

Code Switching as an Outcome of Language Contact: a Context based Model

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Abstract:

Algerians code-switch in most cases to three languages: Arabic, Tamazight (Shawith in this case), and French. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the underlying sociolinguistic factors leading to Shawith- Algerian Vernacular Arabic code-switching. It suggests a comprehensive context based model that explains a speaker's choice of a certain code when conveying a communicative message. The data have been collected by recording and observing daily communication of Shawith native speakers. The main findings state that Shawi native speakers perform different interactional acts based on their calculation of the surrounding context. The latter is a sum of three worlds components that undergo a process of saving, changing or expanding.

Keywords: Code-switching; Shawith; Context based model;

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1. Introduction:

Languages in contact results in different linguistic phenomena such as code switching. The latter has become a corollary consequence of linguistic practice in all bilingual and multilingual societies all over the world. Much ink has been spilled about the phenomenon of code switching in the recent decades. It has been a subject of many writers, linguists and researchers such as Myers-Scotton (1993); Auer (1998); Milroy & Muysken (1995) and so many others. The different studies dealing with code switching have attempted to account for the various syntactic/ grammatical processes happening when alternating the code in addition to the social and interactional factors motivating the switch from one language to another. A legitimate question imposes itself: Why do people code switch at all? A simple question that incites to undertake a scrutinized analysis of the different social, pragmatic and psychological reasons behind the process of code switching.

Algeria, a North African country, is the epitome of a multilingual society where many languages and varieties exist in the sociolinguistic scene. Tamazight (with its varieties), Algerian Vernacular Arabic (AVA), Modern standard Arabic (MSA), French and English are spoken to varied extents in different regions of the country. Shawi language, or Shawith, a variety of the Tamazight language, is the mother tongue of the native inhabitants of a region in the east of Algeria. Therefore, Shawith has been in contact with the other existing languages, especially AVA and French in the daily communicative routine. Code switching is one of the outcomes of language contact in the Shawi community. Shawi speakers switch code to AVA or sometimes French in order to fulfill different communicative purposes related to varied social tasks. The present study adopts the contextual

approach and seeks to determine the different context-based reasons behind the code-switching phenomenon.

1. Literature review:

1.1 . A sociolinguistic view to code switching

Bilingual speakers frequently use two or more languages, dialects or varieties in the same conversation. A bilingual speaker is sometimes seen as someone who can use two languages almost like native speakers while others regard a bilingual as someone who has some competence at least in one of the four skills. Myers-Scotton (2006) explains bilingualism as “the ability to use two or more languages sufficiently to carry on a limited casual conversation” (p. 44). On the other hand, Skutnabb-Kangas (1981) presents another view to bilingualism stating that a bilingual is an individual who can function in two or more languages, either in monolingual or bilingual communities, in accordance with sociocultural demands of the community or the individual himself at a native-like level. It appears that a bilingual is someone who has the necessary competence to function in two languages or varieties.

The contact between languages in bilingual and multilingual societies has many outcomes among which the phenomenon, known as code-switching (CS). It has become a major focus of attention in linguistics. CS is a growth area in linguistics, since it provides insights about plurilingualism and language itself, from several different perspectives. It also contributes in various ways to an understanding



of how the individual is articulated with the social (Gardner-Chloros, 2009).

Many scholars agree that code switching is best defined as the alternation between two or more languages or varieties in the same conversation. Gumperz (1982) defines the term as “the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems” (p.59). Moreover, Milroy and Muysken (1995) state that code-switching is “the alternative use by bilinguals of two or more languages in the same conversation” (p. 07). However, Bentahila and Davies (1983) give a more detailed definition of code switching. They write:

We shall henceforth use the term code –switching to refer to the use of two languages within a single conversation, exchange or utterance. The result is an utterance or interaction of which some parts are clearly in one of the bilingual’s languages and other parts in the other language. (p. 315)

Many approaches have described code switching. Gumperz (1982) divides code switching into conversational /metaphorical code switching and situational code-switching. Conversational code switching emphasizes the factors related to the conversation itself. Here, the change of the code is motivated by the code’s metaphorical world that it introduces to the conversation. On the other hand, situational code switching occurs when changes happen in language

choices due to external factors in the speech situation such as specific settings, topics, or participants.

Gumperz (1982) identifies more factors that lead to shifting between language varieties in order to serve different communicative purposes; his concepts of **we-code** (i.e. the language of minority) and **they-code** (i.e. the language of the dominant group) signifies the notion of bilinguals' switching for claiming group membership or solidarity. Table 1 shows the different code switching factors suggested by Gumperz (1982):

Table 1. Code switching factors

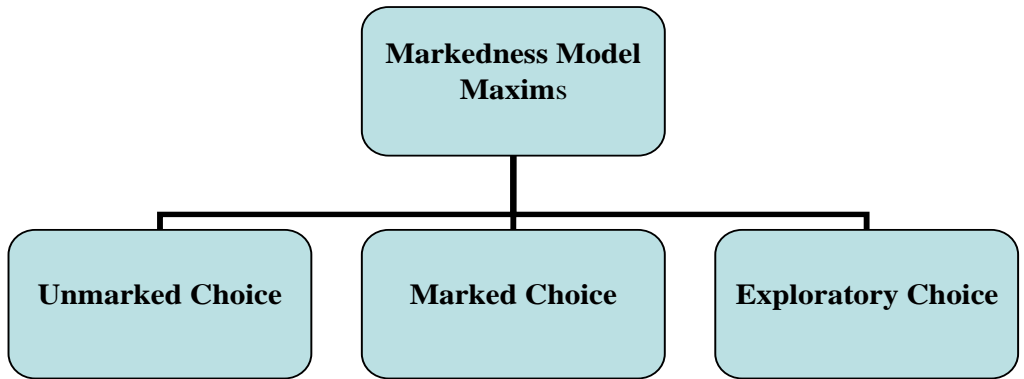
Code Switching Factors	Definitions/ Illustrations
Quote Another Speaker	Copy someone's words in another language
Addressee Specifications	specify to whom the expression is addressed
Interjection	Emotional associations with certain language
Reiteration	Clarify or emphasize a certain message
Message Qualification	Provide emphasis through linguistic contrast
Personalization vs. Objectivization	A repertoire is associated with objective facts or subjective opinions.

Myers-Scotton (1993) has presented the Markedness Model (MM) that analyzes code switching from a social indexical

motivation. According to Myers-Scotton, each language in a multilingual community is associated with particular social roles, which she calls rights-and-obligations (RO) sets. The MM is stated in the form of a principle and three maxims. The negotiation principle presents the theory's central claim "Choose the form of your conversational contribution such that it indexes the set of rights and obligations which you wish to be in force between the speaker and addressee for the current exchange" (Myers-Scotton, 1993, P. 113)

The Markedness model clarifies how interlocutors negotiate their identities. By speaking a particular language, participants signal their understanding of their role in the current situation, within the context. Speakers code switching may initiate negotiation over relevant social roles. Myers-Scotton (1993) assumes that speakers must share, at least to some extent, an understanding of the social meanings of each available code. If no such norms existed, interlocutors would have no basis for understanding the significance of particular code choices. The markedness model is based on three maxims as shown in Figure1.

Fig.1. The Markedness Model maxims



The unmarked choice maxim makes your code choice the unmarked index of the unmarked RO set in talk exchanges when you wish to establish or affirm that RO set. The marked choice maxim makes a marked code choice that establishes a new set of rights and obligations as unmarked for the current exchange. The exploratory choice maxim is used when an unmarked choice is not clear, so participants use code switching to make alternate exploratory choices as candidates for an unmarked choice and thereby as a clue for rights and obligations set which they favour. Therefore, participant rights and obligations are the main cause of alternation and language choice (Myers-Scotton, 1993).

Some scholars have suggested micro sociolinguistics functions of code switching; Appel and Muysken (2006) come up with six main functions of code switching as demonstrated in Table 2:

Table 2. Functions of code switching

Function of CS	Definition/ illustration
The referential function	Lack of facility in a certain language
Directive function	Include or exclude an interlocutor from a conversation
Expressive function	Speakers use a code to express feelings, opinions and attitudes
Phatic function	Show a tone change or focus on important parts in the conversation
Metalinguistic function	Impress others by showing linguistic skills
Poetic function	CS to amuse or entertain the speakers

Holmes (2013) also suggests some social functions of code switching. She states that a speaker may switch to another language in order to signal group membership and shared ethnicity with an addressee. Therefore, it serves as a solidarity marker between two minority ethnic group members. Code switching is also motivated by the identity and relationship between participants and it often expresses a move along the solidarity/social distance dimension. Thus, a switch can contribute to the construction of solidarity as it can also distance a speaker from those they are talking to. Furthermore, code switching may also indicate a change in the relation status between people or the formality of their interaction. People may switch code within a speech event to discuss a particular topic. Some bilingual speakers reveal that certain kinds of referential content are more appropriately or more easily expressed in one language than the other. Speakers also code-switch to quote a person or to express affection.



The switch can express a shift from an intimate and friendly style to a formal style which distances the speaker from the addressee. Switches may be accounted for by lack of vocabulary in a language (Holmes, 2013).

2.2- Theoretical framework

Many studies have dealt with the social motivations of code switching trying to answer questions as to why bilingual speakers code switch and which functions CS serves and how it is formed. Gardner-Chloros (2009) explains that, in sociolinguistics, three types of factors take part in the formation of CS in a conversation:

1. External factors that are not linked directly to particular speakers and particular circumstances in which the varieties are used, that affect all the speakers of the relevant varieties in a particular community such as society economy and language prestige.
2. Factors linked to the speakers as individuals and as sub-group members such as their language competence, their relationships, their attitudes and ideologies, their self-perception and perception of others.
3. Factors linked to the conversations itself where CS takes place: CS is a major conversational resource for speakers that provides better discursive options.

Furthermore, Wei (2005) compares between the two dominant models discussing the phenomenon of code switching. Wei states that Rational Choice (RC) models of code-switching (including the Markedness Model) suggest that bilingual speakers make rational

choices according to the rights and obligations set they perceive in a given situation. Speakers judge situations to be marked or unmarked. Speakers express their rational decisions through their choice of language as well as their attitudes and identities. On the other hand, Wei (2005) adds that the Conversation Analysis (CA) approach to code-switching embraces the RC model's idea of bilingual speakers being rational individuals. Here, speakers are not oriented to rights and obligations, or attitudes and identities, but rather to conversational structures aiming primarily at achieving coherence in the actual interactional task. Therefore, speakers code-switching is programmatically relevant to the talk-in-interaction. In this sense, CA approach is driven by internal cues within the interactional conversation but the RC model is more related to rational decision based on the perception of the external world of the conversation (RO set). He concludes with the need for a model that adopts both approaches' contributions to the understanding of the phenomenon of code switching (Wei, 2005).

At this juncture, the Context-based Model (CbM) introduced by Amraoui (2017) suggests a comprehensive account of the motivations of code switching. It clarifies the basic ground for language choice and the reasons behind code switching. Therefore, speakers' choices to code switch are not merely based on their set of rights and obligation in the conversational situations or what they infer from the pragmatic and discursive processes within the interactional

conversation; The code switching process is indeed based on speakers judgment of the context. Here, the context is the sum of three worlds:

Table 3. Worlds of the context

Context world	Definition/ illustration
World of the code	It is all the components related to the languages or varieties used by bilinguals in a specific speech community such as code status, code prestige, code cultural background, code economic power, code emotional significance...etc.
World of the speaker	It is all the components that constitute the individual social image such as speaker's intention, personality, mood, self-image, face wants, social role (rights and obligation), cultural background, identity, age...etc.
World of the conversation	It is what is expressed in the interactional conversation at hand. In other words, it is what is perceived and inferred by the speaker while interacting with the addressee.

An interaction contains many contextualization cues that help the individual judge the actual context. An utterance made by a speaker is not only an illustration of a limited immediate thought but also a message that bears different contextual cues and details that have an effect on the interaction participants.

The speaker calculates the context based on the three worlds. Their knowledge of all the components related to the worlds, some of which are stated previously, is crucial in judging the actual context. The

speaker then decides their code choice in order to perform one of the three following interactional acts:

1. Save the context of interaction: the speaker code switches to save (keep, preserve) the context when the context is responsive to the speakers aims of interaction.
2. Change the context of interaction: the speaker code switches to change (alter) the context and establish a new one when the actual context is unresponsive to the speaker's aims of interaction.
3. Expand the context of interaction: the speaker code switches to adjust (partial modification) the context when the context is partially responsive to the speaker's aims of interaction.

Therefore, the speaker opts for one of the three interactional acts in order to satisfy their interactional needs.

2. METHODOLOGY

The study investigates the functions and reasons of code switching in the shawi community. The data collection tools are recordings of Shawith native speakers' communication in real life situation in addition to the observations of the researcher being a native speaker of Shawith language. The study sample includes bilingual speakers of Shawith (a variety of Tamazight language) and Algerian vernacular Arabic; some speakers are competent in other languages which are not the focus of the study. The two languages are in a direct contact throughout the daily life activities which results in different language contact aspects.

The researcher analyzes the data following the CbM previously

dealt with in Amraoui (2017) and specifically developed in this paper to reach a comprehensive view to code switching.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of data has shown that native Shawi speakers realize different functions when saving, changing or expanding the context of interaction. These functions reflect what speakers intend to perform through their language choice. Some instances of code switching are provided in the discussion (the underlined words) to clarify the different interactional acts.

4.1 - Saving the context of interaction.

Saving the context of interaction comes when the speaker realizes that all worlds components of a certain context of interaction are in accordance with what they aim to achieve in the interaction. Therefore, when the speaker calculates the context and judges it as being acceptable, they move to the step of saving (keeping, guarding, preserving) the context by making an utterance that expresses a certain function contributing to the preservation of the context of interaction (keeping the worlds components as they are). This is illustrated in the following conversation:

P1:haj tamurθ ney anbed fellas!

(this is our land we stand for it!)

P2: Ah lazem!

(we have to)

In the example, person 1 (P1) expresses a point that satisfies P2 aims of interaction. Therefore, P2 code switches to Algerian Vernacular Arabic (underlined words) to emphasize the point and, hence, confirm the context of interaction. Another illustration can be seen in the way Shawi speakers greet each other:

P1: ahla jamdukl mataheli:ð?

(hi friend, how are you?)



P2: labas hifek ?

(Fine, you ?)

P1: Neħmdu rabi w neħkroh.

(we thank Allah)

In this conversation, P1 and P2 find themselves in a casual situation where they greet each other and inquire about each other's state. Here, the context seems to be pleasing to both interlocutors and P1 uses an Algerian Vernacular Arabic expression to show his wellness and hence save the context of interaction.

4.2 - Changing the context of interaction.

Changing the context of interaction happens when there is a change in one or more of the worlds components of a certain context of interaction. Therefore, when the speaker calculates the actual context and realizes that it does not correspond to what they want to achieve in the interaction, the speaker code switches to alter the context and, hence, make a new one which is more responsive to their aims of interaction. The following examples show the point:

P1: afeħ heteqleđ amsalt heħħas

(As you see, the situation is sluggish)

P2: la tyimafā-mmin xuđ bel-asbab w yeħjar

(Do not stay like that, make use of available means and change it.)

This part of a conversation demonstrates P1 dissatisfaction with the actual situation. It reflects some negative feelings that impact the actual context of interaction which does not respond to P2 aims of interaction. Hence, P2 code switches to AVA in order to give a piece of advice that aims to change P1's mood and create a new context of interaction that is full of positive vibes. Notice example 2:

P1: jebđu: jetrigal lżaw ussan-aj.

(The weather is getting better these days)

P2: azyal đigsegasen-aj jeqwa w kajna ħaza uxra ħija nuqs teħzi:r.



(Temperature has been higher these years and there is something else: lack of afforestation.)

P1: haða lazem yetða:leʒ

(This has to be solved.)

In this example, the speaker code switches to AVA in order to introduce a new item/ topic to the discussion. The two speakers are talking about the weather then speaker 2 code switches in order to add a new topic to the already existing one and hence making a change at the conversation world level to start a new context of interaction.

4.3 - Expanding the context of interaction.

Speakers expand the context of interaction when they add extra data to develop the context and reach further aims of interaction. This means that the actual context does not fully satisfy the speakers' aims of interaction but just part of them. Therefore, when the speaker calculates the context and finds out that it is limited and needs extra data, they code switch to include more data in the context worlds so that the context responds to more aims of interaction. It is not about changing the world's components but adding more data to deepen and specify the context. The following examples clarify the idea:

P1: Kullef ʒla lxedma w sbar jaxi qaren ameqqiθ yeltmeqqiθ sazal iyezra:n

(everything comes with work and patience as they say drop by drop the valley flows)

P2: fus ðug fus awma.

(Hand in hand brother.)

Here, P1 code switches from AVA to Shawith in order to clarify his message through an idiomatic expression (underlined). This plays a role in elucidating the context and adding more data to the conversation. Therefore, the meaning gets deepened and the context of interaction becomes expanded and powerful so that it responds to more aims of interaction. The second example shows more:



P1 mamek^w iseqaren i- hehji:ft- aj?

(How is this plant called ?)

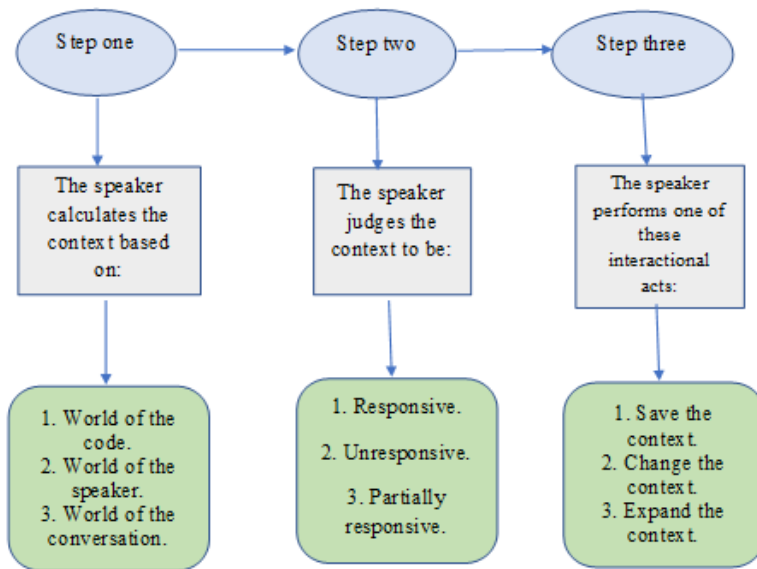
P2: qarennas imezreji:n, belferbija lxaja:ta.

(It is called felty germander.)

The second example shows another function of code switching which is translation. When Person 2 is answering P1’s question about the name of the plant, P2 provides the name in Shawith then translates it to AVA to give further details and more information about the plant. Hence, this contributes to the expansion of the context and the satisfaction of speaker’s aims of interaction.

Figure 2 summarizes the general outlines of the model:

Fig.2. The Context based Model outline



CONCLUSION :

The study focuses on code switching rather than code mixing. The excerpts taken from the collected data show a total switch from one code to another to fulfill some sociolinguistic functions. The utterance made by the speaker bears a message that intends to perform a certain interactional act. Hence, the speaker chooses to save, change or expand the context of interaction. The latter is a sum of three worlds' components that the speaker learns and acquires throughout their life span. The context of interaction is very flexible in the sense that any total change in one of the worlds' components results in the emergence of a new context; this demonstrates the capacity of the human brain to bear an immense number of contexts. Performing an interactional act includes the realization of a varied number of functions in the communicative situation such as quoting, distancing, translation and elucidation, etc.

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