Hablo tres idiomas:
el español, el inglés y *Spanglish*.
Diego, un informante del studio

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Abstract

The current study analyzes the use of code-switching in the speech of 18 informants from the Tucson area, as recorded during interviews with various graduate students. All data was analyzed and coded for both bare-switches and string-switches. Each switch was further classified according to its discursive function (see Myers-Scotton 1993 and Zentella 1997). The results show that code-switching is influenced by multiple factors, most importantly, the bilingual abilities of speakers and their interlocutors as well as the degree of familiarity between the participants of each speech event. The author clarifies the regularities and rule-governed aspects of code-switching, and shows that the majority of code-switching occurs between speakers who consider themselves to be balanced bilinguals, a reflection of the fact that code-switching does not indicate a language deficit, but rather an increased sensitivity to the speech situation and the various functions of language itself.

Introduction

United States census information from 1990 – 2000 indicates that there was a 53% increase in the Hispanic population, bringing this minority sector to encompass 13% of the nation's total population. With an ever-increasing population of Spanish speakers in the United States, it is imperative to clarify the myths that surround this growing minority population. The current study attempts to further understand and clarify the use of what is commonly and often derogatorily referred to as Spanglish, better known in the linguistic field as code-switching. According to Keller, code-switching is often seen as "… a cipher that can only be decoded by those who are communally initiated" (1979: 284). As the majority of speakers in this country today remain monolingual, the myth of code-switching as a willy-nilly use of two languages persists (Valdés-Fallis, 1976). Toribio states that even in recent years, "…some Latinos are precluded from code-switching by their acceptance and internalization of the stigma

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attached to the behavior…" (2002: 155).

Code-switching, in reality, is neither willy-nilly nor cryptic; rather, it is reflective of the bilingual and bicultural reality in which many individuals live. Its use is not merely a question of linguistic options, but also one of identity. Thus, the ability to combine two or more languages into a coherent unit is simply an expression of the ability to make the most appropriate linguistic choice, given the systems one has available. As Zentella states, Code-switching is "…a very commonly occurring speech style in many multilingual societies" (1997: 1). Just as monolingual speakers shift styles to more appropriately accommodate the speech situation in which they might find themselves, so too bilingual speakers shift both styles and languages in accordance with each speech situation they encounter. In fact, according to Bell, "…at all levels of language variability, people are responding primarily to other people" (1984: 197).

Zentella states that "Research on Spanish-English code switching has established its rule-governed nature but the methodology has been disparate, with little unity between qualitative and quantitative approaches (1997: 5). The present study attempts to make a first step towards bridging the gap between these two types of research. Both quantitative and qualitative research are imperative to furthering our understanding not only of code-switching, but of a multitude of linguistic phenomena. The current study clarifies the structured nature of code-switching, in the hopes of shedding light on the fact that it is not only a normal type of speech, but also a necessary and appropriate speech choice, given the specific context of any given speech event.

Theoretical Framework

Code-switching has been defined by numerous researchers in various fields. At present, there is no consensus on a single definition for code-switching itself. Perhaps the multi-faceted nature of code-switching, coupled with the diverse number of disciplines which investigate it have made a single definition all but impossible. The current study follows Myers-Scotton's definition of code-switching as "…the use of two or more languages in the same conversation, usually within the same conversational turn, or even within the same sentence of that turn" (1993: vii). Code-switching is typically further subdivided into two types: inter-sentential and intra-sentential. The present study refers to intra-sentential code-switching as a bare-switch, more appropriately further described as a switch which affects a one to three word constituent1 within a single utterance. Inter-sentential switching is referred to as a string-switch, or a switch which affects a series of words. The present study further classifies both types of switches in accordance with Zentella's discursive strategies code-switching classification (1997). Though some researchers further differentiate code-switching from borrowing, the current study does not address the issue; "while what is gained by distinguishing code-switching and borrowing is an issue in discussions of the structural constraints on code-switching, this subject is not relevant to the argument here" (Myers-Scotton 1993: 6).

As mentioned earlier, Zentella's code-switching classifications are imperative to the present study, as her framework guides both the analysis and understanding of the code-switches observed in the data. According to Zentella's data and her subsequent grammar of Spanglish, the majority of code switches occur at the sentence and noun levels (1997: 117). Zentella further proposes that not only is the grammatical nature of the switch important, but even more important are the potential discursive functions of each switch. She found that an overwhelming majority of switches fall within three discursive strategies: footing, clarification and crutching. Footing involves realignments of conversational structure in the form of topic shifts, quotations, statement/question shifts, role shifts and rhetorical shifts. Clarification strategies are composed predominantly of translations, and crutching involves such ideas as a momentary forgetting of a word or what Zentella calls recycling, perhaps best described as a grammatical repair. In fact, the current study concurs with Zentella's 1997 findings, and employs some of the further subdivisions found within her work to more adeptly detail the strategies observed in the data.

An additional concept of interest, introduced by Valdés (1997) is the idea of the bilingual continuum (as cited in Lynch 2003). According to Valdés and Figueroa, "There is no exact set of procedures that can be used to determine how bilingual an individual is across a broad range of contexts and settings…" (as cited in Lynch 2003: 34). Therefore, Valdés (1997) proposes a continuum of bilingualism, suggesting eight types of bilinguals who range from virtually monolingual in Spanish with limited English competence (or vice-versa) to fairly balanced bilinguals in both Spanish and English, whose individual language abilities reflect both the context of learning and living (as cited in Carreira 2003: 53). The idea of the bilingual continuum has been adapted to fit the limited population of the present study, and will be discussed in depth later.

Lastly, Bell's Audience Design Model (1984) is also employed to account for the variation in use of code-switching observed between the speakers. According to Bell's model, "Style is essentially speakers' response to their audience" (145). Bell states that when making decisions, speakers respond primarily to the following three issues, all of which reflect some aspect of their interlocutor:

- The personal characteristics of their addressee
- The general style of their addressee's speech
- The addressee's level for specific linguistic variables (161).

Even children as young as those studied by Zentella take into account the linguistic proficiencies of their audience before considering any other variables. Furthermore, Bell's Audience Design Model "…assumes that persons respond mainly to other persons," and this in fact seems to be the case yet again in the current study (1984: 159). Though some dispute the use of code-switching as a style shift, Bell himself addresses this issue in his 1984 seminal paper: "…the processes which make a monolingual shift styles are the same as those which

make a bilingual shift languages" (245). Both Bell and Fishman agree that, "…language switching is overwhelmingly influenced by who the addressee is" (Fishman as cited in Bell, 1984: 175). In fact, a majority of previous studies support the idea that in code-switching as style-shifting, "language choice could be attributed almost entirely to interlocutors, and minimally to topic or setting" (Bell 1984: 180). As Bell notes, the bilingual situation offers researchers a clearer view of style-shifting, thereby providing a potential opportunity to clarify some of the confounding variables involved in style-shifting itself (1984).

Research Questions

The current study was guided by the following research questions. Both a quantitative and a qualitative analysis of the data was undertaken in order to better understand the code-switches observed within the data set. The following questions are based on a functionalist perspective and analyze the observed switches in terms of speaker and listener proficiencies, as well as discursive functions of switches. Each of the following questions will be treated in depth in the results and discussion section.

1. Does a wider variety of code-switching (both bare switches and string-switches) occur in the speech of balanced bilinguals as opposed to the code-switching observed in the speech of bilinguals who are dominant in either Spanish or English?
2. What are the most common discursive functions of code-switching? And do those discursive functions differ between bare switches and string switches?
3. Does the addressee's status and linguistic proficiency affect the use and type of code-switching observed?

Method

18 native speakers of Tucson Spanish were interviewed by 9 graduate students. Two types of interviews were conducted: (a) interview between graduate student and native speaker or (b) interviewer and two native speakers of Tucson Spanish interviewed simultaneously. Each interview lasted between 30 minutes and one hour and 30 minutes, depending on the type of interview conducted. Each interview was recorded on an audiocassette and transcribed by the individual interviewer, resulting in nine distinct transcribers. The current study only analyzes the data of those interviewed. The data from the interviewers is disregarded, *unless* it triggers a code-switch on the part of one of the interviewees.

Participants

The participants included 9 male and 9 female speakers of Tucson Spanish of various ages and socio-economic levels. Of more interest to the present study is the degree of bilingualism of each speaker, along with their relationship to their individual interlocutor. A question regarding language preferences and abilities was raised in each of the interviews; thus, what follows is a self-

estimation of each participant's abilities in both Spanish and English. Additionally, each interviewer reported on each participant's language preferences. In every case, there was consensus with the self-description. Table 1 is based on this data.

	Monolingual: Spanish	Dominant: Spanish	Bilingual	Dominant: English
Male	2	3	1	3
Female	2	0	5	2

Table 1: Continuum of Bilingualism

Additionally, each interviewer reported on the relationship he/she possessed with the interviewee. That data was also tabulated into Table 2 below.

Friends	Acquaintances[1]	Student/Teacher[2]	First Meeting
4	6	4	4

Table 2: Relationship between interviewer and interviewee

Both of these tables will be relevant to the discussion of the data that is to follow.

Data Analysis & Coding

Data was analyzed for bare-switches and string-switches. Bare-switches were divided into the following categories: (1a) noun (sale en el *caller ID*), (1b) adjective (en la casa *bilingual*), (1c) verb (nunca tuve problema *fitting in)*, (1d) conjunction (maybe you shouldn't get on it, *pero* nonetheless it), preposition, and adverb. Additionally, each switch was analyzed according to its discursive function, as outlined in Zentella (1997). String- switches were analyzed according to their discursive function and categorized into the following distinct categories: (3a) topic shift (qué interesante. *I have a book of my great uncle*), (3b) direct or indirect quote (he was covering for it. *Y el dijo frente a todos*), (3c) translation (he was a former wrestler he was a former *lucha libre*), (3d) declarative à question shift (¿cómo le puedo explicar? *Just a little kinda*), (3e) aside to check with listener (por allá, *right Kathy?* Pero Uds.), (3f) seeking approval or opinion (Mira *and you're like, huh? Ya' know*), (3g) role-shift (y luego se le olvida. *Don't mix 'em up*), (3h) rhetorical ask & answer (ie: You know what they do? Los agarran y), (3i) narrative frame —includes speaker's comments on own speech (ie: asi *practically it was horrible),* (3j) appositives (todo este territorio nos tocó, *that was my backyard*. Siempre…) The possibility of a trigger was also analyzed, though not enough data were recorded in this category to make a quantitative analysis relevant. Finally, the relationship between speakers and their respective proficiency levels were also analyzed, as presented in Tables 1 and 2. (For complete data coding, please see Appendix A.).

In conducting my analysis, I follow Zentella (1997:120) in using percentages due in part to the over-lapping, interactive nature of code-switching and the inability of researchers to identify

where potential switches can or cannot occur (see also Silva-Corvalán 2001). Additionally, according to Myers-Scotton, "…code choices fall along a continuum as more or less marked" (1993: 82); therefore, not only are researches faced with the question of whether or not a switch is possible, but one also must consider the probability of such a switch. Though the confounding nature of the data prevents a strict statistical analysis, the results that follow remain pertinent to furthering our understanding of code-switching.

Results and Discussion

The majority of switches observed in the data fall into the category of bare-switches. 238 of the 362 switches observed were bare-switches (66%), with the majority of these switches affecting nouns (200/238 = 84%).
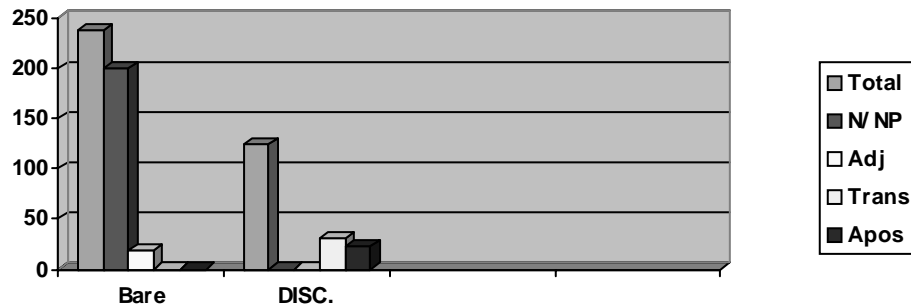
Table 3: Bare switches vs. String switches

It should also be noted that of the 124 string switches which occurred, 99 (or 80%) came from one particular interview. Clearly, this skewed the data to a significant degree. Without the data from that particular interview, the data would reflect a much clearer preference for bare-switches.
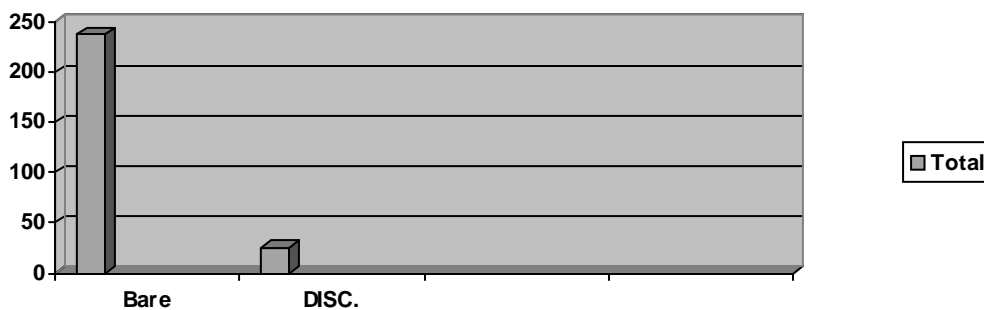
Table 4: Bare switches vs. String Switches (excluding skewed interview)

An analysis of bare-switches shows the overwhelming majority of switches at this level affected bare nouns or complex nouns, as can be seen in Table 5.
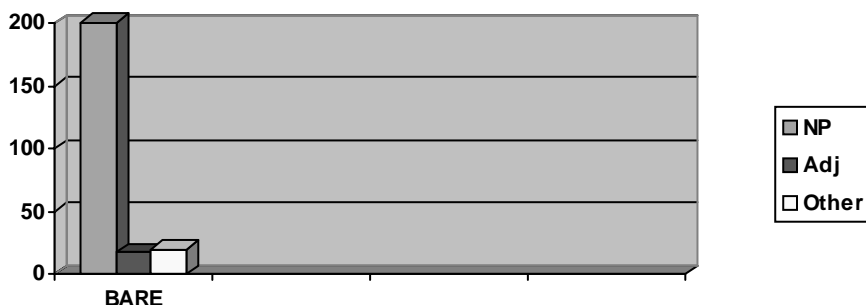

Table 5: Bare-switch types

It was difficult to determine the discursive function of each bare-switch, as multiple functions seemed possible in many instances. As Zentella states, "Pinpointing the purpose for each code-switch is a task as fraught with difficulty as imputing the reasons for a monolingual's choice of one synonym over another, and no complete account may ever be possible" (1997: 99). However, the functions observed at the string level were more clearly delineated, thus allowing a further analysis based on the discursive function of each string-level switch. The results of this analysis can be seen in Table 6.
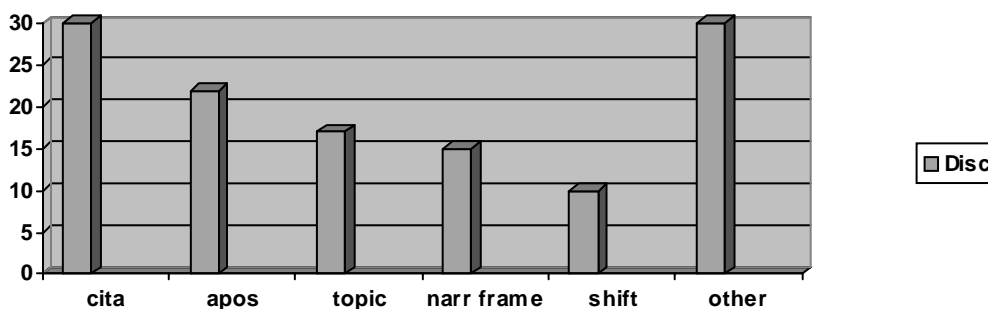

Table 6: Discursive Function of String Switches[4]

My data concurs with that of Zentella's. String switches were used primarily to account for direct and indirect quotes (30/124 or 24%) as well as for topic shifts (17/124 or 14%). In fact, as Milroy and Gordon point out, "code alternation provides a contrast – effectively a boundary – between the reported speech and the surrounding discourse" (2003: 219); this provides a nice

account as to why the majority of switches functioned in the discursive capacity of quoting. Though Zentella found translation to play an important function in the code-switches she observed, this was not found to be the case in the current data set. This can be explained by the distinct nature of the two data sets. Zentella's data is based on the natural speech of young children, whose primary function in the home was often to translate both for and between adult speakers. The current data set, on the other hand, analyzes interview-setting speech, where much less translation resulted, perhaps due to the high level of bilingualism that existed on the part of both interviewers and interviewees. In the current data set, appositives (22 of 124 or 18%) were found to be more frequent, as well as narrative frame shifts (15/124 or 12%) and role-shifts (10/124 or 8%). Each of the other categories analyzed contained less than ten tokens, and were therefore grouped together, under the heading of *other*.

Additionally, data was also analyzed according to the level of bilingualism of the individual who performed the switch. These results again concur with previous research.
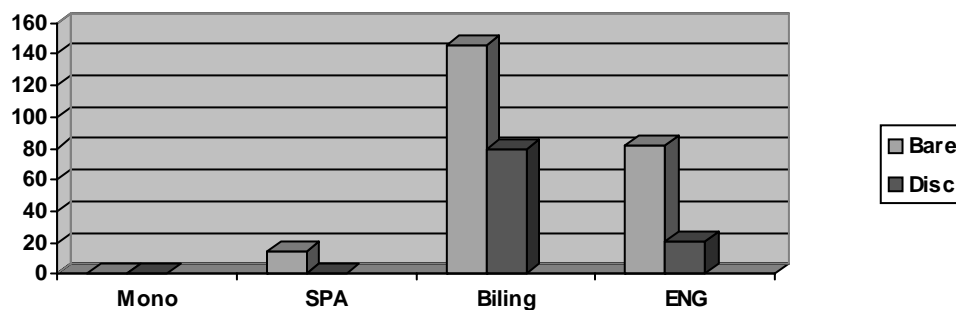

Table 7: Code-switching and level of bilingualism

(Mono=monolingual Spanish speaker, SPA = Spanish dominant bilingual, Biling = Balanced bilingual and ENG = English dominant bilingual)

The majority of code-switches were employed by speakers who considered themselves to be balanced bilinguals. Additionally, it should be noted that the monolingual speakers of Spanish did not employ any code-switching at all; again, this is not surprising. The English dominant speakers also used a high degree of code-switches, the majority of which occurred at the bare-switch level.

Finally, it is hypothesized that the low amount of code-switching accounted for by the Spanish dominant speakers was most likely a result of the task type. All interviews were conducted with the intent of eliciting Spanish, and interviewees were told prior to the start of the interview that the researchers were interested in the language and culture of Tucson Spanish. If we employ Myers-Scotton's Matrix Model (1993), the unmarked choice for these particular interviews would

be Spanish, while the marked choice would be English. This accounts for the asymmetrical style code-switching that was observed; where the vast majority of the switches shifted from Spanish into English. Therefore, few code-switches resulted for those speakers whose dominant language was Spanish. These speakers merely accommodated to their interviewers' request by maintaining conversation in Spanish.

Additionally, familiarity also played a strong role in influencing both type and quantity of code-switching observed. The one particular interview (mentioned earlier as having significantly skewed the data) resulted in an extremely informal setting, as all three of the people present, both interviewer and interviewees were good friends who typically spoke to one another in English. Thus, an interview in Spanish was a bit artificial for this particular group and the three frequently switched into English, which seemed to be their default setting for large chunks of language at a time. This resulted in an unusually high quantity of string-level switches. 99 of the 124 of string-level switches (80%) occurred during this interview. Additionally a relatively high number of bare-switches also resulted; 62 of the 238 bare-switches that were recorded occurred during this interview, accounting for 26% of the total data observed. This is clearly a disproportionate amount if one considers that an equal division of code-switching among interviews would yield 5% of code-switches per interview. The high degree of familiarity between participants clearly acted in a conducive fashion, allowing a much greater amount of code-switching, as compared to the other interviews. This concurs with a majority of previous research on code-switching that states that code-switching is much more probable between friends, while simultaneously upholding Bell's ideas that speakers choose a speech style appropriate for their respective interlocutors.

As level of familiarity between participants decreased, amount of code-switching also decreased, in some cases resulting in no code-switching at all between people who had never previously met before or were not more than mere acquaintances. This concurs with Myers-Scotton's (1993) notion that code-switching is even less likely between speakers of different status levels, as well as between strangers, perhaps in part because these individuals are less aware of each other's linguistic repertoires as Bell (1984) points out. This notion comes into play as well in the data of the four participants who were students of their respective interviewers. Though code-switching did occur between students and teachers; oftentimes, these asymmetric relationships resulted in a type of linguistic insecurity which prompted what Zentella terms "crutching" or code-switching which is employed during a momentary lag in word retrieval. In the present data set, such instances were identified by rising intonation or the use of "*Como se dice*". All 11 instances of crutching were recorded in interviews between teachers and students; this particular type of code-switching did not occur at all in the rest of the data set. Clearly not only degree of familiarity but also status plays a role in effecting both type and quantity of code-switching produced.

Qualitative Analysis: Metalinguistic Talk about Code-switching in the Transcripts

Lastly, and on a more qualitative note, the topic of code-switching, or Spanglish, as it was popularly referred to in the interviews, was discussed by nearly all of the interviewees. Their feelings regarding this practice offer further insight into the nature of code-switching and the stigmas which are often attached to it. According to the male interviewee who produced the highest number of code-switches of all the participants, code-switching "Es parte de la cultura de una frontera." (*Is part of border culture*)5. This is the same participant who stated "Hablo tres idiomas: el español el inglés y *Spanglish." (I speak three language, Spanish, English and Spanglish*). This generally positive attitude toward code-switching has "…gained an increasingly affirmative, symbolic status amongst many young Chicanos" (Gumperz as cited in Williams 2000: 2).Though this particular participant seemed to have quite positive views about code-switching, he was adamant that he did not teach his children to speak *Spanglish*. At this point in the interview, however, his wife interjected and said that he often addresses the children using a mix of the two languages. Despite his positive attitude, this person is clearly struggling with the stigmas attached to code-switching, a feeling that is reiterated frequently in the metalinguistic talk that follows in the other interviews.

Indeed, the rest of the participants shared a more negative view of the phenomenon. When another participant was asked whether or not he liked code-switching, his response was a firm "para nada" (*not at all*). Another participant stated even more vehemently "le odio al español del del allí en la frontera, porque se oye tan feo a mí" (*I hate borderland Spanish, it sounds ugly to me*). Yet despite all of these negative attitudes, the feeling that language and its use is inextricably tied to one's identity remains. Yet another participant stated, "No se puede forzar un idioma, y no se puede, el idioma es…es en realidad lo hace la persona que lo habla" (*You can't force a language, you just can't, language is in reality made by the person who speaks it*). Language is a continuous creation of one's self and its inextricable link to identity is what makes a further understanding of code-switching so imperative. Code-switching is by nature indexical, and its "…indexicality derives from the fact that the different linguistic varieties in a community's repertoire are linked with particular types of relationships" (Myers-Scotton 1993: 85). These speakers' intuitions reflect the fact that language and identity are inextricably connected.

Conclusions

It is interesting to observe that despite the fact that the current data was obtained under the restrictive condition of a formal interview, the results do in fact concur with those of previous studies. The majority of the code-switches observed occurred at the bare-switch level. Nouns remained most susceptible to switches, followed by switches affecting strings of words. Despite popular misconception, code-switching as observed in the current data set clearly does not reflect a linguistic deficiency, but rather is employed solely by speakers who possess a high degree of competency in the languages participating in the switch. This concurs with the findings of many

researchers, including Myers-Scotton that "…the majority of speakers engaging in such code-switching are relatively proficient in all languages involved "(1993: 119). In fact, code-switching was rarely employed in cases where the participant did not know the word or string of words used in the other language; rather, it served a variety of discursive functions; in fact, "code-switching is used to convey intentional (i.e. non-code based) meanings of a socio-pragmatic nature" (Myers-Scotton 1993: vii). The data concur with Zentella's statement that "The potency of code-switched discourse is enhanced by the multiple readings that many switches suggest, freeing the speaker and hearer to co-construct their interpretations in ways appropriate to each exchange" (1997: 99). The multiplex nature of code-switching, coupled with the numerous factors which are reflected by its use make a strictly statistical analysis of the data all but impossible. Yet the results observed remain important in elucidating the regular nature of code-switching. Despite the restricted mode of elicitation, the code-switching produced replicates that of previous studies. The same factors continue to affect its use, the most important of those being, degree of familiarity and degree of bilingualism. Clearly the conclusions of the present study are, by necessity, tentative in nature. All interviews were conducted by community outsiders, and the code-switching observed in the data of the interviews may not reflect the "normal" code-switching employed in everyday life. As Zentella states, "It is important to reiterate that the Spanish elicited under constrained conditions does not provide an accurate picture of speakers communicative competence in their daily lives" (1997: 210). Nevertheless, the data clearly reflects the idea that "…English-Spanish code-switching is a creative style of bilingual communication that accomplishes important cultural and conversational work" (Zentella, 1997: 113). Code-switching is a normal dimension of speech within any bilingual or multilingual community. In addition to various syntactic rules, code-switching also evokes a multitude of discursive functions. Code-switching serves not only as a conversational style and topic shifter, but also as a mark of identity for those individuals who employ it.

Appendix A: FACTOR GROUPS

Bare-switches (1)
(according to grammatical function)
1a = noun or NP (sale en el *caller ID*)
1b = Adjective (en la casa *bilingual*)
1c = verb or VP (nunca tuve problema *fitting in)*
1d = conjunction, preposition, adverb
(maybe you shouldn't get on it, *pero* nonetheless it)
1e = discourse marker (estudiar en la universidad *so* pues ya de)
1f = exclamation (muy muy alto *shit* y lo hice)

Noun Type (0)
    0a = established, cultural (voy al *mall*)
    0b = cultural (la *middle school, high school*)
0c = non-cultural (es el *bilingual*)

Discourse Function of Bare Switches (2)

2a = translation (y juega fútbol. *Soccer* con mucho frío)

2b = none noted

2c = direct quote (en vez de *wicked)*

2d = needs word (uses ¿cómo se dice? Or rising intonation as indicated by ?)

2e = discourse marker (estudiar en la universidad *so* pues ya de)

2f = exclamation (muy muy alto *shit* y lo hice)

Relationship between speakers (5)   Proficiency Level (6)

5a = desconocidos   6a = Spanish dominant

5b = acquaintances   6b = English dominant

5c = friends   6c = Bilingual

5d = student/ teacher   6d = Spanish Monolingual

Discourse level switches/ strings (3)

3a = topic shift (qué interesante. I have a book of my great uncle)

3b = direct or indirect quote (he was covering for it. *Y el dijo frente a todos*)

3c = translation (he was a former wrestler he was a former *lucha libre*)

3d = declarative à ? shift (como le puedo explicar? *Just a little kinda*)

3e = aside to check with listener (por alla, *right Kathy?* Pero Uds.)

3f = seeks approval or opinion (Mira *and you're like, huh? Ya' know*)

3g = shift role (y luego se le olvida. *Don't mix 'em up*)

3h = rhetorical ask & answer (0)

(ie: You know what they do? Los agarran y)

3i = narrative frame (includes speaker's comments on own speech)

(ie: asi *practically it was horrible)*

3j= appositives (todo este territorio nos tocó, *that was my backyard*. Siempre…)

Trigger (4)

4a = triggered by loan word/switch

(y un ejemplo hicieron un <u>census</u> my junior year)

4b = not triggered

4c = triggered by a person (parallelism)

[(a) Mi mama se acostumbra hablar puro *Spanish* tambien(d) *Spanish* tambien]

4d = triggered by a taboo word (none observed)

4e = triggered by a proper name

(oye cuando va sonar la bell, <u>Mr Bell</u>, that was the thing)

Notes:

1 Most switches at this level affected just one word; however, some did affect complex nouns, which resulted in constituents of more than one word

2 Met at least once previously, no established communication

3 In all cases, the interviewer was the teacher and the interviewee the student

4 cita = direct or indirect quote, apos = appositive and narr frame = narrative frame, shift = role shift

5 This translation, along with all those that follow represent the researcher's translation.

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