. (eds.), 1998.

1 April:

- Multi-ethnolects and youth languages. Nortier, J. and M. Dorleijn (2013): Multi-ethnolects: Kebabnorsk, Perkerdansk, Verlan, Kanakensprache, Straattaal, etc. in P. Bakker and Y. Matras (eds.): *Contact Languages*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton. Pages 229-272

- Student presentation: choose a chapter from Nortier & Svendsen : Language Youth and identity, for example the chapter on Hip-hop in osla and New York by Cecilia Cutler and Unn Royneland.

8 April:

On the advantages of multilingualism and how to profit from it.

- Read: Toolkits multilingualism: http://www.urbanlanguages.eu/toolkits
- Student presentation: choose one of the city reports (ask Jacomine who has them all).

15 April:

Presentations of the book reviews in (progress). This is the right moment to ask fellow students for feedback. There is still time to make changes!

22 April:

Symposium on Language Contact organized by the students. To be planned and discussed during the semester. Ideas: invite (a) speaker(s); present (provocating) statements.