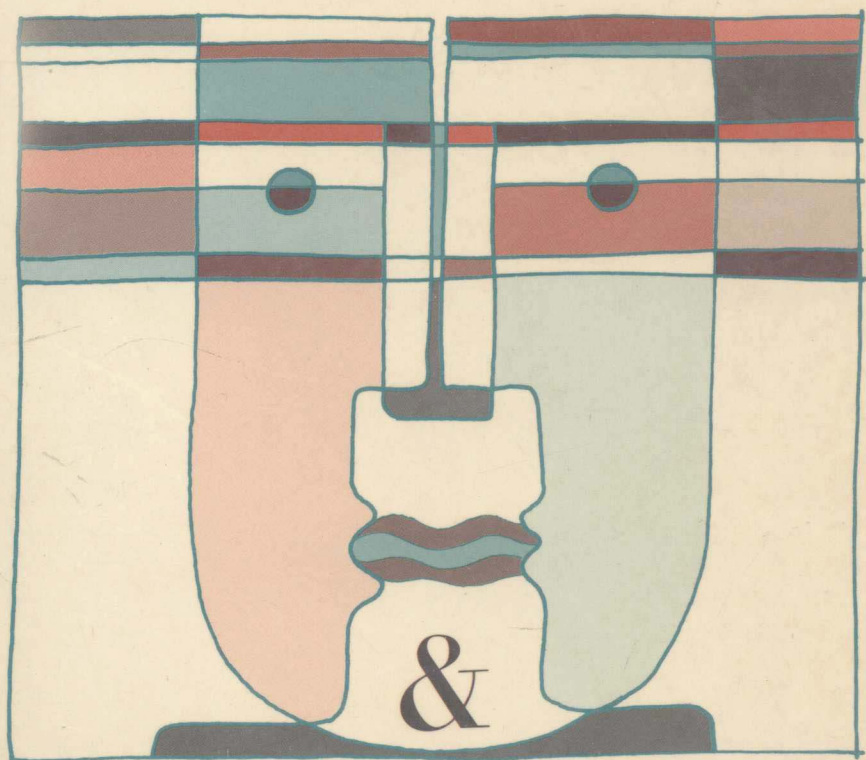


JOSIANE F. HAMERS AND MICHEL H.A. BLANC

BILINGUALITY



BILINGUALISM

Bilingualism and Bilingualism

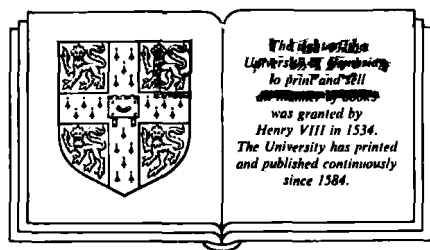
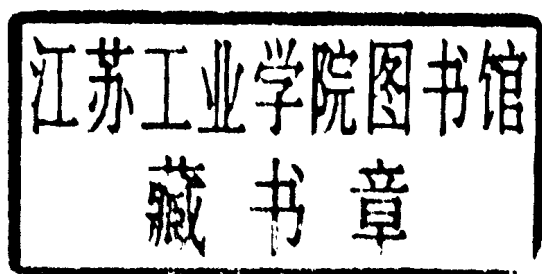
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FOREWORD TO THE FRENCH EDITION

Twenty years ago no one could have written such a book as this. Back then bits and pieces of a general theme were only beginning to emerge here and there. The field was wide open though no one had a clear idea what or where the field itself was. Some of us saw the early starts as extensions of one branch or another of the behavioural sciences, for those making the early research explorations came from various academic backgrounds – experimental psychology, linguistics, social psychology, anthropology, sociology, area studies, information-based studies, or communication and speech. None of us had the training to write such a book because we were all tied too closely to one or perhaps two of the basic behavioural sciences.

What was required to make a book of this sort possible was, first, a new generation of scholars trained to cross discipline boundaries; second, time for numerous bits and pieces to come to light to give an outline of a field of study; and third, time for a set of social conditions to shape themselves so as to make the study of bilingualism and of bilinguals something more than an academic preoccupation.

This is a splendid book not only because it is beautifully written and carefully documented, but also because it discovers and stakes out a rich and robust field of study that some of us presumed was there but none of us really recognized. To discover the terrain, it took a particular combination of talents and experiences that Josiane Hamers and Michel Blanc happen to have. Their interdisciplinary experiences are evident throughout this book. Josiane Hamers came to McGill University for graduate training in the early 1970s after a complete classical education in Belgium in the behavioural sciences and experimental psychology. McGill was then as now an active centre that not only appreciated her inquisitiveness about the psychology, neurology and social psychology of bilingualism and bilinguals but also encouraged it. While learning, she taught the rest of us as much as she learned. Michel Blanc brings a different set of talents and experiences to this important book, and his own flawless bilinguality and biculturality, like Josiane's, include a special knowledge of languages and cultures. He came to the disciplines of psycholinguistics

and sociolinguistics from a literary, linguistic and ethnographic background and from teaching and research experience in second-language teaching. Together the authors cross numerous disciplines and they do so with comfort and ease because they have been research contributors all along the line.

As a consequence, the field they present to us is real and extensive. For example, they take the reader through the psychological and cognitive aspects of bilingualism to the exciting promises of the neurosciences which in turn are enriched because of their current fascination with the bilingual condition. At the same time, they integrate and elucidate the experimental, the social psychological and the ethnographic aspects of bilingualism with examples drawn from various corners of the world. In fact, it is the cross-cultural applicability of the principles of bilingualism that they propose, including the role language plays in personal identity, that convinces the reader of the promise of the new field of study that they present in this book. The national and international features of language, the challenges of linguistic planning, the contact of languages within each social system become clear and understandable because one set of theoretical principles applies to data gathered from a wide array of nations. The authors are equally convincing as they apply their principles to three real-life topics in the final chapters: the bilingual education of children, the learning or acquisition of second languages, and the translation of information across languages.

Without subtracting a thing from the effort and the skills of the authors, the times have helped shape this work in important ways. We are living in a world where language is tightly linked to personal identity which in turn is tightly linked to nationality. It is a world where a neglect of this language-based identity provokes sentiments of separatism and independentism. It is a world of immigrants and emigrants, where questions of maintaining or abandoning one's home language affect education policies in all immigrant-receiving nations. It is also a world where the most advanced nations realize that they can no longer be ignorant of the languages and cultures of other peoples on this very small planet. Josiane Hamers and Michel Blanc have intelligently capitalized on the times and their book is a very important contribution to human understanding.

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PREFACE

This English edition is an updated and completely revised version of a book by the same authors originally published in French under the title *Bilingualité et bilinguisme* (P. Mardaga, 'Psychologie et Sciences Sociales' series, 129, Brussels; Hamers & Blanc, 1983). Though broadly based on the French original, the present work is not a translation. Few chapters have remained intact, one has been deleted, some conflated, others split up. The new Chapter 1 combines the material originally shared between Chapters I and II. Chapter III has been divided into Chapters 2 and 3; the latter, entitled 'The social and psychological foundations of bilinguality', presents a much-revised and expanded social psychological model of bilingual development. The former Chapter V has been divided into two, now Chapters 5 and 6, corresponding to the first and second parts of the original chapter respectively. Chapter VI is now Chapter 7, the original Chapter VII having been deleted and some of its contents developed elsewhere in the book. Chapters 8–10 cover pretty much the same ground as in the French version.

In updating and revising the French edition we have benefited from the wealth of publications on bilingualism since 1983; we have also taken into account the public and personal comments and criticisms addressed to the original work, although on the whole we have been greatly encouraged by these comments and criticisms. Lastly, we have learned from our own research findings and this new book is the fruit of three years of continuing dialogue between the two authors. If there is a difference between this English edition and the original French version, it is essentially one of focus and emphasis: the present book attempts to present the state of the art in the study of languages in contact from a multidisciplinary point of view and offer the reader our own syntheses and theoretical models based on the evidence available, rather than to cover the ground. What we have lost in detailed descriptions we hope to have gained in explanatory power. Let the reader be the judge of this.

We gratefully acknowledge the encouragement and comments of our colleagues Wally Lambert, Hugo Baetens Beardsmore, Richard Clément, Richard Bourhis and Rodrigue Landry. We thank the Canadian High Com-

mission in London, and in particular Michael Hellyer, for their financial assistance; Rob Kennedy for his technical advice and Birkbeck College for their unstinting hospitality; Penny Carter and Rosemary Morris for their editorial skill and patience; and last, but not least Dr Sanchez Romate for his vital support throughout the writing of this book. We of course accept full responsibility for its shortcomings.

Michel H. A. Blanc and Josiane F. Hamers
London and Quebec
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Introduction

In this book we attempt to present the state of the art on the principal issues of bilingualism and languages in contact. Our approach is multidisciplinary in so far as we study the various phenomena at different levels of analysis: we analyse languages in contact first in the language behaviour of the individual, next in interpersonal relations, and finally at the societal level where we consider the role of language in intergroup relations.

Each level of analysis requires specific disciplinary approaches: psychological at the individual level, social psychological at the interpersonal level and sociological at the intergroup level. We discuss only those theoretical constructs which either have been empirically confirmed or for which empirical verification is possible. We have rejected unsound and unverifiable models, or if we mention them, it is to stress their theoretical and methodological flaws. We have also rejected data that is not based on theoretical assumptions, as well as theories based solely on anecdotal evidence; we have not relied either on models constructed on the grounds of evidence stemming from isolated case-studies. However, we do not ignore this evidence provided that it can confirm experimental data, or if it is the only available evidence, as for example in the study of bilingual aphasics. Typologies of bilingualism are mentioned only when they are based on theoretical grounds and have therefore a predictive character: we consider a typology useful only in so far as a new classification of phenomena permits a better understanding of the psychological, sociological and linguistic processes and their interplay when languages are in contact.

In the first seven chapters we analyse theoretical models and research data in various disciplines as well as the methodological issues relating to them. Sometimes we propose a new interpretation or a modification of the existing one. The last three chapters address applied domains of languages in contact, namely bilingual education, second-language learning and interpretation and translation. Although throughout the book we are interested in the psychological and social behaviour of the bilingual speaker, we rarely detail linguistic descriptions specific to languages in contact, such as interference, borrowing, mixing and fusion. This would have lengthened our main analysis; we refer the

reader to the work of linguists such as Haugen (1950), Weinreich (1953), Clyne (1967), and Poplack, Sankoff & Miller (1987) among others.

It must be borne in mind that in English there is an ambiguity in the term *language*, which sometimes refers to a general communication process, rule-governed and shared by all humans (in French *langage*) and sometimes to the code of a specific speech community with its own rules (in French *langue*) (see also Le Page & Tabouret-Keller, 1985). As he reads on the reader will probably become aware that *language* does not necessarily have the same meaning in the different chapters. In the early chapters on the individual's language behaviour we use a more 'focussed' definition of language, i.e. it is defined as an abstract entity distinct from others, whereas in the later chapters we sometimes refer to a 'diffuse' definition, i.e. distributed on a continuum (see Le Page, 1978). In yet other chapters we take 'language' to mean a linguistic code used by a group of speakers who stand in a similar relationship to it and perceive it to be different from other linguistic codes.

Our main concern is the identification of universals of behaviour when two or more languages are in contact. The phenomenon of language behaviour cannot be studied in isolation, as it is in constant interaction with other phenomena, namely with culture. Although language is part of culture there is no simple cause-and-effect relation between them; rather, they are in constant interplay. When a chapter focusses on one or the other aspect, it must be kept in mind that one aspect of language behaviour, e.g. interpersonal features, cannot be explained if other dimensions, e.g. intergroup relations, are ignored. This focussing, therefore, is a momentary simplification which enables us to analyse the phenomenon more closely. Similarly, when we use a dichotomization, e.g. compound versus coordinate bilinguality, it must be understood as two extreme poles on a continuum rather than as two distinct entities.

In trying to understand behavioural processes there is a danger of reifying such conceptual constructs as language, culture, society, cognition, frames, scripts, etc. Because we view these concepts only as theoretical constructs which should enable us to understand human behaviour better and are convinced that they do not exist in the absence of human behaviour, we have tried to avoid their reification. It is in this spirit that all constructs used throughout the book must be understood.

In Chapter 1 we propose a number of definitions which are useful for subsequent discussions. We also identify some dimensions which enable us to classify bilinguals in discrete categories. Then we discuss measures that have been developed to assess bilingualism at the individual and the societal level.

Chapters 2 and 3 address the issue of bilingual development. The empirical research data on the bilinguistic, neuropsychological, cognitive and socio-cultural dimensions of the ontogenesis of bilinguality are discussed in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 deals more specifically with the social and psychological foundations of bilingual development: after analysing the nature of language be-

haviour and development we stress the role of social networks and socialization. To end the chapter we propose a social cognitive model of bilingual development.

Chapter 4 examines the psychological mechanisms relevant to bilingual information processing, i.e. decoding, encoding and the representational mechanisms, in particular memory. The dual-coding model is discussed at some length. We further give a brief review of the bilingual's non-verbal behaviour and close this chapter with a discussion of aphasic bilinguals and the relevance of clinical data for our understanding of bilingual processing.

The next two chapters deal with the social psychological dimensions of bilinguality. In Chapter 5 we examine the relationship between culture, identity and language behaviour in a multicultural environment. After a discussion of the interdependency between language and culture, we analyse the bilingual's cultural identity and the social psychological processes which determine inter-ethnic interpersonal relations. Chapter 6 addresses the issue of the interaction between interpersonal relations and linguistic behaviour: in the first part speech-accommodation theory and its consequences for bilingual behaviour and bilingual speech mode are discussed, while in the second part we describe communication strategies specific to intercultural interactions, such as code selection, speech modification, code-switching and code-mixing.

The relations between multiculturalism and intergroup relations are discussed from a sociolinguistic and social psychological standpoint in Chapter 7. The role of language in intergroup behaviour is approached from different perspectives: language as a symbol and instrument of group identity, the concept of ethnolinguistic vitality and the interface between language and ethnicity in a multicultural setting. We then discuss language-planning policies and their consequences for groups and individuals. In the second part of this chapter we review the different types of sociolinguistic variations that arise from languages in contact: bilingual speech repertoires, diglossia, language shift, pidginization, creolization and decreolization. We analyse their implications for language behaviour and linguistic theory.

The last three chapters deal with fields of application of bilingual theorizing. Chapter 8 reviews the educational problems arising from a language contact situation: educational language planning and development of literacy, bilingual education for the majority children, bilingual programs for the ethnic minority children, bidialectal education and community bilingual education. In Chapter 9 we analyse the psycholinguistic foundations which underlie L_2 learning and teaching methodology. The processes of acquisition of a second language are discussed and compared with those of L_1 acquisition. After reviewing some of the theories on which different teaching methodologies are based, i.e. contrastive analysis, error analysis and interlanguages, we describe a number of psychological processes relevant to L_2 teaching which might provide useful guidelines in developing language-teaching methods:

communicative competence, aptitude and memory in L_2 acquisition, communication modes, cognitive styles and affective processes such as attitudes towards L_2 . In Chapter 10 a different domain of application which calls for bilingual competence is analysed, that is, interpretation and translation. We try to understand how the different psychological processes involved in these tasks interplay with the necessary bilingual skills.

Language contact is a widespread phenomenon which deserves our attention as it involves a large and growing proportion of the world population; it is a complex phenomenon which requires several levels of analysis and hence several disciplines, each with its own theoretical and methodological approaches. Several disciplines have made considerable contributions to our knowledge of this phenomenon. But a better understanding of languages in contact calls not only for a multidisciplinary approach but for an interdisciplinary integration of these diverse disciplines (Blanc, 1987a). One of the major problems of an interdisciplinary approach is the integration of the macrological and the micrological levels of analysis. Because of the enormous methodological and theoretical difficulties, very few scholars have attempted it, and even fewer succeeded. If at times our discussions lack an interdisciplinary scope, it is because the state of the art does not allow it yet.

This book is meant for all those who are interested in language behaviour: psychologists, psycholinguists, sociologists and sociolinguists, linguists, pedagogues, educators, administrators who have to plan bilingual education, language teachers, interpreters and translators. We do not address the questions of communication disorders in bilinguals, speech therapy or bilingual behaviour in exceptional children, neither do we discuss the issue of contacts between a natural spoken language and a natural sign language. Fascinating though these issues are, they are beyond the scope of the present book. However, professionals working with bilinguals might find some useful insights in the present book in so far as it offers them general principles of bilingual behaviour.

Even though we felt it necessary sometimes to give complex technical details, we have tried to avoid the unnecessary use of technical jargon, and when we could not avoid it we tried to define it in a way accessible to all readers, regardless of their disciplinary background, and notes are provided for some chapters. Some of the most important terms and concepts we use are defined in a Glossary at the end of this book. This, we hope, will further help the reader unfamiliar with certain terms and concepts. Throughout this book we use the masculine form as a generic term, unless otherwise specified; *he*, *him* and *his* refer therefore to a person, regardless of gender.

Given the magnitude of the problem, some analyses may have escaped us. We apologize to the authors we have unconsciously left out and to those we have misinterpreted, either because we had to summarize their view in a few sentences or because we had to synthesize approaches and disciplines with

which we are not familiar. We will be rewarded if this book informs the reader on problems of languages in contact. We hope that *she* or *he* will have a better grasp of these problems after reading this book. Our goal will have been attained if this reading provokes many challenging questions. However, we do not necessarily provide the answers, as they are not known in the present state of the art.

Dimensions and measurement of bilinguality and bilingualism

The aim of this book is to critically review the state of the art in the field of *languages in contact*. By languages in contact we understand the psychological state of an individual who uses more than one language¹ as well as the use of two or more codes in interpersonal and intergroup relations. We distinguish between bilinguality and bilingualism. Bilinguality is the psychological state of an individual who has access to more than one linguistic code as a means of social communication; the degree of access will vary along a number of dimensions which are psychological, cognitive, psycholinguistic, social psychological, social, sociological, sociolinguistic, sociocultural and linguistic (Hamers, 1981). The concept of bilingualism, on the other hand, includes that of bilinguality (or individual bilingualism) but refers equally to the state of a linguistic community in which two languages are in contact with the result that two codes can be used in the same interaction and that a number of individuals are bilingual (societal bilingualism).

1.1 Definitions

The concept of bilingualism seems at first sight to be non-problematical. According to the Webster Dictionary (1961) bilingual is defined as 'having or using two languages especially as spoken with the fluency characteristic of a native speaker; a person using two languages especially habitually and with control like that of a native speaker' and bilingualism as 'the constant oral use of two languages'. In the popular view being bilingual equals being able to speak two languages perfectly; this is also the approach of Bloomfield (1935), who defines bilingualism as 'the native-like control of two languages' (p. 56). In contradistinction to this definition which includes only 'perfect bilinguals', Macnamara (1967a) proposes that a bilingual is anyone who possesses a minimal competence in one of the four language skills, i.e. listening comprehension, speaking, reading and writing in a language other than his mother tongue. Between these two extremes one encounters a whole array of defini-

tions, as for example the one proposed by Titone (1972), for whom bilingualism is 'the individual's capacity to speak a second language while following the concepts and structures of that language rather than paraphrasing his or her mother tongue' (p. 11).²

All these definitions, which range from a native-like competence in two languages to a minimal proficiency in a second language, raise a number of theoretical and methodological difficulties. On the one hand, they lack precision and operationalism: they do not specify what is meant by native-like competence, which varies considerably within a unilingual population, nor by minimal proficiency in a second language, nor by obeying the concepts and structures of that second language. Can we exclude from the definitions of bilingual someone who possesses a very high competence in a second language without necessarily being perceived as a native speaker on account of a foreign accent? Can a person who has followed one or two courses in a foreign language without being able to use it in communication situations, or again someone who has studied Latin for six years, legitimately be called bilingual? Unless we are dealing with two structurally different languages, how do we know whether or not a speaker is paraphrasing the structures of his mother tongue when speaking the other language?

On the other hand, these definitions refer to a single dimension of bilinguality, namely the level of proficiency in both languages, thus ignoring non-linguistic dimensions. Even recently Paradis (1986: xi), while suggesting that bilinguality should be defined on a multidimensional continuum, reduces the latter to linguistic structure and language skill. When definitions taking into account dimensions other than the linguistic ones have been proposed, they too have been more often than not limited to a single dimension. Baetens Beardsmore (1982) has listed some thirty-five definitions and typologies of bilingualism, very few of which are multidimensional.

We have no intention of reviewing all the definitions or typologies that have been proposed for bilingualism; instead we will mention only those which are operational and can be applied in empirical research or those which are based on a theoretical construct. It must be borne in mind that when qualifiers are used to describe bilingualism or bilinguality, they generally focus on one single dimension of these phenomena which are thereby viewed from a particular angle. If we use some of the classifications put forward by researchers it is because they appear to be relevant to the dimension under study; however, we must not lose sight of the fact that bilinguality and bilingualism are multidimensional phenomena and must be investigated as such. In the past failure to take into account simultaneously other dimensions in addition to linguistic ones has all too often led to incomplete or erroneous interpretations of these phenomena.