Penelope Gardner-Chloros. *Code-switching*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, New York, 2009. (xii, 242)

This book fittingly begins with an epigraph which contains the complete text of the John Godfrey Saxe poem based on the legendary Indian tale of the six blind men who palpate numerous parts of an elephant, a fitting analogy to the topic of code-switching and the various approaches that have been made to it. This text is supported with examples from numerous sets of languages, including samples of casual letters from Cicero with switches to Greek, and supplemented by an appendix that explicates the Language Interaction Data Exchange System Project, including a relevant glossary.

The phenomenon of code-switching,[1] defined here as "the use of several languages or dialects in the same conversation or sentence by bilingual people" (4), is pervasive among bilinguals. Still, as G-Ch points out, much is wanting in the term. The term *code*, we are reminded, originated for this purpose as a loan term from communication technology when signals were *switched* between devices (11); now in language *code* is variously applied to varieties, not matter how conceived, while *switching* simplistically conveyed in the earliest models the changing of the position of the mental toggle switch between varieties. Indeed the term is used to cover a range of language events by various writers (12, 13). Speakers perform many communicative and social functions through the use of the practice, which are well documented in the literature. This book seeks to penetrate further into what is going on when speakers do this, "to encourage the formulation of more holistic insights and research" (10), following, as suggested by the analogy with the elephant in Saxe's poem, a "multifaceted approach" (7).

One immediate question that arises is that of what a language is, in the mouth and mind

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[1] The author's application of hyphen in the orthographic representation, which I follow, is discussed at 4, n. 3.

of a code-switching speaker (8). This question is very apt in relation to the children of immigrant Spanish speakers in Southern California, whose Spanish is not the local variety their parents brought from their home area in Northern or Southern Mexico, Guatamala, El Salvador, Peru, etc., but a feature-mixed adoption of the pool of Spanishes to which their school friends contribute, which is then richly code-switched with Southern California English. In a more specific sense, data represented here challenges the notion of 'matrix' language (47). A long sample from an Alsatian-French bilingual speaker does not readily lend itself to being identified with a base of either language which is switched in and out of, having more the appearance of a "convergence" (ibid.). In addition, the salient point is raised that the code-switching bilingual (a redundant phrase?) also challenges the notion of the "native speaker," and along with that, the "ideal speaker," and thus what putative performance errors signify in these situations (18). The code-switching bilingual speaker, on a socio- or idiolectical basis, recomposes the rules.

In some bilingual contact circumstances it is not clear whether a term is being borrowed and adapted or switching is occurring. Examples analyzed as likely adapted loans include *use* and *respect* in *kamno use* 'to use' and *kamno respect* 'to respect' among Greek Cypriots in London (50). We often think of loans as being adapted phonologically and morphologically; such examples as these are not unambiguous. The author notes that when defining code-switching "as inclusively as possible," a cline emerges, with lexical borrowing at one end and convergence at the other, before the point of fusion is reached (59). In southern United States border Spanish, loans like *carro* 'car', *marketa* 'grocery store' have replaced native Spanish equivalents in monolingual Spanish, but in the switched speech of bilinguals the English source terms freely occur.

A number of examples show that code-switching, in addition to involving grammatical and lexical variants, reflect discourse and social relations, including marking group identity in

Alsace (48), inducing a female at a party to dance (69), expressing linguistic preferences, and negotiating family relationships (72 – 77). In some instances, both code-switching and employing monolingual discourse conventions permit achieving the same functions, although the bilingual code-switcher can choose from other layers of resources (74 – 75). The author is thus correct to admonish against relying on decontextualized data to draw conclusions (54).

It is argued that while grammatical approaches have been highly fruitful in the study of code-switching, they have not taken "variations in code-switching behavior sufficiently seriously"; these will be "more satisfactory" when they account for "differences in competence between speakers," those owing to "typological factors," and social parameters (91). Examples such as the following confound purely grammatical based accounts.

> (Greek Cypriot – English)
> *Irthe dhaskala private*
> Came teacher private   [note N – Adj. word order]
> A private teacher came   (96)
>
> (French – English)
> *Tu peux me pick-up-er*
> You can   me pick up-INF   [note pronoun placement, supply of INF marker]
> Can you pick me up?   (97)
>
> (German – English)
> *Jemand hat gesagt dass er ist the father of her child*
> Somebody has said that he is the father of her child   [note noun phrase follows *ist*] (99)

It certainly seems to be the case that "overall we are faced with a degree of variation which no single set of grammatical rules can account for" (106).

In fact, the best accounting for code-switching in its all its variegated complexity may be the great "flexibility" and "adaptability [and, I might add, creativity] of human beings" (177), as we are able to use whatever resources are at our disposal to produce the effects we desire in communicative situations as we go about our daily business.

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