

Code switching, a Conversational Strategy in Berber?

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Résumé :

Le présent article est une analyse d'un corpus bilingue berbère/arabe algérien/arabe standard/Français. La perspective que nous utilisons pour cela est une perspective conversationnelle. Cette perspective est assez récente dans la recherche sur le code switching. Elle s'est avérée très intéressante dans l'interprétation des procédés et stratégies usités par les locuteurs bilingues dans divers milieux sociolinguistiques. Je vais me concentrer dans le présent article sur les parlers des groupes minoritaires Kabyles et Mzabi de la ville d'Oran.

Abstract

The present paper is a trial analysis of a Berber-Algerian Arabic-Standard Arabic-French bilingual corpus. The analysis that I will be conducting is couched under a conversational analysis perspective. This perspective is fairly recent in code switching research, and it has proven to be insightful in the interpretation of bilingual phenomena and strategies across diverse sociolinguistic settings. I will be focussing in my paper on the Kabyle and Mzabi minority groups of Oran. These groups have as their mother tongues Berber which is a variety that is unintelligible with Algerian Arabic.

Introduction

Bilingual and monolingual conversations may be interpreted using a conversational analysis perspective. This perspective is built on the assumption that all types of conversation are by essence interactional events that are characterized by conversational strategies. These strategies are used by interlocutors to construct interactional meaning. The conversational analytical approach to the interpretation has proven its efficiency as an alternative to the purely linguistic analyses to code switching and other contact phenomena. The present

paper seeks to apply some findings of the conversational approach on a Berber bilingual data in the Kabyle and Mzabi minority groups of Oran. These groups use code switching as a strategy to show conversational elements such as emphasis, changes in turn takings and others.

The Data Collection

The corpus that we have used in the analysis is the one of an ongoing post doctoral research that we are carrying on the Berber minorities of Oran. It has been gathered in tape recordings on informal conversations. These tape recordings have been carried out by one of the informants who took part in the interactions. The other informants did not know they were being recorded. This was done to obtain spontaneous speech. The contexts chosen are three informal contexts (interactions in shops, university campuses and dormitory and at a café) and a formal context (a preach at a mosque). We obtained four tape recordings: two tape recordings of sixty minutes, and two tape recordings of thirty minutes.

The Method of Analysis

The tape recordings were transcribed. The informants were asked for help during the transcription phase. This was done for two reasons. The first reason is that I am not a native speaker of Berber. I therefore needed their help in order to be as faithful as possible concerning how they pronounce such or such a word, or when we needed to understand what they meant. The second reason is because these informants took part in the interactions, therefore, they remembered turn takings, interlocutors, subjects of discussions, the roles of the interlocutors, and the settings of their interactions. I took the passages that I found most interesting, i.e. passages that contain code switching, code mixing and singly occurring borrowing.

The scope of our study is micro social networks, that is we have worked with small groups which we believe are representative of the community under investigation. The other reason is that bilingual linguistic processes are typical of these small networks. I have chosen to use a conversational analysis method in my analysis of the data. The model I am using is the one which has been advocated by Peter Auer (1998). Auer(1998) initiated a tendency in the analysis of conversational code switching which stands as a counter current to the

insertional approach to language alternation as it has been advocated by Myers Scotton(1998, 2002) and her associates. But let us first have a look at Auer(1998) approach to Code switching.

Auer's Discourse Analysis Approach to Code Switching

P. Auer (1984) sets a discourse based model for the analysis of code switching. He tries to use a Conversational Analysis Approach (hereafter CAA) in the analysis of bilingual behaviour among Italian immigrants in Germany. This model states in principle that any conversation involving different varieties is in its essence a conversational event (P. Auer, 1998: 1). This model is also based on the assumption that code-switching passages may be analysed internally⁴⁷ (within the frame of a single conversational episode). This approach is based on the use of tools and methods which are specific to conversational analysis when it comes to the interpretation of code switching motivations. It uses concepts such as '*turn taking*', '*change within conversation*', '*opening and closing devices*', '*emphasis of one's message*' and related concepts in the analysis of bilingual strategies such as code switching. Many specialists in bilingual research adopted this model in their analysis of code switching (C. Stroud, 1998⁴⁸; M. Sebba, 1998; Li Wei, 1998; J.N. Jorgensen 1998). They observed in the various studies they conducted in different social cultural settings that some code switches which were thought to be random ones by other scholars, were in fact perfectly interpretable (extra and inter sentential code switchings). Conversational analysts were able to interpret extra sentential code switches and single occurring code mixings by attributing them a function within conversation. They also argued that bilingual speakers have bilingual communicative and conversational competencies, i.e. they use constituents from both varieties to convey what Auer (1998: 2) calls interactional meaning.

Under this approach, the languages involved in code switching do not seem to be separated. They are not considered as dominant and

⁴⁷. 'internally' is used here to mean the analyser's tendency not to resort to external cultural and social knowledge, i.e. to extra conversational factors.

⁴⁸ In Auer ed(1998)

embedded languages or base, but they are rather considered as tools to convey conversational meaning. The power hierarchy between the varieties involved is not a central issue or question in this approach. What is important is how these varieties are used as strategies to communicate by bilingual speakers. As Caccamo (1998: 30) puts it "codes are not linguistic codes but rather communicative ones". The studies following this approach have shown that code switching may be used as a conversational device. They call such type of code switching *Discourse Related Code Switching*⁴⁹.

Code switching may be used as other linguistic resources within conversations to fulfil conversational functions. Below are some instances from the Berber bilingual data that we have investigated where code switching is used by Mzabi and Kabyle bilingual speakers to construct conversational meaning⁵⁰.

The use of code switching as a strategy to emphasize one's message in the conversation

Some scholars (Auer, 1998: 80; Gardner Chloros, 2009: 45) call this type of code switching code switching for repetition or emphasis. Bilingual speakers resort to that type of code switching in order to have more strength in the communication of their message through the repetition of the same term in the varieties involved (emphatic repetition).

1 /ǵal kafir wa lmunafiq a-kafer d-a-mnafeq ... /

(The non-believer and the sinner, the non-believer and the sinner...)(Mzabi Berber-Standard Arabic code switching)

⁴⁹ It is the use of code switching to organize the conversation by contributing to the interactional meaning of an utterance (interactional means the function of the utterance in the whole conversation).

⁵⁰ For practical reasons we have decided to transcribe the Algerian Arabic parts of the data in bold, the Standard Arabic parts will be transcribed in bold and underlined whereas the French parts of the data will not be transcribed but written in italics.

We notice in this utterance that for emphatic purposes, the informant uses standard Arabic /ʔal kafir wa lmunafiq / that he repeats (emphasizes) /akafər da mnafəq/ when he switches to Berber.

Boumans (1998) observed the same process that he called recursive code switching between Dutch and Turkish in the speech of Turkish emigrants in the Netherlands. Owens (2005) also noticed this phenomenon of recursive code switching in the speech of Arabic-Swahili bilinguals in Nigeria (i.e in the switching between Swahili and Arabic). Repetition is also used by monolingual speakers for different conversational functions. Tannen(1989) talks about the repetition in order to make sure that the interlocutor has in fact heard or understood. Another function she argues is to lend emphasis on the conversational message. The only inconvenient is that repetition is boring. To avoid being boring bilingual speakers use other linguistic codes which are at their disposal Gardener Chloros(Punjabi- English) observed this reiteration phenomenon in the speech of Indian speakers in London in a paper that she has co authored with Malcolm Edwards in 2000. Boumans noticed the same in the speech of Moroccan speakers in the Netherlands (Dutch- Moroccan) but he concentrated on the syntactic analysis of the code switching taking an insertional approach

A device to signal a change in topic

Bilingual speakers as monolingual speakers change topic even within a single conversation. They may use code switching as a strategy to signal this change in topic. Code switching in this case is not to be equated with situational code switching in which certain topics are discussed in certain varieties and not in others; e.g. talking about Islam in Algeria triggers off the use of standard Arabic. Gumperz (1972) puts forward the idea that speakers recognize basic relationships between certain types of topics and certain code. Discourse based code switching is a type of conversational code switching where constituents from different varieties are used in conversation to start a new topic (Alfonzetti, 1998:197). Alfonzetti states that “Code switching may therefore be seen as one of the devices by means of which the task of changing topic may be carried out by bilingual speakers.

2 A: /ħəgga ʃa nsina/ (what did we forget)

B: /mma nəddu ʔaʃr a ntəʔ/ *les anneaux dorés* / məʃʃi nəm-s-əfhəm ənruħ ədnəʔ θivəlyəθin/ (Mum, we take ten curtain golden rings, did not we agree on buying shoes)(Kabyle Berber-Algerian Arabic-French code switching)

This is a conversation in a shop between a Kabyle customer and her mother. The mother first asks her daughter about things they forgot to buy in Algerian Arabic. The daughter answers her in Algerian Arabic but she switches to Kabyle to signal a change in the topic of conversation /nəmsəfhəm ənruħ ədnəʔθivəlyəθin/ (did we not agree on buying shoes)

A device to structure and segment the information into smaller units
Code switching may be used as a means to slice information into small pieces. It may also be used to signal the introduction of new informative elements.

3 /ʔawal ʃajʔ ʔindama jamut al ʔinsan at-təxlaq
dis -ta gaʃa mbaʔd ad-jəbda jdub-a tam urθ əl
jaxsən adərʃin/

(Lit: *The first thing when the human being dies, a worm is created within him, then he starts disappearing until the bones disintegrate*)

This utterance contains a We notice in this utterance that the informant slices the whole information in the utterance into two pieces. The second piece of information is introduced by the switch to Algerian Arabic which is itself triggered off by the Algerian Arabic expression /mbaʔd/ a discourse marker.

A device to open or close one's turn in conversation

In conversational analysis, opening one's turn is called a pre-opening (Coulthard, 1985: 165). It is the beginning of a speaker's turn in conversation. Closing one's turn is called a pre-closing. Code switching may be used as a closing or opening device in conversation. In a bilingual study on dialect code switching in Italy, Alfonzetti (1998) suggests that code switching might be used in closing and opening conversations.

An illustrative example of such an instance of code switching would be

4: X: /at truħəð ar Bejaia niy at təqqiməð ðegi?

Will you go to Bejaia or will you stay here?

Y: /ur zriyara asəggwas agi m að ruħəy ar Bejaia niy að qiməy ðegi bəssaħ nəsa θaməyra ðag Sétif eðruħəy ənʃallah mbafd edasey er Mostaganem après edasey erwahran aðkamləy *les vacances après aðkaʃməy le rattrapage* ənʃallah/

(I don't know for this year if I will go to Bejaia or will stay here, but we have a wedding ceremony in Sétif, I will go with God willing, then I will go to Mostaganem, then I will go to Oran to end the holidays, and then I will enter (take) the make-up exam with God willing.

We notice in this dialogue that the second informant closes her turn in the conversation by using an Algerian Arabic code switch /... ənʃallah/ (*with God willing*).

A device to introduce contrastive information

Code switching may be used by speakers to signal contrast in the development of conversation, i.e. to introduce contrastive information.

One such example would be:

5 /balak ədhamləx juwən daʔrav balak adəfaʔ xir n
wəqvaili bəʃsaħ lwaldin ur ħəmlan ara/

*(perhaps, I'll love an Arab perhaps he would be better than a
Kabylian, but my parents would not like him).*

In this utterance, the code switching /bəʃsaħ lwaldin/ introduces a piece of information which contrasts with the previous one. Basically, she means that her point of view is different (contrasts with) that of her parents. As it has been stated above in this paper, Auer's(1998) model in the interpretation of code switching has got many alternatives among which the one of Myers Scotton(2002). The model advocated by this scholar is built on the assumption that code switching bilingual data are guided by extra-conversational elements.

Auer's Model versus Myers Scotton's Model

Myers Scotton's (1998, 2002) model is based on a marked theory of languages which advocates that there are norms and rules which govern conversational interaction. These norms are social norms in nature. They are known by all members of the speech community. These norms are drawn from situational factors, or contextual cues. Situations in Myers Scotton's (1998) model are predetermined by these contextual cues. Speakers may either comply with the norms that guide their interaction, in which case they use the marked code (relevant code), or they disagree with the norms of interaction, in which case they are said to use an unmarked code to impose new norms of conversation, that is the ones that they want to see as prevailing. The varieties in code switching in Myers Scotton's model do not contribute the same way. There is a hierarchy between them within conversation. There is a dominant and a dominated code. Auer's (1998) model is based on the principle that this hierarchy between varieties is not as important as their conversational contribution. It is also based on the principle that situations in

conversation are not predetermined; they are open to local negotiation between the speakers involved in conversation. It is also based on the principle that the socio-cultural context of the conversation may not be used in the analysis. This contradicts in a way Myers Scotton's (1998) model which is a model that relies on external socio-cultural factors. Rules of conduct of speakers within conversation in Auer's (1998) model are not guided by social norms. They are rather guided by internal conversational norms.

Auer's (1998) model considers code switching as an independent code with its own rules and processes. Competent bilingual speakers use it as an unmarked code (in group code). The speakers do not consider the varieties used in conversational code switching as separate. These speakers use constituents from both varieties which are available to them. They nevertheless feel that they are using one single variety instead of different linguistic systems. One of the criticisms from Auer, Sebba and many other specialists against Myers Scotton's model is on the issue of the directionality of code switching. While Myers Scotton (1998) believes that code switching appears to be unidirectional, i.e. from the Embedded code to the Matrix code, Auer(1998) and the others regard code-switching as being multi directional. This is what we observed in fact in some of the utterances in our data recording where the informant switches from Berber to Algerian Arabic to French while he feels he is using the same variety. Therefore, Myers Scotton's model seems to be a predictive model in the sense that code switching is constrained by morpho-syntactic rules and that the direction of switching is predictable by the dominance configuration between the varieties involved, i.e. generally from dominant to dominated codes. Auer proved in many studies that code switching is sometimes not predictable and that domination between the varieties involved does not matter. He also found that extra- and inter-sentential code switching, which is considered as uninteresting and not interpretable in Myers Scotton's model, is worth analysing in the sense that it contributes to the construction of conversational meaning within interaction.

6- /mar aðesθəqsiy jəmma ɣaf waɫrabən θəqqarijid/
normal. /muqal kan vavam *gma il n'est pas contre* (when I ask
my mother about Arab people, she tells me ok, just see your father,
well, my brother is not against me knowing them)

The underlined string contains an extra-sentential French code switch and an intra-sentential code switching from French to Berber.

The extra-sentential code switch is (*bon* meaning *so*). Extra-sentential code switches have no interpretation in Myers Scotton (1998, 2002) model. She argues that they are not worth analysing. In our example, this is a case of a conversational marker. Its explanation may be drawn from the conversation itself. The informant is introducing three pieces of information. The first one is when she talks about “asking her mother”, and she code switches to French “(normal)”. This code switch signals a new piece of information in the utterance. This piece of information is found in the next sequence which represents a switch to Berber /muqal kan vavam/. The third piece of information is signalled by bon, /gma/, il n'est pas contre. This third code switch (the extra-sentential one) is used to direct attention towards another piece of information. In short, she uses code switching to signal new elements of information in the conversation. This is what Peter Auer (1998: 21) calls the use of code switching as a strategy to construct conversational meaning.

7. A: /batait ituari dani/?

(*what is written here?*)

B: /əʃzam əlhərf əlhərf at tfahmad/

(*read letter by letter you will understand*)

-/ruħ marka-jas ju- məʃtari at tbarkid aswawəl
uylub/

(go take the order of the customer, stop talking too much).

If we apply Auer's (1998) model to this utterance, the first code switch /ruħ/ may be considered as an opening device under the form of a pre-opening. It introduces the following information, i.e., /markajəs/ (*take the order*).

The second code switch /məʃtari/ (*customer*) signals the end of the first element of the information and the beginning of the second information. There are two conversational messages, namely, taking the order of the customer and a request to stop talking. The first code switch introduces the first element and the second code switch to Arabic introduces the second element.

8 - /nukni nħamməl bəzzaf bəzzaf tikərbabin/

We like much much tikerbabin (a traditional Berber dish)

If we apply Auer's (1998) model to this utterance, we find that this code switching is used as an emphatic device. So this code switch is used by the informant to make her message more emphatic.

9 - A: /θħamland̩ at tʃədħad̩ ?/ (*do you like to dance?*)

B: /ħəmlay ad̩ʃədħay θaqvajliθ/ (*I like to dance Kabyle dance*).

A: /θxaddmad̩ am ð waʃravən kimini/ (*Do you do it as Arab people do?*)

B: /əlla ala ur qablən ara ðəg wəxxam/ (Lit. *No, no, my house (family) does not accept*).

In this conversation, we will only take the string that contains Algerian Arabic - Berber code switching. It is an inter-sentential code switch (/əlla/ (*no*), the negative particle in Arabic). In the

conversation, the speaker is asked if she dances as the Arabs. She says no but she repeats the same negative particle in Algerian Arabic and Berber. This is a case of emphatic code switching. The speaker code switches to emphasize her message and give it more strength in the conversation.

10-/nukni si-tizi ur-nət-s-ruħ-uj-ara aʃas θ-ət-s-
ruħ-u jaja jəkʷ ðdadda zəðyən ði/ Tiaret /bəʃʃaħ
hakda gaaʃ jadra/ Naziha /θxadmað ði/ *l'examen* /n-
θaʃrafθ ney walu/

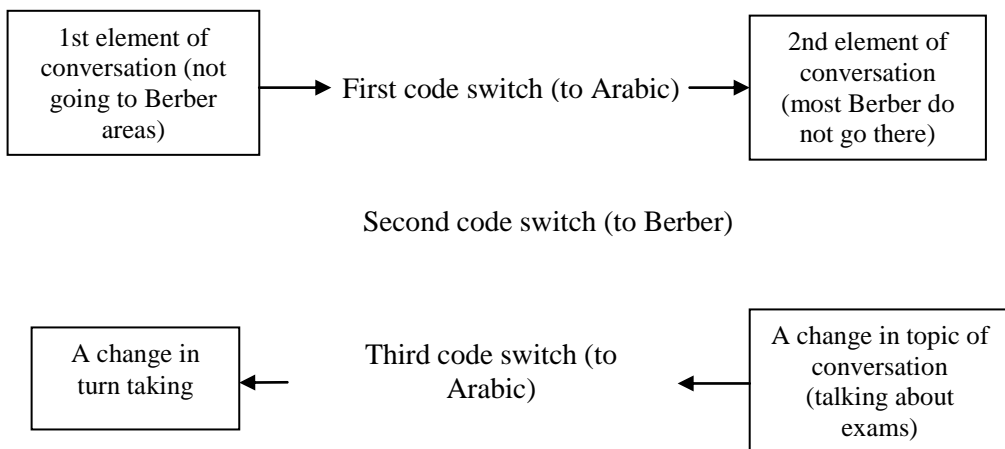
We are from Tizi-Ouzou, we do not go there many times, They (my parents) live in Tiaret, but this is true for all Berber people living outside Berber speaking towns (the fact of not going many times there), what's new Naziha, did you work in the exam of Arabic or not?

We have taken this long passage to show that the speaker is talking about two different topics of conversation. We shall focus on the first code switch /bəʃʃaħ hakda gaaʃ/ (*but this is true for all of us*). This is a sequence of inter-sentential code switching between Berber and Algerian Arabic. This code switch is used to signal contrast. It is rather an additional piece of information that is introduced by code switching to Algerian Arabic. So we have two pieces of information:

- The idea of going to Tizi-Ouzou
- The fact that most Berber speakers from Kabylia who do not live there do not go there often.

The speaker carries on with the conversation by using the language of the code switch (Algerian Arabic), but she immediately comes back to Berber to introduce a new topic of conversation, namely, the exams. This second code switch to Berber is used as a strategy

to signal a change in topic of conversation from talking about going to Berber speaking towns to the subject of exams. The speaker carries on with the conversation in Berber and then she makes a third code switch to Arabic i.e. /walu/ (*not*). The speaker uses this code switch as a closing device. She uses it as a strategy to show that her turn is over in the conversation. So it is used to signal a change in turn taking. We can schematise this sequence by the drawing below:



We notice that the direction of code switching, first from Berber to Arabic, then from Arabic to Berber and last from Berber to Arabic is used as a discursive device. The varieties involved seem to be equal in terms of hierarchy within this utterance. The code switching is multidirectional in this case.

11 X: /at truħəɟ ar Bejaia niy at təqqiməɟ ðegi?

Will you go to Bejaia or will you stay here?

Y: /ur zriyara asəggwas agi m að ruħəy ar Bejaia niy að qiməy ðagi bəşşah nəsfə θaməyra ðag Sétif eðruħəy ənʃallah mbaɪd edasey er Mostaganem

après edasey erwahran aḍkemləy les vacances après
aḍkaʃməy le rattrapage ənʃallah/

I don't know for this year if I will go to Bejaia or will stay here, but we have a wedding ceremony in Setif, I will go with God willing, then I will go to Mostaganem, then I will go to Oran to end up my holidays, and then I will enter (attend) the make-up exam with God willing.

There are six extra-sentential sequences of code switching in this passage. This is a conversation between two speakers about spending one's holidays.

The first code switch is to Arabic. It is indicated by a coordinator /bəʃʃaħ/ (*but*). It is used to introduce contrastive information to the one preceding it. The first information is to go to Bejaia, the second information relates to having a wedding in Sétif.

The second code switch (/ənʃallah/) is a frozen idiomatic expression from Arabic. On the one hand, it denotes a religious tendency i.e., Muslim belonging, and on the other hand it is used to signal the end of the second information in the process of the information given. This code switch is an extra-sentential code switch. Alfonzetti (1998) and other specialists refer to it as a discourse marker.

- The third code switch to Arabic /mbaʔd/ (*then*) is used to introduce the third element of information (the next town the speaker wants to go to).
- The fourth code switch to French which is triggered by the first *après* (*then*) introduces the fourth element of information (going to another town i.e. Oran to end the holidays).
- The fifth code switch to French which is signalled by the second *après* (*then*) is used to introduce the fifth element of information i.e. attending the make up exam.
- The third, fourth and fifth code switches are used as conversational strategies to segment the information (spending

holidays split into smaller pieces of information). The elements of information are segmented following a sequential order.

- The sixth code switch (/ənʃallah/) is an extra-sentential code switch. It is the same frozen idiomatic expression as that used in the second code switch in this passage. It is used this time to signal that the turn of this speaker is over in the conversation. So this code switch is used as a closing device. It is a pre-closing code switch.
- The second and sixth code switches are signalled by frozen expressions that denote cultural and / or religious attitudes. But in addition to their ideological connotation, they have a conversational function. We may interpret these two code switches according to their function in the interaction without looking at their socio-cultural (religious) connotation. So code switching in such a case may be analysed internally (within the frame of conversation), extra-conversationally by relating it to its socio-cultural external context, or both internally and externally.

12-/bəʃʂaħ rabba juznanərd a-ndir/ (*But God sent us a herald (the Prophet)*)

This utterance contains an extra sentential code switch to Algerian Arabic /bəʃʂaħ/ (*But*). Following Auer's(1998) model this code switch has a conversational function. It introduces a contrastive piece of information which contrasts with the one preceding it. The code switch is also a connector. Connectors' switching has been noticed in many minority groups in contact situations. Gardener Chloros and Edwards (2003) discuss the replacement of monolingual discourse strategies used to signal contrastive information such as pauses and falls in intonation, or by a marked use of stress by code switching back and forth. The direction of the switches in such case becomes less important than the conversational meaning of the switch itself. We may also talk about the switching in connectors as a signal to the emergence of mixed codes in minority groups.

Connectors are cases of insertional code switching par excellence since they do not trigger off the use of other language items around them. We noticed in the analysis of this tape recording that Algerian Arabic connectors seem to be used on a same scale as M'zabi ones. This may be a signal of the emergence of a M'zabi Algerian Arabic mixed code in the speech of our informants. This phenomenon has been noticed in many studies on minority groups.

Oesch Serra's (1998) study on the emergence of a mixed code in the speech of migrant Italians in French speaking Switzerland is a good illustration of such mixed codes. She showed that the use of connectors from both French and Italian with a similar frequency has given rise to a mixed French Italian code which was characterized by the use of both connectors such as the French 'mais' and the Italian 'ma', both meaning (*but*). Similar studies have also shown the emergence of such a mixed code in the speech of Moroccan emigrants in England and in the Netherlands (Boumans, 1996; Li Wei, 2003). Such a mixed code is characterized by the prevalence of discourse markers from the majority language in the in-group language of these Moroccan speakers.

To compare these findings with our data, we calculated the number of discourse markers in one of the tape recordings. Out of 102 discourse markers, 33% are not Berber (21 Arabic discourse markers, 12 French discourse markers). This may be interpreted as a stage in the formation of a mixed code). Below is an instance of code switching

13-/tʃalid̥ asis bata əʃraju fid əzzuhur/

(Do you know about what is this thing, flower feast?)

From a discursive point of view, code switching is used here to show a change in turn taking. From a socio-cultural point of view, this code switch may be considered as a metaphorical code switch. This speaker uses S. to show his religious affiliation. M'zabi Berber speakers are generally very attached to Islamic values. He ironically

uses this code switch to show that this feast is not part of their cultural heritage nor is it part of contemporary feasts. This attitude appears in the last part of the interaction where the second speaker insinuates that this feast /ʔid əzzuhur/ is not accepted in the M'zabi culture.

14-/aḍ ḍkəʃmay ɣər/ D.S /ənʃallah/

(I will enter (attend) the make up exam, with God willing)

We shall focus on the code switch /ənʃallah/ (*with God willing*). This is an inter-sentential code switch between Berber and Standard Arabic. The Berber part being /aḍ ḍkəʃmay ɣər D.S (*I will enter (attend) the make up exam*) while the Standard Arabic part is /ənʃallah/ (*with God willing*). From a discursive point of view, this code switch constitutes a pre-closing. The speaker signals that her turn taking in the conversation is over. Generally speaking, code switches to Standard Arabic involving this idiomatic expression are most of the time pre-closing or pre-opening. Code switching is used in such cases as a closing or an opening device.

15-/ʔawəl ʃajʔ ʔindama jamut al ʔinsan at təxlaq
dis ta gaʃa mbaʔd ad jəbda jduba tam urθ əl
jəxsən adərʃin/

(The first thing when the human being dies, a worm appears in him, and then he starts melting until the bones disintegrate)

In this passage, we have intra-sentential and inter-sentential code switching between Standard Arabic and M'zabi Berber. The first utterance is from Standard Arabic: /ʔawəl ʃajʔ ʔindama jamut al ʔinsan / (*the first thing when the human being dies*).

It is followed by an utterance from M'zabi Berber /at təxlaq dis ta gaʃa/ (*a worm appears in him*). This is an inter-sentential code switch. It is followed by an extra-sentential code switch to Algerian Arabic /mbaʔd/ (*then*). This in turn is followed by a Berber M'zabi part /ad jəbda jduba tam urθ əl jəxsən adər ʃin/ (*he starts melting until the bones disintegrate*).

From a discursive point of view, the extra-sentential code switch to Algerian Arabic /mbaʔd/ (*then*) is used as a device to signal a succession of elements of information.

1st element: the appearance of the worm in the body.

2nd element: the melting of the body and the disintegration of the bones.

The two elements are segmented (separated) by this code switch to Algerian Arabic (the discourse marker /mbaʔd/).

The second code switch is a single noun /rabi/ (*God*). It is a religious expression that has a heavy religious weight. It is neither adapted phonologically nor morpho-syntactically. We can consider this as a borrowing since it is used by monolingual speakers. This

17- /rabi sobħanu wa taʃala jənnə jana amal at tħasbəm rabi jaxlaq anay ʃabaθən/

(*God with all His greatness tells us do not think God created us without any purpose*)

In this utterance, we have inter and extra-sentential code switches between Arabic and Berber. The first code switch is an inter-sentential code switch. It is a frozen cultural (religious) idiomatic expression /rabi sobħanu wa taʃala/ (*God with all His greatness*). It may be considered as a loan which kept its original pronunciation in Standard Arabic, not only as a case of Classicism,

but also because it has a strong cultural and religious load. Expressions such as this one abound in Muslim communities whether they are Berber speaking or Arabic speaking communities. These expressions have strong cultural and religious connotations. This protects them from being assimilated in the language systems of the communities where they are used. They are considered as sacred and unchangeable. The code switch in this utterance is noticed many times in this tape recording. This may be due to the fact that the informant is an Imam (a *preacher*). He has a language repertoire characterized by a lexical richness in Standard Arabic. The situation itself is very formal; it is a sermon at the mosque. It may be compared to a diglossic situation involving M'zabi Berber and Standard Arabic. In order to be well understood by those attending his sermon, the preacher uses a mixing of Standard Arabic and M'zabi Berber.

Conclusion

The application of a conversational analysis perspective to the interpretation of code switching seems to be a promising alternative in the analysis of code switching and related contact phenomena. The investigation of the Berber bilingual data of the present paper indicates that the interpretation of code-switching may be internal to the frame of conversation. Code switching in such a case is only meaningful in terms of its interactional and conversational function (the function that it conveys in the conversation). Languages are used as resources to convey meaning in conversation within Mzabi and Kabyle communication networks. This is done independently from the status attributed to the varieties involved in the wider socio-cultural context of the speech community.

The informants that we have investigated seem to mix varieties (Berber, Algerian Arabic and French) in some of the examples given above. Sometimes, the direction of switching seems to be meaningful only within the frame of conversation. In some examples we have switching from Berber to Arabic, then from Arabic to Berber and then from Berber to Arabic again. The direction of switching is not guided by any language hierarchy (dominance configuration) but by an inner conversational construct.

The Mzabi and Berber minority speakers seem to use a mixed code where the majority of code switches are single constituents that may not be interpreted from a socio-linguistic point of view, but in terms of their interactional contribution. These speakers code switch without making any functional differentiation between the varieties involved (absence of a diglossic code switching).

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