

Sociolinguistics

I. Language Contact

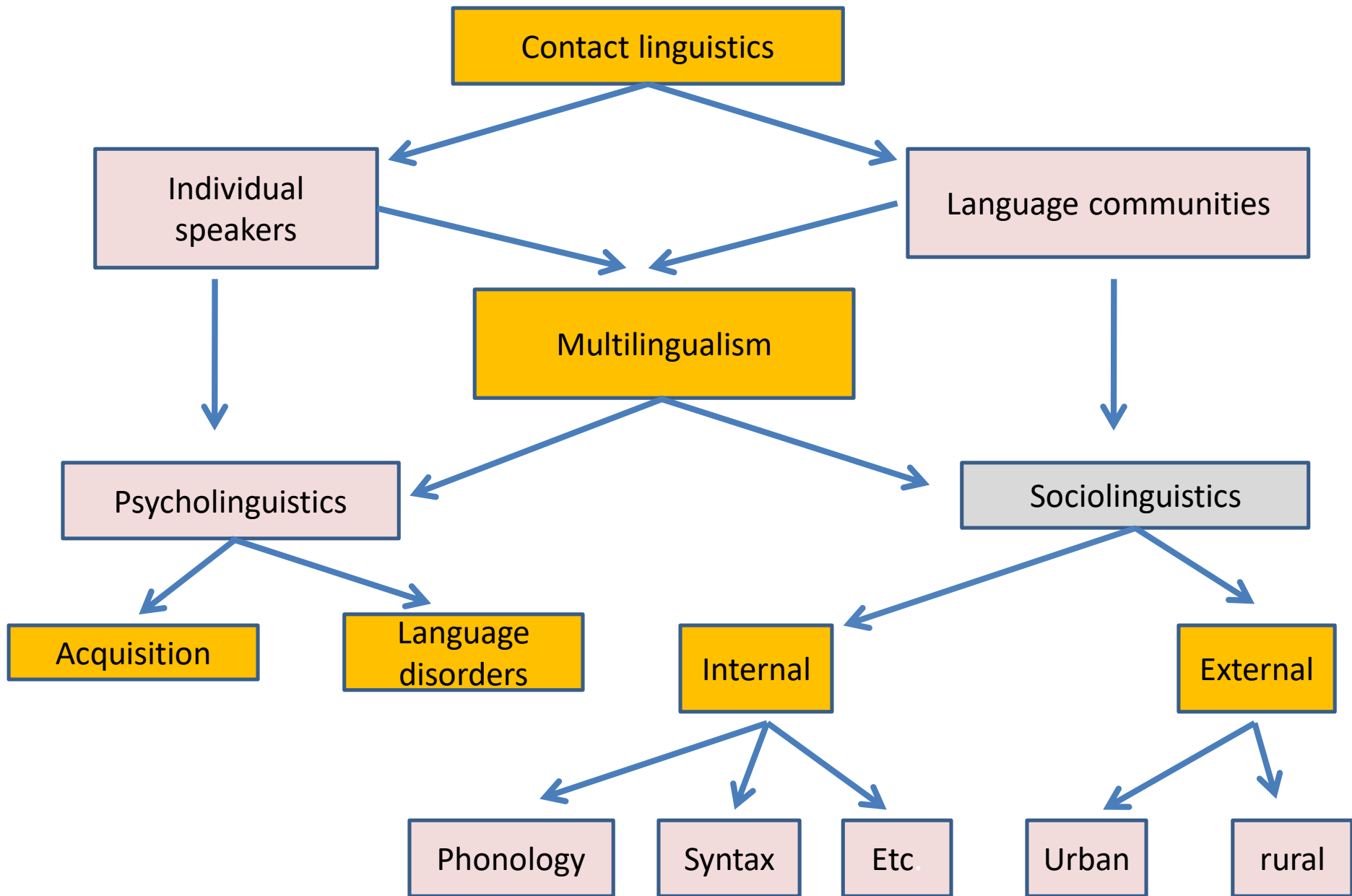
Scientific research on multilingualism has experienced numerous stimuli, the majority of which can be attributed to language contact research to Weinreich's tradition and his famous work *Languages in Contact* (1953).

His work was based on the fact that speakers of language communities, rather than languages on an abstract level, are in contact with one another, and that any analysis of multilingual behaviour is useless without consideration of the linguistic and cultural roots of the given situation.

It is recognized that the majority of the world's population is multilingual, so that multilingualism is to be regarded as the norm rather than the exception.

Although multilingualism and language contact between individuals and groups are as old as Babylonian confusion of tongues , language contact research first obtained a secure position in applied linguistics in the 1970's through the development of the social sciences.

Its greater importance in many parts of the world led to an interdisciplinary interest in contact linguistics, whose relation to multilingualism can be portrayed graphically



II. What is Contact Linguistics

As an interdisciplinary branch of multilingual research, contact linguistics incorporates three areas of inquiry: language use, language user and language sphere.

The significant parameters of contact linguistics are linguistic levels (phonology, syntax, lexicon) and also discourse, analysis , stylistics and pragmatics.

In addition there are external factors: nation, language community, migration....

The type multilingualism is also relevant, in other words, it manifests itself as individual, institutional, or state bilingualism, as social multilingualism, as diglossia or dialect, or as natural or artificial multilingualism for which the immediate levels – such as so called semilingualism or interlinguistics– must be considered.

The structuring of social groups is of crucial importance to the language user. Besides the conventional differences of age, sex, and social relationships, minority status receives special attention from researchers of multilingualism.

Above and beyond these factors , all of the sectors responsible for the social interplay of a language community play an essential role. Added to the traditional sectors like religion, politics, culture, and science in the last decades are others like technology, industry, city administration and, most recently also media, advertising, and data processing.

In the educational/cultural sector, the schools occupy a special place, as they are constantly exposed to next forms and models of multilingual multilingual instruction.

The question of whether bilingual or multilingual education will interfere with a child's right to use his/her mother (home, first, colloquial) tongue depends mainly on the intentions of the respective language planners, so that uniformity and integration, instead of language maintenance, constitute the motivating forces of multilingual instruction

In order to simplify the issue , the underprivileged must submit to bilingual education and thus to assimilation. Contact processes that have concerned researchers in multilingualism since the beginning are partly diachronic and partly synchronic in nature.

Besides language change , borrowing processes, interference, and language mixing, there are lingua francae, language alienation , language maintenance and loss, code switching, pidginization, and creolization.

The effects of such language contact processes can be registered by measuring language consciousness and attitude. Language loyalty and prestige play a decisive role in the linguistic identity of a multilingual person, and extreme care must be taken in interpreting so-called language statistics (censuses and public opinion surveys)

The language spheres in which in which considerations of multilingualism have become indispensable extend over numerous areas of study and are , furthermore, dependent on the respective level of development and interest.

These include, to name a few, language policy, language planning, language , language contact in multinational industries and organizations language care and revitalization among minorities as well as single development , planned languages and the role of English as a world language with all effects on the respective individual languages.

Such a bird's view shows well enough how extensive , interdisciplinary, and yet specialized the field of multilingualism is as related to contact linguistics.

More extensive explanation will be included in the coming lectures related to:

1- Contact and Conflict

- a- Ethnic contact and conflict and sociology
- b- political language contact and conflict
- c- Language conflict and Contact Linguistics

2- Essential Principles of Contact Linguistics

3- Typology of Conflict

- a- Natural language conflict
- b- Artificial language conflict
- c- Future Prospects

d- Language Planning

e- language and education

f- Language and the law