Codeswitching Worldwide II
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Introduction

Rodolfo Jacobson

The advancement, over the last four years, in the field of codeswitching has suggested that a follow-up volume of the Editor's *Codeswitching Worldwide* (Mouton de Gruyter, 1998) is in order and that the present publication of *Codeswitching Worldwide II* will allow the interested reader to realize to what extent scholars have come to grips with the alternation between two languages as an ordered phenomenon of language use. The core of the studies included in this volume consists again of papers that were delivered at the *World Congress of Sociology*, the fourteenth congress held in 1998 at the University of Montreal in Canada. In addition to the papers selected, a few additional papers have here been incorporated as they closely relate to the very topics discussed at the session *Languages, codes and codeswitching*, chaired by the Editor of the present volume. The international focus has once more been one of the major goals in our selection and the authors hailing from six different countries are discussing bilingual language use in over a dozen of different settings in such diverse areas as France (including Alsace), Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Russia, Central and South Africa, Spain, and Turkey. The volume has been subdivided into five main sections, Section 1: Theoretical issues revisited, Section 2: Linguistic aspects: from morphosyntax to semantics, Section 3: Codeswitching as oral and/or written strategy, Section 4: Emergence of new ethnicities and Section 5: Communication codes in education. These sections are followed by a general bibliography compiled from the individual references supplied by each author and by a well-organized index to assist the reader in locating the terms and topics that relate to the various chapters. The objective of the present introduction is to highlight some of the issues discussed in the chapters that follow.
The volume starts out with a contribution from Carol Myers-Scotton entitled *The matrix language frame model: developments and responses*. The inclusion of Myers-Scotton's study in this volume is in no way accidental as her research in the field of codeswitching has been remarkable in the sense that her work has raised the theoretical level of investigation to a new higher plane. The placement of her chapter at the beginning of this anthology is then intended to set the framework of what *codeswitching* means in the eyes of sociolinguistic scholars today. Her chapter is quite unique in that she takes a step backward to reexamine, as if an outsider, her own findings over the years and tries to deal - in a most scholarly way - with some of the issues or critiques of her work that colleagues in the field have raised in their books, articles or even personal conversations. Finally, she advances as a bonus some thoughts on the refinement of her Matrix language frame model, a new model that she calls the 4-M model.

In the introductory part of her chapter, Myers-Scotton defines the two basic hierarchies of classical codeswitching, the *Matrix language vs. embedded language opposition* and the *Content morpheme vs. system morpheme opposition*, and refers then to some more recent elaborations on these hierarchies in publications by herself or in collaboration with Janice Jake. Thereafter, Myers-Scotton elaborates on the findings reported in each of these publications. Later in this chapter, she explores the notion of *congruence checking* which goes beyond her earlier *blocking hypothesis*. Congruence, she alleges, is apparent at the level of abstract entries in the mental lexicon known as *lemmas* and each lemma must be checked for congruence at various abstract levels. In one of her subsections, Myers-Scotton discusses several compromise strategies, two of which are *embedded language islands* and *bare forms*, strategies that she illustrates with examples from Swahili-English. She then elaborates on how the original Matrix language frame model has been modified. Several parts of that model had in fact been clarified in the revised edition of *Duelling languages*, certain claims revised and the notion of Composite matrix language introduced. Myers-Scotton ties the model to the abstract level of linguistic competence, thus showing her indebtedness to Chomskyan postulates. Most important, however, is another subsection in which the author clarifies that her unit of analysis is neither the
sentence nor the clause but the *Projection of complementizer*, for short CP. Myers-Scotton then shows how a CP may qualify as a bilingual unit and the reader will realize that “a bilingual CP contains minimally a mixed constituent or at least one embedded language island”. The notion of classic codeswitching becomes clearer when Myers-Scotton compares it to composite matrix language where the latter allows for a degree of convergence toward either the matrix or the embedded language. The very notion of matrix language becomes significant when Myers-Scotton specifies its nature as an abstract frame rather than an actual language event. In other words, matrix language exists only as a morpho-syntactic abstraction. Here she detracts herself from her earlier conception to identify the matrix on the basis of frequency metric alone. The new attempt of subcategorizing system morphemes now leads Myers-Scotton to describe in the newly conceived 4-M model, a four-way distinction that preserves the content vs. system morpheme opposition but subdivides the system morpheme category into three types: early system morphemes, bridge late system morphemes and outsider late system morphemes. In other words, one is here dealing with two different levels of morphemes, one that distinguishes between content and system morphemes and another that subcategorizes system morphemes into three different types as seen in the following diagram:

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Content   -   System
         /     \
    Early  Bridge late  Outsider late
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This subdivision of system morphemes, Myers-Scotton argues, “allows for a fuller explanation of why certain types of congruence problems arise in codeswitching”. It is in particular here that Myers-Scotton returns to the issues or critiques referred to above in order to show how some queries by sociolinguistic scholars can be satisfied on the basis of a subcategorization of system morphemes. In fact, she takes great pains to respond to the various arguments of experts like Bentahila–Davies, Poplack, and Boumans and seems to settle the issues raised quite satisfactorily. On the other hand, it should be interesting to learn to what extent the objections of these scholars have now been acquiesced or
mitigated. In the final portion of the chapter where she discusses the composite matrix language, Myers-Scotton attempts to clarify further how the abstract lexical structure from more than one variety is involved in building the frame and how these levels of structure can actually be split and recombined. In summary, the discussions in this chapter are highly informative elaborations on the status of today's codeswitching theories and it is particularly gratifying how Carol Myers-Scotton addresses the issues raised by some of the colleagues in the field and refines the model that may solve several legitimate concerns on how to analyze the global phenomenon of code alternation.

Compared to Myers-Scotton, who covers her research and that of her associates during almost two decades, the following chapter is of a more limited scope. Rodolfo Jacobson, who is also Editor of the present volume, basically addresses one single issue alone, that of whether, in addition to matrix-embedded language constructs, one can also make a case for another type of codeswitching strategy. Jacobson's study entitled Language alternation: the third kind of codeswitching mechanism is included in this section because of his concern for theoretical issues, even though his approach to codeswitching stresses to a large degree its pragmatic nature and its sociocultural significance. In his introduction, Jacobson refers to a number of studies, his own as well as those of others, that point to the fact that the two participating languages in bilingual discourse may at times play equal roles in the unfolding of the message rather than functioning in a superordinate-subordinate relationship and supports this assertion with codeswitching data from English-Spanish and English-Malay discourse. Jacobson then suggests that data of this sort give credence to the fact that the so-demonstrated notion of equality actually points to a third kind of codeswitching mechanism, one that he calls with Bentahila-Davies language alternation. On the other hand, Jacobson does recognize the fact that the most common type of switching is "one in which one language occupies a dominant position and the other is subordinated to the former". He cites to this effect additional examples from English-Spanish and English-Malay and reminds the reader that he had suggested – as early as in 1983 – a crude form of frame analysis where an imaginary frame would allow chunks of the dominating language [matrix] joined by chunks of a subordinated
language [embedding] be embedded in such a frame. Since Myers-Scotton conceptualized at a later time her *Matrix language frame model*, Jacobson emphasizes some of the differences between these two conceptualizations, in particular the fact that he uses the actual sentence as unit of analysis, whereas Myers-Scotton uses the CP, that is, the projection of complementizer. Another difference can be seen in the fact that in Myers-Scotton’s view only *two* mechanisms can operate, whereas for Jacobson there are *three* of them. In this context, Jacobson makes ample reference to the work of Abdelâli Bentahila and Eyrlis Davies when he continues to stress the importance of the kind of codeswitching that reveals equal relationship between the two participating languages. Later, he reports on his own research in Malaysia and cites various English-Malay utterances that he alleges are valid examples of language alternation. The criteria to identify language alternation used by Bentahila–Davies are subsequently expanded and concrete steps are suggested that would identify some bilingual discourse as such. The sociocultural implications of finding instances of language alternation are then discussed and Jacobson offers a panoramic view of Malaysia’s language situation. Although the cited country had ruled, at the time of its independence, that *Bahasa Malaysia* would be the national language, English, the language of its colonial predecessor, is still present in many language events. Jacobson argues therefore that language alternation might be a feasible way of allowing both languages to co-exist as, in this language mixing strategy, Malay would never occupy a subordinate position in regard to English. A subordination of the Malay language would certainly run counter to the political demands of this independent nation.

Section Two focuses more directly on the linguistic aspects of language contact. Its four chapters encompass such diverse issues as morphosyntactic change from a historical perspective, switchability of items at the synchronic level, lexical innovations as a result of cultural thrust, and the role of semantic specificity in the adoption of host language lexemes by a migrant population. More specifically, Jeanine Treffer-Daller argues in her chapter entitled *Contrastive linguistics: Borrowed and codeswitched participles in Romance-Germanic language contact* that her contribution arises from “a comparison of the linguistic
consequences of language contact between the Germanic and Romance language varieties" spoken along the linguistic frontier. She touches upon a vital argument that, before her, had already been considered by Muysken, namely whether the patterns observed are due to structural differences between the languages or are merely the result of a series of sociolinguistic factors and characteristics of interlocutors. Treffers-Daller then points to the limitation of actual typological differences between the Romance and Germanic varieties but still recognizes the impact of such sociolinguistic variables as the amount of support for a given variety and the general attitude toward these variables. Treffers-Daller roughly bases her study on a language contact model developed by Thomason and Kaufman, model that she considers a powerful tool for describing contact differences. However, she finds two exceptions to the similarities of otherwise parallel situations, those of Brussels and Strasbourg. In describing these situations, she deviates to some extent from the general focus of this volume, which is codeswitching, and proceeds to describe one single grammatical characteristic that has resulted from the borrowing patterns of the speakers of French and of two Germanic varieties (Dutch and Alsatian) in the formation of past participles. The nature of this Romance-Germanic merger in single words is however close enough to the codeswitching process as to allow the inclusion of her study in the present volume. At the beginning of the chapter, Treffers-Daller provides some basic notions on borrowing and interference through shift here drawing on the earlier work of Weinreich as well as the more recent elaborations by Thomason and Kaufman. Her definitions of these two types of externally motivated language change help the reader conceptualize her arguments and it is, in particular, the discussion of the five levels of Thomason and Kaufman's interference scale that clearly shows how shift can be measured quantitatively. Treffers-Daller then applies the model to data from her and Gardner-Chloros' database and formulates three hypotheses that lead her to conclude that the data from Brussels and Strasbourg may not lend support to the claim that "the sociolinguistic history of the speakers is the primary determinant of the linguistic outcome of language contact". It is the structure of the languages that plays the more important role, argument that she corroborates with findings from Brussels Dutch and Alsatian, even though she restricts
these to the formation of the past participles that show different integration strategies, some having integrated and others, unintegrated forms.

In the following chapter entitled *Functional categories and codeswitching in Japanese/English*, Shoji Azuma takes the reader to consider, within the context of universal grammar, what is switchable in human languages. Although he considers this issue from the vantage point of Japanese–English codeswitching, he hopes that his findings can be generalized to apply to all codeswitching events. The *Principles and parameters* approach on which his study is based is defined in the introductory part of the chapter and a functional parametrization hypothesis is subsequently framed in order to then formulate the constraint that *closed class items* cannot be switched. The switching of *open class items*, Azuma alleges, is widely illustrated in the literature and the dichotomy between these two classes can be related to some recent discussions by Chomsky on lexical vs. functional categories. He then argues with Fukui that only functional, that is, [+F] elements are subject to parametric variation. Azuma elaborates on this point that according to the suggested hypothesis “if an element has the feature [+F], then it is parameterized for its specific language and (it) is not interchangeable”. If this hypothesis proves valid, then only [-F] elements in the lexicon can participate in codeswitching. In the main part of this chapter, Azuma discusses the switchability in Japanese of the four non-functional elements of the lexicon, noun (N), verb (V), adjective (A) and pre/postposition (P). N is recognized as the single most commonly switched element but V, A and P require extensive discussion in order to determine under what circumstances switching becomes viable. Then, Azuma turns his attention to the functional categories agreement (AGR), tense (T), determiner (D), and complement (C) and demonstrates that neither T nor C switches have ever been accounted for and that AGR and D, both absent from the Japanese language, cannot even be investigated. One isolated example of D (determiner) insertion however seems to suggest that D may be less resistant to codeswitching. At the end of the chapter, Azuma provides the reader with Fukui’s feature specification of functional categories which shows [+N] to be specified for both AGR and D, a fact that may explain a slight potential for switchability.
The following chapter takes the reader back to the European continent, not to Treffers-Daller’s Romance-Germanic borderland but to the eastern frontier. Olga S. Parfenova acquaints the reader in her chapter entitled *Linguostatistic study of Bulgarian in Ukraine* with a comprehensive picture of the survival of the Bulgarian language in the Ukraine and the area of the Sea of Azov. The language has undergone there a great deal of relexification as a result of the strong Russian influence, mainly during the communist era. Parfenova makes an interesting distinction between *discourse mode* and *discourse strategy* where the former reflects the nature of intra-ethnic communication alone. However, she points to the difficulty of determining the extent to which borrowings from Russian occur as the close genetic relationship between the two languages often obscures the difference between varieties. Parfenova provides then a careful description of the background of the language situation of the area in order for the reader to capture the relationship between language and ethnicity. The following discussions deal with the description of data and methodology where she specifies four types of text units on the basis of Gerov’s Bulgarian word level data. Her overall approach of analysis follows the linguostatistic model and Parfenova takes pains to describe how the idiolectal and sociolectal data have actually been collected. The quantitative characteristics of Russian words in Bulgarian speech is given in percentages and also shown in diagrams in order to allow the reader get an insight into the language situation of two groups of Bulgarians in the context of their use of *russisms*. Parfenova’s study becomes more specific on this issue when she discusses the functional characteristics of the cited russisms, especially where she gives examples of codeswitched utterances and distinguishes there Bulgarian lexemes from non-adapted [bold] and adapted [capitals] Russian borrowings. Furthermore, Parfenova discusses temporal, locality as well as several modal expressions which all show the interesting mosaic of the preference of Bulgarian items for certain expressions and of Russian expressions for others. Parfenova concludes her chapter qualifying the language use of Bulgarians in the Ukraine as a codeswitched mode with primarily Bulgarian characteristics as Russian constitutes a presence of reasonably small percentage in intra-ethnic communication, mostly in non-adapted form. She ascribes the presence of whatever Russified variants that are found
in local speech to the influence of the socially active population. As for the overall process of relexification, Parfenova suggests that the total absence of Bulgarian instruction in local schools is the main cause of the presence of Russian words in Bulgarian speech.

The following chapter contains some similarities – at least on its surface – with the two preceding chapters of this section in the sense that its author also focuses on the insertion of embedded lexemes, a field of study that he calls *insertional codeswitching*. On the other hand, Ad Backus investigates in his contribution to the volume entitled *The role of semantic specificity in insertional codeswitching: Evidence from Dutch-Turkish* a setting that is quite different from those of two earlier chapters. In effect, Backus' data describe the clash of two cultures (Turkish/Dutch) that has resulted, not from the contact between resident cultures as discussed by Treffers-Daller and Parfenova, but from recent waves of migration to a distant country, to Holland. Backus argues in the introduction to his chapter that the reasons for *lexical borrowing* have rarely been studied and yet a semantic-pragmatic study of this nature is a valuable undertaking, since it sheds light on the process of lexical renewal. The purpose of such a study, he states, is “to develop some ideas what it is that makes a content word borrowable” and after studying the switching strategies of Turkish immigrants, he suspects that it is the high degree of specificity that seems to stimulate insertional codeswitching. In his section on *Specificity*, Backus suggests that semantic congruence is higher for general concepts and requires little if any embedded language words. Words, however, that are not semantically equivalent in the two languages are more prone to be used within a matrix language utterance and several semantic-pragmatic factors may indeed underlie the selection of embedded words. The reader may find it profitable at this point to interrelate Azuma’s notion of switchability and Backus’ thoughts on semantic specificity. Both address the issue of what can be borrowed in codeswitched discourse, but one does so with a syntactic and the other, with a semantic perspective in mind. In a later segment of the chapter, Backus suggests a tentative definition of what he calls the *Specificity hypothesis* and makes a clear distinction between the *inherent semantics of lexical elements* and *referential specificity*. His primary argument for insertional codeswitching is that "borrowing
speakers only take from another language what they need” in order to fill the gaps in their discourse. Furthermore, specificity is best seen in gradient terms so that the terms high specificity and low specificity can be equated to higher-level and basic-level vocabulary. Backus then attempts to give a pragmatic definition of the mentioned notion in the sense that certain semantic fields or even certain topics stimulate insertional codeswitching. “If semantic domain,” he argues, “is an important predictor of switches, then it must be part of our definition of specificity.” The preceding arguments lead Backus to now focus on the main issue of the chapter, i.e., the semantic specificity in Turkish-Dutch codeswitching. At this point, he describes the data studied, the roles assigned to semantic domains and provides the reader with a summary of the findings. In the course of his deliberations, Backus upgrades his semantic domain hypothesis when he refers more specifically to the embedded language semantic domain. In later subsections he deals with the selection of embedded language elements by groups of immigrants, groups that he classifies as first generation, intermediate generation and second generation. There is a wealth of specific data here that point to the semantic domain effects, even though the predictability of embedded language content word selection seems to diminish across generations. In the section Role of specificity, Backus seeks to account for other-language embeddings that can apparently not be justified by means of the notion of semantic fields but can through what Backus calls certain auxiliary constructs. Here, Backus refers to words that are intimately related to Dutch and are preferred by second generation speakers who have lived in Holland all their lives. Other words – even though unmotivated by domain membership – can be explained through semantic specificity and still others through various psycholinguistic mechanisms, such as activation levels, just to mention one. There is one word however that Backus finds totally unexplainable by semantic or psycholinguistic means but the unexpected use of the Turkish word can be justified simply by the fact that this word always appears in the matrix language. In Specificity within a semantic domain the reader finds an in-depth analysis of content words as used by one member of the intermediate generation. A table of the distribution of content words by semantic field and matrix language of clause accompanies the descriptive analysis. Two
additional factors that also promote codeswitching are discussed, i.e., flagging and focusing. Flagging is the notion that had been proposed earlier by Poplack and refers to the speaker’s intent to call the listener’s attention to an imminent codeswitch, whereas focusing has to do with the inherent meaning of morpho-syntactic constructions. Backus’ conclusion reiterates – as it should – the findings of this study, even though he still makes some tentative comments on the difference between core and culture borrowings and the selection of embedded language words, the latter being guided by a combination of factors, such as, bilinguality, personal preferences, and current accessibility. The study as a whole reflects the writer’s insight into the sociolinguistic working of the bilingual mind.

As the reader moves on to Section Three, Codeswitching as oral and/or written strategy, there are two matters that may come into his/her mind, one, in order to encounter codeswitching data, even those of a quite exotic kind, a person does not have seek them out in faraway lands like Russia or Japan, he/she can find them right here in the United States where many immigrant communities seek to maintain their ancestral language; two, codeswitching, that was believed to be an oral language performance only, also exists at the written level as McClure and Montes-Alcalá have shown, in particular when those sharing the same two varieties hardly ever come into personal contact as this is the case for Assyrian-English switchers or when an individual switches languages in his/her personal record keeping as is the case in the Spanish-English diary entries.

Erica McClure tells the reader in her chapter entitled Oral and written Assyrian-English codeswitching that “relative little attention has been accorded to the difference between oral and written codeswitching” and to the nature of the social and political features of codeswitching communities. Her study on Assyrian-English codeswitching aims at filling this gap in the codeswitching literature. Most important for this endeavor is her reference to Gal’s proposal that an “integration of conversational, ethnographic and social historic evidence” is called for and McClure’s study of modern Assyrian reveals the extent to which she is following Gal’s postulate. The introduction of the chapter deals mostly with the overall background of the West Semitic language that is little known to
outsiders except for a handful of linguists specializing in Semitic languages. A number of interesting characteristics of the Assyrian people are here revealed among which their multilingualism, dialect variation and diglossia will capture the readers' interest. Despite the cited dialect variation, McClure also mentions forces of dialect unification, even though there is no Assyrian nation as such to sponsor or legislate language unification. Four types of Assyrian data are collected among natives or descendants of natives of these Middle-Easterners now residing in the Chicago area and yield the data base for the present study. In her discussion of what codeswitching is, McClure reviews some of the sociolinguistic literature with special attention to the difference between a codeswitch and a loanword, difference that has baffled numerous linguistic scholars without ever finding a conclusive answer to their query. From oral codeswitching McClure moves on to the written counterpart and points to several factors that distinguish the written from the oral type. She specifies here what, in the context of her research, qualifies as a codeswitch and that words are considered codeswitches when they meet certain characteristics. In her discussion of oral and written codeswitching, McClure uses a format that differs from other contributions in the volume in the sense that she first comments on the characteristics found in her data and later on provides the actual data, a slight inconvenience for the reader but the care that McClure takes to explicate her data is impressive and makes up for any inconvenience that this format might have caused. At the same time, McClure provides a worthwhile means by her data to acquaint the interested reader with some aspects of this unfamiliar code. The actual switches illustrated in the chapter contain intersentential, full clausal, embedded-between-languages and subordinate switches. Also, various grammatical categories are discussed and, most interestingly, one such category concerns bicodal words where English nouns carry Assyrian plurals or, in one case, an Assyrian possessive pronoun postposition. McClure's comments on written codeswitching are also interesting for the difference that she makes between the various codeswitching strategies in accordance with the media type or genre in which they occur, such that the switching on the internet is quite different from printed materials. In her discussion later of the functions of oral Assyrian-English codeswitching, McClure
distinguishes between situational and conversational switching and, as for
the latter, she subcategorizes the lexical switches on the basis of gaps,
connotation differences, clarification, emphasis and switches of interlocu-
tors. In this part of the chapter, the format of data citation changes and
the examples are now inserted in the text, a practice that makes the
reading and identification of elements easier to follow. McClure's
discussion of the functions of written Assyrian-English codeswitching
are mainly an elaboration of earlier arguments but include some interest-
ing comments on the significance of postings on the internet to the effect
that cyberspace is allowing Assyrians who are spread out all over the
world to reunite in a certain way and hereby experience, for the first time,
a kind of togetherness they never dreamed of during the many centuries
of diaphora.

Cecilia Montes-Alcalá offers the reader a different aspect of written
codeswitching, since she focuses, not on a whole community like the
preceding author, but on the performance of a single individual, herself
as recorder of a personal journal. Montes-Alcalá first discusses briefly the
different levels of codeswitching, refers to its social stigmatization and
stresses its inherent regularity at the grammatical as well as pragmatic
levels. She also deplores the paucity of studies on written codeswitching.
Although the object of her study and the methodology used are only
touched upon slightly, the actual nature of her approach is the pragmatic
analysis of data collected in the past and not a search for theoretical
elaborations on language alternation. In effect, most of her sources reflect
dates in the seventies and eighties with very few in the nineties. The
significance of her study should therefore not be seen in the advancement
of abstract schemes but in the citations of codeswitching events that
reflect the creativity of a truly bicultural person. It also reveals an
interesting progression from intersententiality to intrasententiality as the
writer attains the necessary balance between two cultures without which
such intrasententiality would not emerge. Montes-Alcalá subcategorizes
her Spanish-English switches into ten types; direct quotes, emphasis,
clarification or elaboration, parenthetical comments, idiomatic expres-
sions, linguistic routines or clichés, symmetric alternations, triggers,
stylistic matters and lexical need, types that are remindful of some of the
earlier work on oral codeswitching. However, what is different in