Quest for Connections in Language, Culture, Literature

Quest for Connections in Language, Culture, Literature

Edited by

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Part III Building Bridges of Understanding in Education

INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of the book "Quest for Connections in Language, Culture, Literature" is to provide a platform for an international team of researchers working in a variety of interrelated fields to present their novel views on the changing linguistic landscape, discourse and translation studies, diachronical evaluation of the quality of literary translations, and their teaching practices at the tertiary level. It is a multicultural research team's effort to develop a new understanding of how cultures, languages and literatures interact today.

The main distinction of the book with its three parts can be described as the overview it gives, first, on the multilingual situation observed in the majority of countries as a sociocultural phenomenon, its historic, social, cultural and educational roots, then, on the ways to build the bridge of understanding diverse cultures with a variety of translating means researched by the authors, and last, on the efficiency of applying such results in the educational sphere. This combination of approaches seems quite unique.

Elena Malashenko focuses on the phenomenon of multilingualism. The author emphasises that with globalisation linguistic plurality has become increasingly prevalent though the arguments in support of unilingualism are still impressive. The definitions, historical and contemporary contexts, and characteristics of multilingualism provided, as well as the examples of multilingual educational, institutional and other policies pursued in the countries all over the world, prove the multifaceted nature of multilingualism in a globalised world. Challenges such as linguistic inequalities, language policy implementation, complexities of promoting multilingualism in diverse contexts and others are also highlighted.

Dmitriy Kiselyov refers to the phenomenon of multilingualism and the trends of its development in the Republic of Uzbekistan. The author studies the origin of the modern linguistic landscape in the country, in particular the main language groups, the time and circumstances of their representatives' settlement and the conditions different languages function in. The spheres of traditional distribution of the languages both in historical perspective and at present time are described. It is emphasised that the mother tongue is in most cases an important element in determining the identity of the inhabitants of Uzbekistan. The author underlines the importance of the

sphere of education in terms of assessing the role of languages and improving multilingualism.

Takanori Kawamata and **Hiromasa Tanaka** deal with the problem of complex interactions among representatives of diverse linguistic, cultural and professional backgrounds in intercultural business communication. To facilitate communication and make it more efficient its participants are trained to share their linguistic knowledge and intercultural expertise. Such interventions regarded as interpretation acts are studied by the authors. The implementation of the two-project-based learning programme designed for university students from Georgia, Japan and Malta encourages them to employ communication strategies not only to understand each other but also to aid their peers, and in this way to acquire the skills necessary for their own interpretative acts in the future career.

Natalia Fenenko identifies lacunae in terminology systems. The research is based on the comparison and analysis of the terms presented in the works of French interpretative translation (ITT) and Russian linguistic translation (LTT) theorists as well as the terms in dictionaries of translation terminology. As a result, three types of terminological correlations are identified and classified. The classification reflecting such correlations as terms of ITT being complete lacunae for LTT, terms of LTT being complete lacunae for ITT, and terms being partial lacunae in both translation theories, contributes to the standardisation of terminology systems in contemporary translation studies.

Cui Boshi and **Zhang Wei** aim at sharing the beauty and meaningfulness of the Chinese poetry culture. A popular genre of the Chinese literature called Song Ci is discussed on the example of the works of Lu Yu, a poet of the Southern Song Dynasty. The researchers characterise one of Lu Yu's poems entitled "Phoenix Hairpin" which serves as an example of the author's intertwined ideas about love, life and duties to the homeland. The story of the creation of the poem, the analysis of its structure, and the interpretations of the three translation versions of the poem into English allow to assess how well the form and meaning of a Chinese poem can be rendered in translation.

Thomas Beavitt presents the results of long-term collaborative work aimed at exploring and presenting relationships between two cultures and languages throughout history. The materials studied are lyric poems on prophetic and Scottish themes written by the Russian poet M. Lermontov and an adaptation of a mediaeval romance composed by the Scottish bard and prophet Thomas the Rhymer. Providing a brief historical background of prophecy in Scotland and Russia, the author gives the analysis of the poets' works exemplifying it with the excerpts from his own translations of

the poems. In the project described the author's translations were later developed into a song form, then filmed and performed with a vocal ensemble, musicians and members of the club for historical dance reconstruction.

Tatiana Syromiatnikova considers the concept of expressiveness of a literary text and points out that the variety and convergence of expressive means used by writers create a serious translation challenge. It is especially true about the works by the Russian writer Nikolai Gogol and folkloric nature of his narration replete with linguistic elements originated in the Ukrainian culture. Comparing two German translations of Gogol's stories, the author finds out that translators use full or partial equivalents, functional analogues and contextual synonyms to convey invectives in Gogol's works into German. Phraseological units are mostly translated through explication and phraseological analogues. This predetermines creative modifications of the source texts.

Yuri Maslov explores the phenomenon of retranslation first characterising its nature, meaning and types. Then the author focuses on the Russian writer I. Bunin's creative oeuvre that has received multiple translations into many languages, and distinguishes the peculiarities of Bunin' style such as the absence of a rigid plot structure, great role of natural phenomena in the narration, use of multiple epithets, and exceptional musicality of the prose. These and other features are abundant in the "Dark Avenues" collection, which presents a serious translation challenge. The comparative analysis of the four translation versions of the story "Caucasus" reveals the finest nuances and allows to make a conclusion about the importance of a native speaker's review of the translation into another language as well as the necessity to deliver literary translation projects by multinational teams.

Anatoly Babushkin considers the means of translating anthroponyms, i.e. names and surnames that often represent an example of what seems untranslatable. Such names are found in abundance in the satirical Russian novel "The Golden Calf" by I. Ilf and E. Petrov. The author analyses its 2009 English translation made by H. Anderson and K. Gurevich, and classifies the anthroponyms regarding the extent to which a reader of the book may be aware of them, from well-known or international with quite transparent inner structure to imaginary that are still related to creating a comic effect. Rendering the names and preserving the comic effect requires translators' creativity and skillful diversification of translation methods.

Svetlana Semochko studies linguistic peculiarities of subtitling animated and fantasy films. Having described the characteristics of an audio-visual discourse, the author describes the audio-visual translation of

such films as a challenge. Their subtitling is viewed as a hybrid form sharing common traits with dubbing and literary translation. The results of the research based on the comparison of the original (English) and foreign language (German and Russian) subtitles demonstrate the inevitability of complex transformations in nominative and discursive strategies due to the linguistic asymmetry of the languages and numerous technical limitations in subtitling.

Baktygul Kurmanova gives the analysis of the ethnolinguistic situation in Kazakhstan characterised by multiethnicity and diversity within the country's linguistic entities. The regional study suggested by the author demonstrates the regional difference in the distribution of the numerous nationalities living in the country and their languages. In this situation a state priority is polylingual education. Its aim is to ensure that all learners at all levels of their education master their command of what is called trinity languages–Kazakh as the state language, Russian as a means of interethnic communication and a foreign language. The native languages of ethnic groups settled in certain districts are also part of the new curricula recently designed and implemented.

Merita Hoxha and **Lynn W. Zimmerman** turn to the issue of implementing the communicative language teaching approach which sometimes is understood as the use of a target language only, thus contributing to creating a negative learning environment. Having considered the arguments for and against the use of learners' mother tongue (L1) in the language classroom, the authors launched an action research project aimed to examine the effect on the learning environment by comparing the amount of L1 used in two groups of students. The study clearly showed that supporting the limited use of L1 in the classroom can bridge a transition to the communicative way of language teaching and cultivate a positive learning environment in the language classroom.

Rumiya Tangalycheva describes a creative technique developed in order to increase intercultural competence when teaching multicultural groups of students. The technique is based on the use of a cultural assimilator which is actually a case study opened with a short story about an event of communication between representatives of two different cultures in a variety of settings (education, business, family and friends, everyday life, public space, etc.). The communication is complicated by some problem, and to understand its reason and overcome it, some solutions are proposed and talked over by students and their teacher; then expert interpretations are considered. In this way cultural differences are surmounted and adaption to the new sociocultural context is supported.

Iryna Piniuta and **Tetiana Piatakova** present the framework aimed to develop pre-service teachers' plurilingual competence which in general is seen as the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication within multilingual and multicultural contexts. For pre-service teachers plurilingual abilities refer to those of mediation, interrelation and interaction of multiple languages in learning, classroom practices and research. The authors formulate the principles to develop plurilingual competence such as providing exposure to and instruction in multiple languages, developing communicative abilities in real-world contexts and positive attitudes towards language diversity, and describe the theory-grounded sequence of activities designed and implemented in the educational process.

Nataša Gajšt provides her view and practical experience on how students' first language can be used effectively in the second language class to train them to switch from their first language to a foreign language and vice versa in their future professional business environments. The author proposes a step-by-step terminology-to-letter-writing approach to teaching commercial terminology and commercial correspondence in English and describes the modules designed on the basis of this approach. The modules include a sequence of interconnected activities, numerous translation tasks among them, that students can do collaboratively and individually to increase the level of their proficiency in two languages as well as cross-cultural communication skills.

In the afterword **Yuri Maslov** adds his comments acknowledging the variety of research ideas presented in the book and their scientific and practical value. He foresees, though, that the research interest in the field of studying languages, cultures and literatures is bound to develop greatly so there is a lot of work ahead, and it is still a quest.

The editor Elena Chaika

PART I

BRAVING THE NEW MULTICULTURAL WORLD

CHAPTER ONE

MULTILINGUALISM IN A GLOBALISED WORLD

ELENA MALASHENKO

We estimate that most of the human language users in the world speak more than one language, i.e. they are at least bilingual. In quantitative terms, then, monolingualism may be the exception and multilingualism the norm (Auer, Wei 2007).

1. Overview of multilingualism in the context of globalisation and its importance in contemporary society

In today's globalised world, where interactions among individuals from diverse linguistic backgrounds are increasingly common, the phenomenon of multilingualism takes centre stage as understanding multilingualism is of paramount importance in contemporary society for several reasons. Initially, in a globalised world where interactions among people from diverse linguistic backgrounds are commonplace, multilingualism serves as a bridge for communication and cultural exchange. It fosters mutual understanding and appreciation of diverse linguistic and cultural traditions, contributing to social cohesion and harmony. Additionally, multilingualism has significant implications for various sectors, including education, commerce and diplomacy. Proficiency in multiple languages can enhance individuals' educational and employment opportunities, facilitate international trade and collaboration, and strengthen diplomatic relations between nations. Lastly, recognising and valuing multilingualism is essential for promoting linguistic diversity and preserving it.

With globalisation facilitating increased mobility, trade and communication across borders, linguistic plurality has become increasingly prevalent.

Reaum and Pinto in their research presented recent positions taken by philosophers on language policy. They discussed "the arguments in support of unilingualism (such as ease of communication) and of multilingualism, the most prominent of which is the argument that diversity in languages is

as important as biodiversity; the arguments for each are impressive, but no conclusion is still reached" (Spolsky 2012, 43).

Peter Auer and Li Wei's statement above (2007) about monolingualism as the exception and multilingualism as the norm reflects the reality of multilingualism being widespread globally. While it is difficult to provide exact figures due to variations in definitions and data collection methods, numerous studies suggest that multilingualism is indeed prevalent.

2. What is multilingualism?

Different authors have contributed significantly to the study of multilingualism.

Cenoz and Jessner's work (2000) explores various dimensions of multilingualism, including neurolinguistics, psycholinguistics, education, sociolinguistics and language policy. Cook and Bassetti (2011) delve into the relationship between language and cognition and cover topics related to bilingualism and multilingualism. Romaine (2001) emphasises that bilingualism and multilingualism are normal and necessary aspects of everyday life for most of the world's population. Her insights challenge the perception that monolingualism is the norm. Erard's work (2012) questions the notion of linguistic weakness in monolinguals. He highlights the prevalence of multilingualism worldwide and challenges assumptions about language abilities. Urkhanova (2023) has extensive experience teaching Russian as a foreign language in an academic multilingual environment. Her work explores correlations between students' established language structures and new knowledge when teaching Russian in diverse language contexts.

Dmitrieva and Holter (2019) delve into the practical challenges, creative opportunities and ethical questions faced by translators working with globally multilingual texts like James Joyce's "Finnegans Wake" in Russian translations. Druzhinina and Zashikhina (2019) have contributed to the field of multilingual pedagogy, and their research focuses on defining the concept of multilingualism, considering plurilingualism and the Russian term *mnogoyazychie*. They propose an innovative concept of multilingualism for educational purposes based on methodological principles. Pavlenko (2023) shines light on the millennia-long history of multilingualism as a social, institutional and demographic phenomenon. Going against the grain of traditional language histories, these thought-provoking case studies challenge stereotypical beliefs, foreground historic normativity of institutional multilingualism and language mixing, examine the transformation of polyglot societies into monolingual ones, and bring out

the cognitive and affective dissonance in present-day orientations to multilingualism.

As we can see, the list of scholars is long and could be continued. Each of them has their own view on the problem and enriches our understanding of multilingualism and its implications across various contexts.

Oxford Reference describes multilingualism as the ability to use three or more languages, either separately or in various degrees of code-mixing (Oxford Reference Online). According to Aronin and Jessner (2015), multilingualism is a fundamental characteristic of human beings, reflecting our ability to communicate in three or more languages and the social contexts where this ability is applied. Maher (2017) highlights multilingualism as languages crossing the boundaries of nations, continents and cultures, like Spanish in Europe and the Americas.

The practice of using multiple languages in various aspects of human life is a distinctive feature of human behaviour, recognised by anthropologists since ancient times. In today's world, multilingualism is widespread and deeply intertwined with the processes of globalisation, serving as a pivotal element in sustaining and progressing modern global society. In essence, multilingualism reflects the dynamic interplay of linguistic repertoires and cultural contexts. Whether someone grows up speaking two first languages simultaneously or learns additional languages sequentially, embracing multilingualism opens doors to new perspectives, connections and shared experiences across borders and cultures.

Multilingualism encompasses a wide range of linguistic phenomena, including individual multilingualism, where individuals are proficient in multiple languages; societal multilingualism, where multiple languages coexist within a community or region; and institutional multilingualism, where organisations or institutions operate in multiple languages. Understanding these types is paramount for grasping the complexity of linguistic diversity in our globalised world.

"Multilingualism (Latin *multus* in the meaning of many + *lingua* for language) is a social situation involving groups or communities who communicate, with varying proficiency, in more than one language, in addition to a national or standard language. This is called societal multilingualism" (Maher 2017, 23).

Similarly, individual multilingualism or bilingualism (Latin *bilinguis* in the meaning two-tongued) refers to individuals who possess proficiency in two languages. Whether acquired through upbringing, education or immersion, individual multilingualism showcases the linguistic versatility of individuals and their ability to navigate diverse linguistic environments.

Societal multilingualism highlights the richness of linguistic diversity and the dynamic nature of language contact and exchange. Societies and communities often exhibit multilingual characteristics, where multiple languages coexist and interact within a shared geographical or cultural space.

Institutions, such as governments, educational institutions and businesses, operate in multiple languages to accommodate diverse stakeholders and audiences. Institutional multilingualism underscores the pragmatic need for effective communication in various contexts, from legal proceedings to international trade.

3. Historical and contemporary contexts of multilingualism

Understanding the historical and contemporary contexts of multilingualism is also crucial for grasping its significance in today's globalised world. Throughout history, linguistic diversity has been a ubiquitous phenomenon, a hallmark of human societies, shaped by historical events, cultural interactions, socio-political developments and factors such as migration, trade and conquest. Migration, driven by economic, political and social factors, brings individuals from diverse linguistic backgrounds into contact with one another, leading to language contact and potentially to language change. Migrants often bring their native languages into new cultural contexts, leading to language convergence and linguistic diversity within host communities. This phenomenon is particularly evident in urban centres and diaspora communities, where multiple languages coexist and interact. Maher (2017) mentions that one-third of urban Europe under the age of thirty-five has a migrant background and this means an inflow of languages. He underlines that one territory may host several different languages inside its borders. For instance, in "the Netherlands, in addition to Dutch, there are twelve major community languages. Luxembourg has three official languages (French, German and Luxembourgish) while the Philippines has over 120 languages, including two official (Filipino and English) and nineteen recognised regional languages" (Maher 2017, 22). "The scope of multilingualism involves past and present and all the language modes: writing, speaking and signing. People do this in daily life, alternating their speech style, languages and dialects according to different social contexts and conversations" (Maher 2017, 24).

Let us have a look at some notable examples of multilingual individuals across different historical periods.

- Elizabeth I (1533-1603, Queen of England) was proficient in English, Latin, French and Italian. Her linguistic abilities allowed her to engage in diplomatic correspondence and cultural exchanges.
- Friedrich Engels (1820-1895, social scientist and journalist, a collaborator of Karl Marx) was fluent in German, English and French. His multilingualism facilitated his work on political theory and economic analysis.
- J.R.R. Tolkien (1892-1973, the renowned author of "The Lord of the Rings") was proficient in various languages, including English, Latin, Greek, Old Norse and Middle English. His love for languages deeply influenced his fictional world-building.
- Vladimir Nabokov (1899-1977, novelist and translator known for works like "Lolita") was a polyglot who spoke Russian, English, French and German fluently. His linguistic versatility enriched his literary endeavors.
- Arthur Koestler (1905-1983, a Hungarian-British author) wrote in multiple languages. He was proficient in Hungarian, German, English and French. His works spanned various genres and explored complex themes.
- Elias Canetti (1905-1994, a Bulgarian-born writer and Nobel laureate) spoke several languages. His linguistic repertoire included German, English, French and Bulgarian. His novel "Auto-da-Fé" remains influential.

These individuals and more others exemplify the richness of multilingualism and its impact on literature, diplomacy, and intellectual pursuits.

In the modern era, globalisation, characterised by increased interconnectedness and mobility, further facilitates linguistic interactions, cross-border communication, trade and migration, leading to linguistic interactions and the spread of languages across geographical and cultural boundaries. Moreover, globalisation promotes the dominance of certain languages, such as English, as global lingua franca, influencing language learning priorities and language use patterns worldwide.

How many languages are there in the world? Nobody will tell you the exact figure as it is being changed every day. The number comprises sixty languages with over ten million speakers, spoken and written languages, deaf sign languages, 228 language families, and ninety-six language isolates. There are creoles, pidgins, mixed languages, and still unclassified languages. It is estimated that English is spoken by more than 1.5 billion people worldwide and will continue to be the most widely spoken language in the world in 2024. According to various resources (The Most Spoken

Languages 2024), there are more than 7,000 languages in the world, but only English and Mandarin Chinese exceed one billion.

English, while it dominates as a lingua franca globally with over 1.4 billion total speakers, is actually the first most spoken language with 406 million first-language speakers. Leading the charge as the most spoken original language, Mandarin Chinese takes its second place and proves its cultural and demographic weight. India's lingua franca, Hindi, boasts 616 million speakers, symbolising the rich heritage of the subcontinent and its pivotal role in South Asia's regional dynamics. Spanish follows with 569 million speakers and illustrates its widespread use beyond Spain and Latin America and increasingly in the US.

The languages of the world are a mosaic and have massive linguistic diversity. For instance, in India, according to Maher, "1,620 so-called mother tongues are classified into 200 languages" (Maher 2017, 30). Massive conglomerations like Chinese or Arabic are called macro languages comprising many languages. For example, Arabic consists of eighteen identifiable languages, each spoken by over a million people. Chinese comprises thirteen separate languages, each with at least a million speakers. Macro languages are like linguistic galaxies, containing diverse constellations of dialects and tongues.

Another way of describing multilingualism is to connect it with the need for language policies and language planning.

4. Multilingualism and different policies and practices

4.1. Multilingual educational policies

Educational policies and practices play an important role in shaping patterns of multilingualism. Multilingual education programmes, which promote the use of multiple languages in instruction and offer a range of cognitive, academic and sociocultural benefits, contribute to linguistic diversity and proficiency among students. Research has shown that multilingual education enhances cognitive flexibility, academic achievement and intercultural competence among students. Some key benefits include cognitive benefits, as students engage in language learning and cognitive processing in multiple languages. Bilingual and multilingual individuals often exhibit enhanced cognitive abilities, such as problem-solving skills, metalinguistic awareness and cognitive flexibility. Multilingual education has been linked to improved academic outcomes, including higher academic achievement, literacy skills and academic performance across subject areas. Multilingual students often outperform

their monolingual peers on standardised tests and academic assessments. Multilingual education fosters intercultural competence and cross-cultural understanding among students, as they learn to navigate diverse linguistic and cultural contexts. Exposure to multiple languages and cultures promotes empathy, tolerance and appreciation for cultural diversity.

Language policies in schools and universities influence language attitudes and the maintenance of minority languages which often face threats of extinction due to factors such as language shift, globalisation and cultural assimilation. Linguistic inequalities and power dynamics often perpetuate disparities between dominant and minority language speakers, leading to marginalisation and linguistic discrimination, which requires proactive language policy and planning interventions. Developing language policies that recognise and value linguistic diversity, promote multilingualism, and supporting minority language rights can help mitigate linguistic inequalities and promote social justice.

The maintenance and revitalisation of minority languages to preserve linguistic knowledge and cultural heritage for future generations is possible through various strategies. Firstly, documenting minority languages through linguistic research, documentation projects and language archives. Secondly, implementing language revitalisation programmes, such as language immersion schools, community language classes and language preservation initiatives. And finally, advocating for the recognition of indigenous language rights, including language use in education, government and media. Access to quality education in multiple languages is essential for fostering linguistic diversity and promoting inclusive learning environments.

Language policy and planning efforts in education aim to the following: implementing multilingual education programmes that incorporate minority languages into the curriculum alongside dominant languages helps preserve linguistic diversity and support of linguistic minority students' academic success; offering linguistic support services, such as language support programmes, bilingual education resources and language assessment services, helps address the needs of multilingual learners and promote equitable educational opportunities; providing professional development opportunities and resources for teachers working in multilingual classrooms helps build their capacity to effectively support language learners and implement culturally responsive teaching practices.

Several successful multilingual education programmes serve as models for effective language policy and planning. Case studies from around the world highlight innovative approaches to multilingual education implementation.

1. Wales has embraced bilingual education by establishing Welsh-medium schools. These institutions immerse students in both English and Welsh, ensuring fluency in both languages. The curriculum integrates Welsh history, culture and literature, fostering a strong sense of identity (Welsh Medium Schools 2024).
2. Singapore's bilingual education policy, which promotes English and a mother tongue language as mediums of instruction in schools, has been successful in fostering bilingualism and biliteracy among students. The policy recognises the importance of preserving linguistic diversity while providing students with opportunities for academic success and global competitiveness (Lee, Phua 2020).
3. Canada's French immersion programmes offer students the opportunity to learn and study in French, even in English-dominant regions. These programmes have been successful in promoting bilingualism and biliteracy among students, fostering appreciation for Canada's linguistic and cultural diversity (French Immersion Program 2023).
4. Finland's language-in-education policy emphasises the importance of multilingualism and encourages students to learn multiple languages from an early age. The policy recognises the cognitive, academic and sociocultural benefits of multilingual education and integrates language learning into various aspects of the curriculum (Burner 2022).
5. South Africa's diverse linguistic landscape includes eleven official languages. Schools often have students from various language backgrounds. Teachers use multilingual strategies, code-switching and translanguaging to create inclusive learning environments (The 11 languages of South Africa 2018).
6. India boasts of a tapestry of languages with the Constitution recognising 22 languages and a staggering 19,500 dialects spoken throughout the nation. This diversity serves as both a treasure and an educational challenge. The goal of education in India is to break down language barriers ensuring that every child can learn effectively regardless of their tongue. In India, MTB-MLE programmes promote education in children's mother tongues. States like Karnataka, Odisha and Tamil Nadu have implemented this approach. It enhances learning outcomes and preserves linguistic diversity (Ryan Idea Lab 2024).
7. Bolivia's IBE programme integrates indigenous languages into the IBE (Intercultural Bilingual Education) curriculum. Students learn in their native language (such as Quechua or Aymara) alongside

Spanish. This promotes cultural pride and academic success (Taylor 2004).

Despite its benefits, implementing multilingual education policies presents several challenges that require careful consideration and proactive measures such as linguistic resources, language attitudes and ideologies, and policy implementation.

To begin with, ensuring adequate linguistic resources such as qualified teachers, instructional materials and language support services is essential for the successful implementation of multilingual education programmes. Limited resources and infrastructure can hinder the effective delivery of multilingual education and limit access for linguistically diverse students. Next, addressing language attitudes and ideologies is vital for promoting multilingual education acceptance and fostering inclusive learning environments. Negative attitudes towards minority languages, linguistic prejudices and language hierarchies can undermine the effectiveness of multilingual education initiatives and perpetuate linguistic inequalities. Furthermore, implementing multilingual education policies requires coordination and collaboration among policymakers, educators, parents and community stakeholders. Challenges such as bureaucratic hurdles, resistance to change and conflicting language policies may impede the effective implementation of multilingual education initiatives.

4.2. Institutional policies

Regional organisations often operate with a greater degree of multilingualism than their official or working languages might suggest. Perhaps, ironically, despite the highly important symbolic position of multilingualism within the institutions of the European Union, the practical outcome is one of increasing monolingualism and dominance of English as an almost exclusive working language internally (Spolsky 2012).

The extent of language use depends on whether the organisation primarily engages with member-states (ASEAN) or reaches out to a broader public (EU).

English, French and German are the three working languages of the European Commission. Figures show the dramatic rise of English as the increasingly dominant working language, displacing in the process all others to quasi-symbolic position: whereas in 1997, 45.4% of Commission documents were written in English, this percentage increased to 55% in 2000, 62% in 2004 and to 72% by 2006. The decline in the use of French as the language in which official Commission documentation is initially written is no less than staggering: from 40.4% in 1997, down to 33% in

2000, 26% in 2004, and finally 14% in 2006. German's fall, less dramatic, is still quite significant during the same period: from 5.1% to 3.1%, and finally 2.8% (Spolsky 2012).

At the same time, there are limitations in the linguistic practices of the EU: its external communication and information efforts are mostly restricted to the use of the Union's twenty-three official languages, and do not cover necessarily the language spoken by its citizens. Catalan, spoken by between nine and ten million people, is neither an official language nor for that matter a language under which speakers have the linguistic access which provides to citizens as indicated earlier "the opportunity to participate effectively and equally in the democratic life of the Union" (Spolsky 2012, 169).

Other regional organisations such as the African Union, ASEAN and MERCOSUR generally tend to favour using an international language for external communication purposes, though this is also at times acknowledged as ineffective since many citizens are not fluent in the official languages of the organisations.

ASEAN's situation is significantly different and at the same time shows the problems linked to the use of an international language (Spolsky 2012). As we see, the type of language policy adopted by a regional organisation is highly influenced by its target audience. If the focus is on member-states, the policy may differ from one that caters to a wider public and depends on a specific cultural or linguistic mission.

It is clear that it is in the context of communications between institutions and citizens the principle of respect for linguistic diversity deserves the highest level of protection.

5. Impacts of multilingualism

5.1. Multilingual communication and technology

From ancient empires to medieval trade routes linguistic diversity has been intrinsic to human civilisation. Conquests, migrations and colonialism have led to the spread and assimilation of languages, creating complex linguistic landscapes characterised by multilingualism. Technological advancements, mass migration and globalisation have accelerated linguistic interactions and expanded the scope of multilingualism. Urbanisation, multiculturalism and diaspora communities contribute to the dynamic linguistic tapestry of contemporary society. Technological advancements, particularly in communication and translation technologies, have revolutionised multilingualism. Digital platforms, such as social media and

online translation tools, facilitate cross-linguistic communication and collaboration. Machine translation technologies enable instant translation between languages, allowing students to access educational materials and resources in multiple languages. Machine translation systems leverage algorithms and statistical models to analyse and translate text from one language to another, offering several benefits and implications for multilingualism. For example, machine translation tools:

- provide instant access to information and resources in multiple languages, enhancing accessibility for users with diverse linguistic backgrounds; individuals can communicate, collaborate and access online content in their preferred languages, regardless of linguistic proficiency;
- facilitate cross-cultural communication and understanding by bridging language barriers and enabling dialogue between speakers of different languages; global organisations, multinational companies and international communities rely on machine translation to facilitate multilingual interactions and collaboration;
- serve as valuable language learning aids, helping learners to understand and engage with texts in foreign languages; by providing instant translations and vocabulary assistance, machine translation tools support language acquisition and proficiency development.

As we see, machine translation technologies can bridge language barriers and facilitate communication among linguistically diverse students and educators. On the other hand, these technologies also pose challenges and limitations for multilingual communication. Machine translation systems may produce inaccuracies, errors and mistranslations, particularly for complex or ambiguous texts. Achieving high levels of accuracy and quality in machine translation remains a challenge, as algorithms struggle to capture nuances, idiomatic expressions and cultural references. These algorithms may exhibit biases and cultural insensitivity, leading to inaccurate or inappropriate translations. Addressing bias in machine translation requires ongoing efforts to improve algorithms, mitigate sources of bias and incorporate cultural context into translation models.

Language learning apps and digital platforms provide interactive and engaging resources for students to learn languages independently. These apps offer personalised language instruction, adaptive learning algorithms and multimedia content to support language acquisition and proficiency development. Online collaboration tools, such as video conferencing platforms and collaborative editing software, enable students and educators to collaborate across linguistic and geographical boundaries. These tools facilitate communication, collaboration and knowledge sharing in

multilingual learning environments. However, technological advancements also raise concerns about linguistic homogenisation and erosion of linguistic diversity in online spaces. Anyway, by learning from successful case studies and leveraging language technology educators and policymakers can promote inclusive and equitable multilingual education initiatives that empower students to thrive in an increasingly interconnected and diverse world.

Thus, technology plays a vital role in facilitating multilingual communication, offering opportunities to bridge linguistic divides and promote cultural exchange. By addressing challenges in developing multilingual technologies, such as linguistic complexity and data availability, and leveraging the potential of machine translation, researchers and developers can contribute to the advancement of multilingualism and cross-cultural understanding in an increasingly interconnected world.

5.2. Cognitive benefits of multilingualism

Linguistic diversity, resulting from multilingualism, has profound implications for individuals and societies. Language contacts occur when speakers of different languages interact, leading to linguistic borrowing, code-switching and language shift. Contact-induced changes, such as pidginisation and creolisation, illustrate the adaptive nature of languages in multicultural settings and can result in the emergence of hybrid linguistic varieties, reflecting the cultural and social dynamics of multilingual communities. Moreover, language change may occur due to lexical borrowing, grammatical convergence and phonological adaptation, shaping the evolution of languages over time. Multilingualism, the ability to speak multiple languages fluently, has been associated with a myriad of cognitive benefits. Different researches have shown that individuals who are proficient in multiple languages exhibit enhanced cognitive abilities such as improved problem-solving skills, greater cognitive flexibility, and metalinguistic awareness compared to monolinguals. Bilingualism and multilingualism have been associated with cognitive advantages, including better executive functioning and delayed onset of cognitive decline in ageing populations. For instance, multilingual individuals often demonstrate superior executive functioning skills, including cognitive flexibility, problem solving and attentional control. The constant need to switch between languages and inhibit irrelevant linguistic information strengthens cognitive control mechanisms, leading to improved executive functions.

As we have mentioned above (see 3. Historical and contemporary contexts of multilingualism*)* dozens of individuals exemplify the richness of multilingualism and its impact on enhanced memory capabilities, particularly in tasks involving verbal and non-verbal memory recall. Bilinguals and multilinguals tend to have better episodic memory, semantic memory and working memory capacities compared to monolinguals.

It is worth mentioning that multilingual individuals possess heightened metalinguistic awareness, allowing them to reflect on and analyse language structures more effectively. This awareness extends beyond linguistic domains and can enhance skills such as problem solving, critical thinking and abstract reasoning.

A study conducted by researchers at the University of Tokyo (Umejima et al. 2021) shows that multilingualism not only enriches communication but also enhances cognitive abilities, including problem solving, memory and metalinguistic awareness. It was revealed that multilingual individuals have trained their brains to learn languages effectively. This training makes it easier for them to acquire new languages after mastering a second or third language. The results provide neuroscientific evidence supporting the cumulative-enhancement model of language acquisition–a theory that suggests language skills are additive.

The study involved native Japanese speakers (whose second language was English) learning Kazakh, a language entirely new to them. Instead of classroom drills, the researchers simulated a more natural language learning environment. Volunteers had to figure out the fundamentals of Kazakh purely by listening to recordings of words and sentences. Multilingual participants, who knew up to five languages, demonstrated remarkable language adaptation skills.

Research also suggests that bilingual and multilingual individuals may experience delayed onset of cognitive decline and dementia compared to monolinguals. The cognitive benefits accrued from lifelong multilingualism contribute to cognitive reserve protecting against age-related cognitive decline.

5.3. Sociocultural implications of multilingualism

Multilingualism has profound sociocultural implications. Let us explore some key aspects.

Socioculturally, multilingualism contributes to the richness of cultural exchange and intercultural communication, fostering understanding and cooperation among diverse linguistic communities.

"Multilingualism could bring benefits to a community, helping to promote empathy between different ethnic groups" (Crystal 2012, 150). Multilingual societies often exhibit greater cultural diversity and social cohesion, as individuals navigate multiple linguistic and cultural identities. These societies serve as hubs of cultural exchange, where individuals from diverse linguistic backgrounds share their languages, traditions and beliefs. This cultural diversity contributes to the richness of social interactions and promotes mutual understanding and respect among linguistic communities.

Multilingualism plays an essential role in preserving and promoting linguistic and cultural heritage of minority languages and indigenous languages, as speakers pass down their languages to future generations and advocate for language revitalisation efforts. Moreover, multilingualism promotes cross-cultural understanding and tolerance, mitigating linguistic prejudices and stereotypes. Alternatively, linguistic diversity also presents challenges, such as language barriers, linguistic discrimination and the marginalisation of minority languages.

Economically, multilingualism can confer competitive advantages, such as improved employability, access to global markets and enhanced cultural competence in international business. Multilingual individuals are highly sought after in the global job market, as language proficiency opens doors to international career opportunities. Bilingual and multilingual employees possess valuable linguistic and cultural skills that are increasingly in demand in sectors such as diplomacy, tourism and international business. Multilingualism provides businesses with a competitive advantage in accessing diverse markets and establishing international partnerships. Multinational corporations benefit from employees who can communicate effectively with clients, customers and stakeholders across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

On the contrary, linguistic diversity may also present challenges, such as language barriers in trade, commerce, international negotiations, the cost of language education and translation services, and the unequal distribution of linguistic resources. Language differences can impede communication, hinder collaboration and create misunderstandings in cross-cultural interactions. This warrants attention and requires careful consideration and proactive measures to address effectively.

Here are some ideas.

1. Language policy and planning are essential for managing linguistic diversity and promoting language rights. Governments and educational institutions must develop inclusive language policies that recognise and value linguistic diversity, support minority languages and promote multilingual education.

2. Linguistic inequalities persist in many societies, with dominant languages often enjoying greater prestige, resources and opportunities than minority languages. Addressing language inequality requires addressing structural barriers, promoting linguistic diversity and advocating for the rights of linguistic minorities.

Multilingual individuals often navigate complex linguistic identities, balancing multiple language affiliations and cultural allegiances. Issues of language identity and language loyalty can arise, particularly in multicultural and multilingual settings, where individuals may face pressure to assimilate or conform to dominant linguistic norms.

6. Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, we have explored the multifaceted nature of multilingualism in a globalised world. From its overview, importance and various benefits to its sociocultural implications and the role of technology in facilitating communication, we have delved into various aspects of multilingualism and its impact on individuals, communities and societies. The dynamics of multilingualism is shaped by a myriad of factors, each influencing language use, acquisition and maintenance. Multilingualism is a multifaceted phenomenon that transcends individual, societal and institutional boundaries. By exploring its various types, historical roots and dynamic processes, we have gained valuable insights into the intricate interplay between language, culture and society. Understanding the dynamics of multilingualism is essential for promoting linguistic diversity, fostering inclusive communication and building bridges across linguistic divides in our globalised world.

We have also discussed the cognitive advantages of multilingualism, including enhanced executive functioning, memory capabilities and metalinguistic awareness. Multilingual education emerges as a powerful tool for promoting linguistic diversity and academic achievement, while language technology offers opportunities to bridge linguistic divides and support multilingual communication.

Multilingualism offers cognitive, sociocultural and economic benefits, yet it also presents challenges and issues that must be addressed to fully realise its potential. By recognising the cognitive advantages of multilingualism, fostering intercultural understanding and promoting inclusive language policies, societies can harness the power of multilingualism to promote diversity, equity and social cohesion.

We have also highlighted the challenges such as linguistic inequalities, language policy implementation and the accuracy of machine translation systems, underscoring the complexities of promoting multilingualism in diverse contexts. What is more, language policy and planning play a key role in managing linguistic diversity, yet they often reflect power dynamics and linguistic inequalities. The maintenance and revitalisation of minority languages face obstacles such as language shift and marginalisation. Addressing these challenges requires concerted efforts to promote linguistic diversity and ensure linguistic rights for all individuals and communities.

Recommendations for Future Research and Policy Interventions

To further promote multilingualism and address challenges in its implementation, future research and policy interventions should focus on developing inclusive language policies that recognise and support linguistic diversity, promote language rights and address linguistic inequalities. Investing in multilingual education programmes, teacher training initiatives and language support services can empower linguistically diverse students and promote academic success. Advancing research and development in language technology, including machine translation, natural language processing and language learning platforms can enhance multilingual communication and accessibility. Promoting cultural sensitivity and awareness in multilingual contexts is critical for ensuring that language policies and practices are inclusive and respectful of diverse linguistic and cultural identities.

Promoting multilingualism is a collective responsibility that requires concerted efforts from policymakers, educators, researchers and communities. By recognising the importance of linguistic diversity, embracing multilingualism as a resource and implementing inclusive language policies and practices, we can create a more equitable, inclusive and interconnected world for future generations.

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