



The Value of Code-switching, Motivation and Implications for Parenting

Lili Xia^(✉)

Wuhan University of Communication, Wuhan, China
595036055@qq.com

Abstract. In verbal communication, code-switching is a common occurrence. The motive for code-switching has been studied from a variety of disciplinary viewpoints, including sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and psychology. This study will summarize Colin Baker's views and investigate the value and underlying motives of code-switching in terms of discourse theme awareness and social rules, based on past theoretical discoveries. Additionally, the study will make some recommendations for parents regarding the effects of code-switching on foreign language instruction.

Keywords: Code-switching · Value · Motivation · Recommendations for Parenting

1 Introduction

Colin Baker responds to this subject by presenting his thoughts and observations in a calm manner. When all or all participants in a dialogue know both languages, he makes it apparent that code-switching is a beneficial and meaningful communication method. Code transitions can happen throughout long stretches of speech, between sentences, or even inside sentences. It's worth looking into the reasons and reasoning behind language switching. Colin Baker summarizes the definitions and disputes in the academy about the difference between language mixing and code-switching, based on the views of a number of other authors in relevant subjects. While there is no definite answer as to what is correct and what is incorrect, the general view is that bilingual children are aware of information in two languages and are capable of making somewhat subjective decisions about which language should be spoken to whom in which situations. They can quickly learn which social contexts are appropriate for code-switching and which communication audiences are receptive to it. In addition, the authors claim that code-switching is not the same as interference or mixed language. It's a third, more subtle language that bilinguals utilize to achieve subtle effects.

The authors claim that a range of factors determine the type and processes that influence code-switching, including familiarity, expected status and ethos of the environment, and the audience's language skills. As a result, the authors claim that code-switching is symptomatic of important social and power interactions in addition to being linguistic. To put it another way, code swapping occurs at both the micro and macro levels. Colin Baker's remarks are insightful and I couldn't agree more.

© The Author(s) 2022

G. Ali et al. (Eds.): ISEMSS 2022, ASSEHR 687, pp. 2067–2073, 2022.

https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-494069-31-2_243

2 Definition of Code-switching

Language code, code-switching, and code-mixing are all included in the definition of code-switching. Code-switching is commonly understood to refer to the use of individuals to communicate. A language, a dialect, a corpora, or a domain can all be examples [11]. Most sociolinguists interpret code-switching as a switch from one language or linguistic variety to another in a conversation or discussion based on this interpretation.

Wardhaugh [11], for example, defines 'code-switching' as "the conversion from one code-speech to another, or the mixing of various code-speech (often within a very brief discourse) to produce a new code-speech". In effect, this is arguing that code-switching and code-mixing are the same thing.

Some researchers believe that 'code-switching' refers to inter-sentential switching, while 'code-mixing' refers to intra-sentential switching. Poplack [8], for example, claims that code-switching is a phenomenon in which sentences or sentence fragments from different languages appear in rapid succession in speech, and that the internal structure of these sentence fragments must follow the syntactic and lexical rules of the other language; otherwise, code-switching cannot be claimed. Others have claimed that there is no need to distinguish between code-switching and code-mixing in order to avoid terminological misunderstanding [3, 6, 9]. For example, according to Verschueren [9], code-switching is "any distinguishable variant of a language that involves a systematic collection of choices, regardless of whether the variant is associated with a specific geographical area, a social class and a functional task, or a specific context of use", and thus code-switching is an umbrella term for code-selection. Within the same verbal communication, it can refer to the alternating usage of speech belonging to two separate grammatical systems or subsystems.

When considering the communicative roles of code-switching and code-mixing, the author contends that there is no need to discriminate between these two ideas. When studying the motive for code-switching, the same argument can be ignored: multiple languages and varieties of the same language appearing simultaneously in the same verbal conversation are investigated.

3 A Review of Studies on Code-switching Motivation

The core of the communicative subject's discourse message in verbal communication is verbal motivation. The first question that comes to mind when considering code-switching in a verbal subject's communication is: why does code-switching happen? People code-switch for a variety of reasons. Early code-switching studies focused on elucidating the reasons for code-switching. Gumperz [3] and others interpreted code-switching as a method employed by speakers to influence or change interpersonal connections, claiming that it is caused by two reasons: changes in situational characteristics such as themes and participants, and changes in the tone, emphasis, or role relations of speech. Later in his career, he [3] saw code-switching as a type of contextualization signal, a way of demonstrating and explaining the speaker's objectives or imparting pragmatic meaning. The Accommodation Theory, proposed by Giles[2], claims that speakers adjust their language or style in order to agree with or please the other person,

or to emphasize contrasts with them. This reveals the psychological standpoint of the individual. From the standpoint of individual psychology, this explains the phenomenon of code-switching.

The markedness model, a cognitive perspective, is used by Myers-Scotton [6] to suggest that the underlying motive for code-switching should be described in terms of the speaker. The speaker is a rational actor, and code-switching in a discussion is a cognitively based 'calculating' act in which the speaker seeks the most advantage at the least cost to himself.

According to Chinese researcher Liu Zhengguang [5], the above-mentioned theoretical models only describe one or a few aspects of code-switching dynamics, and hence lack comprehensiveness and adequacy of explanation. They shift their focus to pragmatics, claiming that speech actors switch codes to comply to linguistic reality, social conventions and mental motivation, employing Verschueren's linguistic adaptation theory to explain the phenomenon of code-switching. According to the history of code-switching and contemporary research, code-switching is motivated by a binary element, namely subject consciousness and social rules.

4 Motivation for Personal Code-switching

4.1 Motivation Under the Influence of Subjective Consciousness

Language is a result of people's subjective initiative, and the use of various languages or dialects reflects their social psychology. "Subjective elements such as the communicator's feelings and attitudes interact with objective features of the social situation to regulate the formulation and understanding of speech in actual verbal communication", according to Wang Dechun, et al. [10]. "The language user's perception of and willingness to use the context determines the speech choice". As a result, code-switching is influenced not just by social conventions, but also by the need of communicative partners to satisfy their own sense of subjectivity.

4.1.1 Awareness of Affinity

Humans are sociable animals with a strong urge to communicate and maintain contact with others. Everyone has an intrinsic need to meet new people, connect with them, get along with them, and form friendly and collaborative relationships. According to social psychology study on 'similarity attraction', those who have more similarities and fewer differences are more loved and socially accepted by others. As a result, when conversing, people will seek out areas of connection and exhibit affinity for one another. Social groups that speak a specific language, for example, have strong feelings for their mother tongue or dialect. Outside of this social group, the mother tongue or dialect is frequently the emotional tie that binds individuals and expresses their shared link. When a student learned that he was from his hometown while conversing with his teacher, he immediately changed to identify himself in his native language and spoke to this teacher in his native language. The purpose of this student's abrupt change in language code is to demonstrate his fondness for his teacher and to bring their attachment and relationship closer together.

4.1.2 Awareness of Achievement

The rule of nature dictates that the fittest will survive. Everyone wants to succeed in order to make the world a better place to live. The drive to compare oneself to others and to be like them is recognized by social psychology as a herd mentality (conformity). This is known as a sense of accomplishment, and it refers to people's drive to attain or demonstrate their accomplishment in social situations. This urge can also be satisfied by manipulating words. As a result, speakers will actively and consciously swap codes to demonstrate their skill when under the influence of a sense of accomplishment.

For example, when university students from rural areas return home during vacations, they may purposefully speak Mandarin rather than the local accent. This is because knowing Mandarin in rural China is a sign of being well-informed and educated. Despite the fact that this method may expand the emotional gap between the two parties and possibly produce resentment, it is objectively true. Furthermore, language has evolved into a powerful negotiating tool for persons seeking to adapt to modern society and better their status. A person who is fluent in two or more languages will appear to have a distinct advantage over others. It is typical to hear a combination of English and Chinese in everyday life, which is generally seen as a sign of 'hipness'. Of course, there are those that frequently switch codes when speaking to demonstrate their multilingualism. This is unfavorable, yet it represents the speaker's desire for approval, acknowledgement, and a sense of accomplishment and ability.

4.2 Motivation Subject to Social Rules

Human behavior has a social meaning in a certain communication context. In the circumstances of the situation, people will act according to social norms. People's choice of code-switching is not fully independent in the case of code-switching, and it can even be influenced by social contexts and social conventions [4]. People participate in code-switching for external reasons such as social rules. Social rules provide the extrinsic motive for code-switching.

4.2.1 Rules of Civility

In everyday life, 'politeness' has a moral or ethical connotation and is a code of conduct that everyone should follow. In 1985, Stella Ting-Toomey created the face-to-face negotiation theory. The hypothesis was created to better understand how people from various cultural backgrounds deal with relationships and conflicts [7]. According to the hypothesis, 'face', or one's self-image when interacting with others [7], is a universal phenomena that exists across civilizations. When a person's face is threatened during a fight, he or she will want to save or restore it. This set of communicative behaviors is known as 'face-saving', according to the theory. The theory presents a culturally generic framework to examine the negotiation of face engineering because people's attitudes regarding 'face' and the execution of 'facial engineering' differ across cultures. Essentially, politeness is a linguistic strategy to save face for all parties involved in a communication. People use code-switching tactics to prevent damaging the 'face' of both parties in a verbal exchange. In other words, the social rule of 'politeness' governs code-switching to some extent.

4.2.2 Rules of Cooperation

Cooperation is fundamental in any human endeavor, and interpersonal language activities are no exception. There is a tacit agreement between speaker and listener in all communication acts to achieve a certain purpose, a concept that both sides should obey called the Cooperative Principle. The Cooperative Principle and its principles are descriptive rather than prescriptive from a pragmatic standpoint. The goal of pragmatics is to discover why individuals do what they do rather than telling them how to follow these principles. In practice, however, people follow basic norms of collaboration in the course of conversation, whether consciously or subconsciously. In other words, people's communicative behavior is governed by the principle of collaboration in some way. Both sides to the debate are bound by particular modal principles while adhering to the idea of collaboration from the perspective of the discourse's subject. Both have a similar intellectual background and hence utilize different codes of discourse, but they are able to de-emphasize and simplify them, making communication between the two parties easier.

4.2.3 Rules of Power

Brown and Albert Gilman performed a survey in 1960 to learn more about the pronoun 'you' in five different languages. Participants were given a scenario in which they had to choose the right pronoun when speaking with people of various socioeconomic classes, levels of familiarity, and ages. Participants moved between pronouns to flatter the person they were speaking to, according to the findings. According to Brown and Gilman, there are two types of "you", one signifying a power dynamic and the other indicating a solidarity dynamic. To make it obvious and easy to comprehend, the pronoun for solidarity is referred to as 'T', and the pronoun for power is referred to as 'V'. T and V are used to suggest different relationships between interlocutors depending on age, social class, likeness, familiarity, respect, and emotional expressiveness [1]. On the basis of the foregoing, it can be argued that in actual language use, there is a 'concept of power' that reflects differences in social rank and status between speakers; and that this concept of power acts as an internalized social rule that governs the use of language between speakers and their choice of code.

5 Parental Advice Based on Code-switching

Language acquisition is essentially a bilingual process, with frequent code-switching, and it has substantial ramifications for both family communication and children's language development.

5.1 Parents Should Develop Their Own English Language Skills and Serve as Linguistic Role Models for Their Children

Although language impairments in parents are not a major influence in code-switching, they are nonetheless an important component of English language training that must not be overlooked. If parents have weak English skills, they will be unable to provide their

children with high-quality language input and may even affect their attitude to language education at home. In fact, children learn English by imitating their parents' speech or emotions, using them as language models, and their parents' language patterns can have a subtle impact on their offspring. Parents should continue to learn and gain experience in the practice of home language communication in order to determine the best approach to code-switch at home.

5.2 Switching Codes as Frequently as Possible to Prevent Infants from Establishing a Transitory Dependency on Their Mother Tongue

According to research on the motive for code-switching, one partner's code-switching usually influences the other's code-switching, and code-switching can also be used to attract attention, emphasize, and explain topics. As a result, it is critical that parents speak to their children in a foreign language during family interactions, as the language of communication has a significant psychological impact on the child. As much code-switching as possible should occur during communication so that the child can consciously or unconsciously mimic and adhere to it, and words that are swapped frequently over time become inherent to the child's language.

If the child is having trouble comprehending something, parents should not always utilize their mother tongue to communicate a solution. This is due to the fact that it will only cause the youngster to get reliant on the mother tongue. Slowing down, repeating expressions, paraphrasing with relatively simple words or sentence patterns, using some high-frequency conventional expressions, or using body language or sketches as a way of reducing the problem of comprehension difficulties due to expressions and allowing the child to focus more on the input of the target language than on the content of the expressions in the mother tongue are all options that parents can try to alleviate the problem of comprehension difficulties due to expressions.

5.3 Make Every Effort to Place Foreign Language Acquisition in Context and to Improve CHILDren's Sense of Language and Concepts

Context is important in the learning of a foreign language, and it is sometimes utilized to persuade youngsters to switch codes. It is critical to offer children with as many situations as possible when learning a foreign language so that objective variables can drive code-switching in young people. For example, at home or in the neighborhood, organize or participate in frequent foreign language corners. Children can only speak a foreign language if they are in a foreign language corner, but young individuals must begin with code-switching. Another suggestion is to watch more foreign language films and other audiovisual materials. Children can use audiovisual elements to help them understand language and language concepts, and they can use surface language perception to help them activate deeper semantic encoding.

6 Conclusion

In conclusion, the motivation for code-switching is driven by both social rules and the sense of the topic of the discourse as a linguistic and social phenomena in which human

beings are the subjects of practice; both impact each other and are important. It also demonstrates that studying the motive for code-switching is a difficult subject that can only be addressed in depth if the above-mentioned binary aspects are considered, and if multiple disciplines' answers are combined.

References

1. Brown, R. & Gilman, A., The pronouns of power and Solidarity. *Readings in the Sociology of Language*, pp.252–275.
2. Giles, H. & St.Clair, R., 1979. *Language and social psychology*, Oxford: Baril Blackwell, Cop.
3. Gumperz, J.J., 2002. *Discourse strategies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
4. Hudson, Richard, 1986. Sociolinguistics and the theory of grammar. *Linguistics*, 24(6).
5. Liu Zhengguang, J., 2000. *A philological study of code-switching*, Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research.
6. Myers-Scotton, C., 2017. Code-switching. *The Handbook of Sociolinguistics*, pp.217–237.
7. Oetzel, J.G. & Ting-Toomey, S., 2003. Face concerns in interpersonal conflict. *Communication Research*, 30(6), pp.599–624.
8. Poplack, S., 1978. *Syntactic structure and social function of code-switching*, New York: Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños City University of New York.
9. Verschueren, J., 2003. *Understanding pragmatics*, London: Arnold.
10. Wang Dechun, Sun Rujian & Yao Yuan, 2000. *Psychosocial linguistics*, Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, pp. 259.
11. Wardhaugh, R. & Fuller, J.M., 2021. *An introduction to sociolinguistics*, Wiley-Blackwell.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

