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A CASE OF LANGUAGE SHIFT

Contacts between languages have been thoroughly studied by Uriel Weinreich. In his work "Languages in Contact" (New York 1953) Weinreich has paid particular attention to bilinguals and bilingualism. In connection with the latter he deals with the phenomenon which he calls language shift. Language shift is the change from the habitual use of one language to that of another. The speaker of language A may make abundant use of the vocabulary of language B, but inflect such words according to the system of language A. There can, however, also be such language shift where the bilingual speaker always knows that he is using one system or the other without preferring the system of language A to that of B or vice versa. The bilingual speaker can easily change over from one language to another. Weinreich calls such a shift switching. The ideal bilingual switches from one language to the other according to appropriate changes in the speech situation, but not in an unchanged speech situation, and certainly not within a single sentence. If he does include expressions from another language he may mark them off explicitly as "quotations" by quotation marks in writing and by special voice modifications (slight pause, change in tempo, and the like) in speech.¹ Such switching, however, is not the only one possible. Weinreich himself mentions bilinguals who have used two languages within the same sentence, employing elements of both languages according to the system of a given language, and who, under certain conditions, cannot say which language they meant to use in a sentence just uttered. They may even admit that their distinction between languages undergoes a temporary collapse. The author mentions collapsed texts of Basque-French, Slovak-German, English-Gaelic, etc. in which the grammatical system of neither language dominates. In his book Weinreich has also provided a pertinent bibliography of switching in different languages. Switching may be social as well as psychical. Nevertheless, it occurs only where bilingualism or multilingualism is widespread.

The problems of code switching are dealt with also by E. Haugen in his excellent paper "Language Contact"²: code switching occurs

¹ U. Weinreich, *Languages in Contact*, p. 73.

² *Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Linguists, Oslo 1958*, p. 777.

when a speaker turns from one language to another; in the most favourable case the switch is complete, i. e. there is a point in the speech chain at which all aspects of the utterance change, including phonology, morphology, syntax and lexicon. This may occur at the end of a complete utterance or within an utterance; it may include as little as a single word inserted into an utterance.

In the present short paper we should like to dwell on a case of switching that is characteristic of bilinguals in Finland. At the beginning of the 20th century it was very common in Finland for Finnish-speaking inhabitants in bilingual areas to have a knowledge of Swedish and to include Swedish words in their Finnish speech. During the course of the present century the Swedish language has steadily lost ground to Finnish. The position today is generally such that speakers of Swedish in bilingual areas also know Finnish and use Finnish words in their Swedish speech. Switching is not a rare phenomenon in bilingual areas. Switching may also occur in bilingual families where one easily changes from one language to the other. In her novel "Kesämaa" (Helsinki 1967), the Finnish writer Iris Kähäri (born 1914) characterizes the everyday life of a large family living in Viipuri and its environs by depicting the Swedish-speaking housewife and even her children as so bilingual in a Finnish-speaking environment that switching occurs constantly in their speech. The following are a few typical examples (the Finnish words are spaced out). *O vilken gammal juttu. Vai gamla juttu?* 'And what an old story. An old story, is it?'; *Mamma antoi heille alla sorter kun muuten olisivat naukuneet som katten kring het gröt* 'Mummy gave them every kind (of buns) because otherwise they would have mewed like the cat around hot porridge'; *Ei vihreää såsom i detta hus* 'No green like in this house'; *Hän pyysi että Lati eller Ville ajaisi hevosen kanssa ner till båten* 'He begged that Lati or Ville would drive with a horse down to the ship'; *Di e pappa där i Viipuri som väntar mej o sen kommer haikara till mamma ja tuo en uusi pieni poika eller tyttö* 'It is Daddy there in Viipuri who is waiting for me, and then a stork will come to Mummy and bring a new little boy or girl'; *Sitten kun sota on slut* 'Then when the war has ended'; *O du Veera, du ska genast gå till puoti att ostamaan sokeri-kilo* 'And you, Veera, must go to the shop at once and buy a kilo of sugar'; *Skam o synd att börja ilman vihkimättä elää* 'It is a shame and a sin to begin living without being married'. The same author also has other similar sentences where there is switching from Swedish to Finnish or vice versa in dialogues or meditations.

During his visits to Finland in recent years the present writer put down numerous examples of switching in the speech of Swedish-speaking citizens of Helsinki and Turku. Abundant additional data have been obtained from Dr. Mauno Koski, lecturer in Finnish at the Åbo Akademi. The illustrative material at our disposal shows that the switching of speakers of Swedish to Finnish is not entirely accidental but that it is governed by certain regularities. Switching occurs above all when something is expressed emphatically or under emotional stress: *han har en gammal rämä bil* 'he has an old wreck of a car'; *det var hemskt kiva i går* 'it was awfully nice yesterday'; *visst är det så, det är ju alldeles selvä* 'of course it is so, that is quite evident'; *det hände en nolo juttu i går* 'a sad thing happened yesterday'; *mera löyly!* 'more steam! (a request for more hot vapour in a sauna bath-house)'; *jag såg en eldsvåda, det var hurja* 'I saw

a fire, it was terrible'; *hon har blivit alldeles hurja sen hon flyttade hemifrån* 'she has gone quite crazy since she left home'; *det var en hemsk jono vid kassan* 'there was a dreadfully long queue at the ticket office'; *jag hade väldig säkä i går kväll* 'I had a great piece of good luck yesterday evening'. Emphasis and emotional stress are common in slang as one of the characteristic features of the latter is accentuated novelty. Because of this striving for novelty, slang makes abundant use of loan-words and foreign words. Switching is also characteristic of slang. The present writer has collected many pertinent examples from the speech of the Swedish-speaking inhabitants of Finland. The following are some of these: *tvätt na aman!* 'wash (your) mug!'; *ingen åker rukki nuförtiden mera* 'nobody rides a bicycle any longer nowadays'; *den filmen är nastal!* *det är en huippu leffa* 'the film is swell! it is a topping film'; *jag står i puhelinkipsa med matkaradio i andra handen* 'I am standing in a telephone box, with a transistor radio in the other hand'; *vi går på jätski* 'we are going to have some ice-cream'; *will du ha ranskis eller limpa?* 'do you want a French roll or bread?'; *en sån där pimutyp, du vet* 'such a sex-appeal type, you know'; *den mjölk man får i butiken är bara joppi* 'the milk one gets from the shop is mere skim milk', etc. Evidence from different countries shows that the use of slang is closely connected with sporting activities, motoring included. It is therefore only to be expected that switching also occurs in connection with sports: *dom har kört kolari* 'they had an accident during the drive'; *ta fram letkun så ska vi tvätta bilen* 'take out the hose, (and) we shall wash the car'; *det blir dyr juttu att korjata det här* 'it will be expensive to repair this (car)'; *jag får kyyti hem, så det är ingen kiiru* 'I shall be given a lift home, so there is no hurry'; *gå ut på lenkki* 'to go out on the running-track'; *får jag ta kaverin med?* 'may I take the comrade along?', etc.

Switching is likewise common in connection with food, especially when the latter is being ordered in a cafe, restaurant or snack-bar: *kaffe och piispamunkki, var så god!* 'some coffee and a chocolate cake, please!'; *köp en piirakka och en makkrapala åt mig!* 'buy me a pie and some sausage!', etc.

Switching occurs frequently when speaking of articles of clothing: *en alldeles vanlig rak mekko* 'an entirely ordinary straight child's dress'; *jag har tappat min pipo* 'I have lost my stocking-cap'; *innan man börjar med sparkbyxor, kan man ha kapalo vaippa på baby'n* 'before one begins using rompers, the baby can have a pilch', etc.

The Finnish words within Swedish sentences presented above are not loan-words which are general in the speech of Finnish Swedes or which do not have Swedish equivalents. These Finnish words are cases of switching that occur as if imperceptibly or depending upon a certain situation in the case of bilingual speakers. That these are instances of wide-spread switching is shown perhaps best of all by such sentences as *vi lyfter upp den så får ni den pystyyn* 'let's lift it up, then you will get it upright'; *vet du någon kiva kahvipaikka här?* 'do you know of any swell cafe hereabouts?'; *var är asuntos?* 'where do you live?', etc.

Speaking of contacts between Swedish and Baltic-Fennic languages, one could add that switching was common in the case of Estonian as well. In Noarootsi before the emigration of the local Swedes the present writer put down sentences like the following: *Hans har i Sotlop ain*

stor tore maja 'Hans has a fine big house in Sutlepa'; *vait no hâla moodi var selle nâgu* 'I do know what he looked like'.

The kind of language shift that we have called switching after U. Weinreich has received only scant attention in linguistics. In the field of the Fenno-Ugric languages, V. Hallap's article on Mordvin-Russian "language mixture" deserves attention.³ Mari-Russian switching has been examined by J. Ivanov.⁴ Short notes have been published on Estonian-Swedish switching by E. Oksaar and J. Tuldava⁵, and on switching in Vote by D. Tsvetkov⁶, etc.

In his book Weinreich has given a relevant international bibliography, but unfortunately he has to admit that the whole problem has hardly been explored. Nevertheless, the literature available has enabled Weinreich to draw the correct conclusion that an abnormal proneness to switching has been attributed to persons who, in early childhood, were addressed by the same familiar interlocutors indiscriminately in both languages.⁷ Switching may, however, also occur widely where bilingualism has become habitual among adults. The general precondition everywhere for switching is a complete mastery of two (or more) languages. The switching of the vocabulary of the other language into one's mother tongue indicates that the second language has become as important a medium of communication as the native language. In connection with the Swedish-speaking inhabitants of Finland it is possible to state that at least in bilingual areas the Finnish language is often even more important as a means of communication than is the Swedish language.

ПАУЛЬ АРИСТЭ (Тарту)

ОБ ОДНОМ СЛУЧАЕ ЯЗЫКОВОГО КОНТАКТА

В Финляндии говорят на финском и шведском языках. В двуязычных районах шведы, как правило, знают и финский язык. Поэтому среди шведов широко распространен билингвизм. У билингвов очень часто наблюдается явление, которое можно назвать меной языка. В рамках одного предложения говорящий может с шведского языка перейти на финский и наоборот. При мене языка сохраняются грамматические системы обоих языков, т. е. шведские слова изменяются по правилам шведского, а финские — финского языка. Сохраняются и фонетические особенности обоих языков. В статье анализируются случаи мены, характерные для разговорного языка, а также диалогов из художественной литературы. Мена языка выступает чаще всего в арпо.

³ V. Hallap, Mordva-vene segakeelsusest. — KK 1960, p. 220.

⁴ J. Ivanov, Tonšajevo maride kakskeelsusest. — ESA 1963, p. 165 (with bibliography).

⁵ E. Oksaar, Kaksikeelsuse problemaatika. — Tulimuld 1961, p. 47; J. Tuldava, Võõrmõjusid Rootsi eestlaste keeles. — ESA 1965, p. 93.

⁶ D. Tsvetkov, Vadjalased. — EK 1925, p. 44.

⁷ See also B. Malmberg, Språket och människan, Stockholm 1964, p. 103; V. Rūķe-Draviņa, Mehrsprachigkeit im Vorschulalter, Lund 1967; E. M. Вепещагин, Психологическая проблематика теории языковых контактов. — ВЯ 1967 4, p. 122 (with bibliography).