

Capturing Bilingual Practices of the Bidayuh

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Abstract

This paper discusses an anthropological framework to examine language shift among the Bidayuh, a polyglossic community located in the south-western part of Sarawak, Borneo. The framework captures speakers' variations in language choice patterns and their bilingual-/multilingual practices. Language choice data was collected through interviews with 61 respondents, and participant observation of language choice of the respondents in various settings.

The results of the study indicate that language shift is primarily a consequence of subtractive bilingual practices. Taking the Bidayuh language situation as an example, the paper contends that speakers' bi-/multilingual practices are central in the assessment and prediction of language shift in communities. Considered in this light, the macro-view of language choice patterns of a community as primary evidence of the progression of language shift in communities should then be considered with caution.

Keywords: *Bilingualism, Borneo, polyglossic communities, language shift, anthropology*

Introduction

Societal bilingualism provides a macro-view of language choice patterns of a community, whereas speakers' bilingual practices suggest ways in which they utilise languages at the micro-level. Through a macro-perspective, language choice patterns are dictated by norms of language use in high and low domains. Language choice patterns of communities are characterised as having one of these conditions: Both diglossia and bilingualism, bilingualism without diglossia, diglossia without bilingualism, neither bilingualism nor diglossia (Fishman 2000, 1967). A condition of bilingualism without diglossia is said to indicate the existence of an on-going language shift in a community. Nevertheless, the macro-perspective does not provide a description of the process of language shift. Investigation of bilingual practices at the micro-level can provide greater insights into the process of language shift. However, this does not imply that a description of societal bilingualism in a community is less useful for studying language shift. Rather, the process of language shift, initiators of shift, and their motivations for shift, are better understood through investigation of speakers' bi-/multilingual practices.

Language shift phenomena continue to attract researchers, despite an abundance of literature on the subject. One factor motivating this interest is the fact that language shift varies across communities, and thus, factors for language shift remain elusive. This can be overcome by employing a micro-anthropological construct. Within such an approach, we acknowledge the existence of various criteria through which to assess the survival of a language; the language choice patterns of a community constitute one main criterion (c.f. Edwards' typology of minority situations, 1992; Fishman's GIDS, 1991; Himmelmann's language endangerment scenario, 2010; Lewis and Simmons' EGIDS, 2010; The UNESCO language endangerment and vitality framework, 2003).

This paper offers a qualitative framework, to capture societal and speakers' bilingual practices in communities undergoing language shift. In this paper, I will demonstrate that language shift is primarily a consequence of subtractive bilingual practices, and that speakers' bi-/multilingual practices sit centrally in the assessment of language shift and in the survival of language in communities. As I demonstrate, individuals who share similar motivation for language shift initiate the occurrence of such a shift. To this, I also discuss the interaction between macro- and micro- factors in processes of language shift.

The paper is structured as follows: The second subsection describes the sociolinguistic underpinnings of the study. Here, I will not provide an exhaustive account of the functional allocation of languages and varieties in Sarawak. Rather, I highlight some influencing factors that have affected and will affect the Bidayuhs' selection of codes and subcodes. In the third section, I will discuss the methodological framework of the paper, and the ways in which I collected data to effect a use of this framework. In the fourth section, I discuss the data and the analysis of this

data. In the fifth section, the conclusion, I conclude the paper, and discuss the implication of my work for both scholarship and for society at large.

The Sociolinguistic Setting

Sarawak, a territory in Borneo, is populated by 2.6 million people. There are more than 51 languages consisting of the three largest groups; the Iban, the Malay, and the Chinese, each language totaling more than 500,000 speakers, followed by the Bidayuh and the Melanau communities with 140,000 and 220,000 speakers respectively. The other smaller ethnolinguistic groups are subsumed under the category of 'Orang Ulu' (People of the hinterland) with a population ranging from a few hundred to 30,000 speakers. The Sarawak sociolinguistic situation is similar to the description provided by Platt (1977, p. 362). Here, communities are characterised by multilingualism and polyglossia, with subcodes within each of the separate codes, and interaction between the bi-(and often multi-)lingualism of the individual. The functioning of this multilingualism in communicative events is heavily predicated on ethnic and educational background and the correlation of codes (and subcodes) with particular spheres of social activity and particular social attitudes.

The two major languages that can influence the language choice of the Bidayuh (and other communities in the territory) are thus Malay and English. Malay is the most widespread language in this territory, primarily owing to its role as the national language of Malaysia, and its long tradition as a lingua franca in the region. English is the second most important language under the Malaysian constitution by virtue of its role as a global language for international communication, where the dominance of English in Malaysia is associated with its perceived status. English also carries some weight in terms of social identity, and its prestige in the economic and social sense. The choice between English or Malay in social situations in the contexts of Sarawak is determined by the interlocutor's background, i.e., level of education, competency in the languages, and ethnicity.

Both languages are employed in all types of domains (formal, semi-formal, informal). Standard Malay and standard Malaysian English are the (H) varieties in multilingual Sarawak, where these codes are appropriated in formal settings i.e., the workplace, education, and church, and in official public events. In informal and semi-formal settings, community members choose a combination of these inter-group codes – colloquial English, Sarawak Malay dialects, and Iban. The mother tongues and other native languages in the territory are spoken within their respective communities.

The Bidayuh is the fourth largest ethnic group in Sarawak, Borneo, with a population of approximately 220,000. Bidayuh speakers mainly reside in the capital city, Kuching, and its peripheries – Serian, Bau, and Lundu. The latest subgrouping study on the Bidayuhic languages in Sarawak by the Summer Institute of Linguistic (SIL) identifies four regional dialects; Bau-Jagoi,

Bukar-Sadong, Biatah, and Sembaan-Tringgus (Rensch 2006). The term ‘Bidayuhic languages’ refers to the Bidayuh varieties in Sarawak and those found in neighbouring Kalimantan, Indonesia. Mutual intelligibility between these varieties can be distant to the extent where they are described as separate families of languages (Omar and Norahim 2020; Omar 1983). The mutual intelligibility factor, to some extent, may hinder communication in intra-group interaction in the Bidayuh languages. Despite its (Bidayuh) numerical strength, the signs of active shift among the Bidayuh were already apparent at the time of this research, but it was uncertain as to which social groups were initiating this shift within the community.

Coluzzi et.al. (2013) discuss the survival of the Bidayuh language, after having conducted a survey on language choice and attitudes of the Bidayuh in four rural localities within the Bidayuh belt. Coluzzi et.al. compared the results of their study with previous studies in assessing the vitality of the Bidayuh language. The study, which involved 266 respondents (from all age-groups and different social background) concluded the following: “The overall results of our research show a very high degree of language maintenance and intergenerational transmission among the Bidayuh in the Bidayuh belt” (p. 386). They also noted that “Despite such vitality, however, the Bidayuh language is not safe, as the comparison data from older and younger speaker clearly show.” (p. 388). The correlation of language choice data with age groups in the study does not identify the initiators of shift within the community. If the implicational scaling technique (i.e., an analysis that groups respondents through patterns of choice) were employed in analysis, the results of the study would possibly reveal the identities of speakers who have shifted, as well as their motivation and direction of language shift. Here, the process of language shift could be described explicitly by observing speakers’ bi-/multilingual practices. Below, I move to discuss ways in which to achieve such a method.

Methodical Framework

I collected data for this study on the Bidayuh community between 2007 and 2009. Considering the fact that the population of the Bidayuh community is comparatively large, it was not feasible to conduct a language shift study that involves a representative sample, and thus, the sample set, I argue, is not representative. I hence limited the scope of the study down to educated Bidayuh individuals residing in the Kuching-Samarahan Administrative Division urban centre. This constitutes a social category that is deemed significantly susceptible to language shift.

To ground the study, I entered the field with the assumption that the shift to major language(s) occurs among those Bidayuhs who exhibit subtractive bi-/multilingual practices. To capture these bilingual practices, I conducted interviews with a questionnaire for the Bidayuh respondents in various settings and community events. I asked the Bidayuh respondents to state their language choices “most of the time” with various categories of interlocutors in four settings; home, workplace, recreational or social, and places of worship. The home setting contains intra-

ethnic interactions (intra- or inter-dialectal) with core and extended family members. Interactions outside the home are largely inter-ethnic, and hence, the categories of interlocutors vary in ethnicity and education. I also included questions on language choice, attitude, and competence. The response options were: (i) Monolingual - the use of a main language in daily interaction, which occupies approximately 80% of interaction time and content, e.g., dominant Malay, dominant English; (ii) Bilingual – the regular use of two languages, e.g., Malay-English, Malay-Bidayuh; or (iii) multilingual – the regular use of three or more languages, e.g., Malay-English-Bidayuh. The asterisk alongside the mention of bilingual patterns (*), e.g., B*M, indicates that the Bidayuh language is spoken most of the time (approximately 70%), but together with a regular use of Malay (30%). The percentages are largely perceived.

Initially, I correlated language choices of Bidayuh respondents in various settings with two age-groups, ≤ 38 years old and ≥ 39 years old. The older respondents received education in English whereas younger ones received education in Malay. Their professional contexts also fit into any of four language settings: An academic institution, a government body, a government-linked company, or a private agency. Apart from facilitating participant observation of the Bidayuh speakers in interaction, workplace language choice patterns can also be interpreted with reference to these settings and the context of interaction (Bloom and Gumperz 1972).

Age group	Frequency	Percentage
≤ 38 years old	34	56
≥ 39 years old	27	44
Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	29	48
Female	32	52
Type of marriage	Frequency	Percentage
Inter-ethnic	27	61
Intra-ethnic	17	39

Table 1a: Distribution of the Bidayuh Respondents Based on Social Factors

Respondents rated their competence in languages and dialects using a Likert scale, as follows:

	Competence
1	Is able to understand some vocabularies and isolated phrases (e.g., greetings)
2	Is able to understand light conversation and produce simple sentences (e.g., prices of goods in shops) but have difficulty in speaking
3	Is able to partake in casual conversation with ease (domestic topics among friends) and listen to light radio programmes (e.g., song requests), but unable to understand fully what is heard in community meetings or gossips between native speakers (e.g., kampong folks)
4	Is able to communicate quite effectively and appropriately in the culture of that language with native speakers (e.g., kampong folks and the older generation), and understands quite well what is heard during community meetings
5	Is able to communicate effectively and appropriately with general ease in a range of social contexts, and has a native ability in speaking i.e., accurate accent (Li Wei 1994)

Table 1b: Competence measurement

I applied speaker variables to locate motives for language shift or maintenance, as follows:

	Variable
a	Language experience in formative years
b	Place where respondents were raised - in Bidayuh villages or urban centres
c	Age at the time of migration from Bidayuh villages to urban centres
d	Duration away from the homeland, and places settled
e	Current place of residence
f	School experience – English-medium or Malay-medium school and the location of the school
g	Attachment to village community – Frequency of visits to Bidayuh villages, membership in social groups in the Bidayuh community
h	Type of marriage i.e., inter-ethnic or intra-ethnic
i	Mixed parentage or single (ethnic) parentage
j	Religious belief
k	Competency in languages
l	Social circle

Table 1c: Motives for language shift or maintenance

As the analysis did not present emerging patterns that indicate societal intergenerational shift in the Bidayuh community, I employed the Guttman implicational scaling technique (c.f. Gal 1979; Li Wei 1994) to locate initiators of language shift. These scales are significant for revealing structure in variability, as the technique allows for a grouping of respondents according to pattern of language choice in each setting, where the results are placed on horizontal and vertical axes. (See Table A and Table B in the Appendix). The horizontal axis provides the patterns of language choice of each respondent in each of the four settings (individual bi-/multilingual practices). The vertical axis indicates the overall pattern of choice of the respondents in each setting (societal bi-/multilingual practices). I then further categorised the respondents according to type of bilingual practice, assuming that speakers may share similar social background and language experience within each category. The categories of bilingual practice are as follows:

	Variable
a	Additive bilingualism – The speaker retained mother tongue at home and in other settings as well
b	Diglossic-like bilingualism – The speaker retained mother tongue at home but speaks major languages in other settings
c	Subtractive bilingualism Type 1 – The use of the mother tongue is greatly reduced and confined to particular family members generally older generations
d	Subtractive bilingualism Type 2 – The speaker has not acquired the mother tongue or has passive competency in Bidayuh, and hardly communicates in Bidayuh.

When Fishman (as cited in Fasold, 1984, p. 215) first mooted intergenerational language shift, he also suggested that investigation of language shift and language maintenance (LSLM) should ideally involve a longitudinal study that repeatedly studies a population over several years. Shift is taken to be in progress if data from the same population for more than one time show a significant decline in a number of respondents reporting the use of the mother tongue. Fishman has also suggested that in the absence of census data, intergenerational shift may be studied by taking the language choice patterns of community members within a single period of time. However, age-related differences may reflect age-grading patterns or life-cycle differences i.e., differences in language behaviour expected of people in a society at different ages (Fasold 1984, p. 215). Alternatively, age-cohort analysis (c.f. Lieberman, as cited in Fasold 1984, p. 229) and retrospective questions constitute techniques employed to alleviate or to rectify the problem.

Nevertheless, a survey questionnaire as the main instrument for capturing language choice patterns does exhibit reliability and validity issues. What speakers report in a questionnaire on language attitudes does not always correspond to their descriptions of language choice. Results may show some level of contradiction, where respondents may profess loyalty towards the

mother tongue, yet this expression of loyalty may not translate into language use. Therefore, the use of the questionnaire is generally coupled with participant observation or other techniques, as a form of counter-checking. The self-reported questionnaire is useful for capturing language choice patterns of a community on a larger scale owing to the rigour of the instrument. Nevertheless, a survey of this kind cannot capture more intangible issues such as language attitudes, language loyalty, and social identities expressed through speech. These issues can only be examined by observing language choice of community members in interaction.

Data and Analysis

This subsection provides details of the results of the language choice patterns of the Bidayuh respondents in the four settings. The settings can be further divided into home vs outside home where in the home setting, interactions are intra-ethnic in nature whereas outside the home, interactions are largely inter-ethnic (Also refer to Table A and Table B in Appendix for summary of overall patterns of choices in each setting).

Age-group	1	2	3	4	5
Older speakers	-	1	3	1	22
Younger speakers	3	1	4	6	20

Table 2a: Ability in Bidayuh

Age-group	1	2	3	4	5
Older speakers				4	23
Younger speakers				1	33

Table 2b: Ability in Malay

Age-group	1	2	3	4	5
Older speakers					27
Younger speakers			3	11	20

Table 2c: Ability in English

Note. Total no of older speakers = 27; younger speakers=34

Table 2 (above) summarises the respondents' use of and competence in three main languages, Bidayuh, Malay, and English. Roughly, an educated Bidayuh speaker uses at least three languages, namely Malay, English and another language - Bidayuh, Chinese or Iban.

Overall, the results suggest a shift towards English and Malay among educated Bidayuh speakers. The status of the English as crucial for social mobility and economic advancement has motivated educated members of this community to reinforce and intensify the use of English at home. This view has its roots in the varied mindset of members of the community. The encroachment by Malay and English in the domain traditionally reserved for the use of the mother tongue seems inevitable owing to the widespread occurrences of inter-ethnic and inter-dialectal marriages. The Bidayuh community members would adopt urban norms following a prolonged stay in the capital city. Consequently, many speakers have come to loosen the link between the community language and ethnicity, in particular speakers who are less attached to their community. These circumstances do not support retention of the mother tongue.

Language Choice Patterns at the Workplace

Language choice patterns at the workplace show a dominance of English (Table 3). Despite Malay being the official language in governmental transactions, English predominates among Bidayuh professionals in this study, as the language preferred in interaction among executives irrespective of the category of organisation.

Pattern of Language Choice	Younger Speakers	Older Speakers	Total
Dominant English	8	14	22 (36%)
Dominant Malay	9	4	13 (21.4%)
Malay-English	12	3	15 (24.6%)
Malay-Bidayuh	1	1	2 (3.3%)
English*Malay	1	3	4 (6.6%)
Malay*English	-	1	1 (1.6%)
Iban-Malay	1	-	1 (1.6%)
Malay-English-Iban	2	-	2 (3.3%)
Malay-English-Iban-Bidayuh	-	1	1 (1.6%)
Total	34	27	100%

Table 3: Patterns of language choice at the workplace

Note. E*M = dominant English (70%) and regular use of Malay (30%). M*E = dominant Malay (70%) and regular use of English (30%).

The three main patterns of choice are: Dominant English (36%); Bilingual Malay-English (24.6%) and dominant Malay (21%). Inter-speaker variation in pattern of language choice relates closely to the types of social circles with which the speakers interact regularly at the workplace, and the norm of language use in each organisation.

The term social settings refers to interactions that occur at recreational places and community activities. In less formal settings, the norm of language use specific to a domain has less influence on language-choice decision making. Given that the nature of interaction in this setting is largely inter-ethnic, a common language is required in interaction. The majority of the respondents stated their preference for Malay or/and English. Nevertheless, we also see a greater use of the Bidayuh language in this setting compared to that of the workplace. A total of eighteen people (29%) indicated that they regularly use Bidayuh with friends.

Pattern of Language Choice	Younger Speakers	Older Speakers	Total
Dominant Bidayuh (B)	3	1	4 (6.6%)
Dominant English (E)	5	9	14 (22.9%)
Dominant Malay (M)	11	5	16 (26.2%)
Bidayuh-English (BE)	-	2	2 (3.3%)
Malay-Bidayuh (MB)	5	1	6 (9.8%)
Iban-Bidayuh (IB)	1	-	1 (1.6%)
Malay-English (ME)	6	4	10 (16.3%)
Iban-Malay (IM)	1	-	1(1.6%)
Malay-*Bidayuh-English (MBE)	1	4	5(8.2%)
Malay-*Bidayuh-English-Iban (MBEI)	1	1	2 (3.3%)
Total	34	27	61 (100%)

Table 4: Patterns of language choice in social settings

Note. Patterns indicated with an asterisk (*) designate dominant Malay with regular use of other languages.

Language Choice Patterns at Places of Worship

The majority of the Bidayuh respondents are Christians. In this setting, English is preferred mainly owing to the fact that Christian evangelism was introduced to the Bidayuh in English. Church services are also conducted in Malay in the capital city to cater for various ethnic groups. Christian materials and church services have recently become available in minority languages,

explaining the increasing use of these languages for religious purposes among the younger speakers (12 of a total of 27).

Pattern of Language Choice	Younger Speakers	Older Speakers	Total
Dominant English	16	21	37 (60.6%)
Dominant Malay	4	2	6 (9.8%)
Dominant Bidayuh	6	-	6 (9.8%)
Malay-English	2	-	2 (3.3%)
Malay-Bidayuh	2	1	3 (4.9%)
Bid-Eng	3	2	5 (8.3%)
Mly-Bid-Eng	1	1	2 (3.3%)
Total	34	27	100%

Table 5: Patterns of language choice at places of worship

Language Choice Patterns in the Home Setting

The respondents were asked to describe the language(s) they speak most of the time with 12 interlocutors in the home setting. The interlocutors include immediate and extended family members from both sides of the family. Table 6 (below) summarises the patterns of language choices of the respondents with family members.

Pattern of Language Choice	Younger Speakers	Older Speakers	Total
Exclusively Bidayuh	9	2	11 (18%)
Dominantly Bidayuh	8	18	26 (42.6%)
Bidayuh-English	2	-	2 (3.3%)
Bidayuh-Malay	3	2	5 (8.2%)
Bidayuh-Iban	1	-	1 (1.6%)
Bid-Malay-Eng	2	3	5 (8.2%)
Bid-Malay-Eng-Iban	1	-	1 (1.6%)
* Limited use of Bidayuh	7	3	10 (16.4)
Total	33 (100%)	28 (100%)	61(100%)

Table 6: Patterns of language choice with family members

On the whole, the Bidayuh in all age-groups in this study generally prefer to communicate in their mother tongue with family members. Sixty-one percent chose Bidayuh patterns exclusively or dominantly. Respondents with an ‘exclusively Bidayuh’ pattern speak Bidayuh with core and extended family members, and have always lived within the Bidayuh areas and/or have never gone to other places. Married respondents in this category have spouses from the same dialect group. Respondents with a ‘Dominantly Bidayuh’ pattern speak mostly Bidayuh with family members, but also regularly use other languages with core family members (spouse, children, siblings). The remaining respondents speak Bidayuh together with two or more other languages with family members. This multilingual pattern is largely found among respondents from mixed parentage or in families with a fusion background, where the members are in inter-ethnic marriages. The results also suggest that the mother tongue is still preferred in interaction with older speakers i.e., grandparents (33 people of 38). The preference for English with children (20 people of 42) in inter- as well as intra-ethnic marriages suggests that socio-economic considerations have influenced their choices to some extent (Refer to Table C in Appendix C). The following table summarises the overall patterns of bilingual practices of the Bidayuh respondents.

Pattern of Language Choice	Younger Speakers	Older Speakers	Total
Category1: Additive Bilingualism	13 (21.3%)	10 (16.4%)	23(37.7%)
Category 2: Diglossic Bilingualism	7 (11.5%)	9 (14.8%)	16(26.2%)
Category3a: Subtractive Bilingualism	9 (14.8%)	6 (9.8%)	15(24.6%)
Category3b: Subtractive Bilingualism	5 (8.2%)	2(3.3%)	7 (11.5%)
Total	34	27	61

Table 7: Categories of bilingual practice

The terms ‘additive’ and ‘subtractive’ bilingual practices are taken from Lambert (1974, as cited in Baetens Beardsmore, 1982, pp. 19-20). Lambert defines,

...additive bilingualism as a situation where “the second language brings to the speaker a set of cognitive and social abilities which do not negatively affect those that have been acquired in the first language but where the two linguistic and cultural entities involved in being bilingual combined in a complementary and enriching fashion. The term subtractive bilingualism, ... a psychological condition brought about because of negative values speakers assign to languages in a community, and it

refers to the type of situation usually found in minority communities (although majority groups may also display 'subtractive bilingualism', my insertion), where the ability to function in major languages increases with use i.e., seems to be "ascending" while the use of the mother tongue appears to be recessive.

The social profiles of the respondents in each category are given below:

Category 1 (Additive bilingualism): Speakers in this category maintain the use of the Bidayuh language at home as well as outside the home. This is a positive form of bilingualism where acquisition of second languages (i.e., Malay and English) is not at the expense of the mother tongue.

Category 2 (Diglossia-like bilingualism): Speakers in this category display a 'diglossic-like' pattern in the sense that they maintain strict separation of functions of languages in the High and Low domains of language use. They have retained Bidayuh as the main language at home, and speak major languages in other settings.

Category 3a and 3b (Subtractive bilingualism): Speakers in Category 3a and 3b predominantly speak Malay or/and English in daily interactions including the home setting. The use of the Bidayuh language among these speakers has been greatly reduced largely owing to a combination of inter-related factors: mixed parentage, being uprooted from homeland in early formative years, intermarriages, ambivalent attitudes towards the mother tongue, and 'urban upbringing,' i.e., they attended missionary schools in the city and speak English at home. Speakers with non-acquisition of the mother tongue and with a passive competence in the Bidayuh language (Category 3b) are most commonly found among respondents of mixed parentage and those being uprooted from the homeland in early formative years. It appears in the case of the Bidayuh that speakers of mixed parentage will most likely acquire the mother's language with the exception of inter-ethnic marriages involving a Malay, which will lead to total assimilation of a Bidayuh speaker to Malay, culturally and linguistically. Malay or/and English is a popular choice for ease of communication within the family in inter-ethnic marriages. More often than not, the role of the Bidayuh language in such families becomes peripheral. Generally, the speakers who retained Bidayuh in this study perceived the mother tongue as crucial for ethnic group membership.

The Process of Language Shift

The period immediately after the independence of Malaysia (1963) marked the beginning of the transformation of the Bidayuh community from its remoteness from modernity. This period witnessed socio-economic development in Bidayuh areas, during which time, basic infrastructures had reached Bidayuh villages. The Bidayuh were no longer isolated from

contacting other ethnic communities. The impact of the introduction of school into its community began during this period. Access to higher education has brought further changes to the mindset of the Bidayuh community members, where industrialisation has brought about continuous rural-urban migration. There were sizable recruitments of Bidayuh (and other indigenous groups) into the police and military workforce from 1960's-1970's. Some Bidayuh families were uprooted to work in other parts of Malaysia, an event which was detrimental to the retention of the mother tongue in affected families.

Cases of language shift among older Bidayuh speakers in this study can be described as a 'socially motivated linguistic change' (Gal 1979), whereby speakers adopted a prestigious language to attain social identity in the larger community. This factor, the language-identity relationship, also appears as the main factor motivating a shift typical of socially and economically disadvantaged communities in the region (e.g., Coluzzi 2010; Florey 1990; Haji-Othman 2016; Martin 2005; Mohd Yassin 1998). The perception towards own group, and of other major groups towards the Bidayuh community, were less favourable at the time. The Malay or/and English languages were perceived as prestigious, and symbolised the attainment of progress and modernity. Marriage to more socially and economically superior groups (e.g., Europeans and Chinese) was regarded as a symbol of social success. This phenomenon typically appears among children of police and army personnel who were raised in camps. The confined environment forces greater assimilation of minority communities with major groups. Until the present time, the Malay language is preferred for communication within the family. The experience has a social psychological effect on the speakers who loosely came to view the link between ethnicity and mother tongue. In extreme cases, they experienced a fragmented ethnicity (Fishman 1966, as cited in Florey 1990, p. 178), a situation where speakers feel detached from their own culture as well as the host culture.

Cases of language shift among younger respondents in this study are primarily a consequence of the change in norms of language use in the home setting. Bidayuh leaders are hopeful that the community's mission to improve the welfare of its members can be achieved through advancement in education. Here, the acquisition of English at an early age is propagated, inspiring concerned parents to adopt English at home. The younger speakers are subjected to greater threats from Malay and English as, unlike their predecessors, they are raised in the city and learn to socialise at an early age in multicultural environment, hence, they have absorbed urban values with greater intensity. One major factor for the failure in intergenerational transmission of the mother tongue to the younger generation is the speakers' ambivalent attitudes towards the mother tongue as symbolising group membership. Some Bidayuh speakers in this study expressed that children will eventually pick up the mother tongue later in life. For that reason, they do not see the need to teach children to speak their mother tongue at an early age.

Individual bilingual practice is, to a certain extent, dictated by community norms. Community norms are maintained through institutional norm-enforcement agencies e.g., the workplace, school, media, and so forth. Hence, societal bilingualism can significantly influence bilingual practice at the micro-level. In formal settings, the norms of language use can exert a greater influence on language choice patterns. In informal social settings, where language choice is not domain-specific, the speakers' social circles dictate language choice patterns. Here, the social circle is a form of non-institutional norm enforcement (Milroy and Milroy 1997) that has effects the dominant use of the Malay language among younger Bidayuh speakers. In the home setting, a social norm that frames the community language as an expression of cultural identity is valued. Yet, the norm has changed, and is threatening the inter-generational continuity of the Bidayuh language. Current efforts to build ethnic consciousness in the community will take the direction of the incipient shift among the Bidayuh. Further change can be prevented through the identification of variables that will facilitate language maintenance (Fishman 1991). The use of the mother tongue at places of worship can be inculcated to sustain the community language.

Discussion

This section provides justification for the main intention of this paper, that is, to emphasise speakers' bi-/multilingual practices as central to the assessment and prediction of language shift in communities. This view, however, does not imply that societal bilingualism and its domain are of no significance or less useful for examining language shift. As I have demonstrated with reference to the Bidayuh community, both the macro- and micro-investigation of language choice patterns in a community are necessary for understanding the process of language shift. I further demonstrate this point when I discuss the macro- and micro factors influencing language shift.

Here, I first draw attention to Fishman's statement on the concepts of Diglossia and Bilingualism. Fishman (2000/1967, p. 85) notes that bilingualism is essentially a characterisation of individual linguistic behaviour, whereas diglossia is a characterisation of linguistic organisation at the socio-cultural level. This distinction articulates the focus of investigation in each case. Diglossia describes the functional distribution of languages in a community, and the social structures governing the norms of language use in various domains. The functional allocation of languages in domains does not necessarily reflect bi-/multilingual practices at the micro-level. Rather, I argue that it is the way in which speakers put to use various languages at their disposal in interaction, and their attitudes towards languages, that will provide greater insights on language shift situations in communities. Language shift is primarily a consequence of subtractive bi-/multilingual practices in a community. The process of language shift is initiated by a section of a community's population or a social group within the community. Speakers' social background and their motivations for language choices are therefore crucial in understanding the process of language shift in communities. Such a standpoint justifies the need to examine bi-/multilingual practices at the micro-level, which is often neglected in approaching

the subject of language shift. Societal bilingualism is still a major factor influencing bi-/multilingual practices at the micro-level. Karan (2011, p. 138) has emphasised the need to examine a micro societal view while investigating language shift and the ethnolinguistic vitality of communities, and the fact that individual motivations ground such an investigation, while stressing that speaker's motivations are best understood within larger societal contexts.

Fishman noted that speech communities may be characterised by widespread bilingualism, but the repertoires of these speech communities may not be diglossic, i.e., compartmentalised or kept separate, but may exhibit complementary distribution. This condition, which Fishman describes as a case of "bilingualism without diglossia," may characterise communities that are experiencing rapid social change, and possibly a reflection of an on-going language shift. Diglossia, a condition of separation of language use in a community, assumes that each language has specific role(s) within the community. As long as the roles do not overlap or languages do not encroach upon the roles of other languages, the state of bilingualism would remain stable, and minority languages would more likely survive for generations.

Nevertheless, this description of diglossia seems simplistic for complex language situations observed in multilingual continents around the world. Sociolinguistic situations in communities globally have become more complex. Even in so-called monolingual communities, as in the case of Arabic countries, overlaps between codes and exoglossic forms are inserted in daily communication among Arabic speakers (Badaoui 2017). Descriptions of multilingual practices in communities globally have demonstrated that knowledge of several languages in one's repertoire can be resourceful. In African contexts for instance, multilingual practices are multiglossic, or to be more exact, polylexic, and are utilitarian or instrumental in nature, and reflect complex interplay of languages (Lüpke and Storch 2013). Similarly, in this context, communities are characterised by multilingualism in polyglossic states. Language choices are influenced by a combination of factors, such as a common language shared among participants in interactions, the nature of interaction (inter- or inter-group), the norms of language use in particular domains and for specific functions, and other pragmatic considerations. In addition to this, equally significant is a speaker's social network, a non-institutional norm enforcement agency (Milroy and Milroy 1997, p. 53). These factors may be considered when capturing bi-/multilingual practices in communities. The complexity of language situations in communities therefore calls for alternative approaches with which to capture language choice patterns.

I now discuss the difference between the methodological framework employed in this study and the macro-sociological construct, which has improved from the time of Susan Gal's framework of analysis. I identified the bilingual practices of the Bidayuh respondents through the use of Guttman's implicational scaling technique, whereby I rearranged the data according to 'patterns of language choices' of the respondents in each setting. The technique captures both the macro- and micro-view of language choice patterns of the community, that is, the patterns of choices of individual speakers in each setting as well as the overall patterns of choices in each

setting. This technique contrasts with the macro-sociological construct, where language choices of the respondents are correlated with age-groups to determine intergenerational language shift. Notwithstanding, this paper argues that correlating age with language choice patterns does not necessarily point to the initiators of shift, and the actual causes of shift in communities.

I ground my methodological framework on the anthropological approach to language shift, and in particular, the work of Susan Gal (1979). Gal's study explained the process of language shift of a German-Hungarian bilingual community in Oberwart, Austria. After a preliminary observation of language choice of the community, Gal (1979, p. 101) concludes that choice may be predicted on the basis of two components of the situation – characteristics of the speaker and of the listener. Nonetheless, this does not imply that the other two factors that could have influenced language choice, i.e., setting and topic of conversation, are not of equal significance, but in the community that Gal studied, language choice can be determined by the interlocutor factor on most occasions. Furthermore, Gal asserts that it is by observing the language behaviour of speakers with various types of interlocutors that the social symbolism of language is revealed. Gal's questionnaire asked about language choices with various types of interlocutors. The results were then analysed using the implicational scaling technique and not tabulated in frequency percentages as normally conducted in previous language shift studies. With this technique, Gal was able to capture social situations when and where the mother tongue (i.e., Hungarian) was used, and situations where the intruding language (i.e., German) was increasingly being used in the community. This inventive methodology distinguishes her work from the domain approach.

In the Bidayuh community (and multilingual communities globally), code-choices are not exclusive to their functional allocation in High and Low domains. In observation prior to the survey, I concluded that the language choice patterns were dictated by the interlocutor factor, and cases of language shift can be identified through the practice of subtractive bilingualism. Hence, instead of investigating language choice patterns in various domains, I investigated 'patterns of language choices' of the speakers in various settings with various categories of interlocutors. The patterns of choice in each setting were tabulated in percentages to indicate the preferred patterns in each setting. I also categorised the respondents based on their bilingual patterns of choices, and then investigated the social profiles of the respondents in each category of bilingual practice, in search of influences to language shift and language maintenance.

In this study, the word 'setting' is used instead of 'domain.' The later concept refers to "higher order generalisation from congruent situations" (Fishman 1965/1986, p. 445) with the components, locality, topic, and participant. For instance, a typical family domain would be a situation in which a speaker is at home talking to another member of the family about an everyday topic. However, 'setting' refers to "localities marked by the apparent occurrence of particular activities, and venues for different groups of people to meet and interact" (Bloom and Gumperz 1972, p. 422). Settings vary with respect to social dimension; that is, on a formal-informality continuum. Some settings can be seen as more formal than others, owing to the fact

that it “may be characterized by the presence of certain cultural features and it may manifest certain social norms to which members may implicitly adhere to in interaction (Bloom and Gumperz 1972, p. 422-423). I refer to the term ‘domain’ only when it refers to classes of congruent situations, as described by Fishman. Within a particular setting, various social situations require the use of different codes. Platt (1977) refers to these social situations (or speech situations as he calls it) as subdomains within a general domain. According to Platt,

it would be unrealistic to stipulate a one-to-one relationship between speech variety and domain and sub-domains, but certain varieties were far more frequently associated with certain general domains than others.

(p. 370)

The framework employed in this study has also shown macro- and micro-factors interacting causing language shift among the Bidayuh (also See Tsunoda 2006; Clyne 2003; Edwards 1992 on micro- and macro-variables in language shift). I summarise this relationship in Figure 1.

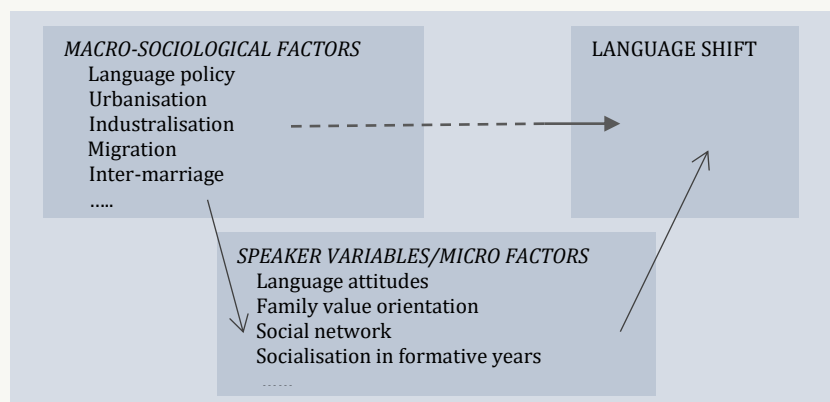


Fig 1: Relationship between macro- and Micro-factors in language shift

The list of macro- and micro factors in this study is not exhaustive, but rather, is predicated on the language shift situation of a community. The relationship between the macro-sociological factors and language shift is not a causal one, and the factors can lead to the disintegration of a speech community. Where other language(s) become focal for communication in a minority community, language policy will have an adverse effect on survival of mother tongue. The mixed-marriage factor is also significant for occurrence of language shift in this region, as a common language is required for communication within the family, and in some cases, it motivates changes to speaker’s social network. Contrastively, the relationship of the speaker variables with language shift is a direct one. The variables have a direct influence on speaker’s bi-/multilingual practice.

Conclusion

This paper has proposed a framework that captures both societal and speakers' bi-/multilingual practices of a community. The paper has demonstrated the interaction between societal and speakers' bi-/multilingual practices in language choice decision-making. This framework provides a realistic view of language shift situations in communities, and to prevent researchers from making misleading claims of the state of affairs when reporting the phenomenon of language shift in communities. The study has suggested that 'speaker variables' rather than 'social variables' (e.g., age, gender etc.) account for language shift. By employing the speaker variation framework, this study described the process of language shift, identifying the initiators of shift within the community, and that their motivation leads to this shift.

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Endnotes

The term “diglossia” (Ferguson 1959/2000) initially refers to a linguistic situation where two varieties of a language exist side by side throughout the community, with each having a specialised function. By consensus, it now generally refers to bilingual communities in which the two languages are functionally distinguished in terms of (H) and (L).

The total number of indigenous languages is concluded from lexicostatistic studies on indigenous languages of Sarawak.

In Gal’s study, there were 13 types of interlocutors which represent various social contexts, e.g., Interlocutor 12, government officials represent interaction in a formal domain; Interlocutor 3, black market clients, represent an informal situation. Gal uses the implicational scaling technique to examine the choice of Hungarian or/and German in various social contexts in the community.

Appendix A

Table A: Overall Language Choice Patterns of Younger Speakers in Various Settings

Speaker No.	Age	Home	Workplace	Social Setting	Religious Setting
Additive Bilingual Practice					
Retained Mother Tongue (MT); Speaks MT in other settings beside home					
48	32	B(Ex)	ME	B	B
24	36	B(Ex)	M	IB	B
43	30	BEx)	ME	M*BE	B
28	27	B(Ex)	ME	MB	MB
34	30	B(Ex)	ME	MBEI	MBE
33	28	B(Ex)	MEI	MB	BE
4	33	B(Dom)	E	M	B
35	26	B(Dom)	ME	B	E
32	32	B(Dom)	ME	MB	E
61	32	B(Dom)	IM	MB	B
59	35	MIB	MB	MB	E
42	31	MBEI	MEI	B	B
30	29	BE	E	MBE	BE
Diglossic-like Bilingual Practice					
Retained MT at home and speaks major languages in other settings					
27	26	B(Ex)	ME	ME	E
22	33	B(Ex)	ME	E	E
8	36	B(Ex)	ME	M	E
57	36	B(Dom)	M	M	M
11	36	B(Dom)	M	M	E
23	36	B(Dom)	E	ME	E
1	29	B(Dom)	E	ME	E
Subtractive Bilingual Practice					
Use of MT is greatly reduced; Confined to some family members					
36	24	MBE	M	M	E
7	31	MBCE	ME	ME	E
18	34	MB	M	ME	ME
6	29	MBE	ME	ME	E
45	31	MB	M	M	M

46	38	BE	E	E	E
20	29	M (some Bid)	ME	M	E
60	37	MB	M	M	MB
53	28	IB	M	M	BE
Subtractive Bilingual Practice Non or poor acquisition of MT					
31	35	MEC	E*M	E	E
54	27	M	M	M	M
29	23	CE	E	E	E
52	30	M(some Bid)	E	E	M
37	31	MEI	E	IM	ME

Appendix B

Table B
Overall Language Choice Patterns of Older Speakers in Various Settings

Speaker No.	Age	Home	Workplace	Social Setting	Religious Setting
Additive Bilingual Practice					
Retained Mother Tongue (MT); Speaks MT in other settings beside home					
17	50	B(Ex)	E	B	E
5	51	B(Dom)	E	BE	E
10	51	B(Dom)	E	MBE	E
44	50	B(Dom)	E	MBE	BE
25	42	B(Dom)	E*M	M	MB
39	55	B(Dom)	E	MBE	E
41	47	B(Dom)	MEIB	MBEI	BE
38	48	B(Dom)	M	BE	E
9	39	B(Dom)	M	MB	M
59	40	B(Dom)	MB	MB	MBE
Diglossic-like bilingual Practice					
Retained MT at home and speaks major languages in other settings					
15	49	B(Ex)	E	E	E
16	49	B(Dom)	E	E	E
12	52	B(Dom)	E	E	E
26	50	B(Dom)	E	E	E
14	50	B(Dom)	E	E	E
19	50	B(Dom)	E	ME	E
3	53	B(Dom)	M*E	M	E
47	54	B(Dom)	ME	ME	E
58	48	B(Dom)	M	M	E
Subtractive Bilingual Practice					
Use of MT is greatly reduced; Confined to some family members					
50	39	MB	E	ME	E
2	44	MBE	E*M	ME	E
56	50	MBE	E*M	M* IBE	E
49	40	MB	ME	E	E
55	53	MBE	E	E	E

51	53	MBE	M	MBE	E
Subtractive Bilingual Practice Non or poor acquisition of MT					
21	44	M(some Bid)	ME	M	M
40	49	ME(some Bid)	E	E	E

Appendix C

Table C

*Patterns of Language Choices of Respondents with Various Types of Interlocutor in the Home**Setting*

Exclusively Bidayuh													
No.	Age	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
33	28	B		B	B	B	B	B	-	B	B	B	B
8	36	-	-	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	-	MBE
22	33	-	-	B	B	B	-	-	B	B	B	-	-
27	26	-	-	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	-	
28	27	-	-	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	-	
34	30	-	-	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	-	-
15	49	-	-	B	-	B	-	-	B	B	B	-	-
48	32	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	MB
24	36	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	BEI
43	30	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	MBE
17	50	B	B	B	B	B	-	-	B	B	B	B	BE
Dominant Bidayuh but speak other languages													
5	51	E	E	B	B	BE	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
14	50	E	E	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
26	50	E	E	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	M	MBE
39	55	E	E	B	B	B	-	B	B	B	B	E	BE
16	49	E	E	B	B	B	B	B	B	BE	BE	Chi/ Mel	B
12	52	E	E	B	B	BE	B	B	B	B	B	M	E
47	54	E	E	B	B	BE	B	B	B	B	BE	E	E
13	48	E	E	BE	B	BE	B	B	B	B	B	M	ME
23	36?	E	E	BE	B	BE	B	E	B	E	B	E	BE
10	51	BE	BE	B	B	BE	-	BE	B	B	BE	B	B
44	50	BE	MBE	B	B	BE	B	B	B	BE	B	ME	BE
59	48	ME	E	B	B	BE	B	B	B	B	BE	M	MBE
19	50	BE	BE	-	-	B	-	-	B	-	B	-	BE

3	53	E	ME	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	MBE
38	48	E* IB	E*IB	B	B	BE	-	B	B	BE	BE	I	E*MI
41	47	I* ME	I*BE	B	B	B	-	B	B	B	B	I	IB
61	32	IM	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	I	IB
11	36	ME	E	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	M	ME
32	32	ME	E	BE	B	BE	B	B	B	B	B	M	MB
4	33	B	BE	B	B	B	B	B	B	MBE	MBE	B	BE
1	29	-	-	BE	B	BE	B	B	B	B	B	B	BE
35	26	-	-	B	B	B*ME	B	B	B	ME	ME	-	B
9	39	M	M	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	M	M
25	42	MB	MB	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	M	MB
57	36	M	MB	B	B	B	-	B	B	B	B	M	M
50	39	-	-	M	B	M	-	B	B	MB	MB	-	M
Bidayuh-English													
46	38	E	E	B	B	BE	-	BE	BE	BE	BE	B	MB
30	29	BE	-	B	B	BE	B	BE	BE	BE	BE	M	MBE
Bidayuh-Malay													
49	40	-	-	B	-	MB	-	B	B	M	B	-	-
18	34	ME	E	B	B	B	B	MB	B	B	MB	ME	M
45	31	M	MB	MB	B	MB	-	MB	MB	MB	MB	M	M
60	37	M	MB	MB	MB	M	-	MB	MB	MB	MB	M	M
59	40	MB	M	B	B	B	B	B	M	B	M	I	I
Bidayuh-Iban													
53	28	-	-	IB	B	I	B	I	B	B*M	I	-	-
Mly-Bid-Eng													
2	44	M	E	B	B	BE	-	B	B	BE	BE	M	ME
56	50	ME	ME	B	B	B	B	B	B	MB	MB	B	B
55	53	E	E	B	-	BE	-	B	B	MB	BE	M	E
6	29	-	-	BE	B	BE	-	BE	ME	ME	BE	-	ME
36	24	-	-	BE	MBE	B	B	ME	B	MB	ME	-	-
Mly-Bid-Eng-Iban													
42	31	E	E	B	B	B	-	B	MEI	MEI	B	Sign L	MEI
Speak some or no Bidayuh													
40	49	E*MB	E	MB	M	E	M	ME	M	E	E	M	E

21	44	M	M	M	-	M	-	MB	MB	MB	MB	M	M
51	53	ME	E	B	B	MB	-	MB	M	M	MB	M	ME
52	30	-	-	M	MB	M	M	M	M	M	M	-	-
54	27	-	-	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	-	-
20	29	M	BE	M	M	M	-	-	M	-	M	M	-
7	31	E	-	MB	-	M	-	B	CE	CE	B	E	E
29	23	-	-	CE	E	CE	E	E	CE	CE	E	-	E
31	35	C	E	EC	MC	MEC	-	ME	EC	EC	ME	EC	MEC
37	31	-	-	EI	MI	MEI	MEI	ME	MI	MI	ME	-	-

Note. 1=spouse 2=children 3=parent 4=grandparent (father's side) 5=siblings 6=Grandparent (mother's side)

7=Uncles (Father's side) 8=Uncles (mother's side) 9=Cousins (father's side) 10=cousins (mother's side)

11= Mother and Father In-laws 12= other in-laws