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Code-Switching Practices
among Immigrant Polish L2 Users of English

A b s t r a c t : The present paper aims to present a mixed method study on code-switching prac-
tices among L2 users immersed in the L2 culture. Code-switching practices were measured
among 62 Polish L2 users of English who had immigrated to the UK and Ireland and reported
using English on an everyday basis. The informants of the study were to fill in an online ques-
tionnaire and answer an open question concerning situations in which they switch from their L2
to L1 most frequently. Quantitative analysis showed that age and self-perceived L2 proficiency
were both linked to the frequency of code-switching. Qualitative analysis of the results revealed
that the participants reported code switching mostly in emotionally charged situations as well
as when discussing personal topics with known interlocutors. The results of the study are in
line with some quantitative studies (Dewaele, 2010) as well as some autobiographical findings
(Grosjean, 2010; Pavlenko, 2004; Wierzbicka, 2004) and shed some more light on the complex
notion of bilingualism and code-switching.

K e y w o r d s : code-switching, bilingualism, immersion, L2 use

Introduction

> A language is not a code for encoding pre-existent meanings. Rather, it is
> a conceptual, experiential and emotional world. Shifting from one code to
> another is not like shifting from one code to another to express a meaning
> expressible equally well in both these codes. Often, the very reason why
> a bilingual speaker shifts from one language to another is that the mean-
> ing that they want to express 'belongs' to the other language. (Wierzbicka,
> 2004, p. 102)

Language switching or code-switching is described as occurring most often
in a bi-multilingual context (Altarriba & Heredia, 2008). Literature reports vari-

ous types of code-switching, such as inter-sentential switching, which occurs outside the sentence or the clause level; intra-sentential switching, which occurs within a sentence or a clause; tag-switching of either a tag phase or a word, or both; or intra-word switching, which occurs within a word itself, such as at a morpheme boundary (Li, 2000). Li (2007, p. 15) states that it has become clear from previous research that "code-switching is not necessarily the sign of a problem, but rather the illustration of the skilled manipulation of overlapping sections of two or more grammars." He asserts that there is "virtually no instance of ungrammatical combination of two languages in code-switching, regardless of the bilingual ability of the speaker" (Li, 2007, p. 15). It is important to note that in the process of code-switching two languages do not play the same role, as one language sets the grammatical framework, whereas the other provides items to fit into that framework. Therefore, it is not a simple combination of two sets of grammatical rules but the grammatical integration of one language into other (Li, 2007). At the same time, Li (2007) suggested that bilinguals who have different proficiency levels in their two languages or who are speaking two typologically different languages can not only engage in code-switching, but also vary it according to their needs, as there might be different reasons behind the process. One of the reasons might be the fact that "certain notions or concepts are simply better expressed in the other language … the word or expression in the other language adds a little something that is more precise than trying to find an equivalent element in the base language" (Grosjean, 2010, p. 53). Another reason for code-switching, according to Grosjean (2010, p. 54), is to fill a linguistic need for a word/expression that requires lengthy explanations in the base language. However, he mentions that despite different reasons possibly influencing code-switching it is important to remember that it follows very strict constraints and is implemented by bilinguals who are competent in their languages (Grosjean, 2010, p. 56).

Sociocultural studies on code-switching view it both as a method of organizing a conversational exchange and as a means of making knowledge of the wider context in which conversation takes place relevant to an ongoing interaction (Nilep, 2006). According to Myers-Scotton (1993), each language in a multilingual community is associated with particular social roles, termed "rights-and-obligations." By speaking a particular language, participants signal their understanding of the current situation, and particularly their role within the given context. Therefore, by using more than one language, speakers may initiate negotiation over relevant social roles. Nevertheless, Myers-Scotton (1993) assumes that speakers must share, at least to some extent, an understanding of the social meanings of each available code in order to be able to negotiate it. If no such knowledge of social norms existed, interlocutors would have no basis for understanding the significance of particular code choices (cf. Nilep, 2006, p. 11). In line with Myers-Scotton (1993), Wilson (2008) suggests that

social interaction is a performance during which we present ourselves in particular roles. She claims that the new roles adopted by foreign language users require preparation in terms of appearance and manner in order to influence the audience and that they carry a warning that the foreign language user may have doubts about their presentation of self. Therefore, it might be noted that the choice of different languages to express, for example, different emotions (Dewaele, 2006; Wierzbicka, 2004) whether conscious or otherwise, suggests that each language enables individuals to present themselves in different ways (Wilson, 2008, p. 27). Heredia and Altarriba (2001) claim that some words match the context "better" in the other language, such as in the case of *carino*, a Spanish word that has a connotation of liking but does not have a single English equivalent. Therefore, if two Spanish-English bilinguals are speaking in English, and then use this Spanish word, it provides a much richer and deeper understanding than a weakly corresponding English word (Altarriba, 2003).

Code-switching is also claimed to be a "textualization cue" which signals parts that need to be interpreted differently from the rest of the conversation (Chan, 2004, cf. Altarriba & Heredia, 2008). Dewaele (2010) points to the fact that code-switching can signal that the speaker is reporting someone else's speech; it can also serve to highlight particular information, indicate a change in the speaker's role, qualify a topic or single out one person as the addressee. Dewaele's (2010) quantitative analysis reveals that self-reported code-switching is most frequent when discussing personal or emotional topics with known interlocutors (friends or colleagues) and is significantly less frequent when talking about neutral topics to strangers or to larger audiences. He suggested that this may be simply due to the fact that once the speaker knows which languages the interlocutor has mastered, information that is typically shared by friends and colleagues, the speaker may choose to resort to code-switching to establish a common multilingual identity, or to create specific illocutionary effects. Dewaele (2010) also found that the topic of conversation is significantly linked to the frequency of self-reported code-switching. More specifically, the frequency of self-reported code-switching was found to be much lower when speaking about neutral topics compared to personal or emotional topics.

It could be hypothesized that code-switching might not only provide enrichment to bi/multilingual communication but can also enable the speaker to express a concept or emotion that does not have an equivalent in the other language, provided the collocutors share knowledge of the same languages. In the case of communication in the L1 or L2 which does not have equivalent relevant concepts or emotions, the speaker faces difficulties in expressing thoughts or emotions in that language, as it feels distant and unemotional (Ożańska-Ponikwia, 2013). Wierzbicka (2004) reflects on such situations and describes this phenomenon from her own experience in being unable to use English, her L2, to talk about her little granddaughter:

I just can't find English words suitable for talking about my little grand-daughter. It is not that I am not familiar with the register of English used for talking about babies but I feel that this register does not fit the emotional world to which this baby belongs for me. No doubt, one reason is that Polish was my first language and that as such it is imbued with an emotional force that English doesn't have for me. But this is not the only reason. Another reason is that Polish words that I could use to talk about my baby granddaughter do not have exact semantic equivalents in English and therefore feel irreplaceable. (Wierzbicka, 2004, p. 100)

In light of the above, Wierzbicka's reports concerning language and code-switching are in line with Heredia and Altarriba's (2001) view that words fit the context 'better' in the other language. Similarly, Fishman (1965, p. 69) reflects on language choice in different situations:

Not only do multilinguals frequently consider one of their languages more dialectal, more regional, more sub-standard, more vernacular-like, more argot-like than the others, but in addition, they more frequently associate one of their languages with informality, equality, or solidarity than the other. As a result, one is more likely to be reserved for certain situations than the other.

Equally, Pavlenko (2004) describes switching into Russian, her L1, to signal more intense affect, be it positive and negative. Similarly, a number of studies on code-switching have established that bilinguals may code-switch to mark an affective stance. In this regard, speakers may switch to their L1 to signal intimacy or to express their emotions, and to the second language to mark distance, an out-group attitude, or to describe emotions in a detached way (Dewaele, 2004; Pavlenko, 2004). Nevertheless, the use of L1 as the 'intimate' language and L2 as the language of detachment might not always be the case. Dewaele (2010) states that sometimes L2 or LX can become the most emotional language, and this was the case for participants in his study who reported shifts in language preference linked to new partners or simply to the fact of having moved to a different country and, subsequently, having acculturated to the new language and culture. Feedback also showed considerable variation between individuals, with cultural background playing an important role in the perception and use of emotional language. Fishman (1965, p. 69) comments on the topical regulation of language choice that:

Certain topics are somehow handled better in one language than in another, in particular multilingual contexts. This situation might be brought about by several different but mutually reinforcing factors. Thus, some multilingual speakers may "acquire the habit" of speaking about topic x in language X

partially because that it the language in which they were trained to deal with this topic, partially because they may lack the specialized terms for satisfying discussion of *x* in language *Y*, partially because language *Y* itself may currently lack as exact or as many terms for handling topic *x* as those currently possessed by language *X*, and partially because it is considered strange or inappropriate to discuss *x* in language *Y*.

This is later presented by Wierzbicka's (2004) and Pavlenko's (2004) self-reports of language switching, which also point to the social structure and the cultural norms of a multilingual setting and the role they might play in language switching in particular social or cultural contexts. In the light of the research presented above, it could therefore be stated that code-switching might depend on the sociocultural context of the interaction (Dewaele, 2010; Panayiotou, 2004), as well as the topic (Altarriba & Heredia, 2008; Dewaele, 2010; Fishman, 1965) and its emotional force (Dewaele, 2010; Pavlenko, 2004; Wierzbicka, 2004).

Study Design

The present study is a part of a larger online survey on perception and expression of emotions by Polish L2 users of English (Ożańska-Ponikwia, 2013). Detailed description of questionnaires addressing code-switching is provided below.

Research questions. The present study is to address the following research questions:
1) What variables might influence code-switching among the immigrant group of Polish L2 users of English?
2) What are the code-switching practices among researched Polish L2 users of English who are exposed to L2 language and culture?
It could be speculated that such variables as self-perceived L2 proficiency and length of stay in a foreign country might influence code-switching among Polish L2 users of English.
It was hypothesized that informants of the present study will report code-switching from L2 to L1 mostly in emotionally charged situations.

Participants. The informants of the study were 62 Polish L2 users of English. Two thirds were females and one third were males. Their age varied from 17 to 58 years, with two thirds of the sample being in their twenties, almost one forth being in their thirties, and the remaining 10% being in their forties

or fifties (N = 97, Mean = 29, SD = 7.9). More than half of the informants held a BA, 8% had an MA, 8% had received secondary education, and more than one quarter reported receiving vocational education (N = 97, Mean = 3.4, SD = 1). As far as L2 proficiency is concerned: 1% reported beginner level, 3% rated themselves as pre-intermediate, 15% as intermediate, one third as upper-intermediate, and nearly half as fluent (N = 95, Mean = 4.2, SD = 0.89). Half of the participants had lived in the UK and Ireland for up to 12 months, one quarter reported living there from 12 to 24 months, and the remaining 23% had lived in the UK and Ireland between 24 and 324 months (N = 97, Mean = 25.7, SD = 47).

Selection and recruitment. The aim of the present study was to find a heterogeneous group of informants that would fulfill the requirement of immigrating to the UK or Ireland and using L2 on an everyday basis. It is important to mention that the focus of the study was on the exposure to foreign language and culture, rather than on command of the L2, even if they are closely related. Another aim, as mentioned by Ożańska-Ponikwia (2012; 2013) when approaching particular groups of participants there was an attempt to capture the responses of a broader group than only 'young adults enrolled in the universities where the researchers work' (Dewaele, 2005, p. 370), who are likely to represent a narrower range of ages, ability, and linguistic background (Wilson, 2008, p. 115). Consequently, a snowball sampling procedure was used. For this reason, volunteers were recruited in different ways including advertising the questionnaire on various conferences, on the Linguist Lists and through Polish societies in both the UK and Ireland.

Procedure and data gathering. The informants of the study were to fill in an online questionnaire on perception and expression of emotions in the L1 and L2. However, for the purpose of this discussion only the analysis of participants' self-reports concerning code-switching practices will be presented.

Instruments. Two instruments were used: a personal background questionnaire and questions concerning code-switching practices. Below detailed presentation of both instruments is presented.

Personal background questionnaire. The personal background questionnaire comprised ten questions that allowed the researcher to gather the data concerning age, gender, self-perceived L2 proficiency, length of stay in an English-speaking country (LGS), and educational level. In addition to the variables described above, it also elicited data on participants' self-perceived command of other foreign languages but only 6% of the sample reported some basic command of such languages as Russian, French or Spanish.

Questions concerning code-switching. The questionnaire contained two items designed to provide a detailed insight into the process of code-switching practices among bilinguals and L2 users of English. The first question was "Do you ever change the language of the conversation from English (L2) into Polish (L1)?" This question was scored on a 5-point Likert scale requiring participants to choose between 1—Not at all, 2—Occasionally, 3—Sometimes, 4—Often, or 5—Very often. After choosing one of these five options, the respondents were presented with an open clarification question: "In what situations do you change the language of the conversation from the L2 to L1?" Both questions were presented in participants' L2.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis. All participants of the study ($N = 62$) answered the question "Do you ever change the language of the conversation from English (L2) to Polish (L1)?" marked on the five-point Likert scale from 1—Not at all to 5—Very often. 15% of the respondents claimed to never change the language of the conversation from L2 to L1, 30% reported doing so occasionally, almost one quarter admitted to switching language sometimes, and the remaining 31% selected the options 'often' (11.4%) or 'very often' (20%). In order to analyze these results in a more detailed statistical manner a correlation analysis was introduced. It showed that frequency of the code-switching was related only to age ($r = 0.216$, $p < 0.05$) and self-perceived L2 proficiency ($r = -0.233$, $p < 0.05$). That could suggest that self-reported code-switching takes place mostly among younger participants with lower self-perceived L2 proficiency. It was interesting to see that the length of stay in a foreign countr was not a significant factor in this correlation. Nevertheless, another statistical analysis revealed that it was correlated with self-perceived L2 proficiency ($r = 0.213$, $p < 0.05$), which could suggest that it influences the process in a non-direct way, and that the interplay between the measured variables is quite complex and nuanced.

Qualitative data analysis. A majority of the researched sample ($N = 54$) provided answers to the open question: "In what situations do you change the language of the conversation from L2 to L1?" which were analyzed qualitatively with the use of inductive category development (Mayring, 2001). The criterion of definition was derived from the theoretical background and research question. Following this criterion the material was worked through and categories were deduced. Later these categories were revised and reduced to main categories and analyzed in terms of frequencies. Detailed data analysis is presented below.

As a result of the content analysis four sub-groups of answers emerged:

1—Known interlocutors,

2—Emotions,

3—Inability to translate into L2,

4—Inner speech.

A detailed description of the frequency of occurrence of each sub-group of answers is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Answers to the question "In what situations do you change the language from L2 to L1?"

Categories	Frequency	%
Known interlocutors	31	57.4
Emotions	16	29.6
Inability to translate	5	9.3
Inner speech	2	3.7
Total	54	100.0

As can be seen in the table, participants reported changing the language of conversation from L2 to L1 most frequently in the presence of known inter-locutors, with 57% of all answers. The second biggest reported sub-group was Emotions (30%). Meanwhile, the remaining 13% of answers were distributed between two categories of Inability to translate into L2 (10%) and Inner speech (3%). Examples of participants' answers are presented below.

Language switch from L2 to L1—Detailed presentation of findings. All responses to the code-switching question were carefully analyzed and catego-rized into four sub-groups. A detailed analysis of the qualitative data from all these categories is presented below.

Presence of known interlocutors. The majority of statements concern-ing language change from L2 to L1 (57%) referred to the presence of known interlocutors. Informants reported that they would change the language of the conversation in order to clarify, translate or explain something in the L1.

When I can see that my friends don't get what's going on I often switch to Polish to explain or translate. It's quicker this way. (Male, 24, Secondary Education, LGS 64 months)

My husband is Polish and his English is good but he often interrupts while code-switching to Polish and asks for clarification. I didn't feel it's right among our English friends so asked him to explain in English that he doesn't understand and wants me to translate. Even if I switch to Polish from time

to time I feel that when everyone knows why, it's acceptable. (Female, 34, MA, LGS 45 months).

When I see that someone has problems with English in everyday situations I often translate or explain in Polish. It happens very often not only with strangers but with my Polish friends as well. (Male, 22, Secondary Education, LGS 24 months)

It's funny; I live in Ireland and have an Irish partner but use Polish at work with my colleagues all the time. (Male, 25, BA, LGS 34 months)

From the examples presented above, it could be concluded that language switch situations occur because of a vocabulary deficiency or low L2 proficiency. It is interesting that some informants consider it wrong frequently to use one's L1 in the presence of the L2 speakers who do not understand given the language. This would suggest that adhering to social rules is very important; if these are violated, this needs to be explained to and approved by the L2 speakers.

Emotions. Thirty percent of answers concerning language switch from L2 to L1 report that it occurred in the context of expressing positive and negative emotions and enjoyment:

When I want to express what I feel I find it impossible to use English. When I really want to say how I feel I need to use Polish. (Male, 25, BA, LGS 24 months)

I know English, and I know how to express what I feel in English; however, it's just not what I feel and I need to use Polish. My partner tries to understand my Polish emotions, but since he is English, he finds it a bit difficult. Well, how can you understand something you have never experienced? (Female, 30, BA, LGS 64 months)

Expressing emotions in English is possible, but when you really want to let other people know what's going on only Polish words seem to be right. I hate translating my emotions into English as it seems that I feel something totally different. (Female, 28, BA, LGS 50 months)

My partner is English but I prefer to say 'Kocham Cię' instead of 'I love you'. He was even joking that when I said 'tak' instead of 'yes' when he was proposing that meant way more than 'yes'. He got used to my Polish way of expressing affection. (Female, 32, MA, LGS 76 months)

For most of the time at home or at work I operate in English but even so I use Polish in everyday situations in order not to be understood. Sometimes

when I'm arguing with my partner I start to use Polish to tell him what I think of him. It's safe as I'm not hurting his feelings and at the same time venting my anger. (Female, 23, BA, LGS 43 months)

Sometimes I switch to Polish to express my anger/frustration. I prefer not to be understood so I do that in Polish. (Female, 22, Secondary education, LGS 28 months)

At work I find myself changing to Polish as no one understands. (Male, 24, Secondary education, LGS 32 months)

These observations indicated that expressing emotions in the L2 seems to be a difficult task. Participants claimed that they cannot fully express themselves in the L2 as they lack specific concepts in English that could correspond with Polish emotion words. However, foreign language proficiency is not the main factor as the majority of informants considered themselves fully fluent in the second language. It could therefore be speculated that some emotions and emotion words are specific to a given language and that expressing them by means of another language is not always possible, or that it changes the meaning of the emotion. Some participants also use their L1 for venting negative emotions or expressing their true feelings without hurting someone else's feelings. It could be suggested that living with two languages, which are so distant in terms of expressing emotions, results in a compromise between the two social scripts: the English script that avoids hurting someone else's feelings and being considerate and thoughtful, and the Polish one which avoids controlling and suppressing emotions.

Some informants claimed to switch to L1 when expressing their enjoyment:

Sometimes when I'm having fun I switch to Polish it just seems more natural. (Female, 30, MA, LGS 43 months)

I can't imagine watching a football match and reacting and commenting in English. It's unnatural. It's the same when I have fun with my friends, doesn't matter whether Polish or English, all the exclamations are in Polish. I can't control it as controlling it ruins the fun. Being natural is being Polish. (Male, 45, MA, LGS 87 months)

My friends even learned all little exclamations of joy and fun! They know that I really have fun when I switch to Polish. (Female, 28, BA, LGS 48 months)

These observations might suggest that at moments of enjoyment, such as while watching a football match, informants feel it is inappropriate to use L2, as they do not feel comfortable with it. They feel more at ease expressing the

joy of the moment in their L1. It could also be speculated that strong positive states are encoded in the L1 and thus participants find it impossible to fully enjoy themselves without being able to express that in the L1.

Inability to translate into L2. Almost 10% of responses were categorized as Inability to translate into L2. Most of informants in this group reported shifting to L1 due to a lack of appropriate vocabulary that they could use in their L2:

> I often change to Polish when there's no word that would mean the same in English. There are many such words staring from food (national cuisine) and ending on expressing emotions. I find it better to use a Polish word than to use a translation because it feels kinda right. I know that it might not be appropriate but what can you do? You either express it in Polish or not express it at all. I prefer the first option. (Female, 27, BA, LGS 34 months)

> I know English well but sometimes I lack the professional vocabulary that I know in Polish but not in English and need to use Polish equivalent. Well, it's easier to use L1 as I know exactly what I am to do and I feel more self-confident. (Male, 24, BA, 24 months)

This might suggest that for some informants it is impossible to find L1 equivalent in the L2. In such situations they opt for L1 in order to express themselves, even though it might be socially inappropriate.

Inner speech. It is interesting to note that some informants responded to the question "In what situations do you change the language of the conversation from L2 to L1?" by understanding change in self-directed speech as an instance of departure/shift from L2:

> I have quite good English and I'm studying in England but even if I talk fluently in English I talk to myself in Polish as if all the mental processes were conducted solely in Polish. When I do simple counting out loud I always do that in English; however, when I have to do some serious calculations I'm unable to do that in English and I always use Polish, even if I am to do it out loud. It seems that my brain is not able to perform any more complicated tasks when 'receiving instructions' in English. (Female, 29, BA, LGS 34 months)

Some reports state that using L1 in the act of talking to oneself is treated as shifting from the L2 but, on the other hand, some participants claim to be unable to use L2 for inner speech. It is interesting to note that some informants were very self-aware and able to notice such subtle changes as changes in their

inner speech while performing mental processes. This would suggest that living in the non-native country implements L2 as the language one would use to talk to oneself. Departure from this language choice, even in mental processes, is regarded as an instance of language switch from the L2 to L1.

Discussion

Our first research hypothesis stating that self-perceived L2 proficiency and length of stay in the UK and Ireland might influence code-switching among Polish L2 users of English was only partially confirmed. Quantitative data analysis showed that both age and self-perceived L2 proficiency correlated with the frequency of code-switching reported by informants of this study. It could be noticed that younger and less proficient L2 users tend to code-switch more often than their older and more proficient colleagues. Another important finding was that the exposure to a foreign language and immersion in its culture was not directly linked to code-switching. It influenced self-perceived L2 proficiency, which was shown to be one of the variables correlating with the frequency of code-switching, but no direct influence of the length of exposure to a second language code-switching was found.

Qualitative data analysis was included as it is believed that incorporation of participants' views and insights might shed some new light on the interplay of language, culture, and emotions (Dewaele, 2008; Pavlenko, 2008). The research hypothesis was partly confirmed as the informants reported code-switching from L2 to L1 in emotionally charged situations, but at the same time also pointed to a number of other situations in which they most typically code-switch from L2 to L1. Among such situations were: the presence of known interlocutors, inner speech, and not being able to find an appropriate translation in the L2. However, 30% of informants pointed out that code-switching from L2 to L1 occurs most often in emotionally charged situations. It could be noted that from their perspective some emotions are untranslatable; secondly, it doesn't 'feel right' to use L2 in some situations (as switching to L1 conveys more emotional intensity, be it positive or negative); and thirdly, in some instances L1 is used in order to vent emotions and avoid hurting someone else's feelings. These findings support those of Dewaele (2010) and Grosjean (2001). Dewaele states:

> I have argued that a highly emotionally aroused speaker might become more self-centered and momentarily diverge from the shared language. Grosjean (personal communication) suggests that the Complementarity Principle could also explain, in part, which language is used when expressing emotions (i.e.

does the bilingual have the vocabulary needed to do so in the "wrong" language?). He thinks that a lack of vocabulary may force bilinguals to revert to the other language when expressing their emotions. It is also possible that the emotion vocabulary is present in both languages, but that the speaker may be aware of the nonequivalence of emotion concepts in both languages. A realization that the emotion concepts in the weaker language may be incomplete (Pavlenko, 2008a), combined with possible gaps in the prototypical scripts, may push the speaker to switch to the language in which emotion concepts are more complete, where the emotionality and valence of an emotion word—or an emotion-laden word—are known and where they will have the intended illocutionary effects (Dewaele, 2008b; 2008c). This would explain why many participants said that their stronger language felt more appropriate to convey a strong emotion in. (Dewaele, 2010, p. 210)

It can be speculated that in the present study, living with two languages which have such distant norms in terms of the expression of emotions, resulted in a compromise between the two social scripts for expressing emotions; the English one which avoids hurting someone else's feelings for being considerate and thoughtful, and the Polish one which avoids controlling and suppressing emotions (Hoffman 1998; Wierzbicka, 1999).

Results of this study showed that informants reported code-switching most often in the presence of known interlocutors and while expressing emotions. The quantitative analysis of a similar code-switching study by Dewaele (2010) revealed that self-reported code-switching was most frequent when talking about personal or emotional topics with known interlocutors (friends or colleagues) and was significantly less frequent when talking about neutral topics to strangers or to larger audiences. Dewaele (2010) suggested that the reasons for this might be quite simple. Once the speaker knows which languages the interlocutor understands—information that is typically shared by friends and colleagues—the speaker may choose to resort to code-switching to establish a common multilingual identity, or to create specific illocutionary effects. The analysis of the narratives confirmed the general trends uncovered in the quantitative analyses, while adding rich information concerning the reasons for code-switching and self-perceived difficulties in expression of emotions in the L2. The qualitative data analysis showed that self-reported code-switching from L2 to L1 was more frequent in the context of a discussion of emotional topics with interlocutors who shared the knowledge of both L1 and L2 with respondents. Dewaele (2010) additionally states that the typical preference for the L1 for communication of emotion can enter into conflict with the need to maintain the dialogue in the L2 because the interlocutor might not share the speaker's L1. Such instances were also noted in the narratives of the informants of the current study. One participant reported expressing love in the L1 even if the partner does not share

the knowledge of that language. She comments that her partner knows what she means and that it is more emotional and important for her to express it in her L1. This is reminiscent of Pavlenko's (2004) comments concerning her own experiences of code-switching between Russian and English. She states that switching to Russian, her L1, would imply that she is serious about the things she's discussing. Dewaele (2010) notes that strong emotional arousal might either activate a background language or wreck its inhibition, thus allowing the background language to temporarily become the output language. This instance of code-switching would thus be non-strategic and probably uncontrolled. It therefore seems that strong emotions can disturb the balance of the language modes, leading to increased code-switching (Dewaele, 2010) especially from L2 to L1. Dewaele (2010) further suggests that a multitude of situational and pragmatic variables can be linked to code-switching and that additional factors may become relevant, such as the perceived emotional strength of words and expressions in the different languages, the degree of emotionality of the topic under discussion, and the amount of control that the speaker retains over language choice. The analysis of informants' narratives concerning difficulties in expressing emotions in the L2 led to the conclusion that the greatest difficulties are faced while expressing negative emotions in stressful situations. In this regard, Dewaele (2010) suggests that:

> A highly socialized LX user may be perfectly capable of communicating emotions in an LX, feeling both competent and confident in using it, but it takes years before the positive language characteristics and emotional strength of swearwords in the LX will equal those of the L1. Participants confirmed that it is often only after decades of living in an LX environment that they dared to use some of the swearwords in that language, and even then only the mild ones. Feedback also showed considerable variation between individuals, with cultural background playing an important role in the perception and use of emotional language. (Dewaele, 2010, p. 218)

Conclusions

The present study shows that the relationship between language and culture is very complex and nuanced with different variables influencing various aspects of code-switching. Quantitative analysis of the present study shows that frequency of code-switching researched among Polish L2 users of English was related to such variables as age and self-perceived L2 proficiency. At the same time, qualitative data analysis presents some interesting insights into the

process, showing that a qualitative approach and focusing on the respondents' perspective might also provide some useful data that could explain the reasons behind code-switching practices of Polish immigrants to the UK and Ireland and shed some more light on this complex process.

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Der Sprachcodewechsel
bei den englisch sprechenden polnischen Immigranten

Zusammenfassung

Der vorliegende Beitrag bezweckt, die Ergebnisse der Forschungen über den Sprachcodewechsel (code-switching) bei den eine Fremdsprache Sprechenden darzustellen. Die mit code-switching verbundene Verhaltensweise wurde in einer Gruppe von 62 in Großbritannien und Irland lebenden und alltags englisch sprechenden Polen untersucht. Die Befragten sollten im Internet einen Fragebogen ausfüllen und offene Frage beantworten, in welcher Situation sie während der Konversation am häufigsten die Sprache vom Englischen ins Polnische wechseln. Die Mengendatenauswertung zeigte auf, dass das Alter und die Gewandtheit des Fremdsprachengebrauchs die Frequenz des Sprachcodewechsels stark beeinflussten. Die qualitative Auswertung dagegen ließ erkennen, dass die Befragten die Sprache besonders in den durch Emotionen gekennzeichneten Situationen oder in den mit gut bekannten Personen geführten Gesprächen über private Sachen wechseln. Die hier angeführten Ergebnisse decken sich mit früheren Mengenauswertungen von code-switching (Dwaele, 2010), als auch mit quantitativer Analyse (Grosjen, 2010; Pavlenko, 2004; Wierzbicka, 2004).