

## Book Reviews

Peter Auer (ed.): *Code-Switching in Conversation: Language, Interaction and Identity*. London and New York: Routledge, 1998. 355 pp.

Reviewed by Magdolna Kovács

Since its first appearance in linguistics in the 1950s, code-switching has received increasing research attention, especially in the last twenty years. Today, code-switching is no longer 'peculiar' and is recognized as a 'worldwide phenomenon' (cf. Roberto 1990 and 1998). Most of the research activities investigate the influence of extra-linguistic (mainly sociocultural) factors in code-switching or search for grammatical constraints on (intrasentential) code-switching. A third, perhaps less investigated research area, examines code-switching from the conversational analysis point of view. This book represents the latter approach, although it aims at a consensus between micro- and macro-dimensions of code-switching (i.e., between discourse-orientated and socioculturally orientated research).

The present book is a collection of contributions from a workshop on code-switching held at the University of Hamburg in 1995. The simple structure makes the book easily accessible. The editor's (Peter Auer) introduction is followed by twelve other articles in two parts. Each chapter is also summarized and put into historical context by the editor. These short introductions contain very useful information but unfortunately are not mentioned in the table of contents. An index of subjects is provided but the reader is left without an index of the referred authors.

Peter Auer's main introduction outlines the theoretical basis and the goals of the volume. The major aim is to fill the gap between the grammatical and (in its narrow sense) the sociolinguistic approach in code-switching. The conversational and sociocultural levels of code-switching are successfully linked, but less effort is put to integrate the grammatical level. As the title of the introduction already suggests (*Bilingual Conversation revisited*), the theoretical frame is based on the editor's earlier works, mainly on *Bilingual Conversation* (Auer 1984) and some other publications (especially Auer 1995).

The editor emphasizes that code-switching is first of all a *conversational* event. The importance of sociocultural factors is also recognized but their role can only be analyzed after attention to the conversational context. Auer's conversational analysis-based model for code-switching is a continuum from *switching* (with clear conversational function) to *mixing* (without conversational function). *Code-alternation* is a cover term for (discourse- and participant-related) *switching* and (discourse-related) *insertion*. (From the grammatician's point of view, Auer's *switching* is called intersentential and *insertion* intrasentential switching. In his earlier works Auer used 'transfer' for *insertion*.) Mixed code is seen as interactionally meaningless alternation of elements of two (or more) languages or language varieties.

The two parts of the book approach the topic from different perspectives. The authors of the first part (chapters two to six) make an attempt to bring to light what are *The 'codes' of code-switching*. The main message is that the traditional equation between codes and languages is untenable. Special attention is also paid to the grammaticalisation of code-switching (i.e., mixed code emerges). In *Conversation and beyond*, the second part (chapters seven to thirteen), the authors investigate the role of sociocultural factors in code-switching. Although the authors agree on that for full understanding of code-switching the sociocultural factors have to be taken into account, most authors reject the suggestion of Myers-Scotton (1993) that the social motivations would play a leading role

in code-switching. Chapter by chapter the authors move away from strict conversational analyses and the analysis of social factors seem to take over. In search of factors beyond conversation, many of the authors discuss the issues of ‘we-code’ and ‘they-code’ and the ‘situational’ vs. ‘metaphorical switching’ (Blom and Gumperz 1972 and Gumperz 1982).

In the chapter entitled *From ‘switching code’ to ‘code-switching. Toward a reconceptualisation of communicative codes*, Celso Alvarez-Cáccamo aims to redefine of the meaning of code and code-switching. The author questions the recent research practice which often associates speech varieties mechanistically with ‘codes’. A redefinition of code-switching is started by going back to the origin of the word. The original expression ‘switching code’ implied that speech varieties *have* codes which can be switched. Following this track, to Alvarez-Cáccamo ‘code’ is not language but a communicative device (cf. Gumperz 1982: ‘contextualisation cue’). Alvarez-Cáccamo’s redefinition excludes “switching” which is socially or interactionally meaningless. At the same time the meaning of ‘code-switching’ has been stretched to include monolingual speech as well (e.g., switching only prosody). The theory is supported by the author’s Galizan-Portuguese – Spanish conversation data.

In the third chapter, *Code-switching and the notion of code in linguistics. Proposals for a dual focus model*, Rita Franceschini places code-switching to a wider frame of multilingual behaviour. According to her, people have a repertoire of codes. They focus either on one of the varieties (‘monofocus attention’) or on more than one variety (‘bifocus attention’) at the same time. Code-switching is associated with bifocus attention. In this model code-switching is a general phenomenon of language: it is related to linguistic variability and to flexibility in behaviour (i.e., an extra-linguistic factor) to use the available varieties. Franceschini’s arguments are partly based on her (Swiss-)German – Italian (dialect) conversation data from Switzerland. In her data code-switched

speech seems to be the norm which indicates grammaticalisation of code-switching.

Code-switched speech variant as a code of itself appears already in Rita Franceschini's article. Based on Zairians' conversations in Belgium, Michael Meewis and Jan Blommaert have a similar view and call it 'monolectal view' in their article *A monolectal view of code-switching. Layered code-switching among Zairians in Belgium*. For Zairians code-switching is the unmarked choice, the norm. They switch between already code-switched Lingala-French and Swahili-French speech. The type of code-switching is called 'layered' by the authors. As also stated by Franceschini, full competence in any of the involved languages is not required. It is, once again, an argument against the views that languages themselves were codes. Both of the Franceschini's and Meewis - Blommaert -cases of 'code-switching' would be called code-mixing and not switching in the sense of Auer's introduction.

Bilingualism in Switzerland also appears in Cecilia Oesch Serra's article *Discourse connectives in bilingual conversation. The case of an emerging Italian-French mixed code*. She analyses how Italian bilingual migrants use discourse connectives in French dominant part of Switzerland. From three discourse markers used by bilinguals only two are available for monolingual Italians (*ma* 'but' and *però* 'but', 'however', 'yet') and only one for monolingual French speakers (*mais* 'but'). In the monolingual speech the function of *ma* and *mais* are similar. The three connectives in bilingual speech take a functional specialization which is different from their monolingual ones. In the new argumentative system with three adversative connectives available, *ma* introduces the weakest argument, *mais* is in the middle and *però* is in the dominant position. The development of the new system is a sign of emerging mixed code.

Discourse markers and connectives are also the objects of Yeal Maschler's article *On the transition from code-switching to a mixed code*. The article is mainly based on Hebrew-English bilingual conversation between two first-generation American women in

Israel. The language alternation in discourse markers and conjunctions seems to be not accidental but well definable: discourse markers are mainly in Hebrew and conjunctions mainly in English. Similarly to the preceding chapter, this is regarded as a sign of mixed code and grammaticalisation. The author appropriately raises the question: whether this special distribution of discourse markers and conjunctions is typical for this particular conversation or is a more general pattern in Hebrew-English bilingualism or in bilingualism in general.

The second part of the book starts with chapter seven *The 'why' and 'how' questions in the analysis of conversational code-switching*. Here Li Wei analyses how Cantonese-English bilinguals of different generations use code-switching as a 'contextualisation cue'. According to the spirit of the book, he reverses the order of the old questions 'why' and 'how' switching takes places and stresses that first should be answered 'how' and then 'why' (contrary to the 'markedness' model of Myers-Scotton 1993). His Cantonese-English bilinguals use code-switching mainly for negotiation of the language of interaction, to contextualise turn-taking etc. which are purely conversational functions and do not reflect any extra-linguistic factors. However, part of code-switches in the data could not be understood without extra-linguistic factors (attitude, language preference, community norms etc.) which could be 'brought about' by the participant in the conversation.

In chapter eight, *The conversational dimension in code-switching between Italian and dialect in Sicily*, Giovanna Alfonzetti tries to find the answer what function code-switching has in conversation when two closely related varieties of language (Italian and Sicilian dialect) are in question. She notes that the direction of code-switching in most of the cases (e.g., in self-repair, topic change, quotations etc.) does not matter. This supports the theory that the function of the code-switching is first and foremost conversational: to obtain *contrast* by the help of the available two codes. However, in a few cases direction of switching matters, usually when speakers have divergent preferences for languages

(negotiation) or correct the 'wrong' code (reformulations). Those two latter cases imply macro-social influences. However, the existence of 'we-code' and 'they-code' is not self-evident in her data probably because the matter of question is a monocultural community without major ethnic conflict.

In chapter nine, *Bilingual conversation strategies in Gibraltar*, Melissa G. Moyer analyses English–Spanish code-switching. This language pair has probably had the most attention in code-switching research. Her data, however, has its own curiosity: it is not based on taped conversations but on an idealized telephone conversation between two housewives in a Gibraltarian weekly newspaper. Moyer aims to pay attention both to the form and to the meaning of code-switching. She distinguishes three levels (strategies) of conversational structuring in Gibraltarian bilingualism. At the highest level the main language is selected. After that selection, language negotiation between turns takes place at the intermediate level. Intrasentential switches emerge at the third, the lowest level. The meaning of switches (= language choices) at the second and third levels are analysed on the basis of Auer (1995) and the forms on third level on the basis of Muysken (1995).

In the tenth chapter, *Children's acquisition of code-switching for power-wielding*, J. N. Jørgensen rejects the view that minority language ('we-code') could always be associated with low prestige and submission and a majority language ('they-code') with high prestige and power. Jørgensen finds that although that applies to the national level also in Denmark, it is not necessarily the case at the community level. Jørgensen demonstrates through schoolchildren's Turkish–Danish bilingual conversations that at the school level children may use code-switching for power-wielding but mainly not because of the power differences presented in the Danish society but for controlling a particular situation.

The problematic 'we-' and 'they-code' opposition and associated factors are also the topic of Mark Sebba's and Tony Wootton's article *We, they and identity. Sequential versus identity-related explanation in code-switching*. The authors demonstrate,

how difficult is to find clear 'we-code' and 'they-code' among young Londoners of Caribbean origin. For them both London English and London Jamaican Creole are in some way 'we-codes'. Although London Jamaican Creole is usually not their first language, it seems to be more 'we-code' (i.e., it enjoys the status of the 'youth-code'). London English is, however, their preferred language for most of the time. Sequential analysis of the London English London Jamaican Creole bilingual conversations shows that in many cases code-switching functions as contextualisation cue. In other cases, when sequential analysis does not entirely explain the switches, Sebba and Wootton bring an extra-linguistic factor, the identity, into the picture. Social identities are not regarded as stabile but flexible structures which may change during the interaction.

As a consequence of increasing migration, the number of multiracial and multilingual communities grows in the world. In chapter eleven, *Language crossing and the redefinition of reality*, Ben Rampton deals with one consequence of the emerging new plural ethnicities: the problem of language crossing. Language crossing is a non-prototypical inter-group code-switching, where speakers temporarily leave their normally used language variety and adopt a new code which is not thought to belong to them and which is not fully acquired by them. When crossing the linguistic border between groups, the speakers also cross ethnic or social group borders. Examples are from Indian, Pakistani, African Caribbean and Anglo descent adolescents in a neighbourhood of the South Midlands of England. Although out-group code-switching has been used in the data only marginally, it is a significant conversational practice to negotiate and find a common ground in a multiracial youth community. Rampton places language crossing into a wider theoretical frame by combining the Gumperzian situational and metaphorical switching with Bakhtin's (1984) notion of polyphony or double voicing. Rampton distinguishes between situational switching ('relatively routine contextualisation cues') and figurative switching (polyphony or double voicing when 'speakers use someone else's discourse (or language) for their own purposes').

Figurative switching is divided into metaphorical switching (or uni-directional double-voicing) and ironic switching (or vari-directional double voicing). In his data crossing into Creole seems to belong to metaphorical switching and crossing into Panjabi or styled Asian English to ironic switching.

In the last chapter of the volume *Perspectives on cultural variability of discourse and some implications for code-switching* Christopher Stroud takes the longest step away from conversational analysis. He emphasizes that code-switching cannot be understood without understanding the sociocultural context. Stroud analyses Tok Pisin – Taiap code-switching in the village of Gapun in Papua New Guinea. There is a language shift into Tok Pisin taking place in the village. Tok Pisin is the prestigious language and is associated with a traditional concept of *save* which implies social knowledge, collectivism, maturity, maleness, goodness, Christianity, modernity etc. The opposite side of the self-conception is *hed* which denotes individual will, childness, femininity, badness, paganism etc. The local vernacular Taiap is associated with the latter. The function of the local *kros* is to publicly declare critique, anger or protest, to let the other villagers to know about that the *kroser's* autonomy is somehow offended by somebody. The *kroser* is usually a woman and the major part of the *kros* is in Taiap. By analysing a Gapuner woman's, Sake's *kros*, Stroud shows how code-switching from Taiap into Tok Pisin has traditional conversational functions on the one hand. On the other hand, he points out how Tok Pisin (the language of the masculinity etc.) is used by a woman for breaking up or renegotiating the traditional gender roles. Similar to Rampton, Stroud operates with Bakhtin's notion of double-voicing.

More than twenty years of intensive research, a satisfactory definition of code-switching is still missing. The present book on conversational code-switching enlightens many of the dimensions of switching and makes an attempt to clarify the term of code-switching. Unfortunately, the back cover definition, 'the alternating use of two or more languages within conversation', equates codes with languages, in spite of the fact that exactly this equation has been



questioned throughout the book. Some authors speak about cases of 'switching' which cannot be regarded as 'switching' according to the spirit of the editor's introduction.

The book focuses on the conversational dimension of switching, although the sociocultural dimension is also acknowledged and widely represented. However, the grammatical level finds little place, except the issue of grammaticalisation. On one hand, this is understandable because in the continuum model expressed in the introduction, intrasentential 'switching' is distinguished from code-switching and called not switching but 'insertion'. On the other hand, under the title of the book, '*Code-switching in conversation*', the authors do not deal with 'switching' only but with other phenomena on the continuum model as well.

The book is an impressive collection of current conversational code-switching research. It has examples from languages or language varieties close to each other (e.g., Italian - Sicilian dialect, French - Italian) or language pairs which are very different from each other (e.g., Danish - Turkish, Lingala - French etc.). Many of the 'switches' presented in the book are non-prototypical in the traditional sense and therefore have not been included in previous code-switching research. The book is recommendable reading for everybody interested in code-switching.

## References

- Auer, Peter (1984) *Bilingual Conversation*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Auer, Peter (1995) The pragmatic of code-switching: a sequential approach. In Lesley Milroy & Pieter Muysken (eds.), *One speaker, two languages*. pp. 115–135. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail (1984) *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Blom Jan P. and Gumperz John J. (1972) Social meaning in linguistic structure: code-switching in Norway. In Gumperz, J. and Hymes, D. (eds.), *Directions in Sociolinguistics*, pp.407–434. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Gumperz, John J. (1982) *Discourse Strategies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jacobson, Rodolfo (ed.) (1990) *Codeswitching as a Worldwide Phenomenon*. American University Studies. Series XIII Linguistics. Vol. 11. New York – Bern – Frankfurt am Main – Paris: Peter Lang.
- Jacobson, Rodolfo (ed.) (1998) *Codeswitching worldwide*. Trends in linguistics. Studies and monographs 106. Selected rev. papers from two sessions of the XIII World Congress of Sociology, held 1994 at the University of Bielefeld, Bielefeld, Germany, with other studies included. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Muysken 1995 Code-switching and grammatical theory. In Lesley Milroy & Pieter Muysken eds., *One speaker, two languages*. pp. 177–198. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Myers-Scotton, Carol (1993) *Social Motivations of Codeswitching*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Contact address:

Magdolna Kovács

Åbo Akademi

Department of Finnish

Fänriksgatan 3 A

FIN-20500 Åbo

Finland

E-mail: mkovacs@abo.fi

Pekka Sammallahti: *The Saami Languages: An Introduction*.  
Karasjok: Davvi Girji, 1998. Pp. 268.

Reviewed by Ida Toivonen

*The Saami Languages: An Introduction* describes and discusses the Saami language group (formerly known as Lappish), which is part of the Finno-Ugric branch of the Uralic language family. Although only a little more than 20,000 speakers remain, they are spread over a relatively large area in northern Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the