

Contextualization cues and footing in Japanese-English bilingual storytelling activities¹⁾

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Abstract

本研究は、ハワイで幼児期から日本語・英語の二言語に接する環境にいる男女6人のバイリンガル児(5;0-7;11)のうち、童話の語りにおける日本語と英語の言語の切り替えを調べた。その中で、子供たちによる言語の切り替えが、どのような参加者のいる枠組みで、どのような自己の位置づけに基づいて決められているのかを contextualization cue (Gumperz, 1982), footing (Goffman, 1981)を用いて分析した。

分析の結果、バイリンガル児の言語選択は、童話を語るタスクの中で、談話中の様々なコミュニケーション機能を表すために使われていたことがわかった。多くの場合、言語が切り替わる際、その言語使用は異なるコンテキストを表し、単に童話の情景描写を行っているわけではないことを示した。またオーディエンスとして子供たちが参加した際には、話者自身の位置づけが変化し、言語の切り替えにつながっていた。

Key Words: bilingualism, codeswitching, footing, contextualization cues, storytelling

1. Introduction

Japanese people have continuously migrated into Hawaii since 1868, except for the period around World War II (Chinen & Higa, 1997; Ogawa & Grant, 2008). Today there are many people who moved from Japan to Hawaii for international business and career purposes. In this setting, having two languages, or bilingualism, emerges because of the need to communicate with those who play an important role in a person's life: parents, siblings, other family members, peers, and teachers. In the multilingual society of Hawaii, many children were born in Hawaii or moved there at an early age and have acquired two different languages.

Based on the data from my fieldwork in Hawaii, this study attempts to see how children's codeswitching is displayed in the use and shifts of alignments in their storytelling narratives. Children select their languages for various communicative functions when they create social relations in their narratives as they go into the story and interact with their peers. The research questions are (1) how the bilingual children use switches between languages for various functions

and (2) how the Japanese/English language choices help to frame the activities that the bilingual children are engaged in.

This paper is organized as follows: Section 2 reviews previous studies which have found in bilingual codeswitching phenomena, including some relevant terminology and research. Section 3 presents demographic information on the participants, as well as the set of data used to analyze their bilingual narratives. Section 4 analyzes some excerpts of discourses from a qualitative perspective. Finally, Section 5 provides the concluding discussion, followed by a list of references and appendices.

2. Previous studies

2.1 Codeswitching in bilingual speech

The definitions of bilingualism and codeswitching vary among scholars. For this study, I define bilingual children's codeswitching as the patterned switching between languages (or codes) that occurs both inside and outside sentence boundaries. Past research has shown three basic types of codeswitching²; those occurring across sentence boundaries (intersentential); those occurring within sentence boundaries (intrasentential); and tag, interjection, sentence filler, and sentence-final particle switching (extrasentential) (Hoffmann, 1991; Nishimura, 1985; Romaine, 1995; Taura, 2005). Prosodic and phonological cues, including emphasis and pauses, morphological integration, fluency, and social interaction with the audience all combine to determine one's code. According to Swann (2000), 'individual speakers draw on features from languages or language varieties, each associated with different social groups and sets of values' (Swann, 2000:181). Codeswitching is a 'frequently and naturally occurring phenomenon in bilingual speech' (Hoffmann, 1991:85). It occurs early in children, but 'at first is used mainly to express a word or an expression that is not immediately accessible in the speaker's other language(s)' (Grosjean, 1982:206).

Bilingual codeswitching, rather than arising from insufficient control of L2, can be 'a highly developed skill requiring competence in two languages, a skill which is governed by rules common to both' (Poplack, 1981:183). Limited proficiency in one code is not necessarily an indicator of a poor codeswitcher and vice versa. It could be further inferred that 'it is not linguistic proficiency, but the interaction of situation and codeswitcher's intention that determines the occurrence of codeswitching' (Taura, 2005:37). Following previous research, this study explores codeswitching from the perspective of interactional sociolinguistics.

2.2 Contextualization cues in codeswitching

Gumperz's notion of contextualization cues refers to 'constellations of surface features of

message form which are the means by which speakers signal and listeners interpret what the activity is, how semantic content is to be understood, and how each sentence relates to what precedes or follows' (Gumperz, 1982:131). He proposed that any aspect of linguistic data – 'lexical, prosodic, phonological, and syntactic choices together with the use of particular codes, dialects, or styles – may function as a contextualization cue, indicating those aspects of the context which are relevant in interpreting what a speaker means' (p. 162). Switching serves to contextualize certain linguistic activities (Auer, 1998: 310). Thus, the notion of contextualization cues offers an important tool to grasp the relationship between language use and speakers' orientations to context and inference marking (Drew and Heritage, 1992:8). A contextualization cue is useful to measure bilingual participants' orientation to situational and metaphorical codeswitching.

In addition, Gumperz (1982) presents metaphorical codeswitching as separate from situational codeswitching. Speakers 'create a new context in metaphorical codeswitching. In contrast, situational codeswitching occurs due to change in location or a new participant who does not speak their language' (p.60). Linguistic alternation invokes a contextual frame that acts as an adjunct to the frame indexed by the first code, not simply as a replacement for it (Rampton, 1995:278). Contextual information often provides evidence of the pragmatic intent of the utterance (Demuth, 1998:16), which may result in codeswitching.

There are two types of codeswitching: discourse-related switching and participant-related switching. Discourse-related codeswitching involves a contextualization strategy used by bilinguals to convey meaning in conversation. As a contextualization strategy, it 'represents a metapragmatic comment on the on-going interaction which marks it as bilingual' (Auer, 1998:310). With discourse-related codeswitching, 'participants make sense of a switch by interpreting it as marking out a different addressee, a new topic, a distinct narrative segment and so forth' (Rampton, 1995:277) involving contextualization cues as outlined by Gumperz (1982). In this paper, the examples of the discourse-related codeswitching are given in Section 4. In contrast, participant-related codeswitching covers instances of diverging language preferences and competence' (Auer, 1998). For example, Shin's study of Korean-American children in the U.S. shows that the bilingual children use codeswitching to negotiate individual preferences for one language or the other (Shin, 2005).

2.3 Footing in codeswitching

Footing is speakers' alignments toward people, topics, and actions, proposed by Goffman (1981). It is often used in conversation analysis, and it is 'the alignments we take up to ourselves and the others present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of an

utterance' (p.18). A change in footing can be seen as a truly interactional phenomenon in that it is not only dependent on what type of shift the speaker advances in his or her speech, but also upon how the shift is received by the co-participants (Cromdal & Aronsson, 2000). This change in footing is indicated in the different roles that the narrator represents, for example, an author, animator, principal, and so forth.

A close relation between codeswitching and shifts in footing can be found, according to Goffman (1981). Goffman mentions, '[f]or speakers, codeswitching is usually involved, and if not this then at least the sound makers that linguistics study: pitch, volume, rhythm, stress, tonal quality' (p.128). In other words, a codeswitch is a clear indication of the shift in footing at least with a sound change. Changes of a speaker's footing often project changes of his or her participation frameworks, testifying to the reflexive nature of footings (Drew and Heritage, 1992). The Goffmanian footing provides a useful set of tools for analyzing bilingual children's construction of conversational realities. For example, by analyzing Swedish-English bilingual children's conversations at an international school, Cromdal & Aronsson (2000) showed how different production formats and participation frameworks are interactively constructed, sustained and re-negotiated (p.453).

Summing up this section, we see that codeswitching research has been investigated since the 1980s. However, the concern with participants' interpretations and intentions is still underrepresented in studies of codeswitching, as pointed out by Cromdal & Aronsson (2000). Due to these limited resources, this study is significant as an attempt to use the analytical tools such as contextualization cues and footing in order to investigate the codeswitching phenomena in the following sections.

3. Methods

3.1 Participants

Out of twenty-one children in Takemoto (2009), six Japanese-English bilingual children aged 5;0 to 7;11 were selected for this study. Participants were located through personal acquaintances in the Japanese-English bilingual community in Honolulu. Children in this study are those who (1) have access to both Japanese and English since birth or an early age at home and school as well as after-school lessons (i.e., elite bilinguals) and (2) have relative fluency in both Japanese and English.³⁾ These children narrated a Japanese culture-specific story, *Momotaro* (*The Peach Boy*), in both Japanese and English.

All the children are relatively balanced bilinguals who are immersed in both English and Japanese bilingual education and contexts: Japanese at home and in after-school activities and English for formal instruction at school and some public interaction in the community. All of the

children have Japanese as their first language and speak Japanese with their Japanese-speaking parents and were involved in community events in Hawaii. In the multilingual environment of Hawaii, Japanese is not only the family’s immigrant language spoken at home, but also the language of the Japanese community outside school and in after-school activities. Demographic information on each child is presented on Table 1. Numbers in age (;) indicate a child’s years and months.

Table 1: Demographic information on the bilingual children

Name	Age	Gen	Edu	M's L1	F's L1	Arrival Age	Residence in U.S.A.	Siblings
Naomi	5;0	F	Pre-K	J	J	since birth	5;0	OS (7;11)
Ken	5;9	M	K	J	J	since birth	5;9	n/a
Nancy	6;2	F	K	J	J	since birth	6;2	n/a
Saki	6;2	F	K	J	J	Japanese -born 0;10	5;4	YS (2;5)
Maggie	6;9	F	G1	J	J	since birth	6;9	n/a
Amy	7;11	F	G2	J	J	since birth	7;11	OS (10;0)

Legend

Gen: Gender Edu: Education K: Kindergarten G: Grade M’s L1: Mother’s First Language F’s L1: Father’s First Language J: Japanese E: English OS: Older Sister YS: Young sister

Every child in this sample attended a school where all education and activities are conducted in English due to there being no daily full-time Japanese school in Hawaii. However, all the children in the sample population in Hawaii participated in after-school and weekend activities in Japanese. Saturday School, Sunday Church School, several *kyuku* ‘after-school cramming school’ and non-study types of after-school lessons such as piano and karate lessons can be the source of Japanese formal input outside the home. Because of the limited sources of Japanese input in education, Japanese formal learning is accessible mainly to the children whose families support them in the pursuit of bilingualism.

3.2 Data

There were four types of data: (1) audio recordings of the children’s storytelling narratives in

both Japanese and English, (2) interviews with the children after the storytelling, (3) the observer's field notes, and (4) children's language background questionnaires filled out by their mothers. Participant observations were carried out by the investigator, a fluent bilingual speaker in Japanese and English. Because the details of the setting and activities of participants are often essential to interpreting participants' utterances, field notes capturing contextual details at each recording were taken, following Demuth (1998). The audio recordings of the data were transcribed and coded, following conversation analytic conventions. See Appendix for transcription conventions.

A wordless picture book of *Momotaro (The Peach Boy)* was created for data elicitation and used throughout the narrative data collection. Momotaro is a traditional Japanese story and contains Japanese culture-specific lexical items such as *kibi-dango* 'millet dumpling', and *oni* 'ogre', etc. These culture-specific terms were expected to elicit examples of codeswitching from the participants in their English retelling of the narratives. The illustrated photos of the picture book of Momotaro (Mizuhata & Miyao, 2007 [1997]) by Nagaokashoten were utilized, after the permission for the use of research purposes was obtained.

4. Contextualization cues and footing in on- and off-task contexts

This section presents the analyses of the bilingual children's speech data in the framework of interactional sociolinguistics. Based on the notions of contextualization cues and footing in codeswitching as we have seen in Section 2, the following Sections 4.1 and 4.2 will examine contextualization cues in on- and off-task contexts. In addition, side sequences (c.f. Shin, 2005) that voice and signal other thoughts or characters in bilingual children's codeswitching will be used for the analysis.

4.1 Cues at 'on-task'

Codeswitching is used for different functions in children's storytelling. The reality of working with individual children resulted in different types of codeswitching. The different contexts of telling the story are depicted, for example, asking for an appropriate term, or commenting on the story in Japanese while working on constructing the story. In this case, the children are still 'on-task', trying to tell the story appropriately.

4.1.1 Request for editing

Bilingual children make use of the other language when they are narrating in one language. Different functions reflect the use of different languages. A child's request for editing her recorded storytelling is one example as shown in (1).

(1) Maggie (6;9) told *Momotaro* in English to the investigator.

- 1 M: and (.) what (.) um (.) *koko wa chotto (.) ano (.)*
here TOP a little well
'And, what, um, well, a little, here...'
- 2 *saigo wa keshi-tai ↑na*
last TOP erase-want FP
'I want to erase the last.'
- 3 I: *un (.) ii yo. koko wa yaranakute (ii yo)*
yeah fine FP here TOP do.NEG.CONT fine FP
'Yeah, it's fine. You don't have to do it here.'
- 4 M: so, monkey on the tree (.) *kara ne?*
from FP
'So, from the monkey on the tree, right?'
- 5 I: okay
- 6 M: and he saw a momotaro um (.) > skip *shite ii?*
do.CONT fine
'And he saw a *momotaro*. Can I skip?'
- 7 *momotaroo ga (.) ano (.) hune o sagasu tokoro.<*
Momotaro NOM well boat ACC search place
'The place Momotaro is, well, looking for a boat.'
- 8 I: yeah (.) oh (.) you can do it as you like.
- 9 M: momotaro um (.) said (.) we can try on the boat

Notice here in (1) that a codeswitch to Japanese provides a side sequence that voices other thoughts from her main body of storytelling. Her storytelling activity takes place in English, while her side comments that organize the storyline are conducted in Japanese as shown in lines 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7, where Maggie is asking for permission to edit the story. Various kinds of embedded, non-linear sequences such as question/answer and request/concession (or refusal) involve codeswitching, as Shin (2005) points out. Lines 4 and 6 involve codeswitches within a sentence boundary. She specifies where she wants to speak in English, but she requests the edit in Japanese. It appears that she uses different languages for different functions, i.e., English for storytelling and Japanese for editing and requesting.

In addition to her side sequences signaling negotiation, Maggie's codeswitching results from

a shift in footing. She shifts her role from both author and principal to author only when she starts negotiation. Instead of holding her role as principal, Maggie gives the role of principal to the investigator by asking for permission to edit the story in her preferred way, starting from line 1 to the end of the excerpt. When Maggie moves into a storytelling activity, she makes a switch into English, which is an instructed language in this activity. In contrast, shifting into a negotiation frame co-occurs with a switch into Japanese in all lines. Not only codeswitching, these frame transitions are also marked by other linguistic and prosodic features, such as shifts in voice quality. In this narrative, Maggie lowers her pitch and whispers when she changes to Japanese and negotiates with the investigator. Her frame shifts are associated with systematic codeswitching.

4.2 Cues at ‘off-task’

4.2.1 Request for a drink

The children made use of metaphorical codeswitching (see Section 4) in ‘off-task’ contexts, as contextualization cues signal in a child’s storytelling as in example (2). This example shows codeswitching as a side sequence, which serves another voice within one person in the narrative, because it has a pragmatic function of separating the official activity, i.e., narration of *Momotaro* in English, from her personal request for something to drink in Japanese.

(2) Maggie (6;9) told *Momotaro* in English to the investigator.

- | | | |
|---|----|--|
| 1 | M: | and one and a bird got a little ↑scared |
| 2 | | but when we went closer and closer |
| 3 | | it got ↓darker and darker. |
| 4 | | ° <i>chotto nodo kawaite kichatta</i> °
a little throat dry.CONT come.PERF.PST
‘I’m getting a little thirsty.’ |
| 5 | I: | <i>n?</i>
huh
‘Huh?’ |
| 6 | M: | ° <i>chotto nodo kawaite kichatta</i> °
a little throat dry.CONT come.PERF.PST
‘I’m getting a little thirsty.’ |
| 7 | I: | yep ((passing a drink)) |
| 8 | M: | ((drinking)) |
| 9 | I: | ↑okay |

- 10 M: *koohii?*
 coffee.BRW
 ‘(Is this) Coffee?’
- 11 I: *uun (.) nanka (.) rate mitai na? kafe rate?*
 no something latte.BRW like FP café latte.BRW
 ‘No, it’s like, latte? It’s like café latte?’
- 12 *koohii miruku ppoi?*
 coffee milk.BRW like
 ‘It’s like coffee (with) milk?’
- 13 M: <1:0> <and it was, it turned darker and darker.>

In (2), Maggie does not want to interrupt her storytelling, and she uses different codes for different functions clearly in her narrative. In line 4, she switches her code and changes her voice quality by whispering in order to convey her feeling as a side sequence that voices her request. Her codeswitched utterances in lines 4, 6, and 10 function to request a drink and ask a question about off-task as a side sequence. When she gears back to her storytelling, she switches back to English as shown in line 13.

Her side sequences signals her negotiation as request for a drink, and Maggie’s footing is shifted from author and narrator to negotiator. This negotiation involves different footing, realized as codeswitching. By switching English to Japanese in lines 4, 6, and 10, she shows her different positions.

4.2.2 Bilingual humor

Codeswitching at ‘off-task’ occurs for the purpose of creating comic effects in storytelling activities among children, especially when their peers are present. Bilingual language usage involving switched puns and jokes can be said to serve the poetic function of language (Appel & Muysken, 1987). This type of switching is used by children to introduce comic effects into their narratives. Codeswitches and bilingual creative words are observed when a bilingual child regards the storytelling activity as an entertaining task with peers. Some children make the audience laugh by using codeswitching to create jokes and puns, thus serving poetic functions, as shown in (3) and (4).⁴⁾

(4) Ken (5;9) told *Momotaro* to his friends Saki and Nancy (both 6;2) and the investigator

- 1 K *obasan to ojichan...*
aunt and uncle
'Aunt and uncle...'
- 2 N: ((laugh))
- 3 S: *dakara ENGLISH*
so
'So, English!'
- 4 K *dakedo ossan(.) obasan ga*
but uncle aunt NOM
'But the uncle and the aunt (said...)'
- 5 *moo ↑chotto de <2:0> ikeba yokatta*
more a little COP go.COND good.PST
“(I) should have gone a little more further.”
- 6 *demo ojichan wa okotteta.*
but uncle TOP angry.PST
'but the uncle was angry.'
- 7 N: *°oko...°*
- 8 I: english
- 9 S: english
- 10 I: okay?
- 11 K: <2:0>UNGLISH
crap/unko/-lish
'Craplish'
- 12 N: ((laugh)) unglisn.
- 13 I: okay. <2:0> okay.
- 14 K: he, he gree his (.) en bebe. en za sa pa dele.
and he was a bit dele take ttele
- 16 N: [((laugh))]
- 17 K: [dere ka tele. un gake tetta un do ko teka debe.
- 18 I: in English. [english
- 19 S: [english
- 20 K: okay, CHINEMESE. [ta tebe.
- 21 N: [((laugh))]

instruction and starts telling the story in Japanese. In the same line, he deliberately uses a different register *obasan to ojichan*, ‘aunt and uncle’, not the appropriate one *obaasan to ojiisan* ‘grandma and grandpa’, which creates a disjunction between the appropriate storyline and his storytelling. In line 2, Nancy notices Ken’s inappropriate use of a Japanese register, which results in her laughter. Then in line 6, Nancy tries to cut in to let him know, and soon the interlocutor tells Ken to use English in line 8. His friend Saki also tells him to use English in lines 3, 9, and 19. However, in line 11, Ken creates a Japanese-English blended word, Unglish: /unko/ ‘crap’+ /lish/ with sequential voicing from /k/ to [g]→ ‘Craplish’ to express his aversion to the use of English in his storytelling activity. Ken’s ability to make up a bilingual compound with word-internal switching, such as Unglish, highlights his command of two languages morphologically.

Ken’s frame shifts and disjunction creates humor. His frame shows his reluctance to use English in his playful narrative by using his made-up foreign languages (as in Gree and Chinese) as well as Japanese. This frame involves laughter from Nancy and frustration from both Saki and the investigator, because Ken is opposed to the storytelling task in English. Nancy laughs after each example of Ken’s non-English language play. Saki and the investigator are frustrated by his inappropriate language use and repeatedly tell him to speak English. In the participation framework, the disjunction between [Ken and Nancy] and [Saki and the investigator] brings humor to this storytelling activity. Ken’s codeswitching to non-English languages such as Gree, Chinese, and Unglish shows how the disjunction is done, which involves humor in his bilingual audience through his language play.

The different functions of codeswitching are signaled by contextualization cues and footing. This is also influenced by Ken’s audience design. As Bell claimed (1984:145; 1997), style is essentially speakers’ response to their audience. In Ken’s narrative with his peers, Nancy primarily aligned with his primary audience, while Saki and the investigator aligned with his secondary audience. The difference in the positions of the audience reflects his code selection.

Summing up this section, this paper examines how codeswitching is used to manage different alignments to the audience in children’s narratives, involving different contextualization cues and footings. Directions of codeswitching are determined in speakers’ constellation of footing, because shifts in footing induce a switch to the languages. In bilingual children’s codeswitching, shifts in their orientations toward their interaction bring codeswitching into their storytelling activities. Based on the previous studies of footing and codeswitching, this section has attempted to identify some functions of codeswitching, as used by the children for their various intentions.

5. Conclusion

By describing how codeswitching is made relevant by the child participants themselves, this study examines instances of codeswitching qualitatively which are triggered by contextualization cues and shifts in footing. Bilingual children make use of codeswitching to contextualize shifts in their interaction with other group members. The use of codeswitching reframes a speaker's activity from telling a story to other intentions. The most intriguing examples are presented in Section 4.2.2, bilingual humor.

I must admit, however, that the children's conversations are not completely transparent to interpretation. Interpreting the conversational aims of young children has limitations sometimes. Even so, contextualization cues and footing which are realized as codeswitching do signal different communicative functions in their storytelling activities.

Bilingual children's codeswitching does not result from a linguistic deficit. Rather, the children in my study are using switches between codes for various functions, not singular functions, by providing contextualization cues and shifts in footing. They are creating social relations as they go into the storytelling activities, rather than following pre-established guide for how to switch languages for their audience. In future research, I would like to examine these children's social relations and identities playing out in their bilingual language play.

Notes

- 1) I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Christina Higgins and her students at the University of Hawaii at Manoa for their comments on my early analysis of the bilingual speech data. I am also grateful for the invaluable comments made by two anonymous referees. Special thanks go to Laurie Durand for proofreading my early drafts and to Toshiaki Furukawa and Koichi Higaki for their insightful comments and warm encouragement. I would also like to thank the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan, for granting the scholarship for the research in Hawaii. Lastly, my deepest thanks go to the children and their parents in this study. All remaining shortcomings are solely my own responsibility.
- 2) Codeswitching and code-mixing are often distinguished, with 'code-mixing occurring intrasententially and codeswitching occurring intersententially' (Hoffmann, 1991:104). However, under the umbrella term 'codeswitching,' intrasentential switching is often referred to as 'code-mixing' (Appel & Muysken, 1987:118). The word 'mixing' has a 'somewhat negative association' (Taura, 2005:24) with imperfect bilingual learning of two languages in a society. This study, therefore, uses the term codeswitching to cover both codeswitching and code-mixing in order to avoid any confusion from the negative connotation of language mixing.
- 3) Before the culture-specific storytelling activity, the investigator asked each child to narrate a wordless

picture book, *Frog, where are you?* (Mayer, 1969), to measure his or her oral fluency in both Japanese and English.

4) Children's personality may affect this type of codeswitching use.

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Appendix

Abbreviations and transcription conventions

Abbreviations

ACC	accusative
BRW	borrowing
CONT	continuative
COND	conditional
COP	copula
FP	final particle
NOM	nominative marker
PERF	perfective
PL	plural
PST	past
TOP	topic marker

Transcription Conventions

.	falling intonation
,	continuing intonation
?	rising intonation
=	latched turn with no gap or overlap, or continuation by same speaker

:	sound stretch
[overlap
° <i>etto</i> °	whispered
<u>born</u>	greater than normal stress
↑	rise in pitch
:	sound stretch
<5:0>	pause in seconds
(.)	micropause
(the)	unsure hearing
£	smiley voice
TALK	loud volume
> <	faster than surrounding talk
< >	slower than surrounding talk
((laugh))	description of non-verbal actions