Code-switching between Mandarin and Taiwanese in Three Telephone Conversations: The Negotiation of Interpersonal Relationships among Bilingual Speakers in Taiwan

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This study examines the code-switching used in three telephone conversations in Taiwan and analyzes on the micro-level how the bilingual Taiwanese speakers involved use code-switching as a resource to define interpersonal relationships and achieve specific communicative goals. The three conversations share a similar "face-threatening" goal, and thus become particularly interesting and resourceful locations for examining how bilinguals manipulate the two codes to perform their communicative tasks. Social factors such as generation and urbanity also play a role in the employment of code-switching in the three conversations.

1. Introduction

Since Blom and Gumperz's (1972) pioneering work, there has been an increasing academic concern with code-switching, defined by Gumperz (1982) as "the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems" (59). The research in the past few decades has gradually revealed that, contrary to a common belief that code-switching indicates lack of competence on the part of speakers, it is a mode of communication that requires complex sociolinguistic and bilingual skills. This study focuses on the code-switching between Mandarin and Taiwanese in three telephone conversations that took place in Taiwan and pursues the following research questions (1)How do bilingual Taiwanese speakers express their identities and define interpersonal relationships by manipulating the two codes? (2) How is code-switching used as a resource by bilingual Taiwanese speakers to perform communicative tasks in daily life?

The three conversations examined in this paper were recorded on the same day. These calls were initiated by the same person and had a common communicative goal: for the caller to ask the respondents to tape-record their daily conversations for the purpose of research. The comparison of the three conversations is of particular interest for several reasons. First, while the respondents are of different generations and reside in urban and rural areas, during these telephone conversations they engage in a similar communicative task. Thus, comparison of these three conversations can illustrate how and to what extent generation and urbanity, the two salient social factors in Taiwanese society with regard to language choice (Huang, 1993), influence a single initiator's employment of code-switching. Second, the goal of the communicative task, for the initiator to gain assistance from the respondents, is highly face-threatening for both parties (Brown and Levinson, 1987). In order to accomplish this conversational task, while still saving face, the initiator uses certain rhetorical strategies, one of which is code-switching.

1.1. Relevant Research Literature

Gumperz (1982) considers code-switching as a type of *contextualization* cue, which is used to signal, as well as to help hearers interpret, speaker intentions. Contextualization is defined as:

> speakers' and listeners' use of verbal and nonverbal signs to relate what is said at any one time and in any one place to knowledge acquired through past experience, in order to retrieve the presuppositions they must rely on to maintain conversational involvement and assess what is intended. (Gumperz, 1992:230)

Code-switching provides contextual information equivalent to that which can only be conveyed through prosody, paralinguistic

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signs, or other syntactic or lexical processes in monolingual settings. In situational switching, a concept introduced by Blom and Gumperz (1972), a language or a speech style is regularly associated with particular activities or settings, and its use comes to connote them. However, metaphorical usage involves a shift in contextualization cues, as well as other content markers that characterize the situation, without an accompanying shift in topic. As Gumperz states:

> this partial violation of co-occurrence expectations then gives rise to the inference that some aspects of the connotations, which elsewhere apply to the activity as a whole, are here to be treated as affecting only the illocutionary force and the quality of the speech act in question. (1982:98)

The study of code-switching leads Gumperz to conclude that code-switchers have socially defined notions of codes or grammatical systems. Effective speaking presupposes inferences about where social boundaries lie and how language practices correlate with these boundaries.

In line with Gumperz, Myers-Scotton focuses on speaker motive, rather than the abstract macro-level social context, and takes code-switching as a type of skilled performance. She develops a markedness model of code-switching (1993), arguing that all speakers have a *markedness metric* which enables them to recognize that all code choices vary along a markedness continuum, ranging from *unmarked* to *marked*. An unmarked choice is defined as "the choice of a particular linguistic variety that is *expected* as the medium for a talk exchange, given the norms of the society regarding the salience of specific situational factors present" (1993:153), whereas a marked choice is considered unusual and unexpected.

According to this model, members of bilingual communities employ code-switching when they perceive that its use will improve their cost--reward balance for the conversation at hand. At the core of this markedness model is the *negotiaion principle*, which states that "[you should] choose the form of your conversation contribution such that it indexes the set of rights and obligations which you wish to be in force between speaker and addressee for the current exchange (1993:113). In other words, code choices are regarded as indexing

rights-and-obligations sets (RO sets) between participants in an interaction. In this model, speakers are considered as creative and rational actors, but the interpretation of their code choices is socially constrained by the normative framework specific to their community. All code-switching (CS) can be explained as having one of four related motivations:

> (1) CS as a sequence of unmarked choice (sequential unmarked CS) occurs when situational factors change within the interaction and the speaker wishes to index the new unmarked RO set in alignment with them; (2) CS itself as an unmarked choice (unmarked CS) [continuous switching between two or more languages in one single conversation] occurs when the speaker wishes to index two identities or "attitudes" toward the interaction (and therefore two RO sets) simultaneously; (3) CS as a marked choice (marked CS) occurs when a speaker wishes to negotiate an RO set other than the unmarked one; and (4) CS as an exploratory choice (exploratory CS) occurs when the unmarked RO set is uncertain. (Myers-Scotton, 1993:149)

Although the markedness model is useful in understanding the data collected in this study, my approach departs from that of Myers-Scotton in one respect: I emphasize the fluidity and ambiguity of the moment-to-moment mutual negotiation of interpersonal relationships. In dealing with face-threatening situations (Brown and Levinson, 1987), bilingual speakers may engage in both intrasentential and intersentential code-switching to provide their conversational partners with a range of choices in order to constantly negotiate interpersonal distance.

Brown and Levinson's concept of *face* (1987) is also useful for understanding the code-switching data presented in this paper. According to them, *face* refers to a person's desire to be unimpeded (negative face) and to be approved of in certain respects (positive face). Some acts are intrinsically face-threatening. When a speaker commits a face-threatening act, he/she estimates the risk of face loss and the degree of efficiency of communication. He/she then selects a strategy among a number of choices, ranging from going on record baldly to going off record, providing more than one interpretable intention so that the actor can not be held to have committed him/herself to one particular intent. Although Brown and Levinson's model does not explicitly deal with code-switching, itsemphasis on human

verbal interaction gives it the flexibility to account for social motivations for code-switching. To contextualize the three conversations in the study, I next provide a brief introduction to the sociolinguistic background of Taiwan.

1.2. Sociolinguistic Background of Taiwan

Taiwan is an island off the coast of southern China. The earliest inhabitants of Taiwan were the Malayo-Polynesians, who spoke Austronesian languages. The better-known part of the history of Taiwan begins with the Chinese settlement built by immigrants from coastal areas of the Chinese Mainland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The majority of the immigrants came from the Fujian province and spoke dialects of Southern Min, which became the dominant language in Taiwan. The dialect of Southern Min spoken in Taiwan today is referred to as *Taiwanese*.

In 1949 the Chinese Nationalist Government lost the civil war with Chinese communists and retreated to Taiwan. The central government was reestablished in Taipei, and Mandarin was promoted as the official and the only legitimate language. Since then, the influence of Taiwanese has been declining, although it is still the native language of up to seventy percent of Taiwanese people. The ban on ethnic languages other than Mandarin has been lifted, but Mandarin is still generally considered a more prestigeous language than Taiwanese.

1.3. Background Information on the Participants of the Three Conversations

The first telephone conversation involves a woman I call Mei, a bilingual Taiwanese woman in her fifties, and her sixty-year-old brother Cheng. Both Mei and Cheng speak Taiwanese as their first language, learning Mandarin in elementary school. Mei left their hometown, Ilan, for Taipei in her twenties and has lived there ever since. Cheng is a retired middle school teacher in Ilan. In this telephone conversation, Mei asks Cheng to tape record his daily conversations. In the second conversation, Mei calls Cheng's daughter, Lan, a fluent Mandarin-Taiwanese bilingual, for the same reason.

The third call is divided into two parts. The first part is a conversation between Yan, Mei's daughter, and Kang, Cheng's son and Yan's

cousin. Yan grew up in Taipei and has limited Taiwanese ability. Kang speaks both Taiwanese and Mandarin fluently. He was raised in Ilan but moved to Taipei after high school. The second part of the conversation is between Mei and Kang. Table 1 summarizes the information about interlocutors given above.

(1) Background information about participants in three conversations with simiilar communicative goals

Name	Relation to Mei	Age	Education	Bilingual Ability	Home-town	Current residence
Mei	Self	50s	High school	Competent bilingual	Ilan	Taipei
Cheng	Brother	60	Junior college	Competent bilingual	Ilan	Ilan
Lan	Niece	Early 30s	College	Competent bilingual	Ilan	Ilan
Kang	Nephew	Late 20s	Graduate school	Competent bilingual	Ilan	Taipei
Yan	Daughter	Mid 20s	Graduate school	Limited Taiwanese	Taipei	Taipei

2. General Pattern of Language Use

Mei, the core participant in the three conversations, code-switches both intersententially and intrasententially in all three conversations. However, she employs different overall patterns of language use when addressing different respondents. In terms of the proportion of her use of Taiwanese and Mandarin, the percentages of the time that she speaks Taiwanese out of her total speaking time to Cheng, her brother, and his children, Lan and Kang, are 62% (3'35/5'47), 44.1% (5'50/13'13), and 45.2% (0'47/1'44), respectively. She spends roughly the same percentage of time speaking Taiwanese to Lan and Kang, the younger generation, while she speaks more Taiwanese when addressing Cheng, her brother. On the basis of these conversations, Mei's overall patterns for conversing with the younger generation and her own generation are different, even though the four speakers are all competent bilinguals whose first language is Taiwanese.

Extending Myers-Scotton's markedness model (1993), we can interpret the degree of proportional differences in language use as the unmarked proportion use, indexing different sets of rights and obliga-

tions.[1] Myers-Scotton's model limits the unmarked-choice maxim to code-choice in talk exchanges and does not seem to regard unmarked code-switching (CS itself as the unmarked choice) as capable of conveying marked and unmarked indexicality by itself.[2] However, there appears to be a specific pattern in Mei's speech when addressing members of different generations, even when she code-switches under the category of unmarked CS.

The second observation about the general tendency of language choice comes from the conversation between Mei and Cheng. After Cheng expresses his willingness to help with the recording, the topic switches to the funeral of one of their relatives in Ilan. Mei does not talk much here, but the percentage of her Taiwanese speaking time rapidly increases to 94.3% (0'33/0'35). This is an example of situational code-switching in Gumperz's terms (1982), or an example of a change of unmarked choice for a new RO set in terms of the markedness model, although the case here does not involve switching from one language to another language, as Gumperz's and Myers-Scotton's models suggest. Rather, the example here regards a change in frequency, that is, the extent or degree of switching, between two pieces of conversation that already involve a good deal of unmarked code-switching.

The third observation about the general tendency of language choice comes from the conversation between Yan and Kang. Place of residence, or social network in a broad sense, also plays an important role in language use in Taiwan. The locations involved in this case, Taipei and Ilan, are very different in terms of labor employment and industry structure, population distribution, and language use. Taipei is the political and economic center of Taiwan, while Ilan is a county where 37% of the population participates in farming and fishing.[3] It is well-known in Taiwan that the younger generations born and raised in

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[1] I do not intend to claim that there is a precise percentage in each case of proportional language use to index a specific RO set. Rather, the proportional differences in language use mentioned here are regarded as relational.
[2] Note that the concept of unmarked and marked is gradient rather than categorical. The unmarked CS may not serve as an extreme marked choice, but different overall patterns may be relatively marked or unmarked corresponding to different RO sets.
[3] The statistical result is drawn from the website of Ilan County Government (http://www.ilhg.gov.tw/).

Taipei generally have a much more limited Taiwanese ability than members of the same generations from places outside Taipei, even though many Taipeians are the descendants of the earlier Chinese immigrants who spoke Taiwanese.

In the Taiwanese context, language shift between generations happens most abruptly and apparently in Taipei, which has been documented by a number of researchers (for example, Hsu, 1999; Huang, 1993). This process can be seen operating in the conversation between Yan and Kang. While both Yan and Kang speak Taiwanese as their first language, since living for an extended period in Taipei, they both now use Mandarin as their dominant language. Thus their conversation is conducted entirely in Mandarin, with only a few Taiwanese interjections.

3. Intrasentential Code-switching

In the discussion of where code-switching actually takes place, I examine Mei's conversations with Cheng and Lan, focusing especially on Mei's contributions. These conversations contain a huge amount of both intersentential and intrasentential code-switching. A large part of the intrasentential code-switching is composed of terms that describe the study. Since Mandarin is the language used in education and institutions, it is not surprising to find discourse about research conducted in Mandarin. Example (2) is an excerpt of Mei's conversational contribution from her conversation with Cheng. The italics refer to Taiwanese.

(2) Jiushi   shehui   yuyanxue.
    Namely   social   linguistics

   Laite   *tosi*   *kong*   *ai*   *ti*   shehui   shang,
    Inside   namely   say   need   at   society   above

   Ato   shijishang,
    Namely   real

    Zirande   zhuangkuang   xia   chansheng   de.
    Natural   situation   under   produce   Suffix

    'It's called sociolinguistics. It's about the society, that is, actual conversation under natural situations.'

Switching between two languages creates dual communicative effects. On the one hand, the use of Taiwanese signals the more unmarked choice for intimacy among family members and thus makes it harder for the respondents to refuse giving help. On the other hand, the use of Mandarin lends the statement more authority than a pure Taiwanese statement would have and shows that the research is a serious matter.

However, each specific instance of intrasentential code-switching does not necessarily index any particular social meaning. Common terms used frequently in both Mandarin and Taiwanese can be the locus of switching as well. An example is provided in (3). It is the overall pattern that carries communicative effects as mentioned above, and the code-switching pattern itself is rather unmarked.

(3) *a*   *li*   pingchang   *kam*   *e*
Then   you   usually   whether   will

Ka   *lin*   tongshi   liaotian   *asi*   *saN*   *ane*   *hoN*?
With   your   colleague   chat   or   what   this way   Q

Nimen   dabufen   *long*   *kong*   *saNmi*?
You(pl)   majority   all   speak   what

Guo   tai   yu?
Mandarin   Taiwanese   language

'Do you often chat with your colleagues or things like that? What do you usually speak? Mandarin or Taiwanese?'

4. Intersentential Code-switching

Intersentential code-switching is also frequently employed by Mei in her conversations with Cheng and Lan; it functions as a contexualization cue to signal frame change as well as an indication of a redefinition of the RO set in place. In some cases, code-switching serves to organize the internal structure of the conversation; in other cases it redefines the interpersonal relationships between the participants. Oftentimes, however, it functions in both ways simultaneously. Example (4) shows how intersentential code-switching organizes the conversational structure. Here Mei appears to use intersentential code-switching as a contexualization cue to show that the frame has been changed. (4) is a turn spoken by Mei that follows the segment of con-

versation with Cheng in (2), in which she explains the study and gives directions.[4]

(4)

M: I to si le kong, chit le lang, phi lu kong li, goa tu a kong chit poaN kong li hoN.	*That is to say, one person, suppose it's you.*	1 2 3
Li ti chhu e kong ui, lok chit le.	*When you are at home talking, you record the conversation.*	4 5
A si kong li chhu khi ka peng iu ti kong ui si, li lok chit le.	*Or when you go out with friends, record it.*	6 7
A si kong li ka tongshi *kong ui si, li lot chit le.*	*Or when you talk to your colleagues, record it.*	8 9
Ran hou *ne, I be ti* zhong jian zuo yi ge bi jiao shen ru de yan jiu.	Then, she wants to do research *from it.*	10 11
To si kong, tong yang de yi ge ran, ta zai jia li, ta shi yong tai yu huo zhe guo yu de pin lu shi duo shao.	*That is to say*, the same person, when he is at home, what is the frequency of his use of Taiwanese or Mandarin.	12 13 14
A si kong, zai shenme zhuang kuang xia ta hui zhuan huan, zhuan huan guo lai.	*Or*, under what situation he would switch, switch to another language.	15 16 17
A si kong, u e lang si ti chhu e long xi guan kong, a ti chhu e jiu jia ren ma, hen fang song, to kong tai i.	*Or, some people* are accustomed to *using Taiwanese at home. At home* it's family, so they are relaxed. *So they speak Taiwanese.*	18 19 20 21
A na chhu li goa khau khong ling ai ka lang kong kok kok i a si a na a ne. Chit ma to si be zhen dui zhe ge qu yan jiu.	*If they go out they might use Mandarin or something like that. Now she wants to* focus on this to do a study.	22 23 24 25
Si kong, yan jiu *he le he le* guo tai yu de shi yong.	*That is*, studying the use of Mandarin and Taiwanese.	26 27
Tong yang de yi ge ren, dan shi ta sui zhe shi jian bu tong, di dian bu tong, ren wu bu tong.	The same person, when there is difference in time, settings, or people.	28 29 30

In the first part of this turn, from line 1 to line 9, Mei gives directions and examples about how Cheng could do the tape-recording almost entirely in Taiwanese. When she explains abstractly the goal of

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[4] The romanized form of the original data is presented in the left column while the English translation is in the right column. Plain font is used to represent Mandarin and italics are used for Taiwanese. The romanization of Taiwanese generally follows Cheng (1993) with certain modifications. A vowel followed by a capital N refers to a nasalized vowel.

the study, however, she code-switches to Mandarin (line 12 to line 17). Then she gives another concrete example in Taiwanese about how some people might prefer speaking different languages in different settings (line 18-23). Finally she restates the abstraction again in Mandarin (line 26-30). This excerpt presents a very systematic pattern, in which examples and directions are provided mostly in Taiwanese, while more general statements are provided in Mandarin. In order to explain the goal of the study and the directions of recording procedures in an efficient and clear way to someone unfamiliar with these concepts, Mei employs code-switching to organize the structure of the conversation, giving the listener cues to prepare for forthcoming messages. It is also likely that for Mei, the "legitimated" language, Mandarin, is associated with research, abstractions, and generalizations. Mei's intention for code-switching, whether conscious or not, is beyond the researcher's grasp, yet the effect of code-switching is one that scaffolds the conversational structure. Mei consistently uses code-switching to signal the nuances of change in her speaking, and very often this strategy is interwoven with the negotiation of distance between participants.

Mei also uses intersentential code-switching when she contrasts the correct recording procedures with counter-examples about what not to do, to further illustrate the nature of the recording activities. In the following example, Cheng misunderstands the nature of the recording and claims that he will compose a speech in his mind before the recording starts. Mei then gives an explanation of the recording procedures. The bold font is used to indicate the contrast in content between the example-giving part and the refutation.

(5)

M: *Be siuN saN?*	M: *what do you mean?*	1
	(pause, then M realizes that he	2
	means to prepare a speech.)	3
Mei you, mei you.	**No, no.** (emphatically)	4
Li be lok im e si hoN,	When you make the recording.	5
I chu iau si a na kong ho cho be	*The main reason why she wants to*	6
lok im, i to si be ai zui zi ran de	*record conversation is that she wants*	7
qing kuang xia.	the most natural conversation.	8
Chit chiong e, **ni bu yao xian shuo**	*This kind of thing.* **You don't**	9
you tai ci.	**compose lines in advance.**	10

Kong goa chit ma le lok im a, goa chit ma ai kong kik i, goa be kong tai i a.	*Thinking that now the recorder is on, I should speak Mandarin now, or I am going to speak Taiwanese.*	11 12 13
Bu shi zhe yang.	**That's not the way.**	14
Li na be a ne I to khi lok he le dian shi ji *to ho lo.*	*If she wants that she could simply record* TV shows.	15 16
Bu shi, bu shi……	**No, no**……	17

Note that when Mei comes to realize what Cheng means, she suddenly switchs to Mandarin, saying *meiyou, meiyou* 'no, no' with an emphatic intonation. This switching, along with the changes in prosody, is a dramatic contextualization cue, which immediately and powerfully presents the listener with the message of how wrong such an idea is to her. Then she explains the purpose of recording in Taiwanese, switching to Mandarin in line 9 and 10 for *ni bu yao xiang shuo you tai ci*, 'You don't compose lines in advance.' Afterwards she gives examples of incorrect recording procedures in Taiwanese (line 11-13), and then refutes these examples with *bu shi zhe yang,* 'that's not the way' (line 14) in Mandarin. Then she emphasizes the dispreferred choice *li na be a ne I to khi lok he le dian shi ji to ho lo*, 'If she wants that she could simply record TV shows' in line 15 and 16, once again followed by a refutation in Mandarin *bu shi, bu shi* 'no, no.' Especially in the second half of this excerpt, it is apparent that by contrasting examples of incorrect recording procedures in Taiwanese with denials or corrected directions in Mandarin, Mei creates a sharp contrast between appropriate and inappropriate methods. There is similar use of intersentential code-switching in other conversations as well (see Su, 2000 for more details).

The goal of the two conversations is for Mei to gain assistance from Cheng and Lan in recording their own conversations, which, of course, presumes their granting permission to be recorded. Mei's asking for permission is highly face-threatening (Brown and Levinson, 1987) for Cheng and Lan, since Cheng and Lan would be responsible for getting permission from the others who would be participating in the interactions, as well as for dealing with their reactions to the request and the taping. In order to achieve her goal, Mei uses certain rhetorical strategies at the level of actual content and of contextualization cues, code-switching being one of them.

If we focus on the content of the two conversations, it is clear that several topics occur in both conversations, in addition to the description of the study and the directions for recording. First, Mei repeatedly emphasizes the difficulty of getting consent to record. Since Taiwanese are generally cautious of being recorded and thus not always willing to be part of the recording process, Mei states that the only way to receive assistance is to depend on relatives and close friends, which severely limits the amount of data available for research. In saying so, she indirectly places the listeners in a situation where a commitment to help seems obligatory, given the fact that the listeners are themselves Mei's family members. In addition, Mei points out that she has been asking other relatives and friends as well, suggesting that the listeners are not the only ones being asked and that everyone is "in the same boat" now.

To deal with such a highly face-threatening communicative task, Mei applies positive politeness strategies, claiming common ground and in-group identity (Brown and Levinson, 1987). These passages are almost all conducted in Taiwanese, except for occasional intrasentential code-switching. An excerpt from Mei and Lan's conversation is given in (6) below. By speaking the in-group language, Taiwanese, Mei indexes the RO set to family members and negotiates interpersonal relationships as well as the possibility of receiving consent from the addressees.

(6)

M: *Goa chit ma to chin kho lian ne.*	M: *It's difficult for me (us).*	1
Loing ai lang chhui lan chia e hoN.	*I need to ask our family.*	2
Ma chhui SC in he peng e.	*I also ask SC's family too.*	3
SC in hia e qinqi *goa ma chit le chit le* da dianhua.	*I called SC's relatives one after one.*	4
		5
Goa ma pai tho, pai tho li ka goa iong la.	*I'd like to ask for your help too.*	6
		7

Another topic that recurs is the assurance of privacy. Mei emphasizes that the recording is purely research-oriented and that access to the taped material will be limited to the researcher herself, the listener's relative. In Mei and Lan's conversation, the topic is repeated three times, with two passages almost exclusively in Taiwanese and one half in Taiwanese and half in Mandarin. The language choice for this topic

is not as clean-cut as the previous one, but the general tendency is for Taiwanese to predominate. Mei's language choice can be seen as an assurance to Lan as a close family member that Lan can trust her, while her use of intrasentential code-switching into Mandarin in the third passage appears to lend authority and to indicate the factual and serious nature of the privacy issues involved in research in general. Indeed the third passage is the one that has the most formal tone, containing more research-related terms. Examples (7) and (8) are two of the passages in question, (8) being the one that is half in Taiwanese and half in Mandarin.

(7)

M: *A si kong be iao kin, in ui goa che mm si kong,*	M: *But it's OK, because I now,*	1
		2
I che lok im che si chuncui *i ka ki be thiaN e.*	*She wants to get recording, and that is purely for herself.*	3
		4
Ai be thiaN i to si be thiaN saN,	*What she is looking for;*	5
Be thiaN khoaN kong chit le lang pi lu kong,	*What she is looking for is, say, one person,*	6
		7
Jiashe *chit ma na lai kong,*	*Now* suppose,	8
Lai pai tho li luyin *lai kong*	*You are going to* record your conversation,	9
......		10

(8)

M: *HeN a, goa siuN na lan ka ki,* Ying gei ke yi xiang xin dao le.	M: *Right, I think we are a family,* We should be able to trust each other.	1
		2
		3
I to si tak chhe,	*This is just for her study,*	4
to si be zuo lun wen *niaN.*	*She just needs to* work on her thesis.	5
A be khi gong kai *chit le* nei rong a.	*She's not going to reveal all the content.*	6
		7
Ta zhege meiyou yao gongkai neirong de.	She's not going to reveal every detail.	8
		9
U si ka ne kong yi duan yi duan *a ne.*	*If any, it's just* excerpts of paragraphs.	10
		11

Note that Mei's overall language choice, as mentioned earlier, to Lan and Cheng, respectively, is around 44% and 62% Taiwanese out of her total speaking time. Especially in Mei and Lan's conversation, where use of the two languages is almost evenly split, the dominant use of Taiwanese in the above topics seems particularly salient. Table (9) is a summary of a rather lengthy, uninterrupted turn spoken by

Mei, along with indication of the languages used in the shifting topics. Part of the conversation summarized here has appeared in the previous examples. In the discussion prior to this turn, Mei and Lan are discussing people's general uneasiness with tape-recording.

(9)

Topic	Language
Mei agrees that people get nervous under this situation, and states that when she began to record herself she was a little uneasy as well.	T with occasional M words
Mei assures that the recording will only be heard by the researcher. (7)	T with occasional M
Mei gives examples about possible recording settings.	M
Mei states the importance of being natural. Monitored speech is not the interest of the research.	M with occasional T
Otherwise the researcher could record TV shows instead.	T with occasional M
The goal of the study is to observe actual language use in society.	M
The access to the content of the recording is limited to the researcher. (8)	Half in T and half in M

Topics shift within this turn, and code-switching between the two languages clearly corresponds with these shifts. In the first two topics, while Mei recognizes the general fear of being recorded and assures Lan that the recording will be not used for purposes other than research, she uses Taiwanese to minimize the distance between herself and Lan, to ally herself with her interlocutor who would likely feel uneasy about being recorded, through both the content of her words and her language choice simultaneously. Then, she switchs to the direction-giving topic, for which Mandarin is the more unmarked choice due to its factual implications. The meaning of code-switching itself and that of code-switching to a specific language seem to be at work simultaneously here. On the one hand, code-switching itself, regardless of the languages involved, can be interpreted as a contextualization cue to indicate a change of frame that organizes the internal structure of the conversation, as discussed above. On the other hand, switching from Taiwanese to Mandarin specifies social import, that Mei redefines her social distance from Lan from one of in-group solidarity to one of neutrality given the factual description of the research.

Next, Mei addresses the importance of being natural, noting that otherwise the research could simply involve recording TV programs. There is a switch from Mandarin to Taiwanese at the point where Mei seeks to differentiate "the important thing" from "the wrong procedures." Then Mei shifts to the goal of the study, for which she switches back to Mandarin. Again the switching itself signals a new frame, while switching from Taiwanese to Mandarin in this passage expresses social meanings: since this passage addresses abstract concepts, Mandarin is the more unmarked choice. Finally she states that the recording is for research purposes and that the full content will not be available to the general public. Here she mixes the two languages.

In this passage, what we see is the constant negotiation for the unmarked RO set for each different topic. Mei's goal is to persuade Lan to tape-record on her daughter's behalf, and she clearly uses a number of strategies. She expresses the difficulty of getting consent and ensures the scholarly purpose of the recording; yet at the same time she appears to attempt to show that the study is serious and valid and to give directions clearly about the procedures involved. In other words, her language choice has the effect of gaining listener's compassion as well as their respect for the study. Therefore, code-switching becomes a useful tool, sending off-record messages to the listener/interpreter. By simultaneously indexing two seemingly conflicting RO sets, Mei provides Lan with a number of defensible interpretations. Note that in the above examples, the pattern of intersentential code-switching is not entirely clean-cut. There is occasional intrasentential code-switching in many of the passages dominated by one language. The interaction of intrasentential and intersentential code-switching allows Mei to avoid total commitment to the RO sets of either languages. Almost all of the topics in the passage can be addressed in both languages (except for some of the abstractions about the goal of the study, for example), which leaves the speaker a range of choices to constantly negotiate interpersonal distance and to achieve the communicative goal.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, I examine how the different backgrounds of conversation participants, such as generation and place of residence, affect language use. Since all three telephone conversations share similar communicative goals, they are comparable at least to a certain

degree. In addition to the examination of the general tendency of language choice in the three conversations, this paper also shows how code-switching is employed as a tool to negotiate interpersonal relationships and to organize the internal structure of the conversations. There are three points worth noting. First, the distinction between intrasentential and intersentential code-switching is a useful one, but oftentimes these two types of code-switching interact with each other. Second, while constant intrasentential code-switching is often considered unmarked, the degree or extent of switching actually carries social import. Third, while constant intrasentential code-switching may signal dual membership, it may also be used as a resource for bilingual speakers to avoid commitment to the social implications of either code in handling face-threatening situations.

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