



Language, dialect and variety

Variety or code (Holmes, p. 19)

Kalala speaks an informal style of Shi, his tribal language, at home with his family, and he is familiar with the formal Shi used for weddings and funerals. He uses informal Shi in the market-place when he deals with vendors from his own ethnic group. When he wants to communicate with people from a different tribal group, he uses the lingua franca of the area, Swahili. He learned standard Zairean Swahili at school but the local market-place variety is a little different. It has its own distinct linguistic features and even its own name – Kingwana. He uses Kingwana to younger children and to adults he meets in the streets, as well as to people in the market-place.

Standard Zairean Swahili, one of the national languages, is the language used in Bukavu for most official transactions, despite the fact that French is the official language of Zaire. Kalala knows almost no French and, like most other people in Bukavu, he uses standard Zairean Swahili with officials in government offices when he has to fill in a form or pay a bill. He uses it when he tries for a job in a shop or an office, but there are very few jobs around. He spends most of his time with his friends, and with them he uses a special variety or code called Indoubil. This is a variety which is used among the young people in Bukavu, regardless of their ethnic backgrounds or tribal affiliations.

- ▶ The factors that lead Kalala to choose one code rather than another the kinds of are social factors relevant to language choice in speech communities throughout the world.
- ▶ Characteristics of the users or participants are relevant. Kalala's own linguistic repertoire and the repertoire of the person he is talking to are basic limiting factors.

Table 2.1 Two linguistic repertoires in Zaire

Kalala's linguistic repertoire	Addressee's linguistic repertoire
Shi: informal style formal style	Rega: informal style formal style
Indoubil	Lingala
Kingwana	
Standard Zairean Swahili	Standard Zairean Swahili

Domains of language use

Table 2.2 Domains of language use

Domain	Addressee	Setting	Topic	Variety/Code
Family	Parent	Home	Planning a family party	_____
Friendship	Friend	Beach	How to play beach tennis	_____
Religion	Priest	Church	Choosing the Sunday liturgy	_____
Education	Teacher	School	Solving a maths problem	_____
Employment	Employer	Workplace	Applying for a promotion	_____

Source: Based on Fishman 1972: 22

Table 2.3 Domains of language use in Paraguay

Domain	Addressee	Setting	Topic	Language
Family	Parent	Home	Planning a family party	<i>Guaraní</i>
Friendship	Friend	Café	Funny anecdote	<i>Guaraní</i>
Religion	Priest	Church	Choosing the Sunday liturgy	<i>Spanish</i>
Education	Teacher	Primary school	Telling a story	<i>Guaraní</i>
Education	Lecturer	University	Solving a maths problem	<i>Spanish</i>
Administration	Official	Office	Getting an import licence	<i>Spanish</i>

Other social factors affecting code choice

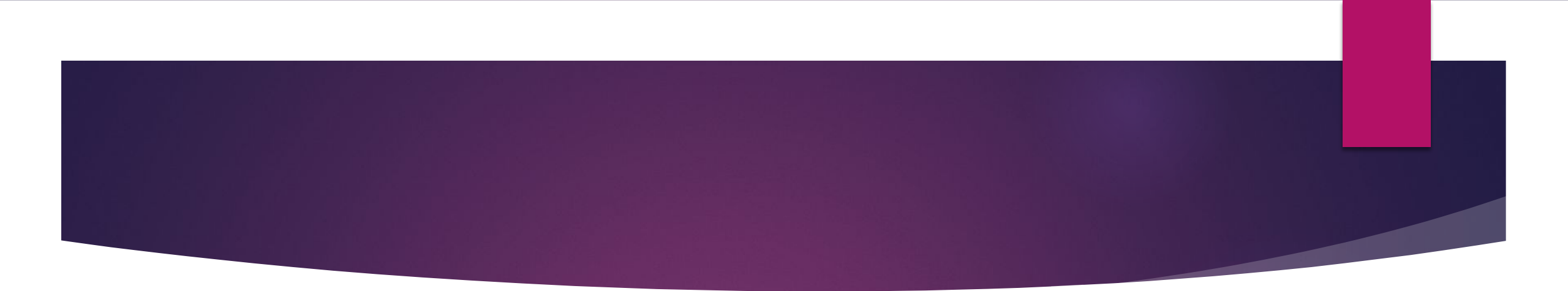
- ▶ The status **relationship** between people may be relevant in selecting the appropriate code.
- ▶ Features of the **setting** and the dimension of formality may also be important in selecting an appropriate variety or code. In church, at a formal ceremony, the appropriate variety will be different from that used afterwards in the church porch.

Zwracamy się tak do siebie, ponieważ jest to miłe. Nie ma za tym żadnych historii.	We use nicknames, because it's nice. There are no stories behind it.
Jest to bardziej czułe.	It's more affectionate.
Mówimy tak do siebie by pokazać drugiej osobie jak bardzo się ją kocha.	We use nicknames to show the other person how much we love them.
Lubimy mówić do siebie w sposób pieszczotliwy. Uważam, że zdrobnienia są wyrazem miłości, potwierdzają fakt, iż jesteśmy razem.	We like addressing each other in an affectionate way. I think that nicknames show our love and prove that we are a couple.
Przejaw tego, że znamy się dobrze i jesteśmy blisko.	Nicknames show how well we know each other and how close we are.
To jest kochane i o wiele bardziej miłe niż suche imię. Od razu panuje inny nastrój rozmowy. Zazwyczaj przed snem najczęściej używamy zdrobnień.	Using nicknames is sweet and so much nicer than using names. It automatically creates better atmosphere while having a conversation. Usually, we use more nicknames just before going to bed.
Myślę, że tworzy to między partnerami bardziej intymne relacje i stwarza miłszą atmosferę.	I believe it creates intimate bonds between partners and makes the atmosphere in a relationship better.
At the start of a relationship it is part of the special feeling . It fades with years!	Na początku związku, zwracanie się do siebie w szczególny sposób jest czymś wyjątkowym. Z czasem, to uczucie powoli zanika.
Nicknames seem to be really pleasant and sound good for us.	Zwracanie się do siebie w szczególny sposób wydaje się być naprawdę miłe.
They are ways to show how I feel about her, and to overtly show her I love her	To sposób na to, aby pokazać co do niej czuję i otwarcie wyrazić swoją miłość.
To show affection.	Aby wyrazić uczucie.
We use nicknames because it signifies our closeness.	Zwracamy się do siebie w szczególny sposób, ponieważ wskazuje to na bliskość w naszym związku.

Nicknames used in intimate situations.	
Phrases meaning a 'beloved one'	kochanie, ukochana, <u>schatzi</u> , jedyna
Phrases meaning 'something precious'	skarbie, najdroższa
Sex-related	dziewczynka, niunia, dziewica cud, naughty <u>girl</u> , big boy, bad <u>girl</u> , bad boy, absztyfikant, <u>maczo</u>
Animal-deriving	mysz, <u>myszka</u> , myszka, misio, misiu, misio-pysio, kocie, kicia, kocica, kocur, niedźwiedź, ptaszyno, ogierek
Body parts	dzióbek
Variations of the word beautiful	moja najpiękniejsza, piękna, przystojniaczku, przystojniaku, cudenka, cudenka
Tenderly about small children	niunia, maleństwo, malutka, malutki
Biblical names	diabeł
Family functions	żonka, mężuś
Food-deriving	strawberry flavoured muffin of love, chocolate and cheese
Title-names	bogini
Astronomical names	<u>wenus</u>
Words with an offensive undertone	suko, szmato, <u>zбочух</u>
Others	<u>nieni</u> , <u>aktywiec</u> , sztywniak, <u>tubby</u> , <u>tubs</u> , <u>yummy bummy</u> , mruk

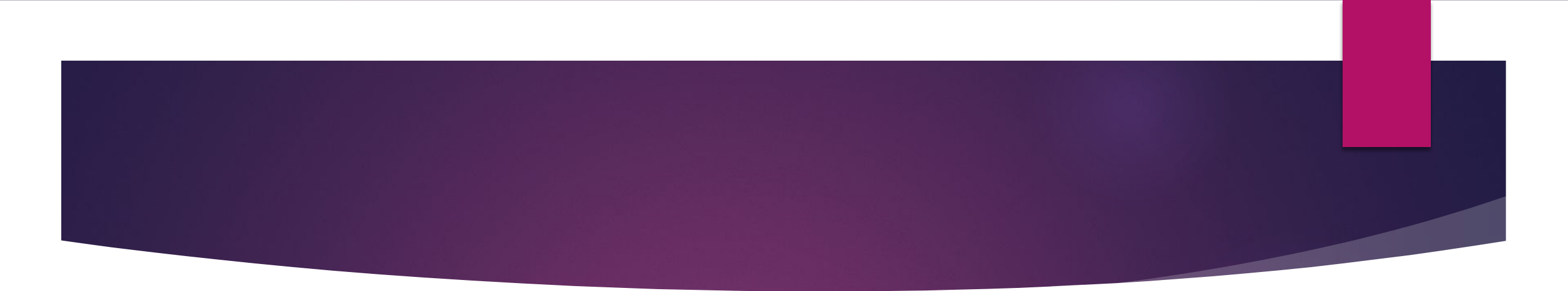
Table 5: Examples of the nicknames used in intimate situations.

Phrases meaning a 'beloved one'	kochanie, darling, love, sweetheart, honey
Phrases meaning 'something precious'	skarbie, skarbusiu, najdroższy, darling
Animal-deriving	kotek, piesek, kocinka, piesia, kocio, myszek, żaba, kacuszko, kurczak, kurczaczek, pisklak, pchełka, misiu, kotku, tygrysie, kociaku, tygrysku, prosiaczku, rybko, rybeńko, dove, love dove, <u>dovey</u> , <u>misiulku</u> , <u>pszczołko</u> , <u>robaczku</u> , bear, <u>bearie</u> , grizzly bear, <u>grizz</u>
Name-deriving	Rafałku, Natalka, Agusi, Przemek, <u>Malwiś</u> , <u>Erni</u> , Niusia, Pinka
Names connected with flora	kwiatuszku, <u>zieleniu</u> , perełko
Food-deriving	parowa, cukiereczku, słodki biszkopcik, <u>nugget</u> , pączku
Body parts	mordko, pyszczku, pysku, pysiu, <u>dziubasku</u>
Weather-connected	słońce, słonko
Family functions	mężu, zono, <u>dziadziuku</u>
Physical and mental features	zołzo, franco, maleństwo, maruda, słodziak, malutki/a, droopy drawers, <u>ciamciuś</u> , snuggle <u>buggle</u> , handsome chops, poppy knickers, tubby, tubs, Dicky, <u>menduniu</u> , little fat bastard, princess
Film / fairy tales characters	czarownico
Tenderly about small children	mała, maleństwo, niunia, lala
Sex-related	miss, my beautiful lady, pretty boy
Names meaning a 'creature'	matey beast, monster, <u>monst</u> , <u>monstie</u>

- 
- ▶ Another important factor is the function or goal of the interaction. What is the language being used for? Is the speaker asking a favour or giving orders to someone

DIGLOSSIA

In Eggenwil, a town in the Aargau canton of Switzerland, Silvia, a bank-teller, knows two very distinct varieties of German. One is the local Swiss German dialect of her canton which she uses in her everyday interactions. The other is standard German which she learnt at school, and though she understands it very well indeed, she rarely uses it in speech. Newspapers are written in standard German, and when she occasionally goes to hear a lecture at the university it may be in standard German. The national TV news is broadcast in standard German, but weather broadcasts now use dialect. The sermons her mother listens to in church are generally in standard German too, though more radical clerics use Swiss German dialect. The novels Silvia reads also use standard German.



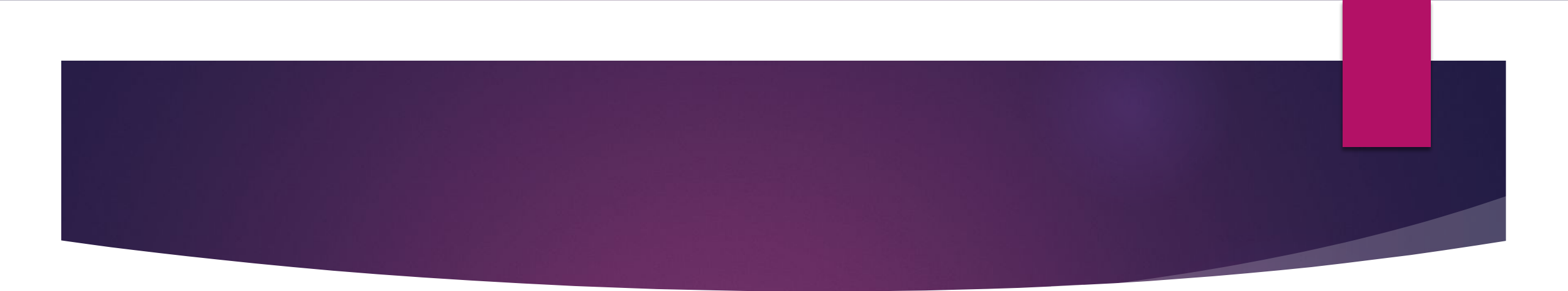
diglossia has three crucial features:

1. Two distinct varieties of the same language are used in the community, with one regarded as a high (or H) variety and the other a low (or L) variety.
2. Each variety is used for quite distinct functions; H and L complement each other.
3. No one uses the H variety in everyday conversation.

In Europe in the Middle Ages, Latin was the H variety alongside daughter languages, such as Italian, French and Spanish, which had developed from its more colloquial form. These communities all satisfy the three criteria.

In these communities while the two varieties are (or were) linguistically related, the relationship is closer in some cases than others. The degree of difference in the pronunciation of H and L varies from place to place, for example. The sounds of Swiss German are quite different from those of standard German, while Greek Katharévousa is much closer to Dhimotiki in its pronunciation. The grammar of the two linguistically related varieties differs too. Often the grammar of H is morphologically more complicated. So standard German, for instance, uses more case markers on nouns and tense inflections on verbs than Swiss German; and standard French, the H variety in Haiti, uses more markers of number and gender on nouns than Haitian Creole, the L variety.

Most of the vocabulary of H and L is the same. But, not surprisingly since it is used in more formal domains, the H vocabulary includes many more formal and technical terms such as *conservation* and *psychometric*, while the L variety has words for everyday objects such as *saucepan* and *shoe*. There are also some interesting paired items for frequently referred to concepts. Where standard German uses *Kartoffel* for 'potato', and *Dachboden* for 'attic', Swiss German uses *Härdöpfel* and *Estrich*. Where Katharévousa uses *ikias* for 'house' Dhimotiki uses *oikia*.

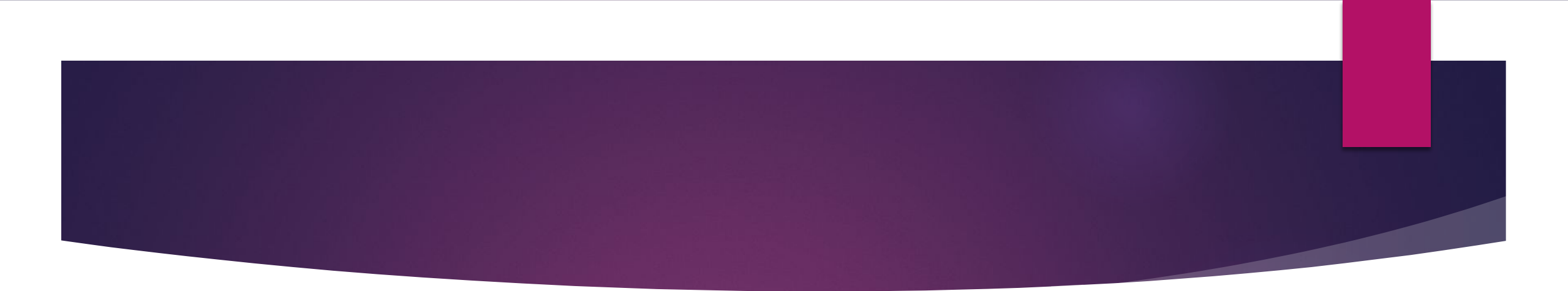


Diglossia is a characteristic of speech communities rather than individuals. Individuals may be bilingual. Societies or communities are diglossic. In other words, the term diglossia describes societal or institutionalised bilingualism, where two varieties are required to cover all the community's domains. There are some diglossic communities where there is very limited individual bilingualism; e.g. in Haiti more than 90 per cent of the population is monolingual in Haitian Creole. Consequently they cannot actively contribute in more formal domains.

Table 2.4 Relationship between diglossia and bilingualism

		DIGLOSSIA	
		+	-
BILINGUALISM	+	1. Both diglossia and bilingualism	2. Bilingualism without diglossia
	-	3. Diglossia without bilingualism	4. Neither diglossia nor bilingualism

Source: Fishman (2003: 360). Reproduced with permission

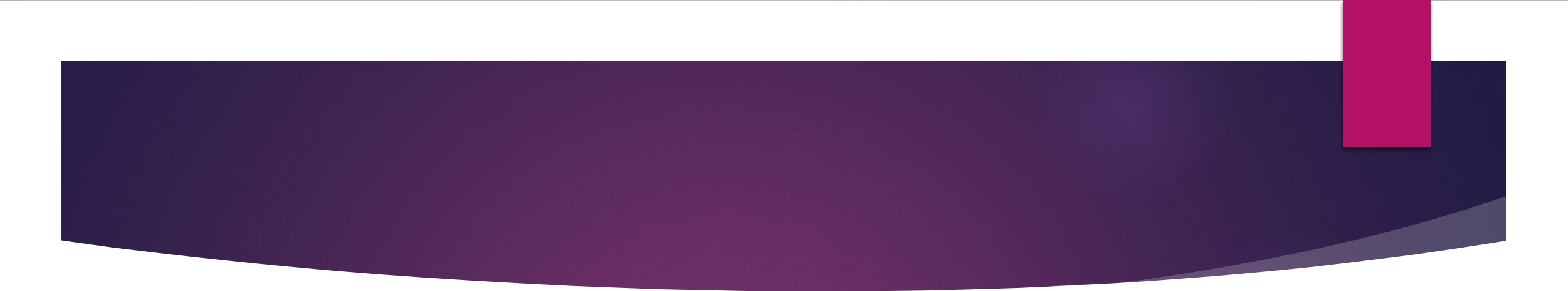


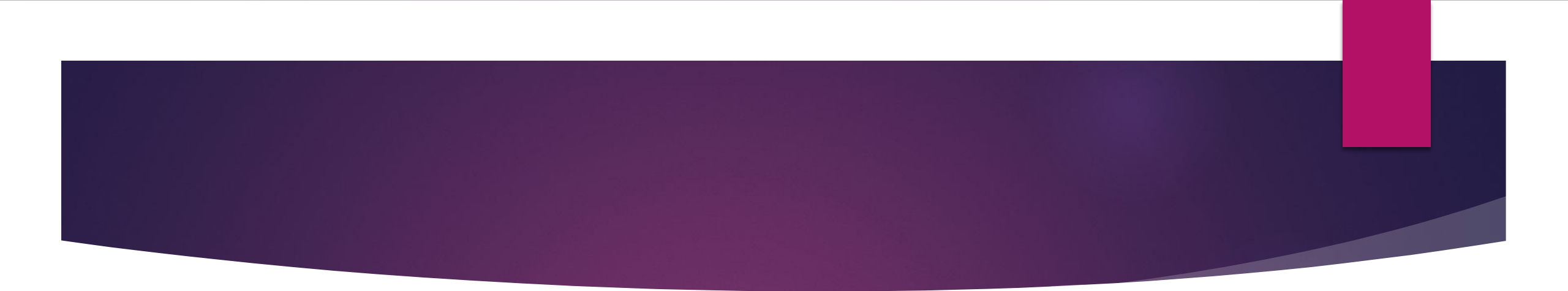
Diglossic situations involve two contrasting varieties, H and L. Sometimes, however, a more sophisticated concept is needed to describe the functional distribution of different varieties in a community. People like Kalala in Bukavu, for instance, use many different codes for different purposes. The term polyglossia has been used for situations like this where a community regularly uses more than two languages. Kalala's linguistic repertoire described in table 2.1 provides a nice example of polyglossic relationships

Code-switching and code-mixing

Vernacular language

- ▶ The term Vernacular is used in a number of ways. It generally refers to a language which
- ▶ has not been standardized and which does not have official status. There are hundreds
- ▶ of vernacular languages, such as Buang in Papua New Guinea, Hindustani in India, and
- ▶ Bumar in Vanuatu, many of which have never been written down or described. In
- ▶ a multilingual speech community the many different ethnic or tribal languages used
- ▶ by different groups are referred to as vernacular languages. Vernaculars are usually the
- ▶ first languages learned by people in multilingual communities, and they are often used
- ▶ for a relatively narrow range of informal functions.

- 
- ▶ There are three components of the meaning of the term vernacular.
 - ▶ The most basic refers to the fact that a vernacular is an uncoded or unstandardised variety.
 - ▶ The second refers to the way it is acquired - in the home, as a first variety.
 - ▶ The third is the fact that it is used for relatively circumscribed functions, The first component has been most widely used as the defining criterion, but emphasis on one or other of the components has led to the use of the term vernacular with somewhat different meanings.

- 
- ▶ An influential 1951 UNESCO report, for instance, defined a vernacular language as the first language of a group socially or politically dominated
 - ▶ by a group with a different language. So in countries such as the United States where
 - ▶ English is the language of the dominant group a language like Spanish is referred to
 - ▶ as a Chicano child's vernacular. But Spanish would not be regarded as a vernacular
 - ▶ language in Spain, Uruguay or Chile, where it is an official language. In this sense
 - ▶ Greek is a vernacular language in Australia and New Zealand,, but not in Greece or
 - ▶ Cyprus. The term vernacular simply means a language which is not an official language
 - ▶ in a particular context.