

ENGLISH/KUWAITI ARABIC CODE-SWITCHING AS A STRATEGY OF LANGUAGE CHOICE IN SOME KUWAITI FAMILIES

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Abstract

This study aims at investigating the phenomenon of English/Kuwaiti Arabic code-switching deployed by Kuwaiti mothers as a language choice strategy with their children in different social contexts.

The study was meant to examine the speech of balanced bilinguals in English and Kuwaiti Arabic, rather than unbalanced bilinguals. Therefore, fifty Kuwaiti mothers who were all university graduates or university/college students participated in the study. Recorded conversations were used as a technique to obtain spontaneous and natural speech from Kuwaiti mothers and their children.

The code-switching data were chiefly interpreted within a social framework. First the analytic framework used in the present analysis was described. Then, a detailed turn-by-turn analysis of English/Kuwaiti Arabic code-switching was introduced. The analytic approach adopted to examine the data was the sequential approach (Auer, 1988, 1991, 1998). This approach classifies, in various ways, the grammatical structures or discourse functions of code-switching.

The study shows that Kuwaiti mothers and their children deploy E/KA code-switching in both the home and non-home domains as one strategy or language choice. This only one indication that English, in Kuwait, is no longer used merely in academic settings. Rather, its use has expanded to various domains.

The Researcher recommends that other studies should be carried out to see if English/Kuwaiti Arabic code-switching deployed by other social groups, such as among friends, exists.

Introduction

In a longitudinal study on language choice in the State of Kuwait carried out by the writer of this paper, the use of English/Kuwaiti Arabic code-switching was one of the underlying themes that was located (Dashti, 1998). A questionnaire was distributed to 500 Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti Arabs residing in Kuwait. The results of the questionnaire showed that Kuwaitis claim that English/Kuwaiti Arabic code-switching is used among different interlocutors and in different interactions, particularly in Kuwaiti mother/child interactions.

This paper aims at verifying the above claim by examining code-switching data of Kuwaiti mother/child interactions, both in the home and non-home domains to see, first, how they use code-switching as a linguistic resource or for communicative purposes, and second, to argue that English in Kuwait has been recently developing a more centralized role and its use is spreading in different social domains. Although it is widely acknowledged by educationists in Kuwait that English in Kuwait maintains an EFL status, this paper could enhance other researchers to carry out similar studies to see if Kuwait is heading towards maintaining an ESL status.

I believe at this stage that we have in Kuwait a considerable number of balanced bilinguals as far as English is concerned. So let us examine their use of English to see if patterns of E/KA code-switching are parallel to those found in bilingual communities.

The code-switching data of this study will be chiefly interpreted within a social framework. First, I shall describe the analytic framework used in the present analysis. Then, I shall introduce a detailed, turn-by-turn analysis of E/KA code-switching. The analytic approach adopted to examine the data is the sequential approach (Auer 1988, 1991, 1998; Li Wei & Milroy, 1995) which classifies in various ways the grammatical structures or discourse functions of code-switching.

1.2 Significance of the study

To the best of my knowledge, there has been no investigation of code-switching in general and English/Kuwaiti Arabic code-switching in particular in the state of Kuwait. It is hoped that this study will provide a basis as well as a stimulus for further research in language choice, and some related underlying themes such as code-switching among Kuwaiti-

tis. It is also hoped that this study will make use of the theoretical and methodological procedures carried out in different parts of the world by examining code-switching in the Kuwaiti community.

1.3 Scope of the study

A significant underlying theme of language choice that is worth studying is associated with the role of English language in Kuwait. I believe at this stage that different interlocutors do not only use English in schools and academic settings but also at home and outside the home. One evidence of such status of English is that Kuwaitis tend to use English/Kuwaiti Arabic code-switching in various domains as a strategy of language choice. So, it is worthwhile investigating, for example, the mechanisms of code-switching that Kuwaitis deploy, if any. Although other languages such as (Farsi) and other varieties of the Arabic language are used in Kuwait, analyzing patterns of code-switching between these languages and varieties of the same language and Kuwaiti Arabic is beyond the scope of this study.

2. Theoretical Assumptions

2.1 Conversational code-switching: Introduction

Code-switching has often been described as a conversational strategy. This strategy is sometimes discussed in terms of its use in intensifying or decreasing such conversational acts as demands, refusals, topic change, explanations or comments, verifications or interpretations.

Blom & Gumperz, for example, in their study of Hemnesberget, Norway, identified two types of code-switching practice: situational and metaphorical. Situational code-switching occurs when the languages used change according to the situations in which the conversants find themselves; that is they speak one language in one situation and another in a different one (1972, p. 421). For example, an adult Berber-speaking Moroccan in The Netherlands speaks Berber with another Berber-speaking Moroccan, but switches to Moroccan Arabic when speaking to a non-Berber Moroccan (Appel & Muysken, 1987). Likewise, in Sauris, Italy, speakers use Friulian, an Italian dialect, in semi-public settings such as the local bar, but speak a localized German dialect at home, and standard Italian at school and church (Denison, 1972).

Metaphorical code-switching, on the other hand, refers to those situations where speakers switch from one language to another in order to achieve special communicative effects, while participant and setting remain the same.

It is worthwhile mentioning that a great deal of research in the micro-interactional aspects of language choice, such as Auer's (1984, 1988, 1991, 1998) research has been motivated by Gumperz's (1982) approach to code-switching. In this study I will consider primarily, Auer's (1984, 1988, 1991, 1998; Li Wei & Milroy, 1995) sequential analysis of language alternations on which my analysis will rely.

2.2 Classificatory Vs Sequential Approaches to Conversational Code-Switching

There are two analytical approaches to examining conversational code-switching: sequential and classificatory. The former focuses mainly on the embedding of language choice in the turn-by-turn organization of interaction, while the latter classifies in various ways the grammatical structures or discourse functions of code-switching. In our analysis in this study we will attempt to examine Auer's (1984, 1988, 1991, 1998; Li Wei & Milroy 1995) sequential approach, which has proved to bear more strength over other analytic archetypes. As to the classificatory approach, we may mention briefly that Gumperz examines the conversational loci where speakers are likely to change from one language to another by identifying a number of discourse functions which code-switching is seen to fulfil. These functions include the following: (i) quotation, (ii) addressee specification, (iii) interjections, (iv) reiteration (v) message qualification and (vi) personalization versus objectivisation (1982).

The sequential approach, on the other hand, focuses mainly on the embedding of language choice in the turn-by turn organization of interaction and shows how code-switching is interactionally meaningful. In addition, code-switching helps to produce changes in the definition of the situation, i.e., can be characterized conversationally, and are interactionally meaningful (Auer, 1984).

It is worth mentioning that Auer (1984, 1988, 1991, 1998) who carried out a sequential analysis of code-switching on data collected among Italian speakers in Constance, Germany, proposes that code-

switching is better analyzed as a contextualisation cue⁽¹⁾, a term which has already been introduced by Gumperz (1982, 1992). Contextualisation cues are identified as all the process by which members of a given community may interpret the local and conceivable contexts, which are necessary for the elucidation of their linguistic and non-linguistic activities. Additionally, Li Wei (1994, 1995) and Li Wei & Milroy (1995) argue that the study of code-switching as contextualisation cues calls for an analytic procedure which focuses on the sequential development of interaction. Such analytic procedure can be best achieved by adopting the framework provided by conversational analysis. Li Wei (ibid) identifies three levels in conversational analysis. Level A refers to the situation where two speakers use different languages in consecutive turns. A single speaker, then, within a turn, may switch code at sentence boundaries (Level B) to give us what Poplack terms as 'inter-sentential code-switching' (1980, p. 590). We will see later that Level A and Level B are combined in a way that the end of a sentence is possibly a turn transition point. Level C refers to different constituents within a sentence being coded in different languages. The following examples (from English/KA code-switching) are meant to clarify the three levels:

Example 1: Level A: (different speakers using different languages in consecutive turns).

Context: in a park, mother talking to son.

M: (to son) do you want to play with the kids

S: (to mother) baʕad ʃwaj

after a while

M: (to son) leiʃ mama ruħ ilʕab

why mom, go and play

Example 2: Level B: (switching code at sentence boundary)

Context: over a meal, mother advising daughter not to eat too much sweet.

M: (to daughter) a:na gitliʃ lata:kli:n ħulu wajid

I told you don't eat a lot of sweets

(1) See Gumperz (1982, 1992) and Auer (1991) for a full description of the characteristics of contextualisation cues.

D: (to mother) a small piece please mum

M: (to daughter) a very tiny piece ikli fa:kha aħsalliʃ

a very tiny piece. Eat fruits, it is better for you.

D: (to mother) I got fed up with fruits

Example 3: Level C: (different constituents within a sentence coded in different languages)

Context: mother instructing daughter on how to use a dandruff shampoo.

M: (to daughter) at least mama marritein fi ljo:m

at least mum twice a day

D: (to mother) alla twice a day wa:ʃid mama

oh God twice a day too much mum

Literature on code-switching reveals that different groups within a community may adopt different code-switching strategies. Distinguished choices by two speakers at turn boundaries (Level A), for example, occur in conversational interactions comprising participants of different abilities and attitudes (e.g. Poplack, 1980, 2000; Scotton, 1983; 1997) whereas intra-sentential code-switching (Level C) is more likely to be found in stable bilingual communities. In the data corpus collected for this study code-switching is inspiring at all Levels, A, B and C.

As far as the organization and management of conversation are concerned two essential constructs of conversation analysis (i.e. turn-taking and the adjacency pair) should be presented, here, as they have ample inference for the later analysis of English/KA code-switching.

2.3 Turn-taking

Conversation analysts perceived that conversation interaction is marked by a systematic sharing of speakership. Li Wei, for example, argues that 'conversational participants employ 'a local management system', a set of rules with ordered options which operates on a turn-by-turn basis' (1994, p.154). This local management system which Schegloff refers to as 'The Turn-Constructional Component', requests the supposition that turns are made of minimal units which may 'include sentential, clausal, phrasal and lexical constructions' (2000, p.

42). Schegloff (ibid) argues that the end of such a unit is a transition relevance place (TRP) (2000, p. 49). Other studies perceived different features (contextualisation cues) as being implicated by the speaker in specifying the end of a turn, such as intonation, pitch/loudness, syntax, Gesture, etc. (Duncan, 1972, 1974; Graddol et al., 1987).

2.2.2 Adjacency Pair

Another local management organization in conversation is adjacency pairs of which 'question-answer, greeting-greeting, offer-acceptance, apology-minimization, etc. are prototypical' (Levinson, 1983, p.303). Schegloff & Sacks (1973) and Schegloff (2000) characterize adjacency pairs along the following lines: adjacency pairs are sequences of two utterances. These utterances are (i) adjacent, (ii) produced by different speakers, (iii) ordered as a first part and a second part, and (vi) typed, so that a participant first part requires a particular second (e.g. offers require acceptance or rejections, greetings require greetings, and so on). They (ibid) also claim that there is a rule governing the use of adjacency pairs, namely: having produced a first part of some pair, current speaker must stop speaking, and next speaker must produce at that point a second part to the same pair.

The importance of the adjacency pairs concept is revitalized by the notion of preference organization, Levinson (1983). Preference organization does not limit itself to the ranking of second parts of adjacency pairs. It can handle structure turns prior as well as subsequent to a given turn. To illustrate this, Levinson provides various examples, one of which is the following:

R: What about coming here on the way (.) or doesn't that give you enough time?

C: Well no I'm supervising here. (1983, p.335).

The above example indicates that a small delay (marked (.) is sufficient to indicate to R that there may be a problem with R's suggestion, the one R suggests.

In studying different strategies that speakers use to repair their contributions in conversation, Schegloff et al. came up with a device called 'the organization of repair'. (1977, p. 339). They (ibid) make two significant distinctions: (a) self-initiated contrasted to other-initiated repair- i.e. repair by a speaker without prompting; (b) self-repair

contrasted to other-repair. The former is being carried out by the speaker of the repairable item and the latter by another party. It is worth mentioning that the presence of repairs, particularly, other-initiated repairs has vital ramification for the sequential organization of conversation (LiWei, 1994). In any given conversation (like the one between R and C above) there is an exchange between participants, which is embedded within the exchange usually initiated by the first speaker. Levinson refers to this exchange structure as 'insertion sequence' (1983, p.348).

Hence, following a conversational analysis-style procedure, I will explore later in this paper the way in which Kuwaiti mothers and their children use E/KA code-switching as a contextualisation cue to signal turn completion, to label dispreference and insertion sequences, and to repair problem spots in conversational interactions.

2.3 Methodology

The scenario for the present paper revolves around examining the social meanings and discourse functions of code-switching data in Kuwaiti mother/child interactions⁽²⁾. Such examination will help us shed some light on the role of English in the state of Kuwait.

2.3.1 Subjects

Fifty Kuwaiti mothers participated in the study. They were all university graduates or university/college students. Although the results of the questionnaire showed that Kuwaitis, from different educational levels, claimed to use English/Kuwaiti Arabic code-switching, their claim, unless verified, is not to be taken seriously. One pitfall of using questionnaires as a technique in language use studies is that the subjects under study are not usually aware of the variety or varieties they use. Therefore, this study was meant to examine the speech of balanced bilinguals in English and Kuwaiti Arabic, rather than unbalanced bilinguals. The researcher hopes that the speech of our subjects will give us a clear picture of code-switching patterns.

As far as their children are concerned, their ages ranged from 6

(2) Female Kuwaitis were chosen as subjects for this study rather than male Kuwaitis due to the fact that in Kuwait women spend much more time with their children than men do. This choice, I assume, would make the results of this study more valid.

(school age) to 15. As a matter of fact, and due to the social development in Kuwait, the role of Kuwaiti mothers has changed. Now, they shoulder together with their husbands most of the family responsibilities. Therefore, pre-school children are usually left with the family's maid. Children, older than 15, and specially boys, spend most of their time with their friends rather than with their parents. Hence, the researcher believes that among this age group, 6-15, mother/child interactions will take place more often.

2.3.2 Access to Informants

The search for my subjects was not an easy task. Although Kuwait is more of an open country compared, for example, to its neighbor Saudi Arabia, in the sense that men's access to interviewing women is not totally forbidden, it is always better to approach married women through a woman rather than a man, or on the other hand, the researcher could approach the husband to ask his permission first. I depended on my wife and other female relatives in seeking the right people. They in their turn had to ask their friends if they knew women who could fall within the category we are seeking.

2.3.3 Recorded Conversation

Recorded conversations were used as a technique to obtain spontaneous and natural speech from Kuwaiti mothers and their children. In order to get valid and unmonitored speech, the subjects were not told -prior to get the recordings- that examining code-switching was the aim of the recordings; rather, the researcher told them that the study was examining the development of some Kuwaiti Arabic lexical items in the speech of children. Had the researcher told his subjects -in advance- the purpose of the recordings, he would have got totally invalid and completely monitored speech. When all the recordings were collected, the researcher told his subjects the real aim of the study and hence, no subject showed any objection. As a matter of fact it was difficult to fix a time for each of the subjects to get the recordings, due to the fact that they were all busy with work and other social activities. Therefore I decided to leave the recorder with each of them for a few days. This was successful in the sense that natural speech could be obtained. The subjects were also told that the recordings did not necessarily have to take place at home; rather they were told that it

was preferable that the recordings take place in any setting in which they find themselves together with their children. All in all, 132 hours of data were obtained.

2.3.4 Problems Encountered in the Fieldwork

As in any other fieldwork some problems were encountered. According to Islamic culture, married women should always ask for their husbands' approval for anything they want to do, for example, if they want to visit friends, go shopping, see a doctor etc. A number of those women who were very interested and willing to participate called back after having had the permission denied by their husbands and apologized. In addition, some of those husbands whose permission for an interview was requested, objected to the idea of having their wives' voices recorded, despite being convinced that the recording was for mere academic purposes. Although some non- Kuwaiti Arabs (who claimed that they spent most of their lives in Kuwait, and hence speak fluent Kuwaiti Arabic and English) were willing to participate, they were excluded for the sake of consistency. The number of the subjects, then, rested on 50.

2.4 Data Analysis

This is the main section where our code-switching data will be examined in the light of the sequential approach. We will introduce the way code-switching works as a contextualisation cue in English/Kuwaiti Arabic conversations. Contextualising turn-taking, preference organization, repair and pre-sequence and insertion sequences will be examined respectively in an attempt to see if Kuwaitis, when using English/Kuwaiti Arabic code-switching, are deploying parallel code-switching patterns to those used by bilinguals in different bilingual communities. First, we will look at contextualising turn-taking.

2.4.1 Contextualising turn-taking

(1) Context: At home, mother asking son to bring his shirt from maid (in all the examples and extracts throughout the following data, M = Mother, S = Son, and D = Daughter).

M: (to herself) wen il qami:ʃ (.) tʃinna

[where is the shirt (.) it seems]

(1.5)

M: (to son) ismeŋ (.) see if she has finished with it

[listen, see if she has finished with it]

S: (to mother) O.K. mum

The context of this conversation is as follows: the mother has asked the maid to iron the son's shirt before they go out. Entering her son's room, she begins the conversation by saying /wen il qami:ŋ/ 'where is the shirt'. The tag /tʃinna/ 'it seems' is preceded by a short pause. At this point and by the merit of grammatical completion we are able to find transition relevance place (TRP) (Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff, 2000). Despite the fact that after the first sentence the mother has not selected a specific next turn, the context shows that only her son is present⁽³⁾. In such situations, although not necessarily at the first TRP, the son is expected to speak but he passes a second opportunity to speak. The mother, then, continues, after a short pause. She switched to English and specifically asks her son to go and find out about the shirt. By doing this she has selected the second speaker, her son, where he answers and accomplishes the turn transition.

According to Gumperz, this kind of code-switching functions as a procedure for address specification, emphasis, or reiteration (1982). However, to Auer this kind of code-switching serves to signal turn handovers (1991, 1998). By comparing the son's response to his mother and after the mother switches from Kuwaiti Arabic to English, we can see that this seems to be the interpretation by the participants themselves. Sebba discusses similar patterns in a study of London Jamaican conversationalists, who also tend to code-switch at turn-final positions to indicate turn completion and turn transition (1993).

(2) Context: Mother taking her children for dinner

M: (to children) wen tabu:n ta:klu:n mama how about Hardees

[where do you like to eat mum how about Hardees]

(3) This piece of information was depicted by the researcher's wife who was present in that context.

(3.0)

M: (to children) Hardees ma:ʃi

[Hardees O.K.]

S: (to mother) no I like Hungry Bunny.

D: (to mother) me too.

If we look at extract (2) from a structural perspective, we see that it is an example of tag-switching, where /ma:ʃi/ is a tag in Kuwaiti Arabic (See Poplack, 1980 for this type of code-switching). However, from a sequential perspective, it seems that a tag-switch located at the end of a turn often marks a change of speakership. In extract 2, the mother is driving her children (a son and a daughter) for a meal in an, as yet, undecided fast food restaurant. She asks her children in English where to go. They do not respond. After a three second pause, she suggests Hardees (an American fast food restaurant) and switches to the Kuwaiti Arabic tag /ma:ʃi/, which marks the end of her turn as a speaker and the choice of the next speaker. Both the son and the daughter suggest another restaurant, and by that the turn transition is accomplished. The extract shows that when considered from a sequential perspective, language choice is interpretable primarily with reference to the language used in preceding and following utterances, either a turn or part of a turn. We know from the literature that the rival nature of turn-taking where speakers deploy different means to seize, allocate or retain the floor is most perceptible in contexts where a number of people interact, e.g. in parties or in peer conversations (e.g. Levinson, 1983; Atkinson & Heritage 1984; Heritage 1989; Li Wei 1994, 1995). Similarly, Sacks et al., argue that in group interaction self-selection by one or another speaker occurs unless the next turn speaker is specified (1974, p. 721). The following example from our data corpus suggests that code-switching in Kuwait, is also used to contextualise such competitive self-selection in group conversation.

(3) Context: In a park, mothers are taking their children to play.

M. (to her son) ʃfi:k ʔabi:bi (.) sa:kit ru:h lʔab mama

[what's wrong, darling. (he is) silent. Go and play mum]

S: (to mother) ʃisma

[what's name]

C1: (to S1) come on let's go and play

C2: (to S1) jella imʃ taʃa:l nilʃab

[let's go and play]

C1: (to S1) are you hungry?

C2: (to S1) ʔintə teʃba:n

[are you tired?]

Son: (to C2) a little

C1 (to S1) ʔummi ʃindaha ʔakil

[my mother has food]

We can observe in the above conversation that different speakers self-select contrastive choices of English and Kuwaiti Arabic in consecutive turns. After the mother's first turn their choices of language are different from the one in the preceding turn. It is very important to distinguish such contrastive choices of language by various speakers in consecutive turns from the changing of language by the same speaker in the same turn because the discourse as well as the socio-cultural meanings are contextualised, and therefore, the inferences drawn by participants from the two types of code-switching may be quite different. What makes the choice of language in this extract differ from that in extracts (1) and (2), is that in the first two extracts code-switching is carried out by a number of speakers. In extracts (1) and (2), it seems that code-switching by the same speaker illustrates the speaker's eagerness and capability to accommodate his/her interlocutor. Whereas code-switching in extract (3), denotes, in addition to preference and competence, the participants' role relationships.

2.Contextualising Preference Organization

4.Context: At home, mother encouraging daughter to do her daily prayers

M: (to daughter) ʃelletaj

[did you pray?]

(1.5)

M: (to daughter) Mariam when are you going to pray?

D: (to mother) *Ṣellet*

[I prayed]

5. Context: At home, mother and daughter getting ready to go to a wedding party

M: (to daughter) the red shoes are nice it goes with it.

(2.0)

M: (to daughter) do you want the red shoes or not

(2.0)

D: (to mother) *ʔibeʒ* aħla

[the beige is better]

M: (to daughter) *ħabi:bt*i the red matches your dress

Darling the red matches your dress

D: (to mother) all right then

We noticed in extract (4) that the daughter does not at first answer her mother back when asked if she has prayed. The mother then, repeats her question, but this time switching from Kuwaiti Arabic to English. The daughter interprets this repetition as an indirect request to say her prayers. When she finally responds to her mother's question after a short pause (thereby marking her response as dispreferred), she uses Kuwaiti Arabic, which contrasts with the code used by her mother. The daughter's response may also be interpreted as an answer to the mother's first question in Kuwaiti Arabic. According to Li Wei an example such as this comprises: a) a tying-back (by using the same language as the original question) and b) a divergence from preceding language choice, where divergence choice here signals dispreferred activity (1994, p.163). See also Brown & Levinson where preference organization is discussed in connection to the notion of 'politeness' (1987, p.38-43).

In extract (5), the mother, who is using English throughout the

conversation, selects the red shoes for her daughter. The mother's initial offer (which conversational analysts refer to as the first pair part) is expected to be fulfilled by a second part, apparently by the daughter. Levinson states that failure to fulfil such expectations usually results in silence (1983). This applies in extract (5) when the daughter did not reply after the initial offer. The mother, then, repeats the offer in an assertive form (do you want the red shoes or not) to get a response, but the daughter indirectly refuses the mother's offer by mentioning an alternative to the red shoes. Her indirect refusal is marked in two steps: a two-second delay, and the choice of Kuwaiti Arabic, which contrasts the code choice in the immediately preceding turn by the mother. Finally, the daughter's acceptance of the mother's offer is in English, which corresponds to the language choice of the mother, but differs from the one she has used to mark her indirect refusal.

One more example is extract (6) where the mother, son and daughter are sitting in the living room deciding what to watch on the video.

(6) Context: In the living room

M: (to children) who would like to watch 'toy story'? (An American movie)

S: (to mother) I like mum.

M: (to son) tebi, mama

[(do) you want, mum?]

S: (to mother) ʔI: abi

[[yes, I want]

M: (to daughter) how about you Sara?

D: (to mother) laʔ, ma:bi, mu: hīlu

[no, I don't want, it is not interesting]

M: (to daughter) jeʕni ma:tabi:n

[you mean you don't want]

D: (to mother) Uh Uh it is boring.

In this extract, the son accepts his mother's offer twice, using the

same language as his mother (English and Kuwaiti Arabic respectively for this preferred response). The daughter's refusal, as in extract (4), is marked by contrasting language choices. Levinson informs us that in Monolingual English conversation, dispreferred responses are characterized by a number of structural features such as delays, by pausing before delivery or by displacement over a number of turns via insertion sequences, prefaces (e.g. the use of markers of dispreferreds like *Uh* and *Well*, token agreements, apologies) and accounts, that is, explanations for why the dispreferred act is being done (1983). If we apply Levinson's ideas to the extracts above (from our data) on bilingual speech, we find a similar pattern. The daughter in extract (6) is using an English marker (*Uh Uh*) to express a dispreferred act. Similarly, Auer argues that code-switching may be seen as the most crucial discourse marker in bilingual conversations in the sense that one may notice their occurrence more often than other linguistic features (1991, 1998).

Before concluding this section, I will present an example of code-switching data, which mark a different type of dispreferred second, namely, the refusal of an offer. As in monolingual speech, refusals in bilingual speech seem to always be in dispreferred format.

(7) Context: At home, mother, her brother and her children together with the researcher and his wife having tea after lunch

M: (to son) go with your uncle to the swimming pool

S: (to mother) (1.5) baru:h bet ʃagir

[I want to go to ʃagir's (his cousin) house

M: (to son) ʃagir mu: hna:k tʃam merraʔgu:lik habi:bi

[ʃagir is not there, how many times I've told you]

S: (leaves and comes back with his swimming suit)

In this extract we notice that the mother is asking her son to go with his uncle to the swimming pool. However, the son refuses the offer by saying that he wants to go to his cousin's house. His refusal is marked by two behaviors, first by pausing for one and a half-second and then by choosing Kuwaiti Arabic, which contrasts with his mother's choice of code. Interestingly, the mother repeats her offer not only by explaining why she does not want her son to go to his cousin's

house but by switching to Kuwaiti Arabic, the same code that was used by her son to express his refusal. So, we may notice that preference organisation does not only affect the second part speaker's contribution but also functions across a given speaker's turns, allowing repairs of first parts of the pair to occur in following turns. One example of such a repair is the mother's reformulation of her first offer after a dispreferred response (go with your uncle to the swimming pool).

Now, I would like to examine the language choices which are used by Kuwaiti mothers and their children in initiating and making repairs, in their English /Kuwaiti Arabic conversations.

2.4.3 Contextualising repair

We have mentioned earlier in this paper that a 'repair' is another expression referred to by conversational analysts, for 'correction'. Among linguists and others who have all concerned themselves with the phenomenon of correction, a distinction is commonly drawn between 'self-correction' and 'other-correction', that is, correction by the speaker of that which is being corrected vs. correction by some others; (Schegloff et al. 1977, p. 353). They (ibid) add that the one who performs a repair is not necessarily the one that initiated the repair act. In fact, both self-repair and other-repair, they continue to claim, are arrived at from either: self-initiation of repair or other-initiation of repair. We will explore such assumptions in the following extracts from our data.

(8) Context: At the house door steps, mother and daughter waiting for a friend (who seems to be late) to go to a hair stylist. Mother is calling her from her mobile.

M: (to daughter) wai ǒibaḥni ha ttalifon killa maǰgu:l makulla nantir
[oh, this telephone has killed me always busy we have to wait]

D: (to mother) oh why wait?

M: (to daughter) ʕajal ʔatiʕil fi:ha ʕalbeʕar

[So, I'll page her]

In the above extract the mother and her daughter are waiting for a friend to join them to a hair stylist before going to a wedding party. We notice that the mother is initiating a repair on her first turn in using Kuwaiti Arabic. However, the daughter selects English to ask 'why wait?'

which is followed by the mother's repair, which again in KA. What this extract reveals is the fact that the second speaker (the daughter), in asking the first turn speaker (the mother) to reformulate her statement, is obviously suggesting that to them as participants there is a problem, although what needs repair, to non-participants may not be clear. Moreover, we notice that the language of the repair initiator tokens contrasts with the language of the preceding and following turns.

On one hand, the above extract demonstrates the fact that detecting repair and as a result, inferring meaning, can be done through sequential analysis of conversational code-switching which focuses on the participants themselves. On the other hand, our subjects seem to be capable of deploying similar code-switching patterns to those deployed by stable bilinguals.

(9) Context: Mother and children watching T.V in the living room

D: (to mother)that lady called you from Boston ha: öi jisimha

[that lady called you from Boston this what's her name?]

M: (to daughter) minu Jane?

[who Jane?]

D: (to mother) ya Jane

In this extract, the daughter is trying to remember the name of her mother's friend who called from Boston. Unlike extract (8) (where the subsequent repair is other initiated self-repair), the following repair by the daughter in this extract is a self-initiated other repair.

Participants in any given conversation deploy resources such as code-switching tags to mark a certain item within an utterance as problematic. Sacks et al. refer to such resources as 'try markers', which are inserted in a given utterance in a different language before the speaker repeats or clarifies the problematic item (1974, p. 711). So speakers do not have to always replace the problematic item with a contrasting-code item. Look at the following extract:

(10) Context: At home, mother and children sitting in the living room

M: (to daughter) your cousin muna bint Şama Salwa called

[your cousin Muna daughter of aunt Salwa called]

In this extract, the mother code-switches from English to Kuwaiti Arabic to accomplish a repair, which clarifies the referent of the word (cousin). Kinship in Arabic is quite complex. For example different morphemes are used to mark male and female aunts and uncles; 'Cousin' could mean, in English any male or female from the part of either the mother or the father. However, in Arabic, different words referring to 'cousins' are morphologically constrained. To have a few examples:

- Wild ʕammi = my male cousin whose father and mother are brothers.
- Wikd xa:li = my male cousin whose father is my mother's brother.
- Bint ʕammiti = my female cousin whose mother is my father's sister.
- Wild xa:lti = my male cousin whose mother is my mother's sister.

Apparently, in this extract the daughter has more than one cousin under the same name 'Muna'. The mother is using a 'try marker' in Sacks & Schegloff's sense [bintʔama Salwa] to solve the problem and identify which cousin she is referring to.

(11) Context: in a bookshop

M: (to son) ha:ðə aħsen all right ha:ðə ʃa:mil

[this is better, all right, this is more comprehensive]

Here the mother and her son are looking for a science atlas. The mother inserts a code-switched tag [all right] before the speaker (the son) repeats or clarifies the problematic item. It is obvious, though, that the code-switching in extracts 10 and 11 share one feature, that is, a predictable end at which point the speaker switch back to the original language.

Briefly, we may say that the extracts above show that there are three main ways in which code-switching can contextualise repair, and our Kuwaiti informants seem to use the three of them. First, a repair initiator may be issued in a contrasting language, the speaker of the repairable item then doing the repair himself or herself. Second, the repairable item(s) may be replaced with an equivalent in a different language; this can be done by the speaker without prompting from others (self-initiated self-repairs) or by different speaker without

prompting from others (self-initiated self-repairs) or by different speakers (other-initiated other-repairs). The third is to insert an item in a different language to draw the listener's attention to the repairable.

However, Schegloff claims that efforts at repair sometimes fail and failing to do required repairs, may result in undesirable communication outcomes (2000, p. 59). Look at the following extract:

(12) Context: At home, son needs to take the video to his room with friends

S: ʕetu:ni lv:dju

[give me the video]

M: aaah I am tired (3.0) lhi:n wegt no:m tʃemmissa:ʕə

[yawning, I am tired, now, it's bed time. What's the time]

S: bas aʃu:fil muba:ra:t

[just to see the football match]

M: laʔ jaʕni la?

[no means no]

Here, the son is asking to get the video (probably to take it to his room). His question is a pre-request (see section 2.4.4) to stay later than his bedtime. However, the mother does not reply immediately, but pauses and then follows her son's utterance by asking about the time (which may be seen as a hedged refusal of her son's pre-request). This can also be seen as a candidate 'next turn repair initiator', which gives the first part speaker (the son) an opportunity to re-formulate the prior turn in the next turn in order to avoid immediate dispreferred response. It is relevant to mention, here, that despite the fact that the mother's first turn is contextulised by being realised in a language contrasting with that of her son's pre-request, he fails to make the apparently required repair. His failure to achieve the desired agreeable response from his mother is associated with his failure to read the contextualisation cue provided by his language switch and use appropriate procedures (see Gumperz 1982 for similar examples).

2.4.4 Contextualising pre-sequences and insertion sequences

The term sequence is used, with a systematic ambiguity, to refer both to a certain kind of turn and a certain kind of sequence containing that type of turn (Levinson 1983). Some kinds of pre-sequences are pre-invitation, pre-request, and pre-arrangements for future contact. Look at the following example from Levinson (1983:347) that shows pre-request:

C: Do you have hot chocolate?

S: mmhmm

C: Can I have hot chocolate with whipped cream?

S: Sure (leaves to get)

We noticed from the extracts throughout this paper that sometimes when the next speaker in a given conversation does not take the turn at a TRP, the present speaker has the choice to continue. The topic of the self-continuation may stay the same as to the one in the speaker's preceding turns (See extracts {1} and {2}). Nevertheless, in some cases, a new topic is brought about or the participant is changed. If this takes place, then code-switching helps to mark the introduction of new conversation topics or new participants. (Levinson 1983; Li Wei 1994, 1995; Li Wei and Milroy 1995). The extracts below are meant to clarify the point that pre-sequences in our data are frequently marked by code-switching.

(13) Context: Mother, daughter and son in 'Kuwait Entertainment City'⁽⁴⁾

D (to mother): waj taʃba:nə

[oh I am tired]

M: mmm

D (to mother): ha:əa majiʃbaʃ

[he does not get fed up (referring to her brother)]

(1.5)

D (to mother): I got detention yesterday

(4) . Kuwait Entertainment City is similar to Disney Land and Euro-Disney.

M (to daughter): detention! Why?

D (to mother): We were drawing the map.....

In extract (13), the {mm} by the mother which follows the daughter's first turn suggests that the former does not want to take up the turn despite the fact that she is paying attention to her daughter's speech. The daughter, then, (switching to English continues, but inserts a completely different topic by telling her mother about the detention she got at school. This is a clear case where code-switching is used to insert a new topic.

(14) Context: Mother and children in the Entertainment City. Son wants to buy a toy.

M (to son): aʃtiri:lik min issu:g ahsen

[I'll buy from the mall it's better]

(1.5)

did you take your medication last night?

S (to mother)): yes

M (to son): tabi mægnə̃m (ice-cream)

[(do) you want magnum?]

S (to mother): ʔj ʃej

[anything]

In extract (14), the pause suggests that the mother's turn is completed. Nevertheless, the son fails to respond, and the mother then continues by inserting a new topic to the main body of the conversation (did you take your medication last night?). Again, the mother here is inserting a new topic into the conversation, which can be seen as a pre-sequence. Our last example is one of code-switching that marks out insertion sequences.

(15) Context: Mother and children having dinner in an Italian restaurant.

D (to mother): you get me some mum from the salad buffet

M (to daughter): ʃalatathum mu: ʃaj ana gilt lukum ma:h hel matʃam

[their salad is not good I told you I don't like this restaurant]

D (to mother): ha:t[I talk to the manager

[talk to him talk to the manager]

M (to daughter) wi ma:ku fa:jdʔku: macaroni cheese tabi:n

[oh there is no use there is macaroni cheese do you want?]

[useless. Do you want macaroni cheese?]

D (to mother) ʃwajjʔ

[a little]

In extract (15), the daughter did not get a side order of corn that she has ordered. She asks her mother to get her some form the salads buffet. The daughter's request makes up a first part of a pair. The mother, then, instead of getting some corn for her daughter, responds with a statement showing her dissatisfaction with the restaurant upon which the daughter asks her mother to talk to the manager. It is not until the mother shows her dissatisfaction with the manager too (from a previous experience) that her daughter accepts some macaroni cheese instead of corn. What is evident here, is that the second part has been put off and detached from its first part by the embedded exchanges. The extract shows that the embedded sequences are clearly marked out by a series of code-switches, while the final compliant offer aligns with the language of the previous turn.

The last three examples clearly suggest that inserted information was contextualised by the choice of code-switching. It seems that this type of insertion is parallel to the way in which various kinds of phonetic marking, for example, contextualises such material in monolingual conversations.

To sum up, the various code-switching practices discussed above can be described as interaction reflexes of mother/child specific language choice preferences between Kuwaiti Arabic and English. As Li Wei suggests that 'through experience, they develop a sense of 'script' or 'schema' for which language is used to whom and when, and exploit the linguistic resources available to them to achieve special communicative effects' (1994, p. 178). The data also showed that code-switching can be used by the same speaker to mark turn allocation, self-repairs, and some pre-sequences and embedded sequences. Likewise, it

can be utilized by different speakers in continuous turns for the purpose of contextualising self-selection as next turn speaker, interruption, dispreferred second pair parts, other-repairs (including repair initiators) and insertion sequences.

It is apparent from the analysis above that code-switching is one of the strategies of language choice in these Kuwaiti dyads. The data above show that metaphorical code-switching (Blom & Gumperz 1972; Gumperz 1982) is one strategy used by Kuwaiti mothers and their children, where the switch is used to achieve a communicative goal while the participants, the setting, and the topic stay the same.

2.5 Conclusion and Recommendations

In this paper, I presented some data of English/Kuwaiti Arabic code-switching in mother/child interactions. The data were analyzed following Auer's (1984, 1988, 1991, 1998) sequential approach. I have explored in this paper the way in which Kuwaiti mothers and their children use English/Kuwaiti Arabic code-switching as a contextualisation cue to signal turn completion, to label dispreference and insertion sequences, and to repair problem spots in conversational interactions.

It is clear from the above analysis that Kuwaiti mothers and their children deploy English/Kuwaiti Arabic code-switching in both the home and non-home domains as one strategy of language choice. This is only one indication that English, in Kuwait, is no longer used merely in academic settings. Rather, its use has expanded to various domains. The results of our data may well be a stimulus to other researchers to see if English/Kuwaiti Arabic code-switching is deployed by other social groups, such as among friends.

It is highly recommended that similar code-switching research could be embarked on by other researchers to examine the following issues:

1. Structural (morphological, syntactic) analysis of English/Kuwaiti Arabic code-switching among Kuwaiti mothers and their children.
2. A sequential and/or syntactic analysis of English/Kuwaiti Arabic code-switching in other interactions, e.g., Father/child, friend/friend, male/female interactions.

3. Structural and/or sociolinguistic analysis of Farsi/Kuwaiti Arabic code-switching among Kuwaitis. Farsi is a variety that is highly spoken by a large number of Kuwaitis in the State of Kuwait.
4. Attitudes of Kuwaitis towards code-switching in the State of Kuwait

المزج في صيغة الخطاب بين العربية والإنجليزية كاستراتيجية للاختيار اللغوي لدى بعض الأسر الكويتية

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الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى إلقاء الضوء على استخدام ظاهرة المزج اللغوي (اللغة الإنجليزية واللهجة الكويتية) من قبل بعض الأمهات الكويتيات وأبنائهن في المجتمع الكويتي. وحيث إن العينة المستهدفة لغرض الدراسة هم الأمهات الكويتيات اللائي يجدن التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية واللهجة الكويتية فقد تم اختيار عدد (٥٠) أمماً كويتية ممن حصلن على شهادات جامعية أو ما زلن طالبات مستمرات في الجامعة. وتم تسجيلهن وهن يتحدثن إلى أبنائهن في عدة أماكن ومناسبات مختلفة.

قام الباحث في هذه الدراسة بشرح بيانات المزج اللغوي باستخدام الإطار الاجتماعي واصفاً في البداية الإطار التحليلي المستخدم لغرض البحث. ومن ثم قام الباحث بتحليل تفصيلي لبيانات المزج اللغوي التي قامت بتسجيلها ومزجها. كما استعان الباحث "بالمدخل التتابعي" Sequential Approach لدراسة البيانات.

وقد بينت نتائج الدراسة أن الأمهات الكويتيات يملن أحياناً إلى استخدام المزج اللغوي (كإحدى استراتيجيات الاختيار اللغوي) عند التحدث مع أبنائهن سواء في المنزل أو في أماكن أخرى. ويدل هذا الاستنتاج على أن استخدام اللغة الإنجليزية في المجتمع الكويتي لم يعد يقتصر على الحقل الأكاديمي فقط بل تعداه إلى ميادين اجتماعية أخرى. ويوصي الباحث بتشجيع علماء اللغة الاجتماعيين بدراسة ظاهرة المزج اللغوي عند فئات أخرى لنرى مدى انتشارها في المجتمع الكويتي.

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