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PECULIARITIES OF CODE-SWITCHING IN EVERYDAY SPEECH

Code-switching, within the realm of sociolinguistics and literary theory, refers to the systematic alternation between two or more languages or linguistic varieties within a single communicative context. It can be a powerful tool for both teachers and students, fostering a deeper understanding of concepts and facilitating communication.

Key words: code switching; the typology of code switching; the peculiarities of code switching; bilingualism.

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ОСОБЕННОСТИ КОДОВЫХ ПЕРЕКЛЮЧЕНИЙ В ПОВСЕДНЕВНОЙ РЕЧИ

Кодовое переключение в социолингвистике и теории литературы означает систематическое чередование двух или более языков или языковых разновидностей в рамках одного коммуникативного контекста. Это может быть мощным инструментом как для преподавателей, так и для студентов, способствующим более глубокому пониманию концепций и снятию трудностей при общении.

Ключевые слова: переключение кодов; типология переключения кодов; особенности переключения кодов; билингвизм.

Introduction. Code switching is a linguistic phenomenon in which speakers of two languages (i.e., two codes) switch between these languages while communicating with other people who share the same codes. In other words, code switching means a verbal action in which the use of two or more codes alternates in a single conversational episode. The changes are always unconscious and spontaneous, and users do not have to have the same facility with both languages. This phenomenon is intricately tied to cultural and social dynamics, serving as a linguistic strategy for individuals to navigate diverse identity constructions and convey nuanced meanings.

This practice is not merely a reflection of bilingualism or multilingualism; it serves as a social tool that enables individuals to navigate complex cultural landscapes, establish identity, and foster connections with diverse audiences. In an increasingly globalized world, where interactions span various cultural contexts, understanding code switching becomes essential for deciphering how language shapes our social interactions. This article will explore the nuances of code switching, its implications in communication, and the role it plays in expressing identity and belonging in our daily lives.

Main part. Code-switching is a common practice among bilingual or multilingual individuals. It plays a significant role in not only in everyday speech, but also in language education, particularly in multilingual classrooms. It serves as means of crossing barriers in communication and implementing mutual understanding.

Code-switching is often context-dependent. This phenomenon can occur in both spoken and written language. For example, the main sentence may be spoken in one language and a subordinate clause in another. Code-switching is a frequent phenomenon in mixed ethno-linguistic regions [1].

In the last fifteen years, a large number of studies have appeared in which specific cases of intra-sentential code-switching were analysed from a grammatical perspective, involving a variety of language pairs, social settings and speaker types. It was found that code-switching is a quite normal and widespread form of bilingual interaction, requiring a great deal of bilingual competence [2, p. 177].

Competence of one variety of a language, be it a dialect, register, style, appears to be a highly rare phenomenon. The majority of speakers have the command of different varieties of the language that they speak. Further, bilingualism and even multilingualism are considered as the norm of many speakers all over the world [3, p. 17].

Speakers who intra-sententially code switch have a high level of bilingual proficiency since they need to know quite enough of grammar of both languages in order to be able to produce grammatically correct utterances [3, p. 18].

In addition, we can highlight *code-mixing* which refers to intra-sentential mixing of the languages involved (inside one sentence) and *code-switching* which refers to inter-sentential mixing of the languages among bilinguals (within the same clause). It is also what is known as a change in dialect / accent in a language when speaking in a certain setting or to certain people.

Various attempts have been made in pursuit of investigating *the typology of code switching*. According to the functional features, Blom and Gumperz (1972) were the first to recognize two types of code switching, based on their ethnographic study in a town in Norway. They revealed that the way local people employed the codes was ordered and anticipated. The codes then were identified as *situational code switching* and *metaphorical code switching* [3, p. 22].

In fact, *situational switching* is a social view of code switching which occurs when there is a change in situation such as a change of the topic, say, chemistry, physics, philosophy; setting, such as court, school, home, etc., and interlocutors who can be friends, teachers, family members, etc. Factors determining situational code switching relate to outside the content of a particular interaction. Such factors can be as power, and status between interlocutors. Sometimes; for instance, a group of learners may alternate their language differently when talking in a restaurant as opposed to when they are speaking in class. This is called “situational code switching”. In other words, the social settings restrict the selection of social variables; one kind of code, in a particular setting, may be more appropriate or the same speakers may choose another variety of code in another setting. Situational switching can be explained in terms of the change of code which is directly influenced by the context, opposite to metaphorical switching which remains a decision that interlocutors make at a specific time of their conversation [3, p. 23].

On the other hand, *metaphorical code switching* occurs when two codes are used by bilinguals or multilinguals in the same setting. For example, clerks who work in the bank may discuss personal issues with each other in local dialect and transact businesses in the standard dialect. Metaphorical code switching to the bilinguals' desire to identify with a group. In metaphorical code switching, the setting remains the same, but what may change can be the topics or subject matter of the conversation [3, p. 23].

Code switching has been quite adequately touched upon and has been the subject area in many master's theses and doctoral dissertations. It dominates prominently in the major journals on bilingualism, remarkably Language and Cognition, Bilingualism, and The International Journal of Bilingualism. Code switching has gained attention from diverse fields in anthropology, sociolinguistics, formal linguistics, language teaching, and psycholinguistics. Having analysed researches on code-switching we believe that it can happen accidentally when the individual does not realise it or it can be intended. When it happens accidentally, the main reason for code-switching is to blend in better or use habitual expressions. The main reasons for intended code-switching are as follow: 1) people's wish to clarify the piece of information, amplify and emphasize the ideas; 2) need for quoting other people's sayings; 3) pursuit of expressing the personality and the mood of the speaker.

English speakers often use Spanish when switching. This happens due to some similarities between the languages, despite their different origins. Thus, among the similarities we find the Latin alphabet, related words, syntax, and some grammatical categories (for example, plural nouns).

Having analysed the peculiarities of code switching, we underline its several key aspects in everyday speech:

– *Social Context*. Code-switching often reflects social dynamics, such as the relationship between speakers, the setting of the conversation, and the cultural background. It may indicate familiarity, solidarity, or even social status. *For example, in a conversation with friends: “I was like, ¿Qué tal? Let's go to the movies later!” (Я подумал, «Что?»)*. Here, the speaker switches to Spanish for a casual greeting, reflecting the shared language among friends.

– *Identity Expression*. Speakers may switch languages to express their identity, cultural affiliation, or group membership. This can strengthen in-group bonds or signal a shift in social identity. *For example, expressing excitement: “I just got my promotion! ¡Estoy tan emocionado!” (Я так взволнован!)*. The use of Spanish adds emotional depth to the expression of happiness.

– *Pragmatic Functions*. Code-switching can serve various pragmatic purposes, such as emphasizing a point, filling a lexical gap, or softening a statement. It can make communication more effective or nuanced. *For example, in a meeting: “We need to focus on our KPIs, y luego podemos discutir el presupuesto” (и тогда мы сможем обсудить бюджет)*. The switch to Spanish may be used to clarify points for bilingual colleagues.

– *Linguistic Proficiency*. The degree of fluency in each language can influence code-switching. Bilingual individuals may switch to the language they feel most comfortable with, especially when discussing complex topics.

– *Cultural Nuances*. Certain phrases, idioms, or cultural references may not translate well, making code-switching a useful tool for conveying meaning that may be culturally specific. *For example, discussing food:*

“I made some tacos for dinner, and they were muy deliciosos!” (и они были очень вкусными). The switch to Spanish emphasizes the cultural aspect of the food.

– *Informality and Casualness*. Code-switching is often more prevalent in informal settings, such as conversations with friends or family, and may be less common in formal or professional contexts. *For example, talking with parents: “Can you help me with my tarea? I don’t understand this math problem” (задание)*. The use of Spanish for ‘homework’ reflects the language used within the family.

– *Impact on Language Evolution*. Frequent code-switching can lead to the emergence of new linguistic forms or hybrid languages, influencing language development and usage over time. *For example, discussing a show: “Did you watch the latest episode of La Casa de Papel? It was incredible!” («Бумажный дом»; невероятно)*. Here, the switch highlights the specific lexis.

These peculiarities demonstrate the dynamic nature of language use in multilingual contexts and the complex interplay between language, culture, and identity.

Code switching has been largely investigated in the Russian-English settings. A variety of academic papers, covering a wide range of articles, theses and dissertations, were devoted to scrutinize the phenomenon.

The three factors affecting Russian-English code switching among bilinguals involve the social contexts in which the Russian and English languages are learned; the specific function for which each language is customarily employed; and the efficacy of a language as a communicative tool in the society where it is used [4].

There are three main settings where people learn the language: home, school, college or University. Before a child comes to school s/he learns the first language at home. At the same time a child experiences different cases of social interaction where English and Russian variations arise. It can happen everywhere — in the street, at the shop, while watching TV, listening to the radio, talking to peers, surfing social media, etc. *For instance, 1) Сегодня на площади “Time Square” в Нью-Йорке запустили так называемый “countdown” для Рождества [4]; 2) Какой шикарный “look”!*

The English language, thus, becomes an integral part of the Russian-speaking community.

It is obvious that social context is constantly changing within the development of the society and it is reflected through the language in general. These changes in the system of language, in their turn, have impact on the younger generation in particular. The mixture of the Russian and English languages has become an integral part of the bilingual speech in Russia. The main principle of the Russian-English code switching lies in the choice of a specific code that would be the most optimal in the specific situation. Thus the functions of this phenomenon vary greatly. English and Russian co-exist and supplement each other, i.e. English is an auxiliary language. English facilitates mutual understanding and successful communication in the English-Russian as well as Russian-speaking communities [4].

Conclusion. Code-switching in everyday speech is a common practice among bilingual or multilingual individuals which not only strengthens interpersonal bonds but also reinforces cultural identity, allowing individuals to navigate different social spheres comfortably. By shifting between languages or dialects, speakers not only convey meaning but also reflect their cultural heritage and social affiliations.

As our world becomes increasingly interconnected, the significance of code switching continues to grow. It highlights the fluidity of language and the adaptability of communication styles in response to varying circumstances and audiences. While it can enhance understanding and enrich conversations, it also presents challenges, including potential misunderstandings and societal stigma.

Ultimately, recognizing and appreciating code switching as a natural and valuable linguistic practice can promote greater inclusivity and empathy in our interactions. By embracing the complexities of language and the nuances of communication, we can foster deeper connections and celebrate the rich tapestry of human expression in our everyday lives.

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