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SPOKEN DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF CODE-SWITCHING BETWEEN SPANISH AND GERMAN IN A BILINGUAL'S INTERACTIVE PATTERNS

by *María Olivares Baños*

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Keywords:

Code-switching; bilingualism; adjacency pairs; spoken discourse analysis; mother tongue; second language use; conversation analysis; context of culture; context of situation; social context; case study

Abstract

This study investigates the phenomenon of code-switching in informal conversations of a Spanish/German bilingual. For this purpose a careful analysis has been carried out of the sequential organization, specifically of the adjacency pairs in which one pair part is in German and the other pair part in Spanish or even mixed up in both languages.

The analysis of spoken discourse has always been a debated issue due to the fact that there are numerous analytical perspectives. The way of analysis chosen in this paper is an eclectic model because some aspects of various perspectives have been used. Some of these perspectives are the CA which is concerned with the description of sequential patterns and therefore allows identifying many details and the ethnographic approach in which some contextual factors are included.

In view of the necessity to relate the verbal behaviour to the setting in which the talk occurs, as well as to the cultural background of the participants, a careful analysis of the situational, social and cultural context has been carried out.

1. Introduction

Code-switching is a phenomenon that consists in mixing two different languages within a same conversation. It is becoming more and more familiar to our culture because of the increasing existence of bilingual people and due to its complexity generalizations concerning this issue should be avoided, because the factors, functions and general characteristics will always depend on the individual speaking and on the different situations in which the conversation takes place. Gumperz (in S. Romaine, 1995 :121) considers that code-switching is "the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems".

Misunderstanding or other kind of similar problems could easily appear in conversations with members of different cultures, therefore the cultural differences are a very important factor in the analysis of code-switching, especially if the participants belong to very divergent civilizations. In the specific case that is going to be studied in this investigation, this is not the case, because the way of living of the two interlocutors is very much alike. I am referring to the German and the Spanish society, two western cultures whose cross-cultural similarities in conversational practices are very similar.

Despite of this fact, some important differences have to be pointed out as for instance, the quite different perceptions of reality of Spaniards and Germans. Germans have an enormous respect for possessions and property, whereas for Spaniards personal dignity is of much greater importance, being money, time and even prudence only of secondary importance. The humane side of Spaniards and their emotiveness has also to be contrasted with the instrumentality and the sincerity of Germans is also. Finally the 'distance of comfort' has to be pointed out, because whereas Germans are a non-tactile culture, Spaniards are very touchy and sensitive. This difference has been the cause of many misunderstandings between both cultures.

In this paper, the complexity of spoken discourse analysis has been added to the density of code-switching and therefore a very careful examination of these phenomena is going to be presented. With this objective, I am going to focus most of my attention on the sequential organization in informal conversations between two bilingual family members who frequently use code-mixing. Within the sequential organization, special attention has been paid to the adjacency pairs which Schegloff and Sacks (1973: 295-6) explain as follows:

Adjacency pairs consist of sequences which properly have the following features: (1) two utterances length, (2) adjacent positioning of component utterances, (3) different speakers producing each utterance.

The component utterances of such sequences have an achieved relatedness beyond that which may otherwise obtain between adjacent utterances. That relatedness is partially the product of the operation of a typology in the speakers' production of the sequences. The typology operates in two ways: it partitions utterance types into 'first pair parts' and second pair parts (...).

Investigations of naturally occurring talk are a quite recent phenomenon which has rapidly captured that attention of a very large number of researchers. Many previous studies have focused on the issue of code-switching in bilingual people or on spoken discourse analysis of intercultural communication. But on the other hand I have not been able to find many studies related to the analysis of code-mixing in informal conversations.

The purpose of this study is to carry out a case-study of a German/Spanish bilingual informant in order to illustrate how frequently and naturally code-switching occurs in informal conversations. Special attention will be paid on the adjacency pairs in which one pair part is in German and the other one in Spanish or

even mixed up in both languages. The aim of this investigation is to see how Francisco, our subject of study, has substituted the preference of his mother tongue, Spanish, by his second language, German, due to contextual factors.

Another approach that has been a helpful resource to carry out this investigation has been the Systemic Functional Linguistics, draw on the semantic theory of British linguist J.R. Firth (1957). As this model of discourse analysis interprets conversation as a process of making meanings and at the same time, models conversation as purposeful behaviour it will be very useful for this study. Two of the main benefits of Systemic Functional Linguistics are the following (Eggins S. & Slade D.,1997:47):

1. It offers an integrated, comprehensive and systematic model of language which enables conversational patterns to be described and quantified at different levels and in different degrees of detail.

2. It theorizes the links between language and social life so that conversation can be approached as a way of doing social life. More specifically, casual conversation can be analysed as involving different linguistic patterns which both enact and construct dimensions of social identity and interpersonal relations.

2. Types of Code-switching.

There are different kinds as well as degrees of code-switching, we are going to make a distinction between three types (Poplack in S.Romaine, 1995:122):

1. **tag-switching:** the use of a tag in one language into an utterance that is completely in the other language.

Ex: Ja klar, aber so hast du das original ¿sabes?
(Claro que si, pero así tienes el original ¿sabes?)

2. **intra-sentential switching:** switching of different types within the clause or sentence boundary.

Ex: Digital significa kriegst du besseren Empfang, also bessere Bilder.
(Digital significa que tienes mejor recepción, así que mejores imágenes)

3. **inter-sentential switching:** Switch at a clause or sentence boundary, where each clause or sentence is in one language or another.

Ex: Ja aber hast du doch gesehen como las he sacado yo.
(Si pero tu lo has visto, como las he sacado yo)

3. System of analysis used.

The analysis of spoken discourse has always been a debated issue due to the fact that there are numerous analytical perspectives. The way chosen to analyse a

text will depend on what the main purpose of the study is. In this paper I have decided to use an eclectic model of conversation analysis using some aspects of various perspectives that I have found interesting.

As this study is mainly focused on the investigation of code-switching within adjacency pairs I will use the transcription conventions of Conversation Analysis (CA), which is concerned above all to describe sequential patterns and therefore allows to identify more details, as for instance, increasing or decreasing intonation, turn taking patterns and turn types. Ian Hutchby and Robin Wooffitt (1998: 13) give the following definition on CA: "To put it at its most basic, conversation analysis is the study of talk. More particularly it is the systematic analysis of the talk produced in everyday situations of human interaction: *talk-in-interaction*." Therefore this system is a perfect tool for the kind of analysis that I am going to carry out, with the exception of the fact that it does not consider the evidences that come from outside the talk itself.

From my specific point of view, it is necessary to relate the verbal behaviour to the setting in which the talk occurs, as well as to the cultural background of the participants. Since CA does not regard such external factors I have added in this analysis some aspects of the ethnographic approach who considers convenient the inclusion of some contextual factors as for instance the knowledge of participants' identities.

In view of the fact that, Francisco, our object of study, made more or less use of code-switching depending on the situation and on the other participant of the interaction I have decided to investigate the social relationship of participants and how this affects the language of the discourse.

Therefore the model that I am going to present in this paper uses on the one hand the structure of CA and on the other hand three aspects of the context which are: (1) the situational context; (2) the social context and (3) the cultural context. In the situational context, the spatial and temporal dimensions will be analysed, whereas in the cultural context the communicative function and style as well as the background of the participants is going to be studied. For Malinowski the situational context and the cultural context are understood as follows (Gregory, M. & Carroll, S. 1978):

Context of culture: the general background context of the speech act and the socio-cultural context which is determined by the fact of growing up in a particular society and culture. This type of context has been related to the concept of social purpose and genres which move through different stages (beginnings, middles and ends) and they are also related to the culture in which they are created.

Context of situation: Malinowski (1946: 307) used this term in order to refer to the specific situations within the broader socio-cultural environment in which the text was uttered. And he suggests that the situation in which words are uttered " can never be passed over as irrelevant to the linguistic expression", and that "the meaning of any single word is to a very high degree dependent on its context" It is not difficult to recognize that language use changes according to the

situations and therefore language only has meaning when it is placed in its context of situation.

Social context: Finally, the social context can be used in two different senses (Halliday & Hasan, 1989). The first one refers to the social system and therefore it could be considered a synonymy of the culture. And the second one is a more specific meaning that indicates that we are concerned particularly with the relationships between language and social structure. In the social context I am going to focus on the following aspects:

1. Field: the topic and subject matter of the text
2. Tenor: the relationship between the participants
3. Mode: the role language is playing

Although the use of CA and some contextual factors could be considered contradictory, this is not the first time that something similar has been done. The existence of other perspectives such as, Interactive Sociolinguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis have already demonstrated that the inclusion of context and CA within the same model of analysis enriches the study.

4. The data analysed.

The samples used for the analysis of this study are sketches of 'natural interaction' (Paul Ten Haven 1999:48) which have been audio recorded in naturally occurring situations. They have been selected from entire conversations because they were considered interesting for the analysis. My decision to use a audio-recording instead of a video-recording is due to the fact that the participant was used to see an audio-recorder in the room where the conversations took place, and therefore I thought that it would be less influential than a video-recorder.

The participants of these everyday conversations were two family members of different sexes and whose preference for the use of one language or the other one is much related to their cultural background differentiation. Both are bilingual and have no problem in using whether Spanish or German with the only distinction that whereas M prefers to use Spanish, F's preferred language is German. For this reason, in the vast majority of their conversations, code-switching can be found.

4.1. Context of culture.

The object of study, Francisco, is a twenty-nine-year old man who was born and still lives in a small city in the south-west of Germany. In his community German is spoken although Spanish is his mother tongue. He has heard Spanish from his family members since his birth but the language he heard outside was German. Therefore he acquired Spanish as a mother tongue and German as a second language learnt by immersion. Consequently, Francisco has been accustomed to hearing two different linguistic systems since he was born. At the age of 5 he could be considered a bilingual child that was able to speak both languages fluently distinguishing between the different contexts of use. Ten years later when his

family decided to go back to their mother country he was strong-willed to stay in Germany. Since then he only makes use of his mother tongue in telephone conversations with his family or when he spends his holidays in Spain (approx. 3 weeks per year). All these facts have contributed to the oblivion of Francisco's mother tongue and to his preference of the German language. To prove this point, we will have a look at a collection of data taken in different informal conversations. These data will show how difficult it is for Francisco to have a whole conversation in his mother tongue without switching into German.

4.2. Situational/ Social Context and formal analysis.

Text 1

Field: computers (importance of having the original 'office')

Mode: interactive face-to-face

Tenor: 2 bilingual family members

1F- Pero este por ejemplo, lo que tiene es el 'office'(0.1) sabes?↑

2M- ↑Ah ya (0.1) bueno pero eso tampoco es importante↑

3M- Te lo coges [y te lo grábas] y ya está↑

4F- [Ja kl::ar das ist] ne aber so hast du das original ¿sabes?↑

(Claro que si eso es, no pero así tienes tu el original ¿sabes?)

5M- Wo für willst du das denn, (0.1) das orgi::nal?

(Y para qué lo quieres, el original?)

6F- Pues tener el original siempre es mejor que una copia no? ↑

a) Formal analysis:

In the first part of the adjacency pair of turn 4 a tag-switch can be found, because the interlocutor starts talking in German but at the end switches to Spanish in his question. The other participant with whom F is interacting responds in turn 5 with another question rather than simply by supplying what has been requested and she does this making use of the German language. Finally in turn 6, F changes again to Spanish in order to answer the question of M, but he closes up this conversation using again a tag-question and making a comparison between having the original 'office' or just a copy, to be more convincing.

In this example it may be pointed out that questions are not always followed immediately by answers, because sometimes they are followed by further questions as has been seen.

It is also important to mention the overlap that occurs in turn 3 and 4. While M is talking, F interrupts her before she had closed up her turn, and he does this by increasing his intonation. More examples of interruption and overlapping like this one will be seen in the texts that follow, because this is one of the strategies that F uses in order to seize the turn.

b) Situational/Social Context:

In the creation of this text two participants are involved, that have a high affect and frequent contact because of their familiar relationship. They both have a conversation about computers which takes place at night time in the bedroom of one of the interlocutors.

The mode of this example is spoken because it is an interactive face-to-face conversation. It is interactive because there are two participants using language as action, that means, using language to accomplish some task which in this case is to convince one participant of the importance of having the original 'office'. We can also say that it is a spontaneous talk without rehearsing what is going to be said, because Francisco even did not know that he was being recorded. As the rest of examples that we are going to see, these are sketches of informal and everyday conversations.

As we can see, the dialogue starts in Spanish but in the fourth line Francisco switches to German to express his conviction about the issue. The code-switch in this case is probably due to the fact that he is addressing to another bilingual person, and therefore he switches to his preferred language that is German. As we have already shown in one of the examples of types of code-switching, at the end he makes use of a tag-switch in his mother tongue.

Something that could be considered a bit contradictory to our study is the last adjacency pair in which Francisco is asked a question in German but decided to answer it in Spanish. An explanation of this could be that he sometimes switches to his mother tongue when talking to a person whose preference is Spanish because of the role relation of solidarity.

Text 2

Field: conversation about books

Mode: face-to-face interaction

Tenor: 2 bilingual family members

1F- Hast du eigentlich mit den Büchern was anfangen können=↑
(*Al final te han servido para algo estos libros*)

2F- = Hast du dir überhaupt angeguckt? ↑
(*¿Te los has mirado?*)

3M- Ich hab dieses hier ein bisschen gelesen (0.1) die Grammatik ↑ (0.2)
(*Me he leído este un poquito, la gramática*)

4M- Esta bien este de gramática

5F- Syno::nyme ist vielleicht auch wichtig ne? ↑
(*El de sinónimos también es importante ¿no?*)

6M- Si este lo estuve leyendo así un poco ↓pero es que

7F- Ich glaube das sind ganz einfache Bücher oder? ↑
(*Yo creo que estos son libros muy simples ¿no crees?*)

8M- Si

a) Formal analysis:

In turn 1 and 2 the same participant asks two consecutive questions which are interrelated and answered in turn 3 and 4 that is the second part of the adjacency pair. As can be seen, this interchange starts taking place in German, and it is in turn 4, where the Spanish language is incorporated by the second interlocutor, in order to give its opinion.

In this example the contrary of Text 1 can be seen because in this case the questions formulated by F are followed immediately by answers. In the first adjacency pair, as I have said before, the second pair part is mixed in both languages, whereas in the second and third adjacency pair (turn 5-6; 7-8) code-switching can be found in the question-answer sequence.

In the two last questions originated by F a very clever tactic of influencing the answer is used. F creates his question by stating his opinion and then adds a tag question at the end in order to get the answer with the same point of view. In doing so he obliges the other participant to agree with his perspective.

b) Situational/Social Context:

In this text we can find a conversation about books that the participants had in their hands at the moment of speaking. This exchange took place just some minutes after the example of text 2 and therefore the setting is identical.

Although the participant with whom Francisco is establishing a relation switches to Spanish at the very beginning of the conversation, he decides to continue his talk in German. Therefore the equal relation status as well as the high affective involvement is obvious because of the liberty each of the participants uses to talk in their preferred language, which in this case is a different one. This status of equal relation is due to the degree of familiarity which at the same time has developed through high frequency of voluntary contact. And finally we have to mention the orientation to affiliation which refers to the extent to which we seek to identify ourselves with the values and beliefs of the person with who we are interacting in the different social contexts. As a consequence of the familiar relationship of both participants we can find a clear identification within the social group.

Text 3

Field: conversation about a workmate

Mode: face-to-face interaction

Tenor: 2 bilingual family members

1F- Wie alt ist er?

(¿Cuantos años tiene?)

2M- Er ist (0.1) drei::ssig ↑ oder fünf und dreissig. Dreissig oder fünf und dreissig

(Tiene treinta o treinta y cinco años. Treinta o treinta y cinco)

3F- Er ist aber nicht so alt oder? ↑

(Pues no es muy mayor ¿no?)

4M- Ne (0.1) er ist nicht so alt!

(No, no es tan mayor)

5F- Was macht er denn in Spanien überhaupt? ↑

(Y ¿qué es lo que está haciendo en España?)

6M- Era locutor de radio (0.2) trabajaba en(0.1) Spectrum FM↑

7F- Wo für braucht er es denn eigentlich?

(¿Para que lo necesita?)

8M- ()↓

a) Formal analysis:

Again a conversation in which German is the most used language by both participants although M is again the one that decides to switch into Spanish in turn 6. The interchange is constituted of 4 different question-answer adjacency pairs (turn 1-2; 3-4; 5-6; 7-8) in which F takes the privilege of being the person that asks all the time. This is the main reason why this exchange takes place mainly in German because if M would be the person formulating the question, Spanish would be probably the language chosen for this brief discussion.

In each of the four adjacency pairs found in this example, a different characteristic can be pointed out. Therefore starting with the first one it can be said that it is one of the standard question-answer adjacency pair in which the second pair part is repeated twice due to the insecurity of the answer given. In turn 3 F makes use again of his strategy of stating his opinion and then closing his turn with a tag-question that influences the answer of the second interlocutor. In the second pair part (turn 4) M agrees with F and therefore the answer given is the one expected.

In the third adjacency pair, another example of code-switching can be found in which the first pair part is in German and the second pair part in Spanish. It is again a question-answer sequence and M is the one who chooses to switch into Spanish. Finally, in the last adjacency it was not possible to do a detailed analysis of the language used because of the difficulties of understanding the second pair part. The only think that can be said here is that in this question-answer sequence, F decided to continue the conversation in his preferred language although the other participants had answered the previous question in Spanish, demonstrating in this way her desire to change the language of interchange.

b) Situational/Social Context:

Again two participants with a fluent domain of the German language are involved in this conversation about a workmate of one interlocutor. The affective involvement is high because all both belong to the same family and therefore the frequency of contact is also high. If we refer to the status relation, we could say that we find status of equality between the participants. This fact can be justified by their brother-sister relationship.

The spatial and temporal dimension has also remained the same in this example. The participants are having a face-to-face interaction in the bedroom just

before going to bed. The affective involvement is high because both belong to the same family and therefore the frequency of contact is also high.

Text 4

Field: different types of TV aerials

Mode: interactive face-to-face

Tenor: 2 bilingual family members

- 1F- Pero pone analógica o ↑ (0.1) digital terrestre↓ Que eso es lo importante↓
2F- Digital terrestre es lo que tenemos en Alemania ahora
3M- [ya pero eso]
4F- [Que es] normale Zimmeranenne con con normale Zimmeranten con con =
(*Que es una antena normal de habitación con una antena normal de habitación*)
5F- =con mit einem Verstärker (0.1) eso es↓
(*con con con un amplificador, eso es*)
6M- Pero teniendo en cuenta que esa vale el ::doble
7F- Ja klar lógicamente
(*Si claro, lógicamente*)

a) Formal analysis:

In this conversation F starts asking a question in which he does not expect any response and therefore he takes the following turn without leaving time available for the other interlocutor to answer. In turn 2 he begins explaining a kind of TV aerial but when M tries to give her opinion, F augments his intonation in order to show that he wants to keep his turn. Overlapping in turn 3 and 4 are the results and M's intervention has to wait until line 6.

The adjacency pair that can be found in turn 4, 6, and 6 is very interesting because it does not follow the question-answer structure, like in most examples seen. Here F gives in the first pair part a brief definition of the digital TV aerial and he does this by mixing both languages. This is a very good example of intra-sentential code-switching in which the speaker changes from one language to the other within a sentence boundary. In the second pair part the other participant intervenes in order to agree with F's point of view but giving a disadvantage, which in this case is the price. She introduces this inconvenient making use of the preposition 'but', that is the one mostly used for the expression of disagreements. Finally

The stuttering and hesitations of turn 4 are clear manifestations of Francisco's difficulties using his mother tongue. He starts naming the aerial in German and tries to switch into Spanish to continue talking about the aerial but he

fails in doing so. The results are stuttering and hesitations and finally he explains it in German.

In the last adjacency pair we find again that the other interlocutor gives the statement in the mother tongue but he replies with an inter-sentential code-switching, in order to express his emotions clearly.

b) Situational/Social Context:

Again the two participants are two bilingual members of the family whose power relationship is equal but this time they are having a conversation about different types of TV aerials. The temporal and spatial dimension are the same than in the previous example, at night time in the bedroom of one participant.

The interaction is a face-to-face spoken discourse and language is use to make a distinction of the diverse TV aerials. The different examples of overlapping and turn taking are a clear demonstration of the spontaneity and informality of the text.

Text 4

Field : luggage allowed in Easy-Jet flights

Tenor : 3 family members

Mode : face-to-face interaction

1P- Te dejan poner las cosas en los pies↑

2M- No ::dejan↑

3F- Las cosas pesadas si (0.1)

4M- No

5F- Siempre (0.1) las cosas, las que no pesan (0.1) oben y las que pesan (0.1)
(*arriba*)

6F- abajo↓

7F- Siempre

8P- [nosotros no]

9F- [lo que pasa] es que no se lo que es con est::os (0.1) est::os, est::os

10 P- Vuelos↑

11 F- Estos vuelos baratos weisst du (0.1)
(*¿sabes?*)

12 F- Mit diesem Easy-Jet () habe ich auch keine Ahnung!(0.2) Ich bin nur zwei=

(*con este Easy-Jet, yo tampoco tengo ni idea. Solo he volado dos veces*)

13 F- =mal mit Easy-Jet geflogen (0.2) Einmal nach Liverpool und jetzt
(*con Easy-Jet, una vez a Liverpool y ahora*)

a) Formal analysis:

In this conversation a third participant has been added who starts producing the first part of the adjacency pair that begins in turn 1. This is an example of

adjacency pair in which a new sequence has been inserted for specification (turn 3) in the one that was just started. To the question stated in the first pair part, two different and contradictory answers are given by the other two participants. These answers constitute the second pair part in which F refuses the answer of M and vice versa.

In turn 5 again an example of intra-sentential code-switching can be found in which F gives a specification of where the luggage can be put on board. In line 8, the third participant tries to intervene in the conversation but the only result is overlapping because F increases his intonation and takes again his turn without leaving any time to speak for the others.

Another interesting point that is worth mentioning is the hesitations of turn 9. Here a clear demonstration of Francisco's translation process can be found, which he sometimes uses when speaking Spanish. While talking about Easy-Jet he has difficulties to translate a common word as 'flight' is into Spanish and therefore another participant (P) helps him because he already knew what he was going to say.

In line 11 F makes again the use of a tag-switch but this time he makes it in a different way than in the example already seen. While talking in Spanish he makes use of a tag-switch in German at the end of the exchange which casually is the same he used in Spanish in the other example (*¿sabes? / weißt du?*).

b) Situational/Social Context:

Three participants are involved in this conversation about the luggage allowed on board in Easy- Jet flights, but this time only two of the speakers have a fluent domain of the German language. The third person interacting is the father which used to have difficulties when listening or speaking German.

Francisco is having a conversation with both familiars at the same time and therefore it is a very good example to see how he addresses to his father in Spanish but as soon as he has the opportunity to talk to his sister, he switches into German.

The syntax used by Francisco is standard syntax and he only uses colloquial lexis to talk about commonsense issues in everyday situations. Again overlap and interruption show us the degree of informality of these conversations. The high affective involvement as well as the frequent contact also contribute to make this exchange informal.

The spatial and temporal dimension has also changed in this example. Now the participants are having a face-to-face interaction in the kitchen just before having dinner.

The affective involvement is high because all three belong to the same family and therefore the frequency of contact is also high. If we refer to the status relation, we could say that we find a lightly unequal status between the participants. This inequality

is probably due to the authority that the father has over his son and daughter, although this is not really visible in this sketch of conversation.

5. Results

The data collected show that our object of study, Francisco uses code-switching as naturally as language itself every time he has a conversation with another bilingual person. As has been demonstrated in text 4, two prominent factors that influence Francisco to use more or less code-switching are the situational context and person with whom he is conversing. When addressing to a monolingual person who used to have difficulties while listening or speaking German, our object of study made an effort in order to use only his mother tongue, which in this case is Spanish. The results of this effort have been mainly hesitations and stuttering due to the translation process that sometimes occurs in Francisco's mind while speaking Spanish.

The promptness and automaticity with which these alternations from one language to another take place usually give the impression that the speaker has no control of the structural systems of the two languages and therefore mixes them indiscriminately.

Another important fact that has been demonstrated is Francisco's preference for his second language rather than for his mother tongue. As a result of the cultural context analysed it can be said that this he has changed his preference due to his cultural background in which he has frequent contact with the German language.

I consider also interesting to point out one of the findings that I did not expect before initiating this study. I am referring to the point that in almost all conversations analysed, it seemed as if Francisco were dominating the conversation. Some of the strategies he used to keep his turn when the other interlocutor tried to intervene are overlapping and the increase of the intonation. Therefore it could be said that in this investigation men tend to dominate conversations involving both sexes.

It has been also verified that it is necessary to relate the verbal behaviour to the setting in which the talk occurs, as well as to the cultural background of the participants.

Code-switching, as any other speech act, has to take place in a certain situation to get its proper meaning and therefore it is necessary to recognize the importance of context in order to make sense of the text, because people use language to achieve culturally appropriate goals.

After carrying out this analysis I have the hypothesis that Francisco would not use so much code-switching in a formal situation, that is, a situation where the power between the participants is not equal, the contact is infrequent and the affective involvement low. From my specific point of view he would not be able to switch to a formal lexis due to his 'context of culture' and ignorance of this kind of vocabulary.

6. Conclusion

The main purpose of this paper has been to make a study of the use of code-switching of a German/Spanish bilingual person. An eclectic model has been used in order to carry out a more meticulous investigation of how bilingual speakers work

collaboratively at the meaning of each conversational turn and how code-switching are closely associated with conversational structures.

Both, the analysis of spoken discourse and the analysis of code-switching are a very complicated task because a wide variety of problems in conversations, such as incorrect word selection, misunderstandings, mis-hearings and so on, use to appear. Therefore these kinds of studies have to be carried out very carefully, trying to analyse as many details as possible. With the intention of doing so, the adjacency pair of the CA approach has been chosen to perform this investigation because, as Auer (1984:5) points out:

It gives priority to the sequential implicativeness of language choice in conversation, i.e. the fact that whatever language a participant chooses for the organisation of his or her turn, or for an utterance which is part of the turn, the choice exerts an influence on subsequent language choices by the same or other speakers.

After this research we can affirm that context is of capital importance in the study of the use of code-switching, because the meanings by which we are surrounded are always meanings in context. Therefore if we want to find the proper significance of a phenomenon like code-switching it is necessary to analyse it as a contextualised phenomenon. The main goal while having a conversation is not only to exchange words with the other participants, but actually to understand what they mean. Consequently our choice of words is controlled by the context in which we use the language and it is necessary to consider both, context of culture and context of situation, in order to understand how people use language. As Schegloff (1976: 47) points out:

Taking sentences in isolation is not just a matter of taking such sentences that might appear in a context out of the context... the very composition, construction, assemblage of the sentences is predicated by their speakers on the place in which it is being produced, and it is through that that a sentence is context-bound, rather than possibly independent sentences being different intact objects in or out of context.

It is a clear fact that the phenomenon of code-switching is a systematic and meaningful mode of communication for many bilingual communities and due to its complexity it should always be analysed from diverse perspectives. In the study carried out in this paper I have focused my attention on three contextual aspects (the social context, the cultural context and the situational context) in order to discover the main factors that influenced our object of study to make use of code-switching.

It would be a very interesting point for further researchers to do some analysis on the use of code-switching between bilingual participants in formal circumstances, contrasting it with more informal situations. Other studies could also use other kinds of recordings as for instance a video-recording in order to study the non-verbal behaviour of a bilingual person while using the different languages.

7. References

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