
A REAPPRAISAL OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EXPLANATIONS OF CODE -SWITCHING:

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El cambio de código se puede definir como el uso alternado de lenguas distintas en el interior de la misma interacción lingüística.

En este artículo se examinan y discuten distintas teorías que se han desarrollado para explicar el carácter estructurado de la alternancia tanto a nivel gramatical como funcional y las categorías lingüísticas que se han propuesto para definir los varios tipos de cambio de código.

Algunas de estas propuestas teóricas se confrontan con un corpus de datos derivado de conversaciones entre bilingües grabadas en las cuales se verifica el cambio de código. El análisis de los datos sugiere que las puras explicaciones gramaticales del cambio de código son inadecuadas y que la alternancia parece tener funciones discursivas específicas. Se propone que el cambio de código se puede comprender mejor si se estudia como una estrategia conversacional.

Code-switching can be defined as the alternate use of different languages within the same linguistic interaction.

In this article are examined and discussed dif-

ferent theories that have been developed, to explain the structured character of the alternance both at a grammatical and functional level and the linguistic categories that have been proposed to define the various types of code-switching. Some of these theoretical proposals are confronted with a corpus of data from recorded conversations among bilinguals where code-switching takes place. The analysis of the data suggests that purely grammatical explanations of code-switching are inadequate and that the alternance seems to have specific discourse functions. What is proposed in this article is that code-switching can be better understood if studied as a conversational strategy.

Le changement de code peut se définir comme l'usage alterné de langues différentes à l'intérieur de la même interaction linguistique. Dans cet article, on examine et discute différentes théories qui cherchent à expliquer le caractère structuré de l'alternance, tant au niveau grammatical qu'au niveau fonctionnel ainsi que les catégories linguistiques proposées pour définir les différents types de changement de code. Quelques unes de ces propositions théoriques sont confrontées à un corpus de conversations entre bilingues enregistrées et où on vérifie les changements de code. L'analyse de ce corpus suggère que les explications purement grammaticales sont inadéquates et que l'alternance paraît avoir des fonctions discursives spécifiques. On propose que le changement de code se comprendra mieux si on l'envisage comme stratégie conversationnelle.

Man kann 'Code-switching' definieren als innerhalb ein und derselben linguistischen Interaktion abwechselnd erfolgender Gebrauch verschiedener Sprachen.

Der vorliegende Artikel untersucht und diskutiert verschiedene Theorien, welche entwickelt wurden, um den strukturellen Charakter von 'Code-switching' auf grammatikalischer und funktioneller Ebene zu untersuchen; darüber hinaus werden linguistische Kategorien untersucht, welche die verschiedenen Arten des Sprachwechsels definieren.

Einige dieser Theorien werden einem Korpus von Daten gegenübergestellt, der den Gesprächen von zweisprachigen Personen entstammt. An diesem Korpus erfolgt eine Überprüfung der 'Code-switching'.

Eine Analyse der Daten zeigt, dass eine rein grammatikalische Erklärung des 'Code-switching' ungenügend ist und dass der Sprachwechsel spezifische diskursive Funktionen hat. Es wird vorgeschlagen, 'Code-switching' zum besseren Verständnis als Konversationsstrategie zu untersuchen.

Introducción

Code-switching has been defined as the alternate use of different languages (as in Haugen, 1956). The attitude of linguists towards this phenomenon has not always been positive. In the past the alternation of different languages has been viewed with suspicion and uneasiness, since it appeared to be irreducible to ruled behaviour.

Labov (1971), for instance, quoted a passage where code-switching between Spanish and English took place, as an example of non rule-governed variation and idiosyncratic behaviour. Before him Weinreich asserted that:

"The (...) ideal bilingual switches from one language to another according to appropriate changes in the speech situation (interlocutors, topics, etc.) but not in an unchanged speech-situation, and certainly not within a single sentence."

* (1953: 73-74)

In this passage Weinreich reveals the same preoccupation as Labov: linguistic behaviour must be systematic to constitute an object of study.

In recent years, though, a number of studies have underlined the importance of the analysis of code-switching both from a synchronic point of

view (how and when people code-switch) and from a diachronic point of view (is code-switching an intermediate stage towards convergence?). This interest has come from the realisation that alternating different codes is everyday practice for communities and individuals all over the world and that such practice is not at all the product of the individual's idiosyncratic choices.

Different parameters and constraints have been developed to explain code-switching. Some studies have focused on syntactic properties (Poplack, 1980; Pfaff, 1979; Lipsky, 1978), others have concentrated on the situational and functional significance of code-switching (Blom and Gumperz, 1972; Gumperz, 1982; Di Pietro, 1978), others have investigated the inner, psycholinguistic mechanisms that trigger code-switching (particularly Clyne, 1967).

All these studies have had the merit of showing that code-switching is a structured activity both from a grammatical and from a functional point of view and that mixing of languages does not occur in an unconstrained way.

In this article syntactic (internal) and non syntactic (external) parameters are evaluated on a corpus of data derived from conversations among bilinguals. The objective of this evaluation is to show that a purely grammatical analysis of code-switching is insufficient and may involve a certain amount of simplifications and excessive generalisations and that a better understanding of the phenomenon can be achieved if code-switching is considered as a conversational strategy.

This paper is subdivided into three sections. In the first section different categories proposed to analyse code-switching are presented together with the distinction between code-switching and borrowing.

In the second section the syntactic constraints

proposed by Poplack (1980) are evaluated on a corpus of data from actual conversations.

In the third section is discussed the validity of looking at code-switching as a conversational strategy and the functional categories proposed by Gumperz (1982) and McClure (1977) are applied to the data.

I - Different tipe of code-switching

This study presupposes an important distinction made by Gumperz on different occasions (1972, 1982) between two types of code-switching: *situational* and *conversational*. The second type is also called *metaphorical* by the same author. In situational code-switching there is a one-to-one relationship between social factors and linguistic behaviour. In fact the alternation is determined by changes in settings (situations where the linguistic activity is taking place), speakers and topics of conversation. The most organised and regular kind of situational code-switching is *diglossia* when it is society itself that determines the usage of different varieties according to different social occasions, participants and topics. This type of alternation has been widely studied in sociolinguistics in order to establish the conditions under which each language (or variety) is selected. Conversational code-switching, on the other hand, cannot be directly related to social factors in the same way.

As Gumperz notices, in conversational code-switching:

"(...) the relationship of such factors to speech-form is quite different from what the sociologist means by correlation among variables. One could not take a rating of, for instance, ethnicity or degree of solidarity,

as measured by the usual questionnaire techniques, or other social devices, and expect this rating to predict the occurrence of Spanish or Black dialect or Standard English in a text. Such ratings may determine the likelihood of a switch, but they do not tell when a switch will occur, nor do they predict its meaning."

(1971:328)

As mentioned before, conversational code-switching is also called *metaphorical* by Gumperz because it is often a stylistic device to convey meanings whose interpretation depends on background cultural assumptions shared by the participants in the conversation.

In this perspective code-switching can be studied within the framework of conversation and discourse analysis. Many studies of code-switching have in fact moved in this direction. Di Pietro, for example, in an analysis of code-switching among Italian-Americans says that his point of departure was:

"That all people, regardless of the languages they speak, possess certain verbal skills on which they rely to influence the outcome of their conversations with others (...), equipped with a functional competence in two or more languages, the bilingual is presented with alternative strategies unavailable to monolinguals. From what I have observed, code-switching provides the bases of these strategies."

(1978: 277)

In this kind of study, then, understanding and knowledge of the cultural conventions of the groups (or individuals) involved are very important to provide a general framework of interpretation of the specific linguistic phenomena. Gumperz defines

conversational code-switching as:

"The juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems.'

(1982: 59)

and this is the definition adopted in this paper.

Code-switching, code-changing, code-mixing

Code-switching can occur at different levels. Within a conversation it can take place across turns when the same speaker uses two alternative codes in his two successive turns, or within the same turn. For the latter type of code-switching different classifications based on form and function have been proposed. Poplack (1980) proposes to distinguish between:

- a) *Intrasentential* code-switching (mainly at the constituent or clause level) used by more fluent bilinguals
- b) *Intersentential* code-switching (mainly at the sentence level) used by less fluent bilinguals. Both types are used in more intimate situations as opposed to:
- c) *Emblematic* code-switching which involves mainly tags and simple nouns and is reserved to less intimate situations.

A similar distinction is found in McClure in a study about code-switching among Mexican-American children. The author divides code-switching into *code-changing* and *code-mixing*. The former is:

"a complete shift to another language system"

(1977:97)

and generally takes place at the level of the major constituents and appears to be motivated by situational and stylistic factors. The latter is;

"the individual' use of opposite language elements which cannot be considered to be borrowed by the community."

(1977: 98)

Code-mixing seems to be determined by the fact that the individual is momentarily unable to access a term for a concept in the language he is using and looks for it in the other code. This kind of code-switching generally takes place within constituents and is marked as a foreign element into a monolingual utterance.

These kinds of distinctions, though useful, seem difficult to apply to conversational code-switching. Poplack's distinction between intra-sentential and intersentential code-switching does not play a particular role in the data that will be presented here because all the bilinguals that were recorded use both types without significant differences. On the other hand, McClure's concept of code-mixing seems useful to characterise switches like the following:

- 1) "...porque el *Health-Service* es gratuito"
[...because the Health-Service is free]

from other more genuine switches. The use of the English word here is probably due to the fact that it refers to an English institution which has no proper equivalent in Mexico. But, still, in conversational code-switching individuals use all these types of code-switching in a more or less equal proportion, and their choice seems to depend on the conversational strategies that they are using.

Emblematic code-switching or *code-mixing*, on the other hand, seems to be a powerful conversational device and not simply a type of alternance

dependent on lack of availability of a word or inability to access it in the base language of the utterance. As it will be seen in the discussion of emphatic code-switching, the switch of single nouns or individual words often appears to be a stylistic choice as much as the switch of longer constituents or clauses. The data here discussed suggest that syntactic and functional criteria do not overlap inasmuch as different types of syntactic switches are employed for the same purpose and viceversa. The same individuals tend to pass quite freely from mixed sentences to longer stretches of monolingual discourse with the occasional insertion of single nouns, adjectives or clause connectors, their choice being apparently determined by conversational strategies or other external factors.

Code-switching and borrowing

One of the problems when dealing with data from actual conversations is to decide when the segments) under examination is a code-switch and when it is a borrowing. There appear to be no clear and definite criteria to make such a decision, the generic solution of considering individual words as borrowings and longer concatenations of morphemes as code-switching is very simplistic. Such a solution excludes the possibility of the borrowing of idiomatic phrases and other expressions from L_1 into L_2 , a solution which is not legitimate. Other criteria of distinction are based on the phonological syntactic or semantic integration of the element(s) into the base language. Some authors take the phonological integration to be basic, while others concentrate on the morphosyntactic integration. The adequacy of the phonological criteria has been challenged by many authors on the grounds that the phonology of switches may spill over across lexemes (see Shaffer, 1978 on this point).

On the other hand, syntactic and morphological adaptations are not necessarily an indication of borrowing in themselves as it will be seen in the course of this study. As Gardner-Chloros notices:

"L'intégration morpho-syntaxique à la langue d'accueil est probablement plus fréquente lorsque l'élément importé est un emprunt que dans le cas d'une alternance. Mais ici encore nous voyons un problème dans l'emploi de ce critère pour faire la part des deux phénomènes. En effet, si l'on fait une division a priori sur cette base l'on est empêché de considérer la possibilité que l'alternance puisse avoir lieu à l'intérieur des mots et aux endroits où les grammaires des deux langues sont en conflit. L'argument court alors le danger de la circularité."

(1985: 209)

The main difficulty with the concept of borrowing is that it is fundamentally a diachronic concept in the sense that a final decision on the status of linguistic element can only be given in the light of historical comparison. On the other hand, at a synchronic level, an accurate study should involve the analysis of the lexical inventory of the community under examination and of the process of adaptation that is imposed on foreign linguistic items (as suggested in Pfaff, 1979: 297).

All this beyond the scope of this paper which deals with individuals and not with groups. The most sensible solution in this kind of study seems that of distinguishing borrowings from code-switches on the basis of the judgement of speakers, asking them whether an element or a series of morphemes are felt as marked or unmarked, contrasting or not with the rest of the utterance.

For example in a case like the following utterance taken from the corpus:

2) Your friend didn't look very *macho* the word "macho" was not considered as a code-switch because the informants agreed on the fact that it is part of the English lexical inventory.

II - The Data

The data presented here are derived from conversations among bilinguals that were recorded mostly in Cambridge during a period of approximately one month. These recordings amount altogether to about 360 minutes but the transcriptions only refer to passages where there was code-switching, which were only a small percentage of the total recordings.

Details of the conversations (settings, topics, and participants) will be given together with the analysis of the examples.

In some of the conversations the author was participating. This participation allowed a deeper understanding of certain mechanisms of code-switching that are very closely related to contingent circumstances and to the common building up of meanings which is typical of conversation. It is important to mention that the tape-recorder was hidden and that all the examples discussed are taken from utterances produced by the informants.

The conversations are either in Spanish with switches into English and viceversa or in Italian with switches into Spanish.

This variety of sources seemed important to show that it is possible to make generalisations about the conversational significance of code-switching across languages.

All the informants can be described as fluent bilinguals by normal standards since they have been living for years and working or studying in the country where their second language is spoken. No test was applied to evaluate their degree of bilingualism due to lack of time.

Application of syntactic constraints to the data

Different kinds of syntactic constraints have been proposed on code-switching (see Lipsky, 1978; Pfaff, 1979; Gumperz, 1982). In this section is discussed the application to the data of the morphosyntactic constraints proposed by Poplack in her study of code-switching among English-Spanish bilinguals in a Puertorican area of New York.

Poplack proposes two constraints:

- 1) The free morpheme constraint according to which:

codes may be switched after any constituent in discourse provided that constituent is not a bound morpheme
(1980: 585)

This constraint excludes code-switches such as EAT-IENDO where the Spanish bound morpheme IENDO is affixed to the English root EAT.

- 2) The equivalence constraint, according to which:

"code-switches will tend to occur at points in discourse where juxtaposition of L₁ and L₂ elements does not violate a syntactic rule of either language, i.e. at points around which the surface structure of the two languages map onto each other."
(1980: 586)

Poplack gives the following example to illustrate this constraint:

A (English)

I told him that so that he would bring it fast

B (Spanish) (Yo) le dije eso pá que (él) la trajera ligero

C (code-switching)

I told him that pá que la trajera ligero

where the dotted line indicates at which points code-switching is possible.

Both these constraints are respected by bilinguals in Poplack's data, allowing her to conclude that bilinguals tend to maintain grammaticality in both languages when switching. Respect of these constraints is therefore seen as a measure of degree of bilingualism.

Different works (see Meters, 1979; Gardner Chloros, 1985) have nonetheless reported violation of these constraints in the analysis of data from other languages. In the data here presented violations of the free morpheme constraint were found in a conversation recorded in Italy between the author and an Italian friend who has been living in Mexico for two years. The examples are taken from utterances of this informant, where the basic language is Italian and the switches are in Spanish. (Code-switchings are underlined.)

Consider the following examples:

3) (CS) I CAPELLI SONO MOLTO GRASOSI

[The hair is very greasy]

The basic monolingual sentence would be

3a) (Sp.) EL PELO ES MUY GPASOS-O

3b) (It.) I CAPELLI SONO MOLTO GRASSI

The code-switched adjective GRASOS -I (greasy) is a mixture derived from the Spanish root GRASOS + the Italian plural morpheme.

Consider the further example:

A) SE L U I PER ESSEMPIO AGUANTASSE UN POCO DI TEMPO

[if he for example stood it for some time]

Where the basic monolingual sentences would be:

Aa) (Sp.) SI EL POR EJEMPLO AGUANTARA UN TIEMPO

Ab) (It.) SE LUI PER ESSEMPIO SOPORTASSE UN POCO DI TEMPO

It is clear that the code-switched verb is a mixture of a Spanish root AGUANT and the Italian morpheme -ASSE marking the subjunctive. Notice that Spanish AGUANTASE which is a possible form of the subjunctive is very rarely used in spoken Mexican Spanish and that moreover the morpheme ASSE is pronounced with the double phoneme [ss] according to Italian phonology.

Consider the further example which is in fact used in the conversation as a quotation of somebody else code-switching in Mexico. The exchange is the following:

5) A. lo penso cne questa e I'unica cosa (*) cercare un pol di sdrammatizzare (*) perche se no veramente poverino

B. Poveretto (*) Los poverinos [laughs]

A. [I think that this is the only solution (*) to try to make the thing less dramatic (*) otherwise really poor chap]

B. [Poor chap (*) The poor people]

As explained later in this conversation by B the code-switched expression is taken from a bilingual Mexican-Italian who lives in Mexico. B laughs after the code-switch to underline that this is a quotation. This quoted code-switch LOS POVERINOS is a mixture of LOS POBRE-CIT-OS and I POVER-IN-I, retaining the Italian root + diminutive and affixing the Spanish plural morpheme OS. This example is interesting because it is exactly the same operation performed by the Italian-Spanish bilingual with GRASOS-I, but taking as the base the Italian root precisely because the individual's first language is Spanish. It is also interesting because it shows that violation of the free-morpheme constraint is common among bilinguals and often arises from the linguistic creativity of the individual. The former examples show that the free-morpheme constraint is not universal. On the other hand, the fact that violation of this constraint have been found in different studies of different languages also supports the idea that the affixation of bound morphemes to roots taken from the foreign language is a productive process which is creatively used by individuals and later can be adopted by the community leading to borrowings. The ability of adopting language elements from L₁ into L₂ is part of the bilingual's competence in both languages. This process of adaptation within the word does not seem different in nature from code-switching of complete morphemes. The fact that this kind of switch does not appear in Poplack's data could be due to the tendency shown by the Puerto Rican bilinguals studied by her to keep English and Spanish separate in order to maintain ethnical identity. An excessive mixing of the two languages would then be felt as a threat. In individual, intimate conversations, like the one from which the above examples were taken, on the contrary there is no reason for self-defense mechanisms and speakers appear to be much freer in their use of the language. The above suggests first that the free-morpheme constraint is not a measure of bi-

lingual ability and secondly that the maintenance of grammatical equivalence could be related to sociolinguistic factors.

The latter- observation can be taken as a starting point for the discussion of the second constraint proposed by Poplack: the equivalence constraint. Such constraint correctly predicts most of the code-switched utterances in the corpus. For example:

- 6) CUANDO HICISTE TU B.A. DID IT HAPPEN TO YOU THAT YOU DIDN'T ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS?

If we compare the corresponding monolingual sentences:

- 6a) (Sp.) CUANDO (TU) HICISTE TU CARRERA TE PASÓ QUE
- 6b) (Eng.) WHEN, (YOU) DID YOUR B.A. DID IT HAPPEN TO YOU THAT
-

We can see that the switch occurs at a permissible point.

Nonetheless cases of violation of this constraint were found in the corpus, particularly dealing with adjective placement, in conversations from Spanish base with switches into English.

Consider:

- 7) SUS PADRES LE COMPRARON UN FLAT EN LONDRES. ES UN FLAT MUY BONITO.

[Her parents bought her a flat in London. It is a very nice flat.]

Where the adjective placement conflicts in the two languages.

Compare the monolingual sentences:

- 7a) (Sp.) ES UN DEPARTAMENTO MUY BONITO
 7b) (Eng) IT IS A VERY NICE FLAT
-

Or considering the following utterance:

- 8) YA APRENDIO EL APPROACH MEXICANO DE HACER DEBATES SOBRE TODO

[h e already learned the Mexican approach of making debates out of everything]

Where again the Spanish word order requires adjective post-position: *enfoque mexicano*, while the English requires adjective pre-position: Mexican approach.

In both cases there is a conflict in the adjective placement of the two languages. This kind of violation has already been found in other studies (see Pfaff, 1979: 306). Poplack herself declares that she has found such violations but that they are "rare". In a quantitative study then, these cases are discussed on statistical bases. In the data here discussed such examples are not rare but the point to be discussed is not the frequency but rather the function of such switches. If we look closely at the two examples given we can see that both switches seem to reflect a choice of the speaker and not a casual insertion. In the first one talking about FLATS and not DEPARTAMENTOS in London seems to be a stylistic choice. In the second example the juxtaposition of the term APPROACH which refers to serious academic matters within the context of the Spanish sentence which is about what is claimed to be a typical Mexican habit of talking too much without doing anything, seems also to be a stylistic choice to create an ironic effect. There are cases then, in which structural conflict between the two languages is misregarded by fluent speakers in order to create conversational effects. This conflict may lead to completely ungrammatical sen-

tences like the following, taken from a conversation where the speaker (a Mexican) was talking about a friend's difficulties with Ph.D. studies:

- 9) LE HABIA DICHO SIEMPRE QUE LO MEJOR PARA ELLA
SERIA QUE ELLA SE DEREGISTER DEL GRADO

[(he) had always told her that the best for her
would be to *deregister* from the degree.]

where the word *deregister* is inserted in a totally ungrammatical way into the Spanish construction. The equivalent clauses in the two languages would be:

10a) (English)

THE BEST FOR HER WOULD BE TO DEREGISTER

10b) (Spanish) LO MEJOR PARA EL

LA MEJOR PARA ELLA SERIA QUE (ELLA) SE QUITARA DEL REGISTRO

where the VP is not equivalent because—the Spanish requires the following construction: reflexive pronoun + V + subjunctive, while the English requires to + V + infinitive. Therefore the English verb is inserted within a non-equivalent VP without being morphologically adapted. As visible from the Spanish sentence the equivalent for the verb *dzHzgtbtZh*. is an expression: *quitarse del registro* [to cancel oneself from the register]. It is a literal translation because the bureaucratic practice for Ph.D. students in Mexico is different from that in England. The speaker seems to have chosen the English verb instead of the longer and more awkward Spanish expression on a criterion of simplicity and effectiveness. This verb is the "word that best expresses" what he wants to say. In this case like in the previous ones, the choice involves a structural conflict between the two languages and is resolved with a construction which is ungrammatical from the point of view of one of the two languages.

The analysis of these examples suggests a number of considerations about the constraints pro-

posed by Poplack. First it appears that these constraints are not universal and secondly it appears that they should not be used as a measure of degree of bilingualism as long as violations of these constraints are found in the speech of fluent bilinguals.

It also seems necessary to distinguish between the free-morpheme constraint and the equivalence constraint. The first should be eliminated in that it blocks the study of a creative process which appears to be a quite common practice among bilinguals. The second constraint is too generic and may come into conflict with other principles at work in code-switching. As seen in the examples of adjective + noun placement, considerations of emphasis or of conversational effectiveness may be stronger than fear of structural conflict. This implies that the choice of the points at which code-switching is possible might be related to functions in discourse more than to grammatical principles as such. A category like emphasis, for example, would cut across purely syntactic categories allowing a relative freedom in the switching of single nouns, verbs or other smaller components, regardless of their position in the superficial syntactic structure. On the other hand, as Gumperz (1982) suggests, pragmatic or semantic factors could be stronger in code-switching than structural or grammatical parameters as such. Gumperz quotes, for example, judgements of acceptability by bilinguals that tend to separate certain kinds of NP-VP structures from others as acceptable switches. He suggests that language units are construed on semantic grounds and contrast with each other in a way that does not correspond to grammatical categories.

All these considerations suggest that grammatical constraints on code-switching are not adequate by themselves and that it is necessary to link them to functional pragmatic and semantic constraints. In other terms, it seems necessary to look for an integrated model of code-switching

taking into account both functional and syntactic constraints and relating them rather than just juxtaposing them.

III - Code-switching as a conversational strategy

In what sense can code-switching be analysed as a conversational strategy? The first and more general answer is that the shift from one language to another can be viewed as a kind of signal issued by the speaker to the hearer to search for additional meaning. Gumperz suggests this when he says that Grice's concept of implicature can be applied to code-switching. According to Grice there are some basic principles that govern conversation: quantity (be as informative as necessary but no more), quality (say the truth), pertinence (talk about the subject of conversation), manner (be perspicuous). When one of these principles is violated, implicature arises, that is the hearer is pushed to look for additional non-explicit meaning. Similar principles may be at work in code-switching and explain its interpretation. Gardner-Chloros proposes that a parallel maxim for bilingual discourse could be:

"Speak only one language whenever the situation, the topic of conversation and the interlocutors don't change."

(1985: 39)

In this sense, the fact of violating the principle by code-switching would function as an indication for the hearer to look for conversational implicature. Gumperz shows how this process works for the repetition where the fact that the same message in L₁ is repeated in L₂ gives rise to a new interpretation. And in general, as it will be seen below, this principle might also explain code-switching dictated by emphasis or focus.

The second way in which code-switching can be seen as a conversational strategy is its property of creating contrast. One word can be contrasted with the rest of an utterance or two sequences can be contrasted with each other (like in the case of adversative clauses) or longer stretches of discourse can be contrasted (it's the case of topic shift). In this light, code-switching becomes a precious instrument for the bilingual to perform linguistic operations that in monolingual discourse require different devices. Gumperz (1982) and McClure (1977) suggest a number of functions that code-switching can fulfil in discourse. Here categories proposed by both authors are used to explain the function of code-switching within the conversations recorded.

Particularly the following categories are considered:

- 1) Quotations
- 2) Addressee specification
- 3) Emphasis and focus
- k) Message qualification: which can be subdivided into elaboration and clarification
- 5) Topic-shift
- 6) Mode-shift

A more general category proposed by Gumperz that sometimes cuts across the others is also discussed; the opposition of personalisation and objectivisation which is one of central mechanisms in metaphorical switching.

It is obvious that not all code-switched elements or expressions can be interpreted functionally. There is a great deal of code-switching which appears to be the result of strictly internal

phenomena like triggering or of the ignorance of a word in L₂ or of other non - 1 linguistic factors (tiredness, distraction, etc.). The code-switches that are due to these kinds of factors should not be put together with other more genuine switches. Nonetheless it is not always easy to distinguish what is (consciously or unconsciously) intentional from what is simply firstly available. Only examples which seem to be conversationally motivated are discussed in this section.

Personalisation vs objetivisation

This is a very general category put forward by Gumperz that is used to explain the contrast marked by code - switching between more objective and more subjective talk. The contrast in these cases relates, according to Gumperz, to such things as:

"the distinction between talk about action and talk as action, the degree of speaker involvement in, or distance from, a message, whether a statement reflects personal opinion or knowledge, whether it refers to specific instances or has the authority of generally known fact."

(1982: 80)

This contrast is often marked in bilingual discourse by code-switching and is related to the choice of a "we" and a "they" language. Often bilinguals consider one language as more representative of the external community. This determines the usage of the "we" code for more intimate situations, but also the shift to the "we" code within the same speech event to express personal involvement or distance or the other kinds of meanings to which Gumperz refers. When studying code-switching in large communities the status of the language spoken (which one is the We and which one is the timif code) is established by the community. In conversational code-switching

between individuals of different nationalities the "we-code" seems to be chosen according to the experiences that the individuals share. In the following conversation between a Mexican and an Indian, for example, the alternation is between Spanish and English and the "we-code", as will be seen, is *Spanish*. This is due to the fact that the two individuals have met and become friends in Mexico and identify their common experiences with that country. The conversation is about academic matters. A and B are students of economics and they talk about the course that B is taking and the problems that he is facing. Henceforth this conversation, recorded in Cambridge, will be referred to as C 1.

Examples

11) A - Then you do a lot of tests which are misspecification tests, misspecification tests are tests to see whether your assumptions of the error are satisfied or not.

B - What about the Gaus Markov (*) Markov (*) Gaus Markov condition // that the (*) the (*) that the (*) No (*) *me confundí con los test para las condiciones the biasness.*

A - //mm?

[No (*) I got confused with the tests for the conditions of biasness]

In (11) the talk is carried out in English but B switches to Spanish when expressing uncertainty. The term *biasness* is still in English probably because it is a technical term.

In the following example from the same conversation A and B are discussing about the course and a revision that they can do together:

12) A - Do you do a lot of proofs?

B - Yeah

A - You do?

B - Yes we do

A - There are not many proofs given in this
book

B - I'll show you also the notes (*) Remember
the notes?

→ A - Mm (*) *¿Sabes qué? Porque yo también tengo que echármelo (*) Entonces será mucho más fácil para mí (*)*

[You know what? Because I also have to study this (*) Therefore it will be much easier for me.]

This time the switch comes from A and it marks a shift from talking about the course that B is talking, to talking about the advantage for himself to do the revision with B.

Finally, consider the following example from the same conversation. A and B are talking about the system of exams in England:

13) A - *Cuando hiciste tu B.A. (*) did it happen to you that you didn't answer all the questions? That you spent a lot of time answering one and then you didn't find the time for the others?*

When you did your
B - Aha

→ A - *Entonces te voy a enseñar esto cabrón*

[Then I'm going to teach you how to do it, mate]

B - *No, en Cambridge te bajan mucho (*) I*

answered (*) out of four (*) I answered three
and I didn't complete properly the three (*) yeah
(*) there is (*) there is (*) a method of answer-
ing (*) you have to give the 45 minutes to each
Question and not more because, then, you are left
without time for the other one (*) *Lo que pasa es*
→ *que* (*) [no, in Cambridge they lower your grade
a lot]
[What happens is that]

A - ¿Qué pasa?
[What happens?]

B - *Las pinches condiciones // No son las más adecua-
das* (*) *ya*

A - ¿Qué?

B - *Estando tan viejo* [*] *Está de la chingada* (*)
Pero está bien (*) *no voy mal* (*)

B - [The bloody conditions // are not the best (*)
Being so old (*)

A - What?

B - It's a mess (*) But it's fine (*) I'm not doing
badly]

In the first turn A's switch could be due to an effect of triggering caused by the word *B.A.* but in his second turn A switches back to Spanish when talking about his intention of helping B, explaining to him how to do the exams. On the other hand, B starts in Spanish but switches back into English when talking about the examination papers in Cambridge. His major shift into Spanish (marked by the arrow) marks the introduction in the conversation of a more personal topic: the fact that he is having difficulties with the course because of his age. He expresses his contrasting feelings about it always in Spanish.

The opposition between personalisation and objectivisation will come out again when it merges with other

functions of code-switching like topic-and mode-shift.

Quotation

Another general function of code-switching is to mark a quotation.

As Gumperz notices the quotation is not always carried out in the original language of the original speaker. This fact could be due to the signalling function of code-switching discussed above. The code-switch functions as a signal that allows the speaker to contrast his words with another person's words. In that sense it is not important that the quotation be in the original language. This is confirmed by the fact that in the corpus code-switching marks both direct and indirect speech and free indirect style.

See the following examples taken from the conversation already quoted before between the author and a close Italian friend who has been living in Mexico for 2 years. This conversation was recorded in Italy. The first language of both speakers is Italian. A is talking about M.H., a common Mexican friend. (Henceforth this conversation will be referred to as C2).

- 14 A - ...Per esempio le dice sempre che lei è una
 → *gran mujer* e lei è contentissima (*) Chiaramente la sua meta è vivere con lei (...) Gli ha detto *dame tiempo hasta mayo, a mayo* praticamente le figlie si laureano (...) Comunque il problema mi ha spiegato che sono anche i suoi figli come mentalità (*1 che dice che (*)-sus
 → *hijos tienen la misma mentalidad que su papá.*

[For example he always tells her that she is a *great woman* and she is very happy (*) Obviously his objective is to live with her (...) She told him *give me time until May, in May* practically her daughters get their degree (...) Anyway the problem she explained to me is also her children, their mentality (*) she explained to me that (*)*her children have the same mentality as their father*]

In the first case code-switching marks the indirect quotation, but at the same time the fact that the sequence is in Spanish underlines that those were the exact words of the original speaker. In the second case code-switching marks a direct quote and in the third case an indirect quote.

A further and more interesting example recorded from the same conversation where C (A's mother) has joined:

15) B - Dice che M.H. riceve da questo suo fidanzato
[l aughs] di schi con rose

[She says that M.H. receives from her boyfriend
(laughs) records with roses]

C - M.H.?

A - *con corazones // Corazones*

C - Eh?

[with hearts // Hearts]

C - Madonna mi a, se lo viene a sapere il marito l'am-
mazza

[oh God, if her husband knows it he will kill her]

→ A - *El quiere ir a su casa y quiere LLEVARSELA (*) fa-
re una scena madre*

[He wants to go to her house and take her away
(* make a dramatic scene)]

In this example code-switching into Spanish marks free-indirect style. A is reporting what M.H. must have told her with her words and the switch back into Italian indicates A's personal comment.

Addressee specification

This function of code-switching is often found in conversations with more than two participants. Code-switching allows participants to change addressee unambiguously.

These examples are taken from a conversation (henceforth C3) recorded during a dinner at the author's house in Cambridge. The speakers are Mexicans, one American and one Indian, all friends, all (except for the author) students of economics. All of the participants are fluent in English and Spanish except for the American who has a good understanding but not a good active use of the language. A and B are talking about a debate:

16) A - Who organised it?

B - Cambridge student unit.

C - What's that ?

→ B - *Para Nicaragua un debate de lo que pasa en Nicaragua.*

For Nicaragua, a debate of what is going on in Nicaragua

D - Did E (*) ask you if you wanted something to drink?

→ [to a] *¿Qué quieres?*

What do you want?

In (16) B's shift to Spanish indicates that he's now answering C and not addressing A, while D's shift indicates that he is addressing A specifically.

A further example from the same conversation. Here A and B are talking about a common friend:

17) A - Es napolitano también ése

[He's also Neapolitan]

B - ¿Es napolitano?

[Is he Neapolitan?]

A - También somos muy amigos

[We are also friends]

B - ¿Pero él vive aquí?

[Does he live here?]

→ A - Tiene un trabajo aquí [to c] *What is it, a lectureship?*

[He's got a job here]

where again the switch marks that A is now addressing C.

Another example, taken from a conversation recorded in London, with a Mexican and an Indian friend (henceforth C4):

18) A - ¿Esta ya es Euston?

[is this Euston?]

B - Esa es Euston Road, o sea (*), no sé cómo se llama ahorita. Pero más adelante está Euston Station Planetarium; Madame Tussaud's (*) to C *I wonder if E. would like Madame Toussaud's?*

[This is Euston Road, that is (*) , I don't know what it is called now. But, further on there is Euston Station, etc]

Again B switches to English to indicate that he is now talking to C.

EmpkcL6i6, ;jociiiA and Ke.ZteaatZon

Code-switching is often used in conversation to give prominence to a part of the message or to the whole of it. McClure (1977) refers to the first type of code-switching as focus and to the second type as emphasis. The term focus will be used here to refer to a mechanism which signals the main informative part of a message and the term emphasis will indicate a general mechanism of prominence. Gumperz distinguishes a separate category of reiteration. In fact reiteration is practically always used to give emphasis and is included in this section. Emphasis is one of the mechanisms where the Gricean principles seem to be at work. In fact the mere action of code-switching seems to indicate that it is necessary to look for a particular meaning of the word or sequence switched. Emphasis is often realised through a one-word switch and this is the reason why the so-called emblematic *code-switching* or *code-mixing* does not differ in nature from other types of switches when seen from a conversational point of view. Emphasis can be achieved either by one-word switches or by longer switches. Where it involves one word, it is often a stylistic device that Gumperz compares to a process called foregrounding in literature. He says:

"Words, also carry a lot of culturally specific associations, attitudes and values. These cultural values derive from the context in which words are usually used and from the activity v/ith which they are associated."

(1971: 328)

For emphasis see the following examples from C2. A is talking about the common friend M.H.:

19) A- ... Comunque è sempre piu *Coqueta*, mi fa

vedere tutti i dischi che le regala lui:
te encontré en un día de lluvia (*) tipo
 rose con corazones [laughs] e tutto ro-
 mantico (*) poi la porta sempre a mangiare
mariscos (*) alia Boca del Rio e dice lei
 e molto difficile nel mangiare *los mariscos*
 (*) mi fa morire.

[Anyway she is more and more *flirtations*,
 she shows me all the records that he
 gives her: *I met you on a rainy day*, of
 the kind of roses with *hearts* (laughs) (*)
 he is so romantic (*) then he always takes
 her to eat *sea-food* (*) at the Boca del
 Rio and she says that she doesn't like
sea-food much (*) She makes me laugh]

Here all the code-switching are emphatic. They underline a series of conventions for love-courting in Mexico that are typical of soap-opera and are reproduced as such by poor people in real life. The word *coqueta* [flirtatious], for example, is an affectionate term in Mexico for women who know how to be attractive without being too bold. The longer switch refers to typical records of love songs and the other one-word switches underline the conventionality of this model of courting.

Another example from C3 where the conversation is about males and homosexuality. A is talking about a friend:

- 20) A- (...) Yes, I have a friend who lives in Guerrero (...) the man has really to show lots of ability (*) before he's accepted in the macho environment which is in *cantinas* and *prostibulos*.
 [bars and taverns]

Here again A is using the Mexican terms for bar and tavern because in Mexico these places typically exclude women and they connote a certain kind of male values that would not be expressed by the English equivalents.

Emphasis is often achieved through repetition

of the same sequence in translation. See the following example from C2. A and B are filling in a form together:

21) → A - Data di nascita (*) Non si sa (*) *Quien sabe* ci mettiamo

[Date of birth (*) We don't know. *Who knows* we can write]

B - Dunque (*) mi pare che sia 25 luglio

[Well (*) I think it is the 25th July]

- A - E poi, che altre vogliono sapere (*)
¿*que más?*

[And then, what else do they want to know (*) *What else?*]

In A's first turn the repetition is emphatic in that it marks a joke. In A's second turn the repetition emphasis the question.

Another example from C3. The participants are talking about a common friend:

22) A - What's the name of (*) N's wife?

B - H

A - H (*) Well I went to dinner the // re

C - // Who's H?

B - The wife of N.

→ D - ¿No pasó no? *He didn't pass*

[He didn't pass, did he?]

where the first part of D's intervention is in English and is a question, while the second part is an emphatic repetition indicating assertion.

It is also an example of subjective/objective switch from personal uncertainty to assertion.

Consider the following emphatic repetition from C3. The participants are talking about an acquaintance:

23) A - ... He would talk about people in Bank of Mexico as if they were //his friends

B - *¿es como un ranchero del norte con lentes?*

[is he like a cowboy of the north, with glasses?]

-> A - No, no, gringo, American
[American]

In the following example from the same conversation the participants are discussing, and disagreeing, about the physical characteristics of the people in certain states of Mexico:

2k) A - ...you are wrong

B - It's TRUE (*) they have thick lips and funny noses and

-> A - *¿Cómo son los de Yucatán?* Let's see // Let's see.

B - mm?

A - How are the people from Yucatan?

[How are the people from Yucatan?]

where repetition of the question by A is emphasizing its polemic character.

The following example is from C3. Participants are talking about the homosexuality of various actors. Again code-switching marks an emphatic repetition:

26) A - Errol Flynn is also homosexual (*) So I told you,
J. C., from bio macho to homosexual is just one
ml 11i metre!

→ B - *No pero ésos son bonitos.* Those are just very
pretty.
[No but those are very pretty]

The following example is from C2. A and B are talking
about medicines:

27) A - Me ne prendo ancora?

[Shall I take more?]

→ B - ¿MAS TOVAL/IA?

[More?]

where B is repeating A's words in Spanish to emphasize her
astonishment.

As said before, code-switching is also a function of code-switching
when the latter is used to bring into prominence a
part of the message which is considered important or carry-
ing the essential information. Again code-switching acts
as a signalling device.

The following examples are from C3

28) A - They have seen at Clare (*) a young man running
→ around (*) *parece que* there was a rape yesterday.
[It seems that]

where the code-switched impersonal construction introduces
the main information.

In the following example the topic is pollution in
Mexico. Some of the participants (including A) maintain
that is due to the industries and not to the cars exhaust
fumes:

29) A - I tell you, when we have *Semana Santa* Easter

vacations] lots of people are walking, using
 → their cars, *pero el día es bellissimo* [but the
 day is very nice]

where the switch coincides with the main point: the day is very nice even if there are lots of cars, therefore pollution is not provoked by cars.

Another example from Cl. A is talking about his course in Economics:

30) A - No, si", mi ra (*) lo voy a hacer pero hay al me-
 → nos dos niveles (*) al menos dos (*) *extreme possibilities (*) one is to aet a low mark and then go away (*) the other is to do well (*) to leave some possibilities open, for later.*

[Yes, no, look (*) I am going to do it but there are at least two levels (*) at least two]

where again the switch introduces the main point of the utterance, which is then carried out entirely in English.

Message qualification

This category, according to Gumperz (1982), includes switches that consist of:

"qualifying constructions such as sentence and verb complements or predicates following a copula."

(1982: 79)

But this can be specified with the help of a distinction made by McClure between elaboration and clarification. Elaboration is repetition of a message including additional information, and clarification is repetition of an utterance to resolve ambiguity (see McClure, 1972, p. 107). In the corpus here presented these categories do not necessarily involve repetition.

Clarification

Example from C1:

31) A - I have to give you money (*) *para ese libro*
[for that book]

From C2:

32) A - Se quel la mi domanda, *la dueña, la casera,*
quando venite (*) le dico a giugno?

[if she asks me, *the housekeeper, the landlady,*
when you are coming (*) shall I say in June?

From C3:

33) A - How are the Yucatan? How are the noses in Yu-
catan? Eh? *¿De los Mayas?*
[of the Mayans?]

From C1:

B has proposed to A to revise together part of A's course:

34) A - ST pero pues (*) estas mucho mas avanzado (*)
o sea que puedes (*) la revision que tu hagas
de lo primero puede ser para mi (*) estudio (*)
¿Me entiendes? While you revisa I consolidate
(*) *You see what I mean?*

[Yes but well(*) you are much more advanced (*)
I mean you can (*) the revision that you do of
the first part can be for me (*) a way of
studying (*) Do you understand?]

Elaboration

In examples of elaboration there is either partial repetition or simply a different way of putting the same message.

Example from C1, where A is talking about his exams:

35) A - ...Now if I want to do well (*) really well (*) and then leave the opportunity open (*), that
→ will be good, no? *O sea puedo sacar un buen grado (*) si lo saco (*) si puedo (*O sacar un un buen grado y regresarma o sea (*) posteriormente para mejor aplicar para un doctorado (*T o es mejor sacar un buen grado que pasar mal.*

That is I can get a good mark (*) if I get it (*) if I can (*) get a good mark and go back that is (*) later to be able to apply for a Ph. D. (*) that is better to get a good mark than barely pass.

Examples from C3. Participants are eating:

36) A - Esta buenfsimo [it's very good]

^ - She wanted to throw it away

→ A - ¿Este? ¡Que bueno que invitaste gente: *better to have guests that throwing it away.*

([This? How good that you invited guests])

37)

→ The secret of the nouvelle cuisine de Mexico is: Te tienes que quedar con hambre pero con ganas de seguir viviendo (*) *They serve you a very small portion, so you are still hungry but you're still alive.*

[you have to remain hungry but still desiring to go on living]

In example 37 I underlined the relevant switch only.

Topic and mode, shift

McClure notices that code-switching is used by children either to change topic or to indicate a transition in mode of discourse (for example from narration to comment,

from question to assertion, etc.). It is interesting to notice that topic shift, for example, is a rather delicate operation in monolingual discourse which is often marked by increased amplitude, raised pitch markers of hesitancy or discontinuity (on this point see Levinson 1983 : 313). In bilingual discourse topic shift is often achieved through code-switching in the same turn or across turns. See examples from C1:

37) A - I have to give you money (*) *para ese libro*
[for that book]

B - Pero si yo te debo mas lana que la chingada
[But if I owe you more money than hell]

→ A - ST, cierto (*) que la chingada (*) *This edition is very good(*) I had the previous edition.*
[Yes,true (*) (more) than hell]

38) A - Are you going to find out about which program they have?

B - ST (*) este (*) [Yes (*) well] a program which is called ... and we have to run regressions (...) tests for the regression.

→ A - *Bueno (*) si vas a venir el próximo fin de semana me traes el (*) las notas*

[Well (*) if you are going to come next weekend bring me the notes.]

From C2. A and B are saying good-bye. A has asked what should she hope for B. B answers:

39) → B - *Quien sabe (*) que aguante Palermo (*) In ogni caso verresti dopo Mexico no?*

[who knows (*) That I can stand Palermo (*) Any way you would come after Mexico, wouldn't you?]

The following is an example of code-switching indicating B's desire to interrupt a topic and avoid polemics. This kind of switch has been noticed by McClure (1977) in her study of code-switching among children. Example from C3:

40) A - I'm surprised to see the number of foreign students.

B - They're not many. How many do you know? You know K.?

A - It's not a lot...

C - You mean graduate.

A - No it's nothing to do with a lot...

→ B - *Que buena está esta carne! (*) ¿Que es? ¿Pollo?*

[This meat is very good,, what is it? Chicken?]

Mode-shift

Code-switching fulfilling this function is very common in the corpus. See the following example from C1. A is asking B about the methods of examinations in his course:

k) A - *¿Como lo hacen? No but in the master it doesn't matter if you get a distinction or not.*

[How do they do it?]

where the shift is from question to assertion.

Examples from C3:

42) A - No, but I am surprised because the features //

B -

R!

→ A - *¿Que te pasa hijo?* [What is wrong with you]

where B pronounces A's name with a tone indicating disagreement. The switch to Spanish indicates a shift in A's utterance from developing his own argument into polemically questioning B.

- A3) A - ...Well he goes to the street and takes this taxi (...) but here we have a special campaign to get rid of old people. Oh! How's that? Well
 → you see this star we have there? *El logotipo del Mercedes Benz* (*) This star (*) This symbol.

[The symbol of Mercedes Benz]

where A is telling a joke and the code-switching indicates that he is giving a personal comment which does not belong to the story.

The end of the joke gives another example of shift from narration to comment:

- kk) A - ... and the Mexican says: Ah lucky that I opened the door, if I hadn't opened the door we
 → wouldn't have hit him. [Everybody laughs] *Está muy bueno.*

[it's very good]

Other similar examples from C3. A is talking to B about a film:

- 45) A - no me acuerdo muy bien de (*) de (*) de (*) la pelfcula (*) No me acuerdo (*) era muy sangrienta (*) muchas matanzas (*) cabezas cortadas (*T
 → manos (*) rotas (*) ¡No! *Horrible!*

[I cant remember very well the (*) the (*)the the (*) film (*) I don't remember (*) it was very bloody(*) many killings (*) cut heads (*) broken hands (*) Isn't that so?]

- 46) A - You know (*) they wrote to me that the pollution is horrible.
 → *Está terrible, carajo.* [It's terrible, Jesus!]

47) A - No, I'm asking (*) What kind of noses do they have?

B - SF, tienen labios gruesos los oaxacos. Son ol-
→ mecas. *You remember this Olmecan statues?* Son de labios gruesos chatos.

[Oaxacans do have thick lips. They have thick flat lips]

where B's shift to English indicates that he is passing from assertion to a direct question to A.

Finally the category of mode-shift also explains the fact that most jokes and ironic remarks, which determine a change in the mode of discourse, are signalled by code-switching. See the examples below from C3:

A8) A - If you see Mexico, J.C., the area where there are more homosexuals is the south (*) in Guerrero (*) and that area is supposed to be very macho and that is (*) that is...

B - *Exactamente yo siempre dije que los mexicanos en general (*) los machos son putos.*

[Exactly, I always said that Mexicans in general (*)the macho are gay]

A - ¿Verdad? [laughs] I always thought so

[isn't it?]

In this example the participants are talking about the earthquake in Mexico:

49) A - There was this Swiss delegation (*) they sent them with trained dogs to see whether there was someone alive (*) and they stole the dogs.

B - Who stole the dogs?[Iaughes]

A - Who knows [laughs] All the dogs stayed in Mexico

→ (*) ¡Eh! Se ambiente, se ambiente el perro a la calle.

[approximately: the dog liked the environment]

where the shift marks an ironical remark on the fact that some Mexicans stole the dogs sent to help in the rescuing operations.

Conclusions

In this paper a corpus of data from recorded conversations among bilinguals of different nationalities has been analysed in the light of syntactic and functional explanations proposed for code-switching by different authors.

Specifically, it has been argued that the morphosyntactic constraints proposed by Poplack are not entirely adequate to describe the data. In fact violations of the two constraints proposed by this author have been found, suggesting on the one hand a rejection of the free morpheme constraint, and the other hand the existence of a conflict between the equivalence constraint and other non-grammatical factors that might play a role in code-switching. It has been argued that because these violations occur, Poplack's constraints should not be considered a measure of bilingualism.

Non syntactic functional categories, proposed by Gumperz and McClure to explain code-switching, have proved useful on the whole to account for the data in all the different languages and types of conversations involved.

Our main conclusion has been that although internal and external explanations for code-switching have been given separately in different studies, there seems to be the need for an integration. The analysis of code-switching as a conversational phenomenon suggests that grammatical constraints should be studied in close connection with the classification of the different strategies of communication that involve code-switching among bilinguals.

It is hoped that further studies in the future will explore this possibility.

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