

# 1 The Setting

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Academics first become interested in a research field in different ways – some by following a course at university, others through listening and talking to motivating speakers, others by events they have lived through, and some simply by accident. What triggered my interest in bilinguals and bilingualism was my own bilingualism. I became bilingual in French and English in my youth and often reflected on what it means to use two or more languages in everyday life. This led me to do a Master’s thesis on the topic at the Sorbonne, and then, a few years later, to survey the field for my first book on bilingualism. It was during this last stage that I met Einar Haugen, an esteemed scholar of bilingualism who befriended me and encouraged me to undertake research in this field. In what follows, I will describe these events, which were to influence my own work over the years.

## 1.1 Becoming Bilingual

In *A Journey in Languages and Cultures: The Life of a Bicultural Bilingual* (Grosjean, 2019), I relate how I had started my life as a monolingual, much to the surprise of my interlocutors, who expect me to have been a simultaneous bilingual. After all, wasn’t my father French and my mother English, and didn’t each speak their native language to me from birth? It didn’t happen that way in my case for at least two reasons. First, the one person–one language approach requires some organization and discipline, and neither of my parents seemed interested in pursuing it. They no longer got along and actually separated when I was one year old. Second, consciously raising a child bilingual at the time was not something one did as frequently as now. In fact, back then, bilingualism in children was often perceived negatively. As the educator and linguist Simon S. Laurie (1890) had stated: “If it were possible for a child or boy to live in two languages at once equally well, so much the worse. His intellectual and spiritual growth would not thereby be doubled but halved” (pp. 15–16). And so I started my life as a monolingual.

My mother obtained custody of my sister and me, and she put us in foster homes very early on. The one I remember well was in Villiers-Adam, a small village north-west of Paris, where Madame Wallard looked after several children in a totally French environment. I spent some five years there. When my parents came to visit, separately of course, they would speak French to us. My sister only remained a few years, and I was the only one who started school there at age six. During that time, I do not remember hearing any language other than French being spoken around me. Several months before my eighth birthday, my mother removed me from Madame Wallard's care and took me to Switzerland to a *home d'enfants*, a preschool boarding school. It was located in Chesières, a little village in the French-speaking part of the country, where my everyday life was not really very different from that in Villiers-Adam. It is there that I was reunited with my sister.

Our first contact with English came a few months later when we were given weekly English lessons by a rather elderly man as our mother had decided to put us into local English boarding schools after the summer. He only concentrated on oral language such as greetings, giving the time, saying simple things, and so on, and everything went quite smoothly. Things speeded up at the end of the summer when someone came to transfer me to Aiglon College, an English school in the next village, Villars. In the space of a few hours, I left my monolingual French world to enter an English-speaking world that was new to me. I was eight and a half at the time.

Even though I was dropped into a totally different language environment, everything took place smoothly. Many of the staff and some of the children knew some French and acted as translators when need be. In addition, some of the personnel were Swiss French and the surrounding community was French-speaking. I slipped into English without any trouble, and it rapidly became my dominant language. Since the other boys came from Great Britain and the United States, I also acculturated into their cultures without any effort.

As this was taking place, I slowly lost my French. The more my English improved, the more my French declined and fossilized. Not my simple conversational French, spoken without any accent, but my written, more formal French. In addition, because I sometimes went down to Italy to see my mother, and passed most of my time with the grooms on her horse farm, I started to acquire Italian. None of them spoke my two languages, and so the need for Italian, and the fact there were other children there, allowed me to acquire it quickly. I never learned to read or write the language but, in the end, I did speak it quite fluently.

At age fourteen, my mother moved me to a public school in England, and for the next four years I was in a totally British environment. My written

English improved greatly, to the point that in my last year there, I won the English prize. Within a strict British public school mold there was little room for my French side, and so it was reduced even more. I did have to take French classes though and realized that I was not as good as some of my classmates in grammar and translation. In many ways, I resembled the heritage language teenagers, as they are known today, in countries like the United States.

At age eighteen, I left my school in England and started university in Paris. In the span of one day – the time it took to go from England to France at that time – my need for each of my two languages changed completely. French became my most needed language after having been dormant for ten years. Most of my language domains had been covered by English exclusively, but quite suddenly I had to use French in many of them. It was substantially restricted in terms of lexical and grammatical knowledge, as well as language repertoires. It became my everyday language, though, and over the years my language dominance started changing again. This was certainly the case for my speaking skills, as I did not use English much. My written English did not suffer too much though, and I actually wrote my PhD thesis in it several years later. I also learned some Spanish – we had to have a second foreign language at university – but I never became very good at it.

After ten years in France, my wife, our young son, and I moved to the United States where we lived for twelve years. English became once again my dominant language and French dropped in fluency and use. It is at that time that I learned American Sign Language (ASL) and did research on it, but there too I never became very fluent<sup>1</sup> in it, much to my regret. By the time I wrote *Life with Two Languages* (Grosjean, 1982), eight years after having arrived, I still used my first language with my wife but did practically everything else in English, like innumerable first-generation immigrants.

In 1986, we moved back to Europe for good and settled in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. So, once again, my languages reorganized themselves. We became a French- and English-speaking family – our two English-speaking sons quickly acquired French – and I worked with both languages. As I write this many years later, things have stayed the same, although I have regrettably lost my ASL and Italian.

My life with languages, presented by the means of grids in Chapter 2 (Figure 2.2), helped set the stage for my work on bilingualism. But what was missing was a hands-on project on the topic, as well as a thorough survey of the field. I will now cover these two other aspects.

<sup>1</sup> The reader will notice that I have moved from using “fluent” / “fluency” to “proficient” / “proficiency” as the years have gone by. I have used both pairs to refer to a person’s competence in a language, but since the former have a second meaning (that of expressing oneself easily and smoothly), I preferred to use the latter in my later writings.

## 1.2 A Master's Thesis on Bilingualism

After my "licence" (Bachelor) at the Sorbonne, obtained in 1967, I teamed up with Dounia Fourescot-Barnett to undertake a joint Master's thesis with her (Grosjean and Fourescot-Barnett, 1968). I told her I wanted to work on bilingualism in order to find out about the topic and, indirectly, better understand what I was going through linguistically. She agreed as she too lived in a bilingual environment – her husband was British – and she knew a number of English–French bilinguals we could interview for our study.

When I did the literature search for our team, I discovered Uriel Weinreich's (1966) *Languages in Contact*, Einar Haugen's (1969) *The Norwegian Language in America: A Study in Bilingual Behavior*,<sup>2</sup> as well as the work of several eminent researchers at the time such as Wallace Lambert, William Mackey, and Andrée Tabouret-Keller. Several aspects of bilingualism research marked me then. The first was that the terms "bilingual" and "bilingualism" were still primarily defined in terms of language knowledge. For example, Hall (1952) stated that bilingualism was the "effective command of two or more linguistic systems." Vogt (1954) was less adamant but still put forward proficiency as the main factor. He stated that bilingualism covered all degrees from total mastery to the most rudimentary knowledge of a language other than one's own. Weinreich's (1966) proposal to stress language use – bilingualism is the practice of alternatively using two languages – was still relatively new at the time. A second aspect was that interference<sup>3</sup> was seen as the major trace of intermingling languages. Few researchers at the time made a clear distinction between interferences – deviations from the language being written or spoken stemming from the influence of the other language – and mixed language behavior in the presence of other bilinguals like code-switching and borrowing. And a third aspect that was prevalent pertained to the problems that characterized bilinguals and bilingualism, such as having to keep the two languages separate, feeling different and unsure of oneself, having difficulties integrating into a cultural group, needing to speak the second language like a native, and so on. Bilingualism was only just beginning to be seen in more favorable terms.

Forty English–French bilinguals in Paris took part in our study: fourteen simultaneous bilinguals, twenty-four late bilinguals, and two trilinguals. We attempted to diversify their age and occupation. Some were students but we also had teachers, business people, stay-at-home parents, diplomats,

<sup>2</sup> Haugen's book was originally published by the University of Pennsylvania Press in 1953. It was that edition that I consulted for my Master's thesis. I later worked with the better-known 1969 edition cited here.

<sup>3</sup> Also called transfer and, more recently, cross-linguistic influence.

retirees, and so on. Each one participated separately in a one-hour session where they first answered a questionnaire regarding their biography, their knowledge and use of their languages, their language history, which languages, if any, perturbed them, whether they were conscious of making interferences, whether they felt they were bilingual, and so on. We also asked them about behaviors such as counting, praying, and arguing – questions that were often asked of bilinguals at the time. Then they took part in a conversation *à trois* in which we asked them to reply in the language that they were spoken to in. I spoke English and my colleague French. We covered everyday topics such as politics, literature, music, painting, fashion, and so on. Finally, we asked our participants to do two small tasks. The first one was to translate words, phrases, and idioms from one language to the other. Examining them now, we were clearly seeking to find out how they would deal with homophones, homographs, and calques. The second task was to describe pictures we showed them. They could use the language of their choice to do so.

Our data analysis was very simple, basically drawing up summary tables with little statistics, and was clearly influenced by our state of knowledge of bilingualism at the time. We looked for interferences but did recognize that our participants were in a bilingual environment because they knew that the two of us spoke both languages. So when we could, we classified what were clearly code-switches and speech borrowings into a “parler bilingue” (bilingual speech) category, a term we coined in that 1968 work. Since we didn’t have better terms at the time, we described these elements as “interferences in the presence of a person or people who understand(s) both languages.” Here are a few examples with the code-switches underlined and the translations in parentheses: “I don’t like the pièces à thèse” (problem play); “that piano is a casserole” (pan); “Je ne pense pas (I don’t think so) . . . it’s very far fetched.”

We found that our participants had a very traditional view of bilingualism. Half told us that being bilingual meant being equally fluent in the two languages or speaking them effortlessly. Others mentioned thinking in the one or the other language, passing culturally as English in England and French in France, and going from one language to the other without any effort. As for their opinion about the phenomenon, we noted that they were proud of being bilingual. Some did mention a few difficulties, though, such as having to adapt to a different language/culture, finding friends, changing jobs or schools, having to choose what their main language would be, having to deal with personality issues, and so on.

The greatest part of our data analysis pertained to errors our participants made, most notably interferences. At the phonetic level, we found that either they didn’t make any interferences (six of the forty), or did so in only one language (the vast majority). Only four made phonetic interferences in both languages. At the lexical level, in addition to elements of “bilingual speech,”

we tabulated instances where a participant didn't know a word in one of the languages, as well as traditional false friends such as "classic" for "classical," "virtuose" for "virtuoso," and so on. It is at the grammatical level that we found the most errors, some due to interferences but many also due to an incomplete knowledge of the language in question. These concerned verb tense, mode and voice, agreement, word order, prepositions, articles, and other.

In sum, this piece of work was conducted along the lines of studies at the time, where error analysis was the main approach used. There were glimmers of things to come such as separating elements produced in front of bilinguals from those due to within- and between-language deviations, and putting the emphasis on language use instead of language proficiency when describing bilingualism. On the whole, though, the study was very much a reflection of the "old way" of seeing things, and it certainly played a contrasting role in how I was to consider bilinguals and bilingualism several years later.

### 1.3 A Survey of the Field of Bilingualism

For the next ten years, I was busy learning to be an experimental psycholinguist, doing my PhD with Harlan Lane, starting to publish, and moving and adapting to life in the United States (see Grosjean, 2019). When in the late 1970s, Carlos Soares, a graduate student, asked me to be his advisor for a thesis on language lateralization in bilinguals, I readily accepted. It encouraged me to offer a course on bilingualism and I started looking around for a good introductory book to the field. I couldn't find one and thought that maybe I should write one myself. Oh for the audacity of youth! Harvard University Press showed interest in such a book and I worked on it for the next sixteen months. I handed it in in the summer of 1981 and it was published in 1982. It was a wonderful entry into a field that was still rather new to me, and it gave me a breadth of knowledge I would not have had otherwise.

*Life with Two Languages: An Introduction to Bilingualism* (Grosjean, 1982) was one of the first new-generation books on bilingualism that surveyed the field as it stood at that time. Hugo Baetens Beardsmore's (1982) book, *Bilingualism: Basic Principles*, came out the same year, René Appel and Pieter Muysken's (1987) *Language Contact and Bilingualism* was published five years later, and Suzanne Romaine's (1989) *Bilingualism* appeared seven years later.

My book (henceforth *Life*) was organized from the macro to the micro level in six chapters. The first two chapters, "Bilingualism in the World" and "Bilingualism in the United States," examined the sociopolitical aspects of bilingualism that touched on language policy, linguistic minorities, the evolution of bilingualism at the societal level, bilingual education in the United

States, and language maintenance and shift. The third chapter, “Bilingualism in Society,” concentrated on attitudes toward language groups and languages, language choice, code-switching at the societal level, and bilingualism and biculturalism. The next two chapters examined the bilingual child and the bilingual adult and concentrated on becoming bilingual, describing a person’s bilingualism, being educated in two languages, the effects of bilingualism, the psycholinguistics and neurolinguistics of bilingualism, and the bilingual as a person. The last chapter, “Bilingual Speech and Language,” pertained to the linguistics of bilingualism when bilinguals are speaking to monolinguals and when they are speaking to bilinguals. It ended with the linguistic legacy of bilingualism. In what follows, I will spend a bit more time on each chapter in order to give the reader some idea of the knowledge I gathered that was to influence me in the years to come.

In the preface to *Life* I made a few observations that set the stage for what was to follow. The first concerned how I would define bilinguals: “people who use two or more languages in their everyday life” (vii). This emphasis on language use instead of language fluency/proficiency would follow me throughout my career. Indeed, contrary to general belief, bilinguals are rarely equally fluent in their languages; some speak one language better than another, others use one of their languages in specific situations, and others still can only read or write one of the languages they speak. The second observation was that bilingualism is present in practically every country of the world, in all classes of society, in all age groups; it has been estimated that half of the world’s population is bilingual. And third, I expressed a personal opinion on bilingualism that has guided me ever since: “For me, both as a bilingual and as a psycholinguist, bilingualism is neither a problem nor an asset but quite simply a fact of life that should be dealt with in as unbiased a way as possible.” I failed to add a fourth observation that only became apparent to me over time: The field of bilingualism, although much smaller back then, was already extremely vibrant and contained much valuable research. It is thanks to it that we have been able to make headway since, and reach the stage we are at today.

### *The World*

When preparing the first chapter, “Bilingualism in the World,” I was impressed by the scholarship of researchers such as William Mackey, Evan Glyn Lewis, Heinz Kloss, and Lachman Khubchandani. For the section on the extent of bilingualism, they helped me realize that bilingualism could be found in border areas between two language groups, in specific areas of countries where linguistic minorities are concentrated, throughout populations, in urban areas, in certain occupations, in specific social classes, and so on. As Lewis (1976)

wrote, bilingualism has been and is nearer to the normal situation than most people are willing to believe.

Concerning the national patterns of bilingualism, I based myself on their descriptions of individual countries to discuss monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual countries. What was clear was that even in basically monolingual countries, such as Japan and West Germany at the time, there were several linguistic minorities, and hence bilingualism. Other countries that had decided to have only one official language, as in Africa, had numerous other languages spoken by their populations.

When discussing officially bilingual countries such as Canada, and trilingual countries such as Belgium, I was struck by Mackey's (1967) observation that there are fewer bilingual people in these countries than there are in the so-called unilingual countries. These countries were created not to promote bilingualism, he wrote, but to guarantee the maintenance and use of two or more languages in the same nation. When deciding on an official policy of bilingualism, they often chose between the personality principle and the territorial principle. The former states that bilingualism is the official policy throughout the country, as in Canada. The latter, on the other hand, states that the country is divided into different monolingual areas, as in Belgium (except for Brussels) and Switzerland. Each has its own official language used by the administration and in the schools, and individuals are required to use that language when dealing with the governing bodies of the area. As for officially multilingual nations, such as India (Khubchandani, 1978) and Russia (Lewis, 1972), they too wish to recognize the linguistic identity of the main groups that make up the country, and they want to help certain linguistic minorities maintain and defend their languages. However, the real status of the languages can be assessed by looking at which language is learned and used by people for whom it is not a native language, and which languages borrow from the others.

In the section on language policy and linguistic minorities, I surveyed the support given to linguistic minorities through such actions as recognizing minority languages, giving them some form of official status, standardizing a language and allowing it to have an orthography. I also spent time on how countries can neglect their linguistic minorities and even repress them (Van der Plank, 1978; Kloss, 1967), something that persists to this day in some parts of the world.

Mackey (1967, 1968) was a fine source of information on the origins of bilingualism. He listed movement of peoples for political, social, military, and economic reasons; political federalism and nationalism; educational and cultural factors; as well as industrialization and urbanization. He also explained clearly what the outcomes of societal bilingualism can be over time. It can lead to prolonged bilingualism in a country or region that contains monolingual



communities that need to communicate with one another, as in Canada and Belgium. But it can also lead to a return of monolingualism. This may take the form of the maintenance of the group's original language and the disappearance of the second language, such as the disappearance of German after the break-up of the Hapsburg Empire. It can also result in a shift to the group's second language and the disappearance of the first language. This was the case of the German invaders who lost their original languages in Italy and in Gaul in the sixth and seventh centuries. And there can also be the evolution to a new language through processes of pidginization and creolization. A good example is Haitian Creole, which evolved from contact of different dialects of French, Spanish, native Indian languages, and African languages. It was a pidgin at first, but little by little it became the mother tongue of the vast majority of Haitians, most of whom are monolingual in the language.

### *The United States*

In Chapter 2, "Bilingualism in the United States," I was greatly aided by the work of Einar Haugen, Joshua Fishman, Heinz Kloss, Nathan Glazer, and Bernard Spolsky, among many others. I knew very little about the linguistic situation in the country when I started, but quickly realized that for any person interested in languages in contact and bilingualism, the United States is a nation to study. I also noted quite early on that the bilingualism of most groups is basically short-lived and transitional, in that it links monolingualism in one language – usually an immigrant language – to monolingualism in the majority language, English. This seems to be slightly less true forty years later as there are now signs of more persistent bilingualism.

To describe the language diversity found in the United States, I used the 1976 Survey of Income and Education, conducted by the Bureau of the Census. It included a number of questions on language background and current usage. Some 13 percent of the population at the time reported living in a household in which a language other than English was spoken or who had lived in such a household when they were children. This included Native American languages, older colonial languages, and more recent immigrant languages. Spanish, not surprisingly, was the most used language, followed by Chinese, Greek, and Portuguese, among other languages. Of the older immigration languages, only German was still quite largely used; other languages, such as Polish, Italian, Yiddish, and Scandinavian languages, were already on the decline.

It was possible to get an indication of the proportion of bilinguals since the survey also asked, "What language does X usually speak?" and "What other language does X speak?" I worked it out to be about 6 percent. I then added 1 percent for those who did not speak English at all, and concluded that a full

93 percent of the population was monolingual in English. This clearly showed how monolingual the United States was at the time.

In the section on the life of linguistic minorities, I marveled at how they had organized themselves to maintain their languages and cultures. Their first and main motivation was survival in a foreign land. This slowly evolved into well-organized communities with all the amenities required by its members – stores selling ethnic foods and products, churches and temples to look after their spiritual needs, schools, clubs, societies, and ethnic organizations, newspapers, and, later, radio and television programs. Kloss (1977) reported that the country had generally been tolerant toward its linguistic minorities, with some notable exceptions. It was expected, however, that its members should integrate themselves into the English-speaking society as quickly as possible. This pressure to Americanize, I noted, led the country into a bizarre paradox: most Americans, many of whose families were originally of a foreign-language background, proved to be extremely incompetent in learning and speaking foreign languages.

I also spent a long time on bilingual education in the United States and noted that up to World War I, many private schools and even some public schools, used a minority language alone, or with English, for instruction. The first half of the last century saw the disappearance of these languages in schools but starting in the 1960s, with the rise of ethnicity and the inability of schools to give equal educational opportunities to children of linguistic minorities, bilingual programs started to return (thanks in large part to the Bilingual Education Act of 1968). Many educators accepted the notion that the home language should, at least at first, be the child's language of instruction, and that bilingualism was not detrimental to cognitive growth.

I also surveyed a number of linguistic minorities: Native Americans, Deaf Americans, German Americans, Franco-Americans, and Hispanic Americans. Einar Haugen told me at the time that he was happily surprised that I had included Deaf Americans, as this had not been done before. The final section concerned language maintenance and language shift in the country, and was heavily influenced by Joshua Fishman's work and the authors in his book, *Language Loyalty in the United States* (Fishman, 1966). Nathan Glazer posed the following question in the book: "why, in the country which was most open to immigration . . . there was also the most rapid flight from and abandonment of key aspects of immigrant cultures? . . . Just why America produced without laws that which other countries, desiring a culturally unified population, were not able to produce with laws – is not an easy question" (Glazer, 1966, p. 360). Factors that played a role for each group were the immigration pattern of the minority, the geographic concentration of the group, its cultural mobilization and organization, its attitude toward its native language, and so on. The three factors that seemed to account for language shift was the educational policy of

the country, the periods of American nationalism linked to wars and economic difficulties, and the assimilative power of the society.

### *In Society*

In the third chapter of the book, “Bilingualism in Society,” I first surveyed work done by Wallace Lambert and his colleagues on attitudes toward language groups and languages. They primarily used the matched-guise approach, where bilingual speakers record a passage in each of their two languages, and judges, who don’t realize the speakers are bilingual, are asked to use voice cues to evaluate various personality characteristics. What they are evaluating in fact is the group that the speaker represents through the language spoken. The research showed that the negative attitudes of the majority group toward the group without power and prestige are adopted in part, or in whole, by this latter group, and that in most contact situations one language is usually considered more prestigious.

The section that followed, “Language Choice,” was largely based on the scholarly work of researchers such as Susan Gal, Joan Rubin, John Gumperz, Joshua Fishman and his team, Jürgen Heye, and Carroll Barber. It is best described by the title of an article by Fishman (1965): “Who Speaks What Language to Whom and When?” When speaking to monolinguals, bilinguals will quite naturally choose the language of the interlocutors (if they know it, of course), but everything becomes more complex when they share two or three languages. I illustrated this by describing three groups: Spanish–English bilinguals in Jersey City (Hoffman, 1971), German–Spanish bilinguals in Pomerode, Brazil (Heye, 1979), and Yaqui–Spanish–English trilinguals in northwest Tuscon (Barber, 1973).

The main factors that lead to the use of one language or the other fall into four categories: participants (language proficiency, history of the linguistic interaction, attitude toward a language, age, status, degree of intimacy, etc.), situation (location, formality, presence of monolinguals), content of discourse (topic mainly), and function of the interaction (status raising, creating a social distance, excluding someone, requesting something, etc.). Usually several factors taken together explain a bilingual’s language choice, and some factors have more weight than others. A fine example of the unconscious decision making that takes place concerns language choice in Paraguay (Rubin, 1968) where speakers often have to choose between Guarani and Spanish. Work on language choice had reached its heyday at the time of my book. It is now psycholinguists who are coming back to it with innovative data analysis procedures and new findings (e.g., Tiv et al., 2020).

The third section of the chapter pertained to the social aspects of code-switching and was based on pioneering work by researchers such as John

Gumperz, Carol Myers Scotton, and William Ury, as well as Guadalupe Valdés-Fallis. Code-switching, the alternate use of two or more languages in the same utterance or conversation, can involve a word, a phrase, a sentence, or several sentences. I discussed attitudes toward it (often negative at the time) and reasons for its use: calling on an appropriate word or expression, bringing in the “most available word” at a particular point in time, using it as a communicative strategy, or as an indicator of an attitude or emotion, as well as to emphasize a point, to exclude, to raise one’s status, and so on. I left the purely linguistic aspects of code-switching to the last chapter of the book.

I finished the chapter with a discussion of bilingualism and biculturalism. I defined the latter as the coexistence and/or combination of two distinct cultures. At the time, the literature on biculturalism mainly stressed acculturation, culture shock, and the difficulties of adjustment to a new culture. It can be especially difficult for the children of immigrants who may find themselves in the situation of not being able to assume their two cultures. Lambert (1977) talked of subtractive biculturalism in this case, where there is social pressure to give up an aspect of one’s dual identity for the sake of blending into a national scene. However, if the two cultures are valued equally in the home, in the school, and in the society at large, and if biculturalism is judged to be as valuable as monoculturalism, then children and adolescents who are in contact with two cultures will accept both.

### *The Child*

The next three chapters concentrated on the bilingual child, the bilingual adult, and bilingual speech and language. Chapter 4, “The Bilingual Child,” reviewed work on children who acquire and use two languages in a natural environment – at home, with friends and family, and in the community. In the section “Becoming Bilingual,” I examined different factors that account for the bilingualism of children. I also covered the different parental strategies that can be used to make sure children grow up bilingual. I insisted that what is essential in the maintenance of the “weaker” (often the minority) language, and hence of bilingualism, is that the child feels the need to use two languages in everyday life. This question of need for a language was to appear often in my future work.

The next section, “In and Out of Bilingualism,” covered the facility with which children become bilingual, but also the speed with which they can lose a language. A famous published case at the time concerned Stephen, an English–Garo bilingual boy (Burling, 1978). He no longer needed Garo when he left India and returned to the United States with his parents, and he lost it very quickly. Once again I insisted on the need for communication in two languages for bilingualism to be maintained.

In “The Acquisition of Two Languages,” I discussed what was known at the time on simultaneous acquisition of two languages, as well as successive acquisition, and presented the theories prevalent at the time. For simultaneous acquisition, there were those who defended the independent development hypothesis (each language develops independently of the other), and those who argued that there is a single language system that then separates into two. As for successive acquisition, I discussed the transfer position (the first language affects the acquisition of the second) and the developmental position (the acquisition of the second language parallels that of the first). A large place was also given to the social, cognitive, and linguistic strategies that second-language learners use in the acquisition process (Fillmore, 1976; Keller-Cohen, 1980).

The section “Aspects of Bilingualism in the Child” covered the person-language bond (it may help children differentiate their languages), interpreting by bilingual children (often done to help out their monolingual parents), language choice and code-switching (where the interlocutor plays a major role at first), and the way bilingual children play with language. Then, in “Education and the Bilingual,” I looked at the types of education that lead to linguistic and cultural assimilation (monolingual education and transitional bilingual education) and those that promote linguistic and cultural diversification, notably maintenance bilingual programs and immersion programs. The latter, pioneered by Wallace Lambert and his team in Saint-Lambert (Quebec), had diversified by the time I wrote *Life* in 1982, and had been extended to many other regions and countries.

The chapter ended with “The Effects of Bilingualism on the Child.” I noted that there had been much debate among researchers and educators on this topic over the years. I began with apparent negative effects revealed in the first part of the twentieth century, continued with apparent positive effects found most notably by Peal and Lambert (1962), Ianco-Worral (1972), and Ben Zeev (1977), and finished with the problems that characterized many of these studies. I ended with the opinion that it is probably safer to say that bilingualism as such has no major effect – either positive or negative – on the cognitive and intellectual development of children in general. McLaughlin’s (1978) statement at the time – “In almost every case, the findings of research are either contradicted by other research or can be questioned on methodological grounds” (p. 206) – expressed this well and could be used, with slight changes maybe, to characterize the situation today!

### *The Person*

Chapter 5, “The Bilingual Person,” concerned several aspects that influenced my own work in the years that followed. The first section, “Describing a

Person's Bilingualism," started off with a discussion of the over-importance given to fluency (now usually referred to as proficiency) when describing bilinguals. A linguist like Bloomfield (1933), with his much cited definition of bilingualism, "the native-like control of two languages" (p. 55), greatly influenced others. As I wrote then, if one were to count as bilingual only those people who pass as monolinguals in each language, one would be left with no label for the vast majority of people who use both languages regularly but do not have native-like fluency in each. This paradox led other researchers to propose more realistic definitions. Haugen (1956) stated that a bilingual is a person who knows two languages, and Macnamara (1967) added that bilinguals only needed to possess at least one skill, even to a minimal degree in the second language. The emphasis on fluency led numerous researchers to measure the bilingualism of individuals through rating scales, as well as fluency, flexibility, and dominance tests. I described these and then reviewed the many criticisms that they incurred. I ended the discussion by stating that researchers such as Weinreich (1966) and Mackey (1968) had started to emphasize the bilingual's regular, or alternate, use of two (or more) languages in their definitions. The field has now adopted language use as the main definitional factor (see a review by Grosjean [2022a]).

Mackey (1968, 1976) wanted to describe the complexity of a person's bilingualism and proposed a complex schema that would take into account four aspects: first, the bilingual's comprehension and expression in both the oral and written forms of each language, at all linguistic levels; second, the functions of each language, that is how and for what each language is used; third, the bilingual's ability to alternate between languages as well as the extent this is done; and fourth, the interference behavior of the bilingual. I discussed these aspects and also insisted on the bilingual's language history. Bilinguals may stop using a language, and hence become dormant bilinguals, and maybe even enter the process of language forgetting. I noted that language attrition had received little attention at that time; it was as if society allowed one to learn a language but not forget it!

The second section of the chapter, "The Psycholinguistics of Bilingualism," began with a discussion of the three types of bilingualism Weinreich (1966) had presented: the coordinative type (the words of the two languages have specific meanings), the compound type (the words of the two languages have common meanings), and the subordinative type (here the words of the weaker language are interpreted through the words of the stronger language). Ervin and Osgood (1954) fused the second and third type, which they termed "compound," and gave the first type the label "coordinate." I reviewed the experimental work that had been done to show evidence for the difference between compound and coordinate bilingualism, and showed how the results were mixed. In addition, considerable criticism was aimed by researchers at the

distinction itself, and at the tasks used to study it. Another topic of interest at the time was whether bilinguals had one internal lexicon or two. Once again, I examined the work that had been done to get to the bottom of this and once again showed that the results were mixed, and the criticism abundant.

A research theme under investigation back then, and which is still very much alive today, pertained to how bilinguals manage to keep their languages separate. As Lambert (1972) asked: "How is it that the bilingual is able to 'gate out' or, in some fashion, set aside a whole integrated linguistic system while functioning with a second one" (p. 300), and then switch to the other inactive system and set aside the previously active one? Various switching or monitoring mechanisms were proposed (Penfield, 1959; Macnamara, 1967; Obler and Albert, 1978) and studies were conducted to see if switching languages takes time. I reviewed this work and stated that in the end a psycholinguistic model will have to account for the bilingual's ability to maintain their languages separate in certain conditions and to integrate (intermix) them in others. A few years later, I was to elaborate on this with my proposal on language modes. I also reviewed other aspects of the psycholinguistics of bilingualism: processing of language by nonbalanced bilinguals (Dornic, 1978); the comparison of monolinguals and bilinguals on various language tasks (Mägiste, 1979); and the translation abilities of bilinguals.

In the next section, "The Bilingual Brain," I first surveyed the research conducted on bilingual aphasia; that is, the disturbance of language and speech caused by brain damage. I examined the recovery patterns of bilingual aphasic patients, the factors that account for nonparallel recovery, and whether selective impairment is caused by damage to the stored language itself or by an incapacity to retrieve what is stored. Then, I covered a topic that has practically disappeared in recent times: whether bilinguals show a difference with monolinguals in hemispheric dominance for language. At the time, many researchers had proposed that bilinguals used the right hemisphere in language processing more than monolinguals. The section ended with the way the languages are organized in the bilingual brain, and a description of Paradis' (1981b) subset hypothesis. Bilinguals would have two subsets of neural connections, one for each language, while at the same time they possess one larger set from which they are able to draw elements of either language at any time.

In the last section, "The Bilingual as a Person," I first discussed the attitudes and feelings bilinguals have toward bilingualism: the inconveniences and the advantages of being bilingual, and the differences some see between themselves and monolinguals. To this, I added a few elements on how monolinguals view bilinguals. As I stated, the more monolingual people are, the more difficult it is for them to understand that bilinguals are just like everyone else. Second, I reviewed what was known about some mental activities in bilinguals, such as counting, praying, thinking, and dreaming, as well as the

interaction of language and emotion, stress, and fatigue. Third, I attempted to answer a question often asked by monolinguals: does the bilingual have two personalities or one? I will come back to this question more extensively in this book (see Chapter 7), but back then I gave the beginning of an answer. What is seen as a change in personality is simply a shift in attitudes and behaviors corresponding to a shift in situation or context, independent of language. It is the environment and the culture as a whole that cause the bilingual to change languages, along with attitudes, feelings, and behaviors – and not language as such.

Finally, I presented some bilinguals who had made a mark by their contributions to politics, philosophy, religion, science, music, fine arts, show business, and literature. As I stated then, bilingualism is such a natural aspect of life that few of these people are known for being bilingual!

### *Speech and Language*

In the last chapter of the book, “Bilingual Speech and Language,” I surveyed the linguistics of bilingualism. I wanted to take into account all the recent work that had been done on intermingling languages, such as code-switching, and hence move away from using the global notion of “interference” to cover all aspects of bilingual speech. To do this, I decided to examine bilingual speech in two very distinct environments: when a bilingual speaks to a monolingual in a monolingual environment, and when a bilingual speaks to a bilingual in a bilingual environment. I then moved on to the linguistic legacy of bilingualism.

In the section, “Speaking to a Monolingual,” I started by acknowledging that even if a bilingual has the language competence of a monolingual in both languages, they will seldom be able to keep the two languages completely separate and error free. Some deviations can be due to a lack of fluency in the language, and I termed these within language deviations. They can be due to simplification, overgeneralization, hypercorrection and avoidance of certain elements, and this at all linguistic levels. I spent more time, though, on between-language deviations: the interferences of the other language despite the bilingual’s wish to keep the languages separate. I defined them, at the time as the involuntary influence of one language on the other<sup>4</sup>, a definition that was less englobing than preceding definitions. Weinreich (1966) had defined interferences as “those instances of deviation from the norms of either language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language” (p. 1). Haugen (1956) had talked of “the overlapping of

<sup>4</sup> I was later to make the definition even more explicit: deviations from the language being written or spoken stemming from the influence of the other language.



two languages” (p. 40) and Clyne (1972) had characterized them as “the adoption of any elements or features from the other language.” These definitions did not distinguish the use of code-switching and speech borrowing when bilinguals speak among themselves from the involuntary or accidental use of elements from the other language when speaking to a monolingual. I noted – announcing thereby my later work on language mode – that interferences become much more apparent when a bilingual is speaking to a monolingual. In this situation, the bilingual realizes that code-switching and borrowing might impede communication. If, despite this, there are traces of the other language, then one can often talk of interference.

I reviewed the types of interferences that can exist, first at the level of pronunciation. A “foreign accent” is often a direct reflection of the interference of another language at the level of phonology and prosody. At the lexical level, which also englobes idiomatic expressions, I noted that interferences are very similar to the various types of lexical borrowings made by bilinguals when speaking to one another. One finds words that are imported from the other language and are adapted phonologically and morphologically into the language being spoken. One also finds the extension of the meaning of words that already exist in the language being spoken, based on similar words (homographs, homophones) in the other language. At the level of syntax, I discussed the various types of interference one can find and presented Weinreich’s (1966) three-level classification: those that produce an unintended meaning; those that produce a meaning understandable by implication; and those that produce a pattern possible in the language being spoken but are not required by its grammar. I ended with spelling interferences, the well-known *faux amis* of many bilinguals when writing the one or the other language.

In a second section, “Speaking to a Bilingual,” I surveyed what was known at the time about code-switching and borrowing. Two main approaches are open to bilinguals who want to resort to the other language with other bilinguals, and when the psychosocial environment permits it. First, as we have just seen with lexical interferences, they can borrow a word and adapt (integrate) it into the language they are speaking, or simply extend the meaning of a word that already exists (both can be classified as speech borrowing). Second, they can switch completely to the other language, for a word, phrase, or sentence(s); this is code-switching. My distinction was similar to the one proposed by Haugen (1956) and Hasselmo (1970).

Concerning speech borrowing, I gave the reasons for resorting to it, then discussed the different types that can be found. As for code-switching, I first evoked the notion of a base language. Weinreich (1966) had been of the opinion that when code-switching takes place, the speaker and listener are usually quite capable of stating which base language they are using. Sankoff

and Poplack (1980) expressed doubts, however, that every sentence spoken by a bilingual can be assigned to a base language. I then surveyed the linguistic categories that code-switches fall into, and compared the results obtained by Pfaff (1979) and Poplack (1979). I also examined two linguistic constraints that govern code-switching proposed by Poplack: the free-morpheme constraint and the equivalence constraint. I ended by stressing that speech borrowing and code-switching are not only a reflection of the linguistic needs of individual speakers, but they also characterize bilingual communities and their sociolinguistic norms, as discussed by Clyne (1972), Eliás-Olivares (1976), and Haugen (1977).

In the last section, "The Legacy of Bilingualism," I argued that when bilingualism no longer exists within a community, its passage often leaves a permanent trace in the language that has survived, just as the passage of civilizations can be seen in existing cultures. I concentrated on language borrowing and discussed the complex process that takes place when a speech borrowing (a borrowing at the individual level) becomes a language borrowing (it is now an item at the community or national level). Weinreich's (1966) analogy to differentiate the two is quite visual: a speech borrowing is like sand being carried by a stream; language borrowing, on the other hand, is like the sand that is deposited at the bottom of a lake. And indeed, very few speech borrowings become language borrowings. A borrowing is finally accepted into a language when it is no longer treated differently from other words and when dictionaries, national academies, and influential writers accept it. It is then only a borrowing in the historical sense. I ended the chapter, and the book, with the following: "As long as languages continue to come into contact with one another, through individual bilinguals and in bilingual communities, they will not fail to influence one another. Language borrowing is the legacy of those who live with two languages."

I should add a few lines about the first-hand accounts I put in the book. Although it was a comprehensive introduction to the field, I wanted it to also reflect the bilingual's point of view, just as Einar Haugen had done in his own writings. As I wrote in the Introduction: "Too much has been written by people who see the topic through the eyes of monolinguals." So I included many first-hand accounts from bilinguals and inserted them in "Bilinguals Speak" boxes. I described them in this way: "bilinguals tell about their experiences: how they used their two (or more) languages, their attitudes toward bilingualism, their educational experiences, their feeling about code-switching and . . . borrowing, and the differences they feel exist (or do not exist) between themselves and monolinguals."

Finally, I'd like to mention my interactions with Einar Haugen, one of the most eminent researchers on bilingualism in the last century. I got to know him

as I was preparing my book (see Grosjean, 2019), and he was extremely supportive. He gave me some useful advice, read every chapter, and then kindly wrote a wonderful blurb for the back cover:

François Grosjean has undertaken a truly formidable task – to give the serious student and the earnest layman some insight into what a generation of intense research has taught us about bilinguals and bilingualism. The book manages to combine a very personal touch, which one feels everywhere as growing out of the author's own experience as a bilingual, with wide reading in the many fields of research that bear on the problems of bilingualism.

To conclude this chapter, I should state once again that my bilingualism, my Master's thesis on the topic, and my survey of the field in *Life* all contributed in their own way to prepare me to undertake my own research on bilingualism and biculturalism. This I was to do over the next forty years.