Code-switching and Italian abroad.
Reflections on language contact and bilingual mixture

Stephan Schmid

This paper explores some forms of language contact that arose as a result of the Italian emigration which took place in different historical periods and to various parts of the world. It looks at code-switching within a broader range of sociolinguistic phenomena including bilingualism, second language acquisition, language attrition and language shift, also taking into account the relationship between the social structure of the migrating communities and their patterns of language use. In the light of quite different contact situations both overseas and in Europe, some recent theoretical proposals are discussed, e.g. the idea of code-mixing as a 'code' of its own and the proposal of a diachronic evolution from code-switching through code-mixing to 'fused lects'.

It is argued that the outcome of language contact is, on the one hand, determined by socio-linguistic and linguistic factors, e.g. the configuration of the Italian/dialect diglossia within the migrating community, the level of bilingual competence and the genetic diversity of the non-Italian variety; on the other hand, extra-linguistic aspects also come into play, such as the social permeability between 'in-group' and 'out-group', or the community's geographical and 'psychological' closeness to Italy. From a theoretical point of view, it appears useful to consider code-switching and code-mixing as highly variable discourse phenomena, which need to be distinguished from particular mechanisms of language change such as the genesis of a more stable 'mixed language'.

1. Introduction

Italian linguists have made a significant contribution to the study of code-switching. As the alternation between dialects (and/or minority languages) and regional varieties of the standard language is rather widespread in several regions of the Apennine peninsula, scholars have investigated various facets of the phenomenon, ranging from sociolinguistic behaviour (e.g. Sobrero 1988, Trumper 1989) and conversational cues (e.g. Alfonzetti 1992, 1998) to grammatical structure (e.g. Alfonzetti 1992, Berruto 2004a, Regis 2005). Regarding the latter, the special case of two closely-related linguistic systems has been stressed (cf. Berruto 1985, Giacalone Ramat 1995).

This contribution deals with, so to speak, the 'other side' of Italian code-switching, in that it presents findings from migrational

contexts outside Italy. The interest of such data lies in the fact that Italian has been a 'migrant language' for more than a century, presenting a rather variegated picture from both the geographical and the sociological viewpoint.

The following reflections, rather than tackling syntactic and conversational issues, aim to relate code-switching to other manifestations of language contact such as borrowing, relexification, hybridization and language shift. For obvious reasons, the situations illustrated are not in any way meant to be exhaustive, their selection being determined by the attempt to examine cases that appear relevant in order to address some claims made both in current code-switching literature and in earlier work on the sociology of language.

The paper is organized as follows: after a discussion of two recent proposals about code-switching and mixed varieties (§2), it reports on a number of studies about Italian migrants in North und South America as well as in Australia and in western Europe (§3.1-3.4), allowing a distinction to be drawn between code-switching and language mixture on both psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic grounds (§4).

2. Language mixing and mixed languages

The great fascination of code-switching for laymen and linguists alike leads to representations that are often different, but sometimes also happen to be similar. One popular opinion asserts that "if a bilingual does not know a word in one language, she or he switches to the other language". Now, research on bilingual speech has shown that the filling of lexical gaps – or, more generally, the overcoming of difficulties in expressing oneself in the abandoned language – is a basic function of participant-related 'transfer' or code-switching, but it is by no means the only one (cf. Auer 1984: 26-27 *et passim*, Lüdi 2003).

Another common idea is that code-switching constitutes a language in its own right, i.e. 'a new language'. For instance, a Swiss magazine article stated in 1992 that "immigrant children speak among themselves in a language of their own" and that "not much is known about these new languages"; in fact, code-switching was considered "a kind of language like Verlan, the Parisian jargon, like the slang of black people in the ghetto or the pidgin of the colonies" (*Das Magazin* Nr. 53, p. 29). Occasionally, a similar line of reasoning also shows up in the linguistic literature (in a more sophisticated form, of course), so that I feel it worthwhile to have a closer look at two theo-

retical proposals at least, namely Franceschini (1998) and Auer (1999).

Assuming that most models in linguistics are based on the monolingual speaker and that bilingual behaviour therefore represents a challenge for linguistic theory in general, Franceschini (1998:61) sets out to debate the notion of 'code'. For instance, from the analysis of a sample of conversational code-switching among second-generation Italians in Switzerland (drawn from Preziosa-Di Quinzio 1992: X), she concludes that "the mixture behaves more like a unique code than like two different ones". Moreover, she sketches a "process of grammaticalisation" of code-switching along a continuum, involving a move from "strong" to "weak" functions and from intersentential to intrasentential code-switching; when the expansion of code-switching reaches its maximum, it "even more resembles a code in itself, a language of its own". According to this view, code-switching in conversation "raises the theoretical problem of what can be seen as a single code with regard to speakers' use" (p. 62). The last quotation is accompanied by an endnote, which aims to clarify the terminology employed: "To make it explicit, we use *code* as a superordinate term to designate each systematic co-occurrence of features that speakers use as a consistent vehicle of social behaviour. Thus, a *language* is a particular realisation of a code, used by a large group of speakers" (n. 23, p. 69).

Still, the reader is left with a certain degree of conceptual ambiguity. Either one uses the terms 'code' and 'language' as synonyms, in line with the structuralist tradition (e.g., Martinet 1960: I-18) – and the previously-cited phrase "a code in itself, a language of its own" seems to point in that direction – or conversely, if the notion of 'code' refers to a form of social behaviour, it is no longer synonymous with 'language', also because the bilingual 'code' presupposes the existence of two distinct linguistic systems that can be mixed up in verbal interaction. If we take the latter interpretation as the intended one, then the novelty of the proposal proves to be more terminological than substantial, so that one might doubt whether it really challenges the structuralist understanding of 'language'. From the psycholinguistic point of view, Franceschini's (1998:62-65) "dual focus model" resembles the concept of a 'bilingual language mode' (cf. Grosjean 1985, 2001). Also, from a sociolinguistic point of view, quite a number of scholars have maintained that, in some situations, code-switching can become a 'neutral' communicative mode, lacking precise discourse functions and simply signalling "a group's mixed ethnolinguistic identity" (Apple & Muysken 1987:129).[1] In any case, as

115

Lüdi (1998:151-152) concludes in his considerations on code-switching as a mixed variety, the question of the status of bilingual speech very much rests on the definition of 'language' and on the approach chosen by particular linguists.

Some parallels to Franceschini's proposal can be detected in a paper of Auer's published one year later (1999). In this contribution, the German linguist presents a typology of language alternation phenomena containing three prototypes, namely "code-switching", "language mixing", and "fused lects", which are defined according to a cluster of factors such as the pragmatic value and the structural size of switches, the bilingual competence of the speakers, and the degree of stability.

According to this view, prototypical "code-switching" is contextually meaningful and tends to occur at major syntactic and prosodic boundaries; speakers need not have a balanced knowledge of the two languages. On the other hand, "language mixing" does not exhibit such discourse-related functions, but the use of two codes *per se* displays a social relevance to the participants; speakers are, typically, highly competent bilinguals who produce very frequent, variable switches also within minor syntactic constituents. Sometimes, group members even have a folk name for their "language mixing", such as *Llanito* for the English/Spanish mixture in Gibraltar. The transition to the third prototype, "fused lects", involves a loss of variation in favour of more stable form-function relationships, which in some sense implies a loss of bilingual competence. The category "fused lects" does not refer to pidgins and creoles, but rather to what Thomason (1997:1) calls the "third type of language contact – bilingual mixtures that (unlike pidgins and creoles) must have been created by bilinguals". In fact, among the "candidates for full-fledged fused lects" quoted by Auer (1999:321-329) we find Michif, probably the best known 'mixed language', and the European Romani dialects; other candidates are *Unserdeutsch*, a creole-like variety, from Papua New Guinea, as well as several American varieties spoken by German immigrants. We will have a closer look at these bilingual mixed languages in § 4.

Like Franceschini, Auer conceives of the "code-switching" > "language mixing" > "fused lects" continuum in terms of "grammaticalization".[2] The direction of diachronic development is supposed to be implicational, not deterministic: extensive "code-switching" may lead to "language mixing", but "language mixing" does not necessarily develop into a "fused lect" (conversely, it is impossible that "code-switching" could arise out of a "fused lect").

Auer's typology is quite appealing, in that it captures some general tendencies described in a number of studies on language alternation.[3] Nevertheless, one might wonder whether even the prototypical formulation still turns out to be too schematic: are there not many cases of intersentential code-switching without an apparent value in discourse; and, conversely, is locally meaningful code-mixing (or intrasentential code-switching) not quite common? To what extent do "code-switching" and "language mixing" co-occur, forming two sides of essentially the same phenomenology, i.e. 'code-switching' in the broad sense?

Yet, the most problematic issue in Auer's typology seems to be the transition to the third prototype: while the 'code-switching' vs. 'code-mixing' dichotomy is acknowledged by many linguists (given that these forms of language use have been documented and analyzed in a great variety of sociolinguistic situations), the label "fused lect" is rather new and designates a relatively rare phenomenon among the bilingual communities around the world (cf. §4). Up to now, the creation of this type of language variety has been inferred *a posteriori* on deductive grounds, as is indicated by the very formulation used by Thomason (they "must have been created by bilinguals").[4] The concrete processes by which – as Auer puts it – "language mixing" undergoes "structural sedimentation" and becomes a "mixed language" still need to be empirically documented. How is it that highly competent bilinguals start to constrain their possibilities of language juxtaposition in order to create, quite paradoxically, an increase in linguistic structure? And finally: are there alternative scenarios to the transition from "language mixing" to a "fused lect"?

Since Auer (1999) refers at several points to language mixing among Italians in Switzerland (largely drawing on Franceschini 1998), I will come back to some of the issues raised in his paper. However, it might be advantageous to adopt a comparative perspective by examining other forms of language contact created by Italian abroad. Therefore, in the next section, we will briefly consider the linguistic outcomes of Italian emigration to various parts of the world.

3. Italian abroad

From its beginnings in the nineteenth century, mass emigration has played an important role in the sociodemographic history of Italy ever since. According to census data, more than 24 million Italians

left their country within a hundred years, migrating both overseas and within the European continent (data from Tirabassi 2005).

Table 1. Main destination countries of Italian emigration (1876-1976)

Overseas		Europe	
USA	5.691.404	France	4.117.394
Argentina	2.969.402	Switzerland	3.989.813
Brasil	1.456.914	Germany	2.452.587
Canada	650.358	Belgium	535.031
Venezuela	428.289	Great Britain	263.598
Australia	285.014	Other	1.188.135
Total	*11.481.381*	*Total*	*12.546.558*

This migration took place in several waves at different times. Thus, more than 14 million people had already left Italy before 1915, whereas the exodus was much more contained during the two wars and the fascist period (Corrà & Ursini 1998:563, Tirabassi 2005); after 1945, migration started to increase again (about 300,000 individuals a year). From 1960 on, the demographic movements were basically directed from southern Italy towards other European countries, but certain geographical 'preferences' among the Italian regions had already become apparent before: at the time when the favourite destination of Sicilians was the USA, most Italian immigrants in Brazil came from Veneto (Tirabassi 2005). In 2003, nearly 4 million Italian citizens lived outside their home country according to the *Anagrafe Italiani Residenti Estero* (AIRE); in 1996, however, estimates by the Catholic Church had suggested that the Italian communities spread throughout the world embraced sixty million, including descendents of previous generations of immigrants (Turchetta 2005:12-14).

Thanks to the quantitative dimension of Italian emigration, we not only have available a considerable body of linguistic literature with quite detailed descriptions of particular migrant communities around the world, but there are even a number of state-of-the-art articles reviewing the bulk of the research done in the last decades (e.g., Muljačić 1982, Bettoni 1993, Bertini Malgarini 1994, Corrà & Ursini 1998, Bettoni 2003; cf. also Berruto 1987:179-186 and

Turchetta 2005:3-40); particular attention has been paid to the fate of Italian dialects in various communities (Corrà & Ursini 1989, Marcato et al. 2002). The reader is referred to these overviews, as the few examples presented here cannot claim to be representative (according to the scope of this contribution as outlined in §1). The following brief characterization will focus on those migrant communities that are thought to be most relevant for the issues of code-switching theory, namely north and south America (§3.1-2), Australia (§3.3), and western Europe (§3.4).

3.1. North America

As shown in table 1, the United States of America is the nation that has attracted the highest number of Italian migrants (about 5.7 million), particularly in the period before World War I. Yet even in the year 2000, 15,723,555 US residents, i.e. 5.6% of the entire population, declared themselves to be of Italian ancestry (www.census.gov); according to the 1990 census, 1,308,648 individuals spoke Italian at home, making it the fourth non-English language after Spanish, French and German. Americans of Italian origin are likely to live in metropolitan areas of the West and East coasts: in 1990, 400,218 of the 2,837,908 Italo-Americans resident in New York still said they spoke Italian (Haller 1993:IX-XXI).

The Italian language in the USA has been observed for almost a century now (cf. Corrà & Ursini 1998:565-566 and 571-572 for a short overview). The phenomenon that has attracted most interest is the so-called 'Italo-American' vernacular, described as a "mixed language" by Menarini (1947:173). Some linguistic features of Italo-American may be illustrated by an excerpt from Carlo Ferrazzano's *Orré for Italy: scuperchiatevi li cape!*; this text belongs to the genre of the 'macchietta coloniale' (an ironical character-sketch very popular at the beginning of the twentieth century) and was brought to the attention of linguists by Livingston (1918:219):[5]

(1)   Na sera dentro na barra americana dove il patrone era americano, lo visco era americano, la birra era americana, ce steva na ghenga de loffari tutti americani: solo io non ero americano; quanno a tutto nu mumento me mettono mmezzo e me dicettono: *Alò spaghetti; iu mericano men?* No! no! *mi Italy men! Iu blacco enze?* No, no! *Iu laico chistu contri?* No, no! *Mi laico mio contry! Mi laico Italy!* A questo punto me chiavaieno lo primo fait! "Dice: *Orré for America!*" Io tuosto: *Orré for Italy!* Un ato fait. "Dice: *Orré for America!*"

119

> *Orré for Italy!* N'ato fait e n ato fait, fino a che me facetteno addur-
> mentare; ma però, *orré for America* nun o dicette!
> 'One night in an American bar, where the bar keeper was
> American, the whiskey was American, the beer was American,
> there was a gang of loafers, all of them Americans: I was the only
> one who was not American; when, suddenly, they surround me and
> said to me: *Hello Spaghetti; are you American?* No! No! *I am
> Italian. Are you black hands?* No, no! *Do you like this country?* No,
> no! *I like my country! I like Italy!* At this point, they dealt me the
> first blow! He says: *Hurray for America!* I was bold: *Hurray for
> Italy!* Another blow. He says: *Hurray for America! Hurray for Italy!*
> Another blow and another one, until they made me lose conscious-
> ness; but I didn't say *Hurray for America*!'

Although fictional, Ferrazzano's text has been judged "natural"
for its mimetic intent by Menarini (1947:169). The story is basically
told in Neapolitan dialect (e.g., *quanno a tutto nu mumento me met-
teno mmezzo e me dicettono*), which sometimes shifts towards stan-
dard Italian (*dove il patrone era americano*). The typically 'Italo-
American' character of the narration is achieved through a dense
series of integrated English loans, such as *barra* 'bar', *visco* 'whiskey',
ghenga de loffari 'gang of loafers' etc; but we also observe the use of
language alternation to mark quotations: on the one hand, the narrat-
or reports the speech of the American interlocutors, which exhibits
some features of a simplified Foreigner Talk register (e.g., *Alò
spaghetti. Iu americano men*?), while on the other hand he quotes
some utterances the Italian protagonist produces in a prebasic vari-
ety of an English interlanguage (e.g., *Mi laico mio contry*).

Even if example (1) does not report 'authentic' conversational
data, it can give an idea of the linguistic situation in the so-called 'lit-
tle Italies'. The repertoire of the prototypical immigrant (male, adult
at the age of arrival, of southern origin, illiterate) is mainly composed
of a southern dialect and characterised by limited knowledge of stan-
dard Italian; in fact, 'Italo-American' is to be considered a range of
dialect-like varieties rather than a single 'language' (Menarini
1947:172). As the syntactic and morphological frame of such speech is
entirely Romance, its hybrid character is achieved above all through
extensive borrowing, which guarantees a certain stability to the
Italo-American vocabulary (see Menarini 1947:154-166 for a thor-
ough analysis of the processes of lexical interference at the phonologic-
al, morphological and semantic levels). Due to the unbalanced bilin-
gualism of these immigrants, their scope for language alternation as
a communicative resource was quite limited; in example (1), the only

discourse-related function is quotation, so that in a certain sense, we are at an incipient stage of code-switching. In any case, we are far away from the highly variable juxtaposition of parts of speech that characterises 'language mixing' in balanced bilinguals; therefore, a "fused lect" in Auer's sense could not arise among the early Italian immigrants in the USA.

Still, the protagonist's English interlanguage does contain some elements of linguistic hybridization (e.g. in the noun phrase *mio con-try*), which goes hand-in-hand with the pidgin-like utterance structure (cf. the absence of the copula in *mi Italy men! Iu blacco enze*); but note that it is the language of the narration and not the reported speech which exhibits the typical features of 'Italo-American'. On the whole, this variety did not undergo the drastic structural simplification of a pidgin, although its users spoke different dialects rather than exactly the same native language, and English served as a sort of acrolectal lexifier language. I am aware of only one short note which could testify to the existence of an Italo-American pidgin; it is based on a ritualistic sequence which was declaimed by a 50-to-60-year-old man in a Washington street car (on March 29, 1943) and then annotated by Robert A. Hall Jr. (1943:14):

(2)   fòist wi no pòpol di gá:di – wi gentáilz. pòpol di gá:di giudèi. fòist i kòme ménne, náu i kòme grándi. náu pòpol di gàdi pòpol i pré. en gablescie.
'Previously we were not the people of God – we were Gentiles. The people of God were the Jews. Previously they [sc. the people of God] were as few, now there are as many. Now the people of God are the people who pray. And God bless you.'

This sequence does indeed exhibit some typical features of linguistic simplification, such as the absence of any copula or definite articles, but given the particular circumstances of this verbal event, it must be considered a rather isolated phenomenon.

Another extract from a literary text may give us some additional information about the sociolinguistic context of 'Italo-American'; the dialogue between the two characters, Cicca and Turi, is taken from a comic skit entitled *Nofrio al telefono*, which was first published in 1918 by Giovanni De Rosalia and then (re-)discovered by Di Pietro (1976:208):

(3)   Cicca: … ma picchì doppu tant'anni chi sta 'nta l'America non
                sappi parrari miricanu?
                '… But why, after so many years that he's been in America,
                he doesn't know to speak American?'
       Turi: Va trovasìllu!
                'How should I know?'
       Cicca: Inveci, nuatri, ah, Turi, doppu cocchi se' misi c'arrivammu
                nni misimu a parrari miricanu. Ed ora, quannu parramu,
                a tia e a mmia nni pìgghianu pi miricani.
                'But not us, Turi; six months or so after we arrived, we
                began to speak American. And now, when we speak, they
                take the two of us for Americans.'
       Turi: Sciua! You tocchi very nàisi!
                'Sure, you talk very nice!'
       Cicca: Ma you tocchi cchiù naisi!
                'But you talk better!'
       Turi: When you tocchi, mi stenni.
                'When you talk, I understand.'
       Cicca: Orràiti!
                'All right!'
       Turi: Azzòl!
                'That's all!'

If we compare this with the first text, we note both differences
and similarities. Whilst Ferrazzano's story-teller uses code-switching
exclusively for quotations, in De Rosalia's dialogue the same inter-
locutors – eager to demonstrate their acculturation in the host soci-
ety – switch from Sicilian to a basic variety of English. Here, the
dialect spoken in the first three turns does not conform to the trad-
itional stereotype of 'Italo-American' in that it contains no borrowings
at all, but from Turi's second turn on the two immigrants speak an
interlanguage which contains both elements of the L1 (*ma, cchiù*)
and features of pidgin-like simplification (e.g., the generalization of
the object pronoun for the first person *mi*). Also, the phonotactics of
English words is subject to systematic interference: whereas, in the
Neapolitan case, the paragogic *schwa* varied in spelling (*blacco enze*),
the speech of Cicca and Turi is characterised by a phonological rule
which inserts the unmarked Sicilian vowel /i/ after every final obstru-
ent (*tocchi*, *nàisi*, etc.); words may end in a single sonorant (*when,
azzòl*), but not in geminates (as in the case of *stenni*, where /nn/ is
derived from the cluster /nd/).[6]

What became of the Italo-American dialectal varieties?
Menarini's (1947:173) prognosis, according to which 'Italo-American'

would die out among second generation immigrants, is quite plausible. Somewhat surprisingly, however, it seems that a certain use of the hybrid lexicon has survived. For instance, Scaglione (2000:94) still reports some integrated loans from older immigrants in San Francisco. In 1978-1979, a survey among 73 subjects from the New York area revealed that those aged above 45 claimed to use 48% of the 92 lexical items contained in the questionnaire (Haller 1993:25-35). In an oral document reproduced by the same researcher, a 62-year-old Sicilian woman even proved to actively employ integrated loans derived from the English words 'job' and 'store':

(4)   … e po' dopo quindici giorni me cercai a giobba, e l'ho trovata … (p. 164)
       '… and then after two weeks I searched for a job, and I found it …'

(5)   … mi piacciono 'e store, comprare, guardare … (p. 164)
       '… I like the stores, I like to buy, to look …'

Note that the noun phrase *'e store* in (5) involves a shift from Italian to Neapolitan.

In the 33 interviews collected between 1983-1989 by Haller (1993: 129-178), however, lexical hybrids are no longer the prevailing form of language contact. Instead, among younger immigrants we find different types of language alternation, ranging from tag-switching (6-7), transfer (8-9), code-mixing (10) to conversational code-switching with participant-related and/or discourse-related functions (11, 12):

(6)   […] tutte le mie amiche che si erano fatte così … si hanno sviluppate … fatte così you know grande belle eh […] (p. 170)
       '[…] all my girlfriends had become like that … they have developed … become like, you know, tall and beautiful […]'

(7)   […] se si torna in Italia si ritrova di nuovo difficile, because you know, parlando calabrese devi riparlare italiano […] (p. 159)
       '[…] if you return to Italy, you find it difficult again, because you know, speaking Calabrese you have to speak Italian again […]'

(8)   […] le ragazze camminavano mano in mano no come qui se si cammina così qui pensano che sei una lesbian […] (p. 176)
       '[…]the girls walked hand in hand, not like here if you walk like that they think you are a lesbian […]'

(9)   […] la colazione era molto differente … in comparison di qua […]
(p. 176)
'[…] breakfast was very different … compared to here […]'

(10)   […] poi si faceva come si chiama un pisolino nello in the afternoon,
poi si mangiava […] (p. 170)
'[…] then we made, how you do say that, a nap in the afternoon,
then we had dinner […]'

(11)   […] non mi piace parlarlo tanto, perché sai … it doesn't sound as
good as English, right, so … provo di non parlarlo […] (p. 169)
'[…] I don't like to speak it that much, because you know … it doesn't
sound as good as English, right, so … I try not to speak it […]'

(12)   […] la Sicilia mi è piaciuta, perché ho potuto uscire, ho potuto
divertirmi, ma il paese mio … credo che era a waste of time, and of
money (p. 169)
'[…] I liked Sicily, because I could go out, could have fun, but my
village … I think it was a waste of time, and of money'

Considering the fact that the formal setting of the interview sit-
uation put the interlocutors in the monolingual (Italian) mode, we
might suspect that similar forms of language alternation still occur
in everyday interaction. As regards the formal aspect of code-switch-
ing, an interesting finding emerges from a recent study among the
Lucchese community in San Francisco. Interpreting code-mixing
from a language attrition point of view, Scaglione (2000:87-93) estab-
lishes an implicational relationship between the switching of tags
and of conjunctions: speakers who use English conjunctions while
speaking Italian also practice tag-switching, whereas the opposite is
not necessarily the case.

Actually, not much is known about the interactional and social
value of bilingual speech among Italo-Americans today. Almost thirty
years ago, Di Pietro (1976:204) maintained that, "while many Italian
ethnics have been or are still code-switchers, this particular phe-
nomenon is by no means typical of all of them". Drawing on particip-
ant observation in his own family, the same scholar illustrated a few
communicative functions – such as addressee specification – in the
use of Sicilian and English among grandparents, parents and chil-
dren (Di Pietro 1978), but he again concluded that, except for a few
communities like Boston's North End and Brooklyn, code-switching
was no longer used to display group membership.

Summarizing these few observations about the Italian language

in the USA, we find that some extensive borrowing took place in the restricted repertoire of dialect speakers in the early migration waves, so that one might even speak of a partial relexification of the original dialects. Nowadays, a few remnants of 'Italo-American' words are preserved in the speech of older immigrants, whereas code-mixing and code-switching appear – even if not very frequently – in the communicative behaviour of younger, more balanced bilinguals.

Turning now to Canada, one has to stress the more recent history of Italian immigration there, which became a mass phenomenon only after World War II (Corrà & Ursini 1998:567, Tirabassi 2005); in absolute terms, the Italian presence amounts to less more than a tenth of that in the USA (cf. table 1). Nevertheless, about a million people of Italian ancestry now live in Canada, more than 40% of them residing in the Toronto area (cf. Tosi 1991:273; Auer 1991:404, Tirabassi 2005).

To some extent, the variety of language contact phenomena in Canada resembles that found among Italians in the USA. In particular, one notes the presence of numerous assimilated loans from English into Italian (indeed, very similar to Italo-American vocabulary such as *trocco* 'truck', *ghemma* 'game' and the like). For this phenomenon, Clivio coined the term 'Italiese', which, according to himself, "has achieved considerable local acceptance" (Clivio 1986:130): "Italiese, or Italo-Canadian, must not be regarded as a language separate from Italian; rather, it may be considered as a new dialect of Italian or, better still, a continuum of idiolects […]". The influence of English mainly concerns the lexicon: despite the formative order suggested by the term *Italiese* (from *itali-ano* and *ingl-ese* or *canad-ese*), an English lexical morpheme is usually combined with a grammatical morpheme of Italian (or of an Italian dialect).

Interestingly, Auer's (1991) research in Toronto revealed that bilingual children use a similar Italianization of English words as an *ad-hoc* strategy of word formation, presumably in order to overcome vocabulary problems (13); due to a certain lack of competence in Italian, these children also exhibit frequent language mixing at the intrasentential level (14) combined with strong morpho-syntactic interference from English (15), which actually violates several of the constraints on code-mixing that have been postulated in the literature:

(13)   mu puscie uno buttuni=e giumpe (p. 418)
        'now I push a button= and jump'

(14) iu vo' giocà with uno gatto (p. 418)
      'I want to play with a cat'

(15) va dentr – mia sorella's – letto o mia mamma's letto (p. 419)
      'he enters – my sister's – bed or my mother's bed'

On the other hand, Auer (1991: 428-431) reports data from older second and third generation immigrants, where language alternation displays participant-related and discourse-related functions. This finding can be interpreted as the synchronic presence of two different diachronic stages in the Italo-Canadian community, indicating a move from conversational code-switching to language mixing (in line with the predictions of Auer's 1999 model). Conversely, from an acquisitional standpoint, one could also hypothesize the opposite development from language mixing in early childhood towards code-switching in (post-)adolescence, as linguistic and communicative competence increases.[7]

3.2. Australia

The third English-speaking country with a considerable Italian population is Australia (cf. table 1). As in Canada, mass immigration from Italy took place after World War II (cf. Bettoni 1991:369-370). Italians form the largest non-English speaking community in Australia; as regards regional provenience, emigrants from Veneto and Sicily are largely represented.[8] As in the USA and in Canada, the Italian language spoken by first generation immigrants is characterised by a series of loanblends such as *spiccare* 'to speak' and *rabbiscia* 'rubbish': this vocabulary, very similar and sometimes completely identical to 'Italo-American' and 'Italiese', goes under the heading of 'Italo-Australian' and has been accurately documented (e.g., Rando 1968; cf. Corrà & Ursini 1998:572-573).

Within the English-speaking world, it is the Italian communities in Australia that have probably received most attention from sociolinguists, who have extensively investigated phenomena of language use, language attrition and language shift (e.g., Bettoni 1981; Bettoni & Rubino 1996). From this point of view, code-switching was first perceived as concomitant with language attrition among second generation immigrants, as in the following interview passage reported by Bettoni (1991:380):

(16) mi vo a SYDNEY TECH / mi studia note / mi piaso cosita studiare note
      e lavoro / giorno / il giorno sè lungo però mi piaso e sè / NEW
      FRIENDS amichi mi ho fato
      'I go to SYDNEY TECH / I study at night / I like, well, to study at
      night and I work / at day time / the day is long but I like it and it is
      / NEW FRIENDS friends I have got'.

Second-generation immigrants are often unable to maintain the
monolingual mode suggested by the interview situation. Here, the
'base language' is an Italian variety which shows dramatic morphol-
ogical attrition and a strong hybridization with the 'first language'
(from the point of view of acquisitional chronology), i.e. the Veneto
dialect; moreover, the participant-related switch to English clearly
indicates a preference for English, the dominant language in the
repertoire.

Nevertheless, the 1996 census revealed that the Italian lan-
guage among Italian was more resilient than could have been expect-
ed a few years earlier (Bettoni 2003:283). A rather differentiated pic-
ture of trilingual language use had already been described in an in-
depth study by Rubino (1991), who analyzed conversational data
gathered through participant observation in a Sicilian-Australian
household. In this family, intra-sentential code-switching or code-
mixing is practised without strong symptoms of morphological or syn-
tactic attrition, as subjects fluently switch from English to Italian
(17), from Sicilian to English (18), and from Sicilian to Italian (19);
indeed, an utterance may even consist of three lexical items, each
from a different variety (20).

(17) EVERYBODY ce l'hanno allora (p. 282)
      'EVERYBODY they have it, then'

(18) *a leggiri* FIRST (p. 282)
      '*to read* FIRST'

(19) *chistu cca s'ava livari* così (p. 282)
      '*this here has to be abolished*, like that'

(20) vuoi *u* DRINK (p. 283)
      'do you want the DRINK'

Moreover, as is convincingly illustrated by Rubino (1991:286-
303), these speakers are able to control the choice of the base lan-
guage and the amount of switching according to the degree of formal-

ity of the setting. In another study within a Sicilian-Australian family (Rubino 2004), the same author has recently highlighted the use of code-switching as a conversational strategy permitting the accommodation of speakers with different language abilities.

All in all, the Italian communities in Australia present a rather variegated picture of trilingual language use. While the first generation immigrants of the past created the same hybrid vocabulary as Italians in other English-speaking countries, two contradictory tendencies seem to coexist among the second generation immigrants of today: one is characterised by the attrition of the ethnic languages and an overall shift towards English, whereas the opposite phenomenon involves a conservation of the Italian varieties and a very sophisticated active trilingualism. In either case, no really 'mixed language' has ever arisen in the Italo-Australian context.

3.3. Latin America

Italian migrants to the central and southern parts of America have often settled in rural areas, sometimes even forming rather isolated and closed communities (cf. Corrà & Ursini 1998:570, Marcato et al. 2002:1086-1094). For instance, the Mexican village of Chipilo has, over five generations, preserved a dialect which was spoken a hundred years ago in a small area of Northern Veneto.[9] Similarly, the bulk of the one-and-a-half-million or so Italian migrants to Brazil (cf. table 1) were originally from the Veneto region and concentrated in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, where they not only continued to speak their dialects, but even formed a sort of Veneto-based koiné.

A somewhat different situation characterised Italian emigration to Argentina, the second non-European destination after the United States of America (cf. table 1). In this country, about three million immigrants from all regions of Italy settled mainly in the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires. Another parallel to the USA lies in the chronological dimension, since more than two million Italians arrived during the period between 1876 and 1925. However, there is a significant difference with respect to all other countries: it is estimated that about half of the total Argentinean population is of Italian ancestry (Giunchi 1982:129).

One outcome of the sociolinguistic situation in the River Plate area at that time was the so-called 'cocoliche', a language variety that came into life through the contact of Italian with Spanish and which therefore has to be taken into account when dealing with 'language mixing' and 'mixed languages'. The phenomenon has been drawn to

the attention of scholars interested in pidgin and creole languages in a famous essay by Keith Whinnom (1971: 97-102), who defines this "open system" as a "series of continua ranging from (usually sub-standard) Italian to native *porteño* Spanish" (p. 97). Therefore, it seems that *cocoliche* displayed much greater variability than Italo-American or *Italiese*, since it also embraced a broader typology of contact phenomena.

The primary source of 'cocoliche' lies in the spontaneous acquisition of Spanish leading to a linguistic mixture in interlanguage discourse. In fact, another difference between the River Plate situation and emigration towards the English-speaking countries lies in the genetic and structural closeness of Italian and Spanish, which provides the language learner with a higher 'starting point' in the interlanguage continuum and therefore favours structural language mixing in early learner varieties (cf. Schmid 1994). Whinnom (1971:97) speaks of 'cocoliche' in terms of "imperfect code-switching" and considers it a typical example of 'secondary hybridization', where – differently from the genesis of a pidgin, i.e. in 'tertiary hybridization' – no new distinct species grows out of at least two source languages.

Similarly, Meo Zilio (1964 [1989]:207-208) stresses the absence of internal stability together with the lack of clear 'barriers' between Italian and Spanish: he refers to 'cocoliche' as a "lengua mixta", but does not take it to constitute a third linguistic system, claiming that speakers were not aware of speaking a language different from Italian or Spanish. From 1949 on, Meo Zilio had collected many notes of spontaneously produced 'interferences' in the speech of Italians in the River Plate area, but unfortunately there are no naturalistic 'cocoliche' corpora at our disposal, such as transcriptions of interviews and the like. Just as in the case of Italo-American, we must rely on literary texts which portray the language of Italian immigrants for humoristic purposes. Indeed, the very term *cocoliche* is derived from the name of 'Cocoliccio', the figure of a Calabrese immigrant in popular plays at the beginning of the century (Giunchi 1986:131). As a minimum anthology, Meo Zilio (1964 [1989]:246-154) offers three excerpts from popular literature, each representing a different type of language mixture, namely i) "español italianizante", ii) "italiano españolizante", and iii) "cocoliche *sensu stricto*" (p. 247, n. 126). The latter is illustrated by Meo Zilio (1964 [1989]: 252) with an excerpt from Robustiano Sotera, *El baile de doña Giacumina*, originally published in the review *El fogón* in 1900:

(21)   Merá che Crespino, …, faciamo ine bailecitos cumpedrón, é ne invi-
       tiemo á cualunque rilaciún perque ne se venga á ichiare in pierni-
       tas é far cuarque pillaciún di grappas é caña cul curdoncitos. Ma
       non faciamo argún mamarachios di purcarías, sinon ino balies
       cume la quentes, qui tenga risonancias per tutto lo recovecos de la
       chagras di Mercedes, é que sarga escrebito inta la crúnica suciales
       di lo diaritos dil popolo.
       'Well, look Crespino, … , let's have a great dance party and invite
       all our mates, so they come to dance a bit and drink some Grappa
       and Caña, with the accordion. We won't make any rubbish, but a
       dance party how people do it, that will be famous in the whole
       neighbourhood of Mercedes and that will appear in the social
       chronicle of the local newspaper.'

Again, caution is necessary as we are dealing with fiction: the
words attributed to the female character serve as a parody of her
imperfect mastery of Spanish. There is not a trace of conversational
code-switching in these lines, but symptoms of hybridization appear
at the lexical, morphological and phonological levels. The southern
Italian dialectal background is signalled through phonological proc-
esses like rhotacism (*cuarque*, *sarga*) and the peripheralization of
unstressed vowels (*rilaciún*, *purcaría*), whereas approximation to the
second language emerges, for instance, in lexical choices like *echar
una piernita* and in the rather coherent Spanish plural marking
(even with Italian words like *grappa*); conversely, verbal inflection is
more Italian-based.

Both Whinnom and Meo Zilio emphasize the fact that the target
language also soon had a strong impact on the native language of the
Italian immigrants; given that such interference was again not limit-
ed to the lexicon, it provoked a particular type of language attrition.
In contrast to the first and third poles of the continuum (i.e. "español
italianizante" and "cocoliche *sensu stricto*"), which are now probably
extinct, one can still find 'natural' texts resembling "italiano
españolizante". The following letter was written by a Calabrese
woman who had migrated to Argentina as an adult and had been liv-
ing there for forty years or so (from Giunchi 1986:132):

(22)   Caro figlio per papà come ti dicevo si ha fatto un ceccheo generale
       analisi di sangue, radiografia di torace e di rignone… e il dottore
       dico che tutto sta bene, l'unico che tiene la pressione alta. Sta
       tomando qualcher cantidà di pastiggia, però non vaca se un giorno
       vaca l'altro suve, io penso sarà dello nervio, che lui per qualcher
       cosa si pone nervoso, toma pure pastiggia per lo nervio però sta

dormido todo il dia, paresse un trappo di piso non tiene forza per nada.
'Dear son, for daddy as I told you they have made a general check-up, blood analysis, x-ray of thorax and kidney … and the doctor says everything is okay, the only thing is that he has high blood pressure. He takes a lot of pills, but it doesn't go down. If one day it goes down, the other day it goes up, I think it's because of his nerves, since he gets nervous about anything. He also takes pills for his nerves, but he sleeps the whole day long, he looks like a dishcloth, he has no strength for anything.'

In a sense, the language employed here constitutes a mirror-image of the preceding example: within a fully-developed morphosyntactic frame in a monolingual Italian mode, extensive 'borrowing' and lexical interference from Spanish takes place (without the writer being aware of it).

To sum up, even if the verbal behaviour of Italians in the River Plate area has led to a fair amount of linguistic hybridization, 'cocoliche' does not meet the criteria either of pidgin or of a 'fused lect' (in the sense of a contact language of the third type). Code-mixing among highly proficient bilinguals has not been documented, and it is not clear to what extent conversational code-switching of the participant- and discourse-related type ever existed at all.[10] Rather, it seems that 'cocoliche' lacked both the first and the second stage in Auer's continuum, its hybrid character being the result of either early second language acquisition or of first language attrition. Apparently, the 'acculturation' process in Argentina proceeded faster than in other migrational contexts, and even first-generation immigrants often achieved considerable mastery of the local language.

Another difference compared to the situation in English and German-speaking countries lies in the impact of Italian on the local language. In particular, colloquial River Plate Spanish has retained many loanwords of Italian origin such as *nono* 'grandfather', *laburo* 'work', and *pishar* 'to pee' (Fontanella de Weinberg 2000:40, 54-55);[11] it has even been argued that the typical 'accent' of River Plate Spanish has been determined by some phonological features of Italian (cf. Corrà & Ursini 1998:581).

3.4. Western Europe

As can be seen from table 1., more than half of the Italian emigration that took place between 1876 and 1976 was to European

countries, mainly France, Germany and Switzerland, Belgium, and Great Britain. Not much is known about the language behaviour of the more than 4 million Italians who settled in France, but we may suppose that, in this instance, the quest for cultural assimilation was even greater than in Argentina, and that the genetic closeness of the two Romance languages has favoured the loss of the Italian varieties within two generations.

In neighbouring Belgium, which, with about half a million individuals, constitutes the fourth European destination for Italian migrants, the limited information we have comes from Flanders, and more precisely from the province of Limburg. Jacqmain (1981:118-120) presents transcripts from interview and story-telling data of two subjects who, put in the monolingual mode, produce mainly competence-based switches serving lexical search. However, other forms of language mixture appear: for instance, an 18-year-old student repeatedly (and probably unconsciously) borrows the French adverb *très* (23, 24), whereas an eight-year-old boy produces several features of language mixture and alternation such as the use of a lexical hybrid *zwemmare* 'to swim', morphological attrition (*amichi*) and a preference-based switch to the Salentinian dialect at the end (25):

(23) La psicologia è una … una materia très interessante però un poco difficile.
'psychology is a … a very interesting subject, but a bit difficult'

(24) Il francese ha giocato un … ha giocato un ruolo très importante nei secoli.
'French has played a – has played a very important role over the centuries.'

(25) Italia era bello, era caldo e era bello al mare e po… può zwemmare e giocare e mangiare, era tutto bello, e giocare così con amichi e … quando nu scimme al Belgio nu era bello chiù.
'Italy was nice, it was warm and it was nice by the sea and can … can swim and play, everything was nice, and play with friends and … when we came to Belgium it wasn't nice anymore.'

Jacqmain's (1981:121-122) very pessimistic comments regarding the 'quality' of the Italian spoken by second-generation immigrants is determined to some extent by her normative prejudices. At least, a quantitative study on language choice within another community of the Limburg province revealed that language shift is much rarer than among Italians in the Netherlands (Jaspaert & Kroon 1991:94).

Turning now to Great Britain, the fifth European destination for Italians, it too received a considerable influx mainly after World War II (Tosi 1991:252); still, with a total of about a quarter of a million individuals (cf. table 1), the phenomenon did not reach the same quantitative dimensions as in Canada and Australia. In contrast to the other English-speaking countries, the creation of a mixed vocabulary with loanshifts and loanblends is not documented among first-generation immigrants to Great Britain. From the speech of migrant children in London, Raponi (1985:28-30) reports a few interferences such as *tichetti* 'tickets' and *parenti* 'parents', but non-integrated loanwords clearly prevail; Raponi predicts a shift within this 'subtractive bilingualism' from a simplified variety of Italian towards English. In a more recent study among the Italian community in London, Panese (1992) analyzes conversational data in the light of Auer's (1984) interpretative approach, identifying precise discourse-related functions of switches such as a change of participant constellation, topic and 'footing'. Nevertheless, he also finds quite a number of participant-related switches, generally indicating a preference for English due to a lesser competence in Italian; here again, transfers flagged by pauses and glosses are indexical of an ongoing lexical search. At least the speaker Gn, however, practices code-mixing and tag-switching without any apparent local function, if one abstracts away from signalling a general preference for English (Panese 1992:67-68):

```
(26)  01  Gn:   I think gli italiani si sanno integrare
      02  Sa:   = si, si sanno =
      03  Gn:   = c'hanno una certa (1.0) how do you say?
      04  Sa:   si sanno presentare – c'hanno (0.7) eh – educati
      05  Gn:   c'hanno quella mentalità, you know  ? di fare
      06  (0.6) se devono fare qualcosa – lo
      07        farannno, you know?
      08  r:    si
      09  Gn:   very determined!
      10  r:    mhm – si (ital.)
      11  Gn:   ma sanno – possono lavorare duro – come
      12        giapponesi – they've got you know
      13        c'hanno la – goal
      '01  Gn:  I think the Italians are able to integrate them-
                selves
      02  Sa:   = they, they know =
      03  Gn:   = they have a certain (1.0) how do you say?
      04  Sa:   they know how to present themselves – they have
                (0.7) eh – educated
```

```
05  Gn:   they have that mentality, you know? to make
06        (0.6) if they have to do something – they
07        will do it, you know?
08  r:    yes
09  Gn:   very determined!
10  r:    mhm –         yes (ital.)
11  Gn:   but they – know how to work hard – like
12        Japanese – they've got you know
13        they have the – goal'
```

In this community, discourse-related and participant-related code-switching seems to co-occur with other forms of language alternation, but code-mixing is not so frequent as to lead to the formation of a 'fused lect'.

Germany has been the third European destination for Italian emigrants, since about two and a half million people arrived there between 1876 and 1976 (cf. table 1); again, a major wave of migration began in the 1950s and mainly brought workers from southern Italy. Patterns of language alternation among immigrant children were extensively documented and analysed in the famous MIG Project (*Muttersprache italienischer Gastarbeiterkinder im Kontakt mit Deutsch*, 1980-1985) at the University of Constance, which led to the ground-breaking contribution to code-switching theory presented in Auer's (1984) book. Many of the concepts formulated therein (e.g. the dichotomy between discourse and participant-related switching) as well as the applied methodology of conversational analysis have been fruitfully adopted by other researchers in order to capture the interactive meaning of language alternation. As readers will be familiar with these studies, I will confine myself to only a few remarks here.

It appears that the two basic types of language alternation in the Constance peer group were lexical transfer and locally meaningful code-switching between turns (or between sentences within turns). Apparently, (intrasentential) code-mixing without any discourse function was not very frequent at that time; also, other forms of language mixture like lexical hybridization between German and Italian are completely absent in the data. Typically, group members were rather fluent in the varieties employed (some of them with a slightly unbalanced bilingualism causing a certain preference for the local variety of German); therefore, they were able to exploit the whole range of discourse functions available in bilingual speech.

Within the 'ethnic' side of their language repertoire, the southern dialects played an important role, and their use was certainly

more pervasive than that of near-standard Italian. In addition to the prevalent switches between local German and Italian dialect, the research team found considerable language variation along the dialect-Italian continuum, which Di Luzio (1991) analysed in terms of "code-shifting" and "code-fluctuation". Code shifting – or "style-shift-ing", according to Berruto (2004b) – resembles discourse-related switching, in that it presupposes a good command of the repertoire, increases with age and fulfils transactional functions; linguistically, it is realized through smooth transitions and governed by co-occur-rence restrictions. Code fluctuation, by contrast, is rather abrupt and is characterised by hesitation phenomena that are indexical of its competence-based motivation.

Twenty years later, code-switching still seems to be a widespread form of language use among young Italians living in the industrial towns of Germany. For instance, it has been observed in a district of Mannheim where 16% of the young population is of Italian origin (34% are Turks, 20% Germans, and 30% of other nationalities) and where the majority of these Italians come from Sicily (Birken-Silverman 2001). The following transcript is part of a conversational corpus from a peer group associated with the local hip-hop scene (p. 320):

```
(27)  1   Pino:      da ham wa Lügen erzählt
      2   sara:      zwei Jahre | war das her |
      3   Gio:       | mi' quantu | minchiate ci cuntamu
      4   Pino:      ca iddu veni di Napuli
      5   Gio:       e parramu napuletanu    | (……) |
      6   sara:                          | Ferrari | (…)
      7   Francesco: ((forte)) ouu, che cazzu su sti paroli
      '1   Pino:      there we told lies
      2   sara:      two years ago | that was |
      3   Gio:       | wow, how much | bullshit we told her
      4   Pino:      that he comes from Naples
      5   Gio:       and we speak Neapolitan | (……) |
      6   sara:                          | Ferrari | (…)
      7   Francesco: ((loud)) ouu, what the fuck are these words'
```

In this fragment, in which the three interlocutors are talking about an interview they gave to a German woman, the switch from the 'neutral' German variety towards the Sicilian dialect coincides with the turn-taking of Gio, who successfully suggests this marked choice for the next few turns. According to Birken-Silverman, the use of Sicilian not only fosters solidarity within the group, but it also increases the expressiveness of the story by appealing to a set of

stereotypes associated with this variety, namely masculinity and toughness. In this analysis, it is true that the symbolic value of language choice is locally negotiated, but it nevertheless cannot be interpreted merely by virtue of its sequential position in the conversational frame: rather, participants act on the grounds of their social representations, which contribute to the construction of meaning.[12]

Switzerland – the last European country we will look at – is again very close to Italy and has a long-standing tradition of migration. Originating in the 19th century, mass immigration reached its peak after World War II, and in 1960 more than 60% of all foreigners in Switzerland were Italians (Schmid 2002:102). All in all, nearly 4 million Italian immigrants arrived in Switzerland between 1876 and 1976, almost as many as in France and more than one-and-a-half times as many as in Germany (cf. table 1); moreover, as there are less than a tenth as many Swiss as there are Germans, the presence of Italian immigrants has been much more visible in Switzerland. Even if chain migration is not an unknown phenomenon, Italian communities in Switzerland are generally composed of immigrants from different regions, and their sociolinguistic behaviour aims at imitating developments in Italian society. In particular, a strong shift away from regional dialects towards a more standard-like variety is typical even in intra-family communication, with many parents choosing to bring up their children in Italian (Rovere 1977:44; Franceschini et al. 1984:51-52). In the Italian of first-generation immigrants, lexical interference from German plays a rather marginal role and appears mainly in the form of non-integrated loanwords; either way, the creation of an extensive hybrid vocabulary as in Italo-American, 'Italiese' and Italo-Australian has never occurred (Rovere 1977:72-75). A few loan shifts (e.g. *firma* 'commercial company', *blocco* 'multiple dwelling') and loan blends (e.g. *formulario* 'form', *stipendio* 'grant') do occur in the speech of second-generation immigrants as well (Berruto 1998:150-151); moreover, lexical hybrids have been observed as *ad-hoc*-creations with a ludic purpose (ibid.: 156), as in Italian *crazzetti* 'little scratch' (cf. German *Kratzer*) or Swiss German *Zämpli* 'little paw' (cf. Italian *zampa*).

The sociolinguistic profile of second-generation Italians can be described as the superposition of two diglossias: the local element comprises 'Schwyzertütsch' and Swiss High German, whereas on the ethnic side, an Italian dialect is opposed to so-called 'italiano popolare' (Schmid 1993:266-272; Schmid 2005:187-188). In comparison with the Federal Republic of Germany, two differences must be noted: in German-speaking Switzerland, the local dialect

('Schwyzertütsch') has a much higher status, whilst the Italian communities assign a more marginal role to their native dialects, in which Swiss-born children often have only passive competence.

In fact, quite a number of bilingual Italian children were already living in Switzerland in the 1960s and the 1970s, but it was only in the 1980s that code-switching became a widespread phenomenon. This was partly due to a change in the political climate, which led to a somewhat more integrative attitude towards foreigners in Swiss society; in particular, the Italian lifestyle gained increasing prestige among the local population (Schmid 1993:283; Franceschini 1998:54). On the other hand, the life prospects of the immigrants themselves had also changed: whereas they had previously conceived of migration as a provisional status, the prospect of returning to Italy now became less certain, and the possibility of permanent settlement in Switzerland increased, blurring the barriers between in-group and out-group.

Language alternation between the two central varieties of the repertoire, namely 'Schwyzertütsch' and 'italiano popolare', has been documented and analysed in a number of studies in the Zurich area. In a first sociolinguistic study, Franceschini et al. (1984:55-59) found a clear correlation between the degree of bilingualism and the frequency of language alternation; all in all, 72% of 58 youngsters judged code-switching to be a natural form of verbal behaviour. Moreover, both tag-switching and discourse-related switching emerged in the interviews conducted in Italian (and thus in a rather monolingual mode) with the more balanced bilinguals. Given the subjects' strikingly good command of non-standard Italian, competence-based lexical transfer is not very frequent (Schmid 1993:272-276); instead, a wide range of local discourse functions have been illustrated in conversational code-switching (Pizzolotto 1991:97-133; Schmid 1993:278-281).

Within the Italian side of the repertoire, code-shifting – or even code-switching – towards the dialectal pole does occur, but it is much less frequent than in the Constance data and mainly serves the function of polemic mimicry, as is shown in the following example from Pizzolotto (1991:92-93):

(28)   *èèr, wo imer Auto faart hät s nöd chöne erchlèère, hät müese d Frau choo, wo ja nääbetraa hockt. Tüpisch Bergamasc, hèè. Non capisce u cazzo* [con accento napol.].
        '*he, who always goes by car, he could't explain it, his wife, who sits at his side, had to come. Typically Bergamask, you know. He doesn't understand anything*'

The story is told in Swiss German, but in the final comment the speaker imitates the dialect of the person he is talking about (by simply dropping the final vowel of the Italian word *Bergamasco*) and then concludes with a shift towards his own southern variety. Similar provocative imitation of a dialect different from one's own has been observed by Preziosa-Di Quinzio (1992):

(29)   diglielo al tuo CUMPARE, eh! (p. 85)
         'tell it to your GODFATHER, eh!'

(30)   CHILLE PUVERELLE, (ride) dä p10 redet amel so santopatrese (p. 86).
         (THAT POOR GUY (laughing) *p10 sometimes speaks a sort of* santopa-
         trese'

The "strategic ambiguity" (Heller 1988) of such dialect switches becomes clear from the opposite phenomon, when Italians of northern provenience employ pseudo-southern forms in order to achieve a linguistic convergence with their interlocutors (Pizzolotto 1991:155-156). In any case, participants are far from inferring the conversational meaning of code-switching only on the basis of the sequential organisation of the interaction, since they also rely on their knowledge of the social structure of the Italian community and the sociolinguistic status of the varieties involved. Note that the symbolic value attributed to the Italian dialects is very different than in the Mannheim case, where the regional homogeneity of the immigrant community is responsible for the frequent use and positive connation of Sicilian; in the Zurich area, by contrast, the low frequency of use of the Italian dialects and the heterogeneous origin of immigrants lead to a different metaphorical meaning of dialectal switches.

Within the peer group, socio-cultural conflicts may not only arise from the South vs. North contrast inherited from Italian culture, but they also depend on the linguistic biography of the group members, which determines their language preferences and the expression of their orientation towards Swiss or Italian society. For in-group communication, varying patterns of language alternation can therefore constitute a strategy of conflict management, as observed in an Italian soccer team in the Zurich area (Pizzolotto 1991:148-152): in conflict situations, both the more Swiss-oriented and the more Italian-oriented tended to use their preferred languages, but as soon as the tone became more humorous, intrasentential code-switching increased.

This last finding is in line with the idea that code-mixing constit-

utes the 'unmarked choice' in the case of a stable community composed of balanced and fluent bilinguals. This takes us back to the theoretical considerations discussed in §2 and, in particular, to the claim that frequent code-mixing among Italian bilinguals in German-speaking Switzerland may be interpreted as a code of its own. Franceschini (1998:59-60) illustrates her proposal with conversational data from Preziosa-Di Quinzio (1992:X), which is then also reported by Lüdi (1998: 149) and, in part, by Auer (1999:314-315). In order to broaden the empirical basis of the discussion, I have chosen to provide another partial transcript taken from the same corpus, which consists of recordings of informal encounters among friends in leisure time (Preziosa-Di Quinzio 1992:XXI).

(31) p3: ma i tuoi cugini sind scho z'Amerika geborä

p2: ja, nei keinä sie sind vo zwei bis foif gsii wo's uf Amerika sind … è vero o no?

p9: non lo so, das weissi nöd, c'ho un cugino im Fall, nei nöd, il marito della mia cugina che sarebbe anche mio cugino dänn oder anche un bergamasco, si chiama Angelo und ich han doch gseit es heig einä ä Metzgerei gha, du ich sägter dä hät jedä n'Abig öppä drüü Liter Wii trunkä …

p2: A Galonä

p9: Nöd ganz ä Galonä, ä Galonä son quattro litri, oder, vino rosso und er isch der einzig gsii che beveva il vino come noi susch di anderä in America bevevano tutti il vino col ghiaccio, hei, dä häts Glas gfüllt und i eim Schluck abägläärt … übrigens … salute.

'p3: but your cousins were already born in America

p2: well, not actually they were from two to five when they went to America … is that true or not?

p9: I don't know, I don't know, I have a cousin, no, the husband of my cousin who would also be a cousin then or also a Bergamask, his name is Angelo and then I said one had a butcher's shop, I tell you every night he drank about three litres of wine…

p2: a gallon

p9: not quite a gallon, one gallon is four litres, isn't it, red wine and he was the only one who drank wine like we do, the others in America they all drank wine with ice, well, he filled the glass and drank it in one swallow … by the way … cheers.'

In fact, these few turns show a high degree of language mixing without any apparent discourse function, for instance between the

subject and the verb phrase: in p3's turn, the switch is from Italian to Swiss German, whereas p9 switches twice in the opposite direction in his second turn. However, even in such language mixing, some functions of discourse-related switching appear: in this extract, one detects 'addressee specification' at the end of p2's turn, 'reiteration' at the beginning of the following turn by p3 (cf. Gumperz 1982:77-78), or a 'side sequence' at the end of p9's second turn (cf. Auer 1984:39-40).

Now, it is worth having a closer look at the quantitative dimension of language alternation, since Preziosa Di Quinzio herself (1992:56-57) provides us with a statistical analysis of the fourteen transcripts, differentiating between i) turns uttered entirely in Italian, ii) turns uttered entirely in Swiss German, and iii), turns containing code-switching and code-mixing. The 'wine story' in (31) comes from a transcript where 10.7% of the turns were uttered in Italian, 53.3% in Swiss German, and 37% in both languages (CENA-reg. 3). The 'cheese story' reported in Franceschini (1998:59-60) is part of an encounter with a very similar distribution of the languages used: 10.7% Italian, 49.3% Swiss German, and 40% mixed (POMERIG-GIO-reg. 2). However, there are considerable differences between the fourteen situations of the Preziosa-Di Quinzio corpus: the proportion of Italian turns varies from 10.7% to 48.7% (mean = 25%), Swiss German turns range from 23.0% to 52.3% (mean = 37.1%), and finally, mixed turns are between 26.8% and 55.5% (mean = 37.9%). In other words, the CENA-reg. 3 encounter is the one with the least Italian and the most Swiss German turns. All in all, mixed turns are slightly more numerous than those in Swiss German, and Italian is employed least frequently. It is difficult to single out the factors which determine the choice of these three modes of language use, but it seems that the topic of conversation and the type of activity do play a part: while playing poker, participants uttered 18.5% of the turns in Italian and 51.2% in Swiss German, whereas during a soccer game on television, 48.7% of the turns were in Italian and only 23.0% in Swiss German.

Can we expect such 'language mixing' to lead to the genesis of a 'fused lect'? Are there any indications of an incipient process of grammaticalization? Up to now, no specialization (and fusion) of the two grammars can be detected. Rather, the bilinguals studied display enormous variability in their switching patterns, which constitutes a challenge for the formulation of grammatical constraints. Part of Preziosa-Di Quinzio's (1992) data has been analyzed by Myers-Scotton & Jake (2001:113-114), who identify four types of noun phrases (N=45): within a Swiss German frame, there are 28 embed-

ded Italian NPs and 4 mixed NPs with a Swiss German determiner and an Italian noun, whereas within an Italian frame, there are 9 mixed NPs (Italian determiner and Swiss German noun) and 4 Swiss German NPs. The resulting asymmetry – Italian determiners in Swiss German frames are much more common than Swiss German determiners in Italian frames – is explained by the authors in terms of their MLF model, and more specifically by the fact that Swiss German determiners are marked for case (which they receive from outside the NP). An analogous asymmetry is detected by Berruto (2004a: 57-58) in Pizzolotto's (1991) data: if the syntactic frame is Italian, 6 out of 7 determiners are also in Italian; conversely, if an Italian NP is embedded in a Swiss German frame, 11 out of 16 determiners are in Italian (see, however, Berruto 2004a:58-59 for different proportions in other sociolinguistic contexts with similar language pairs). It lies outside the scope of this contribution to discuss the concept of a 'matrix language' and the implications of the MLF model (for a brief overview, see Myers-Scotton & Jake 2001:87-93 and Berruto 2004a:54-56); what matters for our purpose is the fact that, despite the emergence of certain tendencies, there remains a high degree of variability in the syntactic patterns of language mixing, so that we are far away from the "stabilization of form-function-relationships" that should characterise the grammar of a fused lect (Auer 1999:321).

One final remark is in order regarding Italian bilinguals in German-speaking Switzerland. As already mentioned, the existence of a folk name for "language mixing" within a particular community is sometimes assumed to be an indicator of both its diffusion and the possibility of an incipient mixed code. For instance, we learn from Franceschini (1998:54) that "adolescent peer groups […] used CS as a code which one of them labelled *italo-schwyz*", a designation which is documented in a video recording of an adolescent group in Zürich (1989). On the grounds of this observation, Auer (1999:318) has then attributed the term to the informants of Preziosa-Di Quinzio, inferring that the language mixing mode "employed by the speakers of ex. (2) is called *Italoschwyz* by its users". Similarly, Lüdi (1998:148-151) places his critical remarks on Franceschini's proposal under the heading "the example of italoschwyz in Zürich". However, it seems that the term 'italo-schwyz' has never spread beyond the specific group observed by Franceschini; at least, none of the numerous bilinguals I asked were familiar with it, nor are the researchers who have dealt with the subject (personal communication from Giuseppe Pizzolotto and Ivana Preziosa-Di Quinzio).[13]

So far, our reflections have concerned code-switching and code-mixing among Italian bilinguals in the German-speaking part of Switzerland. Nevertheless, conversational code-switching has also been observed in the French-speaking part, mainly in the Neuchâtel area. Oesch Serra (1998) has studied an interesting case of semantic specialization involving the three adversative conjunctions *ma, però* (Italian) and *mais* (French), observing that these connectives have a different meaning in the bilinguals' speech than in monolingual use. She interprets this finding as a symptom of "an emerging Italian-French mixed code", and Auer (1999:326-327), too, uses this case as an example of the transition from "language mixing" to "fused lects". However, the conversational extracts reported in Oesch Serra (1998) reveal a very small proportion of language alternation; rather, there is a clear predominance of Italian as the base language of discourse, with a few switches to French (or the other way round):

(32)   certo c'è delle persone italiane che si trovano meglio a parlare francese che italiano . io per esempio *je regrette mais* è . che io mi trovo meglio a parlare francese che l'italiano (p. 108)
'of course there are some Italians who feel happier speaking French than Italian . me for example, *I am sorry, but* it's just . that I feel better speaking French than Italian'

(33)   il francese mi esce più facilmente . diciamo che non lo faccio neanche apposta MA: è la mia lingua: è la mia lingua *mais* da quando ho finito la scuola . cerco di frequentare più italiani possibili per . imparare la lingua e leggo molto (p. 112)
'French comes more easily. let's say I don't even do it on purpose BUT: it's my language *but* since I finished school . I try to mix with as many Italians as possible . to learn the language and I read a lot'

The verbal behaviour of these bilinguals is quite different from that of the young Italians in the German-speaking part of Switzerland: language alternation is restricted to locally meaningful code-switching (32) or the automatic transfer of a connective (33), while code-mixing (in the sense of extensive intrasentential code-switching) is completely absent. In this case, bilingualism has led to a very restricted lexical restructuring of the L1 as a result of interference from L2 (the 'new' meaning of *ma* and *però*) and to the borrowing of a single item *mais*. Actually, conjunctions and adverbials are collocated at the second degree of Thomason's (2001:70) 'borrowing scale', which presupposes not "casual contact", but a "slightly more

intense contact"; in fact, borrowings of this kind have been observed in many bilingual communities (for instance, the Surselvan variety of Swiss Romansh has borrowed the connective *aber* 'but' from German). At any rate, this community seems to lack the prerequisites for the emergence of a "fused lect" or a "mixed code" and could more reasonably be located at the first stage of Auer's continuum.

As a general conclusion, one might therefore suggest that the interpretation of code-switching data calls for a more differentiated typology of language contact phenomena; in the following section, I will try to formulate a few pointers in this direction.

4. Code-switching and the sociolinguistic evolution of migrant communities

This brief overview is far from exhaustive, not only because of obvious limitations of space, but also due to a lack of linguistic descriptions: in particular, we do not have at our disposal oral documents or conversational transcripts from the early waves of migration at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, even a brief look at the many facets of Italian abroad brings to light a variety of different contact patterns which we may categorise according to three main groups: i) 'historical' Italo-American, 'italiese' and Italo-Australian, ii) 'cocoliche', and iii) present-day code switching in North America, Australia and western Europe.[14]

In order to achieve a better understanding of these three types of language contact and to evaluate them with respect to Auer's (1999) typology of bilingual speech, we may also wish to investigate the existence of an Italian-based bilingual mixture; this, in turn, calls for a few general reflections on the very notion of 'mixed language' (cf. Bakker & Muysken 1995, Thomason 1997, Thomason 2001:196-221). In fact, compared to the other two types of contact languages, i.e. pidgins and creoles, we know much less about bilingual mixed languages, simply because the systematic study of these varieties has a much shorter history.[15] Allegedly, bilingual mixed languages have two sociolinguistic features in common which allow us to distinguish them from pidgins and creoles: i) they arise within a single ethnic community because of a desire for an in-group language, ii) their creators are fluent bilinguals (imperfect language learning plays no part).

Nevertheless, the sociolinguistic repertoires of the communities

presented in the literature differ considerably from each other, as becomes clear from a comparison between Anglo-Romani and Michif. Anglo-Romani is learned as a second language (for secret purposes) by Roma people living in England who are native speakers of English and who no longer know the ethnic language Romani. Michif, by contrast, is the first language of several hundred persons of mixed Indian-European ancestry in Canada; its creators were bilingual children of white fathers and Indian mothers and thus speakers of French and of the Algonquian language Cree, but nowadays many of these 'Métis' use English as a second language without knowing either of the source languages Michif is derived from.

If we now turn to the linguistic features of bilingual mixtures, the differences are even more remarkable. The most striking case is certainly that of Michif, usually described as having French noun phrases that are incorporated into the verbal morphology and the syntax of Cree. Grammatical mixture also characterises Mednyj Aleut, the now-extinct language of the mixed-blood offspring of Russian-Aleut unions on Russia's Copper islands; in this variety, the elaborate Aleut finite verb morphology has been replaced by the simpler Russian system. However, the typical structural pattern of "language intertwining" (Bakker & Muysken 1995: 42) is that of Media Lengua, the 'halfway language' spoken by hundreds of acculturate Indians in Ecuador: here, the lexicon is supposed to be almost entirely Spanish, whereas the grammar is almost entirely Quechua. Similarly, the grammar of Ma'a (which is spoken in north-eastern Tanzania) is basically Bantu, whereas the lexicon comes both from Bantu and from Cushitic languages.

Given the above-mentioned short history of scholarship in this field, it is quite surprising to find 135 'mixed languages' listed against 372 pidgins and creoles (Smith 1995), even if the list also includes many doubtful cases such as 'Gastarbeiterdeutsch', despite the declared intention not to consider interlanguages (i.e., varieties of second language learners). The similar case of 'Fremdarbeiteritalienisch' (Berruto 1991) is omitted, but there are three Italian-lexifier pidgins, namely the Mediterranean Lingua Franca of the Middle Ages, 16th-century 'Todesche' used by German mercenaries, and Asmara Pidgin Italian. Interestingly for the purpose of a typology of contact languages, there is also a brief reference to one unnamed Italian-Somali mixed language, spoken in the community of Missioné on the Somali coast (though no bibliographical source is indicated, unfortunately).

Now, do the three contact patterns of Italian abroad resemble

mixed languages? The first category – comprising Italo-American, 'Italiese', and Italo-Australian – does not meet the two sociolinguistic requirements: the creators of these mixed vocabularies were not fluent bilinguals, nor did they want to create an in-group language; rather, they tried to acculturate to the host societies as well as possible, despite their limited linguistic skills. From the structural point of view, however, a certain affinity between the Anglo-Italian lexical mixture and mixed languages proper cannot be denied: one could argue, in fact, that extensive borrowing – including basic vocabulary – could indeed have led to partial relexification. This is, ultimately, the basic process in 'language intertwining', but in our case, the proportion of integrated loans from English is much smaller than in the bilingual mixtures described in the literature; finally, it has to be stressed that the Italo-romance grammar remained completely intact.

Instead, a certain amount of grammatical mixture occurred in our second type of language contact, 'cocoliche', which also experienced a higher degree of lexical fusion between Italian and Spanish (at least in its first stages); obviously, the genetic affiliation and typological similarity between the two languages plays a decisive role. Nevertheless, 'cocoliche' also fails to fulfil the above-mentioned two sociolinguistic conditions for a mixed language, since at least its first stage is the result of imperfect learning and not of bilingualism of the balanced type; Italian immigrants wanted to be part of the local community and, in fact, their cultural and linguistic integration into Argentine society took place rapidly and effectively. Yet, even if 'cocoliche' cannot be regarded as a mixed language *strictu senso*, it nevertheless exhibits an impressive amount of linguistic hybridization; moreover, its high degree of structural variability is counterbalanced by its considerable pervasiveness as a sociolinguistic scenario.[16]

If we adhere to the defining conditions of bilingual mixed languages, the best candidate is obviously presented by the third type of language contact of Italian abroad, namely the speech of second-generation Italians in various parts of the world. Most of these are really fluent bilinguals and want to distinguish themselves both from their basically monolingual parents and from the local society; to a certain extent, the bilingual mode of language use (i.e. both code-switching and code-mixing) do serve the same social purposes as bilingual mixed languages. Nevertheless, one has to note a clear sociolinguistic difference between language mixing and mixed languages, in that prototypical mixed languages are spoken by relatively small ethnic communities (often below a thousand individuals) who live in rather

isolated rural areas and maintain strong in-group cohesion. By contrast, the millions of Italian migrants around the world have mostly settled in large urban regions, participating in social networks with varying degrees of permeability and complexity; for instance, the relatively small group of Swiss-born Italians alone amounts to more than 100,000 speakers (Schmid 1993: 266).

However, there are clear differences, in both communicative and structural terms, between the verbal behaviour of these bilinguals and the phenomenon of mixed languages. In all Italian communities where bilingual speech occurs, it still serves as a discourse strategy with precise local functions in the sense of conversational code-switching. When it comes to code-mixing (as in German-speaking Switzerland), the enormous variability of switching patterns does not give any indication of structural sedimentation or of grammaticalisation. Even if Swiss German can be regarded as the dominant language in the bilinguals' repertoire, we are far from seeing the gradual loss of knowledge of Italian which is one of the supposed routes to the genesis of bilingual mixed-languages (Thomason 2001:203-205).

What other scenarios, then, can be depicted for the development of Italian abroad, in particular in a sociolinguistic situation like that in the German-speaking part of Switzerland? The first alternative which comes to mind is obviously the more or less gradual loss of the ethnic language and the diffusion of the local language in all domains of language use, i.e. language shift. Interestingly, Auer's (1999) diachronic typology of bilingual speech resembles some scenarios proposed in the sociology of migrant languages, in that it postulates the gradual transition from one stage to another; but whilst his proposal mainly predicts a move from discourse to grammar (or more precisely, from code-switching to code-mixing to fused lects), traditional sociolinguistic models rather deal with the distribution of the repertoire's varieties in different domains.

For instance, Fishman (1972, chapter seven) proposes four stages ranging from monolingualism in the ethnic language (i) through two intermediate stages with growing bilingualism (ii, iii) to monolingualism in the local language (iv). Fishman's scheme has been paraphrased by Franceschini et al. (1984:56) in terms of code-switching; indeed, one could relate stages (ii) and (iii) to Auer's transition from code-switching to language mixing. Four stages also appear in Gonzo & Saltarelli's (1983:182) continuum of emigrant languages, which predicts for the ethnic language a gradual attrition from "standard" through "fading" and "pidgin" to "fragment". According to these authors, emigrant language acquisition (i.e., the

acquisition of L1 in a L2 setting) involves both hybridization and sim-plification in the second and the third stage ('fading' and 'pidgin'). Finally, Di Pietro (1976: 213) has even proposed five "stages of ethnic-ity" in Americans of Italian extraction, namely (i) "the newly arrived", (ii) "acculturation in progress", (iii) "the ethnic settles down", (iv) "the re-defining stage", and (v) "entering the main-stream". In this scheme, stage (iii) is characterised by the emergence of a "pidgin English" which accompanies an "Italian koiné"; as for language performance, the development goes from "some code-switching" (ii) to "much code-switching" (iii) and again to "little code-switching" (iv).

We must acknowledge that the sociolinguistic evolution of migrant communities is a very complex issue which involves many factors both on the side of linguistic competence (second language acquisition, bilingualism, language attrition) and in language use (language choice and alternation, borrowing and code-switching, etc.). Therefore, modelling the sociolinguistic evolution of migrant communities remains a rather tentative enterprise unless we can draw on the analysis of extensive longitudinal data on both language performance and competence. These conditions not being fulfilled, it is not surprising that linguistic concepts like 'pidgin' are used in a somewhat approximative manner. Still, the three scenarios proposed by Fishman (1972), Di Pietro (1976) and Gonzo & Saltarelli (1983) share two common features: (i) the final stage is not bilingual mix-ture, but language shift; (ii) if hybridization occurs, it is rather at the initial stages as a result of 'imperfect learning'.

An interesting issue is addressed by Di Pietro (1976:214), name-ly the relationship between the putative stages of linguistic behaviour and demographic development: theoretically, a migrant community may remain at the same stage for several generations, but a single individual may also move through several stages in his/her own lifetime. The latter scenario is typical of the early migr-ation periods in the USA, where the process of language shift was completed in the second generation; in Argentina, the cycle may even have been concluded in the life of first-generation immigrants. The former case is probably to be found in the Italian community of German-speaking Switzerland, where a fairly good command of the ethnic language can now be observed among third-generation immi-grants.

This obviously raises the question of the social factors which determine the different patterns of language maintenance and loss. Lo Cascio (1987:91-92) individuates 9 factors that may play a part in

shaping the linguistic evolution of migrant communities (cf. also Bettoni 1993:411-413): (i) geographical distance, (ii) similarity of the local language to Italian, (iii) prestige of the language/culture of the host country, (iv) educational level, (v) family status, (vi) age of arrival, (vii) generation, (viii) occupation, and (ix) residence (rural vs. urban). With the Swiss case in mind, one might wish to split up the first factor (distance) into several sub-factors such as the frequency of visits to Italy, the availability of mass media in Italian, and – of crucial importance – the way in which the subjects themselves conceive of their migration (definitive or provisional); as regards the sociolinguistic situation of the host country (iii), one might consider the presence/absence of diglossia and the status of Italian as a national language of Switzerland.

While it lies outside the scope of the present contribution to discuss all the circumstances of migration in detail, these few considerations may, I hope, help to raise awareness of the many factors that may affect patterns of language contact. Thus, a sociolinguistic approach to code-switching has to stress the necessity to anchor claims about the development of migrant languages in a broader context. The bilingual individual cannot be viewed only as a 'language user'; s/he does have an existence beyond his/her concrete verbal interactions, which is made up of prior cognitive representations and social relationships. This means that promising prospects for future research on code-switching lie not so much in the elaboration of theoretical models (which easily run the risk of oversimplifying rather complex phenomena), as in in-depth studies of single situations that take into account such phenomenological complexity by carefully defining the concepts employed.

In conclusion, an investigation of code-switching and Italian abroad does not yield any evidence that would justify the (con-)fusion of basic theoretical concepts such as *langue* and *parole*. In particular, a comparison of the different patterns of language contact among Italian communities around the world reveals that, so far, no mixed language has been created through code-switching by highly proficient bilinguals; linguistic hybridization rather appears in the case of limited second language acquisition or unbalanced bilingualism.

Address of the Author:

Phonetisches Laboratorium der Universität Zürich, Wilfriedstrasse 6, CH-8032 Zürich, Switzerland <schmidst@pholab.unizh.ch>

Notes

[1]   Similarly, Poplack (1988:217) summarises the results of the studies carried out among Puerto Ricans in New York by stating that "code-switching between English and Spanish was such an integral part of the community linguistic repertoire that it could be said to function as *a mode of interaction similar to monolingual language use*" (italics are mine, in order to highlight what to me seems particularly appropriate terminology).

[2]   Here, the term "grammaticalization" does not apply to the reanalysis of formatives within the language system, e.g. to the move of lexical morphemes towards derivative or inflectional ones. Instead, it is meant in a broader sense (à la Givón), assuming that mechanisms of language change are, to a large extent, discourse-based.

[3]   Berruto (2004b) presents a somewhat more differentiated model of language contact, strictly distinguishing between the two levels of language system and language use.

[4]   In recent years, however, the notion of 'mixed language' has been addressed by a growing number of both theoretical and empirical contributions (e.g., Matras & Bakker 2003, Berruto forthcoming; cf. also Vietti 2005:83-126).

[5]   In the following discussion, excerpts from written texts and transcripts are quoted according to the conventions used in the source indicated.

[6]   As Di Pietro (1976:209) points out, these forms not only serve as a caricature of the strong 'accent' of first-generation immigrants, but they also express a double sense achieved through their homonymy with Italian/Sicilian words (*tocchi* 'you touch', *mi stenni* 'you stretch me out').

[7]   See Romaine (1995:227-236) for a review of some classic studies on code-switching in childhood. The extent to which bilingual children are able to keep apart the linguistic systems they are exposed to is still a matter open to debate; cf. Lanza (2004) for a recent contribution to the study of the early simultaneous acquisition of two languages.

[8]   There are a few Italians in New Zealand, too. A detailed study of the bilingual speech in a small community (Kinder 1985) revealed that code-switching occurred quite frequently but was mostly of the 'flagged' type (i.e., accompanied by hesitations, hedges, glosses, and the like).

[9]   A very different network of Italians in Mexico City has been studied by Bizzoni & De Fina (1992), who analyze 19 hours of conversation among 21 language teachers (15 of whom were Italians who had lived in Mexico for at least six years). The speech of these subjects, who are proficient bilinguals in both standard Italian and Mexican Spanish, displays frequent intrasentential switching together with a whole range of local discourse functions.

[10]   Cancellier (1996:13-61) extends the concept of 'cocoliche' to the writing of Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1811-1888), a journalist and former president of Argentina. Sarmiento's knowledge of Italian was rather rudimentary, but when polemizing with representatives of the Italian community, he often quoted from memory (and rather inaccurately) lengthy passages attributed to his adversaries: "En cuanto a la verdad, derecho y justicia de los cargos, imitamos la circunspección del *Operario Italiano* […]: *Alcune societá di Buenos Aires si stano agitando. Noi invece reccomandamo calma e prudenza, il cuore non e sempre buon consigiere*" (from Cancellier 1996:22). In fact, such language behaviour does not pertain to any of the stages or poles of the *cocoliche* continuum described above, but it reveals one discourse-related function of code-switching, i.e. quotation, on the part of an L2 user.

[11]   Many of these words have passed through *lunfardo*, the slangy argot developed among the criminal underworld of the suburbs of Buenos Aires; the origin of the word is supposed to lie in dialectal jargons of Italy, where *lombardo/lummardu* has a meaning similar to that of *lunfardo*, namely 'thief' (cf. Giunchi 1986: 130-132, Cancellier 1996:10-12).

[12]   It seems to me that this aspect is somewhat neglected in many works of current code-switching research, which tend to overestimate the importance of the interactional mechanisms; see Meeuwis & Blommaert (1994) for a sound critique of such a purely procedural approach.

[13]   Some informants corrected me, arguing that the proper word should be *Italoschwyzer* or *italo-svizzero* (meaning 'an Italian person who has grown up in Switzerland'), but nobody had in mind the name of a language; in fact, the literal meaning of a noun 'italo-schwyz' would be 'Italo-Switzerland', whereas the names of languages are usually constituted by nominalisations of adjectives.

[14]   Since our focus is on code-switching, we will not discuss other issues of migrational dialectology such as the conservative Veneto dialect of Chipilo (Mexico) or the creation of a Veneto-based koiné in southern Brasil.

[15]   This may be due to several factors, in particular the real scarcity of such language varieties, the lack of linguistic descriptions, and a certain dogmatic reticence on the part of linguists; for instance, Thomason (2001:198) quotes Max Müller's 1871 *dictum* "es gibt keine Mischsprache" (cf. Greenberg 1999 for a recent sceptical contribution).

[16]   It is worth recalling that, unlike 'Italiese' and 'italo-schwyz', the term 'cocoliche' was not invented or spread by linguists; even if the phenomenon itself has since died out, the notion of 'cocoliche' is still alive in the linguistic awareness of the 'porteño' population, as I had the opportunity to observe during my first trip to Buenos Aires in 2000.

Bibliographical References

ALFONZETTI Giovanna, (1992), *Il discorso bilingue. Italiano e dialetto a Catania*, Milano, Franco Angeli.

ALFONZETTI Giovanna (1998), "Italian-dialect code-switching in Sicily", in AUER 1998: 180-211.

APPLE René & Pieter MUYSKEN (1987), *Language contact and bilingualism*, London, Edward Arnold.

ARENDS Jacques, Pieter MUYSKEN & Norval SMITH, eds. (1995), *Pidgins and Creoles. An introduction*, Amsterdam, Benjamins.

AUER Peter (1984), *Bilingual conversation*, Amsterdam, Benjamins.

AUER Peter (1991), "Italian in Toronto: a preliminary comparative study on language use and maintenance", *Multilingua* 10: 403-440.

AUER Peter (1999), "From code-switching via language mixing to fused lects: Toward a dynamic typology of bilingual speech", *The International Journal of Bilingualism* 3: 309-332.

AUER Peter, ed. (1998), *Code-switching in conversation. Language, interaction and identity*, London, Routledge.

BAKKER Peter & Pieter MUYSKEN (1995), "Mixed languages and language intertwining", in ARENDS et al. (eds.), 1995: 41-52.

Berruto Gaetano (1985), "*'l pulman l'è nen ch-a* cammina tanto forte'. Su commutazione di codice e mescolanza dialetto-italiano", *Vox Romanica* 44: 59-76.

Berruto Gaetano (1987), *Sociolinguistica dell'italiano contemporaneo*, Roma, La Nuova Italia Scientifica.

Berruto Gaetano (1991), "*Fremdarbeiteritalienisch*: fenomeni di pidginizzazione dell'italiano nella Svizzera tedesca", *Rivista italiana di linguistica* 3: 333-367.

Berruto Gaetano (1998), "Italiano e tedesco in contatto nella Svizzera germanofona: interferenze lessicali presso la seconda generazione di immigrati italiani", in Patrizia Cordin et al. (eds.), *Parallela 6. Italiano e tedesco in contatto e a confronto*, Trento, Dipartimento di Scienze Filologiche e storiche: 143-159.

Berruto Gaetano (2004a), "Su restrizioni grammaticali nel codemixing e situazioni sociolinguistiche. Annotazioni in margine al modello MLF", *Sociolinguistica* 18: 54-72.

Berruto Gaetano (2004b), "Hochsprache und Dialekt als kritischer Fall für die Kontaktlinguistik", in Egger Eckhard, Jürgen Schmidt & Dieter Stellmacher, (Hrsg.), *Moderne Dialekte – Neue Dialektologie*. Akten des 1. Kongresses der Internationalen Gesellschaft für Dialektologie des Deutschen (IGDD), Stuttgart, Steiner: 87-112.

Berruto Gaetano (forthcoming), "Sul concetto di lingua mista", to appear in a volume by Centro Internazionale sul Plurilinguismo, Udine.

Bertini Malgarini Patrizia (1994), "L'italiano fuori d'Italia", in Luca Serianni (ed.), *Storia della lingua italiana. Vol. III. Le altre lingue,* Torino, Einaudi: 883-992.

Bettoni Camilla (1981), *Italian in North Queensland. Changes in the speech of first and second generation bilinguals*, Townsville, James Cook University.

Bettoni Camilla, ed. (1986), *Altro polo. Italian abroad*, University of Sidney.

Bettoni Camilla (1991), "Language shift and morphological attrition among second generation Italo-Australians", *Rivista di linguistica* 3: 369-387.

Bettoni Camilla (1993), "Italiano fuori d'Italia", in Alberto Sobrero (ed.), *Introduzione all'italiano contemporaneo. Vol. II. La variazione e gli usi*, Bari, Laterza: 411-460.

Bettoni Camilla (2003), "Tre generazioni di italiano all'estero", *Italiano & Oltre* 3: 282-287.

Bettoni Camilla & Antonia Rubino (1996), *Emigrazione e comportamento linguistico. Un'indagine sul trilinguismo dei siciliani e dei veneti in Australia*, Galatina, Congedo.

Birken-Silverman Gabriele (2001), "Il siciliano dei giovani immigrati a Mannheim/ Germania", in Gianna Marcato (ed.), *I confini del dialetto*, Padova, Unipress: 315-325.

Bizzoni Franca & Anna de Fina (1992), "La commutazione di codice fra insegnanti di italiano in Messico", in Bruno Moretti et al. (eds.), *Linee di tendenza nell'italiano contemporaneo*, Roma, Bulzoni: 381-406.

Cancellier Antonella (1996), *Lenguas en contacto. Italiano y español en el Río de la Plata*, Padova, Unipress.

CLIVIO Gianrenzo (1986), "Competing loanwords and loanshifts in Toronto's italiese", in BETTONI, 1986: 129-146.

CORRÀ Loredana & Flavia URSINI (1989), "Dialetti italiani all'estero", in Günter HOLTUS (ed.), *La dialettologia italiana oggi: studi offerti a Manlio Cortelazzo*, Tübingen, Niemeyer: 373-391.

CORRÀ Loredana & Flavia URSINI (1998), "I migranti romanzi in età moderna", in Günter HOLTUS et al. (eds.), *Lexikon der Romanistischen Linguistik* (LRL) VII, Tübingen, Niemeyer: 559-585.

DI LUZIO Aldo (1991), "On some (socio-)linguistic properties of Italian foreign workers' children in contact with German", *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 90: 131-157.

DI PIETRO Robert J. (1976), "Language as a marker of Italian Ethnicity", *Studi emigrazione* 13: 203-217.

DI PIETRO Robert J. (1978), "Code-switching as a verbal strategy among bilinguals", in Michel PARADIS (ed.), *Aspects of bilingualism*, Columbia (South Carolina), Hornbeam: 275-282.

FISHMAN Joshua A. (1972), *The sociology of language. An interdisciplinary social science approach to language in society*, Rowley, Newbury House.

FONTANELLA DE WEINBERG María Beatriz (2000), "El español bonaerense", in id. (ed.), *El español de la Argentina y sus variedades regionales*, Buenos Aires, Edicial: 37-61.

FRANCESCHINI Rita, Myriam MÜLLER & Stephan SCHMID (1984), "Comportamento linguistico e competenza dell'italiano in immigrati di seconda generazione a Zurigo", *Rivista italiana di dialettologia* 8: 42-72.

FRANCESCHINI, Rita (1998), "Code-switching and the notion of code in linguistics: Proposals for a dual focus model", in AUER, 1998: 51-72.

GIACALONE RAMAT Anna (1995), "Code-switching in the context of dialect/standard language relations", in Lesley MILRROY & Pieter MUYSKEN (eds.), *One speaker, two languages*, Cambridge University Press: 45-67.

GIUNCHI Paola (1986), "L'Argentina e l'italiano", *Italiano & Oltre* 1: 129-133.

GONZO Susan & Mario SALTARELLI (1983), "Pidginization and linguistic change in emigrant languages", in Roger W. ANDERSEN (ed.), *Pidginization and creolization as language acquisition,* Rowley, Newbury House: 181-197.

GREENBERG John (1999), "Are there mixed languages?", reprinted 2004 in id., *Genetic linguistics. Essays on theory and method,* Oxford University Press.

GROSJEAN François (1985), "The bilingual as a competent but specific speaker-hearer", *Journal of Multlingual and Multicultural Development* 6: 467-77.

GROSJEAN François (2001), "The bilingual's language modes", in NICOL, 2001: 1-22.

GUMPERZ John (1982), *Discourse strategies*, Cambridge University Press.

HALL, Robert A. (1943), "A ritualistic sequence in Italian-English pidgin", *Studies in linguistics* 1: 14-15.

HALLER Hermann (1993), *Una lingua perduta e ritrovata*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia.

HELLER Monica (1988), "Strategic ambiguity: codeswitching in the management of conflict", in HELLER, 1988: 77-96.

HELLER Monica, ed. (1988), *Codeswitching. Anthropological and sociolinguistic issues*, Berlin, Mouton de Gruyter.

JACQMAIN Monique (1981), "Lo stato della lingua italiana presso i figli dei lavoratori italiani emigrati nelle Fiandre", *Lingua Nostra* 42: 117-122.

KINDER John (1985), "Strategie verbali per segnalare l'interferenza nell'italiano della Nuova Zelanda", *Rivista italiana di dialettologia* 9: 103-128.

KOEN Jaspaert & Sjaak KROON (1991), "Social determinants of language shift by Italian in the Netherlands and Flanders", *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 90: 77-96.

LANZA Elizabeth (2004), *Language mixing in infant bilingualism,* Oxford University Press.

LIVINGSTON Arthur (1918), "La Merica Sanemagogna", *The Romanic Review* 9: 206-226.

LO CASCIO Vincenzo (1987), "L'emigrazione italiana - aspetti sociali e linguistici", in id. (ed.), *L'italiano in America latina*, Firenze, Le Monnier: 89-118.

LÜDI Georges (1998), "Le code-switching comme variété mixte?", *Sociolinguistica* 12: 140-154.

LÜDI Georges (2003), "Code-switching and unbalanced bilingualism", in Jean-Marc DEWAELE et al. (eds.), *Bilingualism. Beyond basic principles. Festschrift in honour of Hugo Baetens Beardsmore,* Clevedon, Multilingual Matters: 174-188.

MARCATO Carla, Hermann HALLER, Giovanni MEO ZILIO & Flavia URSINI (2002), "I dialetti italiani nel mondo", in Manlio CORTELAZZO et al. (eds.), *I dialetti italiani. Storia, struttura, uso*, Torino, UTET: 1073-1096.

MARTINET André (1960), *Eléments de linguistique générale*, Paris, Armand Colin.

MATRAS Yaron & Peter BAKKER, eds. (2003), *The mixed language debate. Theoretical and empirical avances*, Berlin, Mouton de Gruyter.

MENARINI Alberto (1947), "Sull'italo-americano degli Stati Uniti", in id., *Ai margini della lingua*, Firenze, Sansoni: 145-208.

MEO ZILIO Giovanni (1964), "El 'cocoliche' rioplatense", *Boletín de Filología* 16: 61-119 (reprinted 1989 as "Aspectos de gramática contrastiva ítalo-hispánica: el Cocoliche", in id., *Estudios hispanoamericano. Temas lingüísticos*, Roma, Bulzoni: 207-254).

MEEUWIS Michael & Jan BLOMMAERT (1994), "The 'Markedness Model' and the absence of society: Remarks on code-switching", *Multilingua* 13: 387-423.

MILROY Lesley & Pieter MUYSKEN (eds.), *One speaker, two languages*, Cambridge University Press.

MULJAČIĆ Žarko (1982), "L'italiano d'oltremare", *Italienisch* 8: 12-26.

MYERS-SCOTTON Carol & Janice L. JAKE (2001), "Explaining aspects of code-switching and their implications", in NICOL, 2001: 84-116.

NICOL Janet L., ed. (2001), *One mind, two languages*, London, Blackwell.

OESCH-SERRA Cecilia (1998), "Discourse connectives in bilingual conversation. The case of an emerging Italian-French mixed code", in AUER, 1998: 101-124.

PANESE Marcello (1992), "Il code-switching come strategia comunicativa: un'indagine nella comunità italiana a Londra", in Alberto SOBRERO (ed.), *Il dialetto nella conversazione. Ricerche di dialettologia pragmatica*, Galatina, Congedo: 43-78.

PIZZOLOTTO Giuseppe (1991), *Bilinguismo ed emigrazione in Svizzera. Italiano e commutazione di codice in un gruppo di giovani,* Bern, Peter Lang.

POPLACK Shana (1988), "Contrasting patterns of code-switching in two communities", in HELLER, 1988: 215-244.

PREZIOSA-DI QUINZIO Ivana (1992), *"Teoreticamente la firma fa indietro". Frammistione di italiano e Schwyzertütsch nella conversazione di figli di emigrati*, Unpublished Master Thesis, University of Zurich.

RANDO Gaetano (1968), "Influenze dell'inglese sul lessico italo-australiano di Sidney", *Lingua Nostra* 35: 17-22.

RAPONI Lorenza (1985), "L'italiano nella seconda generazione di emigrati a Londra (parte 2°)", *Linguaggi* 2: 23-32.

REGIS Riccardo (2005), *Appunti grammaticali sull'enunciazione mistilingue,* München, Lincoln Europa.

ROMAINE Suzanne (1995), *Bilingualism. Second Edition*, Oxford, Blackwell.

ROVERE Giovanni (1977), *Testi di italiano popolare. Autobiografie di lavoratori e figli di lavoratori emigrati*, Roma, Centro Studi Emigrazione.

RUBINO Antonia (1991), "Patterns of language choice and language contact in formal and informal settings", *Rivista di linguistica* 3: 277-305.

RUBINO Antonia (2004), "Trilingual women as language mediators in the family: a Sicilian-Australian case study", *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics* 18: 25-49.

SCAGLIONE Stefania (2000), *Attrition. Mutamenti sociolinguistici nel lucchese di San Francisco*, Milano, Franco Angeli.

SCHMID Stephan (1993), "Lingua madre e commutazione di codice in immigrati italiani di seconda generazione nella Svizzera tedesca", *Multilingua* 12: 265-289.

SCHMID Stephan (1994), *L'italiano degli spagnoli*, Milano, Franco Angeli.

SCHMID Stephan (2002), "La rilevanza sociolinguistica della comunità italofona in Svizzera e il legame fra comunità immigrate e italofonia nella Confederazione Elvetica", in Luciano TRINCIA (ed.), *L'Umanesimo Latino in Svizzera: aspetti storici, linguistici, culturali*, Treviso, Fondazione Cassamarca: 99-113.

SCHMID Stephan (2005), "Spelling and pronunciation in migrant children: the case of Italian-Swiss German bilinguals", in Benedetta BASSETTI & Vivian COOK (eds.), *Second language writing systems*, London, Multilingual Matters: 184-211.

SMITH Norval (1995), "An annotated list of creoles, pidgins, and mixed languages", in ARENDS et al. (eds.), 1995: 331- 374.

SOBRERO Alberto (1988), "Villages and towns in Salento: the way code-switching switches", in Norbert DITTMAN & Peter SCHLOBINSKI (eds.), *The sociolinguistics of urban vernaculars*, Berlin, Mouton de Gruyter: 207-216.

THOMASON Sarah (1997), ed., *Contact languages: a wider perspective*, Amsterdam, Benjamins.

THOMASON Sarah (2001), ed., *Language contact. An introduction*, Washington D.C., Georgetown University Press.

TIRABASSI Maddalena (2005), "L'emigrazione italiana", www.comunetorino.it/cultura/intercultura/12/12f3.html

TOSI Arturo (1991), *Italian overseas. The language of Italian communities in the English-speaking world*, Firenze, Editori Giunti.

TRUMPER John (1989), "Observations on sociolinguistic behaviour in two Italian regions", *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 76: 31-62.

TURCHETTA Barbara (2005), *Il mondo in italiano. Varietà e usi internazionali della lingua* (in collaborazione con Laura Mori ed Elisa Ranucci), Bari, Laterza.

VIETTI Alessandro (2005), *Come gli immigrati cambiano l'italiano. L'italiano di peruviane come varietà etnica,* Milano, Franco Angeli.

WHINNOM Keith (1971), "Linguistic hybridization and the 'special case' of pidgins and creoles", in Dell HYMES (ed.), *Pidginization and creolization of languages*, Cambridge University Press: 91-115.