Who's ''mixing'' the languages?
Statistical-sociolinguistic analyses of
differently developed bilingual practice of
Albanian-speaking school pupils
in German-speaking Switzerland

BASIL SCHADER

Abstract

The extent to which the many Albanian-speaking children and adolescents in Switzerland apply a bilingual mode differs considerably. As part of a larger project, a quantitative exploratory study seeks to understand whether the frequency of code-switching is determined by demographic, individual, and peer-group-related factors. The fact that no striking relationships between these factors can be observed will be discussed with a view to the specificity of Albanian migration. Furthermore, these results raise questions with regard to the determinants of bilingual practice and the characteristics of ''prototypical code-switch-speakers.''

1. Introduction

With approximately 170,000 members, Albanians (mostly from Kosovo and Macedonia) represent the largest group of the more recent migrants in Switzerland. In spite of their numerical significance and their prominent status in the public consciousness (which tends to be negatively charged in the populist press), comparatively little is actually known about them (cf. among others Leuenberger and Maillard 1999; von Aarburg 2002; Schader 2005). The goal and theme of a larger research project of the Zurich University of Applied Sciences/Teacher Training College and the University of Tirana, led by the author, is to review more in-depth information on the aspects (also relevant in terms of linguistic and social integration) of linguistic competencies, linguistic orientation, and school success of Albanian-speaking school pupils in Switzerland. The focus of the investigation includes the bilingual and biliteral practice of the respondents in German-speaking Switzerland.

In addition to the microlinguistic analysis of German-Albanian code-switching (cf. Schader 2005: 248–423), a further focus of interest in this

regard is the sociolinguistically motivated question of whether it is possible to define factors or clusters of factors that explain the differences in the frequency of use of the bilingual mode (cf. Grosjean 1989: 10, 1996: 168ff.), which are in part considerable, or conversely, whether a high or low frequency of code-switching can be judged as an indicator for certain linguistic, integration, school success, or attitude-related features. While, to our knowledge, Albanian-German code-switching has not yet been the subject of scientific analysis, results from studies addressing the characteristics of speakers with active bilingual practice have been reported, for example, by Franceschini (1998) and Auer (1998).[1] The following, summarized findings of our work (cf. Schader 2005: 173–247) will be discussed in the framework of this catalogue of features.

2.   Database, conception, and methodology of the investigation

The empirical foundation of the analysis is constituted primarily by a broad written survey of 1,087 Albanian-speaking school pupils from the fifth to tenth school years in German-speaking Switzerland (547 girls, 537 boys; age 10–18 years). In addition, 218 pupils who were returned emigrants from Switzerland to Kosovo were surveyed. In view of the differing linguistic context of this latter group, the corresponding results are not included in the following description. The complete sample can be divided into two similar-sized groups (N = 571 or 513) *with* or *without* attendance of (voluntary) supplementary Albanian native language and culture courses, which enables conclusions to be drawn about the influence of such lessons with regard to linguistic and literal practice, in particular in the L1. The written survey was administered, following prior instructions, by approximately 275 teachers from regular lessons and from the supplementary Albanian lessons. A bilingual Albanian-German questionnaire with 171 items on the aspects of linguistic practice, linguistic competencies, linguistic biography, parental home, integration, school career, and biographical parameters served as a survey tool (cf. Schader 2005: 427–444, also for further survey tools and corresponding documents). In addition to questions on self-assessment, the questionnaire contained two tests for the measurement of the orientation competence between standard and dialect in L1 and L2. The comprehensive data were supplemented by questionnaires for the teachers on the individual pupils in the survey (perception by others) as well as through post- and comparative analyses on various aspects. With the exception of the question asking for examples of bilingual utterances and the corresponding post-analyses, the survey consisted throughout of multiple-choice questions on mostly

5-point Likert scales. Statistical evaluation ensued using the SPSS program by a suitably qualified professional. The main procedures implemented included frequency distribution, analysis of variance, the chi-squared test, and Kendall's tau-b test. For the analyses reported below, the dependent variable is the frequency with which those surveyed indicated using the bilingual mode (cf. question 94 in the questionnaire: "How often does it happen that you mix Albanian and German words in the same sentence?" Response options: very often — fairly often — sometimes — rarely — never. To facilitate understanding, the question is illustrated by two examples). In the following, this variable is related to 36 potential influencing factors from the areas of demographic, individual, family, school, and peer-group-related variables.

It should also be noted that the quantitative orientation of our explorative study inevitably leads to the fact that qualitative aspects of bilingual practice are neglected. This relates on the one hand to the various levels of complexity in the spectrum from simple insertion to multiple language change, and on the other hand to the functional differences in the scope of code-switching determined by linguistic necessity/palliative code-switching to demonstrative (group) identity functional code-switching, as can be observed mainly on the basis of good single language conditions. The linguistic analysis of such aspects is the object of the author's own investigation (see above).

In the following, firstly the most important findings will be presented and summarized in a graphical overview. After looking at existing research results, possible relationships between the frequency of bilingual practice and the aspects of identity/integration/assimilation, linguistic self-concept as well as family background will then be discussed.

3. Distribution in terms of frequency of use of the bilingual mode

The possibility of an Albanian-German "mixed" language use in migration — initially limited to the simplest palliative insertions — is fundamentally available to all persons with Albanian as their mother tongue and at least rudimentary knowledge of German. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of those surveyed (86%) indicate using the bilingual mode, albeit to individually differing extents.

This relates on the one hand to the bilingual behavior towards different groups of persons and in different social contexts. The most frequent switch partners are named as Albanian-speaking peers outside of the family (56%), followed by siblings (50%), the parents, and non-Albanian-speaking peers. In the contact with the latter, however, the

bilingual practice does not go beyond the recourse to a small number of often offensive Albanian words and expressions, which are fairly widespread in many Swiss senior grades (cf. Schader 2003a, 2003b).

However, the differences also relate to the general frequency with which respondents use the bilingual mode at all. 11% of respondents indicate doing so "very often", 18% "fairly often", 26% "sometimes", 31% "rarely" and 14% "never". In this regard, for the following calculations, three groups "high — medium — low frequency of code-switching" were formed.

4.   Demographic influencing factors

These factors include: gender, age, length of stay in Switzerland, and degree of urbanization of the residential community.

Statistically significant associations with the frequency of code-switching only exist in terms of gender and age. Firstly, it was apparent that girls are represented significantly more strongly among the very frequent switchers ($\chi^2(4) = 21.607$; $p < .01$), and secondly, the group of very frequent and frequent code-switchers was found to have a slightly higher average age than the comparison groups with medium or low frequency of switching (14.3 compared with 13.8 years).

By contrast, there is no significant association between the frequency of switching and the length of residence in Switzerland. The reason for this could be that the data gathered are exclusively of a quantitative nature and do not reveal anything about the linguistic composition and complexity of bilingual utterances. It is suggested in this regard that there are associations with the length of residence or the increase in second-language competencies, and this is confirmed in the linguistic analysis of evidence collected on Albanian-German code-switching. The lack of any association with the degree of urbanization of the residential community (town — country — agglomeration) is not surprising, as this does not reveal anything about the (nonsurveyed) proportion of foreign, in particular Albanian-speaking, residents as a presumably more important factor.

5.   Individual influencing factors

These factors include: self-assessment of the linguistic competencies in L1 and L2,[2] literal usages, translation activities, relationship to L1 and L2, and orientation to return to country of origin or remain in Switzerland.

It is apparent that a frequent use of the bilingual mode is significantly associated with a less positive self-concept in terms of the first language, although the effect size is rather small. Albanian-speaking children and adolescents who assess their competence in the first language as weaker and also read less in this language show a higher frequency of switching; those with a good self-concept in the first language and who read more frequently in Albanian use the bilingual mode less.

The self-assessment of German competencies and the frequency of reading in German do not have an influence on the frequency of code-switching. Equally, there is no association between the frequency of code-switching and the affective relationship towards first and second language as well as the assessment of their importance for one's own future.

Significantly positive associations, albeit with small effect sizes, are found between the frequency of code-switching on the one hand, and the orientation to return to the country of origin as well as translation activities on the other. In comparison with respondents with a low frequency of code-switching, those with an active code-switching practice indicate significantly less frequently that they wish to remain in Switzerland. The same group also assumes functions as translators significantly more frequently.

6. Family-related influencing factors

These factors include: level of education, degree of literacy,[3] socio-economic status and degree of integration of the parents in Switzerland, and parental help in German language acquisition.

The data show no statistically significant association between the three factors of level of education, degree of literacy, and socio-economic status on the one hand, and the frequency of code-switching on the other. These factors, which are of great importance, for instance, in the context of school success, appear to exert no influence on the degree of transcodal practice. A significant association (albeit with a small effect size) is found, by contrast, between (higher) frequency of code-switching and (weaker) German competence of the mother. Equally, respondents whose mothers have less Swiss friends use the bilingual mode more frequently. The two latter factors can be seen as indicators for the degree of linguistic and social integration of the parents in Switzerland. A further influencing factor proves to be the degree of parental help in the children's acquisition of the German language. Respondents who experienced little support in this regard show a (slightly) significantly higher frequency of code-switching.

7.   School-related influencing factors

These factors include: country of residence when starting school and acquiring written language, attendance of kindergarten, distribution across school levels and types, attendance of Albanian native language and culture courses, and rating by teachers.

Significant associations emerge first of all from the point of view of school biography. Children who learned the Albanian written language in the country of origin, or who started school and became literate there, tend to have a higher frequency of switching. Attendance of kindergarten and starting school in Switzerland lead to the opposite effect — namely lower frequency of switching. The same applies for those respondents who learned the Albanian written language in the parental home or in the framework of Albanian native language and culture courses in Switzerland. The formative importance of pre-school institutions and the first school years for linguistic and cultural socialization, integration, and equal opportunities is well known. It is thought to go well beyond the associated longer length of stay in Switzerland and is also reflected in a significantly greater school success of respondents in our sample who had begun their school career in Switzerland. The more frequent code-switching of those who started school in the country of origin and perhaps also have a stronger tie to the country of origin than those born in Switzerland may be interpreted as an unconscious (or conscious) maintaining of the mother tongue. Also in this context, the slightly higher orientation towards returning to the country of origin in this group should be noted (see above). The fact that at the same time — as a further finding — there are significantly more pupils in this group who have repeated one or several school years, could suggest problems of school orientation, integration and equal opportunities, which could well be linked to the Swiss school system.

In terms of the distribution across the different school levels and types,[4] it emerges that pupils with a higher frequency of switching are found significantly more frequently in the lower secondary level than in elementary school (see also the aforementioned slightly higher average age of this group). Particularly striking is the comparison between elementary school and *Realschule* (secondary school with basic requirements). However, if one compares, by contrast, only the different types of lower secondary school with their differing requirements, the differences fall to a level that is no longer significant. Children and adolescents with higher or lower frequency of switching, respectively, are found to an equal extent across all school types of the lower secondary level.

Of particular interest was whether the flexibility and linguistic awareness practiced in the code-switching, understood as a transferable linguistic competence, also has an effect on the evaluation of the language skills by the teachers. On the basis of our data, this did not appear to be the case in terms of the Swiss teachers — there was no association between their evaluation of the linguistic and general performances and the frequency of code-switching. By contrast, in the report marks of the teachers of the Albanian native language lessons, a weak correlation between (higher) marks and (lower) frequency of switching could be discerned.

No direct association was found between attendance of Albanian native language and culture courses (HSK — *Heimatliche Sprache und Kultur* 'home language and culture') and the frequency of code-switching. It could be the case that two effects are cancelling each other out here — namely, the fact that the HSK lessons per se would be a preferred domain for bilingual practice, but that at the same time, a switch-skeptical ideology oriented to keeping the Albanian language pure prevails (see below). However, the significantly lower frequency of code-switching of those pupils who indicate particular pleasure or interest regarding linguistic and culture-related learning in the HSK and a particularly good relationship to the HSK teachers points more to a switch-inhibitory influence of the native language lessons. Therefore, it appears that HSK attendance alone is not decisive for the frequency of code-switching; rather, an important role is played by motivational aspects in the context of the subjective perception of the respondents. However, the association between the good first language self-concept (which should be supported by HSK attendance) and lower frequency of code-switching should be noted here, as well as the aforementioned added bonus of better marks for pupils with lower frequency of switching.

8. Peer-group-related influencing factors

These factors include: frequency of contact with different peers and their role in the acquisition of the German language.

The data show that the preferred partners for the use of the bilingual mode are Albanian-speaking friends. The degree of contact with such friends in the respondents' leisure time is one of the factors that influence the frequency of switching to a significant degree. This applies even more strongly with regard to the extent of their help in the acquisition of German. In contrast to the more switch-inhibitory parental

help (see above), in the more informal context of peer help, bilingual strategies and possibilities appear to be conveyed and practiced from the very outset.

There is no association between the frequency of code-switching and the degree of contact with monolingual Swiss peers. From the contact with other peers, that is, others who are growing up bi- or multilingual, a broadly switch-stimulating effect can be assumed, although the relevant value is slightly below the significance level. It would be useful to examine whether and to what extent bilingual or multilingual linguistic practice is experienced and practiced in the contact with this group from the very beginning as a functional strategy. This is perhaps suggested by the finding that respondents who indicate that they were supported in their acquisition of German primarily by non-Albanian-speaking peers also use the bilingual mode significantly more frequently. Unfortunately, the data do not indicate whether these peers are monolingual or whether they are also bilingual.

9.   Overview: factors with or without a significant influence on the frequency of code-switching

Table 1.   *Demographic factors*

Switch-conducive factors	Switch-inhibitory factors	No significant influence
Female gender	Male gender	Length of stay in Switzerland
Higher age of adolescence	Lower age of adolescence	Degree of urbanization of the place of residence

Table 2.   *Individual factors*

Switch-conducive factors	Switch-inhibitory factors	No significant influence
Lower Albanian competence (self-assessment)	Higher Albanian competence (self-assessment)	Competence in German and Swiss-German (self-assessment)
Shorter amount of time reading Albanian per week	Longer amount of time reading Albanian per week	Relationship to and attribution of importance of the languages
Higher frequency of translation	Lower frequency of translation	
Lesser desire to stay in Switzerland	Greater desire to stay in Switzerland	

Table 3. *Family-related factors*

Switch-conducive factors	Switch-inhibitory factors	No significant influence
Lower competence of the mother in speaking High German	Higher competence of the mother in speaking High German	Educational level of parents Degree of literacy of parents
Smaller number of Swiss friends of the mother	Larger number of Swiss friends of the mother	Socio-economic status of parents
Lesser extent of help from parents in High German acquisition	Greater extent of help from parents in High German acquisition	Competence of Swiss-German of the mother German and Swiss-German competence of the father Number of Swiss friends of the father

Table 4. *School-related factors*

Switch-conducive factors	Switch-inhibitory factors	No significant influence
Acquisition of Albanian written language in school of the country of origin	Acquisition of Albanian written language not in school of the country of origin	HSK attendance yes/no* Evaluation by HSK teacher regarding linguistic aspects**
Shorter duration of kindergarten attendance in Switzerland	Longer duration of kindergarten attendance in Switzerland	Evaluation by Swiss teacher regarding general performance and subject competence
Higher school year	Lower school year	
Attendance of lower secondary school, above all *Realschule* type	Attendance of elementary school	Language-related marks in Swiss report**
More repeating of classes	Less repeating of classes	Extent of help by German teacher or form teacher in acquisition of German**
Less pleasure in learning Albanian language, in the Albanian culture and HSK teacher	More pleasure in learning the Albanian standard language, in Albanian culture, and friendly HSK teacher	School type within lower secondary level
Better evaluation by HSK teacher regarding general performance and subject competence**	Weaker evaluation by HSK teacher regarding general performance and subject competence**	
Poorer HSK report marks	Better HSK report marks	

  *) HSK = (courses in) *Heimatlicher Sprache und Kultur* 'home language and culture'; Albanian native language and culture courses

 **) Not reported here; cf. Schader (2005)

Table 5.   *Peer-group-related factors*

Switch-conducive factors	Switch-inhibitory factors	No significant influence
Higher frequency of contact with Albanian peers during leisure time	Lower frequency of contact with Albanian peers in leisure time	Degree of contact with non-Albanian-speaking peers in leisure time
Greater degree of help from Albanian and non-Albanian peers in acquisition of High German	Lesser degree of help from Albanian and non-Albanian peers in acquisition of High German	

10.   Discussion of the results

An overall finding of the analysis of the various factors related to the dependent variable "frequency of use of the bilingual mode" is that the associations tend to be weak throughout. For the most part, the correlations show small to at best medium-sized effect sizes. The goal of citing marked characteristics of children and adolescents with a high or low frequency of code-switching proves to be a complex endeavor in relation to the group examined by us. The abundance of determinants involved, which in part appear to cancel each other out, considerably complicates the outline of a clear, empirically supported profile of a typical Albanian-German code-switcher. Undoubtedly, the fact that complexity and function-related aspects of code-switching inevitably had to be left out also contributes to this difficulty. The linguistic analysis of the evidence gathered by us (cf. Schader 2005) does indicate that the majority of respondents tend to use the palliative-pragmatic facets of code-switching rather than the demonstrative-group identity ones. However, future research may yield more striking results if the users of functionally different types of bilingual language use are analyzed separately.

As shown, for instance, by the comparison with the catalogues of features reported by Franceschini (1998: 53) and Auer (1998: 235) of "prototypical CS-speakers" (Franceschini 1998: 53), the characteristics outlined only partly contribute to a clarification, as they are necessarily very general ("young age," "member of a minority," "multilingual social background"). Auer's finding that girls and women appear to use the bilingual mode more frequently than boys and men is confirmed by our results. An association of this result with the higher linguistic competence of girls[5] otherwise found in our investigation and by others should therefore be examined in future research.

The feature of "strong ethnic identity" cited by Franceschini is too ambiguous to be either verified or refuted. It is confirmed if one assesses the somewhat higher orientation to return to the country of origin of the group with a higher frequency of switching and their greater frequency of contact with Albanian-speaking peers as indicators of "ethnic identity." However, this can equally be compared with the greater pleasure in the linguistic and cultural contents of the native language lessons or the higher frequency of reading in Albanian, which have been shown to be features of respondents with a low frequency of switching.

No confirmation could be found for the characteristic "lower class," which Franceschini (1998: 53) cites as a feature of "prototypical CS-speakers": A direct, significant association between frequency of code-switching and the factors socio-economic status, level of education and level of literacy of parents could not be proven.

Among the (plausible) problems relating to general feature catalogues is the fact that they inevitably are unable to include two aspects that are likely to play a specific role in shaping the bilingual behavior of Albanian migrants in Switzerland. The first of these is their minority status and their low prestige in Switzerland. Coupled with an at times strong assimilation pressure, these factors could lead to the fact that many Albanians, at least in the public domain, assert their bilingualism less than, for example, the Italian migrants with their rich tradition. Secondly, there are the "linguistic-existentially" founded endeavors to preserve and keep pure the Albanian language, which has been under threat for centuries. These endeavors are discussed and supported on the part of the Albanian academic sphere and in the daily press (cf., e.g., Shkurtaj 1998; Murati 2000; Shasivari 2003). Furthermore, in the diaspora, they are found in the context of the active discussion on assimilation, integration, and preservation of one's own cultural and linguistic identity. The effect of this could tend to be inhibitory to code-switching.

In spite of the mostly weak associations and the limited help provided by findings from existing analyses, can the factors summarized in the tables presented above be further condensed into a profile that explains more precisely the differences in the frequency of code-switching of the respondents? To answer this question with a flat yes or no would appear to be premature. On the other hand, based on our analyses, several areas can be distinguished in which individual factors are concentrated. The following comments should not be understood in this sense as an answer, but rather as an attempt to combine some tendencies and to discuss them as possibly worthwhile questions for further, above all qualitative, research.

10.1.   *Associations with frequency of code-switching: identity, integration, assimilation*

The examination shows associations of higher frequency of code-switching with (a) a lower desire to stay in Switzerland or a higher orientation to return to the country of origin; (b) beginning school in the country of origin (linked with a lower duration of acculturation and school socialization in Switzerland and possibly with a stronger weighting of values, norms, and practices of the country of origin within the culture of the migrants); and (c) more frequent repeating of school years in Switzerland. At the same time, respondents with active bilingual practice spend their leisure time more frequently with Albanian-speaking peers (d), which also played a particularly important supportive role in the acquisition of German in this group (e).

Considering all the cited factors as a whole, it can be assumed that more frequent code-switching can also be interpreted as an identity-supporting maintenance of the first language. This can constitute an important identity-related element in a situation where orientation and equal opportunities are often also made more difficult institutionally. Bilingual practice can, in this sense (at least with regard to the demonstrative-group-identity facets of code-switching), be understood as a medium that, first of all, positively supports the balancing of the bicultural-bilingual identity, secondly, expressively brings this bilingual identity to the fore, and thirdly, could be judged as a linguistic expression in terms of identity of a plausible alternative to assimilation, which is fixed only on German, or indeed to a one-sided segregation fixed on the Albanian. Naturally, in view of all of the above, the construction of an association between a higher frequency of code-switching and integration-related aspects should be treated with great caution. Code-switching is extremely dependent on context and group; for instance, in its expressive-elaborated facets, it can be consciously cultivated as a provocative disposition of puberty (cf. the higher average age of the respondents with active bilingual practice), etc. All of these factors can be of the same or greater influence than those mentioned above and can also cancel out their influence.

10.2.   *Associations with frequency of switching: linguistic self-concept*

It is apparent from the investigation that the extent of use of the bilingual mode is strongly determined by the assessment of one's own competence in the first language. Children and adolescents, who (a) evaluate their Albanian competencies as weaker and (b) show a lower weekly duration

of reading Albanian, "mix" the languages significantly more frequently; those with a good self-concept and active reading practice in Albanian, by contrast, do so more rarely. This could be linked to the fact that (c) pupils with a higher frequency of code-switching receive (slightly) significantly worse report marks in the Albanian supplementary lessons.

At first glance, the data appear to indicate that a higher frequency of switching is not only related to a weaker self-concept in the first language, but also to a weaker relationship to aspects of cultural origin. This could be suggested by the fact that (d) children and adolescents with a higher frequency of switching express significantly less pleasure or interest in terms of the linguistic as well as the cultural contents of the Albanian native language and culture courses (HSK). This is surprising in view of the identity-related findings reported above. It is more likely that the apparently lower interest of this group with a high frequency of switching is not due primarily to content, but is rather linked to context and language of the teaching (Albanian standard language, in which this group does not feel as confident and for which they also receive lower marks from the HSK teachers).

10.3. *Associations with frequency of switching: family background*

As the analysis of the data shows, there are no significant dependencies of the frequency of code-switching of the respondents on level of education, level of literacy, and on the socio-economic status of their parents. In terms of the degree of linguistic and social integration of the parents in Switzerland, only a (slightly) significant positive association emerged between more active bilingual practice of the children and lower German competence and number of Swiss friends of the mother (see above).

However, the analysis of further data relating to the parents shows that the questions regarding family background are not exhaustively answered here. For instance, it is apparent that (a) respondents with a high frequency of code-switching have received significantly less parental support in their acquisition of German, that (b) their mothers (based on the respondents' evaluation) have a weaker competence in German, and (c) apparently have less Swiss friends. This might be linked to the fact that (d) the respondents in this group assume or have to assume linguistic mediation services or translation functions significantly more frequently. Furthermore, it should be recalled in relation to the family background that the respondents who communicate more frequently in the bilingual mode read significantly less in Albanian (e), which might contribute to the fact that (f) they assess their first-language competence as lower (see

above). Conversely, children and adolescents with a low frequency of code-switching evaluate their first-language competence as higher, are called upon for mediation tasks less frequently, and have mothers with better knowledge of German and more Swiss friends. In summary, it can be said that with regard to the family factors, a series of further questions remains open, which should be consolidated in qualitative studies. Clearly, one should bear in mind that it is precisely in the use of the bilingual mode outside of the family that the influence of parental ideologies could be quickly usurped by peer-group-related factors and demographic aspects. This also shows the lack of association between attendance of the Albanian native language and culture courses (HSK) and the frequency of switching, in which presumably the two aspects "switch-inhibitory ideology in the area of HSK" and "optimal switching prerequisites in the contact with HSK peers" cancel each other out.

11.   Final remarks and outlook

A clear result emerging from the explorative study based on a broad N of 1,084 is that there are only a small number of clear associations between the frequency of code-switching of the Albanian-speaking 10-to-18-year-olds surveyed and various demographic, family-related, etc., factors. Linear relationships, for instance regarding social origin, are widely ruled out in view of the mostly only weak to medium-sized correlations. Only in an overall view of some factors can connections be distinguished (for instance, to the linguistic self-concepts or aspects relating to identity), which should be clarified in further research.

One of the causes of the often less than striking nature of the findings could lie in the strong context dependency of code-switching. The relevant conditions in this regard (presence of partners with the same bilingual conditions, appropriate social and communicative context, status as peer jargon, etc.) could at least on some points eclipse the influence of various factors described above. Added to this, as a biographical context, is the age group of puberty of our subjects (with the characteristics of detachment, search for identity, etc.). This might also explain behavioral patterns that deviate from those to be expected (e.g. development and use of the demonstrative-[group]-identity functional facets of code-switching, but also a far-reaching ignoring or renunciation of the first language in the public domain). In addition, as specific determinants in relation to Albanian-German code-switching, first of all the linguistic-conservative anti-assimilation endeavors are to be born in mind, which in parts of the Albanian diaspora could lead to a tendency towards a rejecting stance

to mixing languages. Secondly, the in some places lower prestige of the Albanian migrants in Switzerland in comparison with other groups and the often strong assimilation pressure should be taken into consideration. These factors could have a rather detrimental effect on the development and cultivation of expressive forms of code-switching, at least in the public domain.

With a view to further investigations as well as the evaluation of the bilingual linguistic practice in particular of Albanian-speaking children and adolescents with a high frequency of switching, we will close with the following remarks:

The global evaluations of code-switching, which differ considerably depending on provenance, are problematic, as they do not take account of the context, complexity, and function-related aspects of bilingual language use. This applies both for in part one-sided euphoric evaluations on the part of linguistics as well as in terms of the differently motivated skepticism and reservations of some Swiss teachers and Albanian parents and teachers.

Quick or linear conclusions from the frequency of code-switching of children and adolescents about their degree of integration, family background, linguistic self-concept, etc., are not possible due to the aforementioned context dependency of this phenomenon. Corresponding assumptions therefore need to be checked through additional observations.

In terms of the linguistic-pedagogical view and evaluation of bilingual practice, qualitative aspects need to be incorporated that are related to the type, complexity, and functionality of code-switching. More complex and playful forms do not require any intervention, as they generally can only be developed against the background of a good bilingual competence. By contrast, palliative forms of code-switching determined by a lack of/need for language indicate a necessity to foster linguistic ability. With the exception of children and adolescents who have only recently moved to Switzerland, this should relate primarily to the first language, as the above described significant relationship of weak first-language competence with high frequency of switching testifies. In the case of children from less educated families, attendance of the native language and culture courses should be particularly emphasized as a support measure.

Albanian-German code-switching can be seen as one of several possibilities to live out and linguistically express bilingual and bicultural identity in migration. It can take on important group-identity and integration functions, which can not least contribute to overcoming situations of structural disadvantage, for example, by the Swiss school system. These functional and identity-related aspects have to be respected. Bans or interventions would go directly against this or disrupt relevant processes.

However, where parents or teachers understand all too excessive bilingual practice as an expression of linguistic and cultural orientation problems, in any case increased offers and impulses for the support of the parts of identity related to the culture of origin (conversations, native language teaching, reading, films, etc.) make more sense than prohibitions. In view of the strong context-bound nature of code-switching (peers, puberty, detachment, etc., see above), it should, however, be kept in mind that the supposed problem often rectifies itself, or is solved through the move into another educational or life phase. How much foundation of the language and culture of origin is then still available, depends in turn on the earlier offers and impulses.

Zurich University of Applied Sciences

Notes

1. Cf. Franceschini (1998: 53): "According to the relevant literature [. . .], the prototypical CS-speaker can therefore be described in terms of the following individual and social characteristics: 1) young age, 2) member of a minority, 3) lower class, 4) strong 'ethnic' group identity, 5) a multilingual social background." Auer (1998: 235) summarizes that code-switching "most likely" occurs more in girls or women than boys or men, that "more subtle discourse-related functions" of CS are only used from the tenth or twelfth year of life on, and that CS "occurs differently in the various generations" of a migration population.
2. Indictors of linguistic competencies: evaluation of one's own competencies in relation to a series of specific school-related part competencies (following Müller 1997), evaluation of the general speaking and writing competence in Albanian or German, frequency of reading in both languages.
3. Indicators for the factor of literacy: approximate number of Albanian or German books in the parental home; approximate number of Albanian or German books read by the father or mother per year.
4. In most Swiss cantons, the allocation to different types of lower secondary level ensues at the end of the sixth school year, that is, upon finishing primary school. The main school types of lower secondary level are the *Realschule* (or Sec. B; basic requirements) and the secondary school (or Sec. A; extended requirements).
5. With regard to reading competencies, this is demonstrated by the PISA findings of various countries. Within our investigation, the higher competence of girls, for example, in terms of the orientation competence between dialect and standard in L1 and L2 (see Schader 2004) or with regard to the production of more complex bilingual utterances (see Schader 2005: 290) is confirmed.

References

Auer, Peter (ed.) (1998). *Code-switching in Conversation: Language, Interaction and Identity*. London: Routledge.

Franceschini, Rita (1998). Code-switching and the notion of Code in linguistics: proposals for a dual focus model. In *Code-switching in Conversation: Language, Interaction and Identity*, Peter Auer (ed.), 51–74. London: Routledge.

Grosjean, François (1989). Neurolinguist, beware! The bilingual is not two monolinguals in one person. *Brain and Language* 36(1), 3–15.

—(1996). Bilingualismus und Bikulturalismus. Versuch einer Definition. In *Mehrsprachigkeit und Fremdsprachigkeit. Arbeit für die Sonderpädagogik?*, Hansjakob Schneider and Judith Hollenweger (eds.), 161–184. Luzern: Edition SZH.

Leuenberger, Ueli; and Maillard, André (1999). *Les damnés du troisième cercle. Les Kosovars en Suisse 1965/1999*. Geneva: éditions Metropolis.

Müller, Romano (1997). *Sozialpsychologische Grundlagen des schulischen Zweitspracherwerbs bei Migrantenkindern*. Aarau: Sauerländer.

Murati, Qemal (2000). *Gramatika e gabimeve. Kulla babilonike dhe përzierja e shqipes*. Shkup: Shoqata e shkrimtarëve shqiptarë.

Schader, Basil (2003a). Albanisch — kann doch jede/r Zweite. Ergebnisse einer Untersuchung zum informellen Albanisch-Erwerb von nicht-albanischsprachigen Oberstufen-SchülerInnen. *Albanische Hefte* 1/2003, 19–25.

—(2003b). Përhapja e çuditshme e shqipes në shkollat zvicerane. *Kurrikula dhe shkolla* 4/2003, 5–23.

—(2004). Albanische SchülerInnen zwischen Dialekt und Standardsprache. *Babylonia* 1(04), 57–60.

—(2005). *Shqyrtime gjuhësore rreth kontaktit mes shqipes dhe gjermanishtes në Zvicër*. Tiranë: Kristalina KH.

Shasivari, Shqipe (2003). Si ta ruajnë fëmijët mërgimtarë gjuhën amtare? *URA* 6/2003, 21.

Shkurtaj, Gjovalin (1998). *Ta duam dhe ta ruajmë gjuhën tonë të bukur*. Tiranë: Shtëpia botuese e librit universitar.

von Aarburg, Hans-Peter (2002). L'émigration albanaise du Kosovo vers la Suisse. *Ethnologie française* XXXII(2), 271–282.