Language Contact and Language Learning in a Multicultural Setting: A Case Study of an Indian Family in Macao

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According to Salikoko Mufwene (2007), the ultimate locus of language contact is always in the individual act of communication. In a multilingual setting, individual acts of communication are encounters between different individuals' multiple idiolects. Language contact thus becomes the motivation for individual language acquisition, and the driving force for the acquisition of multilingualism.

This paper discusses the life histories of an Indian family that settled in Macao 26 years ago, the owners of a famous Indian restaurant which is an integral part of the Macao community. The paper focuses on issues of language learning, cultural integration, and the sociolinguistic impact of economic development. Special attention is given to the characteristics of a "good language learner" shown by one of the members of the family, who keeps multilingual notebooks of her language learning.

Language contact has usually been conceptualized from the point of view of the development of a hybrid community language, such as a pidgin or a creole. As Mufwene (2007) points out, from this point of view, hybridity is seen as genetically anomalous, as an extreme phenomenon resulting from an unusual concatenation of circumstances thrusting radically different communities into linguistic contact with each other. However, as Mufwene (2007) also points out, it is possible to entertain the opposite perspective and to view contact and hybridity as entirely normal and frequent phenomena. If contact between languages, communities, populations, and cultures is normal rather than anomalous, then the focus of the description of a sociolinguistic situation could simply be on what kind of contact is taking place, and what kinds of changes ensue from it.

Although the focus of this paper will be a micro-study of a small slice of language contact in the post-colonial period in Macao since 1999, it is worth mentioning that the early colonial period lasted from the beginning of Portuguese colonization in the 16th century until the end of the 19th century¹, and the late colonial period started with the introduction of education in standard Portuguese at the beginning of the 20th century. Prior to the 20th century, Macanese Creole or Patua² was a vibrant community language resulting from colonial contact, with roots that were not just local but extending back to the Portuguese colonization of Cape Verde and Goa. With the more extensive introduction of standard Portuguese, the H-variety³ of Portuguese displaced Macanese Creole, with segments of the population speaking Portuguese and/or Cantonese, with some bilingualism, rather than the contact creole.⁴

While Portuguese and Chinese (the local spoken variety of which is Cantonese, just as in Hong Kong) remain the official languages of Macao, the sociolinguistic situation since the handover of Macao to China in 1999 has changed increasingly to include standard Mandarin Chinese (*putonghua*) and English. While retaining a significant degree of autonomy, Macao has drawn closer to mainland China politically, attracting an influx of professional talent from

the mainland and promoting the use of Mandarin in its institutions. Even more so, Macao has globalized with the advent of top American casino companies like Wynn, Sands, the Venetian and MGM, attracting an influx of international expatriates and migrant workers. While some of this new immigration is from Lusophone (Portuguese-speaking) countries⁵, the lingua franca in this globalized community at large is English. This includes both what could traditionally be termed as native speakers, e.g., Australians and New Zealanders, and international multilingual speakers of English, often of Asian origin, e.g., Filipinos and Malaysians.

To use North American analogies, if the early colonial history produced a cultural "melting pot," the present era of globalization is producing a "tapestry" or "salad bar"⁶. The old melting pot, to some extent, resulted in a blend of Cantonese and Portuguese. The linguistic action now seems to turn on an axis between Cantonese and English—Cantonese as a marker of local identity and English as a marker of global identity—with Mandarin Chinese and Portuguese participating on the sidelines of the action as markers of national and cultural affiliation, and with the whole Babel of possible world languages thrown into the mix. The mix, in terms of social attitude, seems to be a harmonious one; in the words of Fernando Sales Lopes (2008), Macao is "Terra de Lebab" ("Babel" spelled backwards), the opposite of Babel, in that its multiculturalism and multilingualism sow concord rather than discord. The present situation seems just to be a natural development, at exponential speed, of the historically multicultural situation of Macao. And the happiness quotient is certainly enhanced by the economic boom. Macao is a land of opportunity, although it is experiencing some of both the upsides and the downsides of a boom town.

In this paper, the sociolinguistic situation of language contact in Macao is examined through the prism of a case study of an Indian family that has resided in Macao for a quarter century. They are the owners of a famous Indian restaurant, an institution in the community and a locus of social contact. The researcher knows the family well and is a participant observer. A qualitative research method is adopted because it is data-rich and capable of eliciting "emergent" qualities (Hoepfl, 1997), i.e., the categories of experience which the participants themselves consider to be important. Data collection took place in the contextualized naturalistic setting, i.e., in the restaurant itself, by unstructured interview and note-taking.

Methodology of the Case Study

From the outset of the study, I was able to take notes in a naturalistic setting without appearing intrusive, because of my familiarity with the restaurant and the habituation of the owners to my presence. It was precisely because of my prior familiarity with the restaurant and awareness of the language contact and language learning that goes on there, that I had decided to do a detailed case study. I took extensive notes over a period of approximately two weeks in June 2008. The owners were fully informed about the purpose of my study and happy to share information about their life at the restaurant. All names given in this article are authentic and given with permission, and all the information is accurate as pertains to the period during and before the data collection in June 2008. All the data were naturalistic and there was no attempt on the researcher's part to control the environment or the participants.

During the period of data collection, I spent an average of two hours per day at the restaurant, during and in between meal times. I recorded my notes in a 14cm by 16cm notebook, producing 82 pages of notes. Often, I was able to write down the conversation verbatim, in a relaxed atmosphere. In addition, Indu Jha volunteered to let me borrow her language learning notebooks (see the discussion below). Verbatim quotations from the interviews and authentic examples of Indu's language learning notes are incorporated into my discussion below. The discussion includes all of the information I gathered, together with my summary and analysis.

The research goal that guided me at the outset of this study was to describe the sociolinguistic situation of language contact in the restaurant on a micro-level, including 1) the life histories of the participants (the owners of the restaurant as language users and language learners); 2) the kinds of communicative interaction that take place, and the extent to which different languages are involved; and 3) the learning strategies and motivation of the learners. In the course of the research, the emergent qualities that became apparent were Indu's particular learning strategies and motivation for language learning. These will be analyzed in the discussion below using the framework of the "good language learner" (Ellis, 1994, p. 546).

Life at Aruna's Indian Curry and Café House

It is not unusual for businesses in Asia to be blessed by the gods. In China, many a shop and restaurant contains a Buddhist-Taoist shrine of Chinese gods, decorated in characteristic vibrant colors of red and gold. The gods at Aruna's Indian Curry and Café House are Hindu, beautiful bronze statues of the elephant-headed god Ganesha⁷ and of Nataraj, the dancing form of the god Shiva⁸, enshrined in a glass case in the middle of the restaurant, always with a candle burning and a vase of flowers in offering. Aruna herself is like a goddess, as she glides into the restaurant every morning and touches the statues of the gods to ask for their blessing. Around her neck, she wears a diamond pendant of the sacred symbol "Om"⁹.

Aruna Jha, by training a classical Indian dancer¹⁰, first came to Macao 26 years ago when she was invited to give a performance by the Macau Cultural Centre. She liked the warm, laid-back city and its friendly people and stayed on in Macao. She also spent some time living in Hong Kong. The Hyatt Regency Hotel in Macau invited Aruna to add Indian cuisine to the menu. Her signature dishes continued to bear her name on the hotel's menu even long after she stopped working there. She became famous for her culinary talent and opened her own restaurant, winning many Macao-wide awards. In 2008, the restaurant expanded into two branches, the original one near the city center on the Macao peninsula, and a new restaurant on the island of Taipa.

Oddly enough, my friendship with the owners of the Indian restaurant started with Russian. Somehow, Aruna's sister Indu approached me, and asked me where I work and where I live. I work in Macao and live in Taipa, I said. Did I have a bus pass? No. Did I know how to get one? So Indu gave me instructions and directions, with a kind smile, and asked solicitously if I would manage in Chinese. I know a little Mandarin, I said. Indu said she knew many languages, including even Russian. Russian? My interest was piqued. Now here was a language I was much more confident in than Mandarin. "It took me 15 years to learn

Russian properly," I said. "Oh, so you know it well?" Indu's eyes sparkled. "Teach me the Russian alphabet."

Indu had already written down several phrases in Russian in her notebooks, where she "collected" many languages from her customers, transcribing them from her own hearing using Hindi script. "I tell you, Priya, if you know Hindi you can learn any language in the world. I don't know, maybe God has given me a special talent, but for me no language is difficult." The phrases she had already written down included *spasibo* "thank you," *do svidaniia* "good bye," *baranina* "mutton," *svinina* "pork," *kartoshka* "potato," *khorosho* "good," and *ochen' khoroshii uzhin poeli* "we ate a very good supper." I was able to show her how to write them down using the Russian alphabet¹¹. And we went through the Russian alphabet systematically for several hours. Three days later she demanded that I give her a test. She had mastered the alphabet already.

Our Russian lessons then consisted of "need to know" questions initiated by Indu. "How do you say this in Russian?" We went through the entire menu of the restaurant, translating it into her notebook, with phonetic transcriptions written down in Hindi. I gave Indu a Berlitz Russian phrasebook (Berlitz, 2003), with lots of good food and travel vocabulary, and lent her my Russian-English dictionary (Katzner, 1994), based on American English, a very good learners' edition that includes usage examples and stress marks in the spelling (ordinarily, written Russian does not include stress marks, except in learners' textbooks).

Speaking the customers' language with the customers makes them feel comfortable. "One day, a Russian man came to the restaurant. He liked it so much that later, he brought back his wife, and we celebrated the wife's birthday." Indu likes to help the customers with so much more than food. "One time, a father and his son came here from Canada. The father was maybe 80 years old. They needed to buy a specific kind of shampoo and said they had great difficulty communicating their need to the shopkeepers. I wrote down directions for them in Chinese. Just half an hour later, they came back to the restaurant with a bouquet of flowers for me. "Young lady, said the father, nobody could guide us as well as you did."

Indu's notebooks include the names of all the important places in Macao in Chinese ideographs, with the phonetic transcription in Hindi script. She frequently copies the Chinese names for tourists and gives them directions. "How did you learn the order of strokes for the Chinese characters?" I ask. "I asked my customers. They helped me." Figure 1 shows examples of Chinese place names with the pronunciation written in Hindi, which can be given for reference to Indian tourists. If the tourists are not Indian, Indu simply writes down the Chinese characters, sometimes together with the English equivalent of the place name in Macao.

If Indu is the best covert tourist guide in Macao, Aruna is the soul of social life. She knows all her customers personally as friends, and keeps a long list to invite them for social events. The celebration of the Indian festival Diwali¹² is an annual event. And Aruna is an informal Indian ambassador to Macao, helping to liaise with the Indian consulate in Hong Kong. On the wall of the restaurant hang photographs of Aruna with the top leaders of Hong Kong: former governor Chris Patten¹³, former chief executive Tung Chee Hwa¹⁴ and current chief executive Donald Tsang¹⁵. As an expert in dance, she helped to choreograph the performance for the 1997 ceremony of the handover of Hong Kong to China.

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Figure 1: Chinese Place Names

Aruna's two sons, Kavi, aged 19, and Kunal, aged 17, were born in the United States, and lived in Hong Kong in early childhood, but have spent most of their lives in Macao. They went to junior high school in Macao at Yuet Wah College, where their studies were English-medium¹⁶, but most of their friends were Portuguese, Macanese, and Chinese. They consider their home to be Macao, but currently they study in Welham Boys School¹⁷, a prestigious English-medium secondary boarding school in Dehradun, their mother's home town in the Himalayan foothills in the Indian state of Uttaranchal¹⁸. Aruna and Indu's sister Neena lives in Dehradun, while another sister, Purnima, lives in California. The elder son, Kavi, is now applying to colleges to study Hotel and Restaurant Management, while the younger son, Kunal, dreams of going to college at the University of California at Berkeley and of studying law in graduate school. Kunal says of his ambitions, "I want to go to a good university so that

I have less difficulty later in life." The boys are English speech and debating champions, both in Macao and in India. In 2003, Kavi placed 8th and Kunal placed 2nd, beating out his elder brother, in the Junior High School Category of the 2nd Macao-wide English Speech Contest. In India, they participate in debating in the Model United Nations competitions¹⁹. Kunal, 6 foot 2 inches, is an avid basketball player and inter-school champion, and hopes to win an athletic scholarship for his college studies in the US. Both boys are more fluent and literate in English than in Hindi, exhibiting language shift in relation to the older generation. They learned Hindi by naturalistic exposure since beginning their study in India; surprisingly, they do not study Hindi at school. They study Portuguese as a foreign language and, as soccer fans, they support Portugal and Brazil, showing a Portuguese sense of affiliation typical of many Macao residents. They also speak Cantonese, which they acquired by naturalistic exposure from their friends and social environment when living and studying in Macao. The boys help their mother in the restaurant, and are able to speak Hindi or Cantonese with customers whenever the need arises.

The family is typical of the Indian diaspora, which worldwide now numbers over 20 million, with over 2 million in the US²⁰. Statistics compiled in the Wikipedia article on the Indian diaspora give an estimate of 25 million worldwide, with 13,700,000 in Asia, 3,450,000 in Europe, 4,200,000 in the Americas, 2,800,000 in Africa, and 600,000 in Australia and Oceania²¹. Interestingly, the immigration and affiliation of Aruna's family to Macao was not mediated by the cultural connection of Macao to the Indian state of Goa, taken back by India in 1961²², as former Portuguese territories with a Catholic heritage. Rather, Aruna and her family are representative of the globalized Macao: permanent residents of Macao, calling Macao home and by their unique presence adding to and enriching its multicultural mix.

A Good Language Learner

In her dogged pursuit of linguistic perfection when studying Russian and other languages, Indu shows the characteristics of what has been termed "a good language learner." Ellis (1994, p. 546) summarizes five characteristics resulting from several research studies on what differentiates good language learners from average language learners:

There are, perhaps, five major aspects of successful language learning, as evidenced by the various studies [...]: (1) a concern for language form, (2) a concern for communication (functional practice), (3) an active task approach, (4) an awareness of the learning process, and (5) a capacity to use strategies flexibly in accordance with task requirements.

According to Ellis (1994, p. 550), the existing studies "have focused mainly on classroom learners and the 'good' strategies that have been identified necessarily reflect the formal learning setting." There are few studies of what constitutes good language learning in a naturalistic setting. The case study of Indu is therefore especially valuable, as her "good" learning behaviors can be classified using Ellis' taxonomy. In addition, Indu exhibits the characteristic of "motivation as intrinsic interest" (Ellis, 1994, p. 515). I shall discuss all of these characteristics below.

(1) Attention to Language Form

Research has shown that successful learners show a concern for good grammar and pronunciation: "there is convincing evidence from the good language learner studies to show that paying attention to the formal properties of the target language contributes to success" (Ellis, 1994, pp. 548-549). Indu says that she is meticulous and insists on getting things right, copying the same examples over and over again, with a persistent attitude and a bottle of white correction fluid at hand. In her study of Russian, she insists on learning the correct shapes of letters, their alphabetical order, and the correct spelling of words. This has enabled her to learn how to use the Russian dictionary. Indu says that her sister Aruna was at first skeptical of her spending so much time on studying Russian. "Why not just learn how to say a few words?" Aruna would say. "But Aruna has a different nature," Indu retorts. "For her, it is enough to learn how to speak, but I also want to learn how to write."

According to Ellis (1994, p. 546), "[s]uch learners also monitor their L2 performance and try to learn from their errors by asking for corrections when they think these are needed." Indu first writes the Russian word or phrase on draft paper and asks me for its correct pronunciation and English translation. She writes down the pronunciation using Hindi script. She then practices the pronunciation out loud and asks for correction. She copies the phrase, together with the pronunciation and translation, into her notebook, and again asks for correction of any mistakes. She corrects the mistakes and, if necessary, copies the whole thing again more neatly. Sometimes, if the phrase was taken from spoken interaction with a customer rather than from a written source, the phrase was originally written down by her in Hindi script and I am able to give the correct Russian spelling, and provide corrections, when I hear the pronunciation.

(2) Attention to Communicative Practice

Research shows that good language learners are interested in acquiring language for the purpose of communication. This may seem like a truism, but it becomes apparent if we contrast it with the following two possible examples of average learners. Firstly, in a classroom setting, it is not always the case that language proficiency is acquired. Many learners "backslide" after taking the final exam, or after graduation, and even if on paper they have passed intermediate or advanced courses, their *de facto* proficiency is much lower. Secondly, in a naturalistic setting, not all people who are potentially language learners acquire a functional proficiency. One need only think of many cases of expatriates in a foreign country who stay within expatriate communities and do not acquire the ability to communicate in the language of the country they are staying in.

In fact, in my observation, language acquisition is not a plus/minus event but a scalar phenomenon. The extent of the acquisition is often motivated by the extent of the self-perceived need for communication. I have formulated this principle as the "communicative adequacy hypothesis" (Radwańska-Williams, 1999, p. 119):

Communicative adequacy is the level attained by a language learner (L1, L2, or Ln) which enables him/her to function adequately with respect to his/her self-defined or self-perceived sociolinguistic role and/or socio-cultural identity.

The communicative adequacy hypothesis helps to explain why different individuals reach different thresholds in their acquisition of the same language, and also, why the same individual may reach different thresholds in their acquisition of different languages. No matter how good an individual's motivation and aptitude, language learning always requires an investment of time and effort, and there seems to be a natural inclination for people to stop putting in the time and effort when they have either reached a certain level with which they are satisfied, or resigned themselves to a certain level, or conceded that they have no communicative need to learn.

One of the factors that have come up in the research on good language learners is that a previous history of language learning is a good predictor of success in language learning. People who are already multilingual seem to have an easier time in acquiring a new language (Naiman et al., 1978; Nation & McLaughlin, 1986; Nayak, et al., 1987; McLaughlin, 1990; all of these reported in Ellis, 1994, pp. 649-650). In my experience, this process of multilingual acquisition seems also to be a mindset, a "multilingual mindset" of expectation of becoming a multilingual. East European intellectuals, a segment of the population into which I was born, seem to have this mindset—if you are an educated person born in Poland, it is not enough to learn just one foreign language, and the buzzword in Polish education nowadays is języki, meaning simply "languages"—it is taken for granted that mastering foreign languages, as many as possible, is a good thing.²³ A similar attitude for different reasons exists in places like South Africa²⁴ or India²⁵, which each have more than 10 official languages (Gramley & Patzold, 1992, pp. 409-415; Sridhar, 1989). In those countries, language contact between different segments of the community is a strong motivator, in addition to the educational pull of English, not just because of the post-colonial legacy, but as the dominant language of international communication and as the medium of instruction in the country's top educational institutions.

In Indu's case, the self-perception of communicative need is not focused exclusively on communication with customers in the restaurant. It is part of a multilingual mindset that she has experienced throughout her life; the customers are also not perceived so much as "customers," but simply as people, with whom friendships develop and communicative need naturally arises. Indu says that "she loves to help people" in every way possible, and that this way of life is for her a spiritual practice that she prefers to any formal practice of religion. With regard to her motivation for language acquisition, Indu says:

I tell you, Priya, sometimes I feel like I should learn and learn and learn and nobody should disturb me. I had a dream when I was small that I should go anywhere in the world and learn the language. Then I came here to Macao. But now the world is so hectic and advanced with the Internet that everything is easy.

Indu's interest in languages started at home in India, where she had a Punjabi neighbor, although her home town was Hindi-speaking. "I used to imitate her," she says. When she came to Macao, at first she couldn't speak any Cantonese and she couldn't communicate in the market. "I called a friend of Aruna's, who was Chinese but fluent in English. She helped me. She told me what to say so that I could bargain in the market."

Later, Indu worked as a designer in a clothing company. She had six Chinese co-workers whom she supervised. At first it was difficult to communicate with them, but after some time,

she learned enough Chinese that she could understand their conversations quite well. "When they realized I understood what they were saying, they were very careful."

Hidden away on a shelf behind the cashier counter of the restaurant, Indu keeps notebooks of many different languages. The choice of languages mainly reflects the range of customers who dine at the restaurant. The number of languages is not fixed but keeps on increasing—for example, the most recent addition is Kannada, the language of the state of Karnataka in the south of India²⁶. For the most part, the entries in the notebook are everyday vocabulary and phrases, including, but not restricted to, politeness formulae and food vocabulary. The meaning is listed in English and the pronunciation in Hindi script. Some languages are given more representation than others. For example, there are extensive notes on Tamil, because there used to be two workers in the restaurant from the south of India who spoke Tamil²⁷. Sometimes the wife of one of the workers used to call on the telephone, and she could not speak either English or Hindi well. Indu became interested in learning Tamil so that she could communicate with her. Appendix 1 summarizes the languages and vocabulary recorded in Indu's notebooks. The order in which the languages are listed in her main notebook roughly reflects the chronological order of her contact with them: Tamil, Russian, Slovak, Bengali, Swedish, Greek, Hebrew, Malay, Japanese, Spanish, Italian, Gujarati, Marathi, German, French, Persian, Arabic, Farsi (interestingly, a separate entry from Persian²⁸), Sinhalese, Korean, Tagalog, Portuguese, Thai, Malayalam, Kannada and Finnish. There are also separate notebooks for Russian study and for a reference list of places in Macao in Chinese characters. All of the entries include pronunciation written down in Hindi script.

When looking at Indu's notebooks, I noticed an interesting detail which is revealing about Indu's attitude towards communication. The notebooks include vocabulary in Tagalog, even though the Filipino people who come to Macao usually speak English quite well²⁹. Indu learned Tagalog from the wait staff in the restaurant, who were pleased to teach her some of their own language. Why did she need to learn Tagalog, even though most Filipino people could speak English? Indu's answer is that she might need Tagalog if she wants to say something to Filipino customers in private, so that other customers won't understand. This shows a subtle awareness of the different social possibilities of communication.

(3) Pro-active Learning

Another characteristic of good language learners is an active attitude towards learning tasks. Research shows that good learners take charge of the learning process and tend to regard the teacher as an "informant" (Pickett, 1978, cited in Ellis, 1994, p. 549). Certainly this is evident in Indu's case. For example, she "recruited" me as a teacher of Russian. She decides when she wants to learn and what she wants to learn. And even though the learning takes place in a naturalistic setting, she tackles the task academically, keeping meticulous notes and practicing through "homework" in the teacher's absence.

(4) Metalinguistic Awareness

In Ellis' (1994, p. 548) taxonomy, the fourth characteristic of good language learners is that they show "an awareness of the learning process." Research by Reiss (1983, cited in Ellis

1994, pp. 549-550) shows that this awareness is specific and focused, rather than general. While average learners might make a general comment like "[s]tudy it until I understand," good learners are able to zero in on their specific learning strategies and areas of need, e.g., "Try to practice the new tense while speaking" (Reiss, 1983, cited in Ellis, 1994, pp. 550). Indu is enthusiastic and articulate about her learning process: "The more I am writing, the more I am remembering it better"; "I must get the spelling right, and the pronunciation right, and I must get every sentence right."

(5) Flexible Strategy Use

Good learners show "a capacity to use strategies flexibly in accordance with task requirements" (Ellis, 1994, p. 548). Indu has a preferred learning style, which consists of initiating communicative contact, using speakers of different languages as informants, and writing down the pronunciation in Hindi script. But she also exhibits a number of strategies. When possible, she likes to learn the alphabet and the spelling of the given language. This is the case with Russian, but also with Urdu, a language closely related to Hindi, but written with the Arabic script³⁰. It's also the case with her study of Chinese characters. She is not averse to an academic setting, and is interested in signing up for a Mandarin class, although the busy schedule at the restaurant poses difficulty. She has studied the Russian alphabet in both its printed and handwritten versions using elementary school textbooks given to her by a friend (Goreckii et al., 1986, 1989). And she uses television and the Internet as language sources. She is interested in listening to the news in Chinese, not just for the language but because she has noticed that the Chinese news broadcasts are often more informative about local current events. And she uses the BBC World Service website as a source of news in Russian³¹. Her strategy is to write down the news headlines in Russian script from the website, and ask me for the translation and the pronunciation. The vocabulary picked up in this way is from a different and more advanced domain than the typical everyday phrases of the restaurant discourse. figure 2 shows a set of Indu's practice notes from Russian news headlines, including the pronunciation in Hindi *devanagari* script³² and the translation in English.

(6) Intrinsic Interest

Indu shows a positive attitude towards learning and a life-long intrinsic interest. Keller (1984, cited in Crookes & Schmidt, 1989, as cited by Ellis, 1994, p. 515) "identifies 'interest' as one of the main elements of motivation, defining it as a positive response to stimuli based on existing cognitive structures in such a way that learners' curiosity is aroused and sustained" (Ellis, 1994, p. 515). The process of learning itself brings a high satisfaction to Indu. Her level of motivation is best characterized as intrinsic rather than instrumental, even though her learning does have practical applications of usefulness of communication with customers. Her focus is more on the learning itself: "I love to learn, it is my passion;" "Never will you find such a good student as me." Intrinsic interest is a self-fuelling process; the more she learns, the more she wants to learn. And Indu's positive attitude towards communication serves to lower what Stephen Krashen (1985) calls the "affective filter," making the learner receptive to communicative practice. Interestingly, Indu's positive attitude includes attitude

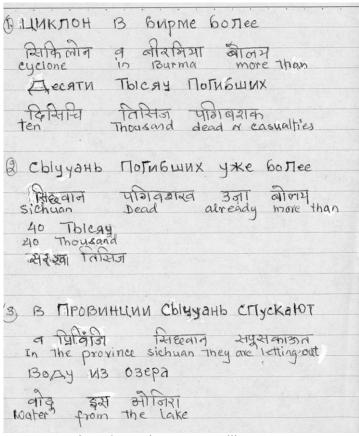


Figure 2: Russian News Headlines

towards error correction; she actively elicits correction of her mistakes and learns from the correction.

Language Contact

Salikoko Mufwene's (2007) great insight is that language contact always takes place at the inter-idiolectal level. It is surprising why this should not be obvious to linguists; the reason, I think, is that linguistics as a discipline tends to be more concerned with studying languages than with studying individual speakers. A focus on the individual speaker, embedded in his or her dynamic life context, reveals his or her uniqueness as a participant in multiple communicative encounters. A prototypical monolingual speaker, if such a creature exists, is a perfect instantiator of a single linguistic code. For that creature truly to exist, all of the communicative encounters in which that individual participates in his or her lifetime would have to take place in the same linguistic code. One can imagine such a situation in a

remote village isolated from the outside world. However, in today's globalized world, multiple codes are becoming the norm rather than the exception. As Mufwene (2007) argues, to some extent multiple codes and multiple encounters have always been historically the norm. What may be novel in today's globalized sociolinguistic situation is the frequency of multiple communicative encounters.

I define a "communicative encounter" as a delimited space of time within which communication takes place between two or more individuals. Language contact is not only inter-idiolectal; it takes place in the "bytes" of communicative encounters. The encounters are delimited: the limits of time and place are flexible but actual dimensions of the experience. From the point of view of language contact, and by way of conclusion to this paper, three generalizations can be made about the "communicative encounters" I have encountered at this restaurant.

(1) Every Communicative Encounter is Inter-idiolectal.

In every instance of interaction, there are protagonists and there are people who are to some extent sidelined. Every participant has a linguistic code or codes. These codes are drawn upon for the communicative purposes at hand. The interaction as a whole is embedded in a web of social relationships.

(2) Despite the Functionality of the Communication, the Social Interaction is not Impoverished.

In the context of a restaurant, one might expect the communicative encounters to be simply service-oriented. Such a service encounter is typically a "scripted" conversation, in the sense given to the term "script" in discourse analysis (Hatch, 1992, pp. 85-120), i.e., a conversation with fixed roles and limited phraseology, which could be learned by rote. Certainly there is much in the restaurant that is scripted, e.g., "What would you like to drink?" "May I take your order?" "May I have the bill, please?" etc. Indeed, the scripted nature of restaurant encounters provides an ideal language learning environment for Indu, enabling her to put much of the vocabulary and phraseology she learns in different languages to good communicative use. However, this particular restaurant goes beyond scripted language. It breaks down the social barriers between the functional service providers and the social life of the customers. The result is an interesting blend, very rich in social interaction. I call it a blend, because communicatively speaking, it is a combination of two different discourse domains, both of which take place in a restaurant scenario. One domain is the interaction between the customers and the service providers, which is usually functional. The other domain is the internal interaction of each group of customers with each other within the group. Viewed from this perspective, it becomes clear why the social interaction in the restaurant is potentially very rich. People come to restaurants not only for the food, but also for the ambience, which serves to facilitate their social interaction with each other. There are romantic couples. There are business lunches. There are friends getting together. There are birthday parties. Even tourists take the opportunity to interact and share their impressions and opinions with each other. Now, when the social barrier between the service providers and the

self-contained discourse domains of separate tables breaks down, the result is a rich social interaction, a community, a feeling of becoming part of the family.

(3) A Restaurant is a Locus of Interaction Between the Global and the Local.

To some extent, perhaps every restaurant is a "glocal locus," especially in a top tourist destination like Macao. In other respects, as shown above, Aruna's restaurant is unique, in that it serves as a focal point in the community and a gateway for newcomers, a place where one is made to feel instantly at home.

What do I mean by a "glocal locus" of interaction between the global and the local? The restaurant is a specific place, a locality. It is situated within the somewhat larger, but also small and specific, locality of Macao, the smallest separate administrative unit of China. It is a unique place within a unique place, and it is to some extent a microcosm of Macao, epitomizing its unique blend of small-town and worldly appeal. It is owned by a family who came from afar but who made Macao their own, and enriched its multicultural mix by their presence. It is a magnet for tourists from India, their home away from home, and a place where they can get information and guidance about Macao. But it is also a magnet for many other people of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds and walks of life, who come for the combination of good food and warm hospitality.

The restaurant and tourism business is termed the "hospitality industry," and is a \$3.5 trillion US dollar sector in the global economy³³. It is worthwhile to ask what the enduring appeal of a place like a good restaurant is. What is the product it sells? Is it simply the food? What is the added value of the intangible dimension of hospitality? What is the magic blend of comfort and allure? Beyond the material aspects of good food and interesting décor, what are the social and spiritual dimensions it provides?

The title of this paper is "Language contact and language learning in a multicultural setting," Apart from the focal benefits of fine dining, Aruna's restaurant provides language contact in a multicultural setting. And this is the globalizing function of restaurants and their appeal within the hospitality industry. In the context of tourism, restaurants are always focal points where the local meets the global. The visitor interacts with the hosts, who show hospitality. The interaction is similar to visiting somebody in their home, yet different. A material exchange takes place and the roles of the service providers are clearly defined. There is a tension between being strangers to each other-at least at the starting point of the interaction-and becoming more familiar, a natural outcome of the process of serving food, which in a family setting is an aspect of intimate love and care. There is a tension between the expectation of exoticism-of experiencing unusual food, or food from another culture-and the expectation of the familiar, as in the case of tourists who prefer to eat the food of their own culture and culinary practice (sometimes, with religious dietary restrictions) when away from home. Thus, restaurants provide a multicultural setting. And restaurants provide language contact by the very nature of the restaurant interaction, especially the typical interaction of the scripted kind, ordering food from a menu, between a customer and the waiting staff. It is in a restaurant setting that a tourist would most likely venture to utter a few words in a foreign language. And it is food vocabulary that often gets borrowed in intercultural contact-witness, for example, Italian food vocabulary in English, such broccoli, macaroni, minestrone, mozzarella, pasta, pizza, ravioli and spaghetti³⁴.

In the special case study of Indu's language learning, what is unusual about the language contact is that it is two-way. Instead of customers making the effort to speak the language of the restaurant, as is often the case with tourists in a foreign country, the effort is being made to speak their language to them. Nor does the interaction necessarily take place in English as an international language, even when all parties to the interaction speak English. Speaking the language of the customer creates a social bond, a comfort zone. It overcomes the barrier of the conventionality of the scripted restaurant situation and forges friendship and meaningful dialogue.

In a multilingual and multicultural language contact situation, not all languages are acquired to the level of fluency. Most are not. What Indu's case shows is that the contact itself is intrinsically valued, and so is any progress, however small, that helps to achieve contact. Language contact in its intrinsic aspect has a dimension of social bonding, something like the "phatic communion" function of language pointed out by Bronisław Malinowski in the 1920s and defined as "a type of speech in which ties of union are created by a mere exchange of words" (Malinowski, 1972, p. 151, as cited in Carter & Simpson, 1989, p. 44). Also, language contact is particularized in the contact between individuals, and is thus interidiolectal. The conditions for various contact phenomena such as borrowing and pidginization are created, but they are secondary to the communicative encounter itself. The focus of the communicative encounter is on communication between individuals, and on whatever linguistic resources can be mobilized to achieve that communication. In the case of a good language learner, mobilizing the linguistic resources becomes an active and life-long process of learning, with no limits on the extent of language proficiency gained in the learning process.

Notes

1. For the history of Macao, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macau and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History of Macau

2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macanese language, accessed on July 1st, 2008.

3. The terms "H" (High) and "L" (Low) language variety refer to the variety or language form preferred by the higher and lower socioeconomic class of society; H and L can also be in a state of diglossia, i.e., two languages or two quite different varieties used for "higher" and "lower" social purposes (Ferguson, 1959, cited in Malmkjaer, 1991, pp. 99-100).

4. Personal communication, Manuel Noronha, University of Macau, July 2nd, 2008.

5. The African Lusophone countries include Angola, Moçambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, and São Tomé e Príncipe, and Equatorial Guinea, and the other Portuguese-speaking countries are Portugal, Brazil and East Timor. In addition, Goa in India has a strong Portuguese heritage (http://angolateam.org/angola_glossary.html,

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portuguese language and

http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Lusophone, accessed on July 1st, 2008).

6. These metaphors have all been used to describe multiculturalism in North America (Bruhn, 2005, pp. 49-69).

7. For information on Ganesha, see http://hinduism.about.com/od/lordganesha/a/ganesha.htm and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ganesha

8. See http://en.wikipedia.org.wiki/Shiva and

http://hinduism.about.com/library/weekly/aa031002a.htm

9. For the significance of Om, see http://hinduism.about.com/od/omaum/Om_Aum.htm 10. For information on Indian dance, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dance_in_India,

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical Indian dance and

http://in.geocities.com/medhahari/classical Indian dance/classical Indian dance.html.

11. In this article, I am using the Library of Congress system of Romanization for the

transliteration of Russian examples: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ALA-

LC romanization for Russian.

12. For information on Diwali, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diwali

13. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chris_Patten.

14. The first Chief Executive of Hong Kong after the handover to China, from July 1st 1997 to March 10 th, 2005 (http://en.epochtimes.com/news/5-9-8/32146.html, and

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tung Chee-Hwa accessed on July 1 st, 2008).

15. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donald_Tsang.

16. http://www.yuetwah.edu.mo/

17. See the website of the school at http://welhamboys.org/, and the description of the school in Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Welham Boys School

18. http://www.indfy.com/uttaranchal-india/dehradun-tours, accessed on June 19th, 2008.

19. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Model United Nations.

20. http://indiandiaspora.nic.in, accessed on June 19th, 2008.

21. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-resident_Indian_and_Person_of_Indian_Origin,

accessed on June 19th, 2008. The categories of "Non-Resident Indian" (NRI) and "Person of Indian Origin" are officially recognized as overseas Indians by the government of India. 22. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goa, accessed on June 19th, 2008.

23. See Radwańska-Williams (2001) for a fuller account of my own process of language learning.

24. The 11 official languages of South Africa are Afrikaans, English, Ndebele, Northern Sotho, Sotho, Swati, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa and Zulu, and the languages most commonly spoken at home are Zulu (24% of the population), Xhosa (18%) and Afrikaans (13%). "English is only the sixth-most common home language in the country, but is understood in most urban areas and is the dominant language in government and the media" (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Languages_of_South_Africa, accessed on July 2nd, 2008).
25. The official national language of India is Hindi, with English used as a "subsidiary official language." The Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution specifies many languages which are given official status regionally in the locality where they are spoken, plus the ancient classical language Sanskrit, still used as a liturgical language of the Hindu religion; as of May 2007, this list includes the following languages: Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, Dogri, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Maithili, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Santhali, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Official_languages_of_India, accessed on July 2nd, 2008).
26. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kannada and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karnataka.

27. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tamil_language.

28. "Persian and its varieties have official-language status in Iran, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan." "Farsi" is the Persian name for "Persian," and the name used for Modern Iranian

Persian; the other modern varieties are Dari, spoken in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and Pakistan, and Tajik, spoken in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Russia

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persian_language, accessed on July 2nd, 2008). However, Indu's data on Persian and Farsi are different from each other, so she has recorded two different varieties.

29. Tagalog (in its standardized form as Filipino) and English are the official national languages of the Philippines. There are several "recognized regional languages" given special regional status by the government; these include Tagalog, Bikol, Cebuano, Ilocano, Hiligayon, Kapampangan, Pangasinan and Waray-Waray

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tagalog_language and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippines, accessed on July 2nd, 2008).

30. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urdu and http://www.omniglot.com/writing/urdu.htm.

31. From the website http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/russian/news/default.stm

32. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Devanagari and

http://www.omniglot.com/writing/devanagari.htm.

33. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hospitality_industry, accessed on July 2nd, 2008.

34. http://www.alphadictionary.com/articles/ling008_a.html, accessed on July 2nd, 2008.

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Appendix 1

The following is a summary of some of the languages that are listed in Indu's multilingual notebooks. Each listing includes entries of vocabulary and phrases. The entries include the meaning, which is listed in English, and the pronunciation in Hindi script. Sometimes the original orthography or the Romanized transliteration of the language is also given. Where these were available, I have included the transliteration. The listings are given in the same order as in Indu's original notebooks.

Language	Quantity of	Examples of language entries (given here in			
Lungunge	material	English to indicate the meaning and/or in Romanized			
		<i>transliteration</i> of the vocabulary item)			
Cantonese	Several pages of	Bank of China Main Branch			
	place names in	Hak Sa (Black Sand) Beach			
	Macao written in	Shell Gas Station			
	Chinese characters,	Tai Fung Bank			
	with pronunciation				
	in Hindi script.				
Mandarin					
		Yangrou "Lamb"			
		Niurou "Beef"			
		Shucai "(Mixed) Vegetables"			
		Mei guanxi "Never mind"			
		<i>Dui bu qi</i> "Sorry"			
Tamil	Several pages, over				
	a hundred entries	"Please give me a glass of hot water."			
Russian	Two pages	<i>Ty moi gost</i> ' "You are my guest:"			
		Ochen' khoroshii uzhin poeli "We ate a very good			
		dinner"			
Slovak	Half a page	One folk song, transcribed in Hindi script, without			
		including the meaning			
Bengali	Several pages,	"What would you like to eat?"			
	more than 60	"Would you like to have fish or meat?"			
	entries				
Swedish	One page	Det vor jattegott "Very delicious"			
Greek	Several words	"Goodbye"			
Hebrew	One page, about 15	Shabat shalom "Have a good Saturday"			
	entries				
Malay	One page	Selamat pagi "Good morning"			
	TI	Selamat datang "Welcome"			
Japanese	Three pages	Food vocabulary and politeness formulae			
Spanish	One page	Gracias "Thank you"			
T (1		<i>Approveche</i> ! "Enjoy"			
Italian	One page	Ci vediamo domani! "See you tomorrow!"			

Ct	<u><u>G</u>11</u>	(9W			
Gujarati	Several phrases	"Would you like to have a Coke?"			
		"Tasty food"			
N / 4 - *	C	<i>audharu</i> "dark" (Gujarati); <i>audhira</i> "dark" (Hindi)			
Marathi	Several phrases	"How are you?"			
C	0 1 1	"Don't worry"			
German	Several phrases	Danke "Thank you"			
		Auf wiedersehen "Goodbye"			
		<i>Bitte</i> "Pardon? What did you say? Please. Here you			
F l	0	are. You are welcome."			
French	One page	<i>Merci beaucoup</i> "Thank you very much"			
		Salut "Hi"			
D	C	Au revoir "Goodbye"			
Persian	Several sentences	Shome chi kori "What would you like to eat?"			
		Shomo nushi danni "What would you like to drink?"			
Amahia	022 222	Hosh amdi "Nice to meet you"			
Arabic	One page Several sentences	Food vocabulary			
Farsi	Several sentences	Madda tridu antakul "What would you like to eat?"			
		Madda tridu anteshau "What would you like to drink?"			
Sinhalese	Several phrases	Sait nimo kabeletin "Nice to meet you" "How is the food?"			
Simalese	Several pillases	"What would you like to have?"			
Korean	One page	"What is your name?" "Baby girl"			
Kutean	One page	"Baby boy"			
		"You are welcome"			
		"You are welcome (said with respect)"			
		"Beautiful"			
Tagalog	One page	"All together"			
Luguiog	on• p•8•	"Pick it up"			
		"Put it there"			
		"Did you understand?"			
		"This," "that"			
		"Where," "what," "when"			
		Food vocabulary			
Portuguese	One page	Quer cha agora ou depois de comer "Do you want			
U		the tea now or later?"			
		Agora "Now"			
		Depois or mais tarde "Later"			
Thai	Several phrases	Khaupunka "Thank you"			
Malayalam	Several phrases	Nanni "Thank you"			
-		Sukham alle or sukmalle "How are you?"			
Kannada	Several words	Hegdiya "How are you?"			
		Channagi dini "I'm fine"			

		Ninage enu beku "What would you like to have?"
Finnish	One page	Mukava Tavata Sinut "Nice meeting you"

Appendix 2

These examples from Indu's notebooks include Finnish and Gujarati.

	Finish	
2008	092-274 days APRII	
मिता काल्यू - Mita Kuolu केतास हुआ - KuTos HYu	u - How are you Aā - Fine thank you	Tuesday
3 मकावा तवाताः सिन्तन. Mu	KAVA TAVATA SINUT - NICE meeting	you .
" सीता हलआइसी इयोहा * सीता हलआईसी - सिमीहा-	AÃ - Fine thank you IKAVA TAVATA SINUT - NRCE MEETIN MITÄ HALUAISIT YUODA-What wou MITÄ HALUAISIT SOYDÃ-What woul K you Bye Bye	A you like to Annk
		8
ह नापदान - NAHDAAN - S ि निर्मेहामीन - NYi Hemimin प्रियान - Pian - Soon	ee you	9
ि निर्मुहामीन - NITHEMIMIK पियान - Pian - Soon	i - ialer	10
" नामतान भिष्ठ डामित - 5	see you later	• 11
व माफ्दान पियान - 5	ee you soon	
		12



- 1 - Janar	
APRIL 105-261 days	2008
Monday The often total . would you like to have coke	٣
A How are you?	
Huma - lasty food	
31351 - Dye Dye	
stigilas and the Joking Bropity - Stredting	
जन्मार - अन्यरा- अजनाड - रोयानी - Brigh	
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actor action - Her sing Pear and Patoto	
ittest - ittest - oura	
बटेका टमेटा रसा आड़ साक - आलू टमाटर की सब्जी	
12	
1	