When we speak of standard language, we speak also about received pronunciation. These are two concepts or two terms that are used generally to indicate a way of using language, which conforms to the natural or acquired habit of educated people, whose speech gives no idea about or indication of their regional origins.

Standard language is believed to be an acceptable, correct and proper version of language. And here we say that though there are sorts of small individual variations in the use of the standard language, because every one of us uses language in a distinct way that distinguishes him from other people around him, we can say that when it comes to the use of standard language, there is a body of relatively homogeneous usage which marks the speech of a number of educated people as similar.

I started by making a distinction. When we speak of received pronunciation, reference is made to speech sounds. And when we speak of standard language, (English, French or any other language), reference is made to the use of words and to the grammatical forms.

This is generally speaking, but from a linguistic point of view, the standard language is not necessarily better in any respect than the other national or regional dialects. It is simply another version or another dialect requiring more detailed description, profound analysis and this is due to its social and educational status that makes it necessary to study and to analyse it in more details than the other.
dialects, because it is considered as a linguistic modal or a linguistic base for the teaching and the educational operation or processes as a whole. We mention here that we have two positions when it comes to standardization. The first position is expressed by the linguists who consider that all languages are the same: there is no differences between one dialect than another, and no difference between a dialect and a standard language. All of them play the same role in society. For the purists, however, and this is the second position, colloquial languages, or colloquial variations of varieties are considered to be improper languages. Any non-standard form is incomplete and non adapted to proper use. Without going into the details here about these two positions, we say that standardization is a change in the profile of a variety to consider it a broader, more general close to perfection, more stable and more acceptable.

A standardized language becomes more general in the sense that it can be used by different members of society, whatever their dialect, whatever their idiolect, whatever their regional origins, they can communicate via this standard language because it is a common language for them. For all of this, the variety to be standardized must go through four processes:

1. **Selection**: the variety to be standardized should be selected. And for it to be selected, there must be an agreement and a general consensus on it, and for there to be an agreement, there must be a general consultation. This selection is a political and social issue. Indeed, the strongest variety gets selected generally under the pressure of the strongest political movement in society and once a variety is selected, it gains a sort of prestige, especially for those who speak it. This prestige or association with the standard form of language makes of the process of standardization a social issue as well. So it is both social and political because we have the interference of different political parties and the strongest party has an influence on the choice of which variety is to be selected. Of course, the speakers
of that variety feel that sort of prestige because their dialect has been chosen for the standardization process.

2. **Codification**: once the selection has taken place, the conventional form is established to be maintained and to be used in all segments of life. For that, it needs a code, a dictionary and an academy. The role of the academy consists of laying down the rules for the language in question (grammars and dictionaries), which will serve as handbooks for speakers. The members of the academy must agree about the words and the lexical items to be used as entries in dictionaries. This is a very difficult and complicated process, because most of the time it is difficult to reach a general agreement or general consensus on the lexical items to be officially adopted.

3. **Elaboration of function**: the variety to be chosen must be able to satisfy all the communicative needs of its speakers and must elaborate all the functions of society i.e. must have a multitude of functions, especially the most basic ones. These functions can be administrative, legal, educational, scientific, political, technological... Further than that, the variety to be standardized must be able to be written and spoken.

4. **Acceptance**. as already argued, people or members of a society should accept the variety before undertaking the process of standardization, because the variety to be standardized will acquire the status of a national official language of the society that has chosen to standardize it. In fact, standardization needs and relies on great work and especially on wisdom, because it involves many processes. The first process is efforts in selecting and adopting the variety to be standardized. The second process is knowledge (linguistic, legal, social, political, scientific, etc..). The third process is the need for experts to undertake all of these tasks. The fourth process is people's attitudes towards the variety that should be positive, otherwise standardization won't be able to take place or won't be a
successful attempt. The fifth process is mastery of the linguistic structure of the language. The sixth one is knowledge about how to form or build and establish a language. For this, we need special experts. The seventh process is a good sense of evaluation to evaluate the variety before and after standardization and to assess the feasibility and applicability of the newly standardized form of the language.

We give examples of such linguistic situations characterized by the contact between national standard forms of language and minority or indigenous languages. This is important to us because of the effect that these situations can have on the life of the people (social, socioeconomic, political and educational).

The first example is that of the United States. We all know that the most commonly used language in the United States is English, precisely American English, which is de facto the national language. There are, of course, many other languages spoken in the United States: 430 languages, out of which, one hundred and seventy-six (176) indigenous to the area brought to the country by either colonists, immigrants or enslaved people. This implies that twenty-eight million have an L-1 which is not English. But this is largely ignored by the American government: only Spanish speakers in the South and the West and American Indians can possibly be educated in their L-1, but only in primary schools. When it comes to higher levels of education, they have to switch to the use of English, which remains basic and only medium of schooling and education. They have to adapt themselves to this special linguistic situation and to face the problems associated with such a situation.

The second example is Wales. In Wales, Welsh people are allowed to choose either English or Welsh or both when they want to have a bilingual education in bilingual schools. This implies that the Welsh policy is based on freedom of choice. The government does not intervene in this choice and doesn't
impose the language of people's schooling, which means that this is their own preference.

The third example is the linguistic situation in Russia. 200 languages are spoken in the country in addition to the Russian language. But the Russian government exerts pressure on people who should use Russian as a basic means of communication and expression. Pressure is especially exerted on parents' speakers of a non-Russian L-1 to raise, educate and communicate with their children via the Russian language. Those who agree to do so are highly encouraged and praised by the government, and they can even receive rewards for that. In general, the linguistic rule adopted in Russia is that people, for their immediate communicative needs and to feel certain lexical gaps, are discouraged to switch to any other languages other than the Russian language instead of the foreign French or English L1s.

South Africa is another example. In this country, we have eleven major languages with European and African origins. So apart from the Xhosa, Venda and Zoulou, there is Afrikaans and English, which are the two official language groups that, in fact, depict the tension that exists in the country between the ethnic Europeans and the black majority. In this country, people get educated in their L-1 and they are denied access to English and by the same token, they are denied access to governmental positions. So this means that those people who do not speak English, and do not get educated in English, and do not have access to governmental positions, are isolated and deprived from any social advancement. So the policy adopted in South Africa is decide and rule.

Our last example is Malaysia. Five languages are used as means of communication and instruction. These are Malay, English, Mandarin, Chinese and Arabic. But over a hundred dialects (exactly 137) are spoken on a daily basis by the Malaysian people for their everyday interactions. English, however, remains
the dominant language there, especially in education, because most textbooks are in English. So if we consider the code-switching there and the process of borrowing, these are generally to and from English and not from any other language. To solve the problem of communication between the speakers of all of these dialects and different languages, they created the Esperanto language that rare but a live language as some refer to it.

The language was European based because it was a mixture of German, Polish, Russian, French and English. The project, however, failed in Malaysia because the Malaysian people did not take it seriously and they even consider it to be an exotic amalgam of different ingredients taken from romance and Germanic languages and the Grammar from Slavic languages. They even ironically referred to it as a heady stew for the Malaysian linguistic palate.

These are by no means the only examples that can be cited here as concrete examples of linguistic situations characterized by the contact between different language, especially between official standard forms of language and indigenous or minority languages . The students are invited to do further research in this connection and to study different linguistic situations in some parts of the world which have not been cited in the present lecture. And they are even encouraged to scrutinize the linguistic situation prevalent in the Moroccan context.

Basic Sources:
