

CHAPTER 7

LANGUAGE CHOICE PATTERNS IN THE SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS DOMAINS, AND INTRA- AND INTER-ETHNIC INTERACTIONS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the language choice patterns of the respondents in the social and religious domains, and in *intra-* and *inter-ethnic* interactions. The social domain includes respondents' interaction with circles of friends and interlocutors in informal settings such as at recreational places and during community activities. Apart from home and the workplace, a great deal of speakers' leisure time is spent in these places. While language choice at the workplace is rather constrained by the formality of social situations, on the other hand interaction in the social domain (and at home) is informal, and speakers interact at the personal level. In the social domain, although Malay and English are the dominant languages spoken, we see greater use of Bidayuh by speakers with certain social profiles.

As indicated in Chapter 1 of this thesis, data on language choice patterns of the Bidayuh graduates were collected by means of a questionnaire obtained through in-depth interview, and participant observation. The procedures of data collection and analysis of survey questionnaire are detailed out in Section 5.2-5.7 of this thesis. The procedures of "participant observation" are described in the next section.

7.2 Participant observation in various settings and domains of language use

In Section 5.6: Survey respondents, it was mentioned that a purposive sampling technique was used in this study, and samples taken are limited to a few organisations so that patterns of language choice between organisations and within a single organisation can be interpreted by reference to settings and context of interaction. The interviews with the respondents were normally conducted either in their homes or at the work place, and this has given the opportunity for the researcher to actually observe the language behavior of the educated Bidayuh while conducting their daily affairs. At the workplace, the researcher had the opportunity to listen to conversations between the respondents, and their clients and colleagues from the same ethnic group as well as from other ethnic groups. For instance, respondents are seen switching codes between Malay and English when talking to various interlocutors on the phone. This was noted down as field notes. Later, the researcher would ask the interviewees the identity of the interlocutors from the telephone conversation, and the reasons for the patterns of choice with each interlocutor. It is also observed that speakers may employ monolingual pattern, or uses a mixed code or code-switched patterns with interlocutors in various social situations and social events.

The observations in other settings (home, recreational places, church services and religious gatherings, community activities, and during festive seasons) were also conducted in the same manner; that is either researcher participates in the event or as an observer, and utilising field notes and/or audio recording as instruments of documentation of the events.

The length and frequency of the observation depends on the event. For the appointment of DBNA new office bearers, the researcher plays the role as an observer for a two-day event. On other occasions, during an informal dinner function, or religious gatherings, the observation was for several hours. Observation of the respondents at recreational places was conducted at intervals for duration of two weeks. During festive seasons, the researcher follows two groups of older and younger respondents in two consecutive days visiting friends and relatives, and was able to observe patterns of choice in intra-group interaction. In addition to this event, observation of intra-group interaction was conducted at the workplace, DBNA office, during recreational activities and cultural events.

7.3 Language choice patterns in the social domain

The data on language choice patterns described in this section is taken from survey responses to Question 34-36 of the Questionnaire, and from participant observation in various settings. Basically, respondents were asked to indicate the social activities they are involved in apart from home and the workplace, and the “languages spoken most of the time” in these places.

Table 7.1 below summarises the choice of language(s) spoken “most of the time” in the social domain. It should be noted that speakers may indicate more than one language or a bilingual pattern as main languages spoken in the social domain. Based on frequency counts, Malay and English are the most popular choices. Forty people or 43% of the respondents indicate Malay and 33 people (35%) indicate English. Twenty people (22%) indicate their preference for Bidayuh in this domain.

Table 7.1: The choice of languages spoken in the social domain

Languages	Younger Speakers	Older Speakers	Total no. of counts
Bidayuh	11 (22.5%)	9 (20.5%)	20 (21.5%)
Malay	25 (51%)	15 (34%)	40 (43%)
English	13 (26.5%)	20 (45.5)	33 (35.5%)
Total no. of counts	49	44	93

Note: N = 93 indicate the total number of occurrence of language preferences

In terms of age-groups, Malay is the preferred choice among the younger respondents. Twenty-five people (51%) indicate preference for Malay in the social domain. Among older respondents, English records the highest number of counts (20 people or 45.5%), while Malay is spoken by 15 people (34%).

Table 7.2 below illustrates the “patterns of choice” of the educated Bidayuh in the social domain. Overall, the most common patterns of choices in the social domain are: “dominant Malay” pattern (16 respondents), “dominant English” (14 respondents) and “bilingual Malay-English” pattern (10 respondents). In terms of age-groups, the most popular pattern of choice among the younger speakers is “dominant Malay” pattern (11 respondents), whereas pattern most frequently employed by older speakers is “dominant English” (9 respondents). Nevertheless, these facts do not seem to suggest that age is a major factor for group variation in “patterns of choice” observed; the patterns are fairly distributed between the two age-groups, and does not characterise a particular age-group. Further examination into the social background of the respondents reveals that speaker’s social circles dictate patterns of language choice in this domain.

Table 7.2: Patterns of language choice between younger and older respondents in the social domain

Patterns of language choice		Younger speakers (Under 39)	Older speakers (39 & above)	Total no. of Respon.	%
Monolingual Pattern	Dominant Bidayuh (B)	3	1	4	6.6 %
	Dominant English (E)	5	9	14	22.9%
	Dominant Malay (M)	11	5	16	26.2%
Bilingual Pattern	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 no. of respondents	34	27	61	100%

Table 7.3: Categories of speakers based on language choice patterns in the social domain

Category of speaker	Younger speakers 39 and below	Older speakers 40 and above	Total no. Of respondents
Category 1: Speak Bidayuh as main language	9 (26.5%)	4 (14.8%)	13 (21%)
Category 2: Speak none or little Bidayuh	23 (67.6%)	18 (66.6%)	41 (67%)
Category 3: speak more 3-4 languages including Bidayuh	2 (5.9)	5 (18.5)	7 (12%)
Total no. of respondents	34 (55.7)	27 (44.3)	61 (100%)

Table 7.3 above shows the categories of speakers according to language choice patterns in the social domain. Speakers can be grouped into three major categories:

- Category 1 - Respondents who speak Bidayuh as main language
- Category 2 - Respondents who speak none or little Bidayuh
- Category 3 - Respondents who speak 3-4 languages including Bidayuh

A total of 13 respondents (21%) indicate Bidayuh as the main language spoken in the social domain (Category 1). These speakers interact regularly with fellow Bidayuh from the same dialect group. However, a majority of the respondents (41 speakers or 67%) falls under Category 2 i.e. those who speak none or little Bidayuh. Instead, Malay or English or bilingual *ME* or *IM* pattern is preferred for social

interaction in this domain. In other words, the Bidayuh language assumes a peripheral role for these speakers in the social domain. Seven people (12%) in Category 3 contend that they have no specific language preference for this domain. They speak several languages at their disposal with various types of interlocutors.

7.4 Social circle and language choice patterns in the social domain

A major factor that explains variations in patterns of language choice in the social domain is speaker's social circles. In this study, speakers may have relatively smaller social circles limited to a handful of friends at the workplace, neighbours and church group members. There are also speakers with social circles confined to a group of people from a similar social background, e.g. same age-group and same profession. Some older speakers socialise with a more diverse group in terms of ethnicity and social rank, and hence have developed larger social circles. Their network of friends may encompass members of recreational clubs, drinking buddies, professionals at the workplace, people who share the same aspiration and passion for community service, and members of various social organisations.

Social circle is dynamic. It changes at various stages of the life span of an individual. It evolves in accordance with speakers' engagement in social activities at one point in time. So, speakers may have a larger circle of friends in childhood and adolescent years, but may become selective with groups that they want to be associated with in older age. Other sources of social circle include the workplace as well as recreational and worshipping places. Sources of social circles also include association with people from similar culture and set of beliefs. In relation to the Bidayuh, it would be easier to contract friendship with natives than with non-natives because of similarity

in culture. Change in religion may also trigger a change in a person's social circles. For instance, upon conversion to Islam, a Bidayuh individual may include more Malay friends in his or her social circles. Generally, the male respondents in this study have larger social circles than their female counterparts mainly because of their involvement in social and community activities. Married female respondents typically have smaller social circles because of the limitation of time for social activities and family commitments.

The patterns of language choice in the social domain are considerably influenced by the nature of the speakers' social circles. For instance, some respondents live in Bidayuh villages, and commute to the workplace in the city. These individuals have two sets of social circles. They have maintained contacts with Bidayuh friends in the village and have circles of friends in the city. So, Malay and Bidayuh are utilised by these speakers in the social domain. Respondents whose social circle is rather confined to a group of people would most likely use predominantly one language in this domain. Family upbringing, school and childhood language experiences equally have bearings on a person's early socialisation process, and are contributing factors in shaping the nature of his or her social circles.

7.5 Patterns of choice and social profiles of speakers

This sub-section describes the social profiles and language experiences of the respondents in the three categories mentioned above. Speakers in each category share some similarities in social background which have accounted for their preferences of patterns of choice in the social domain.

7.5.1 Social profiles of speakers in Category 1 - Respondents who utilise the Bidayuh language

Speakers in Category 1 are those who have indicated the Bidayuh language as the language they speak “most of time” in the social domain. There are only 13 speakers (21%) in this category: Four persons with “dominant Bidayuh” pattern, two persons with “Bidayuh-English” pattern, six persons with “Malay-Bidayuh” pattern, and one person with “Iban-Bidayuh” pattern. The following paragraphs describe the social profiles of speakers in each category.

a. Dominant Bidayuh

There are three younger speakers and one older speaker with “dominant Bidayuh” pattern in this domain. Presumably, Bidayuh with this pattern would have circles of friends who mainly constitute fellow Bidayuh from the same dialect group, and remain strongly attached to the community in the village although they may also have become urban dwellers. These speakers spent most of their childhood years in the village. The younger respondents have never lived beyond the boundaries of the Kuching-Samarahan Division, even when pursuing a university degree. Speakers No. 35 and 4, both younger female respondents (aged 26 and 31 respectively) indicate that approximately 80% of their friends constitute Bidayuh. Their circles of friends are confined to a group of childhood friends from their villages and ex-schoolmates from their respective areas i.e. Krokong and Quop. They attended schools situated in Bidayuh areas. Speaker No.35 went to *SRB St Stephen* and *SMK Bau*, and Speaker No.42 to *SRB St James*, Quop and *SMK Penrissen No.1*. Although, they work in the city, they would return to their villages during weekends. Speaker No. 48 (male, aged 32, Jagoi speaker)

currently resides in a Bidayuh village (Kampung Kapit, Bau), and commutes daily to the workplace in the city.

The older respondent with this pattern i.e. Speaker No. 17 (aged 50, male, Jagoi speaker) said that he interacted largely with fellow Bidayuh on a social level because of his active involvement in youth clubs and other informal groups organised by the community. On these occasions, Bidayuh is the main language spoken. In addition, he mixes with a circle of Bidayuh friends who are professionals from the workplace, and members of two main Bidayuh organisations – Dayak Bidayuh National Association (*DBNA*) and Bidayuh Graduate Association (*BGA*). On the whole, with Bidayuh professionals from these organisations, he would speak Bidayuh (70%) with occasional switchings to English (30%). Although he spent 11 years of his life outside the Kuching-Samarahan Division, he displays positive attitude that reflects allegiance towards the mother tongue and the Bidayuh community.

b. Bilingual pattern Bidayuh-English (BE) and Malay-Bidayuh (MB)

Generally, the respondents who indicate a bilingual pattern i.e. *BE* and *MB* patterns in the social domain have social circles that are fairly balanced between Bidayuh and non-Bidayuh. Although they reside in the city, apparently, the respondents in both categories (*BE* and *MB* pattern of choice) maintain circles of Bidayuh friends who they may have been acquainted with since childhood and adolescent days. These speakers use Malay or English as one of their main languages alongside Bidayuh in the social domain. They have a network of urban friends, with whom they spend their leisure time at recreational places, as well as a social circle that constitutes Bidayuh interlocutors from their involvement in community activities.

Speakers with the *BE* pattern are older in age. Bidayuh is spoken with dialect group members and English is preferred rather than Malay in *out-group* situations e.g. in interactions with other ethnic groups or dialect group members.

Speakers with the *MB* pattern, on the other hand are younger and they prefer the Malay language to English alongside Bidayuh in the social domain although they are also competent speakers of English. These respondents return to Bidayuh villages during weekends, and the Bidayuh language is spoken with village residents. When they are in the city, Malay is preferred with urban friends in their social circle. The preference for the Malay language can also be a consequence of intermarriage to a Malay, and/or being raised in Malay or/and native environment in childhood and adolescent years. During school and university days, these speakers socialise with natives who use Malay as a medium of communication. As a result, they have become well-versed in the local Malay dialect. A Bidayuh speaker who is married to a Malay would normally be assimilated into the larger Malay community, culturally and linguistically, and a great deal of time spent in the social domain would be largely related to the Islamic faith.

c. Bilingual Pattern Iban-Bidayuh (1B)

The respondent who uses Bidayuh and Iban in the social domain is a female Jagoi speaker, aged 36. Her friends are mainly Bidayuh and Iban from various social backgrounds – teachers, nurses, housewives, church friends and ex-schoolmates. With the few Malay friends she has, she speaks the local Malay dialect. With Bidayuh from other groups, a combination of Malay, Iban and Bidayuh is spoken. Being raised in army camps situated in other parts of Malaysia (i.e. Sibuh and West Malaysia), she learns

to speak Iban with Iban neighbours. Back then, Bidayuh was spoken with parents and Iban with siblings. With friends, she would speak Iban and a variety of Malay spoken in West Malaysia. When she returned to Kuching, initially she spoke Iban with siblings. Villagers called them ‘anak Iban’ (Iban children). Gradually, the pattern of choice shifted to Bidayuh after residing in the village for about a year. So, being well versed in Iban, she has also made many friends from this community.

7.5.2 Social profiles of speakers in Category 2 - Respondents who speak none or little Bidayuh

This sub-section summarises the social profile and language experiences of the 41 respondents who state their preferences for major languages, namely English or Malay or both, in the social domain. There are 23 younger speakers and 18 older ones with this pattern. The patterns of choice are “dominant Malay” (16 speakers), “dominant English (14 speakers), “bilingual Malay-English” (10 speakers) and “bilingual Iban-Malay” (1 speaker). The Bidayuh language plays a peripheral role in the daily communication of these urban Bidayuh. It is only spoken with Bidayuh relatives and friends in the village.

a Dominant Malay Pattern

There are 11 younger speakers and 5 older ones with “dominant Malay” pattern of choice. Although not exclusively a trait of younger speakers in this study, individuals with dominant *M* pattern of choice were raised in the city, and have assumed urban norms in interaction. Generally, speakers with this pattern learn to socialise with schoolmates and neighbours from other ethnic groups at a very early age, and have been

assimilated into the larger community for a longer time. The preference for the Sarawak Malay dialect in the social domain is the result of the process of early socialisation in formative years and their “upbringing”. These speakers were educated in schools where students are mostly natives (e.g. MRSM, SMK Batu Lintang, Kuching). The local Malay dialect is the main language for social interaction with peers in school and neighborhood. In childhood and adolescent days, they interact with neighbours and circles of friends who are mainly natives, and Malay is preferred among peers in their social circle.

Three respondents (i.e. Speaker No. 20, 21 and 45) with this pattern have always spoken the local Malay dialect in most social situations even with family members at home. Two persons have experienced living in police quarters, where the Malay language was largely spoken even with family members. The two speakers with this experience are also less competent in the Bidayuh language. Apparently, the experience of living in a confined community (i.e. police/army barracks) has a profound impact on their current language choice patterns (also see Chapter 8 of this thesis). They have also intermarried with Malays. As a result, their daily interaction also includes largely members of this community. Despite being competent in English, the younger speakers with this pattern prefer Malay for social interaction and English for work purposes. In other words, these speakers have a clear dichotomy of language to be employed in formal and informal interactions. They contend that the local Malay dialect is the “in-thing” (current style) for social interaction with peers. English, on the other hand, is used when conversation involves “serious” matters.

The older respondents with this pattern are lecturers or teachers by profession. They also went to schools in the city and spent long periods of time (13 -17 years)

outside the Kuching-Samarahan Division to pursue their academic degrees. Two people intermarried with other natives, and use Malay within the family. Their social circle includes largely natives from various social backgrounds, and Malay is spoken in most social situations because it is the language comprehensible to people from various social backgrounds.

The following paragraphs describe language experiences typical of younger respondents with this pattern. Speaker No. 36 (aged 24, male, Biatah speaker) states Malay is a popular choice in informal interaction with peers in the city. Malay is preferred with ex-school and university mates, and friends contracted at the workplace. He has also developed friendship with individuals during field trips in Bidayuh kampongs, and speaks Bidayuh occasionally during these trips. In childhood and adolescent days, his neighbours and circles of friends were natives. He went to MRSM (a junior science college in the city) and was away at the matriculation centre in Labuan, Sabah. These institutions provide predominantly native environment. His circle of friends has always preferred the Malay language in interaction. Back then, he had few Bidayuh friends. His village, Kampung Semadang, Borneo Heights is about 30 miles from the capital city, and was then inaccessible by road. The Bidayuh peers he encountered with in the city also speak Malay or employ the MB pattern with him. In such a situation, he had little opportunity to speak the community language.

b. Bilingual Malay-English (ME) pattern

There are six younger speakers and four older ones with this pattern of choice. Generally, speakers with the *ME* pattern were also raised in the city, and spent for most of their life in urban settings. English as much as Malay is spoken in the social domain.

The older speakers with this pattern interact with interlocutors from diverse backgrounds, and typically have a larger social circle. For example, Speaker No. 47, who works at an academic institution have social circles that include students and associates from the academic world. He is actively involved in community works, and his regular encounter includes professionals and non-professionals from various social groups.

Interestingly, the younger speakers with this pattern share very distinct characteristics. They were brought up in homes where English is spoken as the main language of communication. These speakers have educated parents and mastery of English was inculcated at home and in school. They were also raised in multicultural neighbourhood, and socialise with their neighbours in the local Malay dialect. With this type of upbringing, they learn to communicate well in Malay and English. Another social variable which defines speakers with this pattern is school experience. These speakers went to mission schools in the city (e.g. St Teresa, St Joseph, Kuching) where the use of English is cultivated among students from various ethnic groups. Hence, they have also learned to socialise early in English, and naturally have circles of friends of similar social profile.

The language experiences described in the following paragraphs are typical of younger Bidayuh speakers with educated parents. Indeed, this seems to be the current trend with younger generation Bidayuh of similar social backgrounds. The emphasis on mastery of major languages, in particular English, for social advancement, and the widespread use of Malay and English in the media and the school has affected to some extent the use of the mother tongue, and proficiency in the Bidayuh language.

Speaker No.1 (aged 29, female, Biatah speaker) has a social circle that includes associates at the workplace and ex-schoolmates. She went to mission schools in the city (i.e. SRB and SMB St Teresa) and was raised by educated parents. She has always lived in the city, but regularly returns to Kampung Masaan, Siburan (15-20 km from Kuching) during weekends. In Kuching, she uses Malay and English most of the time, and switches to Bidayuh occasionally. Bidayuh is spoken mainly with relatives when she returns to the village in Siburan (now, a sub-urban area). In fact, she claims to have difficulties when interacting with fellow Bidayuh in the village, and would code-switch between Malay and Bidayuh to overcome this problem. It may be suggested that her upbringing has affected the acquisition of the community language.

Speaker No. 27 is a young male Biatah speaker (aged 26) who resides in the city during week days but returns to Kampung Bunuk (a Bidayuh residential area situated 34 km from Kuching) during weekends. His social circle includes ex-university friends, church group members, and individuals with whom he spends his leisure time in recreational places in the city. His friends are of various races and English is preferred among members in his social circles. Nonetheless, with Malay interlocutors, he prefers the local Malay dialect. His circle of friends constitutes professionals and most of them have educated parents. Initially, he attempted to converse in the local dialect with this circle of friends, but the crowd he mixes with chooses English. He is also actively involved in youth activities organised by church groups in his village. On this occasion, he speaks a mixture of Bidayuh, English and the local Malay dialect with Bidayuh interlocutors. These individuals, like himself stay in Kuching during weekdays and return to the village during the weekend. Irrespective of the setting, whether he is in Kuching or back in the village, the same pattern of choice is employed with this crowd. With kampong folks, only Bidayuh is spoken. Like the other speakers with this pattern,

he also went to mission schools - SRB St Paul, Bunuk and later to SMK Siburan. These places are within the proximity of the capital city.

c. Dominant English pattern

There are five younger speakers and nine older ones with “dominant English” (E) pattern. Speakers with this pattern speak English most of the time with friends in their social circles and occasionally, switching to the local Malay dialect or/and Bidayuh in conversations. The older respondents with this pattern interact with people that have a similar social profile - same age-group, professionals and English-educated. The female speakers describe their social circle as exclusively “professionals”. For instance, Speaker No. 48 says her social circle includes professionals at the workplace, friends in the neighborhood, and “cell group members” from the Catholic Church. Female respondents report that after marriage, they have little time for social activities. Their social circle has shrunk to include a couple of close friends from childhood and the workplace, and these are professionals and English-speaking individuals.

The younger speakers with this pattern typically socialise with urban peers who have embraced metropolitan values. Their circles of friends constitute people they hang out with for a night out in the city - in clubs, pubs, cyber cafes, etc. In these settings, English is generally the preferred choice in interaction. Speaker No. 32 (aged 32, male Singgai speaker), states that the majority of his friends are Chinese and other Dayaks who reside in the city, and English is preferred in interaction irrespective of level of education. He received his education in mission schools in Bau town and in Kuching (St. Joseph). He doesn't speak much Malay as he has few Malay friends. Likewise, Speaker No.29 (aged 23, male, of mixed parentage Bidayuh-Chinese) who is unable to

communicate in Bidayuh indicates a “90% English” spoken in social interaction, whereas the Chinese constitute 90% of the “metropolitan” friends he mixes with.

d. Bilingual Iban-Malay (IM) pattern

The speaker with “bilingual Iban-Malay” pattern is a female Jagoi speaker of Bidayuh-Iban mixed parentage. She has not acquired the Bidayuh language, and hence does not speak the language in daily interaction. Despite her “urban” upbringing, she prefers indigenous languages in the social domain.

7.5.3 Profiles of multilingual Bidayuh (Category 3)

The speakers in Category 3 use several languages at their disposal in the social domain, namely Malay, Bidayuh, English and/or Iban (MBE or MBEI pattern of choice). The language behaviour that they display with interlocutors in this domain manifests “true multilingual” in interaction. Relatively, they have a larger social circle that encompasses people from diverse social backgrounds. The language choice patterns of some of these multilingual are described in the following sub-sections.

a. Malay-Bidayuh-English (MBE) pattern

Five people indicate this pattern; one younger speaker and four older ones. The following paragraphs describe three speakers with this pattern. Speaker No. 10 (aged 51, male) is a Bukar speaker who is also competent in several Bidayuh isolects (i.e. Biatah, Jagoi and Tringus-Sembaan) in addition to Malay and English. The Biatah language was first learned through interaction with his spouse’s relatives, while Jagoi

was acquired through interactions in school. He is also able to converse in Iban, at least in casual conversation. The native tongues (Bidayuh, Iban and local Malay) were also acquired through working experience. He often renders his service in community activities (e.g. giving motivational talk and parenting skills to Bidayuh villagers). He is a member of the village working committee and chairman of the School Management Board in his village. Depending on the audience, English and Bidayuh are spoken on these occasions. He would speak Bidayuh with village folks, but English and Bidayuh with educated ones. In addition, he has a circle of friends from the professional group, and English is the matrix language with occasional switches to Malay in interaction. English is preferred on this occasion because of the depth of conversation and for effective deliberation on the subject matter. The Malay language is spoken with less educated Malays and other Dayaks. With his Chinese neighbours who are not English-speaking individuals, he would speak the local Malay dialect coupled with some phrases in Hakka. With his circle of Bidayuh friends whom he plays badminton regularly with, he converses in the Bidayuh dialects.

Speaker No.44 (aged 50, male, Jagoi) is competent in Jagoi and Biatah, and has some understanding of the Bukar-Sadong dialect. He is a committee member for several informal groups in his village – e.g. development task force in his village and Alumni Association of Ex-Students of Serasot. On these occasions, he uses Bidayuh and English. In social interaction in urban settings, the language generally used with the circle of non-Bidayuh friends is usually English with occasional switchings to Malay, Iban and Hakka. Switchings between Bidayuh and English is the pattern employed with fellow Bidayuh from the same dialect group. Malay or English or a combination of the two is spoken with Bukar-Sadong speakers. With church group members, English is spoken; with pub friends and golfers, it is Malay. He spent his childhood days in the

village (Kampung Serasot, Bau) and stayed in boarding schools (i.e. SMK Lake and SMK TAR) in adolescent years before pursuing his degrees overseas. He has lived away from Kuching-Samarahan Division for 16 years. In his adolescent years, he had always spoken Bidayuh, Malay and English in the social domain.

Speaker No. 39 (aged 55, male, Bukar speaker) deliberates that involvement in social activities allows him to meet people from various social backgrounds. Language choice would depend on the audience and the social situation. For example, when giving motivational talk and workshop organised by DBNA, he would conduct it in Bidayuh if the audience constitutes village folks, but English is used when the audience constitutes students and teachers. In meetings with members of the education sub-committee and church committee members, English is spoken as these are formal situations. But social chats with Bidayuh church members require him to speak in the Bidayuh language because it creates warmth between speakers, and expresses solidarity with group members. He received early education in schools in Serian town (i.e Ayer Manis Primary/ Secondary School) and in the city (Deshon Secondary School and Sunny Hill Secondary School). He spoke Malay, English and Bidayuh with friends in those days, and this pattern is maintained in informal interaction at the present time.

b. Malay-Bidayuh-English-Iban (MBEI) pattern

There are two respondents with *MBEI* pattern. Speaker No. 41 (male, aged 47, Biatah speaker) uses Malay, English, Bidayuh and Iban with his interlocutors in informal interactions. He claims to be a fast learner in learning languages. He is a competent speaker of the Jagoi and Biatah isolects, and is able to communicate sufficiently in Tringgus-Sembahaan and Bukar-Sadong. Besides English and Malay, he

is very competent in Iban (his spouse is an Iban). Other “dialects” of Bidayuh are also learned through involvement in community work, school and working experiences. In adolescent years, he played football with natives, and spoke the local Malay dialect and Iban. Now, he plays tennis regularly with friends from various ethnic groups. Occasionally, he participates in village activities e.g. fund raising, village development projects, motivational talks etc. He speaks the four languages mentioned above according to the interlocutor.

He spent his childhood years in Siburan (a Bidayuh village 16th mile/25km from Kuching). At that time, his social circle was limited to Bidayuh friends in his village; thus Bidayuh was the main language spoken then. Later, he went for secondary education in Penrissen Secondary School and Kolej Abdillah in the city. These are predominantly native schools and naturally he picked up the local Malay dialect in this environment. He was away from Kuching-Samarahan Division for 17 years and 11 of these years were spent in Sri Aman, an Iban-populated area. This accounts for his competency in the Iban language.

Speaker No. 34 (aged 30, male, Bukar-Sadong speaker) is competent in the mother tongue, and has some knowledge of the “dialects” of other Bidayuh groups. He also communicates with general ease in four languages: Bidayuh, Iban, Malay and English in social interactions with friends. This pattern has been nurtured since childhood and adolescent years through interaction in school and neighbourhood. He had his primary and secondary education in the city (St Thomas School) and later pursued his undergraduate degree locally. While at university (i.e. UiTM), he polished his proficiency in the Iban language. He has experienced staying in police barracks in

Kuching, where Malay and Iban are the main languages spoken. This explains his comfortability in these languages.

In social interaction with close friends, he speaks the local Malay dialect, Bidayuh and Iban depending on the interlocutor. At present, this pattern is maintained with friends in informal interaction. In games (i.e. football), he speaks the local Malay dialect as group members are mostly from this ethnic community. His church pals are Chinese and Iban, hence English and Iban are preferred in encounters with these ethnic groups. Bidayuh is spoken at home and with Bidayuh friends. He contends that he has no language preferences in social interaction with friends. He speaks the language(s) preferred by the interlocutor.

Table 7.4 below summarises the “patterns of choice” in the social domain. A description of speaker profiles is also given.

Table 7.4: Patterns of choice in the social domain and speaker profiles

Pattern of choice	Speaker profile
Monolingual Bidayuh	<p>These speakers spent most of their childhood years in Bidayuh villages, and/or have never settled beyond the boundaries of Kuching-Samarahan Division, even to pursue a university degree.</p> <p>They remain strongly attached to the community although have become urban dwellers.</p> <p>Their social circles mainly constitute fellow Bidayuhs from the same dialect group.</p>
Bilingual Bidayuh-English (BE) Malay-Bidayuh (MB)	<p>The speakers with this pattern have social circles that are fairly balanced between Bidayuh and non-Bidayuh.</p> <p>They have a network of urban friends with whom they spend their leisure time at recreational places, as well as social circles that constitute Bidayuh interlocutors from their involvement in community activities.</p> <p>Speakers with <i>BE</i> pattern are older speakers.</p> <p>Speaker with <i>MB</i> pattern are younger speakers who prefer the Malay language to English alongside Bidayuh in the social domain although they are also competent speakers of English. The preference for Malay can also be a consequence of intermarriage to a Malay, or/and being raised in Malay or native environment in formative years or/and school influence.</p>
Iban-Bidayuh (IB)	<p>The speaker has social circles constituting mainly Bidayuh and Iban from various social backgrounds. She was raised in confined environment (i.e. army camps), and acquired the Iban language through interaction with Iban neighbours.</p>

<p>Monolingual Malay</p>	<p>Despite being competent in English, speakers with this pattern prefer Malay for interaction in the social domain whilst preferring English specifically for work purpose.</p> <p>Although not exclusively a trait of younger speakers, individuals with this pattern have social circles constituting urban dwellers who are mainly natives from various social backgrounds.</p> <p>The speakers were raised in the city, and spent for most of their life in urban settings. They learn to socialise with schoolmates and neighbours from other ethnic groups at a very early age, and were assimilated into the larger community for a longer time.</p> <p>Some speakers have intermarried with Malays; hence, social circles constitute largely Malays.</p> <p>The speakers were raised in native dominated environment in school and neighborhood where local Malay dialect was preferred for social interaction with peers.</p> <p>Some respondents were uprooted from the Bidayuh community in formative years, and speak the local Malay dialect in most social situations even with family members at home.</p>
<p>Bilingual Malay-English (ME)</p>	<p>The speakers were also raised in the city, and spent most of their life in urban settings. English as much as Malay is spoken in the social domain.</p> <p>The older speakers with this pattern interact with interlocutors from diverse backgrounds, and typically have a larger social circle.</p> <p>The younger speakers with this pattern share very distinct characteristics. The use of English was inculcated at home and in mission school. They were also raised in multicultural neighborhood, and socialise with their neighbors in the local Malay dialect. With such upbringing, they learn to communicate well in Malay and English</p>
<p>Monolingual English</p>	<p>The speakers with this pattern have social circles that constitute people of similar social profile - same age-group, professionals, and English-educated.</p> <p>Respondents with this pattern are older respondents and married female professionals whose social circles have shrunk to include a couple of close friends from childhood and workplace, who are professionals and English-speaking individuals.</p> <p>The younger speakers with this pattern typically socialise with urban peers who have embraced metropolitan values. Their social circles constitute people they hang out with for a night out in the city - in clubs, pubs, cyber cafes, etc. In these places, English is generally the preferred choice in interaction.</p>
<p>Bilingual Iban-Malay</p>	<p>The speaker is of mixed parentage Bidayuh-Iban. She has not acquired the Bidayuh language, hence, does not speak the language in daily interaction. Despite her “urban” upbringing, she prefers indigenous languages in the social domain.</p>
<p>Malay-Bidayuh-English(MBE) Malay-Bidayuh-English-Iban (MBEI)</p>	<p>Respondents with these patterns of language choice are competent speakers of several languages which they utilise according to the ethnicity of the interlocutor. They have acquired various languages through working experiences and/or inter-ethnic marriages. Relatively, they have larger social circles that encompass people from diverse social backgrounds.</p>

To sum up, in the social domain, Malay and English are the main languages spoken by the respondents. Speaker variations in patterns of language choice reveal social circle as a major factor dictating choice. The majority of the Bidayuh speakers in this study was raised in urban settings, and has learned to socialise and assimilate with

urban community. These speakers have assumed urban norms in interaction, so Malay and English are preferred even with in-group members. Bidayuh plays a peripheral role in the social domain for most speakers in this study. Nevertheless, it should be noted that speaker's social circle is dynamic. Speakers may change their social circle, and uses more Bidayuh in mature age.

The analysis also shows that Malay is a popular choice for interaction among peers for younger speakers in this study. Presumably, this pattern would continue to dominate with the younger Bidayuh speakers in this community. The role of English though significant in daily life of these speakers would be confined to the workplace. Given that language choice is very much dictated by speaker's social circles, it is anticipated that the use of the Bidayuh language in the social domain would not increase significantly in the near future, because by then, the next generation would have gone through the same experience as their parents and grandparents, and Malay and English would continue to dominate. Unless, a Bidayuh lives in Bidayuh villages and sub-urban areas, the Bidayuh language would not be a major language in the social domain.

7.6 Language choice at recreational places

Observation was done at badminton court on two groups of Bidayuh speakers from the study. The first group is a mixed group in terms of gender, ethnicity and social rank. The speakers are older speakers. The second group is more homogenous, consisting of Bukar-Sadong speakers (all male and older speakers), a Malay, an Iban and a Biatah speaker. The group members are professionals and semi-professionals (i.e. technician, draftmen, and teachers).

In the first group, the Bidayuh speak Malay and English when addressing the larger group involving professionals and non-professionals. English is spoken with professionals. On a one-to-one interaction, however, language choice depends on the identity of the interlocutor. Contrary to the patterns employed by speakers in the first group, patterns of choice of Bidayuh speakers in the second group can be described as largely “Bidayuh as the matrix language with occasional switches to English” in *in-group* situation, that is when interacting with Bidayuh from the same dialect group (i.e. Bukar Sadong). But, a switch to English or Malay would be triggered by the presence of other races (i.e. Malays, Ibans) and Bidayuh from a different dialect group. It is also observed that switching to Bidayuh occurs when the topic of the conversation concerns community affairs. The badminton game was run in English. Throughout the game, Bidayuh speakers would interchangeably switch between English, Bidayuh and Malay.

7.7. Language choice during community activities

This sub-section describes the language choice of the Bidayuh speakers during community events. Observation was done in several settings – at the headquarters of two leading Bidayuh associations: Bidayuh Graduate Association (BGA) and Dayak Bidayuh National Association (DBNA), at a dinner function organised by the women’s wing of DBNA, at REDEEM centre in Singgai and in Bidayuh villages during the *Gawai Festival* celebration. The aim is to observe the choice of language in intra-ethnic interaction.

7.7.1 Observation of the appointment of new office bearers of DBNA and BGA

Observation was conducted on two main events – the appointment of new office bearers 2007 for Bidayuh Graduate Association (BGA) and The Triennial Appointment of Office Bearers for Dayak Bidayuh National Association (DBNA) 2008.

On the whole, the two events were conducted throughout in English (95%). This is to be expected because participants in interactions are generally older speakers. Speeches and deliberations by the delegates demonstrated an apparent fluency in the language. Very few occurrences of code-switching could be found during the entire event.

The use of Malay and Bidayuh was very minimal, limited to salutations and opening remarks at the beginning of each speech. In the Malaysian context, the formality of the social situation is marked by the use of address terms in salutation. For instance, during the opening ceremony of the DBNA event, the Master of Ceremony (MC) began his salutation by using address terms such as *Yang Berhormat*, *Yang Berbahagia etc.* in the presence of dignitaries. Other instances of the occurrence of Malay were observed when he ended his opening remarks with *Terima Kasih* (Thank you), and when he invited speakers to take the stand, he saying *Dipersilakan* (May we invite Mr.X.) and occasionally when making announcements. Instances of Malay were also observed in greetings and closure of speeches. Certain lexical items which are not in Bidayuh were borrowed from Malay in such formal events. Occasionally, speakers code-switched to Malay when cracking jokes. For instance, at the end of his speech, the DBNA president invited delegates to lunch and suggested to community members to get acquainted with the dignitaries (in this case, the State Secretary in the Chief Minister's

Department). The following excerpt shows the president switching from English to Malay after making a speech. When making jokes, he switched to Malay.

...so, we adjourn for lunch...the State Secretary is having his lunch ...so government servant ...this is a good opportunity for you to say hello to himminta naik pangkatkah, minta naik gajikah ...transferkah ... (ask for promotion, increase in salary...ask for transfer)

The following paragraphs give a brief description of language behaviour of Bidayuh speakers during the DBNA event. The event commences with a Christian prayer said in English. The Master of Ceremony (MC) spoke in the Biatah dialect (and sometimes borrowed lexical items in Malay) when executing his task throughout the event, e.g. introducing the speakers, making announcement and opening remarks. The Bidayuh language has not developed a register for this purpose, and this factor explains the code-switched pattern. After the opening remarks, minutes of meetings were read and matters pertaining to certain issues were discussed in English. Minutes prepared by the central committee were in English. Some reports from branches of DBNA were prepared in Malay. Nonetheless, on two occasions i.e. during question and answer sessions and during voting time for new office bearers of the association, some speakers preferred the use of the Malay language (e.g. when reporting on nomination counts for the candidates for new office bearers of the association). During lunch or tea break, speakers conversed in several languages depending on the interlocutor and languages shared between participants in interaction. In *in-group* (intra-dialectal) interaction, generally Bidayuh was the matrix language with occasional switches to English and Malay. In *out-group* (inter-dialectal) situation, Malay and English were spoken.

7.7.2 Observation during Gawai Dayak house visiting

The Gawai Dayak is a festival celebrated to mark the end of the paddy cultivation and the beginning of the harvesting season. The observation was done on two groups of speakers. The researcher followed a group of Bidayuh speakers (from the study) visiting their friends and houses of community leaders during the celebration. On these two occasions, the choice of language with friends varied. Bidayuh is preferred by older speakers whereas younger speakers prefer Malay and English for informal interactions with friends.

The first observation was conducted on a group of older speakers from the Bukar-Sadong sub-group. These speakers are professionals and non-professionals and members of DBNA. This is the same group of speakers observed during recreational activities. The speakers are close friends, and some of them knew each other since childhood. So, the relationships between speakers are intimate. The situation is informal and *in-group*, hence the Bidayuh language was spoken throughout the event. From time to time, there were instances of shifts to English. This occurred when they were addressing dignitaries and community leaders. (e.g. while addressing Yang Berhormat, Dato' Michael Manyin and his wife). Even in the presence of a member of another race, Bidayuh was spoken. English was only used when addressing the researcher. Switching to English occurred when cracking jokes (e.g. imitating or reiterating stories) and when making impromptu speeches in the presence of dignitaries.

The second observation involves interaction between younger female Bidayuh speakers (all graduates) with friends and relatives during *Gawai* celebration. There are

two Biatah speakers, two Singgai speakers and two Malay speakers (the researcher and another friend) in this group.

Throughout the conversation, the pattern of choice can be described as a “mixed” language. Most of the time, conversations were in Malay and English with occasional switches to Bidayuh. Occurrence of code-switching between the local Malay dialect and English was frequent and unpredictable. However, switching to Bidayuh is observed prevalent when the interlocutors constitute village folks, and relatives of the younger speakers. In short, in-group situation triggers the use of Bidayuh in interaction. The younger Bidayuh speakers were raised in urban settings. They socialise most of time in Malay and English in this environment. This explains their preference for Malay and English in social interaction with friends. It may also be suggested that dialect difference may prevent communication in Bidayuh between speakers from different dialect groups.

7.7.3 Observtion during DBNA women’s dinner function

The “get together” dinner function was held in 2007. It was organised by the women’s wing of DBNA. The participants in interaction come from various sub-groups of Bidayuh and social level. Overall, the Bidayuh language was predominantly spoken.

The MC (in her 30’s, female professional) used the Jagoi dialect with occasional switches to English in accomplishing her task. Despite the presence of audience from various sub-groups, English was not the main language. It was an informal event, so the community language is most suited for this purpose. It may be suggested that the Malay language was inappropriate for informal events involving community members. If it had

been an event for charity where there are dignitaries involved and the audience are largely from middle class and elites, English and Malay would be utilised.

The event began with an opening speech by the President of the women's wing of DBNA. Except for a few lines in Bidayuh in the introduction, the president (in late 40s' female Jagoi speaker, professional) delivered her speech throughout in English. Few occurrences of switching to Malay or Bidayuh could be found in her speech, which was typical of the language behaviour of older respondents in this study. Before dinner commenced, Christian prayers were said in Bidayuh Jagoi. During dinner, the Bidayuh "dialects" were heard spoken at each table by group members.

7.8 Language choice in the domain of religion

As mentioned earlier in Chapter 2 of this thesis, the majority of the Bidayuh speakers are followers of the Christian faith. In this study, eight people are Muslims contracted through marriage; the remaining respondents are Christians from various churches.

7.8.1 Language use in church service

In this study, the respondents were also asked to indicate their preference for church services attended. Most of them have no specific preference for the type of church services. They respondents attended church services wherever and whenever to their convenience i.e. the time of the day it is conducted and where they happen to be at the time (in the city or in the village). Normally, church services in towns and in the city are conducted in various languages. English services are usually conducted on

Saturday and early Sunday morning. The Bidayuh speakers reiterate that they attend Malay services because it is conducted later during the day and on Sundays. Likewise, in religious gatherings (e.g. Rosary day – blessing day) in the city, the event may take place fully in English or a mixture of Malay and English because of the multicultural setting. It is observed on these occasions participants speak various codes (Malay, Bidayuh, Iban and English) or mixed codes in one-to-one interaction with their interlocutors.

In Bidayuh villages, church services are conducted in the respective Bidayuh “dialects”. With the exception of hymns (which can also be sung in the Malay language), everything else - prayers, sermons, Bible reading, Hallaluyah, and “*I believe*” are conducted in the community language. On special occasions (Gawai and Christmas celebration) however, Malay may also be used to cater for visitors who do not understand Bidayuh. The hymns are sung in Malay, Bidayuh and English each week based on the theme according to the Catholic Calendar Year - e.g. “holy family week”, “holy spirit week” etc.. Prayer books written in English are translated into various regional dialects of Bidayuh for use in villages. Since there are sub-dialects within a single region, Bidayuh who live within the boundaries of a region use prayer books translated into the regional dialects. Hence, Bidayuh in the Bau area use prayer books written in the Singgai dialect. Bidayuh in Padawan-Siburan and Serian area will say their prayers in Biatah and Bukar respectively. Bidayuh from the Pinyawa’ sub-group in Lower Padawan will use prayer books written in Biatah (the regional dialect). Through the use of prayer books in Biatah, they learn to speak the “dialect”.

7.8.2 Language choice for praying

Table 7.5 below summarises the choice of languages of the respondents for “praying”. The frequency table illustrates that dominance of English for praying far exceeds Malay and Bidayuh with both categories of speakers. About half of the respondents indicate that English is the main language used for praying (on their own). More importantly, the breakdown of patterns of language choice (Table 7.6) shows that more than half of the respondents (38 of the 61 respondents) indicate that they use English most of time for praying. Relatively, a small number of respondents (15 people) indicate that they use Bidayuh or Bidayuh with Malay or/and English. Christianity was initially disseminated through English. This accounts for dominance of English in the domain of religion. Churches were built adjacent to mission schools. So, Bidayuh speakers who went to such schools first learned to pray in English. All the older speakers in this study indicate preference for English for praying. In comparison, patterns of choice for praying among the younger ones vary. One possible explanation for this pattern is because the younger ones were also taught to pray in Bidayuh and Malay. Moreover, prayer books are now made available in Bidayuh dialects, where previously they were non-existent. The domain of religion supports language maintenance.

Table 7.5: Summary of the choice of languages used for praying

Languages	Younger Speakers	Older Speakers	Total no. of counts
Bidayuh	12	3	15
Malay	4	23	27
English	20	25	45
Arabic	7	1	8
Total no. of counts	43	52	95

Table 7.6: Patterns of choice for praying

Patterns of language choice		Younger speakers (Under 39)	Older speakers (39 & above)	Total no. of Respon.	%
Monolingual Pattern	Dominant Bidayuh (B)	6	-	6	9.8
	Dominant English (E)	15	23	38	62.3
	Arabic and Malay	7	1	8*	13.1
Bilingual Pattern	Bidayuh-English (BE)	3	2	5	8.2
	Malay-Bidayuh (MB)	2	1	3	4.9
	Malay-Bidayuh-English (MBE)	1	-	1	1.64
Total no. of respondents		34	27	61	100%

Note: * Respondents who are Muslims

7.9 Summary of dominant languages used in various domains of language use

The following table summarises dominant languages spoken by the Bidayuh speakers in various domains of language use:

Table 7.7 Dominant languages used in various domains

Domains	Dominant languages
Social domain	Sarawak Malay and English
Family & Community	Bidayuh
Work domain	English and Standard Malay
Religious domain	English

On the whole, English appears to be the most dominant language spoken by the educated Bidayuh speakers in this study. It is predominantly used in three of the four major domains investigated i.e. work, social and religious domains. The use of the community language has been greatly reduced in urban settings, and confined to interaction with interlocutors in the family domain and community activities. The Sarawak Malay dialect has also become the speakers' major language for communication in the social domain.

7.10 Language choice patterns in intra- and inter-ethnic interactions

This sub-section discusses the results of the observation conducted specifically to investigate the language choice patterns of the educated Bidayuh in intra- and inter-ethnic interactions.

7.10.1 Social parameters determining choice in intra- and inter-ethnic interactions

Basically, at the micro-level, two main social variables dictate choice i.e. ethnicity and educational background of the interlocutor. This may be represented in the following diagram.

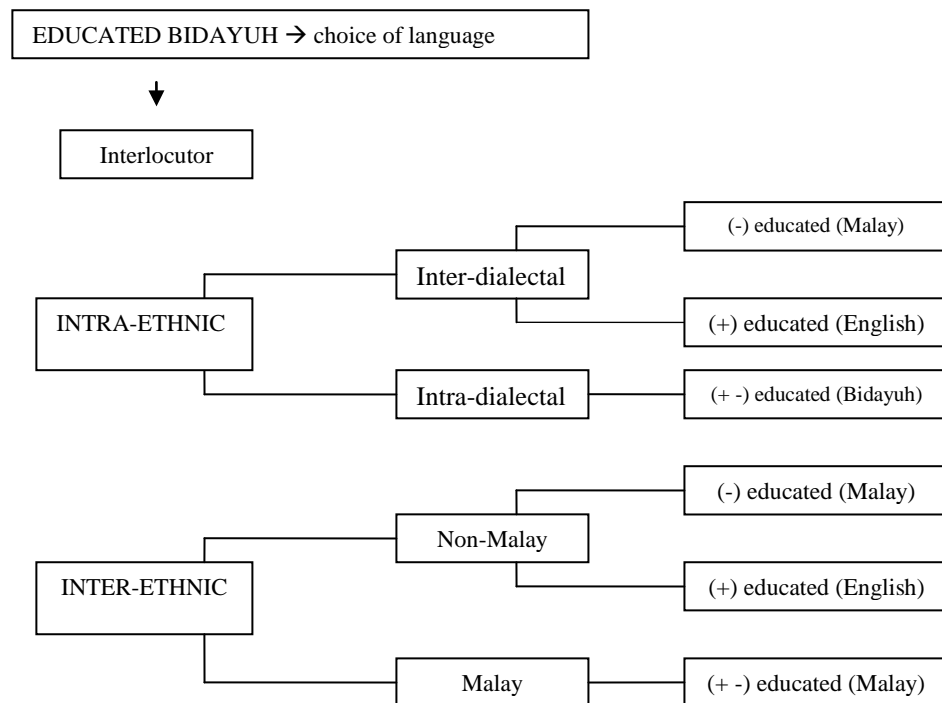


Fig 7.1 Language choice of educated Bidayuh speaker in intra- and inter-ethnic interactions

In face-to-face interactions with various types of interlocutors, an educated Bidayuh speaker would assess the ethnicity and educational level of the interlocutor, which provides the initial background as to the speaker's competency in main languages and common language(s) shared with the interlocutor. English is usually preferred in interaction with more educated individuals in inter-dialectal interaction, and with educated non-Malays in inter-ethnic interaction. The Malay language plays a greater role than English in interaction consisting of speakers from various social background and ethnicity because it is a language that is understood by all speakers in this multilingual society. It is the safest choice when the social background of the interlocutor is not known to the speaker. Typically, Malay is chosen in three types of social situations: (a) in inter-dialectal interaction where the interlocutor is a less educated Bidayuh, (b) in inter-ethnic interaction where the interlocutor is Malay irrespective of level of education, and (c) in inter-ethnic interaction where the interlocutor is a less educated individual who is a non-Malay. The Bidayuh language is usually the norm in intra-dialectal interaction.

Figure 7.1 above summarises patterns of choice of multilingual Bidayuh on the basis of knowledge of the interlocutor's social and ethnic backgrounds. It illustrates the most likely code choice by an educated Bidayuh with a particular type of interlocutor. Nevertheless, it assumes that only one language is spoken in a single encounter at a single space of time. This does not normally happen when participants in interaction are bilinguals. Grosjean (1982:129) emphasises that a bilingual has options when interacting with another bilingual. He may choose one language over several languages at his disposal as the base language, and then decides whether to switch between codes during the entire discourse or otherwise. Presumably, the base or the matrix language is most suited for the occasion. This is also assuming that there is a matrix language in the

code-switched pattern. Researches on bilingual speech have also reported that alternatively, a “mixed language” may also be used. The mixed speech style is common among people between the ages of 20 and 60 and involves both intra-sentential and inter-sentential code-switching (Romaine, 1995:123).

The options open to a bilingual when interacting with a monolingual and when interacting with another bilingual in this multilingual society may be illustrated as in Fig.7.2 below (adapted from Grosjean (1982: 129)).

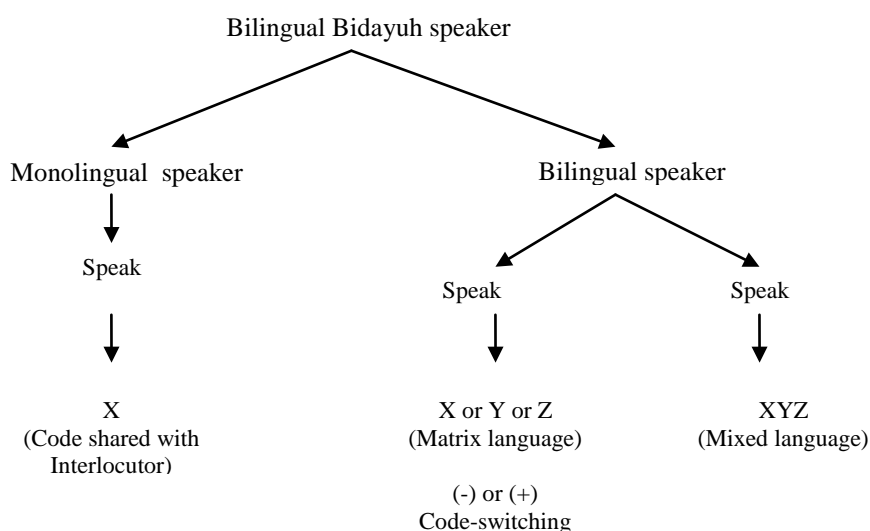


Fig. 7.2 Language choice and code-switching

A bilingual Bidayuh speaker will choose one of the languages he shares with a monolingual speaker. In encounters with other bilinguals, however, the bilingual normally code-switches between languages or may use a mixed code. The pattern he chooses is dependent on various factors, among other things, competency and comfortability in speaking for both the speaker and his interlocutor, and knowledge of patterns of choice between participants in interaction from previous encounters.

Code-switching involves speakers alternating between two or more languages or alternating between two varieties of the same language, within and between sentences (intra-sentential or inter-sentential). Switching has discourse functions; it is “a communicative option which is available to a bilingual member of a speech community on much the same basis as switching between styles or dialects as an option for the monolingual speaker” (Gumperz, 1982, as cited in Romaine, 1995: 161). For instance, as a discourse strategy, code-switch can be used to clarify or emphasis a message, to mark interjections, to serve as sentence fillers, or to specify an addressee as the recipient of the message. Apart from utilising it as a discourse strategy, code-switching also express social meanings in speech (Bloom and Gumperz, 1972). For instance, speakers may engage in code-switching because it is a strategy to influence interpersonal relations (Myers-Scotton, 1979). Code-switching is also linked to group identities of speakers involved in interaction. It also reflects general group values and norms associated with the varieties in a community’s repertoire (cf. Myers-Scotton, 1979). Code-switching may reflect a form of accommodation (c.f. Finlayson and Slabbert’s study, 1997 on code-switchings in the urban environment in Soweto, a major township in greater metropolitan Johannesburg, South Africa).

7.10.2 Code-switching among Bidayuh speakers

Bloom and Gumperz (1972) have distinguished between two types of switching: situational and metaphorical switching. A situational switch indicates a direct association between a switch in language choice and a change in the social situation – e.g. switching codes to indicate the formality and informality of the social situation. Metaphorical switching refers to situations where speakers switch codes for

communicative effects. For instance, some topics are best delivered in one language over the other; a change in topic of conversation motivates a switch in code choice.

It was observed that a multilingual Bidayuh may alternate between codes depending on whether he or she is addressing the larger group or whether the interaction takes place on a one-to-one basis. Consideration for a common language shared with the interlocutor is the priority in this social situation. English or Malay or a mixture of the two is spoken when addressing the larger group. On a one-to-one basis, the patterns of code-switching employed i.e. whether to mix codes or employ a pattern of “matrix language with occasional switches to other languages”, would depend on the social backgrounds of the speakers in terms of ethnicity and level of education as illustrated in Fig.7.1. In this environment, most commonly a bilingual would interact with another bilingual and they would have more than one common language shared between them. In this circumstance, code choice or/and patterns of switching would depend on previous history of interaction with the interlocutor.

In circumstances where the identity of the interlocutor is not known to the bilingual, he may initially start the conversation with a common language, and switch to another language when the interlocutor has indicated his preferences. For instance, this behaviour was observed at an encounter in one of the community functions the researcher attended. The Bidayuh speakers were seen switching codes between English and Bidayuh when greeting fellow Bidayuh and inviting guests to take their place. They may start the conversation in English with an “unknown” interlocutor, and will switch to Bidayuh when they have identified the interlocutor as members of the same dialect group.

A change in “setting” may result in situational switches. A female Bidayuh respondent informs that she speaks Bidayuh with her cousins in the confines of her home, but would switch to Malay when they are in public places e.g. at a supermarket. On this occasion, the switch may also be interpreted as an unwillingness to speak the mother tongue in public places. Researches on minority communities have also demonstrated the social-cum-psychological factor for such behaviour. A most commonly quoted factor is the negative attitude a minority has towards own language or group, and the perceptions of other groups towards the minority language and its speakers. As Grosjean (1982:117) writes, “language both as an instrument of communication and a symbol of group identity is accompanied by attitudes and values held by its users and also by persons who do not know the language”.

Observation of code-switching patterns was also conducted in formal and informal events organised by the community. In formal events (e.g. appointment of new office bearers of Dayak Bidayuh National Association (DBNA) and Bidayuh Graduate Association) English is normally used with occasional switchings to Malay or Bidayuh, while the Bidayuh language is usually preferred for informal events (e.g. dinner functions). Throughout the formal event, metaphorical switchings to Bidayuh or Malay occur typically when cracking jokes or to deliberate a point. The use of the local languages creates “warmth” in the relationship between speakers. Shift can also be observed at the commencement of an event and ending of a speech.

As mentioned earlier, the Bidayuh language has not developed a register for formal situations. So, in the event that speakers wish to address dignitaries, this will motivate a shift to Malay. The need to conduct certain task in a particular language may also trigger a shift. For instance, during the appointment of new office bearers of Dayak

Bidayuh National Association (DBNA), a shift to Malay was observed on two occasions – during question and answer sessions, and during voting time.

7.10.3 Social meanings expressed in speech

This sub-section discusses social meanings attached to the use of language observed in a particular environment i.e. the workplace. Each respondent was asked his or her patterns of code choice with Bidayuh with whom they regularly encounter at the workplace and their language choices. Some of these interlocutors are also respondents in the study. The respondents were then observed in two main types of social situation, *in-group* situation (intra-dialectal) and *out-group* situation (inter-dialectal). In-group refers to interaction between Bidayuh speakers from the same dialect group. Out-group refers to interaction between Bidayuh speakers from different “dialect” groups.

In *in-group* situations, the goal in interaction requires that choice be made on the basis of solidarity with group members. Nevertheless, consideration for solidarity may not always be the priority in in-group situation. It was noted that the same speaker varies in pattern of choice with “dialect” group members suggesting that solidarity may be superseded by other social considerations within the contexts of the interaction. The patterns of choice at the workplace between a superior and his subordinate described in Chapter 6 demonstrate that social roles between speakers can influence language choice at the micro-level. Speakers are required to observe social norms where interaction involves superior-subordinate relationship. There have been other occasions which suggest “intimacy” may dictate choice. These are demonstrated in the following examples.

The first example involves observation of language choice patterns of Speaker No.8 (referred here as Speaker A) with Bidayuh interlocutors at the workplace. Speaker A, a female executive (mid-30's) states she would speak English in encounters with Bidayuh superiors. With Bidayuh subordinates, she describes her pattern of choice as "Bidayuh most of time with a little bit of Malay". Presumably, speakers in the lower category are generally not competent speakers of English; to choose English would be an act that would appear patronising.

Her pattern of choice with executives of the same level (peers) varies. She indicates a 90% usage of English with Speakers C and M, although they share similar "dialects" Both are junior executives; Speaker C is in her late 30's and Speaker M is in his late 20's. Yet, with Speaker AL (aged early 30's) she converses in Bidayuh (100%) most of the time. She deliberates the reason being in encounters with Speakers C and M she normally deals with work-related matters on official basis. The use of alternative languages in the same social situation may reflect underlying social meanings. It follows that Speaker A chooses English with Speakers C and M because their interactions occur only in this capacity as colleagues at the workplace and preference for English with the interlocutors suggests a social relationship of an "impersonal" kind between participants in interaction. Conversely, Bidayuh is preferred with Speaker AL because relationship between them of a family. Initially, Speaker A has attempted to speak in the Bidayuh language with Speaker C. Despite Speaker A's repeated attempts to do this on several occasions, Speaker C prefers English in their encounters. In this instance, the event may be interpreted as Speaker C's intention to maintain the level of intimacy with Speaker A as it is, i.e. distant. The use of Bidayuh suggests "familiarity" with the interlocutor, and for some reasons, speakers may want to remain at *status quo*

with each other in interaction by diverging from the addresser's choice of language. This example also shows that choice is negotiated between participants in interaction.

The second example in support of this contention describes the language behaviour of Speaker No. 17 (referred to as Speaker W, aged early 50's). This speaker, a senior executive displays variation in patterns of choice with two executives from same dialect group i.e. Speaker D (aged early 50's) and Speaker M (aged late 20's). All are competent speakers of English, Malay, and the Jagoi dialect. Yet, different patterns of choice are employed with these executives. Speaker W describes his patterns of choice with Speaker D, also a senior executive, as "Bidayuh (70%) and English (30%)". On the contrary, with speaker M, a junior executive from the same dialect group, the choice is most of the time English (90%). The fact that Speakers W and D are peers (senior executives) as well as personal friends at the workplace entails familiarity with each other. There is no obligation on the part of the speakers to use a particular language which is required in superior-subordinate relationship other than solidarity with dialect group members. In brief, the in-group value is more relevant in this case. This explains the predominant use of the Bidayuh dialect with this interlocutor. On the other hand, relationship with Speaker M is that between a superior and a subordinate. This type of relationship is rather "impersonal" and the occasion calls for the use of a "formal" language in interaction. Moreover, the purpose of interaction between superior and subordinate is usually work-related, which also requires the use of English. This factor also explains the senior executives' preference for English with subordinates, and the junior executive's preference of English with bosses in this environment. Table 7.8 below summarises the social meaning of languages in this environment.

Table 7.8: Social meanings of languages in various social situations within a setting (i.e. the workplace)

Language	Typical Social situations	Social meanings of languages
Bidayuh	Intra-dialectal interaction between Bidayuh from the same dialect group	Expresses “solidarity” in intra-ethnic interaction Expresses “intimacy” between speakers and denotes “warmth” e.g. to show empathy and to console fellow Bidayuh Is used to talk about domestic topics and crack jokes
English	Formal or informal interactions typically among professionals	Expresses “social distance” or interaction of an impersonal kind Indicates seriousness of the topic of conversation, and is utilised for work-related purpose - e.g. briefing, delivering instruction and presentation
Sarawak Malay dialect	Informal situation involving inter-ethnic and inter-dialectal interactions.	Expresses “solidarity” and “intimacy” with fellow Sarawakians Expresses “warmth”. Is used to talk about domestic topics and crack jokes
Standard Malay	Formal situation involving speakers from various social and ethnic background	Expresses “social distance” or interaction of an impersonal kind Indicates seriousness of the topic of conversation, and is utilised for work-related purposes - e.g. briefing, delivering instruction, presentation Denotes “formality” of the social situation

On the whole, a consistent pattern that emerges from the observation is the preference for Bidayuh when speakers relate to each other as friends or/and comrades from the same dialect group. In other words, the Bidayuh language is preferred when Bidayuh speakers appeal to the factor of “intimacy” in social relationships or when they wish to express solidarity with group members (although speakers may not always have these intentions in interaction). Conversely, English (or Standard Malay) is a language to be utilised in formal situations and reflects “social distance” or interaction of an impersonal kind. Interactions between friends and with dialect group members would trigger the use of Bidayuh in this rather formal setting. So, Bidayuh speakers would switch codes interchangeably in conversation when they assume this role in social relationships.

Nevertheless, social meanings of language are not *a priori* categories; languages can also have different meanings in various social situations. So, for instance the Sarawak Malay dialect expresses solidarity with fellow Sarawakians whilst it would be interpreted by speakers as a desire to remain “impersonal” or *status quo* with the interlocutor when spoken in in-group situation. The social meanings of language are negotiated between speakers particularly in less formal settings as there would be less restrictions or constraints on the choice of language. On such occasions, participants in interaction are observed to employ habitual patterns of choice that they normally use with particular interlocutors.

7.10.4 Dialect differences and accommodation in intra-ethnic interaction

Dialect differences may prevent Bidayuh from using the mother tongue in intra-ethnic interaction. Linguistically, mutual intelligibility between Jagoi or Singgai speakers (Western group) and Biatah (Central group) are considerably closer to each other (69.7%) than Jagoi with Bukar-Sadong, an eastern variety or Biatah with Bukar-Sadong with cognates of 48.9% and 50.4% respectively (Rensch C.R. 2006: 223).

This being the case, Jagoi and Biatah speakers may understand each other’s dialects to some extent (although they may have difficulty in speaking) but will encounter great difficulties when communicating with Bukar Sadong speakers. Where mutual intelligibility between the isolects is low, Bidayuh speakers resort to the use of Malay or/and English depending on the level of competency of the interlocutors in these languages. Bidayuh speakers who understand more than one regional dialect may attempt to accommodate to the interlocutor’s dialect in interaction. Alternatively, choice of “dialect” can be non-reciprocal i.e. speakers may choose to speak the dialect of their group without converging to each other’s dialect. Nonetheless, mutual intelligibility is a

subjective notion, and relates closely to speaker's degree of bilingualism and the amount of contact with language.

Generally, Bidayuh speakers would attempt to speak in a Bidayuh dialect in encounters with each other despite dialect differences. When this is the case, the Bidayuh dialect symbolises ethnic identity for its speakers. This is certainly true among Bidayuh respondents from SMK Pending. Bidayuh teachers in this school will converse in the mother tongue in encounters with fellow Bidayuh including those who are less competent in the language (competency of Scale 2 and Scale 3 in the Bidayuh dialect). These speakers have positive attitudes towards the mother tongue. The Bidayuh language is spoken in informal situations – e.g. social chats between Bidayuh teachers, and may serve as a “secret language” to prevent their conversation from being overheard. Switches to Malay or English occur when there is lack of competency in the mother tongue or where dialect differences may impede communication.

It is also observed that the willingness to accommodate to each other's dialect in intra-ethnic interaction is largely influenced by the speakers' attitudes and perceptions towards dialects of other sub-groups and their speakers. Each dialect symbolises group identity. The dialects are related in hierarchical structure on the basis of linguistic genealogy. It is suggested that this factor explains the unwillingness on the part of some Bidayuh to accommodate to their interlocutor's dialect in intra-dialectal interaction. In addition, fear of being mocked at or being ridiculed because of unsuccessful attempts at accommodation also prevents speakers from speaking each other's dialects. Apparently, attempts made to accommodate to the dialects of other groups may not be much welcomed unless it is done successfully and with much seriousness. A frivolous attempt

would only result in embarrassment on the part of the speaker or it may be interpreted by the speakers of the dialect as making a mockery of their language.

7.11 Conclusion

To sum up, Chapters 5-7 of this thesis has shown the intricacy of the Bidayuh language situation. The macro- and micro-analyses of language choice patterns in various settings and domains of language use have indicated different factors at work dictating choice. Social norms governing the use of language in various domains provide possible social constraints dictating choice. Social circle is also another dominant factor that has dictated patterns of choice. It is suggested that social circle is a form of non-institutional norm enforcement agency that has accounted for the dominant use of the Sarawak Malay dialect among younger Bidayuh speakers in this study. Given that, it is anticipated that the Sarawak Malay dialect will continue to dominate in the social domain for Bidayuh speakers in urban settings.

At the micro-level, choice need not necessarily be a single language; multilinguals may code-switch between languages or employ “mixed” patterns. Where the situation is less constrained by the formality of the situation, language choice is dictated by various social parameters: ethnicity, level of education, and common language shared between participants in interaction. The social meaning of language changes in *in-* and *out-group* situations. Social distance between speakers may take precedence over the factor of solidarity with group members. Primarily, a bilingual has several languages at his disposal, which he would utilise in varying degrees according to his needs and intentions in various social situations. On the whole, it is concluded that choice of language is negotiated between participants in interaction according to their intentions (including language attitudes) and the contexts of the situation.