Abstract

This article deals with code switching in a corpus of narratives collected in Sia Pedee (Chocoan) among the Épera of the northern Pacific coast of Ecuador. The reinsertion of Sia Pedee in the nowadays Spanish-speaking community has resulted in older speakers making use of code switching as a way to flag their ethnic identity and index their attitudes towards propositional content. While code switching seems to be inducing certain incipient changes in Sia Pedee, the seriously endangered state of the native language would prevent those changes from taking definite shape, just like the diglossic condition of Sia Pedee before Spanish is preventing the crystallization of a systematic pattern of language mixing.

Keywords: language contact, borrowing, Spanish, Sia Pedee, code switching, reported speech, endangered languages

1. Introduction

The study of code switching is interesting from a theoretical perspective not only because it sheds light on the workings of the bilingual brain and the processing of language but also because it illuminates our understanding of how two linguistic systems are interwoven in discourse. A frequent use of code switching in bilingual communities is the insertion of speech from another language for pragmatic and discursive reasons. Language choice in reported speech depends on a number of factors including the simple flagging of identity or the intricate indexing of speaker attitudes towards propositional content. The interaction between code switching and reported speech is specially dynamic and productive in the oral tradition of bilingual communities. To the extent that a native language spoken by a minority group stands in diglossic relation to the dominant language of the mainstream society, code switching becomes a yardstick of contact-induced language change and loss because it reflects the outcome of two linguistic systems in contact and the negotiations of two discourse structures born in different cultural matrices. Thus, code switching provides an insight into how languages accommodate their structures in bilingual speech and how language decay develops.

This paper deals with the use of code switching in the oral narrative of a bilingual community in Ecuador – the Épera ethnic group – and explores some of its structural effects on the native language. The corpus for the investigation of code switching was collected during several fieldwork stays in the community of Santa Rosa de los Épera, on the Pacific coast of Ecuador, between 2005 and 2008. The corpus includes forty-five pieces of oral tradition in Sia Pedee giving an approximate of 20,000 words and is part of a larger documentation program of the native language. All forty-five pieces were video-recorded, digitalized,
transcribed, translated and grammatically annotated, thus enabling a deeper and contextualized analysis of the material presented here.

This article is organized as follows. Section 2 gives an overview of the Sia Pedee language in regard to its typology and sociolinguistic status. Section 3 analyses the societal and situational factors influencing code switching in story-telling. Section 4 outlines the treatment of quoted and reported speech in Sia Pedee. Section 5 deals with both types of speech in Sia Pedee story-telling and discusses evidence of contact-induced change as a result of code switching to Spanish. The last section summarizes the main findings.

2. A linguistic and sociolinguistic overview of Sia Pedee

Sia Pedee is the native language of the Epera ethnic group. It is a Chocoan language of the southern Embera branch spoken on the Pacific coast of Colombia and Ecuador. While Sia Pedee is originally spoken along the Saija River in the Colombian Department of Cauca, speakers of this language are also found in the coastal province of Esmeraldas in Ecuador. According to oral tradition collected among the oldest immigrants in Ecuador, Epera presence in this country dates back to the late 1940s. While Barret (1926: 30) and Loewen (1963: 239) refer to an earlier presence of Choco Indians in the basin of the Cayapas River, I have not found documented evidence about migration waves before the second half of the past century. Epera migration to Ecuador probably started before the 1940s, but it is from this decade that the first sizable migration occurred. In any case, migration to a place separated by hundreds of kilometers from their homeland meant for Sia Pedee speakers the gradual but steady loss of their native language. At present only thirty men and women – 8% of the total ethnic population – most of them above their fifties, speak the language fluently and use it for daily communication along with Spanish. Sia Pedee in Ecuador is therefore a severely endangered language (Gómez Rendón 2008b).

Facing this rampant process of language loss, the simultaneous raise of ethnic consciousness has recently led Epera leaders to formulate a far-reaching program of language revitalization, one of the main goals of which is the documentation of native cultural expressions, including its linguistic heritage in the form of oral tradition (Gómez Rendón 2009).

Sia Pedee is a typical agglutinative language, with readily segmentable morphemes, all of which are suffixes. While the language’s basic word order is SOV, the corpus collected from Sia Pedee speakers in Ecuador shows a strong tendency to SVO as the unmarked order, most probably as a result of contact with Spanish. Adpositions in Sia Pedee are all postpositional while constituent order has adjectives following the noun head and possessives preceding it (Harms 1994: 9). The major feature of the case system in Sia Pedee is ergativity, according to which the suffix /-pa/ is attached to the agent-like argument of

1 The ethnonym epēra in Sia Pedee means both ‘person’ and ‘Epera Indian’. The language name, Sia Pedee, means ‘wild-cane language’. Epera Indians also refer to themselves as epēraari siapidaari or ‘people of the wild cane’.

2 In Ecuador the ethnic population – i.e. including speakers and non-speakers of Sia Pedee – is 381 people, while the ethnic population in Colombia is above 4,000.

3 In fact there is only one prefix, the generic /ne-/, which can be affixed not only to nouns but also to verb roots in order to generalize their original meaning.
transitive clauses, while the patient-like argument is marked with a zero absolutive case marker. The following example illustrates a typical declarative sentence in the language:

(1) \textit{mi }nawě-pa \textit{chik'o \textit{waarраa }chuu-pa-ri}

\textit{1s.poss mother-erg fish delicious cook-HAB-PRS}

‘My mother usually cooks delicious fish’

While these typological features are largely preserved in the speech of older bilinguals in Ecuador, Spanish influence is increasingly visible on different levels of linguistic structure due to the intense contact with the Spanish-speaking society. Language contact is attested also in Colombian communities but the intensity of it is lower because the Epera community in Ecuador is comparatively closer to mestizo towns and cities and their territory is a linguistic island in a Spanish-speaking environment. Nevertheless, this is not sufficient to explain language loss, since other Indian languages spoken in the vicinity of Sia Pedee are strongly vital (Awapit and Cha’palaa, both Barbacoan). It is therefore not unwise to assume that migration played a decisive role in language loss and shift. Its effects are intensified due to the fact that no permanent contact with Colombian speakers exists beyond short occasional visits of the latter to Ecuador and vice versa. A recent sociolinguistic survey (cf. Gómez Rendón 2006) found that the mother-child transmission of the native language was abruptly interrupted at least two generations ago, that is more or less the time of the second reported migration waves to Ecuador. The same survey found that Sia Pedee native speakers in Ecuador also have near native competence of Spanish, while their children have Spanish as their first language and less than half of them can communicate in Sia Pedee with reasonable fluency. The younger generations including the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the first immigrants are Spanish monolingual without exception, although some of them can understand when addressed in Sia Pedee. Of middle-aged speakers, those who speak Sia Pedee as a second language were born in Colombia while those who were born in Ecuador have only a passive knowledge of the language. Young adults, adolescents and children have all been born in Ecuador. While language loss is the direct outcome of an interrupted transmission from older to younger generations, the shift to Spanish has been accelerated by formal schooling, which is conducted in this language only. At the same time, the out-marriage of Epera women with afro-Ecuadorian and mestizo men has sensibly influenced language loss by banning Sia Pedee from home. Among the reasons for out-marriage are the small size of the Epera community in Ecuador and their long labor relationship with local Afro-Ecuadorian landowners. Out-marriage continues today and makes up a major obstacle to language revitalization programs along with the pervasive use of Spanish-speaking media.

In this context, far-reaching effects of language contact are more than expected for the last Sia Pedee speakers. Besides the common practice of code switching – particularly between L1 and L2 speakers of Sia Pedee – there is well-documented evidence of structural

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4 The first serious attempts to introduce Sia Pedee as a second-language subject in the curriculum were made in 2007. These attempts have been positively accepted by children and parents thanks to the use of innovative pedagogical materials based on new technologies.

5 In-marriage was abandoned after the community bonds were broken with emigration. Older speakers state that Epera tradition strictly prohibits out-marriage, in particular with individuals of African descent, and are well aware of the outcomes of this practice for linguistic and cultural maintenance.
changes concerning phonology (e.g. loss of phonemic contrast between /i/ and /i/) and morphosyntax (e.g. marked word orders becoming unmarked). These changes will be dealt with elsewhere (GÓMEZ RENDÓN forthcoming). In addition, L1 speakers and L2 speakers show moderate degrees of lexical borrowing from Spanish while grammatical borrowing occurs mainly along with code switching. A preliminary statistical survey of Spanish borrowing in a sample from the corpus analyzed in this article found 15% of Spanish tokens, including not only loanwords from the three major classes (nouns, 20%; verbs, 10.5%; adjectives, 2%) but also function words such as adverbs (23%), conjunctions (17%), subjunctions (3%) and discourse markers (22%), plus a small number of frozen borrowings (1.5%). The same survey found a frequency of code switching corresponding to 5% of the sample in terms of tokens. This percentage is much higher in everyday language than in monitored speech such as the one represented in the corpus analyzed here – which is composed basically of pieces of oral tradition. The creative use of code switching by Spanish-Sia Pedee bilinguals shows the importance of this strategy for speaker social positioning and identity indexing.

3. Societal and situational factors for code switching in story-telling

Code switching is not random but systematic. It follows patterns and rules. That is the main finding of the last three decades of research on this phenomenon. The systematicity of code switching owes as much to societal and situational factors modeling bilingual behavior as to linguistic mechanisms themselves. In this section I discuss societal and situational factors in story-telling and keep the analysis of structural, message-intrinsic factors for section 5.

RITCHIE & BHATIA (2006: 339) identify three societal and situational factors which determine language choice in bilinguals: 1) social roles and relationships of participants; 2) language attitudes; and 3) discourse topics. Each of these factors determines which language is used by speakers to tell stories, and whether a switching of code is permissible and strategically relevant to convey pragmatic information. What is the contribution of these factors to code switching in Epera narrative discourse?

Since the Epera speech community in Ecuador is predominantly Spanish monolingual nowadays, with elders and middle-aged adults being the only L1 and L2 speakers of Sia Pedee respectively, code switching in informal domestic settings is limited to these age groups. However, recent interest in language revitalization has created new scenarios for code switching. Some of these are free story-telling sessions in which elder speakers take the floor while middle-aged and young adults are the audience. Teenagers and children usually do not participate in these events, but they do attend school-based story-telling sessions managed by elder speakers as part of a language-teaching program.

The corpus analyzed here was collected in open community sessions involving a small audience. As I already mentioned, many participants do not speak Sia Pedee but have a passive knowledge of the language. The covered topics include creation myths, fables and legends, as well as narratives of recent Epera history and traditional lifestyle. Sia Pedee is

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6 For the sake of this article, I have made a distinction between borrowing and code switching according to the following criteria: all multi-word insertions are code switches; one-word switches are considered loanwords except in the case of finite verbs such as *dijo* ‘say’.3pst’.
the main code used in these sessions, but it usually alternates with Spanish owing to different levels of linguistic competence in the audience. The role of elders in the community as the last speakers of the language and the repositories of cultural wisdom is prominent, even if their role might be underscored in other contexts. Elders are aware of this and act accordingly in story-telling sessions as controllers of language choice. They allow for code switching when necessary and prevent Spanish from becoming the main code in the sessions. Thus, speech accommodation takes place under the conditions set by L1 speakers. These conditions are summarized as follows: 1) Sia Pedee must be the principal code of communication for participants; 2) native speakers are the only community-sanctioned controllers of this code; and 3) the revitalization of Sia Pedee is intended to make the native language a major feature of Epera identity.

The marking of ethnic identity in story-telling sessions is based on the sense of self-identification versus otherness, which translates in the alternate use of Spanish as the “they” code versus Sia Pedee as the “we” code. Identity marking is not exempt from conflict however. Language choice reflects a clash of identities between the code controllers (L1 speakers) and the audience (L2 speakers and passive speakers). Passive speakers represent the cultural avant-garde of the community and its most hispanicized members while L2 speakers are halfway between the latter and the linguistically and culturally conservative L1 speakers. With this background, story-telling is construed as a community-based linguistic practice for creating social distance and strengthening ethnic cohesion and identity, and code switching mirrors the conflict and negotiation of such distance and identity among different age groups of the community.

Although code switching is managed by highly bilingual speakers of the community, i.e. those who speak Spanish and Sia Pedee with a similar degree of fluency, the occurrence of code switching varies according to different narrative genres. Thus, code switches occur only seldom in mythical narrative, and certainly never in religious formulae (songs or prayers). On the contrary, code switching is permitted and even promoted in narratives involving interethnic relations. In this case code switching is clearly preferred over lexical borrowing. In addition, code switching is prolific in stories about evil magic and Christian religion. Language choice is therefore not fully controlled by bilingual speakers, and the type and content of discourse impose their own rules.

A first impression may be that attitudes towards code switching are generally negative in the Epera speech community. But that is certainly an impressionistic evaluation. The practice of code switching is not avoided by participants in story-telling sessions. Not only are they aware of the need to switch codes in certain contexts and their rhetoric effects; they also know well that an appropriate use of this strategy can be accomplished only by competent bilinguals. Indeed, the overt attitude in the community towards code switching is positive, as shown by the free use of it by bilinguals. From my observation of informal settings, I conclude that code switching is not only frequent among bilinguals, but it is considered normal communicative behavior by less fluent speakers. Positive attitudes have led to increasingly higher frequencies of code switching and potential changes in the structure of the language. Some of these changes involve the treatment of other people’s speech in discourse. In order to make them visible, quoted and reported speech in Sia Pedee are outlined in the following section.
4. Quoted versus reported speech in Sia Pedee

Reproducing other speakers’ speech in Sia Pedee involves two different constructions: quotative and reportative. Each involves a different marker, as shown in the following examples:

(2) manpai ochorro-pa ya k’insia ataji
then lizard-erg already think get-pst
mi ñra chaara-pa t’u-na-it’e-da aji
1s now axe-inst fell-go-fut-decl say-pst.3
‘Then the lizard thought: “I will fell [the tree] with my axe” he said’

(3) mapa ne-ina uu-k’ãri pida pia
t’ono-pa-ri
because gen-thing sow-when rep good
spring.forth-hab-pres.hab
‘Because it is said that if anything is sowed there, it grows well’

The first of these constructions is made up of two clauses. The main clause precedes the quotation and carries a thought verb, k’insia ‘think’. The main clause verb can be a saying verb as well, such as a- ‘say’ or manga- ‘say so’. The secondary clause is the quotation and has two defining elements: the quotative verb marked for tense and number, and the declarative marker -da attached to the last element of the clause, typically the verb. Both the closing quotative verb and the declarative marker are obligatory in direct quotations such as (2). Their absence in an otherwise direct quotation produces an indirect quotation. The following examples from Harms (1994: 173) show the differences between direct and indirect quotations.

tell-hab-pst-pl king eye dark be.3.prs-decl say-pst-pl
‘They told him: “the king is blind” they said’

(5) nepiri-pa-chi-da [rey tau p’arĩ bi]
tell-hab-pst-pl king eye dark be.3.prs
‘They told him the king is blind’

While both examples contain a subordinate clause, this clause is a complement of the quotative verb of the secondary clause in the direct quotation (4) but a complement of the main clause verb in the indirect quotation (5). Harms claims that indirect quotations are infrequent in Sia Pedee (Harms 1994: 173). Still, direct-speech constructions with a quotative verb and without a declarative marker are not uncommon in Sia Pedee, provided the direct-speech marker -mada is attached to the quotative verb. Most of these constructions involve imperatives, as illustrated in (6).8

Arguably, the direct-speech marker is a grammaticized fusion of two suffixes: the deictic -ma ‘so’, and the declarative. On the other hand, ma is a distal demonstrative. Sometimes the deictic is fronted and the quotative verb occurs with the declarative (e.g. ma ajida), with exactly the same meaning. The fact that the quotative verb form ajima ‘said so’ may occur instead of ajimada would confirm this interpretation. Interestingly, -mada also marks switch reference or changing subjects in discourse (cf. Harms 1994: 185 f.), a pragmatic function related to direct speech.

8 There is one particular form of the imperative which is used exclusively in quotations, i.e. -pade (Harms 1994: 176). This form occurs as -pada in our corpus, in which it is glossed as a hortative marker. See example (8) below.
This example contains an imperative in the quoted clause that excludes the declarative marker. Notice in addition that some complements of the quoted clause may occur after the quotative verb. In (6) the complement sãude ‘from the gourd’ comes after aji ‘he said’. The direct-speech marker, however, does not necessarily exclude the declarative -da, and both may co-occur in one sentence, as illustrated in (7):

(7) mi-a nan unu-e bi-da a-ji-mada
1s-erg prox.loc see-NEG be.3.prs-decl say-pst-ds
‘“I have not seen him around here!” he said’

The co-occurrence of the declarative and the direct-speech marker usually reinforces the illocutionary force. Thus, (7) is an emphatic negative answer to an insistent question posed by one who suspects that his interlocutor is lying. In other words, constructions (6) and (7) involve direct quotations, even if one of them (6) lacks the declarative marker. This prevents us from classifying them as indirect quotations as (4) above, their main difference being the illocutionary force of the statement.

It is important to note that indirect quotations are not fully equivalent to reported speech because the latter carry the reportative marker -pida. This is illustrated in sentence (3) above, where the reportative marker occurs at the end of the conditional clause. While no quotative verb occurs in either clause in (3), it is possible to find a quotative verb and a reportative marker together in one clause, as shown below:

(8) ak’øre-pa jara-jí isapai ara loko-k’a che-ru
high.priest-erg say-pst fast 3s mad-like come-prs
jita ata-da-pada aji pida
take get-pst-hort say-pst rep
‘Reportedly, the high priest said: “he is coming like a mad, go and seize him right away” he said’

While the quotative verb occurs alongside the reportative marker, the scope of each is different: the quotative verb has the subordinate clause ‘go and seize him’ as its complement; the reportative marks the information source for the whole sentence. Another use of the reportative noticed by Harms (1994: 179) is the echoing of a statement in order to make it clear to someone who did not hear or understand its meaning. In such cases, the reportative marker does not act as a quotative verb and complementation is not involved. In addition, the reportative marker alternates or even co-occurs with the Spanish equivalent particle dizque ‘it is said that’ in our corpus. Interestingly enough, this co-occurrence appears to trigger code switching. The interplay of code switching and reported speech in Sia Pedee is illustrated in the next section.

5. Uses of code switching in quoted and reported speech

Code switching serves different functions in narrative discourse. The most frequent functions observed in our corpus include quoting, contrasting, taboo veiling, qualifying and explaining. Each of these is illustrated below with extracts from Epera narratives. The main
language of the narratives was Sia Pedee while the switched language was Spanish (5% of the corpus). Switches are italicized in the original and in the English translation.

Quoting a character in his own words is a major use of code switching in story-telling. This function becomes particularly clear in vocative clauses such as the following:

(9) ay manpai mangapari mada señor Primitivo ajimada
    ‘“ouch” she used to say, “mister Primitivo” she said’

(10) ma nibide comadre chola aji
    ‘meanwhile, “Chola godmother” he said’

While the use of another language in quotations implies that the character originally used that language as an identity feature, the assumption is valid when the speaker is echoing speech but not when he is paraphrasing it. In the latter case, code switching does not presuppose a linguistic background but assigns to the character the identity features associated with one code. This is illustrated in the following examples from a narrative about the bet made by the devil with God that he would finish the building of a bridge before the rooster crows.

(11) manpai netuarapa kontesta aji ya hacemos la apuesta nan noche a las cinco de la mañana tap’edapodopa ya está listo el puente
    ‘Then the devil answered: “ok, let’s bet, today at five o’clock in the morning, when the day breaks, the bridge will be ready.’

(12) apuesta bampaigna las cinco de la mañana gallo k’arikāri ichia ya aupa baibait’eda aji puente
    ‘The bet was five o’clock in the morning, when the rooster crows he said he would have already finished the bridge.’

Interestingly, God’s words are quoted in Sia Pedee while the devil’s words are quoted in Spanish. The association of the devil with the Spanish language in Amerindian narratives is not uncommon at all. Howard (1984: 70) reports a similar use in Cañar Quichua oral narrative. The association is not univocal however. In (13) below it is not the devil but God’s rooster that is quoted in Spanish. The quotation in this case is interpreted as pinpointing the identity feature of authority, which is marked ‘by default’ with Spanish in diglossic settings.

(13) manga bavior gallo biaji ya amenció adachi
    ‘thereupon God’s rooster crowed: “the day has broken” he said’

The above examples show that Spanish switches in quotations serve the purpose of marking identity. Identity involves not only a they-we distinction but also a human-animal dichotomy. A further example of this is (14) below, in which Spanish marks the speech of a nonhuman character, a black monkey in the guise of a human being.

(14) ma epēra k’ap’ia jaa te antaude su-ak’i bachejí chonaapa iidijí pi k’aata oonima aji ay mi ituaba ando pasando trabajo mi wēra jirima bida aji wēra jirima bida ajipida
    ‘a black-bodied man was sitting behind the house, the old man asked him, “what are you doing here?” he said, “I am having a difficult time looking for a woman to be my wife’ they say he said’

The foregoing examples include not only Spanish switches but also Spanish borrowing and calquing. For example, the saying verb of the main clause in (11) is a loan verb: kon-
testaají ‘answer-pst’, from Spanish contestar ‘to reply’. The analysis of other instances of Spanish-switched quotations suggests that saying loan verbs are not uncommon. Similarly, the main clause of quotative and reported sentences may involve Spanish-switched verbs of saying and thought. Consider the following examples:

(15) manpai chi său tejâmaa t’auboo warrarā pāra k’ira k’awa-e baip’anik’a aji, mimaa ma rrat’a bat’a teerutaya manpai dijo chi warrachaipa ay chiampa jā său ina asotanaapada aji

‘Then he threw the gourd to the floor, ‘are you crazy?’ he said, ‘you gave me rat water’, then the little child said, ‘oh uncle, do not throw it to the floor’ he said.’

(16) chi p’āwa t’o-e pak’āri manpai wāji a iri como ma-āri su-ak’i chada perā iru penso pue ichiaba sīk’oît’e

‘When his gun did not fire, he rushed upon him, as he looks like a poor little man sitting there, he just thought that he would beat him down all by himself’

Furthermore, example (12) above contains an odd structure: an instance of reported speech without its reportative marker. While the construction seems a direct quotation at first sight, the subject of the complement clause in (12) is not a first-person but a third-person pronoun. The construction is not an indirect quotation either: it has the quotative verb aji ‘said’ and the declarative marker -da, both of which do not occur in indirect quotations (cf. section 3). Neither is (12) an instance of reported speech, because it lacks the obligatory reportative marker. In sum the sentence is a hybrid structure that follows Sia Pedee morphosyntax but calques Spanish reported-speech constructions.9 Compare the Spanish clause in (17) to the subordinate clause in (12) above:

(17) él dijo que ya tendría terminado el puente
ichia (aji) (-da) ya baibait’e aupa el puente

‘He said he would have already finished the bridge’

This comparison shows that the speaker produces reported speech but does not mark the clause as such because he follows the model of Spanish, i.e. – syntactic calquing. In these terms, the saying verb aji ‘said’ in Sia Pedee is functionally equivalent to the finite verb dijo ‘said’ in Spanish, just like the declarative marker -da in Sia Pedee equals the conjunction que ‘that’ in Spanish. Evidence of the former was given already in (15) above while the latter is illustrated below:

(18) i wāi t’eda aji teedaa una cosa jarabēit’e, wājīda aji, bajī una semana apai, ya semana abaade jarajī ma que wāit’eda aji,

‘And she said, I am going home, I have one thing to tell [them], I go, she said, just one week passed, and within one week she said that she is going, she said’

Spanish que ‘that’ links the saying verb jarají ‘said’ in the main clause to the clausal complement wāit’eda ‘she is going’. The clause is followed by the quotative aji ‘said’, as if it were a quotation proper. The examples presented so far suffice to show that Spanish switches are usually accompanied by morphological and syntactic changes in Sia Pedee. Let us now turn to other roles of code switching which further confirm this tendency.

9 The second clause contains the loan adverb ya ‘already’ and the loan noun puente ‘bridge’. All the rest is Sia Pedee. Notice in addition that the complement puente ‘bridge’ is dislocated post-verbally, as required by Sia Pedee grammar (cf. section 3).
Another major function of code switching in Sia Pedee narrative discourse is the veiling of culturally taboo contents. As Ritchie & Bhatia (2006: 346) point out, the language performing this function in bilingual speech is the ‘they’ code. Therefore, the default language for hedging in Sia Pedee story-telling should be Spanish, and that is precisely what the data show. Example (19) below is illustrative of this role. The Spanish switch occurs in reference to one of the great taboos in Epera community, i.e. evil magic associated with witchcraft. Interestingly, the Spanish switch contains an embedded language island (Myers-Scotton 2002: 139) which marks the topic of the switch and relates it to that of the preceding string (evil magic):

(19) epéra k’achia bapachi y mia nande ma-ãri jarapëi pàramaa mangi epéra k’awaa bají netuara jai, secreto, ustedes pueden imaginar k’ãare secreto ‘The man was bad, and now I am going to tell you a bit about him, this man knew evil magic, secrets, you can imagine what kind of secrets’.

The same hedging use of code switching is observed in the following examples, with an additional contrasting function:

(20) nangí epéra k’achia ajira k’achia de lo propio k’achia ak’ôrepa ùraa jara nibi él nunca no creía, ak’ôrepa man Ak’ôre ewari waa rrepetaadapada ak’ãri pida él no respetaba ‘This man was evil, but really evil, the high priest counseled, [but] he never believed, the high priest ordered to respect God’s day, they say, [but] he did not respect’

(21) ya netuarapa ichi atentaawã ya manta k’awaaji pero manga manga mida de toda manera él no Ak’ôre ome kree-e pají ma-ãri pida y vivía así ichi malda ome ‘And the devil began to tempt him, he knew it, but anyway he did not believe in God, not a bit, they said, and so he lived with his evil’

Example (20) shows how Spanish switches are systematically used for contrasting focus. Notice that the adversative connector in the translation is not present in the original. Its function is performed by simple juxtaposition of the Spanish switch, which indicates the opposite of a culturally expected behavior. The non-expected behavior of the same character is repeated in (21). This time, however, the corollary requires emphasis, and the adversative connector mida is used along with the Spanish-switched adversative construction de todas maneras ‘anyway’. While these examples of hedging and contrast do not contain quotative verbs, they show the marker pida typical of reported speech. In examples (20) and (21) the reportative occurs in the main clause contrasting with the last Spanish switch. In both cases it is cliticized to native material: the temporal clause ak’ãri ‘when he said’ in (20), and the adjective ma-ãri ‘little’ in (21). However, it is not hard to find examples of the reportative attached to a Spanish switch as in (22) below. Here pida occurs after the Spanish prepositional phrase entre ellos ‘each other’.

(22) nerrorãpa tachi entre ellos k’oparik’ajidá, nerrorô entre ello pida k’oparik’ ajidá, Ak’ôre mismo en ese momento le dio la inteligencia epëravërâmaa, y no sé como, ya manga oowôda ‘white men devoured each other, white men devoured each other, it is said, at that moment God himself gave the Epera woman the intelligence [to escape], and I don’t know how, but she did it’
Just like the use of Spanish in quoted speech in otherwise monolingual native discourse plays the pragmatic role of identity flagging and taboo hedging, in the same way switching to Spanish in reported speech plays a specific role associated with qualifying comments or evaluative explanations. This role is already illustrated in (22) above but becomes clearer in the following example from the same speaker, except that the reportative in this case is not native *pida* but Spanish *dizque* ‘it is said’ – which could be interpreted as a function loanword:

(23) manpai epērāwēra ya anchi omeerāpa ya preparaamaa padachida *dizque* tachi chiara waarraa *ajimada* tachi chiara *dizque es como comer un chancho* jīp’a mada waarraa jook’āri

‘Then the woman and the other two began to prepare the food, *it is said* that our flesh is tasty, *they say it is like eating pork, delicious when cooked’

In (23) the Spanish reportative occurs two times: once accompanied by the quotative verb *ajimada* ‘they say’; and once heading a Spanish switch. The second instance may be considered part of a switch while the first one is rather analyzed as a loanword. In the latter case we have a double-marked construction. Doubling is usually associated to a halfway stage between the use of the native form and the replacement thereof by a borrowing (cf. Gómez Rendón 2008a: 383). Nevertheless, it can be also interpreted as a pragmatic strategy, since it is not uncommon to find the direct-speech marker *mada* co-occurring with the quotative *ajimada*, as illustrated in (24):

(24) mi ewaapaita nejooit’ē bita nama t’ip’i puumaa bida ajī ya mismo *mada* pi it’ai t’oop’et’aayada *ajimada* chaarapa chepada ajī

‘I was about to cook, I was collecting firewood, he said, right now, he said, I am going to break your mouth open, he said, come here, he said’

Another example of how Spanish switches introduce qualifying comments is (25) below. This example includes the occurrence of the Spanish reportative. Code switching seems to be used here to make a meaning clear to a member of the audience who did not know the word *tot’ai* ‘estuary’ (Sp. *estuario*) 10.

(25) ma warra chak’e *dizque* mangi *era* mamīda *no era* tó k’ide *sino era* tot’ai tó che tó ùucheparimái

‘The little boy, they say, he was floating in his cradle not in the headwaters but in the estuary’

The entanglement of Spanish and Spanish-Sia Pedee mixing in (25) is notable. The sentence contains not one uninterrupted string but four distinct units: *dizque, era, no era*, and *sino era*. Are these units to be analyzed as individual switches within one clause or only one switch with so-called embedded language islands? Cases of entangled switching are not uncommon in the corpus.

The following table summarizes the functions of code switching together with the motivations behind their occurrence in the narrative corpus analyzed here.

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10 While it may be argued that code switching in this case could be interpreted as normal hesitation in discourse, it should be noted that the speaker was not interrupted at any moment, which leads to assume that the speaker considers the word not to be of general knowledge for the majority of the audience.
While we have positive evidence of some uses of code switching such as quoting, contrasting, hedging and qualifying, as well as of their pragmatic and discursive motivations, other cases of code switching remain to be explored, as they show a rather non-systematic bilingual behavior. Thus, cases like (25) above are not clear from a functional perspective, and we cannot be absolutely sure that code switching has precisely the explanatory function we claim here. To be sure, we should analyze similar discourse situations in which code switching is not present. Unfortunately, we could not find a counterexample to (25) in the corpus. Still, it may be argued that the advanced state of language shift in the Épera community sets the conditions for random language mixing. Accordingly, code switching would become increasingly dysfunctional when the use of one or another code is not well established in a communicative setting, given the audience’s scarce knowledge in one of them. Such behavior is probably motivated by the incipient use of the native language and the communicative dilemma between the use of such language and the use of the official language already dominant in the community.

### 6. Conclusions

Sia Pedee is an endangered language. Language loss was primarily caused by the migration of the ethnic group outside their native land. Several initiatives have been launched in the last years for the revitalization of Sia Pedee in Ecuador. The refreshed use of the language in the community, especially in story-telling sessions in which people of different ages participate, has intensified the use of code-switching between Sia Pedee and Spanish. The uses of Spanish in narrative discourse respond to various situations, from social distancing and speech accommodation to identity marking, taboo veiling, statement qualifying, and explaining. While these uses are widely and positively recognized by bilingual speakers and the community in general, the changes they prompt in the structure of the native language cannot pass unnoticed. These changes include not only the seemingly harmless fall into disuse of certain evidential markers such as the reportative or the replacement thereof by a Spanish equivalent. They also include the borrowing of morphological material and syntactic patterns. Nevertheless, code switching might not produce a systematic pattern of language mixing under these circumstances, as suggested elsewhere.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function of CS</th>
<th>Motivation for CS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quoting</td>
<td>Assignment of specific identity features associated to each language;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contrast marking</td>
<td>flagging of ethnic identity (they vs. us); flagging of human identity (human vs. nonhuman)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedging</td>
<td>Veiling of culturally tabooed contents (witchcraft, evil, sexual intercourse)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifying comment</td>
<td>Marking of narrator comments as distinct from narrative content; introduction of information from third parties (accompanied by reportative marking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluative explanation</td>
<td>Rephrasing of unclear previous utterances; connection of two successive explanatory phrases.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Functions of code switching
for another Amerindian language, i.e. Paraguayan Guaraní (Gómez Rendón 2007 and Dietrich this volume). In either case, it is too early to make any conclusive statement about the direction of these changes, not only because of the limited scope of the present investigation, but also because of the time required for those changes to take a definite shape.

Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decl</th>
<th>declarative</th>
<th>Hort</th>
<th>hortative</th>
<th>Poss</th>
<th>possessive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DS</td>
<td>direct speech</td>
<td>IMP</td>
<td>imperative</td>
<td>PROX LOC</td>
<td>proximal locative</td>
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<td>ergative</td>
<td>Inst</td>
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<td>present tense</td>
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<td>LOC</td>
<td>locative</td>
<td>PST</td>
<td>past tense</td>
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<td>genitive</td>
<td>NEG</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>reportative</td>
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<td>first person singular</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3s</td>
<td>third person singular</td>
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</table>

References


