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THE SOCIAL MEANING OF BILINGUAL TALK

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ABSTRACT

This chapter presents an overview of the theories on the social meaning of code switching/mixing. The paper argues that bilingual talk is regimented by language ideologies, that is, speakers' attitudes towards the languages represented in the society. The paper cites a variety of examples of bilingual talk from Moldova, Estonia, Jamaica, Germany and Fiji to show how code switching/mixing had different social meaning. The various attempts to develop models to account for the meaningfulness of code switches/mixes across social embeddings, such as those of Gumperz, and Myers-Scotton are critically examined and it is argued that these models fall short of providing an overall account of bilingual talk. The chapter concludes that bilingual talk can be associated with certain evaluations, attitudes, activities or characteristics of typical category members. It also argues that self- and other-categorisation is never automatically achieved by certain bilingual way of speaking, but needs to be interpreted in the specific interactional context in which it occurs.

1. Introduction

This chapter gives an overview of theories on the social meaning of code-switching and language mixing (here subsumed under the heading of “bilingual talk”).

Although forms of bilingual talk such as code-switching and mixing are widespread among bilinguals, they do not occur in all bilingual speakers or communities. For instance, although almost all Luxembourgers speak *Lëtzebuergesch* as their first language and are also fluent in French, code-switching between these varieties is rare. Using *Lëtzebuergesch* is the unmarked way of signalling one's belonging to the non-immigrant part of Luxembourg

society, and French is used in public and in many institutions; the alternating use of these languages within one conversational exchange, or even one sentence, would be marked, however. In contrast, code-switching/mixing is the unmarked way of speaking among many second- and third-generation Turkish–German bilinguals, and speaking monolingual Turkish would be marked for many of them. Different language ideologies are involved here, which regiment the ways in which linguistic behaviour becomes meaningful and even normative for the constitution of social groups and their boundaries. If we seek to explain the meaning of bilingual talk, then we also have to ask about the meaning of monolingual talk (where bilingual talk would also be possible).

Language ideologies also regiment the evaluation of bilingual talk, i.e. speakers' attitudes toward it. While it is true that in many social contexts bilingual talk is evaluated negatively against the background of a monolingual language ideology, it is easy to find counter-examples as soon as one looks outside the modern European nation states. Both in societies predating these nation states, and in those outside the reach of the Herderian idea of (monolingual standard) language reflecting and justifying nationhood, code-switching is or was often typical of the social and academic elites and, as a consequence, highly appreciated. For instance, code-switching between Latin and a vernacular language was widespread among European intellectuals in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (cf. Stolt 1965; McLelland 2004), code-switching between Russian and French was held in the highest esteem among the Russian upper classes in the nineteenth century (Timm 1978), and English–Kiswahili switching is evaluated positively by the East African elites (cf. Blommaert 1992 on Tanzania). In these cases of elite code-switching, it is doubtlessly the prestige of the bilingual talkers which lends prestige to their language or language styles; in all cases mentioned, certain linguistic resources (such as knowledge of 'good' Latin, French and English) are scarce and access to them is restricted by the educational system. An elite speaker combines an internationally prestigious

variety with a local vernacular, thereby excluding both those who have no access to the international prestige variety, and those who are not familiar with the local vernacular (Myers Scotton 1993b). By contrast, code-switching in the lower classes (e.g. immigrant labour forces) and sometimes also at the peripheries of society (e.g. in ‘old’, autochthonous minorities such as the Sorbs in Germany or the Bretons in France) is lacking in prestige because the speakers lack prestige (and their ‘other’ language – the one they use in addition to the majority language – has no value on the linguistic market).

In sum, code-switching/mixing receives its social function and meaning from a number of interacting dimensions, among them the prestige and value of the varieties involved on the linguistic market, the social powers that regulate that market, the specific constellations of majority/minorities (or centre/periphery) within a society that relate to those forms of power, the accessibility of language resources, and the ideologies around the languages and their (bilingual or monolingual) use. The evaluation and social interpretation of code-switching/mixing is thus dependent on a specific ‘political economy of code choice’ (Gal 1988; Heller 1992). We will look into this economy in more detail in the following chapters.

2. A Variety of Examples: Bilingual Talk in Action

We will start with a number of examples of what bilingual talk can mean in its specific sociolinguistic context. The first example takes us to a small shop for household articles in Chişinău, the capital of Moldova (the former Moldovan Republic of the Soviet Union). Since 1991, the official language of the Republic of Moldova has been Moldovan-Romanian (Moldavian).¹ Despite the official

¹ This variety was closely related to Romanian, the state language of the neighbouring Republic of Romania, but diverged from it while the area was under Russian control in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; the exact nature and degree of divergence and the influence of Russian is disputed.

status of Romanian, a large part of the population of Moldova mainly or exclusively speaks Russian, particularly Russians who immigrated to the area during the Soviet period. In Chişinău, the position of Moldovan-Romanian is strong compared to the countryside and smaller towns due to the support it receives from the state institutions which require all officials to be fluent in the official language. However, public life is presently still largely dominated by Russian. In the example, a salesperson (B) and a client in the shop are talking in Romanian, when another client enters:

(1) (from Cechirlan 2008) (A, C = clients, B = salesperson; Moldavian–Russian bilingual talk, Russian underlined²)

- 01 A: *bună ziua,*
hello
- 02 B: *spuneti vă rog, aveți pampersuri numărul cinci?*
do you have Pampers number five?
- 03 A: *da (-)*
yes
- 04 B: *în mare packet*
in large packages
- 05 A: *da (-)*
- 06 B: *dați-mi, unul mare;*
give them to me, a large one;
- 07 A: *unul mare?*
a large one?
- 08 B: *mare da (-)*
a large one yes
- 09 C: *женщина, у вас случайно лампочек нет?*
Ma'am, do you happen to have lightbulbs?
- 10 B: <<*laughing*>>*есть случайно;*>

² I follow the usual way of presenting bilingual data here by marking the two languages with different fonts (underlining, Cyrillic alphabet) here. Note that this procedure is highly presupposing: in particular, it presupposes that all speech can be labelled as belonging unambiguously to language A or language B. There is no way of marking intermediate or ambiguous stretches of talk. For instance, in this extract, the affirmative particle *da/da* is neutral with respect to the two languages in contact; it is a long-established loanword from Russian in Moldavian and not an instance of bilingual talk. As a consequence, lines 3, 5 and the second part of 11, if taken in isolation, could also be labelled as Russian, and line 11 could be labelled as Moldavian. In cases of code-switching like in example (1), I have nonetheless decided to follow the usual standards of data presentation; in doing so, I have maximised the continuous, uninterrupted stretches of talk in one or the other language. This decision is based on the assumption (which can be justified empirically) that in the community under investigation, a principle of one-language-at-a-time is operative.

- 11 C: we happen to have them;
<<happily> *da*: :>
yeah:!!
- 12 B: *три лея (--)* *вам на что.*
three Lei (--) what do you need them for
- 13 C: *мне на сто ватт.*
I need 100W
- 14 A: *da în ce pręt is ele,*
how much are they? (referring to the Pampers)
- 15 B: *două sute patruzecișipatru nouăzeci;*
two hundred forty four and ninety.

The three participants do not know each other. The salesperson, obviously a Russian–Moldavian bilingual, speaks Romanian with the first client; but when another client addresses her in Russian (line 09), she easily switches to that language. In interactional terms, the second customer’s Russian question interrupts the ongoing transaction between A and B, and it establishes a competing participation framework. The two frameworks are contextualised by different languages. However, a full understanding of this behaviour cannot be found in the interaction itself, but must rely on knowledge about the regularities of code selection in Moldova which can only be gathered ethnographically (in this case the information is taken from Cechirlan 2008 and Dumbrava 2004). On the basis of this knowledge, the salesperson’s switching into Russian becomes more than a simple case of accommodation to the language of the customer, as it is found in many service encounters; it is also more than a conversational strategy which makes use of the two languages in order to keep two participation frameworks apart (which, indeed, is its conversational, or discourse-related function in this example). Rather, it must be seen against the background of a general rule of preference according to which language choice is organized in Moldova and which participants bring to the interaction.³ This rule of preference says that Russian is spoken as soon as one participant wishes to do so in public (although the same does not hold for Moldavian). This means that in public, and

³ This situation is in flux, and the description given here holds for the date of the recording, i.e. 2008.

particularly among strangers, the use of Russian is more frequent than the use of Romanian. The pattern reflects the pre-1989 dominance of Russian, and the power and prestige of the Russian population. It has survived the collapse of the Soviet Union due, in part, to the monolingualism of the Russian section of the population which is only slowly giving way to Russian–Moldavian bilingualism in the younger generations. More importantly, it is also the result of the continuing differences in the evaluation of these languages on the linguistic market where Moldavian is only starting to supplant the prestige of Russian very slowly. The customer's use of Russian and the salesperson's switch into this language are not necessarily motivated politically, nor do they necessarily index the customer's Russian monolingualism. They merely comply with the general preference for Russian in public. Code-switching from Moldavian into Russian means compliance with this preference, a pattern which is also found in many other bilingual communities in which one of the languages is a minority language (cf., for instance, Dorian 1982: 78-79 for a similar observation on Gaelic–English language choice). In fact, it can be argued that the very compliance with the preference for one particular language as the unmarked language choice in public produces the status of a minority language, among other things. Note also that the second switch in line 14 has a different meaning. Since Moldavian has already been established as the language between client A and the salesperson, A's return switch re-establishes the first participant constellation and mainly has a discourse-related function.

Compare to this the following example from Estonia. Once again, Russian – the hegemonial language of the Soviet Union to which Estonia, like Moldova, once belonged – is in contact with the national language of a now independent state, i.e. Estonian. The following interaction takes place at the railway station market of Vilnius, between an Estonian-dominant client (C) and a Russian-dominant salesperson (S):

(2) (from Verschik 2008:185-6, Estonian underlined, Russian)

- 01 C: palun se-da ketšupi-t
 please this-PART ketchup-PART
 ‘this ketchup, please’
- 02 S: palun
 ‘please’
- 03 C: éto sam-yi ostr-yi?
 this most-MASC.NOM spicy-MASC.NOM
 ‘is this the spiciest?’
- 04 S: da, sam-yi ostr-yi.
 ‘yes, this is the spiciest.’
- 05 a vot nuudli-d,
 and here noodle-NOM.PL.
 ‘and here are noodles’
- 06 vot ne xot-ite pähkli-d?
 here not want-2PL nut-NOM.PL.
 ‘and don’t you want nuts?’
- 07 C: spasibo, jest’ navalom.
 thanks, be-3SG plenty
 ‘thank you, I have plenty’
- 08 S: a vot očen’ vkusno-je pečen’j-e
 and here very tasty-NEUTR.NOM. cookie-NOM
 ‘and here are very tasty cookies’
- 09 kaer-a-helbe-d s dobavlenij-em nisu-klii.
 oat-GEN-cereal-NOM.PL. with adding-INSTR wheat-bran
 ‘oat cereal with added wheat bran’
- ((conversation on other topics continues for some time in Russian))
- 10 S: aitäh, kolmtheist kolmkümmend.
 ‘thank you, thirteen thirty’
- 11 C: palun. ((hands over the money))
 ‘here you are’

In Estonia, no preference for the selection of Russian in public holds today. This is also visible in our example: the customer starts the interaction in Estonian, and the salesperson answers in the same language. After this initial exchange, a remarkable mutual convergence takes place. The customer, although she is dominant in Estonian and speaks Russian with “a heavy Estonian accent” (Verschik 2008: 185), switches into what she thinks is the preferred language of

the salesperson; the salesperson, who is indeed not fluent in Estonian, gladly accepts this new language choice in turn, but inserts a number of Estonian words (for the products she sells) into her Russian sentences (*nuudli-d, pähkli-d, kaer-a-helbe-d, nisu-klii*). The insertions all are in the nominative, although monolingual Estonian would partly require other case markings (particularly a partitive in the negative sentence in line 06). After a monolingual Russian passage, which is omitted from the transcript, the interaction closes as it started: with an Estonian exchange that terminates the sales transaction. Why does the Russian-dominant (and presumably ethnically Russian) salesperson resort to the kind of mixed style which we find in lines 05, 06 and 09, even though her co-participant would have no problem whatsoever understanding the Russian equivalents for the items she offers in Estonian? Verschik, who calls this style “market discourse”, argues that mixtures of Russian and uninflected Estonian as in this example are systematically used by Russian-dominant speakers in order to accommodate (ethnically) Estonian buyers linguistically. It is a compromise strategy used by Russians who know little Estonian (as evident from the simplified morphological form in which the nouns are inserted). As in the Moldavian example, the salesperson converges towards the language preferences of her costumers, but the structure in which the two languages are juxtaposed is different (sentence-internal mixture instead of sentence-external switching). Even more important, the social interpretation of the mixing reflects the different ways in which the two languages are evaluated on the linguistic market, and the fact that they represent a different constellation of power. Before 1989, the social value of Estonian and Russian was similar to that of Moldavian and Russian in Moldova. But due to the political, social and economic developments in Estonia, the ‘Moldavian’ rule of preference – switch to Russian as soon as your co-participant wishes to – no longer holds; Estonian, the national language, is in a more powerful position today, and although a large part of the Russian population in Estonia still knows little Estonian, the pressure to acquire this language is high (Verschik 2008: 42-46).

Also, attitudes among (ethnic) Russians towards Estonian are much more positive than those of the (ethnic) Russians in Moldova towards Moldavian. The value of the language is appreciated independently of the competence of the speaker, as shown by the customer in the market. She is likely to have lived most of her life in an environment in which knowledge of Estonian was not necessary, and she will have had few opportunities offered by the institutions to learn Estonian after 1989. But she has had to change her old patterns of monolingual Russian language behaviour. Since her knowledge of Estonian is not sufficient to switch into this language entirely, she resorts to a compromise strategy. Mixing Estonian and Russian is accepted and even welcomed by the Estonian speakers as a sign of good will and acceptance of the new norms and ideologies of public language use.

I have purposefully chosen to start this discussion of how bilingual talk can be socially meaningful with two examples in which it is difficult to identify one single bilingual speech community to which all co-participants belong. In both examples, there is a tension between the social identities of the parties involved and the language preferences that go along with them. Older research on code-switching usually presupposed a single bilingual speech community, sometimes even located in one circumscribed territory; often, it dealt with an old (autochthonous) linguistic minority, or bilingual communities which came into being more recently as a consequence of migration but which stabilised under pressure from the majority. Also, older research on bilingualism often started from the idealised assumption that all members of a community share the same linguistic resources, i.e. members are equally (in)competent in the two languages involved. But it is difficult to claim that our examples deal with stable bilingual communities and equal linguistic competences. It is questionable whether there is one Moldavian or Estonian speech community to which all the participants belong; one could also argue that 'Moldavans' or 'Estonians', both understood in ethnic terms, belong to one (bilingual) speech community, and the 'Russians' to another. In more recent sociolinguistic theorising, it is increasingly assumed that

the bilingual speech community is at best a working construct for starting field work, but that its boundaries are disputed, and that membership is gradient (Rampton 2000). In any case, bilingual talk is not restricted to situations in which co-membership in such a speech community can be taken for granted.

In the following examples, such membership is more likely; at least there is evidence that co-participants share one social (particularly ethnic) identity which they activate by code-switching or mixing. The speech community to which both participants belong in the next example is somewhat special in another sense: this community is not ‘territorialised’, i.e. its members (no longer) share one language space; in addition, they do not share an interactional space in the traditional sense of the word, since the interaction does not take place face-to-face, but through electronic media – here, via the internet. The e-mail extract is part of a corpus collected in 2003 among students at the University of the West Indies in Mona (Kingston, Jamaica) who communicate electronically with other Jamaicans, mostly also students, in various parts of the world.

(3) (from Hinrichs 2006: 97; English–Jamaican Creole, Creole underlined)
(end of an e-mail)

[...] *you know the way I feel right now, I don't want to talk to you again. Thanks for reminding me. Mi gone, ONE*
P.S. [...]

As Hinrichs shows, Creole (*Patois*) occurs in these data particularly in the opening and closing sections of the mails, a locus which is particularly relevant for the negotiation of interpersonal relations. It is here that co-membership in the worldwide community of Jamaicans is established most frequently. In the present case, the writer uses a traditional Creole farewell token (*mi gone* = ‘I’m gone’), followed by an abbreviated form of another, more recently routinised farewell token, *one love*, here shortened to a simple *ONE*. The latter goes back to Bob Marley’s song (“One peace, one love”), although its original Rastafarian connotations are no longer relevant (Hinrichs 2006: 96-7). Hinrichs also

comments on the function of the switch into Creole: the Patois first of all “constitutes an endorsement of the covert, pop-culture prestige of Rastafarianism and Reggae music, and a general alignment with the Jamaican way of life and elements of its worldview, such as an all-embracing love, a great joie-de-vivre, etc.” (2006: 96). By bringing in these cultural elements, it signals solidarity, and more specifically, it has the function of softening (repairing) the preceding ironic statement (*I don’t want to talk to you again*). Reference to the popularized Rasta expression explicitly brings in the notion of unity of the ethnic group to which the writer and the reader belong.

From a structural point of view, example (3) is very simple. Not much proficiency in Jamaican Creole is required to make this code-switching work. In fact, it could be called a case of token bilingualism⁴ – one of the languages is restricted in use and mainly serves ritual functions.

The fourth example is again from a different context. The speakers belong to a traditional minority group, and they code-switch in each other’s co-presence, i.e. in face-to-face interaction. In this sense, the example looks like a typical instance of code-switching in an ethnically and even territorially bounded community. Three adolescent girls are gossiping during group work time in the Danish–German school in Flensburg, Germany. In this part of Germany, Danish is an official minority language. We find a mixture of these two languages, which neither formally nor functionally equals any of the previous examples.

(4) (from: Kühl 2008: 202, Danish–German in South Schleswig, Germany, German underlined):

- | | | |
|------|----|---|
| 01 | L: | <i>vi skal arbejde nu</i>
we have to work now |
| 02 | A: | ((laughs)) <i>halløjsa</i>
hallo hallo |
| → 03 | L: | <i>gleich kommt lonepigebarn.</i>
soon comes ‘lone’-girl |
| → 04 | | <i>så er det slut med <u>lustig</u>.</i> |

⁴ Cf. Reershemius 2001 and Kelly-Holmes 2005 on token code-switching.

05 then it's done-with-fun
 æh vi skal nu lige arbejde lidt ((...))
 uhm we have to work now a bit

The main speaker in this extract is L. The interaction starts with her and her friend A speaking Danish, but L soon switches into German in the first arrowed line. Although the sentence she produces is German, the name given to the teacher she talks about is Danish: *Lonepigebarn* is an ad-hoc compound made up of a proper name (*Lone*, the name of the girls' teacher) and the Danish compound *pigebarn* ('girl+child', an unusual word formation, as the established word for 'girl' is simply *pige*). This ad-hoc compound is used as a nickname for the teacher here (presumably because she calls the girls *pigebarn* in class). More interesting is the following line (second arrow), in which the same speaker seemingly switches back into Danish. But is it really Danish? *Slut med lustig* is modelled word for word on the German idiom *schluss mit lustig* (literally: 'over with funny') which does not exist in Danish. The last word (the adjective *lustig* used in the slot of a noun after the preposition *med*) is German anyway, which turns the formulation into a double calque. This calque doesn't just happen – it is produced on-the-spot for interactional purposes. Although line 01 is clearly in Danish, line 03 is basically in German, and line 04 is Danish-dominant, it is not this code-switching which renders this instance of bilingual talk meaningful; rather it is the ambivalence of the utterance in line 04 in between the two languages which is crucial. The speaker plays with the two languages and performs hybridity (see the discussion of similar cases in Fabian 1990; Woolard 1989; Hinnenkamp 2005).

What is the social meaning of this artificially (and artfully) produced hybrid? First, we need to take into consideration that the interaction takes place in a school which is dominated by a 'speak Danish!'-ideology. The Danish minority in the north of Germany (*Südschleswig*) is not based on descent or linguistic knowledge but on membership by self-declaration. Most of its members grow up with German as their only language and only learn Danish in kindergarten or later. In everyday life, German is by far dominant. The Danish schools therefore

believe they have to fight the dominance of German by restricting its use within their premises. The variety they teach is the traditional, Copenhagen-based standard language of Denmark which diverges from the local Danish traditionally spoken in the area of Southern Schleswig in many aspects. In addition, this traditional Danish standard is no longer popular among the Danish, particularly among Copenhagen adolescents today. School Danish (the variety of Danish enforced by the institution) therefore has little to offer in terms of identity and affiliation. The adolescent girls in the example thus interact in the context of an institution which enforces the use of monolingual standard Danish and in which monolingual German, ‘bad’ regional Danish (i.e. the one traditionally spoken in South Schleswig), modern (young) standard Danish and bilingual talk are all disfavoured.⁵ Playing around with the languages (instead of trying to speak ‘good Danish’) is for them an act of rebellion against, and subversion of, the linguistic norms of the school (many examples of this are given by Köhl, 2008, Ch. 8; see Jaspers 2005 for a similar example).

Our last example is taken from yet another context. As in (3) and (4), all participants share one ethnic and linguistic background; however, one of the languages used by the speaker does not ‘belong’ to him and his addressees. It is the language of another group, none of whose members are present.

(5) (from Siegel 1995: 96-7; Fijian and Fiji Hindi, Hindi underlined)

((A relative arrives and is greeted very respectfully by the host. He says:))

- 01 *nī yadravinaka saka* ((accompanied by ceremonial clapping))
 2PS wake-up good RES
 'good morning, Sir'
 → 02 *ao, baito.*
 come sit
 'come in, sit down'
 03 ((general laughter))

⁵ See Musk 2006 for Welsh schools in Wales as another example of a similar ideology; similar issues with respect to francophone schools in anglophone Canada are discussed in Heller 1994: 136-181 and 2002: 81-116.

Half of the population of Fiji are descendants of ethnic Indians who came to the islands from India as indentured labourers around 1900 to work on plantations; the other half are ethnic Fijians. The former speak Fiji Hindi, a koiné of the immigrant Hindi varieties which developed under the influence of English. The language of interaction between Fijians and Indians is usually English, and Fijian–Hindi bilingualism is not common. Nonetheless, as Siegel (1995) points out, Fijians have a basic knowledge of grammatically reduced Hindi, mainly of verbs, which are sometimes used instead of the corresponding Fijian words. This is the case in our extract, since line 2 is made up of two phonologically integrated Hindi verbs used as commands; *āo* ‘come’ and *bai^{tho}* ‘sit’. Since both participants, the guest and the host, are ethnic Fijians and only peripherally competent in Fiji Hindi, one wonders why they would use a language which is not their own, i.e. not associated with their own group, in a situation of in-group interaction in which there is no need to accommodate to any group-external situational norms of language use. Siegel shows that this type of ‘crossing’ (i.e., code-switching into a language which does not ‘belong’ to the speakers; cf. below for a full discussion; cf. Auer 2003b for an overview) has a specific rhetorical effect: it makes Fijians laugh, i.e. code-switching into Fiji Hindi is funny. Code-switching into Fiji Hindi is part of a special genre (that of joking and teasing), a ‘jocular register’, which is appropriate in ‘joking relationships’, such as between cross-cousins. In the extract, the switch into another language establishes a strong contrast between the rather formal first line (the second person plural pronoun used here is a token of respect) and the very informal second line (two unmitigated imperatives). This humorous effect has various dimensions, one of which is to establish solidarity and intimacy by laughing at an absent other and making fun of them. It also has a slightly insulting dimension since among Fijians, categorising somebody as a Hindi-speaking ‘immigrant’ is very negative. This insulting component can only be resolved in a face-saving way if the utterance is interpreted as non-serious. Finally, the humorous effect of the code-

switching in example (5) is also due to the incongruity between the first and the second line, one of the basic ingredients of humour (Attardo 2001).

3. Theories of Social Meaning in Bilingual Talk

In the preceding section, we have looked at five examples in which two languages were combined in some way; in each case, code-switching/mixing had a different social meaning. In this section we will discuss various attempts to develop a model which can cover the meaningfulness of code-switches and language mixings across social embeddings; we will conclude by showing, however, that each of them is based on too narrow an idea of bilingualism, bilingual (or multilingual) communities, and code-switching/mixing and that these notions are unable to explain the range of phenomena found.

3.1. Language Choice and Domains

Theoretically speaking, code-switching/mixing and language choice are two different things. In fact, code-switching is often defined as the use of more than one language *within* a ‘situation’, which presupposes that one language has been chosen for the ‘situation’ and code-switching happens within it. However, this distinction between situational code choice and situation-internal code-switching can be challenged. The problem hinges on the definition of a ‘situation’. A situation can be seen as something which is defined by rather gross parameters such as the participants and their social roles, the locale in which the verbal exchange takes place, and perhaps also its institutional embedding and the task at hand. A situation such as ‘buying food in the market’ is characterised by a speech activity with certain slots for predetermined actions (asking the price, asking for a certain item, bargaining, paying, etc., in addition to framing activities such as

greetings and final salutations), it defines the co-participants' roles (buyer and seller) and the overall task (buying and selling), and it takes place in a locale which is explicitly designated for the activity. The speech activity, the roles of the participants in it, its function and locale will often remain constant from the beginning to the end. However, even in a simple case like this, there are ways to change one or more situational parameters during the encounter: for instance, in between the sales transaction, other activities such as gossiping or small talk may take place (perhaps the buyer and the seller know one another and talk about their family affairs). The definition of the situation then is not constant but changes. If code-switching occurs at the boundaries between the sales transactions and these side-activities, does it occur within the situation or between different situations? The problem is aggravated if we define a situation more narrowly, including parameters such as the topic, the mode of interaction (serious vs. joking), or the personal relationship between the participants (more intimate vs. more formal, etc). Under such a view, it will be even more likely that situational readjustments occur in more or less every interactional episode. Since all these readjustments (changes in any of these parameters) may be indexed and accompanied by code-switching, the question of whether we are dealing with situational code choice or situation-internal code-switching becomes even harder to answer.

In order to avoid terminological confusion I will use the term "focussed interaction" (Goffman 1963) or "encounter" (Goffman 1961: 11) in the following to refer to an interactional exchange which is defined by a joint focus of attention shared by two or more participants. In face-to-face interaction, encounters are usually marked by the bodily orientation of the interactants to each other, and by ritual brackets which mark entry into and exit from the focussed interaction. The term 'situation' will be used in the sense of Goffman's "social occasion" (1963: 18), and restricted to "a wider social affair, undertaking, or event, bounded in regard to place and time" for which a "a pattern of conduct tends to be recognized

as the appropriate and (often) official or intended one”; examples would be a social party, a workday in an office, a picnic, or a night at the opera.

A first theory of the social meaning of code-switching would simply stipulate that code-switching is a consequence of a redefinition of the situation during an episode. In such a view, the distinction between language choice for a situation and code-switching within a situation collapses. The question of why people switch languages can be reduced to the question of why they choose one language instead of another. The fact and frequency of episode-internal switching is a simple consequence of the amount of situational redefinitions that occur. Of course we now need to ask what the regularities are that govern the choice of one or the other language. Communities and speakers may differ in their sensitivity of language choice to changes in situational parameters. For instance, in one bilingual community, language choice may be exclusively related to the parameter ‘social role of co-participant’ (e.g. only speak language A with members of your family, and language B with ‘outsiders’), while in others it may be sensitive to other parameters such as the task at hand, the formality of the social occasion, the chosen topic, etc.

Proposals to account for code-switching in such a model usually do not merely enumerate the changing parameters of the situation which may govern a new language choice, but they try to find a more abstract regularity. On a medium-abstract level, for instance, Joshua Fishman (1972) has introduced the notion of domain into bilingual research. By this he means a set of situational parameters together with a certain ideological (attitudinal) stance. Fishman mentions family, education, friendship, religion and employment as such domains, each representing a specific constellation of localities, topics and participant roles which hold for all the encounters within the domain. The transition from one domain to another may be accompanied by code-switching. His own research site for the development of the theory of domains was the Puerto Rican community in New York, and his selection of relevant domains

reflects the patterns found in this particular community. In other communities, religion may not play a role, but additional domains may be important instead (for instance, the core family may be a different domain from the wider family in immigrant settings in other parts of the world).

However, the model turned out not to be very successful in explaining code-switching. When domains are used to elicit bilinguals' self-reports about their language choice, the result very often is that in many of these domains more than one language is used (see the discussion in Myers Scotton 2006: 77-80), i.e. situational redefinitions are not reported to be accompanied by different language choices. Rather, code-switching itself is the situational norm in some domains. There can be two different reasons for this failure of the model to explain code-switching. One is that the model does not have a high enough 'resolution'; the language choice patterns may be too diversified to be captured by the above-mentioned domains alone. In fact, Fishman stresses that domains are just one source of variation in language choice, and that a complete model would also have to include, at least, the medium (speaking, writing...), inner/outer speech, and formality; he also concedes that domains may be "overlapping". Another reason may be that in many communities, domains are not associated with one language, but with bilingual talk: the Estonian–Russian 'market register' we found in example (2) exemplifies this case just as the German–Danish 'school talk register' in (4) and perhaps the code-switching within an email message in (3). In such cases, of course, respondents will find it difficult to allocate languages to domains in their self-reports.

Although the model is surely not able to give a *general* account of the social embedding of code-switching, there are specific bilingual communities to which it can be applied. Obviously, the model is most successful in communities in which the language choice is clearly compartmentalised. Fishman gives the following example of episode-internal code-switching (i.e. one which occurs within the same focussed interaction) in which the situational parameters change along with

the languages. The example is taken from his Puerto Rican studies in New York. It should be added, though, that more recent research suggests a less compartmentalised use of Spanish and English in this community of speakers (cf. Zentella 1997).

(6) (Fishman 1971: 37ff, Spanish/English, English underlined)

[boss has been dictating a letter to Mr Bolger to his secretary]

- | | | |
|------|------------|---|
| 01 | Boss: | <i>...<u>Sincerely, Louis Gonzalez</u></i> |
| 02 | Secretary: | <i><u>Do you have the enclosures for the letter, Mr. Gonzalez?</u></i> |
| 03 | Boss: | <i><u>Oh yes, here they are.</u></i> |
| 04 | Secretary: | <i><u>Okay.</u></i> |
| 05 | Boss: | <i><u>Ah, this man William Bolger got his organization to contribute a lot of money to the Puerto Rican parade.</u></i> |
| 06 | | <i><u>He's very much for it.</u></i> |
| → 07 | | <i>¿Tú fuiste a la parada?</i>
Were you at the parade? |
| 08 | Secretary: | <i>Sí, yo fuí.</i>
Yes I was. |
| 09 | Boss: | <i>¿Sí?</i> |
| 10 | Secretary: | <i>Uh huh.</i> |
| 11 | Boss: | <i>¿Y cómo te estuvo?</i>
How did you like it? |

((etc., continues in Spanish))

Fishman recommends finding systematic ("emic") correlations between what he calls speech events and language choice in order to analyse the code-switching in line 07: "The first question that presents itself is whether one variety tends to be used (or used more often) in certain kinds of speech acts or events whereas the other tends to be used (or used more often) in others" (p 41). He does not fully apply this research strategy to his example, but it is easy to see that he would expect us to find some correlation between the speech event of an informal chat and Spanish on the one hand, and a business transaction and English on the other. In terms of the domain concept, we could then say that English is associated with the domain 'employment', while Spanish is associated with the domain 'friendship'. In the example, the situation is redefined by the participants from an

interactional exchange within the first domain to one within the second domain. In addition, the parameter of formality changes, such that the resulting “dominance configuration” in the second part of the interaction is quite different from the one in the first part. Note that the switching from one language into another has no meaning in itself, but it is the *association* between domains and languages which makes it meaningful. Had the 'boss' met his 'secretary' exclusively for the purpose of a chat, the whole interactive episode would have taken place in Spanish, but the usage of this language would have had the same social meaning, i.e. that of indexing a speech activity within the Spanish domain.

3.2. Code Choice and Diglossia

Fishman's domain concept holds a middle ground in terms of its 'resolution' or generality. It lumps together a high number of situational constellations under one heading, but since the number of domains is not fixed, the model has some flexibility to accommodate other constellations in addition to the ones he investigated. There are models of the allocation of languages to situation types which have a higher resolution and others with an even lower resolution. Among the latter is Charles Ferguson's concept of diglossia (1959 introduced for varieties of a language, in Fishman 1972 generalised to bilingual situations). Although it was not conceived in order to account for code-switching, it can also be used to predict the choice of one language vs. another according to a binary decision. Ferguson's original model distinguishes an L-variety and an H-variety of a language. The L-variety is used in informal situations and has low official (overt) prestige, while the H-variety is used in formal situations (and for literary writing) and has a high official (overt) prestige.⁶ The distinction is intuitively plausible, but as soon as one tries to apply it in order to predict language choice (or even to

⁶ H- and L-varieties also differ with respect to language acquisition (only L-varieties are acquired as L1 within the family, H-varieties are learned later) and standardisation (low in L-varieties, high in H-varieties).

interpret code-switching) it quickly turns out that the notion of formality is not easy to operationalise. In German-speaking Switzerland, for instance (which is one of Ferguson's examples), the choice between Swiss Standard German and Swiss dialect follows the distinction more or less as predicted, but it is often difficult to tell (in a non-circular way, i.e. without considering language choice) what is formal and what is informal. It may be easy to agree that a speech in parliament or a lecture at the university are formal events (which are indeed done in Standard Swiss German), but what about a school lesson (also mostly done in Standard Swiss German, but perhaps not formal)? Or what about business transactions in a bank, a public speech for a political campaign, or the weather forecast on the radio, which might be considered equally formal but which will result in the choice of dialect?

3.3. We-code and They-code

A very different, but equally dichotomous distinction has been proposed by John Gumperz. His simple but persuasive idea is that in a bilingual group of speakers, one of the codes is associated with the larger, monolingual society and the other is associated with the minority to which the speakers in question belong. He argues that "the bilinguals' two codes directly reflect or signal the contrasting cultural styles and standards of evaluation which they encounter in daily interaction" (1982: 66), i.e. those of the in- vs. out-group. By choosing the latter, the speakers position themselves as being part of the "local team" (Blom and Gumperz 1972). Gumperz calls this variety the "we-code" and the language of the majority the "they-code". The "we-code" is the language of solidarity and intimacy, while the "they-code" is used in more formal, out-group situations. However, Gumperz is cautious to warn us that the distinction is not *predictive* of language choice:

„In situations such as those discussed here, the association between communicative style and group identity is a symbolic one: it does not directly predict actual usage. [...] Only in relatively few interaction situations, such as for example in contacts with older monolinguals, when talking to very small children, or for certain highly ritualized activities, is only one code appropriate. Elsewhere a variety of options occur, and as with conversations in general, interpretation of messages is in large part a matter of discourse context, social presuppositions and speakers' background knowledge“ (1982: 66).

Still, Gumperz claims that it is possible to use the distinction to account for the meaning of (some) code-switches. As an example, he mentions reiterations, i.e. the repetition of a (non-successful) first activity, as in the following example:

- (7) (from Gumperz 1982: 91, Hindi–English code-switching in India, English underlined)
(Father talking to his five-year-old son, who is walking ahead of him through a train compartment and wavering from side to side.))

Keep straight. Siha jao
Keep straight.

Gumperz argues on the basis of informants' reactions to hearing the recording of this sequence as well as the reversed sequence (English used for the first attempt, Hindi for the reiteration) that “the shift to the ‘we’ code was seen as signifying more of a personal appeal, paraphrasable as ‘won’t you please’, whereas the reverse shift suggests more of a warning or a mild threat” (1982: 92). Since the reversal of the direction of the code-switching is not neutral with respect to meaning, so the argument goes, there must be some inherent, “semantic” meaning in the languages themselves, which is captured by the distinction of ‘we’ and ‘they’ codes.

The important difference between this approach to the interpretation and social meaning of code-switching and the one advocated by Fishman is that Gumperz does not claim that the reason for the code-switch is a newly defined situation. The situation remains the same, although the use of English gives to the reiteration a flavour of a different situation in which Hindi (and only Hindi)

would be the appropriate code choice. In a famous paper on code-switching between Bokmål and a local Norwegian dialect (Ranamål, as spoken in Hemnesberget), Blom and Gumperz (1972) have developed this idea further. They laid the foundations of a view of code-switching according to which language choices – as verbal actions in general – are not simply “reflections of independently measurably social norms” (Blom and Gumperz 1972 [2000: 133]), but generate social meaning themselves. In what Blom and Gumperz call “metaphorical” code-switching, speakers behave ‘as if’ they were participating in a situation which requires the opposite code of the one they had been using up to that point. Metaphorical code-switching thus depends on a relatively clear association of situations and codes (“regular relationships between variables and social situations”, Blom and Gumperz 1972: 127; also cf. Gumperz and Hernandez 1968 [1971: 122]), which is used for generating social meaning: “The context in which one of a set of alternates is regularly used becomes part of its meaning, so that when this form is then employed in a context where it is not normal, it brings in some of the flavour of this original setting” (Blom and Gumperz 1972: 127). In other words, the we/they-code model is a “semantic” model because it is built on the presupposition that the codes have a meaning which is independent of the local context in which they are used. But the model is also pragmatic, since this meaning is then channelled into the interaction and, through a complex process of inferencing, becomes relevant in it. Thus, in the unmarked case, i.e. where the situation ‘fits’ the language, no further inference is required. In the marked case, i.e. when language choice and the type of situation diverge, meanings are created on the basis of situation-specific inferencing.⁷

Of course, this model is only applicable in sociolinguistic contexts in which there is a clear difference between a majority and a minority group, and a corresponding majority and minority language. This holds for linguistic minorities as well as for dialect communities such as that of Hemnesberget in Norway. We

⁷ Gumperz (1982: 94-6) explicitly refers to Grice’s maxims here.

can also classify an ex-colonial language such as English as a majority language and compare it to Creole as the minority language – even though the latter example already seems to strain the minority/majority distinction somewhat. In other bilingual contexts, it is much more difficult to say what the minority is and who belongs to the majority. A quick look at the five examples discussed at the beginning of this paper makes this clear: Who is part of the ‘local team’ and how does this relate to the ‘minority language’? Only in example (3) – the Jamaican Creole e-mail salutations – is the answer relatively clear. In contrast, the status of Russian in Estonia, and even more so in Moldova, is highly ambiguous; while the ethnic Russians might indeed feel marginalised in the new states when compared to their status in the pre-1989 period, Estonians and Moldovans in particular also have historical reasons to look upon their language as a minority language, and preference rules for language choice in the official domain such as the one we found in Moldova still bear witness to this status. Even more complicated is the German–Danish example: German seems to be the students’ ‘we-code’, but Danish, if anything, is the minority language in Flensburg (or Germany). Fiji Hindi cannot be the we-code (although it may be a minority language) in (5) because the code-switchers in this example are not part of the Fiji Hindi population.

More important than these limitations of the we-/they-code distinction is another, more principled argument against Gumperz’ distinction between situational code choice and situation-internal metaphorical switching (cf. Auer 1984). It can be argued that every interactionally meaningful instance of code-switching also changes the definition of the situation, however small the readjustment may be. This brings us back to the question raised earlier, i.e. how a situation can be defined. Blom and Gumperz equate the situation with “participants’ mutual rights and obligations” (p 127). But what exactly does this mean? Nobody would dispute the fact that in a case such as example (6) the mutual rights and obligations of the secretary and the boss change; together with

the switching into Spanish, they move into another situational frame, i.e. that of a friendly chat. But isn't that also the case in (7) where the relationship between the Indian father and his son becomes a slightly different one when he repeats his command in Hindi, thereby softening it into a more personal appeal, as Gumperz argues? And wouldn't this also count as a slight change of situation?

There is yet another problem with the view that situational code choice generates the "semantics" (Gumperz) of languages which are then utilised in metaphorical code-switching. If a change from language A to language B is regularly observed during a certain activity (such as, say, reiterated commands), would this code-switching not also contribute to the 'semantics' of the languages? For instance, if the reiterated command was always accompanied by a switch from English into Hindi, this regular pattern would surely make Hindi a 'softening' language. More schematically, we could say: The directionality of the processes postulated by Gumperz, i.e.

Situation →
language choice (situational code-switching) →
meaning of language →
interpretation of conversational (metaphorical) code-switching

is not necessarily the only one. The opposite direction may be just as valid:

sequential structure →
conversational code-switching →
meaning of the language

Recently, Rampton (1998: 302) has called for a reevaluation of Gumperz' metaphorical switching in terms of a Bakhtinian view of "double voicing". Bakthin (1973 [1981]) is concerned with the way in which speakers interlace their own voice with those of other (previous) speakers (including themselves as past speakers). The imported voices can be individuals' voices or generalised voices. Against this background, Rampton equates metaphorical code-switching with double-voicing, since the code-switching speaker adds to his or her own voice

that of the (individual or generalised) speakers in another past or imagined situation in which the switched-to language is appropriate. Like Bakhtin, Rampton further distinguishes between two kinds of double-voicing: one in which the intentions of the code-switching speaker accord with those of the speaker in the original situation (this unidirectional double-voicing is what Gumperz had in mind when analysing examples such as (7)), and vari-directional double-voicing which requires a more sophisticated process of inferencing, since the intentions of the present speaker and the voices s/he brings into the conversation do not converge; this is the case of ‘crossing’ as in example (5).

A final problem with the we-/they-code distinction was already discussed in the context of Fishman’s notion of domains: as in example (2), there are often situations in which the switching/mixing style itself is the code and is meaningful, not the individual code-switches.

3.4. Code-switching as Rational Choice

In a number of papers, Carol Myers Scotton (1988, 1993) has developed a model of “code-switching as rational choice” which focuses on the individual speaker rather than the ‘situation’ in the sense of an externally given determinant of language choice. The model is therefore more cognitive in orientation than the ones discussed so far. In addition, she makes prominent an idea already foreshadowed in Blom and Gumperz (1972): A situation is characterised by a specific set of rights and obligations which are indexed by certain languages associated with it, and evoked by their use (1999: 1263).

Myers Scotton distinguishes various types of code-switching, two of which are reminiscent of Blom and Gumperz’ distinction between situational and metaphorical switching. Code-switching as a (sequentially) unmarked choice occurs when speakers respond to a change in situation, from which a different set

of rights-and-obligations derives, for which in turn a different language choice serves as an index (as in Fishman's example (1) in this chapter, paramount to situational code-switching). Code-switching as a marked choice occurs when speakers intentionally flout the maxim "choose the form of your conversational contribution such that it symbolizes the set of rights and obligations which you wish to be in force between speaker and addressee for the current exchange" (Scotton 1983: 116). This type of code-switching reminds us of Gumperz' "metaphorical code-switching", but there is also a difference: for Myers Scotton, a speaker wishes to renegotiate the rights-and-obligations balance between himself/herself and the co-participant(s) by code-switching in a situation in which this is not adequate. For Gumperz, metaphorical code-switching activates an overlay to the rights-and-obligations set given by the situation by alluding metaphorically to another situation.

Let us consider one of Myers Scotton's own examples. Marked code-switching is of course only possible when the situational parameters strongly and unequivocally prescribe the other language. Some of Myers Scotton's well-known examples take place in a bus in Nairobi, where Swahili is the unmarked choice for interactions with the conductor. In the following example, however, the passenger in the final exchange switches into English:

(8) (from Scotton and Ury 1977: 16-17, also reproduced in Myers Scotton 1988: 168)
(Swahili-English code-switching, English underlined)

- 01 Passenger: *Nataka kwenda posta.*
 I want to go to the post office.
- 02 Conductor: *Kutoka hapa mpaka posta nauli ni senti hamsini.*
 From here to the post office, the fare is 50 cents.
- 03 ((Passenger gives the conductor a shilling from which there should
 be 50 cents in change.))
- 04 Conductor: *Ngojea change yako.*
 Wait for the change.
- 05 ((Passenger says nothing until a few minutes have passed and the bus
 nears the post office where the passenger will get off.))
- 06 Passenger: *Nataka change yangu.*

- 07 Conductor: I want my change.
Change utapata, Bwana.
 You'll get your change, mister.
- 08 Passenger: *I am nearing my destination.*
- 09 Conductor: *Do you think I could run away with your change?*

Surely the choice of English in line 08 can be interpreted as a rhetorical strategy by which the passenger wants to renegotiate his and the conductor's rights and obligations. He tries to establish a hierarchical relationship in which he can claim superior status on grounds of education (higher education being symbolised by access to English). The conductor responds by also switching into the 'power code', thereby maintaining a balance of rights-and-obligations, although these rights and obligations have changed now. The relationship between conductor and passenger has been renegotiated, which leads to – and is indexed by – a renegotiation of the language-of-interaction as well. But as in Gumperz' case, we need to ask whether the difference between a situational renegotiation like in this example and a case of unmarked code-switching (as in example (6)) is really so big. The main difference does not seem to be whether one language is 'predictable' (this also applies to the office interaction between boss and secretary, in which English is arguably the unmarked language choice), but whether the renegotiation is achieved jointly by both parties. This is the case in (6), but not in (8), where the rights-and-obligations set the passenger wants to enact by switching into English is not accepted by the conductor who insists on his authority and role-related professional integrity, and refuses to accept the hierarchical relationship which the passenger attempts to install.

In addition to code-switching as a marked and (sequentially) unmarked choice, Myers Scotton's model provides for further types which make the theory more flexible than the ones discussed so far. For instance, she argues that marked code choices may be unproblematic (and not invite further inferences) if they express deference (i.e. the speaker accommodates the co-participant's language choice, even though it is marked), or if one of the participants is not competent

enough to speak the unmarked language of the situation. In some situations, the unmarked language may not be easy to identify, since there are no trans-episodically stable associations of a language with this situation; as a consequence, language choice is open to negotiation. In these cases, the speaker may select one language and immediately switch into the other in order to keep the code choice open (*exploratory code-switching*). Finally, Myers Scotton introduces a further type of code-switching in which *bilingual talk itself is the unmarked choice*. Here, the situation does not change at all; rather, bilingual talk is the expected option. This applies, for instance, to the Estonian–Russian and the Danish–German examples (see examples (3) and (5), above). She explains these cases in terms of identities and assumes that “when the speaker wishes more than one social identity to be salient in the current exchange, and each identity is encoded in the particular speech community by a different linguistic variety, then those two or more codes constitute the unmarked choice.” Speakers “have two such identities” at the same time, and want to make two different rights-and-obligations sets relevant at the same time (1988). We will see whether this interpretation is correct in the next section, in which we will deal with identity-related approaches to bilingual talk in more detail.⁸

4. Code-switching and Identity

The upshot of the discussion in the last section was that theories which try to explain the social meaning of bilingual talk by very general associations between languages and types of situations (such as domains, in-/out-group, formal/informal) are not likely to be successful. The social contexts in which code-switching and mixing occur are too different to warrant such an overarching theory of bilingual talk and its social meaning. What we need is a more flexible

⁸ Critical appraisals of Myers Scotton’s theory of code-switching as rational choice can be found in Li Wei 2005 and in Meeuwis and Blommaert 1994.

approach. There is a certain consensus in the recent literature on code-switching that such an approach needs to incorporate the notion of social identities. If we step back and look at the theories developed by Gumperz or Myers Scotton, it becomes obvious that their reference to the “rights and obligations” that are linked to certain languages already deal with identities more or less indirectly. Although the concern with social identity is not new⁹, it has only recently taken on a central role in sociolinguistic thinking about bilingualism (see the discussion in Auer 2007).

Social identities are usually referred to in the plural, since in modern and postmodern societies, everybody can activate different social categories for himself/herself. This is not to say that any individual can lay claim to any social identity; rather, access to social identities is regulated in and constrained by social fields. Within the limits of these regulations and constraints (and of course also when we actively want to ‘break the rules’ imposed on us by them), we can activate different ‘personae’, and we also need to do so in order to do justice to the multitude of situations in which we act. These social identities are not simply ‘possessed’, but need to be made relevant in interaction. One of the important means by which this is done is through language – or rather, social styles in which linguistic features play an important role. These styles index social identities, and by using the former, the latter can be enacted and thereby brought to bear on the interaction (Antaki and Widdicombe 1998).

Put in very simple terms, identity-related explanations deal with the interactional processes through which people position themselves in a social space by language use. The relevance of language in this process is that of a style-building resource; social styles index social identities (Eckert 2010). When applied to bilingual talk, the identity approach replaces the notion of languages as

⁹ Cf. in sociology the seminal work of Luckmann 1979 etc., in sociolinguistics Le Page’s trend-setting “acts of identity” 1978 etc. as well the contributions in Gumperz (ed.) 1982, in research on bilingualism Sebba and Wootton’s early 1984 paper on the topic only published in 1998, as well as Di Luzio and Auer 1986. In some older research on code-switching from some decades ago, one can also find references to social identities as an explanatory concept, although they are rather ‘thinly’ theorised.

carriers of social meaning with the notion of social styles. A social style can include monolingual talk in language A or B, but it may also include various forms of switching and mixing. This renders a style-based approach more flexible than one which starts with languages and their meanings. For instance, in example (1), the first client speaks monolingual Moldavian, which is a marked code choice in a shop in Moldova and therefore a way of positioning oneself as an ethnic Moldovan; the second client speaks Russian as part of her social style of presenting herself; since this is the unmarked choice, no self-positioning can be achieved. In contrast to these monolingual language choices, the Russian-Estonian saleswoman in example (2) uses a mixture of Estonian and Russian which is part of a very specific social style ('market discourse') with which she indexes her persona in this sales exchange; equally, the Danish-German hybrids spontaneously produced by the adolescents in example (4) are part of a social style which indexes an identity that could be described as 'German-Danish bilingual secondary school kids in Germany'. A more complex example is (5); the use of Hindi by Fijian speakers is surely also part of a social style, i.e. that of mocking and teasing. As in all mock varieties and 'crossings' into varieties which do not 'belong' to the speakers (see below, p X), the social positioning which is achieved through such language use is not only linked to the construction of one's own identity, but also to the construction of another group's otherness (alterity). Social positioning very much involves creating such differences between oneself ('we') and other social groups ('them'); among other things, this can also be achieved by using a mock variety.¹⁰

In an identity-and-style approach, the situated interpretation of bilingual talk results from two sources: first, there are sedimented style patterns which incorporate a certain way of using one or more languages. These patterns are part of participants' knowledge (which may not always be equally pronounced within the group, and surely need not be explicit). It tells participants which social

¹⁰ More on identity-related construals of relevant others can be found in Günthner 2007 and Deppermann 2007.

groups are characteristically (‘prototypically’) associated with certain stylistic resources and which are associated with others. The adjective ‘characteristically’ (or ‘prototypically’) here means that the association need not reflect reality precisely; for instance, they need not be equated with statistical generalisations since the most prototypical member of a social group may not be one who uses the relevant style feature most frequently. Second, this knowledge needs to be brought into the interactional exchange at hand, i.e. it has to be employed in the right sequential position and topical surroundings, and in the context of the right activity; therefore, not all uses of language A or B, or a mixture of A and B, automatically index a certain persona or identity. Participants make use of bilingualism in the creation of social styles, but bilingual (or, for that matter, monolingual) talk does not automatically become meaningful in interaction. This is a major insight into the way bilingual talk is socially embedded and becomes socially meaningful when compared to the older approaches discussed in the last section.

Let us consider some additional examples from published research studies which explicitly refer to social identities as an explanatory concept.

- (9) (Bailey 2007: 352; the example is taken from the documentary film *My American Girls* made by Aaron Matthews in 2001; transcription adapted; English–Spanish code-switching, English underlined)
 ((Dominican immigrants in New York City. Sandra, who immigrated as an adult, confronts her 14-year-old daughter, US-raised Mayra, over Mayra’s failure to do her homework. Mayra is hanging out in front of the house with a peer, Wendy.))

- 01 Sandra *Yo te dije que tú fueras arriba para que hicieras algo*
pero tú dijiste que no podías porque tenías muchas tareas
 when I told you to do something upstairs you said you
 couldn’t because you had too much homework.
- 02 [*métate inmediatamente*
 get in there right now
- 03 Mayra [*yo lo hice.*
 I did it.
- 04 Sandra *I don’t care.*
- 05 *Vete a estudiar*

- 06 Go and study.
 Tú tienes exámenes la semana entera.
 You have tests all week.
- 07 Mayra *Wendy vamo*
 Let's go
- 08 Sandra ()
- 09 Mayra *I'm GOing.* *Wendy vamo.*
- 10 Sandra *vete!*
 Go!
- 11 Mayra *I'm GOing!*
- 12 Sandra *Vete!*
- 13 Mayra *Hold on, I'm going!*
- 14 Sandra *Mira, yo te quiero abajo ni para un segundo Oístes?*
 Hey, I don't want you down here for even a second. You
 hear me?
- 15 Mayra *I'm GOing!*

In his analysis, Bailey contrasts two different identities; the daughter, Mayra, displays a US-American teenager identity by speaking English, while the mother displays a Latin American first-generation immigrant identity by speaking Spanish. He claims that the languages are each connected to certain rights and obligations, and that certain speech activities (such as talking back to your mother) have a different meaning when they are done in one or the other language. But this analysis needs to be complemented by another aspect: it is not the use of English or Spanish as such which indexes these rights and obligations, but code-switching in a certain sequential positioning in the unfolding interaction, within a particular activity type (an argument), and through the parallel enactment of another particular pair of identities, i.e. the category pair mother/daughter. Sandra and Mayra are quarrelling, and the argument they are involved in is about the duties of daughters and the power of parents to make their children comply with these duties. It is this particular context which enables co-participants to activate the interpretations which Bailey alludes to.

Here is another example of how identities can be indexed by code-switching in a particular sequential and topical context, i.e. 'locally':

(10) (from Sebba and Tate 2002: 81) (London English–London Jamaican Creole, Creole underline)

((context: South-East London school in 1982, two 15-year-old boys discuss the appropriate use of Creole. S has a Barbadian father and American mother, C's parents are Jamaican.))

- 01 S *so I would say, right, to chat Patois, right, I mean it's sometimes – it shows the people that you're lacking intelligence. If you look at it in a certain way, right, it shows your ignorance, I mean you're over in England, right, for so long – I mean to say you should know what to chat in front of certain people, right? So I would say to chat Patois, you know, as a t'ing, you know, it's a bit silly to me – at home, yes, in your own environment, but when you're around white people chatting Patois, to me it looks tedious.*
- 02 C *it might seem tedious to you, but it might be interesting to them – because I mean to say, if you wa:nt them to know your culture you afi chat it have to*
- 03 S *so what you're saying there is that if you're to show your culture you have to chat Patois.*
- 04 C *well if you want if you want exchange it den well you afi chat it*
- 05 S *I think you're talking shite you know mate.*
- 06 C *I'm talkin' what I t'ink*

Sebba and Tate argue that British English (or its regional variant) is a means of identifying with the local culture of the place in England where these adolescents live (i.e. London), while “the associations of Creole transcend the local and carry a heavy symbolic load in racial/ethnic terms”, because it links speakers to the worldwide community of people with Caribbean backgrounds and therefore indexes a black English identity (2002: 80). In the example, C activates these meanings and identifies with a wider black community by gradually switching into a more Creole way of speaking, while S refuses this identity display by sticking to London or Standard English. But at the same time, C and S talk about the use of Creole (“Patois”). Once more, the activation of a ‘British’ and a global ‘Caribbean’ or ‘black’ identity is only possible because it is supported and even occasioned by other features of this interaction: the

developing argument between the two adolescents and their explicit mention of “Patois”.

5. Crossing: Using a Language That Doesn't Belong to You

In the last section, we have discussed identity-related explanations of the social embedding and meaning of bilingual talk. We have argued that bilingual talk can be part of a social style which in turn indexes not only membership in certain social (for instance, ethnic) groups but also certain values, typical features and activities associated with this group. In this section we will discuss forms of code-switching which have an identity function but do not seem to fit into this picture; this type of switching has widely become known as crossing through Rampton's influential work (Rampton 1995). Crossing is a particular kind of code-switching in which speakers 'transgress' into a language or variety which, in their social world, is not generally thought to 'belong' to them. It implies an act of 'trespassing' into the 'linguistic territory' of another group of speakers who have privileged or sole access to it by a speaker who is not an accepted member of that group. This definition applies to example (5) from Fiji discussed in the beginning of this chapter. Although it is a special kind of code-switching, crossing still can receive an identity-related interpretation, since it is linked to matters of maintaining, reinforcing, but also contesting and overcoming social boundaries (for instance, between ethnic groups) as will be discussed in this section.

Crossing can have widely diverging functions, which, in the sense in which the term is used here, include affiliating as well as disaffiliating ones. It is therefore best considered a cover-term for a group of (socio-)linguistic practices. It is obvious that the interpretation of an act of code-switching as a transgression is open to negotiation and may not be shared by all participants involved. For

instance, a speaker may not intend to cross into ‘foreign’ linguistic territory believing that s/he is part of the group who ‘owns’ the variety switched into; s/he may on the contrary believe that s/he is ‘crossing’ into another variety while the others do not see themselves as distinct from the speaker’s social group; finally, the recipient may side with the speaker or with the ‘owner’ in her/his interpretation. But in all cases, sociolinguistic crossing raises questions of boundary-marking, of maintaining or contesting, building or tearing down social, particularly ethnic, borders. For instance, in example (2), the use of – visible non-native – Estonian on the part of the Russian salesperson is an act of accommodation to a language whose ‘ownership’ may be disputed. Not such a long time ago, it would have been considered an act of crossing in Estonia – even though this crossing would have been of the converging, non-antagonistic kind. With the recently growing identification of ethnic Russians with Estonian citizenship and identity, this is no longer the case, and Estonian is regarded as a language which ‘belongs’ to all Estonians, also those who do not speak it as a mother tongue.

Greatly simplifying, crossing can either be antagonistic, i.e. aimed at maintaining or reinforcing group boundaries (as in the Fijian example), or it may be accommodating, i.e. aimed at camouflaging or making irrelevant group boundaries, or even establishing new social categories and ideological alliances (as in the case of the Estonian example, if it is regarded as a case of crossing). This distinction corresponds with one we already know from the discussion of metaphorical code-switching – i.e. between vari-directional double-voicing and unidirectional double voicing (see above, p X). However, as we shall see, the interpretation of crossing is often a complex issue in which the situational context plays a decisive role (see Quist and Jørgensen 2007 for further discussion).

In addition to the interpretation of crossing as antagonistic or affiliating, the linguistic form of the code-switch needs to be taken into account. There are ‘straight’ crossings in which the variety or language crossed into is more or less

identical to the one used in the ‘owning’ group, and crossings in which the code-switching speaker parodies a ‘typical’ speaker of the ‘owning’ group. Often, s/he will then use a mock form of that variety or language.

At a very basic level, sociolinguistic crossing may be involved in any quotation of another ‘voice’ which is associated with another ‘code’. The current speaker animates another past or future, factual or fictitious, generic or specific speaker, giving him or her a typified or even stereotypical representation through language choice, in addition to accent, prosody, or any kind of social-communicative style which is not associated with the speaker’s own social persona but with a different group. Keim (2002) discusses the following example in which a Turkish–German bilingual girl brought up and living in Germany animates her mother’s voice in *Gastarbeiterdeutsch* (a fossilised learner variety typical of first-generation work migrants, i.e. a group of speakers to which the mother belongs but which the daughter does not want to affiliate with):

(11) (from Keim 2002; German/Turkish/*Gastarbeiterdeutsch*; *Gastarbeiterdeutsch* underlined, Turkish in boldface)

((participants: German interviewer IN, mother FU, daughter TE. They are talking about the new apartment into which the family of seven children and the parents are going to move. Will TE and her sister be willing to share a room? This is a question of concern to the mother.))

- | | | |
|----|----|---|
| 01 | IN | <i>gehst mit hitace zusammen ins zimmer</i>
will you share a bedroom with Hitace ((her sister)) |
| 02 | TE | <i>nee</i>
no |
| 03 | IN | <i>net?</i>
no? |
| 04 | TE | <<p> <i>mid=der do=ned</i> >
not with this one |
| 05 | IN | ((laughs [a little])) |
| 06 | TE | <i>[ich will keins</i>
I don’t want any |
| 07 | FU | <<mf> <i>sieben kinder alle willen alle extra zimmer</i> >
seven children all want extra bedroom |
| 08 | IN | <i>die wollen’ [jedes will n [zimmer</i>
they want each of them wants a bedroom of her own |

09	FU	[<i>isch</i> ' [<i>isch was machen?</i> I what I do?
10	TE	<<f, imitating voice> !JA:! <i>was machen?</i>
11		<i>hier sitzen wohin gehen?</i> > (-)
12	FU	<i>çad ir ne k iz almanca?</i> what does tent mean in German, girl?
13		<i>çad ir in ad ı [ne?</i> what's the word for tent?
14	TE	[<i>zelt is gud</i> tent is good
15	IN	<< <i>laughing</i> > <i>zelt is gut (-) alle ins zelt</i> > tent is good (-) everybody into a tent
16	FU	<i>ja ja he he</i>

For the daughter, who is a fluent speaker of colloquial German, this transgression into a variety which does not 'belong' to her but typifies another social group (that of first-generation *Gastarbeiter*), is clearly antagonistic: she uses language in order to erect a social boundary between her mother and herself which, in the context of the interaction at hand, serves to criticise the mother's point of view and, even more so, her lamenting style. The mother's point of view is discredited by the very fact of being associated with the social group indexed by the variety switched into – first-generation *Gastarbeiter* – which holds very little prestige. The mother indeed speaks a reduced variety of German in her own turns in lines 07, 09 (notice *isch was machen*, for Std.G. *was soll ich machen*, in which no inflected verb occurs – an infinitival style typical of *Gastarbeiter Deutsch* where the modal verb is omitted and the first-person pronoun and question word do not obey canonical word order); the daughter imitates her mother's syntax in her following (arrowed) line (*ja, was machen*). Then she uses the same syntactic pattern (infinitival style) to add further utterances (*hier sitzen, wohin gehen* 'here sit, where go') in *Gastarbeiter Deutsch*. This repetition and the exaggeration achieved by it, as well as the parodic prosody, turn the daughter's utterance not just into an imitation, but a mock version of her mother's language.

Reported speech, although often involving sociolinguistic crossing, is not where the term originated from, however. Rather, it was introduced by Rampton

(1995, 1998) in his study on the use of London Jamaican Creole and other immigrant varieties in the UK (Punjabi and Indian English) by 'white' English adolescents in London, which in turn built on previous sociological work by Hewitt (1986). Rampton observed crossing not in interactions between entitled and non-entitled users of the codes, but rather in intra-group situations where the 'crossers' were among themselves. (Hewitt 1986 in fact reports sanctions by Creole speakers when 'whites' used it, which explains this finding.) He found this bilingual practice to occur in what he calls liminal situations, i.e. "at the boundaries of interactional enclosures, in the vicinity of delicts and transgressions, in self-talk and response cries, in games, cross-sex interaction and in the context of performing art. Adolescents used language to cross ethnic boundaries in moments when the constraints of everyday social order were relaxed" (1995: 281). The interpretation of crossing is, according to Rampton, more complex than that of in-group code-switching: "Recipients have to run through a much more extensive set of possible inferences in order to make sense of an utterance, and [...] it is this often unfinished process that generates the symbolic resonance around an utterance" (1995: 278). As a case of metaphorical code-switching (see above, page X), it is particularly rich in inferences; this is partly because there are no established interpretational routines involved, and because crossing calls into question some very fundamental assumptions of everyday language-based categorisation work. Example (5) fits this description: the switch into Hindi among the group of Fijian speakers involves a routine at the beginning of the interactional episode, and it invites inferences because it is unusually impolite; these inferences not only provoke a humorous meaning but also establish a symbolic boundary between the we-group of the Fiji participants and the absent group of the Fiji Hindi-speaking (Indian descent) population.

But crossers can also use this particular kind of switching as an attempt to borrow some of the prestige of the language which is not their own. For instance, Creole in England doubtlessly has a value on a non-official language market in

which street wisdom, virility and verbal virtuosity are highly appreciated. Crossing into Creole therefore may be a kind of accommodation, but it does not necessarily imply a wish to identify with the social-ethnic category of ‘West Indians’ in Great Britain. A similar ambiguity was observed by Cutler (1999) in a study on crossing into African-American English by white Anglo-American youngsters. It seems that some prestigious symbolic resources tend to dissociate from the social group who originally ‘owned’ them (perhaps against their will) and become more widely available as an index to those moral values and ideologies which have come to be associated with the ‘owning’ group. The worldwide borrowing of cultural resources from African-American culture (such as hip hop music) is a case in point.

Although the use of stylised and highly stereotyped varieties – such as the mock Hindi in example (5) – seems to be a straightforward case of antagonistic crossing (cf. Hill 1995), there can be a certain amount of interpretational ambiguity in parody as well. Crossing of this kind is usually mediated by models made popular through the mass media such as TV shows, movies, or advertisements (cf. Sebba 2007 on the role of ‘Ali G.’ in the UK). As an example, consider the use of a stylised variety of (pan-)ethnolectal German. This variety, which is associated with Turkish and other second-generation immigrants in Germany (other than the *Gastarbeiterdeutsch* referred to above, which is the result of a fossilised process of spontaneous acquisition in first-generation immigrants), has become popular among German adolescents of a non-migrant background through its presence in the mass media. The secondary (pan-)ethnolect which was produced by the media was in turn copied and transformed by the monolingual German adolescents (thereby becoming a tertiary (pan-)ethnolect), who themselves may have no direct contact with the social group associated with the primary ethnolect (cf. Androutsopoulos 2001, Auer 2003a). As Deppermann (2007) shows, crossing into an ethnolect of German can serve to stylise another social group (that of a particular ‘type’ of immigrant youngster)

which provides an oppositional display of one's own social identity; alternatively, however, it may simply index media competence while its primary 'owners' are not particularly relevant as a group to identify with or dissociate from.

Conclusion

This chapter started out with a discussion of various models that were developed to account for language choice in relatively stable and uniform bilingual communities in which knowledge about adequate language choices – i.e. choice in accordance with the parameters of the social situation – is shared among members. Code-switching in these models is seen as a consequence of a change in situational parameters which make a new language choice necessary. We have argued that these models fall short of providing an overall account of bilingual talk because the underlying assumption of a bilingual community is not always valid, and because the association of certain classes of situations with languages does not usually exhaust the possibilities of situational variation and therefore has no predictive value in many sociolinguistics contexts. In addition, the models underestimate the fact that bilingual talk in itself may be the appropriate way of acting in a given situation, rather than monolingual talk. The most important reason these models must be regarded critically, however, is that they equate language choice and code-switching/language mixing and therefore do not do justice to the ways bilingual talk itself contributes to the production of its social meaning.

We also looked at models by Gumperz and Myers Scotton which rely on Gricean implicature to account for meaning production through bilingual talk and therefore provide a more adequate analysis, even though Gumperz' distinction between situational and metaphorical code-switching and Myers Scotton's distinction between code-switching as a marked and an unmarked choice have

certain shortcomings. Finally, identity-related approaches to bilingual talk were discussed. It was suggested that bilingual talk is best regarded as part of a social style which is associated with a group. Bilingual styles can be used to claim these categories for oneself, or to ascribe them to others. Hence, they also become associated with certain evaluations, attitudes, activities or characteristics of typical category members. However, we have argued that self- and other-categorisation is never automatically achieved by a certain bilingual way of speaking but needs to be interpreted in the specific interactional context in which it occurs. This was shown, among other things, by a discussion of ‘crossing’, i.e. code-switching into a code not ‘appropriate’ to the speaker. In antagonistic crossing, the switch can be given an identity-related interpretation, but the crossing speaker does not index his or her own identification with a particular social group, but rather distances him- or herself from this group by ascribing certain (stereotypical, and negatively evaluated) attributes to it. In order to come to a more adequate understanding of the meaning of code-switching, we must include this embedding in the unfolding interactional exchange into our analysis.

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