



# **Bilingualism and Multilingualism**

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# Outline

**-Bilingualism and Multilingualism**

**-Types of Bilingualism**

**-Processes involved in Bilingualism**

# Bilingualism and Multilingualism

- Proficiency in two or more languages.
- Bilingualism or multilingualism can be achieved in reading, writing, speaking & listening.
- Around 50% of the world's population is bilingual.

# Who are bilingual children?

- **A bilingual has full fluency in two languages.**
- **Children can acquire two languages at the same time in early childhood and be proficient in both.**
- **Children may also learn a second language after mastering the first to become bilingual.**
- **It is rare for proficiency in both languages to be perfectly balanced in the child.**

# Types of Bilingualism

**1- Consecutive versus Simultaneous Bilingual**

**2- Early versus Late Bilingual**

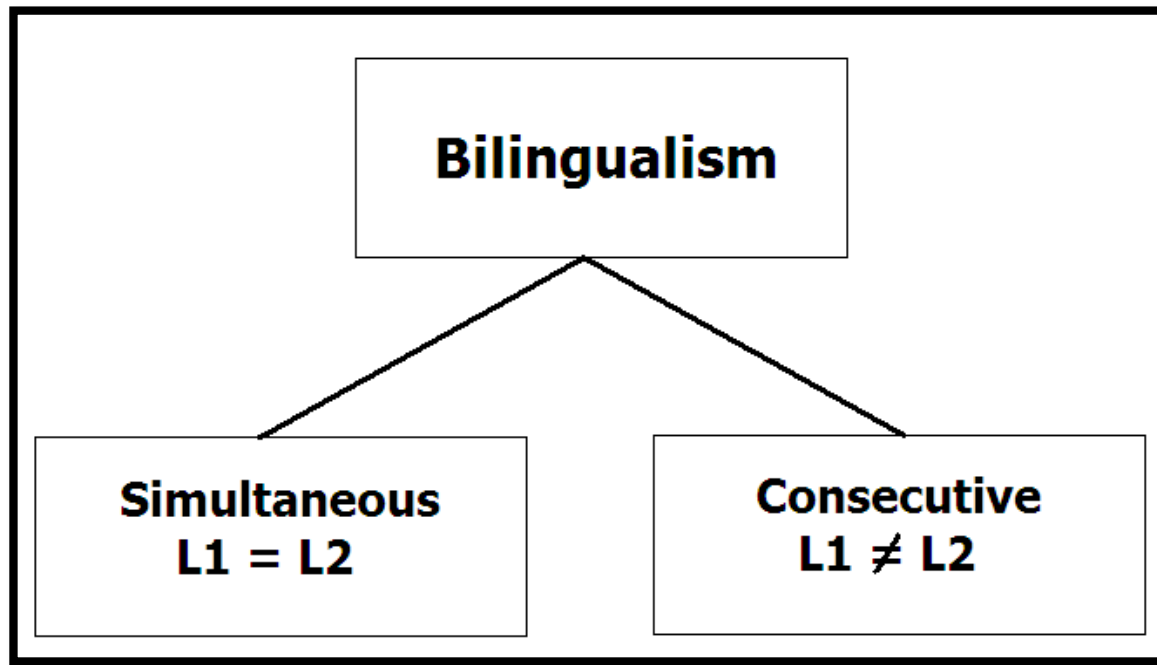
**3- Balanced versus Dominant Bilingual**

**4- Additive versus Subtractive Bilingual**

**5- Elite versus Folk Bilingual**

# Consecutive vs. Simultaneous

- **Consecutive (or Successive) bilingual:**
  - Learning one language after already knowing another. This is the situation for all those who become bilingual as adults, as well as for many who became bilingual earlier in life.
- **Simultaneous bilingual:**
  - Learning two languages as "first languages". That is, a person who is a simultaneous bilingual goes from speaking no languages at all directly to speaking two languages. Infants who are exposed to two languages from birth will become simultaneous bilinguals.
- **Receptive bilingual:**
  - Being able to understand two languages but express oneself in only one. This is generally not considered as "true" bilingualism but is a fairly common situation.



- Most bilinguals are consecutive.

**Consecutive**  
**L1  $\neq$  L2**

- Studies have shown that features of L1 can have a powerful influence on L2.
- L1 “transfer” can be positive or negative.



# **Simultaneous**

## **L1 = L2**

- Studies examining true simultaneous bilinguals are rare.
- Brain imaging studies show a spread in activation across left and right hemispheres.

# Early vs. Late Bilinguals

- **Early age of bilingual exposure has a significant impact on multiple aspects of a child's development: linguistic, cognitive and reading.**
- **Children who experience early and extensive exposure to both of their languages quickly grasp the fundamentals of both of their languages and in a manner similar to that of monolingual language learners.**

# Balanced vs. Dominant Bilinguals

- **Balanced bilingual:**

- someone whose mastery of two languages is roughly equivalent.

- **Dominant bilingual:**

- someone with greater proficiency in one of his or her languages and uses it significantly more than the other language.

- **Semilingual:**

- someone with insufficient knowledge of either language.

# Types of processes in becoming bilingual

- **Additive bilingualism**

- Gain a second language while retaining a first language
- Acquisition of a second language is treated as an asset.

- **Subtractive bilingualism**

- Lose fluency of a first language when acquiring a second language
- Special heritage language schools can help children maintain the language and culture of their parents.

# Additive vs. Subtractive Bilinguals

- **Additive bilingual:**

- The learning of a second language does not interfere with the learning of a first language. Both languages are well developed.

- **Subtractive bilingual:**

- The learning a second language interferes with the learning of a first language. The second language replaces the first language.

- Additive or subtractive bilingualism is related to the different status associated with the two languages in a society.

# Elite vs. Folk Bilinguals

- **Elite bilingual:**

- Individuals who choose to have a bilingual home, often in order to enhance social status. E.g. Educated couple who choose to use two languages at home.

- **Folk bilingual:**

- Individuals who develop second language capacity under circumstances that are not often of their own choosing, and in conditions where the society does not value their native language.

**Thank you for attending!**

**Any Questions?**