
Managing creativity and routines: a new perspective on code-switching

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It is often assumed that code-switching is very creative behaviour. This is certainly true of some forms of code-switching, but not all forms of code-switching are equally creative. As originality is widely seen as the key criterion for creativity, in this paper I will evaluate the originality of different code-switching patterns found in German-English, German-Turkish and Malay-English code-switching. Switches of bare nouns such as those in (1), where the Turkish noun *çatal* ‘knife’ has been inserted into a German sentence, are found very frequently across code-switching corpora from typologically different languages, so this code-switching routine would not qualify as original.

- (1) Wenn man so schneidet oder mit Ø çatal drüber geht
When you so cut or with knife over it goes
‘When you cut it like this or go over it with a knife’ (Treffers-Daller, 2020)

Switches of function words, by contrast, such as the Malay passive marker *kena* in (2), which appears in an English sentence, are much rarer in the literature, and would thus be more original.

- (2) He kena sabotage
He was-PASS sabotaged
‘He was sabotaged’ (Percillier, 2016)

However, the most original and creative form of code-switching is congruent lexicalization (Muysken, 2000). In this type of switching, the grammars and vocabularies of both languages interact: content and function words from both languages are inserted into a shared structure, as in (3).

- (3) Wir haben friends gemacht mit dem shopowner
We have friends made with the.DAT.SG knife
‘We made friends with the shopowner’ (Hofweber et al. 2016)

I will finish by drawing conclusions on the typological and psycho-social factors that contribute to originality in code-switching patterns, and look at differences between the creativity of switches in face-to-face versus online communication.

References: • Muysken, P. (2000). *Bilingual speech*. Cambridge: CUP • Hofweber, J. et al. (2016). Effects of dense code-switching on executive control. *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism*, 6, 648-668 • Percillier, M. (2016). *World Englishes and Second Language Acquisition*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins • Treffers-Daller, J. (2020). Turkish-German code-switching patterns revisited: What naturalistic data can(not) tell us. In N. Smith et al. (eds.) *Advances in Contact Linguistics: In honour of Pieter Muysken*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins