Gender marking in inter-sentential code-switching: potential self-repairs between languages

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The phenomenon of code-switching is well studied in the research field of bilingualism, though most studies from a grammatical perspective focus on intrasentential switching in spontaneous or elicited data (cf. MacSwan, 2014) rather than on mixing between utterances (inter-sentential code-switching). Up to now, the role of gender marking and gender assignment has been a central issue in the study on mixed DPs. Scholars suggest different approaches for explaining gender marking within a switched noun: Gender selection may depend on (a) the grammatical features of the languages involved (cf. e.g. Liceras, Spradlin & Fernández Fuertes, 2005; Liceras, Fernández Fuertes, Perales, Pérez-Tattam & Spradlin, 2008; Moro, 2014), (b) on the type of acquisition, e.g. different gender representations in balanced or unbalanced child language acquisition (cf. Cantone & Müller, 2008, but see the discussion in Eichler, 2011), (c) language processing, cost and priming (cf. among others Abutalebi, Brambati, Annoni, Moro, Cappa & Perani 2007), and (d) nouns in mixed DPs could also be interpreted as borrowings (Toribio, 2001).

In the present study, we will investigate gender assignment in inter-sentential switching in Italian-German and Spanish-German due to observed spontaneous conversational dialogues between Romance-German bilinguals (cf. (1)) who repair gender features in the switched language in the case of disagreeing gender in Romance and German. To perform such a self-initiated self-repair, the speaker cuts off his utterance due to a supposed error or inappropriate element, e.g. the feminine adjective in (1), and repairs the respective element within his turn, without an interruption by the interlocutor (cf. e.g. Schegloff, Jasperson & Sacks, 1977). Such selfrepairs demand that the speaker reflects and evaluates its own speech and that he detects a mismatch in the original utterance. Self-repairs, hence, are the result of selfmonitoring processes (cf. e.g. Levelt, 1983, 1989), and they indicate the speakers' perception of appropriate or even target-like utterances (cf. Di Venanzio, to appear, performed by Spanish-German bilinguals). For each Romance for self-repairs language, a grammatical judgment task (GJT) was designed which presents dialogues similar to (1). They are introduced by a German utterance presenting the respective context noun (differing from Romance with respect to gender), but with a subsequent comment by a Romance utterance which refers to this noun with an object clitic or adjective, showing either (a) the German gender contradicting the Romance equivalent (cf. (2)) or (b) the Romance gender contradicting the presented gender of the German reference noun (cf. (3)).

- (1) 01 A: eine leckere Tomate

 a_{fem} yummy_{fem} tomato_{fem}

 02 B: è buona ehm buono?

 is it good_{fem} ehm good_{masc}
- (2) <u>Italian GJT: German gender object clitic</u>
 - O1 A: Kennst du den Hauptbahnhof_{mas} in Berlin? 'Do you know the station in Berlin?

- 02 B: No, non lo_{masc} conosco. 'No, I don't know it'
- (3) Spanish GJT: Romance gender adjective
 - O1 A: Die neue Garage ist wirklich ganz toll geworden! 'The new garage looks really great'
 - 02 B: Sí, pero salió carisima. 'Yes, but it was quite expensive (in the end)'

Additionally, self-repairs as shown in (1) are discussed in order to examine speakers' perception concerning the appropriateness of repaired gender marking in intersentential language switches. Participants are adult heritage speakers who were born and raised in Germany and acquired Italian or Spanish and German in early childhood (cf. e.g. Di Venanzio, Schmitz & Scherger, in press, for the underlying definition of heritage speakers).

The following research questions will be investigated:

- (A) Which gender is preferred to be marked on clitics and adjectives when referring to a noun after a language switch?
- (B) Which gender can be predicted to be target-like?
- (C) What does gender assignment in inter-sentential switching tell us about the degree of activation of a language in bilinguals?

Finally, we address the question of whether the results depend on language dominance and fluency along the lines discussed in Lipski (2014). We argue that exposure during early acquisition and experience with being in a bilingual mode (Grosjean, 1998) will result in different performances.

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