

CHAPTER 34

Bilingual Conversation

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Bilingualism and Conversation Analysis

For a long time, the analysis of conversational code-switching has been restricted to enumerating the types of functions the juxtaposition of two languages can achieve in discourse. This seems inadequate for a number of reasons. To begin with, it is a futile endeavour to give a closed classificational scheme for code-switching, since an indeterminate number of interpretations can be arrived at. What exactly a bilingual participant is doing when he or she switches languages is closely tied to the specific, never-identical circumstances in which this switching occurs. To be sure, there are interpretations that recur, and it can be instructive to know about these most frequent functions of language switching in discourse. Even so, participants do not just choose one type from some fixed set of alternatives. This brings us to the second point against a classificational approach to code-switching. If the number of types of language alternation is not finite, then *how* do participants agree on one interpretation or the other *in loco*? It is this question which seems to be of primary importance, and it is one left unanswered by all classificational systems.

I suggest that the classification of code-switching types must be subordinated to the analysis of the *procedures* used by participants to arrive at it. The procedural interest is one in *members'* methods. Its starting point is the embeddedness of code-switching in the sequential organization of interaction. The seemingly trivial fact that language choice (whatever the linguistic activity on which it occurs) is preceded and followed by the choice of the same or other language will turn out to be one of the cornerstones of the explanation of the meaning of conversational code-switching. We will see that under close scrutiny, the details of the sequential embeddedness of language choice and language alternation permit us to formulate the coherent procedural model we are looking for.

It is necessary to turn to some definitional issues at this point. First, there is the question of *defining bilingualism*. Linguists have generated an extensive literature in their inconclusive discussion of exactly how competent someone has to be to be 'bilingual'. Dozens of attempts have been made to come to a definition, ranging from minimal ('use of two languages') to maximal ones ('native-like control of two languages'). The impasse can only be overcome if bilingualism is no longer regarded as 'something inside speakers' heads, that is, a mental ability, but as a displayed feature of participants' everyday linguistic behaviour. Bilingualism must be looked upon primarily as a set of complex linguistic activities, and only in a 'derived' sense as a cognitive ability. Consequently there is no one definition of bilingualism: bilingualism becomes an interactionally constructed predicate.

A second issue concerns the definition of the term *code-switching*. I will use the term for all instances of *locally functional use of two languages in an interactional episode*. Code-switching may occur between two turns, or turn-internally; it may be restricted to a well-defined unit or change the whole language of interaction; it may occur within a clause (although this is the rare case), or between clauses. The distinction between functional and (locally) non-functional language alternation is important for setting off code-switching against 'code-mixing'. In the latter case, the frequent variation between the two 'codes' has become a 'mode of interaction' in its own right, that is, a new code with 'rules' and regularities of its own (see also Myers-Scotton this volume, Chapter 33).

Two Basic Procedures for the Production and Interpretation of Code-Switching

Two basic pairs of procedures will be introduced here; they provide the 'underlying' procedural apparatus for arriving at local interpretations of code-switching in their context. These are the pairs *insertional* versus *alternational code-switching* and *participant* versus *discourse-related* code-switching. From a hearer's point of view, we can reformulate them in the form of the following problems for which the speaker must provide hints to solutions:

1. Is the switch in question tied to a particular linguistic structure (for instance, a word, a sentence, or a larger unit: insertional switching), or is it tied to a particular point in conversation (alternational code-switching)?
2. Is the code-switching in question providing cues for the organization of the ongoing interaction (that is, is it discourse-related), or about attributes of the speaker (participant-related)?

In what follows, these procedures will be discussed in more detail on the basis of some data extracts taken from an investigation of bilingual conversations

among bilingual children and adolescents of an Italian family background, living in a small town in Southern Germany.

Discourse- versus Participant-Related Code-Switching

The first extract is taken from a conversation over lunch between Daniela, a 14-year-old girl, her younger sister Fiorella (who does not take part in the following exchange) and two young bilingual women, one of Italian and the other of German background (Angela and Beate). The data (as all the subsequent ones) were recorded in the early eighties of the last century in a small southwest German town with a large proportion of immigrants from Italy. Daniela and Fiorella have an Italian family background and were born and/or brought up in Germany (German in capital letters, Italian or Italian dialect otherwise).

Extract 1: Daniela (D) is talking about the drinking habits of her sister Fiorella.

- | | | | |
|------|----|--|--|
| 01 | D: | perché lei è- riempè il bicchiere no, = <i>because she is- fills her glass you know</i> | |
| 02 | | quando mangia: (-) <i>when she eats</i> | |
| 03 | B: | °°mhm,°°= | |
| 04 | D: | =e poi lo lascia sta:re; <i>and the she leaves it</i> | |
| 05 | A: | mm, | |
| 06 | | (0.5) | |
| 07 | D: | [poi devo: be- (-) eh=bevo io e mi madre <i>then I have to dr- (-) I drink it and my mother</i> | |
| 08 | ?: | [°° (.....)°° | |
| 09 | D: | io non (ne) voglio; (-) °quindi si butta°, <i>I don't want it so it's thrown away</i> | |
| 10 | A: | Mm | |
| 11 | | (2.0) | |
| → 12 | D: | DIE NUDELN SCHMECKEN BESSER, <i>the noodles taste better</i> | |
| 13 | | (1.0) | |
| 14 | | ALS ALLES <i>than anything</i> | |

(Conversation continues in German about the meal.)

Extract 2: Beginning of an interactive episode; adult Manuele (M) approaches Francesca (F) and her younger cousin Luca (L).

- | | | | |
|------|--------|--|--|
| 01 | M: | che bella giornata oggi=eh? <i>what a nice day it is isn't it?</i> | |
| 02 | F: | °mm;° | |
| 03 | M: | cosa facciamo oggi? (-) restiamo dentro; <i>what shall we do today shall we stay inside</i> | |
| 04 | | facciamo qualche [gioco (dien)? (-) n [o; <i>shall we play a game (inside) no</i> | |
| 05 | L: | [NÖ=A [Ä:: <i>no uhm uhm</i> | |
| 06 | M: | eh? | |
| 07 | L: | °uno° (- -) <i>one</i> | |
| 08 | M: | cosa vuoi fare LUKAS; <i>what do you want to do Lukas</i> | |
| → 09 | F: | °AUSGEHE° <i>go out</i> | |
| 10 | L: | IN DE WALD, <i>into the forest</i> | |
| 11 | M: | JA? <i>Really</i> | |
| 12 | L: | ÄÄH (-) IN DER WALD, <i>uhm into the forest</i> | |
| 13 | F: | °LANGWEILIG° <i>boring</i> | |
| 14 | L: | (WO DE:NN) <i>Where</i> | |
| 15 | | (1.5) | |
| 16 | | e::m: | |
| 17 | | (0.5) | |
| 18 | | IN.N PA:RK <i>to the park</i> | |
| 19 | | (1.0) | |
| 20 | F: | <<più f>AM LIEBSCHTE SCHWIMME;> (-) <i>(I love best) to go swimming</i> | |
| 21 | L & F: | ((laughter)) | |
| → 22 | M→F: | vuoi andare a nuotare <i>you want to go swimming</i> | |

- 23 (1.0)
- 24 L→F: DANN GEH DOCH IN DE BODESEE
then why don't you go into Lake Constance
- 25 M: h e h e h e h e h i h i
- 26 F → WENN MORGE NO SCHÖNS WETTER ISCH=(DARF I MAMA)
M: *if we still have fine weather tomorrow (I can sometimes SCHIM.M IM JAKOB)*
go swimming in the Jacob (pool)
- 27 (0.5)
- 28 L: AH SCHÖN WÄR DES GU:T
great that would be fine
- 29 M: <<f>sapete nuotare voi due> (– –)
do you two know how to swim?
- ▶ 30 F: <<lento> [↑lu:i ↓no ↑lu:i ↓no:] <<acc> ↑lui ↓no >
he doesn't he doesn't he doesn't
- 31 L: [DOCH (–) ICH (HABS NICHT)
yes I (haven't)
- 32 M: tu [no?
you don't?
- 33 F: [no! non vuol fa:r mala figu:ra
no he doesn't want to give a bad impression
- 34 *pirciò dice se:mbre si:=*
therefore he always says yes
- 35 M: = ↑ah::[:
- ▶ 36 L: [perché: (io va::i: in) ië no(n); (–)
because (I go to) I don't
- 37 (kon) volevo emparra:re voglio
want(ed) to learn it
- 38 M: bravo Lukas (–) perché non vuoi imparare
good Lukas why don't you want to learn it
- 39 L: perché voglio: (– –) porché non voggio.
because I want because I don't want to
- 40 M: he he he he he 'h 'h
- 41 F: io si
I do

The extract begins in the middle of topic 'having lunch at Daniela's home'. In lines 01–02, Daniela explains to Angela and Beate why her mother does not like her younger sister Fiorella to have wine with the meals: it always gets thrown away, for Fiorella does not empty her glass. The point in the sequential development of that interaction which we will focus on is reached in line 12. Here, Daniela proposes to change the *footing* of the conversation (Goffman 1979) at that moment: a 'change of gears' (2) and a 'change in our frame for events' (5) which, as Goffman points out, is often accompanied and achieved by a change of code. More precisely, in our case, the speaker proposes a new conversational topic, in talking no longer about Fiorella and her drinking habits, but about the lunch she and Angela and Beate are having together. She returns from displaced speech into deictic speech, embedded into the situation at hand. At the same time, she switches from Italian into German.

What is the relationship between code-switching from Italian into German, and the new footing? One way of conceptualizing this relationship would be to see code-switching as a *consequence* of the change of topic. According to such a view, switching is *caused* by a change of topic. If we were to conceptualize code-switching in such a way, we would deny its functionality; being caused by the new footing, it could hardly be said to have any meaning for the development of the conversation. However, in most speech communities, there is no one-to-one relationship between language choice and utterance type. In order to come to a more satisfactory conceptualization of the relationship between code-switching and the new footing in a case such as the one documented in the data extract, it is useful to invoke Gumperz' notion of *contextualization* (cf. Gumperz 1982, this volume, Chapter 40). Gumperz' basic idea is that conversationalists need to provide their hearers not only with propositional content in order to communicate what they want to say, they also have to provide a context in which these propositions can be embedded and in which they become interpretable. Contextualization refers to participants' joint efforts to establish and make relevant such contexts. Thus, the notion of contextualization goes a considerable step beyond the commonplace linguistic formula that interpretations of utterances 'depend' on their context. It brings into focus the fact that such a context is not something given and available in itself, but has to be created and maintained by participants in addition to what they say (in the restricted, referential sense).

Apart from code selection and switching, contextualization strategies rely on prosodic cues (intonation, rhythm, accent, etc.), gestural and kinesic cues, eye contact, etc. Code-switching is one way of contextualizing verbal activities, that is, of informing co-participants about the ever-relevant question 'what are we doing now?' – even though its contribution to answering it may

be restricted to the information 'something different than before'. Whenever a feature of the discourse is changed in such a way, I will speak of discourse-related code-switching.

Consider in this context Extract 3, taken from the same conversation as Extract 1:

Extract 3

- 01 D: e tere:sa (-) è scesa: giù. (-) allo:ra si ë- (-)
and Teresa came down so if
- 02 fin=alle: (-) il=una meno un quarto: abbiamo
until quarter to one we
- 03 parla:to cossi=no (-) fa (mori: d- dë-) uh
talked like that make (... ..) uhm
- 04 A: mm
- 05 (dello di) barzelle:tt, (-)
(of the) jokes
- 06 <<f> KENNSCH DU WITZLE?>
do you know jokes?
- 07 B: <<mp> poche>
few

Participants are the same as above. Again, Daniela proposes a new activity, that is, the telling of jokes (line 06). Again, this proposal is accompanied and signalled by code-switching into German. As in Extract 1, Daniela not only invites Beate to engage in a different activity/topic, she also invites her to switch into German for the following stretch of conversation. However, whereas in Extract 1 both the new topic and the new language were accepted, Beate declines Daniela's invitation to change the language of interaction in Extract 3. In addition, the new topic/activity is only responded to in a very 'unenthusiastic' fashion (cf. the low amplitude of Beate's response in contrast to Daniela's *forte* proposal, and the scaling down on the lexical level – 'few' as opposed to 'oh yes a lot' or something similar). Beate's non-cooperation at the level of language choice parallels her non-enthusiastic cooperation at the topical/activity type level: again, the former is used to signal the latter. Again, this provides evidence for our claim that code-switching is employed as a contextualization strategy to initiate new footings, while a causal interpretation of code-switching as a consequence of topic change fails to explain its meaning.

Turning to Extract 2 now, a different member's procedure for making the juxtaposition of two languages can be observed. Manuele, an adult bilingual

Italian, has met Luca aged nine, and his cousin Francesca aged 12 in the *Centro Italiano* of the town. The three start to plan the afternoon. Francesca wants to go swimming, so Manuele inquires if the two children know how to swim at all. The girl does, but Luca does not and has to defend himself against his cousin's teasing.

In this extract, code-switching is quite frequent (cf. the arrowed lines); however, it does not appear to coincide with frequent changes of footing. The contributions 'marked' by new language are conversationally 'unmarked'. Another difference is that code-switching is not done by one speaker in his or her contribution, but between turns, and that this inter-turn switching is due to participants' consistent use of one language (Italian for Manuele, German for Francesca and Luca). Thus, on a turn-by-turn basis, we can speak of code-switching, but from the perspective of the individual speaker, there is no switching at all. Such a sequence I call a *language negotiation sequence*. It begins with a disagreement between two or more parties about which language to use for interaction, and ends as soon as one of them 'gives in' to the other's preferred language (if that happens at all).

At a closer look, the extract turns out to be composed of two of such language negotiation sequences. Manuele's initial question (01, *che bella giornata oggi=eh?* 'what a nice day it is isn't it?') and his following questions about what should be done that afternoon (03–04) only receive minimal responses which mostly cannot be attributed to either language. The first fully-fledged utterance of one of the children is produced in line 08, when Manuele addresses Luca directly (using the German form of his name, *Lukas*). In his place, his cousin makes a proposal in German to 'go out' (*ausgehe*), which is collaboratively completed/supplemented by Luca's *in de Wald* ('into the forest'). Manuele's German surprise marker *ja?* terminates this first language negotiation sequence in favour of the children's preference. After some German turns by Luca and Francesca, Manuele returns into Italian in line 22 by reformulating Francesca's proposal to 'go swimming' (*am liebschte schwimme*). This reformulation starts a second language negotiation sequence. However, Francesca does not respond; instead, she turns to her cousin (line 24), and only in line 30 back to Manuele, in both cases using German. M insists on Italian in his next question (line 29, *sapete nuotare voi due* 'do you two know how to swim?'). At this point, the two children, who have both displayed a preference for German, split. Francesca switches into Italian and terminates the language negotiation between herself and Manuele in favour of Italian; whereas Luca remains with German until line 39 when he, too, 'surrenders' to the other two participants' language choice.

Switching in the arrowed lines of this transcript does not contextualize new activities, topics, etc. Also, it does not contrast something that has been done before with something that will be done now; on the contrary, different

language choice by the participants establishes some sort of coherence – not between adjacent turns, but between same-speaker turns (or, to be more precise, between Manuele's turns on the one hand, and Francesca's and Luca's turns on the other). In Sacks' terms, code-switching 'skip-connects' utterances and thereby provides a particular type of 'tying' (Sacks, 1992). As to the interactional function or meaning of such a case of code-switching, the object of signalling processes is a different one than in Extract 1. Whereas in the case of discourse-related switching a new footing is marked by language choice, switching of the second type signals a speaker's preference for one language over the other. In the first place, it tells co-participants something about the code-switching party and his or her linguistic preferences. Here, the term *participant*-related language alternation will be used.

Preference for one language over the other as displayed by a co-participant in such a way may be of the relatively stable, individualistic kind. However, it may also be bounded to and hint at characteristics of the episode, that is, a speaker may demonstrate that he or she finds it appropriate to use a given language in the present context (for instance, in the present constellation of participants, for interaction in the presently relevant institutional context for the kind of interaction to be carried out, etc.). Such a more restricted interpretation of participant-related code-switching invokes or alludes to larger scale 'norms' for the uses of the two languages of the bilingual community. Different speech communities diverge in their developing of such 'norms', in their generality and in the strictness in which they require them to be followed.

Line 30 (Francesca's *lui no lui no* 'he doesn't he doesn't') needs some further commenting. Here, intuitively, the interaction seems to have reached a turning point. As noted above, Francesca for the first time uses Italian and gives up her language preference in favour of Manuele's preference for Italian. There is something more substantial and less formal at stake though. We have to see Francesca's factual answer to Manuele's question *sapete nuotare voi due* 'do you two know how to swim?' as a selection out of a set of at least two possibilities. Let us suppose that the 'facts' require a different answer for Francesca and for Luca. Then the girl can at least choose between answer *io si* 'I do', with an implicature 'but he doesn't', and *lui no* 'he doesn't' with an implicature 'but I do'. In terms of truth values, both answers are equivalent. In terms of how language works in and for communication, they are not. To see why this is so, one must take into account that competences of almost all kinds are evaluated positively in the cultures in question; this is demonstrated, among other things, by the preferred character of (other-)ascriptions of competence over (other-)ascriptions of incompetence. Accordingly, the set of alternatives available to Francesca in formulating her answer contains a

preferred, 'politer' version avoiding an explicit other-ascription of incompetence (*io si*) and a dispreferred, 'ruder' one exposing the other's incompetence (*lui no*). In addition to choosing the 'ruder' alternative, the girl employs prosodic means to mark *lui no* and its repetition as a *teasing*, such as slow delivery and syllable-by-syllable switching between a high and a low pitch level. That Francesca's turn is hearable as a teasing is also confirmed by Luca's responses: he first attempts to contradict her (line 31), but when Francesca reveals this move as a strategic lie (lines 33–34), he tries to justify himself and find a reason why he cannot swim (*perché non voglio* 'because I don't want to').

If it is correct that there is an antagonism developing in these lines between Luca and Francesca, this throws a new light and the girl's switching into Manuele's preferred language: by 'surrendering' in the language negotiation sequence with the adult, Francesca changes her allegiance. Instead of insisting together with Luca on German, she symbolically takes Manuele's side and 'isolates' the boy. As this is done together with exposing his incompetence, Luca is 'under attack' both on the level of the activity and on the level of language choice. So language choice is discourse-related, or 'strategic', in this extract. However, it is not code-switching (on the turn-by-turn basis) which is functional – for this phenomenon, as we have seen, is to be interpreted as signalling participants' preferences – but the *termination of a language negotiation sequence* by one of the opponents' having given in to the other. Francesca uses it to symbolically 'switch sides'.

One further step has to be made in this reconstructive analysis of participant-related code-switching as a basic way of using language alternation. In order to understand a sequence as a 'language negotiation', or in terms of 'diverging language preferences', we (and participants) start from the assumption that there is a *preference for same language talk*. Only on the basis of such an expectation does it make sense to speak of a tension between participants using different languages, one which is resolved by one participant giving up his or her preference. As analysts, our evidence for participants' orientation to such a preference (as opposed to, say, everyone-use-whatever-s/he-wants preference) is, in addition to the regular occurrence of sequences of the type

$$A_i, B_g, A_i, B_g, \dots // A_i, B_i, A_i, B_i, \dots \text{ or} \\ // A_g, B_g, A_g, B_g, \dots$$

(where A and B are participants, and *i* and *g* languages), the way in which the transition between the dispreferred and the preferred pattern of language use ('//' in the above formula) can become functional for answering the question 'what is going on?'. B's non-acceptance of Daniela's new language choice and

of her proposal for further conversational activities in Extract 2 is also telling here. For according to the preference for same language talk, the other parties' accepting of the code-switching party's language choice is 'unmarked'. Doing what is 'marked', and employing it for some purpose, underlines the oriented-to status of the postulated preference for same language talk. Obviously, the preference for same language talk is nothing like a universal.

Discourse- and participant-related code-switching can be seen as methods to come to grips with two general types of conversational tasks. One of them concerns the organization of conversation, that is, turn-taking, topical cohesion, tying, sequencing of activities, repair, overall organization, etc. In addition to whatever means there are available to monolingual conversationalists to carry out these tasks, bilinguals can make use of the two or more languages in their linguistic repertoire by employing language alternation as a contextualization strategy. This is what has been called discourse-related code-switching here. A second type of task concerns finding/negotiating the proper language for the interaction, that is (in the ideal case), one that is situationally adequate, that accommodates all parties' competence and preferences, etc. It also includes finding out whether the other has more than one variety at his or her disposal at all. All instances of language switching serving this second type of task have been called participant-related.

Insertion versus Alternation

The second basic procedural distinction, that is, that between alternation and insertion, crosscuts the one already introduced. Up to now, only examples of alternational code-switching have been considered. In order to illustrate insertion, compare Extract 1 with the following two instances taken from a conversation between Manuele and four adolescent boys (Clemente, Alfredo, Camillo and Alberto), all with an immigrant background and living in Germany:

Extract 4: Clemente (CL) and Alfredo (AL) are complaining about two older people living in the same house.

- 01 M: perché non lavorano però eh stanno tutto [il giorno a casa
because they don't work so they stay at home all through the day
- 02 AL: [che è vecchiè e già
pensionann nun hannè figliè; =
he is old and retired already they don't have children
- 05 M: =he [::

- 06 CL: [NA ABER NICHT DER MANN; (-) [DER MANN SCHAFFT NO;
no but not the husband the husband still goes to work
- 07 AL: [u mo u mo
the husband the husband
- 08 u MANN è:: chiste: chiù SCH (-) chiù SCHLIMM angora;
the husband is this one (is) more w even worse
- 09 (1.0)
- 10 na vo:t (.) ((follows story))
once
- 11 M: °°mhm°°

Extract 5: Narrative about a television film about a dog.

- 01 M: ma ma era era in guerra era
but but this was this was during the war it was
- 02 CM: no, allorè (-) lui era (-) ahm (-) DRESSIERT, (-)
no well he was trained
- 03 °come si dice°
how do you say
- 04 M: hm, (-) si si si si.
yes yes yes yes

Looking at the German items *dressiert* 'trained' and *Mann* 'husband' or 'man' in these extracts, the following differences are readily observed: (a) in Extract 1, a whole sentence is produced in German by the code-switching speaker, but only single lexemes are in Extracts 4 and 5; (b) after the present speaker's language alternation, talk in the switched-to language follows in Extract 1, whereas the speaker resumes talk in Italian in Extracts 4 and 5; (c) there are functional differences: in particular, the insertion of *dressiert* seems to correspond to a speaker's difficulties to 'find the right word' in Italian, and *Mann* ties back anaphorically to the first mention of the word in line 06 by another participant, that is, it establishes topical cohesion between two adjacent turns. More generally, I call code-switching at a certain point in the conversation without a structurally determined (and therefore predictable) return into the first language *alternational* code-switching; any code-switching on a certain structural unit with a structurally provided point of return into the first language coinciding with that unit's completion I call an *insertion*.

Polyvalent Local Meanings

The local application of the two dichotomously organized procedural distinctions leads to those local meanings of language alternation that are maximally 'distant' from each other and therefore represent 'clearest' and 'most obvious' cases. However, only a part of the data of our (and presumably of any other) corpus on language alternation can be accounted for by using these prototypes. At least some instances will be polyvalent in the sense of showing characteristics of more than one prototype, or in the sense of showing only some features of the 'nearest' prototype.

It must not be seen as a weakness of our procedural model, but as its natural outcome that the four prototypes do not exhaustively classify the data. Bilingual participants are equipped with the distinctions alternational versus insertional and participant versus discourse-related code-switching. They are means to arrive at local interpretations of code-switching; however, they do not determine them.

Between Participant- and Discourse-Related Switching

I will start out with analyses of a case of polyvalence in which features both of discourse and of participant-related code-switching are present. In the first case, it is the renewed insisting of a party on his or her individualistic language preference in a certain environment which gives code-switching a discourse-related meaning.

In the following extracts, Daniela switches to German for a very short passage (a *jaja* in Extract 6, an *ah so* in Extract 7), which, however, clearly deviates from the established language of interaction (Italian). According to the types of code-switching that have been discussed so far, they are difficult to analyse. On the one hand, they do not seem to build up a contrast between something that has been said before and something that is going to be said now; on the other hand, they are quite ineffective at the level of renegotiating the language of interaction, and the *loci* in which the switching occurs is surely 'critical' for the interaction.

Extract 6: Daniela is telling a joke about Tarzan and Jane to Angela and Beate.

- 01 D: allora: c=era questo: m- staváne passeggiando:
well there was this m they were having a walk
 02 no (-) era u[n (-)
you know it was a
 03 A: [un tarz[an
a Tarz an

- 04 D: [un giorno caldo (-)
a warm day
 05 (1.5)
 06 e dice Jane a Tarzan (-) Tarzan (- - -)
and Jane says to Tarzan Tarzan
 07 no Jane (-) Jane dice a Tarzan si (-) dice Tarzan
no Jane Jane says to Tarzan yes she says (to) Tarzan
 08 a me mi fa: (-) fa caldo (-) me dē (-) be:- (-) e
I am I'm warm I (ha) (ok) so
 09 spogliati no (- -)
take off something
 10 A: hi hi hi hi nella foresta
in the forest
 11 D: e: (-) e soltanto: quello di sopra lei no (-)
(yes) (she has) only this thing on top you know
 12 e a detto ma che fa (-) quelli che co:sa (.....) (-)
and he said but what do you do what are these (.....)
 13 sono le (-) mie: due lu:ci no, (-)
they are the my two lanterns you know,
 14 A: ah.
 15 D: e[:
 16 A: [le mammelle
the breasts
 → 17 D: eh hi hi ['h JAJA 'h 'h 'h 'h ['h°
yesyes
 18 B: [°↑ hnhn hn hn hi [hi hi°
 19 A: [ehn
 20 D: allo:ra ((Daniela continues to tell the joke))
so

Extract 7: Daniela and Angela discuss the idea of having a boyfriend.

- 01 D: [tu non ce l=hai il fidanza:to;
you haven't got a boyfriend
 02 A: [((singing, pp))
 03 <<very short and dry, pp> no>
No
 04 D: peccatē hn?
that's a pity isn't it?
 05 (1.0)

- 06 A: °(perché (→) è un peccato?)°
(why is it a pity)
- 07 (1.0)
- 08 D: <<mf>non lo non lo ne vuoi>
you you don't want one?
- 09 A: 'm'm ((negation))
- 10 (2.0)
- 11 D: <<presto> perché>
why
- 12 A: perché gli uomini mi hanno rotto le scatole,
because men get on my nerves
- 13 (0.5)
- 14 D: AH SO:: 'he he
I see
- 15 A: <<p>tutti uguali,> (→) <<mp>tu lo vuoi?>
all the same you want one?
- 16 D: no; 'h
no
- 01 A: perché
why
- 02 D: he he h ha ha 'h (('embarrassed'))

What is going on here? In Extract 6, Daniela is just about to tell a joke to the two young women Angela and Beate with whom she is interacting. Soon, it turns into a 'dirty' joke. How its 'dirty' character is being established by co-participants is highly relevant to the analysis of Daniela's switching into German in line 17. The use of obscene words is obviously not responsible; for as in many jokes of this type, there are no 'obscene' words to be found in it. There must be other reasons then for which we can see the joke turning into a dirty one.

After the general setting has been given (Tarzan and Jane are on a walk through the jungle), the central part of the joke starts with the reconstruction of an interaction between the two story characters. Extract 6 documents the first step in a three-step sequence in which Jane introduces 'innocent' code names for sexual organs. Jane takes off her blouse and explains to Tarzan (the strong but naïve lover) what her breasts are: *le mie due luci* 'my two lanterns'. Further steps in the coding sequence will introduce 'jungle' for vagina and 'serpent' for penis. The punch line which is prepared in this way is: *dice Tarzan (→) Jane Jane, (→) accendi le tue luci il mio serpente s'è fa eh! (→) s'è perso nella tua giungla nella tua bo:sco* 'so Tarzan says – Jane, Jane, – light

your lanterns my my serpent has go/ – is lost in your jungle: in your wood'. Thus, obscene words are avoided by the teller in her joke. Yet, the very fact that innocent code names are introduced instead of available obscene terms orients to the taboo that forbids the use of the first.

After Daniela has performed the first step in the coding sequence, Angela provides feedback; using the sequential format of a transformation, she introduces a direct (although non-obscene) referential item: *le mammelle* 'the breasts'. By re-transforming the coded expression into what it 'really' stands for, Angela proves that she has understood. However, in our case, the naming of the critical item violates the very taboo Daniela has made relevant by the coding; it presupposes the *luci* and *mammelle* are exchangeable, even though Daniela has put any direct reference 'off limits' by telling the joke as she has told it. Thus, it is Angela's explication of what must not be explicated which turns the situation into an 'embarrassing' one (for Daniela). All three participants try to defuse this embarrassment with the subsequent laughter (lines 17, 18, 19), which is initiated by Daniela, and joined in last by Angela. At the same time, this laughing ratifies the critical character of the interaction at that point. In addition to laughing, Daniela shows another reaction: she briefly switches into German.

In Extract 7, the conversation develops quite similarly, again between Angela and Daniela. This time, the critical topic is not sex, but boyfriends (*fidanzati*). Again, the topic is not critical in it, but is turned into a critical one, on an initiative by the adult. Angela does the trick by turning the girl's system of evaluation upside down. This system has 'having a boyfriend' as a positive, and 'not having a boyfriend' as a negative value (cf. her *peccate* 'it's a pity' after learning from Angela that she does not have a boyfriend). So there is disagreement in the first place (probably from line 06 on). In this delicate (and face threatening) situation, Angela can very easily cause Daniela's embarrassment. In our case, it is the register in which her answer to Daniela's question why she does not want a boyfriend is formulated. The *mi hanno rotto le scatole* 'they get on my nerves' is not a vulgar, but a rather colloquial expression. It is marked in this conversation where such a style is otherwise avoided. Again, Daniela switches into German, and also indicates her embarrassment by laughing (line 14).

Code-switching in either case has something to do with the precarious situation that has evolved. More precisely, it is one of the indicators that show to co-participants as well as to external observers that Daniela perceives Angela's preceding utterance as embarrassing. As such, the switching is discourse-related. But how is such a discourse-related interpretation possible? Here, matters of language preference come in. In this episode, Daniela displays a preference for German, although she usually adapts to Beate's and even more to Angela's preference for Italian. Given these preferences, it is evident

that Daniela's response to an activity by Angela which is embarrassing to her, and which thus threatens her face, is to switch into the language, which she has agreed to avoid for Angela's benefit, but which is her own preferred language. Daniela 'retreats' on 'her' language. Given Angela's preference for Italian, this is tantamount to a ('symbolic') retreat from the interaction – one of its agreed upon features is dissolved. The discourse-related effect of this type of switching is an effect of one participant's rejecting the language of interaction. As it is this participant who is 'on the defensive', we will speak of *defensive* code-switching here.

The short duration of the other-language passage is in line with this analysis. The speaker on the defensive retreats from the interaction to compose himself or herself. The language of interaction is abandoned only as long as is necessary for this purpose.

Between Insertion and Alternation

Prototypical insertional code-switching does not have any impact on subsequent language choice, concerns a well-defined unit and is (a consequence of the latter) relatively short. Prototypical alternational code-switching implies a re-negotiation of the language of interaction, concerns a point in interaction and does not allow predicting return into the first language. Thus, the two distinguishing questions are (a) is it a unit or a point that is concerned? and (b) does language alternation relate to language negotiation? Both criteria can lead into polyvalent interpretations if they cannot be applied with unequivocal results.

One-word TCUs

The first case we want to consider is the diffusion of the boundary between units and points. In simple cases, such diffusion occurs in turns, which consist of just one well-defined unit (for example, a word):

Extract 8: Interview by Manuele with Clemente (CL).

- 01 M: che lavoro fa papa,
what job's your daddy in,
 →02 CL: DACHDECKER
roofer
 03 M: aha (–) e mamma che lavoro fa,
I see and mum what job is she in

- 04 CL: VERKÄUFERIN;
 saleswoman

Extract 9: Interview by Manuele with Camillo (CM).

- 01 M: quando i genitori (mi davano) (–) un po di soldi no,
when my parents (gave me) a little money you know,
 02 andavo subito al cinema.
I immediately went to the cinema.
 03 eh:: fai anche tu cosi oppure: (.)
eh do you also do like that or
 →04 CM: SPARE
save
 05 M: DU DUSCH SPAREN h h hn tu risparmi hēh ?
you save it you save it right ?

Both are taken from formal interviews with Clemente and Camillo, respectively. Due to this general setting, the 'interviewees' are quite taciturn; they laconically respond to the 'interviewer's' questions with one-word answers (*Dachdecker* 'roofer' and *Verkäuferin* 'saleswoman' in Extract 8, *spare* 'to save' in Extract 9). These turns are ambiguous between insertions and alternations. The recipient's behaviour does not provide us with clues as to how he interpreted the language alternation either. In one case, Manuele continues in Italian, that is, he does not orient to matters of language negotiation, in the other he uses German for his subsequent turn, that is, he seems to take up the boy's language choice. However, this evidence is not very conclusive in either case. For in Extract 8, the use of Italian by Manuele may just as well be analysed as his next step in all language negotiation sequence, that is, as his insisting on the preferred language, and in Extract 9, it seems that the adult's 'expansion' of Clemente's *spare* 'save' also changes 'key' of the interaction – at least, Manuele's laughter points to an attempt on his part to reinterpret a rather 'stiff' situation as a humorous one. In addition, Manuele quickly switches back into Italian in the same turn. I consider the diffusion of the clear borderline between a unit and a point in interaction in Clemente's and Camillo's turns not just as an analyst's problem. Our difficulties in arriving at a clear interpretation only mirror those of the participants.

However, it would be certainly wrong to imagine that co-participants are particularly puzzled by such instances of code-switching. They are polyvalent in the sense of being compatible with either 'insertion or 'alternation'. That is to say, the dichotomy just ceases to be important. Consequently, code-switching will be less readily interpretable and acquire interactional function in these cases than in those that can be mapped onto one of the prototypes.

Frequent Turn-Internal Code-Switching

The second criterion to tell code-switching from transfer is the impact that the alternation of language has on subsequent language choice. In addition to the existence of such an impact (alternation) and to its absence (insertion), we observe cases of frequent turn-internal language juxtaposition, which fall between these extremes, or more precisely, which are more or less neutral with respect to the language of interaction. Nevertheless, the distinction between points-in-interaction versus units-of-interaction remains an applicable criterion for classifying these cases as instances of (non-prototypical) code-switching for contrastive functions.

Consider the following contribution by Alfredo, in which Italian dialect and German play a role:

Extract 10: Conversation between Alfredo (AL), Camillo (CM), Clemente (CL) and Agostino (AG) and Manuele (M).

- 01 AL: no: (-) quandë=a casa nostra mbë- (-) a tedeschë (-)
you know when at our house (...) the German (woman)
- 02 quilla NACHBARIN; (-) quando=nui=facimm da mangià o ange
this neighbour; when we do the cooking or also
- 03 (-) <<pressed>OH DA STINKTS WIEDER NACH DEM ZIGEUNERESSE
 UND SO>
oh again it's stinking from this gipsy food and so on
- 04 [(si mett=a crapi)
(she goes to open)
- 05 AG: [ming=ië cë darisë nu scuppolo:ne a chill [che!
if it was me I'd give her a kick to this one
- 06 AL: [a fënestrë=
the window
- 07 =e=s mettë=a (-) mna u:: (-) SPRITZ SPRITZ DA PARFÜM
and starts to (take) the splash splash there perfume
- 08 [ma
But
- 09 M: [°ma ma verame[nte°
but but really
- 10 AL: [<<p>na=vo:t (-) si:: na: [vo:t=i: (-) ë: e;>
once yes once I
- 11 AG: [<<f, agitated> è qua-
is (she) there
- 12 u- è quella [là (... ..)>
the is it this one there (... ..)
- 13 AL: [<<mf>tornatë da scolë I HAB GEDACHT KOMM JETZT
came home from school I thought I am stepping into

- 10 IN E PUFF NEI (-) SO HART=S GSTUNKE NACH DEM ZEUG;> (-)
brothel that's how it was stinking from that stuff
- 11 AG: e:: è [quellë che ci=ha i capelli:
is it this one who's got the hair
- 12 AL: [<<p>DES HAT DA GSTUNKEN>
it was stinking there
- 13 AG: m- a [chillë vecchjë zaganonë
but this old (... ..)
- 14 AL: [DA DIE MÖ:BEL:
the furniture there!

(follows second story by Alfredo about the German neighbour))

For the purpose of this discussion, it is useful to look at a de-interactionalized version of the report and narrative:

quandë a casa nostra mbë/
 a tedeschë
 quilla NACHBARIN;
 quando=nui=facimm da mangià
 o ange
 OH DA STINKTS=WIEDER NACH ZIGEUNERESSE UND SO
 (si mette a crapi) a fënestrë=
 e=si mettë=a - m=na u: SPRITZ SPRITZ DA PARFÜM
 na vo:t
 na=vo:t ië e tornatë da scolë
 I HAB GEDACHT KOMM JETZT IN E PUFF NEI
 SO HAT=S GSTUNKE NACH DEM ZEUG;
 DES HAT DA GSTUNKN

Although there is an overall tendency of the speaker to 'glide' from a more dialectal (Italian) beginning of the turn into (regional) German, such that the turn terminates more or less in that language, it is difficult to tell whether the contribution as a whole should be considered to be German or Italian dialect. A number of turn-internal switches contribute to the 'neutral' character of the contribution. Some of them are familiar patterns known from the literature on discourse-related code-switching. For instance, we notice that the voice of another person (the racist neighbour's speech) is rendered in another language (German). Other switches contribute to the internal organization of Alfredo's report and the subsequent narrative. *Spritz spritz da Parfüm* 'splash splash there perfume' is the climax or upshot of the teller's report of what the neighbour does when the Italian family cook their meals and therefore marks a step in its internal build-up; at the same time, it sets off the antagonist's

action from that of the surrounding description of the scene. Switching into German after *ië e tornaïë da scolë* 'I came home from school' marks the protagonist's internal thoughts (his voice). We are not at the level of language mixing yet: the individual juxtapositions of the two languages create meaning and have a structuring function. On the other hand, frequent turn-internal switching of this type is responsible for the neutrality of Alfredo's contribution with respect to the negotiation of the language of interaction. In fact, as documented in the original version of the transcript, other participants intervene in both languages: Agostino in Italian and Clemente in German. Becoming a habitualized form of talk, frequent turn-internal switching of this type is also the beginning of a development which may eventually lead into abolishing the preference for same language talk.

Conclusion

I have presented a model that accounts for the interactive meaning of one of the most prominent forms of bilingual behaviour here, that is, the juxtaposition of two languages during an interactive episode. The model is built on some basic assumptions which can be summarized as follows:

- The approach is essentially sequential, not 'semantic' in nature. This is to say that the interactional function of code-switching is not derived from decontextualized 'meaning' of the two languages established on other grounds, but as being embedded into the sequential development of the conversation. This sequential development constitutes its primary and most important context.
- The model presented here is procedural instead of classificatory. Two basic procedures relevant for the interactionally meaningful production and interpretation of code-switching were introduced and used to account for local instances of the juxtaposition of two 'codes': that between discourse- and participant-related code-switching, and that between alternational and insertional code-switching. In addition to defining four prototypical instances of code-switching, these two dichotomous procedures of the model also enable us to describe non-prototypical instances.
- In this sense, the model is both context sensitive and context independent (cf. Sacks et al. 1974/1978 for the same argument with respect to turn-taking). In order to take part in bilingual interaction, members deploy rather general procedural knowledge shared by all participants. This knowledge is flexible enough though to be applied to the needs of any new occasion. Thus, discourse-related code-switching may suggest redefining the participant constellation, separate the setting from the events in a

narrative or mark the different voices in story-telling. It is this procedural knowledge plus the local context of their application that jointly provide participants with the resources necessary to decide on the function of a particular instance of code-switching.

NOTE

This article is a slightly updated and terminologically adapted summary of some main arguments from my 1984 book with the same title, based on research with Italian/German bilingual children and adolescents of Italian family background in Germany. No references to later work by myself or in a similar spirit have been included in the text, but the reader is referred to Auer (1995, 1998 and 1999) for some recent developments as well as to Auer (forthcoming) for an overview.

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