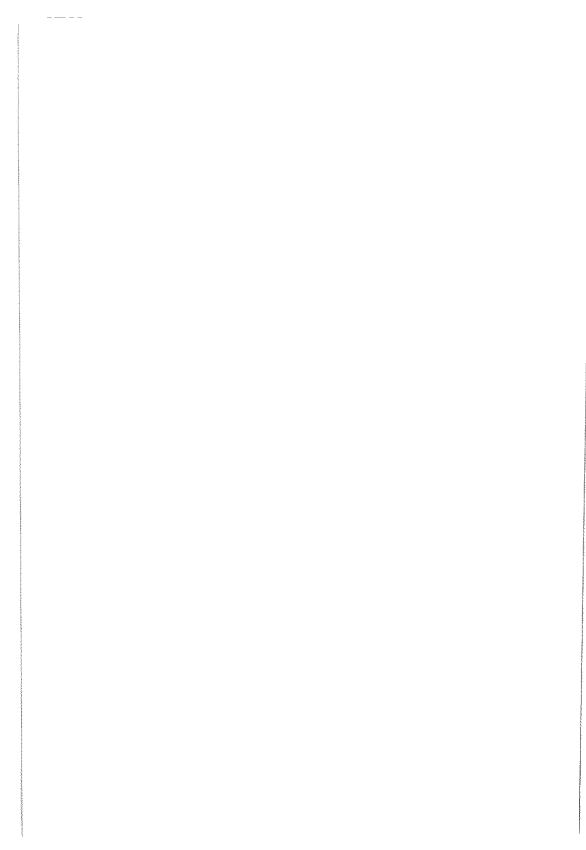*Dª. Mª. Teresa Turell*

THE PRAGMATICS OF CODE-SWITCHING FROM ENGLISH AND INTO ENGLISH

UNIVERSITAT POMPEU FABRA

The pragmatics of code-switching from english and into english*

1. Introduction

There is an <u>internally motivated</u> variation, that can ultimately lead to change, and which would explain variation and change in relatively isolated languages. This is the kind of change that has been traced down in historical times, that led to the constitution of language families, and that constitutes the object of study of historical linguistics. However, there is also an <u>externally motivated</u> variation which originates from <u>language contact phenomena</u>, produced by linguistic contact among languages and varieties of languages, and which are the result of wars and the rise of modern capitalism, of migrations, mass media, and other phenomena leading to the present increasing diversity of historical, socioeconomic, ethnic, cultural and linguistic experiences and contexts.

In this article, I want to refer to <u>code-switching</u>[1] in particular, as one of the most significant of these phenomena, for two important reasons. The first one is that I see CS as a key issue in present day linguistic behaviour, in terms of a) understanding how bilinguals function in either bilingual or predominantly monolingual environments, and b) grasping its consequences for second and foreign language acquisition. This understanding would provide information on, not only the pragmatic constraints or environments which might determine the range of possible values of CS, used as defining

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1. CS from now on.

functions of the social situation, but also on the psychological conditions and social situations appropriate for the appearance of CS. The second reason for choosing this topic is related to my personal convinction, validated by serious research work in this area, that the analysis and understanding of the nature of CS can shed some light on the more general, overall field of the externally motivated type of language variation and change mentioned before.

2. Definition of CS.

CS as defined in this article involves any situation in which an individual alternates between two or more languages. CS can obviously refer, as well, to the collective norms of a speech community which reflects bilingual or multilingual discourse modes. For the purposes of the subject with which I am dealing in this paper, I propose to distinguish between CS as such, that is, any manifestation of language contact which takes place when one speaker alternates the use of two languages, or two varieties of a language in the course of the same conversational turn, and situational CS, that is, those situations of language contact in which a speaker changes language to address different interlocutors, or to speak about different topics.

3. The State of the Art

Research on CS has gone through a stage of isolated observations, on to universalist postulates, then on to parameter or relativized postulates, and finally, on to the present stage of tentative multifactorial models based upon comparative studies. It is important to note that there is a strong feeling among scholars that a general model is needed, a model that would allow an integration of linguistic constraints (Free Morpheme Constraint, Equivalence Constraint (Poplack (1990)), that is, the formal properties of linguistic systems, of psychological constraints, related to the properties of the human brain, and of socio-pragmatic constraints, which uncover the social and interactional properties of social systems and human communication.

4. The framework

In this article, I have chosen to refer to pragmatic questions in particular, not only because my approach to language is nearer to pragmatic views, but also because this is the kind of approach that has been somewhat neglected in contact phenomena studies. In the context of the pragmatics of CS, CS patterns will be seen as "contextualization cues", to use Gumperz's term

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(1990), according to the values attached to each language, and thus it will be possible a) to understand how CS patterns are used to regulate access to valued resources and b) to redefine sociocultural identities which concern both linguistic majority and minority groups.

Thus, I am interested in showing the kind of CS that takes place in specific speech communities, through the interaction of specific members (bilingual, complete or incomplete learners of a second or a foreign language) of these communities which are engaged in social, and therefore, linguistic, situations and events (formal/informal settings and topics). In this way, one can consider a) how language, or variety choice, can affect an on-going social interaction, and b) how a series of factors, that is, the components of communicative events (for example, different kinds of participants, Native Speakers vs. Non-Native Speakers, Non-Native Speakers vs. Native Speakers, Native Speakers vs. Native Speakers, Non-Native Speakers vs. Non-Native Speakers) can affect what is expressed linguistically. This approach also considers language as a) a defining element of ethnic identity, and b) as a symbol of inter-ethnic contact.

5. The interplay between CS as a "reflection" and CS as a "resource"

My proposal of analysis is based upon two concepts, that of CS as a reflection of the kind of interactive patterns of the community involved, and CS as a resource. I take CS as a reflection, as to be those unmarked CS's or situational CS's which occur almost unconsciously within the linguistic mode of a speaker who is not trying to achieve a specific goal, or produce an effect on the interlocutor. I take CS as a resource as the manifestation of language contact which occurs as a communicative strategy of the speaker who designs his/her linguistic mode in accordance with the different components of the linguistic situation (participants, topic, goal, tone), and which is derived from the goals to be achieved and the effects to be produced on the other participants in the interaction.

6. Hypotheses

A first set of hypotheses is related to the degree of bilingualism, and level of competence, and refers basically to natural language situations, so that more proficiency in the less dominant language of the bilingual, would imply, though not automatically, more knowledge because of more contact, and so potentially more CS and situational CS used for communicative purposes, that is, as a resource. And in both natural language, and language

acquisition and learning situations, less proficiency, less knowledge, less contact, therefore, more interference, more unconscious types of language contact phenomena, such as borrowing, interference , and other phenomena, and to sum it all up, a mode of discourse which involves a constant reflection of the language contact situation.

A second set of hypotheses has to do with the typological proximity or distance between the languages involved: more proximity, more mixing, and therefore, more interference, less proximity, more clear-cut switches.[2]

A third set of hypotheses has to do with the nature of contact, that is, the cultural distance or nearness between the communities and speakers involved. In other words, depending on whether or not the attitude towards the other community is positive or negative, the CS and other manifestations of language contact will be of one sort or another. One could hypothese that if the attitude is positive, there is more space for CS to occur unmarkedly, or to use two terms used in CS analysis, smooth, rather than flagged CS. In situations of contact, where speakers want to detach themselves from the other community, the CS's would be marked, flagged, and more situational CS's would occur to address the members of the other community or quote them.

7. CS as communicative device in bilingual & multilingual settings.

In other articles (Pujadas & Turell 1993, Turell 1995b), I raised the question of the "continuum" in CS studies, following Grosjean's model (1990), to explain the different phenomena of language contact and to illustrate the different discourse modalities that are produced by speakers who find themselves in a situation of contact. This paper refers to the pragmatic analysis of CS as communicative device in bilingual, and especially in multilingual settings, in which three or more languages are in contact, and where for one reason or another, speakers are engaged in a social, and therefore, sometimes, linguistic, activity which implies having to use more than their own language, and where they code-switch from English and into English for different pragmatic reasons, and thus use CS as a reflection and as a resource, as proposed above.

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2. Word order, as checked in Poplack's Equivalence Constraint, is in many languages a very important factor in determining the kind of switches that may occur, but does not constitute a strong test of the constraint, because languages like Spanish and English (and also Catalan, with some differences) that have similar word order provide few kinds of syntactic boundaries and slots at which CS is not allowed (Sankoff et al. 1990:76-77).

7.1. The speech communities

The examples considered are taken from the speech mode of two sorts of speakers, a) English natives living in Spain, and b) Spanish and Catalan speakers, with different degrees of proficiency in English, all engaged in different interactions.

7.2. The interactions

These interactions are defined in terms of the basic components of the social and linguistic, that is, communicative situation: the participants, the topic, the participants' objectives and the effects they want to produce on their interlocutors, and, finally, the setting. These situations include infor- mal gatherings, such as dinner, lunch, etc..., and also formal settings such as teaching, formal interviews related to teaching, or formal discussions on linguistics and other topics; on the other hand, the dyadic or triadic combinations of participants include bilingual, or almost bilingual speakers.

8. Discussion

8.1. Examples (1) and (2) are from members of the English speaking community, almost-like bilinguals, or trilinguals,[3] living in Spain, more specifically, in Catalonia, therefore, switching from English into Spanish or Catalan.

> (1) "It sounds better in Spanish; CUANDO HABLO ESPAÑOL is/es clearer".
>
> (CSCD/S/E/92)
>
> (2) T: No ho toquis!
> S: I am not TOQUING it!   (CSCD/T/C & S/E/92)

In these examples, it can be observed that bilinguals, or almost bilinguals, tend to use CS and SCS as a resource, communicatively designing their switch to achieve something or to produce a specific effect on the interlocutor(s). In (1) the English native speaker code-switches intra- sententially into Spanish in a very metalinguistic way, because he does what he is implying from the point of view of the content of the message. In (2) there is SCS into English, but at the same time there is intra-sentential CS

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3. Spanish-English, Spanish-Catalan-English.

into Catalan but keeping the English morphology.[4] This is, therefore, a very conscious switch, and is designed to produce an effect on the interlocutor by emphasizing in English the contrary of what the other person is asking for.

(3) and (4) illustrate another type of switch - intrasentential, but still used as a resource -; in one case to emphasize some point, and in the other, to quote the complicated style used by weather broadcast speakers on Spanish TV.

(3) S: "This is MUY, sorry, can I say, this is MUY INTERESANTE (emphasis)

(CSCD/S/92)

(4) S: "Like the FENÓMENOS TORMENTOSOS, what have you, instead of TORMENTA, FENÓMENOS TORMENTOSOS Y VIEN-TO CON COMPONENTE NORTE, or something. (To quote)
P: "And just call it North Wind".
S: "North Wind".   (CSCD/S & P/A106-109/92)

(5) and (6) are productions of two English speakers in which they use a code-switch as a reflection of what is their interactive practice: one person one language, another person another language.

(5) A: Mare, anem a baix.
P: Eh, Andreu (Catalan discourse marker, Catalan, intonation), WAIT A MINUTE!   (CSCD/A & P/A56-57/93)

In (5), A is a 4-year-old boy who speaks English with his father and Catalan with his mother. In the middle of his turn, P suddenly remembers that he should have addressed his son in English.

(6) S: Fins ara! SEE YOU IN A MINUTE!   (CSCD/S/A98/93)

In (6), S reflects a bilingual interactive practice whereby the same greeting and leave-taking protocoles are used simultaneously.

(7) is an example of a very common practice in other language contact

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4. In English there is a strong tendency to pick up on and repeat the focus of the preceeding utterance (in this case said in Catalan) in one's own utterance where a denial or modification is involved.

situations, used as a reflection of the contact situation:[5]

> (7) S: Jo soc lingüista però, WE'VE CHANGED SO MANY TIMES...
> (CSCD/S/2-A33-34/93)

8.2. (8) and (9) are examples produced by members of the Catalan-Spanish community, almost trilingual in English.

> (8) T: I know a lot of people who "VOLS QUE HO DIGUI MÉS A POC A POC A POC, VA T'HO DIRÉ MÉS A POC A POC".
> (CSCD/T/A360/93)

> (9) M: Què fan aquestes sabates aquí? AH!, YOU'RE GOING TO DO THEM AFTERWARDS, THAT'S WHY YOU LEFT THEM THERE.
> (CSCD/M/92)

(8) and (9) are code-switches used as a resource. In one case to quote somebody's words, after the speaker begins in English; in the other case, to mark a pragmatic function, that of making the interlocutor do something that the speaker wants to be done; the speaker begins in her first language, and switches into the interlocutor's language, that is, English.

9. Conclusions

The analysis of CS and SCS allows me to propose the following patterns that will have to be validated by much data still to be collected.

9.1. English speakers in Spain code-switch quite a lot, making use of both CS or SCS, but in general they make a clear distinction between one language and the others, and therefore, their modality is monolingual in one language and the other, so that they can use one language to speak to some interlocutors, and the other to speak to other interlocutors, but they can simultaneously use a sort of creative bilingual modality, in the sense that they alternate two or three languages in the same turn. The CS are in general of all grammatical types, that is, sentential, intrasentential and extrasentential, with some rapid switching, but keeping the two modes separate. In my view, these practices have to do a) with the fact that English, and the other two languages involved are not that distant, b) with the index of contact, c) with the fact that they

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5. Remember Poplack's example: I begin a sentence in English, Y LA TERMINO EN ESPAÑOL.

know the other languages well, and finally d) with the length of time since they migrated.

9.2. Catalan-Spanish speakers - almost trilingual in English - also code-switch a lot when they use either of these languages, being involved in CS and SCS, but they also keep their modalities quite monolingual. In fact the sort of conclusions mentioned before to refer to the English natives in Spain, could be applied to this community.

9.3. One point that I want to raise refers to the subjects, in each of the communities studied, who use one type or another of CS, or use CS or SCS. Before I started the analysis of my data I was tempted by a very common stereotype according to which English speakers tend to expect everybody to use their language, and that, therefore, there would be very little code-switching in their discourse. In fact, the nativeness or non-nativeness when using one language or another were not significant factors for the particular communities to which I have been referring, when considering CS as communicative design. What I mean is that, at least for the data I have considered, all speakers code-switch, when they use their first language to switch into the second, or when they choose the second language, to switch into their first. Another matter is what formal characteristics these CS's take, or what speech acts they verbalize. In this sense, a thorough analysis of the data, which were entirely collected in Catalonia shows that English speakers code-switch into Spanish and Catalan, Spanish speakers into English and Catalan, and Catalan speakers into Spanish and English, and that they all do it, for communicative purposes. I realize, admittedly, that there are other manifestations of language contact which would trigger a different kind of discourse, which would assuredly be the result of different types of contact (short or long situation of contact (duration of the contact), or even of the degree of contact with members of the other community (contact index).

9.4. One final point should be made in relation to CSwitching practices. When one speaker switches into one of the speacific languages used, he/she imposes this language to the other interlocutors, until another speaker switches for pragmatic reasons, that is, as a resource or as a reflection of his/her contact situation. Otherwise, there is the asymetric exchange of the passive bilingualism type.

To sum up, it seems that in a situation of contact speakers develop speech modes closely related to a) their verbal interactive practices in their own

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language, b) to several social factors, such as, age, c) to attitudes that lead to convergence or divergence, d) to different cultures of reference, as suggested by Salinas (1992), according to whom the interactive routines depend on the different cultural registers, expressed differently by the languages in question. On the other hand, the formal characteristics of the CS's and SCS's seem to depend ultimately on the typological distance and proximity involved, and thus, their structural characteristics. Ultimately speakers code-switch to design their communication more effectively.

What is clear is that extensive analyses, - which would allow us to reach more general conclusions and give us unified mechanisms to identify the different language contact phenomena, and to understand the nature of language better -, are all necessary.

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