

AGE AND GENDER FEATURES OF THE USE OF CODE SWITCHES IN BASHKIR ORAL SPEECH (Statistical analysis)

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Abstract: In the conditions of active Bashkir-Russian bilingualism, a large number of code switches from Bashkir to Russian are recorded in the speech of the Bashkirs. In this article, code switches are studied from the position of the sociolinguistic direction, taking into account the external factors of their occurrence. The material for the analysis was the field notes of the authors, collected during expeditions to the settlements of the Republic of Bashkortostan. The main method of the study is the linguastatistical method used to ensure the reliability of the findings. The selection of examples for analysis was carried out using the continuous sampling method. The novelty of this work lies in the fact that for the first time in Bashkir linguistics an attempt is made to describe code switches taking into account the socio-demographic parameters of the informants. The purpose of the study is to determine the influence of age and gender characteristics on the frequency of code switches. The authors conclude that the switching of language codes is characteristic of the speech of all age and gender groups, but the frequency of their use is not identical.

Keywords: Bashkir language; Russian language; switching of language codes; sociolinguistic aspect; socio-demographic characteristics; age; gender.

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1. Introduction

In the Republic of Bashkortostan (hereinafter referred to as RB), where representatives of over a hundred nationalities live, the main means of interethnic communication is the Russian language, which, in addition to ensuring interethnic communication in the republic, also serves various spheres of human activity - education, office work, mass communication, science, etc. In such a multilingual society, not only bilingualism is widespread, but also polylingualism.

The materials of the 2020 All-Russian Population Census in the Republic of Bashkortostan showed a high percentage of fluent Russian among the population of the republic. For comparison, 97.7% of Bashkirs speak Russian, 86.8% use it in everyday life. While 74.1% of Bashkirs speak their native language, 65.3% use it in everyday life [Brief Summary, 2023, pp. 34–36].

According to the 1979 All-Union Population Census, the percentage of people who consider Bashkir their native language was 64.4%. The number of Bashkirs who were fluent in Russian was 65.2% [Bashkiria in the USSR, 1982, p. 12].

Based on the statistical data of the 1979 and 2020 censuses, we can conclude that over the past 40 years, the number of Bashkirs who speak their ethnic language to one degree or another has remained practically at the same level (64–65%). At the same time, the level of fluency in Russian increased by 32.7%, which implies an increase in the proportion of bilinguals among the Bashkir population.

The relative stability in the indicators of proficiency in the native Bashkir language is primarily due to the language situation in the republic. The increase in national educational institutions, the growth in the volume of television and radio broadcasts, Internet content in the Bashkir language, the organization of various events to preserve and develop the language, the

implementation of projects aimed at popularizing the Bashkir language, contribute to raising the status of the native language among the population of the republic.

However, progressive bilingualism, widespread in the Republic of Bashkortostan, has many positive factors (communication with representatives of other nationalities, familiarity with world culture, advanced technologies, better adaptability and sociability, etc.), but at the same time has a negative impact on the purity of the Bashkir language. In the speech of the Bashkirs, there is an active contamination of the native language with unassimilated vocabulary. The Bashkir and Russian languages, despite the geographical proximity of the two peoples, belong to different language families. The differences between the languages under study are reflected at all levels of the language system, both in phonetics and in vocabulary and grammar. However, as a result of prolonged contact interaction between two unrelated languages, the Bashkirs have developed a mixed language using not only single inclusions, but also a large number of mixed constructions. Unassimilated words in speech can be formed by inflectional and form-building affixes of the Bashkir language.

Not only in the urban environment, but also in the villages, the Bashkir language is gradually becoming the language of everyday, most often intra-family communication. Russian serves as the language of business communication. Even in the Bashkir-speaking environment, there is an alternating use of the Bashkir and Russian languages, a transition from Bashkir to Russian and back, sometimes within the same sentence.

This article attempts to study code switching in the sociolinguistic aspect, taking into account the gender and age characteristics of the informants.

2. Material, Methods, Review

The material for the study was oral discourses collected during expeditionary trips to populated areas of the Republic of Bashkortostan. The informants were native speakers of the Bashkir language with a free level of proficiency in their native language. For all informants, Russian is the second language, mastered after their native Bashkir language. When deciphering the expedition material, code switches on both sides are marked with octothorpe to distinguish them from the original vocabulary and borrowings, which also allows for a quick and effective search for examples with code switches in a large array of data.

For the analysis, 7 informants were selected for each age group and gender (male/female).

The main research method is the linguastatistical method, used to ensure the reliability of the findings. The distribution of the number of code switches per unit of text volume will allow us to understand in which oral discourses the studied speech units are used most often. To calculate the percentage of code switches in monologue speech, taking into account the age and gender characteristics of informants, the following formula is used, used in the previous study [Buskunbaeva 2023: 986]: $R\% = N1/N2 \times 100\%$, where $N1$ is the number of code switches in oral discourses, $N2$ is the number of word usages in oral discourses (see Table 1).

[Table 1. Frequency of use of code switches in the speech of informants of different genders and ages]

Quantitative indicators of code switches Information about informants	Information about informants					
	Gender		Age			
	male	female	puberty, adolescence (12–20 years)	early adulthood (20–40 years)	mature age (40–60 years)	old age (60 years and above)
Number of informants	7	7	7	7	7	7
Total number of word usages in discourses	2816	3679	2128	3254	3498	4131
Number of code switches in all discourses	119	136	189	124	111	51
Number of code switches in percentage	4,2	3,7	8,9	3,8	3,2	1,2

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Sociolinguistic approach to the study of code-switching in the context of Bashkir-Russian bilingualism

In linguistics, code-switching is studied in various aspects - intralinguistic, psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic. In studies of the linguistic direction itself, code-switching is considered in structural, syntactic or morpho-syntactic aspects, they are differentiated from related linguistic phenomena, and the universality of code-switching mechanisms is determined [Poplack, 1981; Balakina, Sosnin, 2015; Danilova, 2015].

Representatives of the psycholinguistic direction analyze code-switching from the position of the influence of extralinguistic factors [Myers-Scotton, Ury, 1977; Vogt, 1954; [Emelyanova,

2011; Tutova, 2017]. As the Norwegian scholar H.Vogt notes, "code-switching itself may be a non-linguistic phenomenon, but rather a psychological one, and its causes are obviously extralinguistic" [Vogt, 1954; 368].

Within the framework of the sociolinguistic approach, code-switching is considered taking into account political, demographic, and cultural factors [Myers-Scotton, Ury, 1977; Koziol, 2000; Gavrulina, 2014; Solzhenitsyn, 2014, etc.].

All of the above approaches allow for a comprehensive and detailed study of such a complex linguistic phenomenon as code-switching and to reveal the mechanism of its occurrence.

The importance of studying code-switching taking into account social factors is noted by many scholars [Labov, 1975;

Gumperz, 1982; Koziol, 2000], since "...the attention of sociolinguists is directed not to the language itself, not to its internal structure, but to how people who make up a particular society use language. In this case, all factors that can influence the use of language are taken into account - from various characteristics of the speakers themselves (their age, gender, level of education and culture, type of profession, etc.) to the features of a specific speech act" [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 10]. Using the material of oral discourses, examples of code switching will be analyzed with the main question – do such social characteristics of informants as age and gender influence the frequency of use of code switching.

3.1.1. Study of code switching taking into account the age characteristics of informants

Age is one of the main indicators in the research of sociologists, including sociolinguists, for whom "biological age is the main objectively given criterion and serves to group social groups within the population, primarily according to biological criteria" [Semenova, 2004, p. 157]. Each "age group is characterized by social status and role expectations that correspond to a certain stage in life, are manifested in the lifestyle of group members and are regulators of social behavior" [Kuryshcheva, 2014, p. 69].

There are a large number of age periodizations in the scientific literature, including various age segments. As I. Gallere notes, "designating the boundaries of the beginning and especially the end of a stage is a very artificial process" [Gallere, 2020].

In this study, the periodization of the life cycle proposed by J. Godefroy was taken as a basis [Godefroy, 1992]. The informants were divided into the following age groups: puberty and adolescence (12–20 years old, two age groups were combined into one due to the small number of texts collected on these groups), maturity, including early maturity (20–40) and mature age (40–60), old age (60 years and above).

Each age group is characterized by a certain social status, norms of socio-cultural and speech behavior, etc.

3.1.1.1. Puberty and adolescence (12–20 years old)

This age period can be defined as "certain stages of human maturation and development, lying between childhood and adulthood" [Frolova, 2009, p. 59]. Informants of this age period are students of secondary comprehensive schools, where Bashkir is taught as a native language, or students of colleges and universities. Teenagers and young men know their native language quite well, speak it with their relatives and friends, although, according to them, they regularly switch to Russian with their peers. Representatives of this age category have laconic, clearly structured speech. There is a desire to speak linearly, strictly adhering to the topic of conversation and weighing each word. Teenagers and young men often resort to switching language codes from Bashkir to Russian in their speech. As the analyzed material shows, the share of foreign words is 8.9%. In the speech of adolescents and young men, intra-phrase switches are predominantly recorded, represented by inclusions, single switches that obey the grammatical rules of the Bashkir language (*элек минең атайым #горотта# эшлэгән ине* 'my father used to work in the city' (m., 13); *уга ун ике йәш тулды #январза#* 'in January he turned twelve years old' (f., 12) and insular switches, which are phrases that preserve the word order of the Russian language

(*безең #районный центр# 'our district center is Askarovo'* (f., 14); *әсәйем #дескей сатта# #васпитател# булып эшләй* 'my mother works as a teacher in a kindergarten' (f., 12). The studied texts revealed the greatest the number of Russian inclusions related to the educational process. The most common inclusions in the lexicon of teenagers are those denoting school subjects (*атайым #история# укытыусыны / #обществовед# / укыта* 'my father is a history teacher / teaches social studies' (m., 11); *#русйазды# ныклап белмәйем* 'I don't know the Russian language (school subject) well enough' (m., 11); *#переменаларза# уйнап йөрөйбөз тышта* 'we play outside during breaks' (m., 13).

Informants of this age, when talking about their pastime, often use the names of outdoor games, participants, game inventory and equipment in Russian (*без унда уйнайбыз #выше ноги от земли# / #догонялки#* 'we play there, play catch-up' (m., 13); *минен эргәлә генә #поле# бар // зур #футбольный поле#* 'there is a field // a large football field near my house' (f., 17).

3.1.1.2. Maturity

According to scientific research, middle age is divided into two periods: early maturity (20–40) and mature age (40–60).

The first period is also attributed to youth, which scientists characterize as the years of "peak" or optimum for intellectual achievements, as a period of consolidation of social and professional roles by type of service, accumulation of relatively constant material resources and social connections, leadership in various types of activities" [Slobodchikov, Isaev, 2013].

The speech behavior of informants in this age category is characterized by variability and frequent switching of language codes. In percentage terms, the number of code switches in their speech is 3.8%.

The main life priorities of this age group are obtaining an education, employment, well-being, marriage and having children. Consequently, informants pay more attention to the topic of family, raising children, work and education. The high frequency of use of unassimilated Russianisms falls precisely on these topics: *мин үзем #абрававанийы# буйынса / #педагогический# бөттәм инде* 'I myself am educated / I graduated from pedagogical school' (f., 35); *беззә өс #садик# инде / берәүе #семеиний садик#* 'we have three kindergartens / one of them is a family kindergarten' (f., 34). As the analyzed material shows, mixed constructions, in which words and expressions from both languages are used alternately, are predominantly characteristic of this age group. The foreign language block can be located both in the preposition (*#документы свидетельство о браке# тапшыргастар китәләр / баралар мәжлескә инде* 'after presenting the document / marriage certificate / they go to the banquet' (f., 38), *өй безең #гдиты писят квадратных метрыф плүс пристрой#* 'our house is about fifty square meters plus an extension' (f., 34), interposition (*ана шуны #на всю жизнь запомнил# мин* 'I remembered this for the rest of my life' (f., 31).

The second period of middle age includes the age range from 40 to 60 years, otherwise known as maturity. This period is characterized by the presence of extensive life experience, the realization of one's potential in professional and social activities.

Communicative qualities of informants' speech. The characteristics of this age group are correctness, richness,

expressiveness and relevance. Speech is mainly structured in accordance with the norms of the Bashkir language, native vocabulary is appropriately used, however, unjustified Russianisms related to unassimilated vocabulary are often recorded. In percentage terms, the share of code switches compared to native words is 3.2%. The most common type of code switches in the speech of informants of this age are intra-phrase switches, represented by single inclusions and island switches: *тиззэн Алла бирһә / диплом алабыз #январзың# азагында* 'soon / God willing / we will receive a diploma at the end of January' (f., 54); *#штукатурить# иттем инде / белемем булмаса ла* 'I plastered / even though I didn't have the skills' (f., 59). The use of mixed constructions in the speech of this age group is recorded quite rarely: *азак йайзан-йайзан #садтарын# халык таштай баитаны / #и все пришло в упадок#* 'then people gradually began to abandon their gardens / and everything fell into decay' (m., 60). Informants of this age group also pay great attention to the topic of work in their stories (*шунан минең эшемде гүрепме директор #завуч# итеп куйзы инде #воспитательной части# инде* 'then, apparently, having seen my work, the director appointed me as a head teacher / for the educational part' (f., 50); hobbies (*#рыбалкага# йөрөгә йаратам / балык тотарға* 'I like to go fishing / catch fish' (m., 57).

3.1.1.3. Old age (60 years and above)

The speech of informants of this age group is characterized above all by speech expressiveness, compliance with basic language norms. Older people formulate their thoughts quite clearly, use complex speech patterns, and appropriately supplement their speech with folk sayings.

Older informants also resort to switching language codes from Bashkir to Russian and vice versa in their speech. However, the share of code switching in their speech is noticeably less than in the speech of informants of other age groups and is 1.2%. K. Myers-Scotton, studying the influence of social characteristics of native speakers on the frequency of using language code switching, also comes to the conclusion that the language of older people is less susceptible to switching from one language to another [Myers-Scotton, 1997, p. 14].

Code switching is represented mainly by inclusions. The most frequently recorded use of function words (conjunctions, particles), introductory words and adverbs of the Russian language is: *#то# йамгыры / #то# кары йауа* 'it's raining / it's snowing'; *#ужы# оютоп та бөткәнем ите* 'I've already forgotten' (f., 76); *алар #дажы# магазин куймазылар дэдәнгә* 'they didn't even put the stores on the beehives' (m., 67). Elderly informants mainly share personal memories, talk about the history of their clan, village. They talk in detail about past events, which is reflected in the vocabulary they use, which is replete with a large number of obsolete words: *#палкага# гына эшлән йөрөнөг инде* 'we worked for the sake of the stick' (f., 86); *элек атайлар #трудодингә# йөрөгән бит ите* 'earlier, parents worked for workdays' (m., 67).

As the analyzed material shows, switching language codes is recorded in the speech of representatives of all age groups. At the same time, the speech of adolescents and young people is more influenced by another language than by elderly informants. The results obtained during the analysis of oral discourses generally coincide with the studies of other scientists. For example, J. Barker, studying the language of Americans of Mexican origin,

also comes to the conclusion that young people are more inclined to use several languages in the process of one communication than the older generation [Barker, 1947, pp. 185–186]. Similar conclusions are reached by researchers J. Koziol [Koziol, 2000], K. Myers-Scotton [Myers-Scotton, 1997, p. 14], noting the characteristic of code switching specifically for the younger generation, which does not always seriously adhere to the norms of speech behavior.

3.1.2. Study of code-switching taking into account gender differences of informants

In sociolinguistic studies, one of the main socio-demographic characteristics of a communicant is gender / sex. In this study, the term gender is used because, compared to sex, it has a broader meaning and "links with natural determinism not only the physical differences between men and women, but also the gender-role division of labor, the different demands and attitudes of society towards men and women, and the different social "value" of individuals depending on their sex" [Kirilina, 2005, p. 8], i.e. it marks the difference between the female and male sexes in the socio-cultural aspect.

The influence of gender characteristics on speech behavior is considered by many scientists studying the problems of gender linguistics [Sapir, 1993; Gritsenko, 2005; Kirilina, 2004; Ishkildina, 2021, etc.], since "taking into account the gender aspect of the speech behavior of communicants allows... to more fully understand the real-life models of verbal behavior of men and women, as well as the specifics of male and female speech strategies and tactics" [Guseva, 2008, p. 28].

Distinctive features of female and male speech can be both gender-marked vocabulary and prosodic means of communication. Female speech is characterized by greater expressiveness, which is expressed in the active use of emotional-evaluative vocabulary and intonation nuances. Male speech behavior is characterized, first of all, by less emotionality, categoricalness, and a more monotonous way of presenting information [Kazimova, 2019, p. 70].

A study of the switching of language codes in the mainstream of gender linguistics will help to find out the frequency of switching language codes in female and male discourses. The analyzed material showed that both women and men actively use code switching in their speech.

3.1.2.1. Women's speech

In women's discourses, the share of code-switching in percentage terms is 3.7%. Women informants most often use inclusions in their speech: *аны безгә #направлений# мән йебәрзеләр* 'he was sent to us in the direction' (f., 57); *#уражайзы# һәйбәт кенә алабыз* 'we are gathering a fairly good harvest' (f., 50).

Women often resort to code-switching when directly quoting in order to convey someone else's speech verbatim. The informant switches to Russian purposefully and motivatedly, since in this case there is no talk of a difficulty in choosing the necessary lexical unit in the native language that arose during communication: *#есть товарищ капитан / один солдат умирает# тине лә / һикерзе тә төштө шунта* 'she said / there is comrade captain / one soldier was dying / and jumped out there' (f., 69); *#Фай / принеси мне конфету# / тей* 'she says / Fai /

bring me some candy' (f., 69). Judging by the analyzed texts, male informants prefer to translate the quotation in Russian into Bashkir.

Analysis of oral discourses shows that both male and female speech are characterized by special means of expressing a gender picture of the world, which is reflected in the use of gender-oriented vocabulary. For example, women willingly talk about family and household matters; the high frequency of use of unassimilated Russianisms falls precisely on these topics: *намидурзар тәмде килеб сығайнде / #маринованный#* 'tomatoes / marinated ones turn out delicious' (f, 51); *әсәйем мән бергәбез / #кухняла# бергә #хозяйин# итәбез* 'together with my mother / we manage the kitchen together' (f, 16).

3.1.2.2. Male speech

In male discourses, the share of code switches in percentage terms is 4.2%.

Men use intrasentential switches between components of complex sentences or island switches more often than women. The informant switches to Russian when he has certain difficulties in expressing his thoughts, using mixed constructions: *мине # перевели # мында / # верхнеуфага # / муллакай () посылыгына // # старший инженер по охране труда # итен* 'I was transferred here / to Verkhneufimsky / to the village of Mullakaev // as a senior labor protection engineer' (m., 75); *#это был единственный условие# уңа* 'this was the only condition for him' (m., 36).

The analyzed material records the hybrid word formation *poluas* 'half-starved', consisting of two roots, the first root of which is the Russian word *pol*, the second is the Bashkir word as 'hungry'. The informant first uses the hybrid occasionalism, then corrects it to the Russian version: *ожно сказать как #палуас# / #палуголудный# / #палуголый#* 'you can say how half-starved / half-hungry / half-naked' (m., 76).

Men mainly talk about work, about their professional and personal skills. Consequently, code-switching is mostly recorded in discourses with this topic (*әтийемде ул калхұзда #кузнис незаменимый# тип әйтергә кирәк инде* 'I must say / that my father was an indispensable blacksmith on the collective farm' (m., 76); *#запань# төзөп / мына шунта эшләнеләр бит инте* 'having built the zapan / that's where we worked' (m., 75).

Thus, code-switching is more common in men's discourses than in women's. This conclusion is consistent with the results of V.G. Gavrilina's study, which explains that "women are translators of traditional culture" [Gavrilina, 2014, p. 162]. At the same time, J. Koziol comes to the opposite conclusion and proves using Spanish-English material that women switch more often than men [Koziol, 2000].

4. Conclusions

Socio-demographic indicators of informants, such as age and gender, being determining factors of speech behavior, play a huge role in choosing a language code. As the analyzed material showed, switching of language codes is characteristic of both the speech of the younger generation and the middle or elderly, both for male and female discourses. At the same time, the frequency of code switching is not the same depending on age and gender. They are highly frequent in the speech of representatives of puberty and adolescence, in male discourses the share of code switching is higher than in female discourses. Code switching has discrepancies

in both structural and lexical-semantic plans depending on the age and gender of the informant. Excessive use of code-switching can, on the one hand, cause a negative attitude in the listener, and on the other hand, does not significantly affect the correct perception of the transmitted information, since those unassimilated speech units are used that are understandable to every bilingual. To a certain extent, one can agree with the opinion of R.T. Bell that "language mixing, far from making communication between bilinguals more difficult, actually makes it easier" [Bell, 1980, p. 156]. However, excessive use of unassimilated foreign-language vocabulary can lead to the loss of the uniqueness of the language and its structure, and also create difficulties in understanding for those who do not have a sufficient level of training. Consequently, one of the priority tasks of modern society is to preserve the purity of the language. The formation of a language culture, first of all, among adolescents and young people, commitment to the native language and literacy will contribute to the development of language identity and a decrease in the inappropriate use of code-switching. Language is a living organism that must develop, but development should not occur at the expense of losing its originality.

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