1 Language Users and Language Use

Introduction. Why do Linguists Often Study Monolinguals?

Knowing and using several languages is a norm in many societies and countries around the world, a fact which escaped the attention of linguists for a long time. Since the late 1950s, the main object of many linguistic studies has been a set of abstract rules of one language, in accordance with the assumption that all normal adult human beings have linguistic competence in their first language (e.g. Chomsky, 1959, 1965) and language is 'represented as a speaker's mental grammar, a set of abstract rules for generating sentences' (Larsen-Freeman & DeCarrico, 2010: 20). Although the concept of 'communicative competence' (Hymes, 1971) drew linguists' attention to language use in particular contexts, which opened ground for the development of sociolinguistics and pragmatics, for many decades linguistics focused on studying abstract monolingual native speaker's competence.

Chomsky's concept of language competence and performance, the observable manifestation of the underlying competence, was based on a much earlier dichotomy of *langue* and *parole* proposed by a Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure (1916). According to him, linguistic analysis was not supposed to focus on the use of language (*parole*, or speech), but rather on the underlying system of language (*langue*), namely on how the elements of language relate to each other synchronically. It was de Saussure's understanding of language that strongly influenced structural linguistics, philosophy and literary criticism in the first half of the 20th century. Interestingly, structuralists did not adopt the views of de Saussure's great contemporary, Baudouin de Courtenay, a Polish linguist (e.g. known for the widely-used notion of the phoneme). Baudouin de Courtenay not only distinguished between language as an abstract group of elements, and speech and its implementation by individuals, but also pioneered research on the use of multiple languages by

speech communities. Sadly enough for studies of multilingualism, structural linguistics and then Chomsky's tradition followed the work of de Saussure, rather than that of Baudouin de Courtenay, excluding people who use more than language as their abstract competence was not 'pure' enough as the object of study (Chomsky, 1986).

On the other hand, to return to the sentence opening this chapter, knowing and using several languages is a norm for many people around the world. Thus this book predominantly deals with language acquisition and use by those who use more than one language. In this chapter we will first say why the concept of the 'ideal' monolingual native speaker of a language is inadequate as an object for language study. Next, we will define someone who knows, learns or uses another language or languages i.e. becomes bilingual or multilingual. Finally, we will look at multilingual speech communities and define the notion of plurilingualism.

Defining Monolingualism

It is worth understanding why the idealised native speaker is now considered an inadequate model for linguistic studies. A native speaker is traditionally defined as a person who has 'learnt language in a natural setting from childhood as a first or sole language' (Ellis, 2008: 297). This definition suffices from the linguistic point of view, however, today it is assumed that the ideal situation of knowing and using one language, i.e. being a monolingual native speaker of that language, may be true only of minority of language users. Using two, or even several languages, is natural in many regions of the world (cf. Aronin & Singleton, 2012a; Cook, 1991; Graddol, 1997; Herdina & Jessner, 2002). Thus, it does not suffice to concentrate on understanding and to explain the grammatical knowledge and the language processing of an isolated ideal native speaker. Considering multiple language abilities and changing social identities of language users, one may even question the very notion of the native-speaker and native-like proficiency (Siegel, 2003), which has become vague and fuzzy:

> Today's ideal speaker lives in a heterogeneous society (stratified along increasingly globalized lines) and has to negotiate interactions with different people representing all sorts of power and solidary positions on a regular basis. What is this ideal speaker a native speaker made of, but a polyphony of codes/languages working cumulatively (and sometimes complementarily) rather than a single, first-learned code? (Mesthrie, 2010: 74)

Therefore, it is proposed that 'native speakerness' is not a simple notion. For instance, Leung *et al.* (1997) claim that terms such as 'native speaker' and

'non-native speaker' should be replaced with the criteria of language expertise, language inheritance and language affiliation. Earlier, Skutnabb-Kangas (1984) proposed defining language users according to the origin of their language, their language identification, their competence and the function the language performs in their lives, as summarised in Table 1.1.

Considering the criteria of defining the mother tongue as proposed above, we can see that identifying a monolingual native-speaker by his/her mother tongue poses several problems. As suggested by Kachru and Nelson (1996), if approached from the sociolinguistic perspective, a 'genetic native speaker' has to be distinguished from a 'functional native speaker' – someone who functions as a native speaker in a variety of a language. Kachru (1999, after Ellis, 2008) further argues that, for instance, an educated speaker of a non-native variety of English can achieve the same degree of functionality in the language as someone who acquired it in the natural setting. Cook (2007: 240, original emphasis) states that 'within the past decade the term *native speaker* has been deconstructed, partly by recognising that people are multi-dimensional; the role of a native speaker is comparatively a minor part of one's identity.'

Neither is it easy to define 'monolingual' and 'monolingualism.' According to Kemp (2009), first it has to be distinguished whether the terms refer to the language use of the individual, or individuals in communities and societies. The term 'monolingual' will be used with reference to individuals, the alternative terms being 'monoglot' and 'unilingual.' Kemp (2009: 13) defines 'monolinguality' as the 'psycholinguistic state of an individual knowing one language', and 'monolingualism' as the use of one language by societies and individuals in those societies (based on Harmers & Blanc's 1989, 2000 opposition between 'bilinguality' and 'bilingualism', to be discussed in more detail in the next section). Monolinguals are 'individuals who use one language and may be proficient at using a number of different varieties of the language together with different registers in the variety or varieties they know, and of switching between varieties and between registers in the appropriate context' (Kemp, 2009: 13). Interestingly, even such a broad definition may be questionable when one considers Wandruszka's (1979) claim that people are innately

Table 1.1 Criteria of defining the mother tongue

Criterion	*Definition*
ORIGIN	the language one learned first
IDENTIFICATION	
a. internal.	a. the language one identifies with
b. external	b. the language one is identified as a native speaker of by others
COMPETENCE	the language one knows best
FUNCTION	the language one uses most

Source: After Skutnabb-Kangas (1995: 44)

multilingual, just because they are capable of shifting between a number of language variants, such as standard language, dialect, colloquial language, specialist jargon and knowledge of earlier linguistic forms of their own language. Thus, the homogeneity of the monolingual speech community is not clear, considering the existence of language varieties, dialectal differences and differences in the register use within monolingual communities (Labov, 1969; Wandruszka, 1979).

Since in many European countries people still identify themselves with one language, monolingualism is often seen by members of western cultures as the unmarked case, and a point of reference for comparison with bilingualism and multilingualism. Conversely, about half the world's population is bilingual (Grosjean, 1982), and there are about 30 times more languages than countries (Romaine, 1989). Doughty and Long (2003: 4) state that '[i]n many parts of the world, monolingualism, not bilingualism or multilingualism, is the marked case.' The changing perspective on the role of monolinguals has also been acknowledged by applied linguistics. In a recent textbook we can read that 'because bilinguals outnumber monolinguals in the world's population, bilinguals more than monolinguals provide a genuinely universal account of the cognitive mechanisms that underline language performance' (De Bot & Kroll, 2010: 124).

Defining Bilingualism

Defining bilingualism poses several problems, and the definition of bilingualism evolved throughout the whole of the 20th century (Ewert, 2009). Most importantly, the definitions vary in relation to criteria of classifying someone as bilingual or not. Older definitions dealt either with the person's L2 proficiency, or with the functional aspects of language use. In more recent definitions the defining criteria also stress the qualitative differences between the monolingual and the bilingual mind. Finally, bilingualism can be defined in terms of the sequence and completeness of L2 acquisition, as discussed in the following section. It is worth noting that in the present book the terms acquisition and learning are used synonymously, as opposed to Krashen's (1982) position. However, learning will always refer to classroom settings. Also, symbols L1 will be used to denote the first language, L2 to denote the second language, and L3-Ln to denote the third and other languages of the learner.

Bilingualism and L2 proficiency

A popular belief is that a bilingual is someone who speaks two languages perfectly well, and that this situation applies only to people brought up with two languages and cultures. This view probably stems from Bloomfield's classic definition (1933: 56): 'In cases where perfect foreign language learning

is not accompanied by loss of the native language, it results in bilingualism, native-like control of two languages.'

Applying Bloomfield's definition to describing people who use two languages poses several problems. First of all, it is difficult to define perfection of language use, and what is meant by knowing a language perfectly. Secondly, it raises the question of defining 'native' and 'native-like' control of languages, leaving it unclear where one ends and the other begins. This definition excludes not only language learners, but also all those who use two languages even on a daily basis, if their use of L2 does not meet idealised native-speaker standard (Ewert, 2009). Interestingly, Cook (1997, original emphasis)[1] points out that Bloomfield's very assumption is wrong, because '(…) the one thing that the L2 learner cannot be *by definition* is a native speaker.' Imperfect as it may be, using Bloomfield's definition for years resulted in 'punishing' language learners for their failure in achieving native-like control of their L2, even though they could use their L2 quite efficiently and effectively.

In an attempt to define the minimum proficiency needed, Macnamara (1967: 59-60) called bilinguals 'persons who possess at least one of the language skills even to a minimal degree in a second language.' This definition obviously points to the other end of the proficiency spectrum, similarly to a more recent statement by Edwards (1994: 55) that '[e]veryone is bilingual. There is no one in the world (no adult, anyway) who does not know at least a few words in languages other than the maternal variety.' Although both these definitions allow us to treat even those L2 learners who are just beginning to learn the second language as bilinguals, it seems that both Macnamara and Edwards are as extreme as Bloomfield. It is difficult to define a bilingual only in terms of his/her maximal or minimal language proficiency.

Bilingualism: L2 use and the bilingual mind

There are many more functional definitions of bilingualism. The earliest were coined by structuralists, as the one presented by Weinreich (1953) in his landmark book *Languages in Contact*. According to this definition:

> the practise of alternatively using two languages will be called here BILINGUALISM, and the persons involved BILINGUAL. Unless otherwise specified all remarks about bilingualism apply as well to multilingualism, the practice of using alternately three or more languages. (Weinreich, 1953: 5, original emphasis)

Weinreich did not make a clear distinction between bilingualism and multilingualism, treating the latter as a variety of bilingualism. Another classic functional definition of bilingualism was proposed by Haugen (1953: 7, original emphasis), who assumed that bilingualism is 'the point where a speaker can first produce *complete meaningful utterances* in the other language.'

On the other hand, Hockett (1958: 16) suggested that a bilingual person may have no productive control over the second language, but still may be able to understand utterances in the language. He called such instances 'semibilingualism', referred to as 'passive' or 'receptive' types of bilingualism in other definitions (Romaine, 1989: 10-11).

According to Mackey (2000: 22), 'bilingualism is not a phenomenon of language; it is a characteristic of its use. It is not the feature of the code but of the message. It does not belong to the domain of *langue* but *parole*.' Contrary to contemporary beliefs concerning language processing in bilinguals, Mackey (1962, 2000: 23) saw bilingualism as a 'behavioural pattern of mutually modifying linguistic practices varying in degree, function, alternation and interference.' This remains in sharp contrast to contemporary views first expressed by Grosjean (1989: 6, original emphasis): 'the bilingual is an integrated whole which cannot easily be decomposed into two separate parts. The bilingual is NOT the sum of two complete or incomplete monolinguals.' Grosjean's classic statement emphasises the qualitative differences between the language competence of a monolingual and a bilingual.

More recent definitions see a bilingual through the prism of language use as 'someone who operates during their everyday life in more than one language and does so with some degree of self-confidence' (Miller, 1983: x). Further, bilingualism is defined as 'the ability to use two or more languages sufficiently to carry out limited casual conversations,' which 'does rule out people who can use a second language only in [very limited and] specialised ways' (Myers-Scotton, 2005: 44-45). The factors of proficiency and use may be combined. Table 1.2 gives an overview of some types of bilingualism as distinguished by Baetens Beardsmore (1986) and Wei (2000) that may be useful for the discussion in the following chapters.

An interesting question is whether language learners can be called bilinguals. Although Hakuta (1986) postulated including all L2 learners in the category, researchers are not univocal in this respect. A crucial point in the discussion of whether L2 learners can be called bilingual comes from Cook (e.g. 1991, 1992, 1997, 1999, 2002), who points to the ambiguity of the very term 'bilingualism.' Instead, Cook proposes his own term 'multicompetence' to denote the state of knowing/using more than one language by an individual. Originally, multicompetence was defined as the 'compound state of mind with two grammars' (Cook, 1991: 112), but was later redefined:

> *Multi-competence* is the knowledge of two or more languages in the same mind. It extends the concept of interlanguage by recognising the continual presence of the LI in the learner's mind alongside the second language, assuming that there is little point in studying the L2 as an isolated interlanguage system since its raison d'etre is that it is added to a first language. (Cook, 2007: 241)

Table 1.2 Some types of bilinguals (given in alphabetical order)

Type of Bilingual	*Definition*
Additive Bilingual	An individual whose two languages combine in a complementary and enriching fashion.
Ascendant Bilingual	An individual whose ability to function in a second language is developing due to increased use.
Balanced Bilingual (Symmetrical Bilingual, Ambilingual, Equilingual)	An individual whose mastery of two languages is roughly equivalent.
Functional Bilingual	An individual who can operate in two languages with or without full fluency for the task in hand.
Productive Bilingual	An individual who not only understands but also speaks and possibly writes in two or more languages.
Receptive Bilingual (Semi-bilingual, Passive Bilingual, Asymmetrical Bilingual)	An individual who understands a second language, in either its spoken or written form, or both, but does not necessarily speak or write it.
Successive bilingual (consecutive bilingual)	An individual whose second language is added at some stage after the first has begun to develop.

Source: After Baetens Beardsmore (1986: 5-18) and Wei (2000: 6-7).

This holistic view of competence remains in accordance with Grosjean (1989) and with the Dynamic Model of Multilingualism (Herdina & Jessner, 2002), to be discussed further in this chapter. It also allows for discussing various qualitative differences between monolinguals and bilinguals/multilinguals. According to Herdina and Jessner (2002: 59) 'A bilingual is not the sum of two complete or incomplete monolinguals; s/he rather has a specific linguistic configuration characterised by the constant interaction and coexistence of the two languages involved.'

Essentially, with our current knowledge of how languages are acquired, it is necessary to redefine the goals of language teaching, which so far have implicitly assumed that students have to approximate native speakers. Cook (1997) discusses non-native speakers' 'failure' to achieve native speaker competence, stating that a second language learner and a monolingual native speaker are completely incomparable. The concept of a native speaker as a language-learning goal is inadequate because 'by definition you cannot be a native speaker of anything other than your first language' (Cook, 2007: 240). Thus, alongside the concept of multicompetence, Cook introduces the distinction between L2 learners who 'are acquiring a system for later use' and L2 users who 'are exploiting whatever linguistic resources they have for a real-life purpose' (Cook, 2007: 242) and who 'know and use a second language at any level' (Cook, 2007: 240). The majority of people in the world are L2 users and the roles of L2 learner and L2 users may overlap.

Cook (1999) suggests that skilled non-native speaker users of English are better models for teaching than monolingual native speakers, while Siegel (2003: 193) points out that non-native speakers may have greater proficiency than native speakers in numerous situations. An interesting comment, which wittingly summarises the discussion of whether bilinguals should be native-like in their production, was made by Ringbom (2007: 102): '[i]f a learner is too native-like in his production, inevitable pragmatic errors involve a risk that he will be regarded as a stupid native rather than as an intelligent foreigner.'

Defining Multilingualism

Multilingualism versus bilingualism

It is still a common belief that being multilingual involves adding yet another language to the linguistic repertoire. In structuralist studies, multilingualism was viewed as a version of bilingualism (Weinreich, 1953; Haugen, 1953) and appears as such also in later definitions. For instance Baetens Beardsmore (1986: 3) argued that the 'term bilingualism does not necessarily restrict itself to situations where only two languages are involved but is often used as a shorthand to embrace cases of multi- or plurilingualism.' This approach is still present today in psycholinguistic literature. For instance, De Bot and Kroll state that

> psycholinguists have recognised the importance of extending the study of language processing to individuals who *are acquiring or actively using more than one language*. (…) [T]he term 'bilinguals' is used to refer to such individuals, even though *their additional languages* are not as strong as their L1. (De Bot & Kroll, 2010: 124, emphasis added)

However, a multilingual cannot be judged in accordance with monolingual or bilingual standards. One of the first to draw attention to the fact that multilingualism is a more complex phenomenon than bilingualism was the Czech scholar Vildomec (1963). Following, came the studies of multilingual learning strategies by Naiman *et al.* (1978) and Ringbom's (1987) classic book on trilingualism. According to De Angelis and Selinker (2001: 44), 'it should be said that a multilingual is neither the sum of three or more monolinguals, nor a bilingual with an additional language.'

Today, it is rather bilingualism which is often seen as a specific case of multilingualism, and not vice versa (Herdina & Jessner, 2002). Although these phenomena remain interconnected, multilingualism stretches beyond bilingualism because introducing another language into a bilingual system changes the whole system with respect to the new configuration of mutual

interactions between all the elements. Therefore, the differences between bilingualism and multilingualism are not only quantitative but, most importantly, qualitative in nature, which pertains to knowledge, processes and ways of linguistic functioning (e.g. Herdina & Jessner, 2002; Hoffmann, 2001). Being multilingual is the very state of the co-existence of the languages in the user's mind and their mutual interactions. Cenoz and Genesee (1998: 2) describe multilingualism dynamically as 'the process of acquiring several non-native languages and the final result of this process.'

It is possible to define multilingualism from a purely functional perspective. For instance, Gabryś-Barker (2005: 17) calls it, pragmatically, 'the ability to use or function in more than two languages.' However, if we apply Skutnabb-Kangas' (1984: 81) criteria, it turns out that a multilingual can be defined in multiple dimensions (Jessner, 2006). Multilinguals will differ in terms of levels of proficiency in their languages, the origin of their languages, the functions of the languages for the individual, and their own identification with the languages, as well as the way others identify them. Combining some of the criteria discussed above, De Angelis and Selinker (2001: 44) say that 'a multilingual is a speaker of three or more languages with unique linguistic configurations, often depending on individual history.' Some authors (e.g. Hoffmann & Ytsma, 2004) oppose the terms of multilinguality, trilinguality and bilinguality associated with the process of acquisition, with the terms of multilingualism, trilingualism, and bilingualism, understood as the final product of acquisition. Others (e.g. Dewaele, 2008, 2010) are careful not to describe all individuals who use more than two languages as multilingual, but differentiates them on the basis of the number of languages used into trilinguals, quadrilinguals, pentalinguals, etc., acknowledging that multilinguals do not display equal proficiency in all their languages. Following Haugen, the terms polyglot and polyglotism can also be found in literature to denote individual multilingualism (e.g. Jessner, 2008b).

Perhaps it is worth finishing this discussion with a quote from Kemp (2009: 24), who concludes that 'it would be useful if researchers were to give a detailed definition of multilingualism as part of their study.' Explicit definitions would allow others to understand the principles behind the study, and how each study relates to the existing literature. De Angelis (2007) suggests including in the definition of multilingualism as many of the following aspects as possible: the number of languages known to the speaker, the age of acquisition (AoA) for each non-native language, the sequence of acquiring all languages, proficiency level in all non-native languages including how this level was measured, whether the use of the languages is active or passive, what productive and receptive skills are used for each language and how these were measured, the time of exposure to native and non-native language environments, the manner of acquisition (formal/instructed acquisition versus natural acquisition), the amount of formal instruction in each non-native language (years and hours per week), the classroom language of

instruction for each non-native language (if learned in a formal setting) and the context in which each language is or was used, for example at home, at school, with peers etc. Definitely, we have to be aware that individuals are unique and differ in their mastery of language skills, cognitive and metalinguistic abilities, as well as their backgrounds.

Individual multilingualism and language acquisition

Comparing bilingualism and multilingualism from the perspective of language acquisition mechanisms, Cenoz and Genesee remark that

> multilingual acquisition and multilingualism (…) implicate all the factors and processes associated with second language acquisition and bilingualism as well as unique and potentially very complex factors and effects associated with the interactions that are possible among the multiple languages being learnt and the process of learning them. (Cenoz & Genesee, 1998: 16)

Whereas in second language acquisition (SLA) L2 can be acquired after L1 or simultaneously with L1, it is not difficult to notice that in MLA languages can be acquired simultaneously or consecutively in various configurations. According to Cenoz (2000: 40), with three languages involved, there at least four different routes of acquisition:

(1) L1, L2 and L3 can be acquired simultaneously.
(2) L1, L2 and L3 can be acquired consecutively.
(3) L2 and L3 can be acquired simultaneously after the acquisition of L1.
(4) L1 and L2 can be acquired simultaneously before the acquisition of L3.

How complicated and varied the process of MLA might be as compared with SLA, is illustrated by Table 1.3.

It is worth noting that MLA, similarly to SLA, may also take place in various settings ranging from fully naturalistic to fully formal. The symbol L3 is widely used in literature to refer to the third language of an individual, in the sense of the third language the person has contact with. Another term and acronym widely accepted in the English-speaking research community is third language acquisition (TLA). Although TLA covers a variety of developmental patterns, its result is called trilingualism (Jessner, 2006).

Hammarberg (2010, 2014) points to the fact that the use of the terms first, second and third language (L1, L2, L3) have become somewhat inconsistent for cases that go beyond the settings of one L1 – one L2 – one L3. The reason he mentions for this is primarily the *ad hoc* development of this terminology when the terms first language (L1) and second language (L2) were coined. According to Hammarberg (2014), the extension of the L1-L2 terms went in

Table 1.3 Possible variants of MLA

Second language acquisition	*Multilingual language acquisition MLA*	
L2 (SLA)	**L3 (TLA)**	**L4**
L1 ⇒ L2 (compound bilingualism)	L1 ⇒ L2 ⇒ L3	L1 ⇒ L2 ⇒ L3 ⇒ L4
L1 + L2 (coordinate bilingualism)	L1 ⇒ L2/ L3 L1 /L2 ⇒ L3 L1/ L2/ L3	L1 ⇒ L2/ L3 ⇒ L4 L1 ⇒ L2 ⇒ L3/ L4 L1 ⇒ L2/ L3/ L4 L1/ L2 ⇒ L3 ⇒ L4 L1/L2 ⇒ L3/ L4 L1/ L2/ L3 ⇒ L4 L1/ L2/ L3/ L4

Source: After Cenoz, 2000: 40 and Gabryś-Barker, 2005: 24.

two directions: one was to redefine L1 and L2 to denote 'native language' and 'non-native language', while the other was to add the category of a third language (L3) to focus on L3 acquisition. However, the terminology still could not capture the status of the multilingual's languages in various complex settings of acquisition. That is why Hammarberg (2010, 2014) argues in favour of the cognitively based, rather than chronological models of MLA, claiming that there are qualitative differences between the native and the non-native languages acquired in complex situations. He proposes to take into account the following factors when describing MLA: *NL(s)/Prior NNL(s)/Current NNL,* or in other words: *L1(s)/Prior L2(s)/L3* (where NL = native language, NNL = non-native language). He also defines L3 in the following way:

> In dealing with the linguistic situation of a multilingual, the term *third language (L3)* refers to a non-native language which is currently being used or acquired in a situation where the person already has knowledge of one or more L2s in addition to one or more L1s. (Hammarberg, 2010: 97, original emphasis)

While currently the terms L1, L2 and L3 are used for describing the gradual expansion and size of a linguistic repertoire, as well as for characterising the status of a speaker's languages in situations of performance, Hammarberg postulates using different sets of terms for the two purposes. He also proposes explicitness about the function in which the terms L1, L2 and L3 are being used in a given paper or document.

Bilingualism and Multilingualism in Social Settings

A basic distinction must also be made between bilingualism and multilingualism at the individual and societal levels. An older term used for

societal bilingualism was 'diglossia', originally referring to communities where two or more varieties of the same language were used by some speakers and later extended to situations where two languages or two language varieties are used by the same population (Kemp, 2009).

The early definitions by Bloomfield (1933), Weinreich (1953) and Haugen (1953) did not make it clear whether the term 'bilingualism' referred to individual, or societal bilingualism. One of the first to draw a clear line between the individual and societal uses of the term was Baetens Beardsmore (1986). His distinction was repeated in Hamers and Blanc (1989, 2000: 6), who opposed 'bilingualism', defined as the property of social groups, and 'bilinguality', which they called the psychological state of an individual able to communicate in two languages. Similarly, some authors differentiate between societal 'multilingualism' and 'multilinguality', i.e. individual multilingualism (Jessner, 2006; Ó Laoire & Aronin, 2004).

It is worth noting that societal bilingualism and multilingualism often do not depend on the people's own choosing, but rather may be forced upon them by other circumstances, including politics, religion, culture, education, economy and even natural disasters which cause major migrations (Crystal, 1997a). Following Siegel (2003: 179-180), one can distinguish five major types of sociolinguistic settings for L2 acquisition resulting in societal bilingualism. The dominant L2 setting (often called the majority language context), means that L2 is the dominant language of the majority of the population and is used in all domains of everyday life. The bilinguals learning/using the L2 are predominantly immigrants, visitors or indigenous peoples (e.g. Turks in Germany, or Aborigines in Australia). The minority L2 setting is when the speakers of the dominant L2 teach the minority L2, which usually happens in the naturalistic context (e.g. English speakers learning Welsh). In the external L2 setting, the speakers of a dominant language learn a foreign language, or a *lingua franca* (e.g. Poles learn English in Poland). The coexisting L2 settings are environments where L1 and L2 users are of similar status and the languages are used in similar domains (e.g. Italian and German in South Tyrol). Finally, the institutional L2 setting (sometimes called the official language context) is when L2 is widely used in some domains and institutions, but for most of the population it is the additional language (e.g. English in Nigeria, or Russian in the USSR).

Societal multilingualism is sometimes divided into vertical and horizontal (Mansour, 1993). According to Mansour's model, speakers can be viewed in terms of their organisation in space i.e. the type of pattern that multilingualism takes in the societies. Horizontal multilingualism is exemplified in communities, where multilingualism is present at a higher (i.e. macro) level of society, but this does not imply that all citizens are multilingual (Cenoz & Genesee, 1998). They live in their own geographic spaces, like separate groups not integrated into the larger multilingual society. This is the case with countries such as Switzerland or Belgium where there are many official

languages, but due to the territorial principle which is based on population separation, there are regions where people are nevertheless monolingual (Franceschini, 2009).

Vertical multilingualism is displayed by societies where 'two or more ethnolinguistic groups share the same territory and participate in joint socio-economic activities' (Mansour, 1993: 19). This can be observed in many of the major European cities which are considered multilingual and multicultural, in some regions which are occupied by a bilingual or multilingual population or among people living in the borderland. In these speech communities, other languages (e.g. English) are taught as L3, which leads to multilingualism.

Aronin and Singleton (2008, 2012a) claim that contemporary societal multilingualism is characterised by the spread of multiple language use through the entire social range and different professional groups. They also argue that since contemporary multilingualism is strictly connected with globalisation, contemporary societies are so inseparably linked with multilingualism that contemporary multilingualism is a prerequisite for society's functioning and progress on a world scale.

Defining Plurilingualism

Living in a multilingual society implies mobility and means having a bulk of linguistic and cultural experience which adds up to overall communicative competence. Such a way of looking at multilingualism is strongly connected with the notion of *plurilingualism*, widely recognised in European documents concerning language policy (cf. Komorowska, 2004, 2007a), which can be included under the umbrella term of multilingualism (Jessner, 2008b). The very word 'plurilingualism' is new to the English language. While in English the same term can be used for societal and individual multilingualism, French and German use different words for referring to an individual's ability to use several languages (*plurilinguisme/Mehrsprachigkeit*, respectively) and to the multilingual nature of a given society (*multilinguisme/Vielsprachigkeit*, respectively). According to Mackiewicz (2002), the Council of Europe has translated the French terms literally into English, using 'plurilingualism' in the individual and 'multilingualism' in the societal sense. The European Union, on the other hand, uses the term 'multilingualism' when referring to an individual, and 'linguistic diversity' when referring to societies.

Interestingly, the European policy has forced some local policy makers to coin new words to denote plurilingualism. For example in Polish, the word *wielojęzyczność* (i.e. multilingualism) used to function with reference to both individual and societal multilingualism. However, the new term *różnojęzyczność* (i.e. use of different languages) has been introduced to cope with the term of plurilingualism reoccurring in European documents. It is

also possible to find the new coinage of *kilkujęzyczność* (i.e. use of several languages), which is supposed to be more neutral (Wilczyńska, 2007).

The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), which is one of the best known documents formulated by the Council of Europe, provides an exhaustive definition of plurilingualism as:

> the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent, has proficiency of varying degrees, in several languages, and experience of several cultures. This is not seen as the superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the user may draw. (Council of Europe, 2001: 168)

This definition captures the core characteristics of multilingual language knowledge and use, stressing the importance of communicativeness rather than the mastery of language. In fact, the definition implies that a plurilingual individual naturally presents different levels of knowledge of each of their languages and explains the pluri-/multilingual system in terms of mutual influence among a person's languages. A metaphor of a plurilingual person proposed by Christ (2001: 3 emphasis original) states that '[a] person is plurilingual if, with respect to a number of languages, he/she has learned to cross the *threshold* into these different language houses.' By this he implies that there exists some 'minimal' competence which one has to achieve in order to be counted among plurilinguals. However, plurilingualism seems to mean more than multilinguality, when one takes into consideration the socio-cultural factors interwoven into the definition. It is often specifically underlined that plurilingualism cannot be considered separately from pluriculturalism, which promotes interlingual tolerance, respect and cooperation. Still, some researchers prefer to use the terms of plurilingualism and multilingualism used interchangeably (e.g. Hufeisen & Neuner, 2004).

In this book, both multilingualism and plurilingualism will be used with reference to individuals rather than to societies. Due to the situation described in Chapter 2, which concerns the nature of language use in Polish society, societal bilingualism and multilingualism are not the main focus of this work, which deals predominantly with individual bilingualism and multilingualism acquired in external and institutional settings.

In the light of the discussion above, it is understood that an individual's multi- or plurilingualism does not imply knowing several languages perfectly, but trying to use this knowledge in communicating with other people in various situations. This returns to the term of functional bilingualism/multilingualism, referring to how well a person may function with his/her languages, which varies from minimal ability to accomplish a restricted set of social activities to being able to perform all the activities in the languages.

Such functional bilingualism/multilingualism is a feature of any language user/learner in Cook's (2007) understanding. In practice, plurilingualism manifests itself in the ability to function in a multicultural community, and thus implies an increased linguistic and cultural awareness, as well as meta-linguistic sensitivity to similarities and differences between languages.

Note

(1) http://homepage.ntlworld.com/vivian.c/Writings/Papers/MonolingualBias.htm