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LANGUAGEx CONTACT BETWEEN PORTUGUESE AND JAPANESE

Functions of Code-Switching in the Speech of Brazilians Living in Japan

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Introduction

It is widely known that contact between Portuguese and Japanese is not a recent phenomenon. During Japan’s Christian Period, the introduction of foreign culture by missionaries and merchants influenced not only fields such as religion, arts and technology, but also the Japanese language. This can be verified in the words borrowed from Portuguese into Japanese. Naturally, the cultural and linguistic influence was not unilateral. The Japanese influence on Portuguese culture and language can still be observed in this day and age. Four hundred years later, yet again we are witness to the interaction between the Portuguese and Japanese languages, this time due to the continuing migration of Brazilians to Japan.

Contact between Portuguese and other languages as a result of emigration and settlement in other countries have been the focus of academic dissertations and studies throughout the years. Amongst them, an important account on the so called “emigrês”, the language spoken in Portuguese emigrant communities, can be found in Dias,1 a description of hybrid linguistic forms between Portuguese and English in the United States. However, very few investigations have been conducted on Portuguese and Japanese language contact. Through the analysis of the data provided from research on Brazilians, this paper will attempt to shed light on this field.

According to the Ministry of Justice, the number of foreign residents in Japan corresponds to 1.4% of the country’s total population. Of this, Brazilians account for the third largest group, with approximately 265.000 people, after Koreans and Chinese.2 The influx of Brazilians into Japanese

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1 Dias, 1989.
2 Statistics data concerning the foreign population in Japan were extracted from the Ministry of Justice home page (www.mof.go.jp).
society has drawn the attention of researchers from different areas. As far as linguistic matters are concerned, bilingualism is one of the important topics to be investigated. It can be observed under different forms in Brazilians’ hybrid speech. One of the characteristics of this speech is the high frequency of code-switching between Portuguese and Japanese.

It is thought that the reason for the occurrence of code-switching is the lack of language proficiency. It is indeed one of the reasons to be considered, however it is not the only one. In fact, if we observe code-switching in different bilingual communities, we will notice that often it occurs because of reasons other than imperfect language acquisition and that it is an important element with social and psychological implications for communication between bilingual speakers.

In this paper, we will take a pragmatic approach to analyzing code-switching practiced by young Brazilian bilingual speakers. We will focus on the functions of code-switching in natural conversations from the point of view that code-switching is a conversational strategy used either to organize the speech or to affect the hearer in some way. On the next pages, after presenting an account of the major trends in code-switching research, we will discuss, based on our data, the role of CS as conversational strategies. Finally, we will briefly analyze how the speakers in different situations select the language to be used.

1. Overview of Brazilian Portuguese language community in Japan

The sudden increase of Brazilians in Japanese society followed the amendments to Japan’s Immigration Law in 1990, which allowed Japanese Brazilians and their spouses to work in the country with very few restrictions. Consequently, Brazilian communities rapidly grew in prefectures as Gunma, Shizuoka, Aichi and Shiga, where a large proportion of the country’s factories are concentrated. In these areas, we can see evidence of the Brazilian presence on the advertisements written in Portuguese inside convenience stores and on sign boards in front of many Brazilian food shops and restaurants. Also, the Brazilian ethnic media has grown considerably, with the publication of various print media written in the Portuguese language.

According to surveys on the social background of Brazilians in Japan, many migrated from Brazil with the intention of working for a period

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3 The spouses are not necessarily of Japanese descent.
between three and five years, however their actual length of stay would often be longer, particularly after 1990. Their families would of course accompany them to Japan and thus a noticeable shift from short-term to long-term stay and, in the case of an increasing number, settlement in the host society could be observed.

As a result, the number of Brazilian children who are born or raised in Japan are increasing. Many of these children are raised in a bilingual environment, speaking Portuguese mainly at home and Japanese in the outside world. They are, therefore, in a permanent language contact situation, which is reflected on their discourse, especially through the use of Portuguese/Japanese code-switching.

On the pages below, we will analyze the functions of various kind of code-switching (hereafter CS) in young Brazilians’ in-group conversations.

In the next section, before proceeding with the analysis, we will briefly discuss the major trends in code-switching research, including studies focusing on Portuguese and Japanese.

2. Code-switching research

Bilingualism and code-switching research owes much of its recognition and development to the work of Weinreich, one of the first attempts to carry out a systematic description of language contact phenomena. Code-switching itself has been a regular object of analysis since the 1970’s.

Studies of CS can be grouped roughly into two main categories, according to their approach, i.e., the pragmatic/functional approach and the syntactic approach. The first trend goes back to the pioneering work of Gumperz & Blom. In this study, the authors analyze the social and situational factors which influence switching between standard Norwegian and a local dialect by inhabitants of a Norwegian village. Later, Gumperz classified the functions of CS between different languages, in particularly, bilingual speech communities such as the Hispanic community in California. These studies introduced some important concepts for the analysis of code-

4 Watanabe, 1995.
5 Weinreich, 1953.
7 Gumperz, 1982.
switching in natural conversation, such as metaphorical CS, situational CS and conversational CS.\textsuperscript{8}

The syntactic approach researches are concerned with the syntactic constraints on CS production, specifically intrasentential CS. Among these studies, we identify three major models. First, we should mention that of Poplack,\textsuperscript{9} an analysis of Spanish/English switching in the New York Puerto Rican community. Poplack claims that CS production is constrained by two rules: the free morpheme constraint and the equivalence constraint. According to these two rules, switching is not allowed between a lexical item and a bound morpheme (grammatical word), nor between constituents belonging to languages with no equivalent word order.

The second model, presented by Di Sciullo, Muysken & Sirigh \textsuperscript{10} attempts to explain CS production by Chomsky’s government binding theory. Finally, we find the “Frame-Content Hypothesis”\textsuperscript{11} and “Matrix Language Model”.\textsuperscript{12} These two models, which can be included in the same group, explains the mechanisms of intrasentential CS production. According to them, CS involves a matrix language (base language) and an embedded language. The grammatical frame of the sentence is provided by the former, while the inserted lexical items come from the later. In spite of its syntactic approach, Myers-Scotton attempts a holistic analysis of CS production, accounting for its social aspects as well. She claims that CS is triggered by social motivations and establishes the dichotomy unmarked language versus marked language. The unmarked language is the language considered usual for a certain type of interaction. CS to a different language is seen as being marked and is determined by specific factors, like expressing the speakers’ social and ethnic identity.

Although the models mentioned above claim universality to their findings, they account for CS in particular communities. The constraints on CS in one community may not apply to CS in a different community. Additionally, patterns of CS also depend on the languages involved. For instance, the word order constraint observed by Poplack applies to English/Spanish CS in the Puerto Rican community in N.Y., but it does not seem to be valid for

\textsuperscript{8} For a detailed definition of these concepts, see Gumperz (1982).
\textsuperscript{9} Poplack, 1980.
\textsuperscript{10} Di Sciullo, Muysken & Sirigh, 1986.
\textsuperscript{11} Azuma, 1991.
\textsuperscript{12} Myers-Scotton, 1993.
CS between Portuguese and Japanese or English and Japanese in immigrant communities.\textsuperscript{13}

Myers-Scotton's model was based on data collected in Kenya's urban environment, a historically multilingual and diglossic society. The social motivations for CS in such a society may not be the same as that of a minority community encrusted in a monolingual society, which is the case of Brazilians in Japan. Therefore, the analysis of CS must take into consideration the nature of the languages switched and, as Nishimura points out, "the historical background of the community studied".\textsuperscript{14}

As for research on Portuguese/Japanese CS, we can mention Nawa,\textsuperscript{15} a qualitative analysis of CS’s socio-cultural functions in interactions among members of a Nikkei\textsuperscript{16} community in Brasilia, Brazil. We also find Kuyama,\textsuperscript{17} an account of Portuguese borrowings in the Japanese discourse of "issei" (first-generation Japanese immigrant) speakers. This study elucidates the process of phonetic-phonological and morphological incorporation of borrowed words from Portuguese into the Japanese language and, although it does not deal with CS, it presents a detailed analysis of the pragmatic functions of borrowing used in the discourse, which has much in common with the functions of CS.

Few studies related to this topic have been done among the Brazilians in Japan, due to their relatively short history as an immigrant community. Regardless, the number of researchers interested in Brazilian speakers’ use of language and language behavior has been gradually increasing. Among these studies we find Kono,\textsuperscript{18} which also deals with borrowing, but taking the opposite view to Kuyama, analyzes borrowing from Japanese into the Portuguese used in newspapers for the Brazilian community. Some of these borrowed words are used with high frequency and according to Kono, have been gradually incorporated in the lexicon shared by the majority of Brazilians living in Japan. As for CS research itself, we mention Nakamizu,\textsuperscript{19} a descriptive analysis of intrasentential CS.

\textsuperscript{13} Data analyzed by Nishimura (1997), which shows English/Japanese CS performed by Japanese-Canadians, back up this statement. As far as I could observe in my own data, Portuguese/Japanese CS also contradicts Poplack’s word order constraint.

\textsuperscript{14} Nishimura, 1997, p. 11.

\textsuperscript{15} Nawa, 1989.

\textsuperscript{16} Nikkei means "of Japanese origin".

\textsuperscript{17} Kuyama, 2000.

\textsuperscript{18} Kono, 2000.

\textsuperscript{19} Nakamizu, 2000.
in Japanese Brazilians’ in-group conversations. As this case study research was one of the first attempts in analyzing Portuguese/Japanese language contact in real oral interactions among members of the Brazilian community, a more comprehensive study of CS as well as of other language contact phenomena are still to be studied from different approaches. In this way, we expect that the following analysis will clarify some of the important sociopragmatic and discoursive aspects of CS produced by the Brazilian speakers.

3. The survey

The total duration of the recordings is approximately two hours. The data was recorded in the cities of Kyoto and Yokosuka City, the latter located in Kanagawa Prefecture. A large number of Brazilians live in Yokosuka, the majority working in factories. On the other hand, although Brazilians living in Kyoto are not numerous, our subjects are college students who moved away to this city from regions in Japan with large Brazilian communities.

3.1. The field work

Natural discourse data was collected for CS analysis from the informal conversations of young Japanese Brazilians. All conversations were tape-recorded at the subjects’ home, however, in the case of the Yokosuka group, also at a local church. In order to obtain spontaneous in-group conversation data, the researcher chose not to be present during those gatherings, but conducted a follow-up interview with the main subjects afterwards to be able to clarify points which were not clearly available in the recording. Also, the subjects were asked to answer a short questionnaire with questions about their sociolinguistic background.

3.2. The subjects

All the subjects were born in Brazil and speak Portuguese as their native language. They accompanied their parents to Japan and received education, or part of it, in Japanese schools. At the time of the recording, their ages ranged from 15 to 23 and they had already been in Japan for at least seven years. Of the subjects, the youngest was six years old upon arrival in Japan and the oldest 14 years of age. All of them are from Japanese descent.
The selection of the subjects’ was based on the following criteria:

1. Arrived in Japan at school age.
2. Spoke Portuguese as a native language.
3. Kept regular contact with other members of the Brazilian community.
4. Had good oral conversation proficiency in both languages.  

With regard to the subjects’ knowledge of the Japanese language before coming to Japan, with the exception of three participants, who spoke the language to some extent at home, the remainder had learned it entirely after arriving in Japan.

4. The analysis: CS as a conversational strategy

Our analysis of the Portuguese/Japanese CS data adopts some of the concepts found in Auer’s “interactional framework”, which was developed based upon the conversational analysis’ methodology. It is not an application of this model though, since the conditions surrounding our subjects are not exactly the same of those presented in Auer’s survey carried out in Germany. However, as both of them deal with immigrant minority communities in countries considered monolingual, we could observe striking similarities between the two groups. The main difference is that the subjects analyzed by Auer were Italian second generation adolescents who formed a more heterogeneous group than those in our study, and that some of them were not balanced bilingual speakers, having very low proficiency in oral Italian. Moreover, interactions between children and adult immigrants were also object of the analysis, which led them to accommodate their discourse through code-switching. This kind of accommodation is not observed in our data, since we focus only on conversations inside peer groups whose members have a relatively balanced proficiency in both languages.

Auer introduced two pairs of central concepts: code-switching vs. transfer and participant-related vs. discourse-related. These concepts will be briefly explained in the next paragraph.

20 The aim of this paper is not to evaluate the subjects’ language proficiency. Although some of them do not have a balanced proficiency in written and formal language, they are able to perform well in casual situations, both in Portuguese and Japanese.

Auer uses a more extensive term, language alternation, which covers both transfer and CS and plays the role of organizing the conversation, either oriented to the discourse itself or to the interaction’s participant. The former kind of alternation is generally a marker of topic change, emphasis, sequential contrast (side-remarks and quotations), etc. In other words, we can say that it corresponds to discourse strategies. The participant-related alternation, on the other hand, signals the speaker’s preference for one language over another. Therefore, it also has the function of negotiating the base language of the interaction. Alternating two languages in the same conversation will eventually lead the participants “to agree on a common language for interaction rather than using languages at random”\textsuperscript{22}.

As mentioned above, the main difference between our findings and Auer’s is that the Japanese Brazilian subjects do not use CS to negotiate the base language of the interaction. Some speakers may prefer to use Japanese rather than Portuguese, but it does not lead the others to choose this language as the unmarked language of the conversation, as we can see in the example (1) below:

(1) Kyoto Group: Discussing the job situation of Ma’s parents\textsuperscript{23}

(Italic is used for Japanese utterances and inserted words)

Ma : Tá ruim a situação.
Pa : Bônasu wa nai yo ne, mô
Ma : A maior parte das firmas tão cortando o bônus.
Cl : Seu pai é shain?
Ma : Sem bônus.
Pa : Aa, só nan da.
Ma : A minha mãe é pâto.

\textsuperscript{22} Auer, 2000 p. 174.

\textsuperscript{23} The following rules were established for the data transcription:

a) Code-switching is showed by Italic letters.

b) The circumflex accent is used to signal the vowel prolongation in Japanese.

c) We decided to do a literal transcription of the speakers’ utterances. Therefore, abbreviations and colloquial expressions are written as they were actually spoken.

d) In order to protect the subjects’ privacy, they are denominated by their names’ initial letters. Nouns of places and institutions are also indicated by their initial letters.

e) Other signs used in the transcription are: [ ] overlapping; // reconstruction of the sentence; ( ) short interruption of the utterance by another speaker.
(1’) English translation

Ma: The situation is bad.
Pa: Bonuses are not been given any more, right?
Ma: Most companies are cutting back on the bonus.
Cl: Is your father a regular employee?
Ma: Without bonus.
Pa: Really?
Ma: My mother is a part-time employee.

Now, let us turn our attention to transfer vs. code-switching. Transfer is the term used to describe alternation from language A to language B of one isolated item or a longer stretch of speech, with a predictable return to language A. On the other hand, CS is the alternation from language A to language B, followed by further communication in language B. In Auer’s framework, as the point of return into the initial language is not predictable, CS implies the above mentioned negotiation of the interaction’s base language, while transfer does not.

In our data, we also make distinction between transfer (hereafter T) and CS. However, CS does not seem to be a sign of language preference or accommodation, as shown in Auer’s data. Triggering CS is not the interaction’s participants, but rather the conversation topics. Therefore, in our analysis, the difference between T and CS is basically a formal one. We will consider as T isolated lexical items and the so called fixed expressions, like “gomen ne” or “dame da yo”, inserted in the grammatical frame of the other language. Thus, T does not lead to a change of the grammatical structure of the sentence. All other types of language alternation, with change of the grammatical frame, will be called CS.

We assume that language alternation in the bilingual discourse has the function of conversational strategies, equivalent to discourse markers in monolingual interaction. These conversational strategies can be either discourse-related, with the function of organizing the discourse, or participant-related. What we call participant-related CS or T are those strategies which affect the hearer in some way. For instance, we consider remarks or reproof of the hearer’s behavior as participant-related language alternation.

As for transfers, we also found discourse-related T and participant-related T in our data. However, the former scarcely appears. Among participant-related T, we can distinguish between those which affect the hearer in the same way as CS and those which are oriented towards the speakers
themselves, with the function of expressing more accurately his/her feelings or emotions.

Based on the collected data, we propose the following classification for the language alternation types observed in the natural discourse of Japanese Brazilians:

Table 1: Classification of Japanese/Portuguese language alternation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language alternation</th>
<th>Discourse-related</th>
<th>Participant-related</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>topic change, side remarks, quotation, etc.</td>
<td>hearer related: reproach, remarks, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>hearer related: topic introduction/reintroduction, etc.</td>
<td>speaker related: speaker's inner thoughts, feelings'expression, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table 1 above, the language alternations are basically divided into two categories. We notice that, although these are closed categories, corresponding to specific set of strategies which can be considered universal, the forms through which CS and T are manifested in each category are not exhaustive and may constitute an open-ended list. It means that CS and T which occur in bilingual speakers' discourse cannot be totally predicted and may differ according to the situation elements or the speaker.

4.1. Participant-related CS and T

Let us see some examples of what we call hearer-related CS/T. Example (2) is an excerpt of a conversation between three sisters (P, S, T) in Yokosuka. They are talking about their plans to study in the USA. The youngest (T), expresses her wish to follow her sisters and is reproached by the others, who think she will misbehave.

(2) Yokosuka Group: three sisters are talking about studying in the USA
(Italic is used for code-switching to Portuguese)

P : Rainen ikô yo. Ne, rainen no shichigatsu ka hachigatsu ni ikô yo, Amerika ni.
T : Uchi mo iku.
The conversation commences in Japanese, however when T insists in going abroad with her sisters, the oldest one (P) code-switches to Portuguese to emphasize her admonition. It is interesting to notice that she first says “you won’t go” in Japanese (omae ikanai) and, then, once more, in Portuguese (você não vai). The other sister (S) also speaks in Portuguese to reprove T. In this way, CS is used here to emphasize the speaker’s reproof towards the hearer. They continue the discussion for a while in Portuguese. This time, we observe instead the insertion of a Japanese fixed expression into the Portuguese utterance to emphasize once again admonition.

(3)  
S : Você não tem nem quinze anos.  
T : E daí? Daqui a dois anos eu vou fazer quinze, ora.  
S : Nada disso. Você vai ver.  
P : Dame da yo. Porque você não tem responsabilidade, vai fazer bagunça.
(3’) English Translation

S: You’re not even fifteen years old.
T: So? In two years I will be fifteen.
S: You’re not going. You will see.
P: You can’t. As you’re not a responsible person, you will make a mess of it.

In (2) and (3), code-switching to both Portuguese and Japanese has the similar function of reproving T’s idea. This shows one of the most important aspect of language alternation, i.e., the contrastive use of both languages in the same speech.

4.2. Speaker-related T

This kind of strategy was observed only in transfers, generally of one word, from one language to the other. We noticed that the speakers tended to use Japanese adjectives to express their feelings and also interjections to express surprise.

(4) Kyoto Group: friends talking about the time they lived in Brazil

Cl: Napolitano, natsukashii! No Brasil, não tinha um sorvete que chamava Napolitano? Qual que você gostava mais lá no Brasil?
Ma: Ahn? Já nem me lembro mais.

(4’) English translation

Cl: Napolitano, It brings back memories! In Brazil, there was an ice cream called Napolitano, right? What ice cream did you like most in Brazil?
Ma: What? I don’t remember anymore.

4.3. Discourse-related CS and T

We consider discourse-related language alternation as strategies used to organize the discourse, which approximately corresponds to discourse markers in monolingual discourse.
In (5), the sisters P and T are talking in Japanese about the “Bunkasai”, a cultural festival held every year in Japanese schools. In the middle of the conversation, T code-switches to Portuguese to make a side remark related to the main topic, the festival.

(5) Yokosuka Group: P and T are talking about a festival in T’s Junior High School

P : Nanimo shitenai jan.
T : Nemukatta, kyô. Bunkasai de sa, hanashiatta.
P : Bunkasai no koto? (Hum) ku gatsu desho?
T : Demo sa, nihon // japonês, você sabe como que é, né, do jeito que é apressadinho.
P : Maa, ichiô datte, bunkasai no junbi ga aru kara.

(5’) English Translation

P : You didn’t do anything.
T : I got sleepy today. We discussed the Cultural Festival.
P : The Cultural Festival? (Hum) Isn’t it in September?
T : Yes, but Japan // Japanese, you know how they are, don’t you? How they are impatient.
P : Well, after all, it is necessary to organize (the Cultural Festival).

T says in a slightly critical tone that the Japanese are very impatient, implying that this is the reason why they began to organize the festival so early. We notice that initially she began her reply in Japanese, suddenly changing it to Portuguese. This code-switching may also suggest that she is drawing a line between her and her Japanese teachers and schoolmates and she thought it would be appropriate to say it in Portuguese.

Example (6) is a strategy very often used by bilingual speakers, that is, code-switching to express quotation. Ma is trying to comfort her friend, whom has lost her apartment’s key, saying that the same thing has happened to her before. She first speaks in Japanese, but code-switches to Portuguese to narrate the episode. During the narration, Ma inserts quotations in Japanese to reenact her own thoughts and surprise at the time she noticed that her key was not in her bag.
(6) Kyoto Group: Ma is talking about the day she lost her key

Ma: Zettai, tabun oitearu to omou (××) oboe ga nai to iu koto wa tabun... Watashi mo ni kai yattan yanka. Da primeira vez, eu cheguei em casa, “kagi nai”. Depois eu tive que voltar pra J., né. Da última vez, quando eu tava indo pra escada, eu falei “are, kagi”. Eu fui lá em cima, tava lá.

(6’) Ma: Maybe you must have left it there... (××) you don’t remember perhaps (where it is)...I lost my key too, twice. The first time, I got home, “No key”. Then, I had to go back to J., right? The last time, when I was walking towards the escalator, I said “??are (Oh!), the key”. I went upstairs, it was there.

It is important to notice that, besides the quotation, the first code-switching from Japanese to Portuguese marks a change in the style from common talk to narration. Once more, CS is marking contrast between the two languages.

The third strategy is that of topic reintroduction through the use of a fixed expression from Japanese in the beginning of the Portuguese utterance.

(7) Yokosuka Group: P, S, T and friends (K, M) are talking about the organization of a party in the church.

P : Seu pai que vai pegar a carne?
K : Hum.
P : Que dia que ele vai? No sábado? É? Nanka kiitenai, M?
(short silence)
P : F. konai yo.
S : Por quê?
P : Porque ele tinha, acho que nanka okane para terminar de fazer a casa, uma coisa assim.
T : Iya da!
P : *Hanashi ni modoru to, então, eh, você não sabe quando ele vai pegar a carne, né?

(7’) English translation

P : Is your father going to pick up the meat?
K : Hmm.
P : What day of the week is he going? On Saturday? Right? Have you heard anything about it, M?

(short silence)
P : F. won’t come.
S : Why?
P : Because he had to, I think (he had to find the) money to finish building his house, something like that.
T : How awful!
P : Getting back to the subject, so, you don’t know when he is going to pick up the meat, do you?

P is leading the conversation. She asks K a question, but does not receive an answer. After a short pause, P changes the conversation topic, saying that someone expected to go would not be able to come and, finally, she returns to the original topic, using the Japanese expression ‘hanashi ni modoru to’ (getting back to the subject), followed by the first question in Portuguese. As the predominant language in this conversation is Portuguese, the stretches in Japanese have specific functions seen as strategies.

5. Language choice in bilingual speech

In the examples of speech above, it is noticeable that Japanese predominates in some of them and Portuguese in others. The predominant language used in a conversation is referred to as the discourse’s base language.

It is already widely known that the bilingual speaker’s language choice is determined by many factors, such as the speaker’s proficiency, the speaker’s identity and factors related to the speech situation. In the case of balanced bilinguals, the situational factors are the most stressed ones. However, these factors may vary depending on the analyzed community.

In our data, we observed a clear language choice among the Yokosuka group. As we were able to record data in two distinct situations, we compared the use of the two languages in both of them. In the first situation, the three sisters are talking at home about daily topics such as school, friends and plans for the future. In the second one, they are talking with their cousin (K) and friend (M), who belong to the same group as them at the local church. The conversation topic is the organization of a party in the church. Although K and M are able to speak Japanese as well as them, the three sisters tend to speak more Portuguese in this situation compared with
when talking between themselves about everyday life. As all of the speakers have the same level of Japanese proficiency and have a close relationship with each other, we believe that what affects their language preference here is not the interaction’s participants, as stated by Auer about the Italian/German data, but the conversation topic. It seems that topics concerning the church activities are considered to be part of the “Brazilian domain”. Furthermore, because the church is also the place for social gathering among their Brazilian members, it functions as the link between them and their culture of origin. Thus, we presume that it is natural to associate Portuguese to matters and topics concerning church affairs.

On the other hand, the three sisters use Japanese to talk about more general topics. Long periods of conversation in Japanese without CS were observed in the data. This is also a natural preference if we consider that they grew up in Japan and daily topics are related to their everyday life in Japanese society.

In the case of the Kyoto group, we were not able to establish a comparison between different situations, since data was recorded only once. Also, the conversation was not oriented towards one topic, as the one about the church activities in Yokosuka. However, if we compare the number of Japanese utterances without CS with the Portuguese utterances shown in table 2 below, we notice that the former overcomes the latter.

Portuguese/Japanese CS was observed in all situations, in Kyoto as well as in Yokosuka, which supports our initial statement that CS is unmarked in in-group conversations among bilingual speakers with the same sociolinguistic background.

In table 2, the total number of utterances produced in each situation is divided into Japanese utterances (J), Portuguese utterances (P) and utterances with CS (J + P). Also, T from Portuguese into Japanese base language (P → J) and T from Japanese into Portuguese base language (J → P) are showed on the table. CS between turns will not be considered here. As it demands a more detailed discussion, it will be the subject for future investigations.

Table 2: Language Alternation in each Situation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situations</th>
<th>J</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>J + P</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>inaudible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kyoto</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yokosuka (home)</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yokosuka (church)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

With the small amount of data, we are able to draw some conclusions from the previous analyses. The first is that languages used by bilinguals must be analyzed according to their functions in the discourse. It is common to mention a lack of language proficiency as the reason for CS occurrence in bilingual conversation. This is certainly one of the reasons, especially in the case of immigrants who have no choice in being bilinguals and face economic, social and educational problems in their new society. However, it is necessary to consider the multifaceted nature of CS, in order to understand that it is a legitimate speech mode for bilingual speakers’ ingroup interactions.

Finally, we should mention that this research is also important insofar as it accounts for one aspect of Portuguese use under contact situation with another language, in this case Japanese. Further research must be pursued in order to enable us to explore new aspects of Portuguese and Japanese language contact and to examine changes undertaken by the Portuguese language itself in the context of immigration.

References


Abstract

Four hundred years after the Portuguese left Japan, yet again we are witness to Portuguese and Japanese language contact, this time due to the continuing migration of Japanese Brazilians to Japan. As a result, the number of Brazilian children raised in a bilingual environment is increasing day by day. In this paper, we analyze code-switching (CS) between Japanese and Portuguese realized by young Brazilian bilingual speakers in in-group conversations. We focus on the discursive and pragmatic functions of CS in natural in-group conversations, taking the point of view that CS must be seen not only as the result of imperfect language acquisition, but also as conversational strategies used either to organize the speech or to affect the hearer in some way, or even to express more accurately the speaker’s own feelings. We believe that similar research brings new insights into the dynamics of Japanese/Portuguese bilingual language use and, also, clarify some aspects of language change in an immigration context.

Resumo

Aproximadamente quatrocentos anos depois que os portugueses deixaram o Japão, somos novamente testemunhas de uma nova onda de contato linguístico entre o português e o japonês, desta vez causada pela crescente migração de nipo-brasileiros. O presente artigo tem por objetivo analisar um aspecto desse contato, nomeadamente a mudança de código observada no discurso bilíngue de jovens nipo-brasileiros que passaram sua infância ou parte dela no Japão. Focalizaremos sobretudo as funções discursivas e pragmáticas da mudança de código em conversas informais entre os jovens bilíngues que possuem perfil sócio-cultural semelhante. Partimos do ponto de vista que essas mudanças de código não são apenas resultado de falta de proficiência lingüística, mas devem ser vistas como estratégias de conversação, importantes na interação verbal entre falantes bilíngues pertencentes ao mesmo grupo sócio-cultural. Acreditamos que pesquisas como esta poderão esclarecer novos aspectos do contato linguístico entre o português e o japonês, sobretudo em contextos de imigração.

要約

本稿は成長期に日本に移住したブラジル人若年層の自然言語を対象に、その言語を特徴づける日本語とポルトガル語のコード切り替え（CS）を語用論的な観点から分類し、考察するものである。バイリンガル者言語の言語におけるCSの出現は話者の言語能力不足由来していると一般的に言われるが、CSに関与する要因は多数であり、バイリンガル者同士の会話において重要な役割を果たしていると思われる。こうしたCSは会話を促進するストラテジーとしてみなし、その機能によって、「話し合いの中でのCS」、「働きかけのCS」、「話し合い内でのCS」の三つのカテゴリーに分類する。それぞれの考察を通して、ブラジル人若年層における言語実態の一側面を明らかにし、移民環境におけるポルトガル語と日本語の接触による言語変化の研究にも示唆を与えると思われる。