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Codeswitching and identity: The case of Francophone immigrants in Israel

Abstract

We consider here Francophone immigrants who settled in a kibbutz, in Israel, about 50 years ago. They joined a society that was then in the middle of a process of reviving Hebrew and adopting it as a national language, under the impetus of strong ideological motivations. The question we focus on here concerns the impact of this context on the development of respondents' French/L1 and the characteristic patterns of code-switching that it will come to illustrate over the years. Many works show that L1 changes and CS occurrences are quite unavoidable among immigrants who acquire a new language (L2) and use it in most areas of their social life. L1, as a result, looses its importance – in areas like work, the public arena and, to some extent at least, the community and family. What is of special interest to us with respect to the insertion of Hebrew in French concerns the question of the correlation of code-switching with the ideological drives that stood in the background of respondents' immigration. It is accordingly that we gathered and analyzed code-switchings in the French spoken by our veteran immigrants from French-speaking countries, in the specific kibbutz under study. These immigrants, indeed, did not simply settle in an urban environment when they arrived in the country, but chose to integrate a kibbutz –a collectivistic village highly involved in ideological preoccupations. Hence, this population is particularly relevant to the investigation of the impact of ideology on the evolution of language contact and code-switching process. As for the data themselves, we found, amongst other findings, a clear tendency to code-switch to Hebrew with respect to subjective domains and identity aspects, which is easily interpreted in relation to the ideological atmosphere and identity ambitions that prevailed in the time of immigration. The findings lead us to specific statements that, as a whole, allow us to assess that even if ideological attitudes and identity changes are not the only factors affecting CS phenomena in the kind of language contact analyzed here, they do play an important role in its development.

Identity, ideology and language

Identity and language are two concepts strongly connected since long by numerous researchers. The idea that language and national identity are related has in fact be given shape in Germany in the late18[th] and early 19th centuries (Fishman 1972; Anderson 1983; see review in Myhill 2006:7-27). Herder (1744-1803), Fichte (1762-1814), and others after them underlined the importance of the spoken language which assumedly reveals the profound essence of a nation. They claimed that language is to be seen as an "almost sacred concomitant of nationality" (Edwards 1985:161; see review in ibid: 24-27). This idea has, over time, taken different formulations, and often quite extreme ones (Myhill 2006; Edwards 1985; Ager 2003). For present-day researchers, the identity/language notion, though still associated with nation, goes far beyond to include collectives, ethnic groups as well as individuals in quest of new values. E. Ben-Rafael (2001), for instance, speaking of ethnicity, underscores the importance of language as an identity symbol, even though its relation to ethnicity is unpredictable in modern settings where political and cultural imperatives influence the public use of official languages and downgrade ethnic codes to the role of secondary vernaculars: "Linguistic elements- a regular register, a restricted vocabulary, typical expressions or a characteristic accent- tend thus to signal social intercourse involving an ethnic dimension and mark, under its different versions, a group's constractive identity." Edwards (1985: 2-3, 46-47,161), too, emphasizes that language is to be considered as a common if not necessary marker of ethnicity or groupness. Pavlenko (2006) claims that all aspects of identity can influence speakers' linguistic investments; national or ethnic identities, for instance, steer individuals toward certain languages and away from others. These are the very reasons explaining that "Zionists arriving in

Palestine shunned their native languages in favour of Hebrew which would unite them in a single ethnic and historic identity" (ibid: 200). The same reasons explain, she says, the Tamil devotees' aspirations in India to revive their mother tongue in order to protect their ethnic identity. In a same vein, Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians wish, after having proclaimed independence, to distance themselves from Russian, the use of which they found incompatible with their aspiration for identities of their own. These examples and many others underscore, says Pavlenko (ibid:220-224), that "national and ethnic identities are tightly linked to political identities, whereby individuals invest not only in particular ethnicities or national belongings but also in political allegiances, rejecting a language linked to oppressive regimes, be it colonialism or totalitarism."

Aside political or national reasons connecting language and identity , one also finds quests for social mobility; French, for instance, is often seen as the language promising refinement and culture, as well as a successful middle-class future (Kinginger, 2004); and majority languages, such as English or German pledge an upward mobility; (Mc Donald 1994; Constantinidou 1994; cited in Pavlenko 2006). Linguistic choices happen also to be linked to gender identities; Japanese women learning English, for instance, often feel that English allows them more equitable gender relations and professional advancement (Pavlenko cites: Kobayashi 2002; Macmahill 2001; Piller and Takahashi, in press; Shumann 1997:274-275); others, on the contrary, develop negative feelings toward secondary languages that, compared with their native language, seem to them to favour gender discrimination (see review in Pavlenko 2006: 223).

In sum, as claimed by Pavlenko (ibid: 223), identity and linguistic options are "inextricably linked to language choices and decisions: the languages we speak or we refuse to speak have a lot to do with who we are, what subject positions we claim or contest, and what futures we invest in". Emotional investments are made in given languages because of the social or cultural character associated to those languages. Furthermore, structural conditions may they too be influential in these respects. Hence, a lack of systematic instruction of L1 to foreign children (which is often the case in new groups), and a firm linguistic policy may incite to a rapid attrition of L1 (Mills 2004, Kanno 2004, Mc. Namara 2004). Pavlenko (2004) thinks that in today America where a mono-linguistic policy prevails, English/L2 acquisition has come to involve the weakening of primary identities concomitantly with the attrition or the loss of L1. For Köpke and Schmid (2004: 12-14), motivation, attitudes and other affective factors may also cause attrition. And even though it is accepted that attitudes may influence more self-perception than actual proficiency (Waas 1996, Yagmur 1997, 2004, and Hulsen 2000), Köpke and Schmid (Köpke 2000: 354-355; Köpke and Schmid (2004:13) still sustain that attitudes may be of impact on attrition. Furthermore, many researchers (see for instance, Dewaele et al. eds. 2003; Edwards, 2003; Smolicz 1984) are convinced that the dynamics of language in contact situations are widely affected by identity.

Studies about German Jews and the Holocaust offer evidence of the link between identities and language. The war, the Holocaust and anti-German resentment are present in many German immigrants' linguistic trajectories and choices; they distance themselves from the past by discarding their native German. Studies of language attitudes among them in the English speaking world are numerous (see for instance, Bossard 1945, Schmid 2002, 2004, Waas 1994) and so are their memoirs and narratives (Pavlenko 2006:202, cites Altman 1986; Hegi 1997; Kluger 2001; Laqueur 2003; Lerner 1997; Strauss 1986; Uhlman 1960). Schmid (2002) reports that almost two thirds of her Jewish informants of German origin living now in the States, rarely or never use German and refuse to pass on the language to their children .

In contrast to this rejection of German, one finds the Hebrew revival phenomenon which actually exemplifies the same kind of behavior. The revival of the language of the Bible as a living national language is certainly one of the greatest instances of the link between language and identity. From

its very beginning, it was motivated by a nationalist drive and the desire to concretize a new Jewish and national identity (Myhill 2004).

At this point, it is to emphasize that in the realm of linguistic development, the non-use, rejection or neglect of a native language (L1) following the adoption of a new one (L2) entail changes in the former. One signals, for instance, morphology and syntactic deviations as well as the multiplication of interferences, lexical errors and retrieval difficulties, attrition phenomena as well as codeswitching manifestations (CS) of various types (Harnisch 2008; Schmid 2002: 177-184; Olshtain and Barzilay, 1991).

Codeswitching

Focusing particularly on CS, their occurrences actually respond to a diversity of functions. They may fill in a lexical void in L1 (Dorian 1989; Hamers, Blanc 1983) or provide lexical, semantic and discursive enrichment. Moreover, CS phenomena may also mark self-identity (Auer 1995, 1996; Meyers Scotton 1993; Jacobson ed. 1998, 2001). For still others (Pergnier 1989) they fulfil essentially pragmatic, lucid and mystic functions. As for borrowings, in particular, CS literature has noted that they principally concern cultural domains (Mackey 1976; Romaine 1989).

One also distinguishes between personal and collective borrowings (Poplack et al. 1988; Poplack et al. 1998). Code alternations may as well express 'they' and 'we' concepts (Gumperz), 'they' being the language of the other, the language to be acquired for multiple reasons, and 'we', the native language of the speaker, the one expressing his real 'self'. At this point, CS can be associated with linguistic behavior conveying emotions. One meets, indeed, cases of native language rejection and attrition as deriving from emotional attitudes. In contrast, one may also meet emotional attachments and "deep love" for new languages or strong instrumental drives for social advancement. In fact, "language use is always at some level an act of identity and since our identities are constantly in flux , and our emotions are changing over time, so our language investments will be complex and even contradictory some times" (Bruch 2006: 5). They raise the questions of in which language, bilinguals give expression to feelings. In other words, does L1 remain the language of the heart?

There are many answers to that question but no consensus has yet been reached (see overview, Pavlenko 2006). Some researchers draw the difference in emotional force between native and foreign swearwords and taboo words (ibid 2006:168- 170; Greenson 1950; Dewaele, 2004a, 2004b). Moreover, it is also observed that some subjects are able to express emotions more easily in the non-native language; this is, for instance, the case of Komiko, a native speaker of Japanese, who states that English allows her to express emotions she feels unable to utter in Japanese. Other individuals prefer to stick to their L1 which remains the main support of their emotional behaviors. Pierre (L1 French, L2 Dutch, L3 English, L4 German) asserts that he does not feel the same emotional load of words in foreign languages such as in French (see in Pavlenko 2006: 172-173). For many bilingual writers, the language of their childhood has remained the language of their heart and talent. Pavlenko (2006: 180-181) draws out different portraits of speakers facing this kind of problem. Hence, Ho, a Chinese/L1 and English L/2 speaker, confides that Chinese is for her the language with the deepest emotional resonance: "*I think it is the language of my heart*" (in Novakich and Shapard 2000, cited in ibid :180); this is also the case of Alfau (in Kellman, 2000, cited in Pavlenko: 2006: 28) who, in spite of the fact he writes fluently in several different languages, it is his native which conveys his most subjective and profound self expressions –i.e. poetry. In brief, some people find greater expressiveness, emotional potential, visceral power in L1 which they continue to use in those respects when speaking or writing about intimate matters, close to their self. Other people, on the contrary, acknowledge that their stepmother tongue has opened

them new possibilities of expressing their deepest emotions, and of feeling free to do so (Pavlenko 2006:182).

The context

In the context of these reflections, we focus in the following on the question of whether or not the quest of a given national identity, Israeli in our case, and the adoption of a new language, Hebrew, have influenced the development of French, the native language of former Francophone immigrants living in Israel for four and five decades. In practical terms, we ask to what extent the processes considered in the above related to the phenomenon of codeswitching, effectively took place in these subjects' language, and whether or not they are accounted for, at least partially, by ideology and the quest of identity.

The revival of Hebrew, as we suggest with others, is one of the best examples of the connection between language and identity (Pavlenko 2006, 2004; Edwards 1985; Myhill 2006, 2004; Masson 2003; Sarfati 1995). It is in view of the gathering of Jewish diasporas from all over the world in the Land of Israel that early pioneers had reached the decision to switch to Hebrew, the language of the Jews' Holy Scriptures everywhere. This switch, they were convinced, would be the most vibrant symbol of the renewed Jewish Nation which aspired to establish. Yiddish (Fishman 1981), Ladino and its varieties, Judeo-Arabic and many other languages associated with Jewish identity were, in this perspective, to be marginalized (Myhill 2004). Hebrew was estimated by leading segments of the Zionist enterprise to be the best Jewish identity marker once modernized and vernacularized.

Hebrew, indeed, has always been considered, not only by Jews but also by non-Jews as the most "authentic" Jewish language (Sarfarti 1995:239-41; Myhill 2006), a contention that was sustained by numerous authoritative sources (see, for instance, NLU 1948; GLE 1964). Language revival of an ancient language for identity-building purposes, which according to no few researchers is a quite a "*difficult business*" (Edwards 1985: 86) has turned out as most successful in the case of Hebrew. This success is explained by Nahir (1977, 1983) as firstly responding to the very need of a linguistically heterogeneous population which agrees on the adoption of a common communicative medium. In second, there was people's awareness of the fact that Hebrew was the language that identifies their olden culture. What is more, Hebrew, actually, has never been a thoroughly dead language among Jews: it was the language of the cult throughout the diaspora and its related folklore (songs, poems etc). It was also the language used in religious academies where Hebrew texts were learned and commented on (Fellman 1976, 1972). It was also the literary language of no few writers in the 19th century who aspired to create a new secular Jewish literature. Last but not least, many Hebrew words were borrowed by the various Jewish vernaculars used in Diaspora communities. In brief, Hebrew, says Fellman, was on the "tip of the tongue" of many Jews' even though, but a few really knew it.

In these circumstances, Hebrew, in Israel, was "*felt to be the language most central to [people's] identity as Jews, as their national language*" (Myhill 2006: 102-107); it was thus forcefully revived and developed as a modern language, to become the symbol of national identity. As described by Myhill (ibid: 101-107), this revival which began in the settlements founded by immigrants in the last years of the nineteenth century and spread primarily through schools, was a general reality by the start of World War Two when it had become the daily spoken language of the majority of the Jews in the country.

Hebrew, however, had a long way to go in order to be adjusted to the contemporary world, which implied many lexical and syntactic innovations. For some commentators, the "output" of these processes of adjustment is very different from the Biblical language and cannot therefore qualify for

the name of "Hebrew", but rather for "Israeli" (Zukermann 2003). This approach is gainsaid by the fact that Biblical Hebrew has remained the core of the present-day language, and it is as such that it serves as the linguistic symbol of " Israeliness". It is on behalf of this language, seen by the vast majority as the direct offspring of Biblical Hebrew, that people endorsed that "a Hebrew individual should speak Hebrew", nay even Hebrew only. Numerous frameworks (*ulpanim*) were created and offered Hebrew courses to immigrants of all ages, and the didactics of Hebrew learning were the object of impressive efforts (Pavlenko 2006; Lefkovitz 2004; Myhill 2006).

Though, one cannot deny that in the last couple of decades, the Israeli public has grown more tolerant of the use of other languages in public; this may be observed in the linguistic landscape of Israel which has become much more multilingual and where one finds a stronger presence of Amharic, French and, above all, Russian (see E. Ben-Rafael et al., 2006). This, however, does by no means undermine the fact that Hebrew is firmly established as the major linguistic marker of the Israeli identity; what has changed is that the switch to a new legitimate language does not entails anymore a dramatic rejection of the use of former L1s - as it was the case in the past.

It is in this changing context that the research reported in the following takes on its interest.

The research

In this paper, we firstly want to learn about the motivations of one specific group of immigrants – Francophones who arrived in Israel some decades ago. We are interested in the ways they perceived this immigration and their – related or unrelated – language attitudes – *vis-à-vis* French and Hebrew. Secondly, we want to learn about changes that have taken place in respondents' French and the influence exerted by Hebrew on it – paying special attention here to eventual CS patterns . Our intention is to see if, as elaborated in the foregoing, the quest of these Francophone immigrants for an Israeli identity and way of life relates to, and accounts for, somehow, given manifestations of CS.

Our present analyses draw from two studies (C1 and C2). C1 was collected in 1998-2000 (see Ben-Rafael, 2001a; 2001b; 2004); C2 in 2004-5. Both report on the spoken French of Francophone subjects of middle-class background and at least secondary education. These respondents immigrated to Israel in the 1950s and 60s, as young adults, when aged 18-20, after completing Francophone high schools in Francophone countries. Data were gathered by means of semi-structured interviews of approximately 60 minutes each. Our questions in either study asked about past events, motives of immigration, linguistic problems, and present-day attitudes toward French and Hebrew. C1 interviewees included 46 Francophones who live nowadays in cities in Israel; C2 interviewees included 15 persons who joined a collective village (kibbutz) at the time of their immigration and who still live there.

In our analysis, we discuss, and in this order, (1) identity motivations and language attitudes, and (2) CS phenomena.

Narratives about ideology and language

Our respondents in both studies are well aware that their immigration took place at a time when a strong ideological atmosphere prevailed in the country. The core of this ideology was a belief in the ongoing building of a new society grounded in new values and a new identity associated with a renewed language. Moreover, most interviewees also insist that they themselves have come to Israel for ideological reasons – membership and socialization in a Zionist organization, reaction to the war experience of their families, an aspiration to a new life style or to join a Jewish society, and the like.

Rosette, for instance, says :

(1) *je suis venue bon parce que [...] à l'époque i fallait pas se marier avec un goj [...] et comme à l'époque[...] lo hajinu mitnagdim laorim ... hajinu bekhol zot jeladim tovim... az kakha bati po... ze hakol*

'I came well because […] at that time one shouldn't get married with a non Jew […] and since that at that time […] *we didn't oppose to our parents … we were in any case good kids…so like that I came here…that's it*'

Respondents emphasize that the switch to Hebrew was a basic credo of their new environment at that time; many felt the urge to learn the language as quickly as possible in order to fit in the society. No few took special Hebrew courses in *ulpanim*. To speak Hebrew, in brief, seemed to them to be a primordial necessity. Hence, Eliyahu remembers, for example, that the first time he came to Tel –Aviv, he was struck by slogans displayed all around reminding people to speak "only in Hebrew":

(2) *on est arrivé à Tel-Aviv en 45... hapaam harichona che bati le Tel-Aviv haja katuv bevet kafe « ivri daber ivrit ! »*

'we arrived to Tel-Aviv in 45… *the first time I came to Tel-Aviv it was written in a coffee house « Hebrew speak Hebrew! »*'

Miriam, another respondent, tells how, a few days after her arrival in the country, a Francophone interlocutor refused to speak with her in French, declaring that he will do so only when she will be able to express herself in Hebrew. She remembers that this remark, which today seems to her completely out of place, seemed natural and understandable to her then.

C2 respondents, members of a kibbuz, insist on the impact of the Shoa on their national feelings and the influence of socialist and communist aspirations which were behind their decision to settle in a kibbutz in Israel. Yair, for example, explains he was impregnated in his youth with the Zionist and socialist ideals and he was convinced at the time that coming to Israel was the right answer to his ideological urges. Yaakov tells that even though he came from Algeria where his family was assimilated to the French population and did not directly suffer from the Shoa, he himself was deeply affected by what he heard in the aftermath of World War II; these feelings added on to progressive ideas about equality and collectivism which appealed to him. Drora, whose parents emigrated from Russia to Paris and have endured World War II, also tells that she was strongly influenced by what she heard at home when deciding to immigrate to Israel. Chula, also from Paris, reminds us too of the impact of the War on her decision to immigrate:

(3) *J'avais 20 ans […] j'ai passé les années de guerre en 1944, après la libération comme on avait perdu beaucoup de famille […] quand j' ai vu à Paris les déportés ... tout ça ... comme on dit zè asa li macheu […] je peux dire que moi je suis montée en Israel des suites de la guerre*

'I was 20 years old […] I experienced world war II in 1944, after the liberation since we have lost many family members […] when I saw in Paris the prisoners from the concentration camps … all this …as one says *it did me something* […] I may say that I , I went to Israel because of the war'

And when the interviewer asks her if she considers her immigration an ideological act, she answers :

(4) *Oui et non …ça dépend de ce qu'on entend par idéologique… moi par exemple j'étais très française ….je connaissais très bien le français […] j'étais bonne élève … j'avais pas des raisons vraiment personnelles, entre guillemets, de vouloir recommencer ma vie …mais je pense que ce __gal__ là de la création d'Israel ça a enflammé beaucoup de gens […] c'était un grand __gal__ après la guerre, la grande guerre et aussi après la création de l'état d'Israel*

'Yes and no… it depends of what one means by ideology… as for me, for example, I was very French… I knew French very well […] I was a good student… I had no real personal reasons, so to say, to desire a new life… but I think that this __wave__ of the creation of the state of Israel it set a lot of people on fire […] it was a great __wave__ after the war the great war and also after the creation of the state of Israel'

Most of the interviewees, when asked about their integration in a new country and in a kibbutz , tend to insist that it was fairly easy . Yisra says that he was enthusiastic to work on the field, and so was the case with Yoav who declares: "*ce qui m'intéressait c'était le travail de la terre!*" ('what interested me the most was to work the land'). Some respondents, however, especially women, remind the difficulties they encountered when getting to physical work. Drora tells for instance:

(5) *La plus grande difficulté… ça a été le travail parce-que je suis allée travailler très rapidement au __bet margoa__…et c'était un travail physique très difficile, donc je me souviens que j'ai eu un __machber__ (…) mais ça a été plus facile à confronter à gérer parce-que he he grâce au __garin__ (…..) et puis bon et puis y avait l'idéal… mais c'était quand même quelque part difficile*

'the hardest thing … it has been work because I began to work very quickly in the __rest house__… and it was very difficult physical work, so I remember I had a __crisis__ […] but it has quite easy to deal with it thanks to the fact we were a __group__ […] and well and we had an ideal…but still it was quite difficult'.

As for respondents' language attitudes, they all say they were ideologically convinced of the necessity for them to learn and speak Hebrew according to the kibbutz's and Israel's general norm; sometimes, they report, they had hard times in this respect. One respondent, for instance, speaking of herself and some of her friends, laughs when remembering:

(6) *Je me souviens très bien les __vatikim__ ils étaient toujours énervés quand on parlait français …à table au __khadar okhèl__*

'I remember very well the __veterans__ of the kibbutz always getting nervous when we spoke Hebrew … in the __collective dinning room__ '

She goes on and tells:

(7) *on pratiquait le français de 5 heures du matin à minuit…[…] on se croyait on se prenait pour des intellectuels…on avait beaucoup de livres de Jean -Paul Sartre et de philosophes … on était abonnés à des revues françaises et jusqu'à maintenant d'ailleurs ….on était du point de vue culturel très très français (…) alors le kibuts (…) nous a donné des cours d'hébreu deux fois par semaine (…) on a commencé à parler l'hébreu comme on dit sur le tas … on était pas très motivés mais y a avait un grand __michtar__ …on nous disait ' __ivri daber ivrit__ '* (laughing)*

'we used to speak French from 5 in the morning until midnight […] we thought we were intellectuals… we had a lot of books from Jean- Paul Sartre and philosophers… we were subscribers to French journals … until now in fact… we were very very "French" intellectually […]

so the kibbutz […] gave us Hebrew lessons twice a week […] we began to speak Hebrew as one goes along… we were not very much motivated but we had to be *disciplined* … people used to tell us '*Hebrew speak Hebrew*'

During the years, we were told, kibbutz reality changed dramatically giving more importance to private life. Hebrew, however, has always belonged, and still belongs, to the ideological aspirations of the community. Margalit and others explain they really felt they were participating to the Hebrew revival. Drora thinks they could not become real Israelis without turning to Hebrew in their daily life. Chula remembers how one family who wanted to retain French with their children was mocked by the community, and she herself claims that she would never had spoken with her children in French at this epoch:

(8) *C'était très mal vu… y avait une famille [...] la mère était juive mais très française et alors à son fils elle lui parlait français et elle s'en fichait du* <u>*bet- jeladim*</u> *[…] je me rappelle que le petit i disait "papa papa" et tout le monde les enfants [….] se moquaient de lui [....] "papa papa" (laughing) et mon fils il l' imitait et i disait:" <u>hinè</u> papa papa"... alors je l'aurais certainement pas fait*

'It was poorly regarded… there was a family […] the mother was Jewish but very much "French" and so she spoke to her son in French and she didn't care of what was going on in the <u>children's home</u> […] I remember her son saying in French "*dady dady*" and all the children laughing at him […] '*dady dady*' and my son used to imitate him and to say: <u>here</u> is '*dady dady*' … so as for me I would never have been ready to do that (*speak in French with my children*)

Perceptions of linguistic change

When the interviewees (C1 and C2) are asked if their present-day French is still the language they used to speak at their arrival, they all confirm that changes have effectively taken place. They see these changes as the consequence of their switch to Hebrew and their remoteness from any Francophone environment. Several subjects are aware of their mixing French and Hebrew, and during the interview tried to control their discourse. They often search after French words and say that they resent a linguistic impoverishment. One respondent (C2), says:

(9) *mon français s'est beaucoup appauvri…énormément appauvri…y a trois mois je suis allée en France parce que ma sœur a eu un deuil [...] je suis allée pour la <u>chiva</u>… alors là j'étais dans une atmosphère française et j'ai vu que mon français était plus comme avant (...) la langue … elle est plus pauvre…avant quand je voulais raconter quelque chose etc… j'avais des mots… comme ça plus choisis… plus descriptifs (...) quelques personnes m'ont dit que je parlais charabia comme ça… de parler ou hébreu ou français … à mon avis je crois qu' i z avaient raison et je fais attention à ça… comme on dit en hébreu <u>ani mudaat lezè</u>…maintenant si tu me demandes en français …et si je veux dire en français "<u>ani mudaat'</u> je saurai pas le dire (...) <u>ani mudaat lamatsav hazè</u> je saurais pas le dire en français…je trouverais pas un équivalent*

'My French has empoverished… much empoverished… three months ago I went to France because my sister went into mourning […] I went there for the <u>mourning time</u> […] so there I was in a French atmosphere and I realized that my French was not as before […] the language … it is poorer… before when I wanted to relate things etc… I had words… more selected … more descriptive […] some people told me I was speaking gibberish… I should speak either Hebrew or French … I think they were right and I do pay attention now to this … as one says in Hebrew I am "<u>conscious</u>"… now if you ask me how to say in French …. and if I want to say in French "<u>I am conscious</u>" I wont

be able to say that […] *I'm conscious of the situation* I won't know how to say that in French… I won't find any equivalent'

And when asked by the interviewer to give a list of Hebrew words she tends to insert into her French discourse, she answers:

(10) *khadar okhèl, je me sers du mot khadar okhèl he he ....je dis pas on va écouter les informations, je dis on va écouter les khadachot (...) pigua par exemple [...] je peux pas le dire en français ....comment tu dis en français « haja pigua »? je vais à la marpéa, par exemple, je dirais jamais je vais à l'infirmerie; on a reçu notre taktsiv, je saurais pas le dire en français ; je vais au doar, pas à la poste [...] on peut me demander :"comment tu as * voyagé hier?" , alors je lui dirai tout de suite "rakèvèt" (laughing)...je lui dirai pas "en train"... tu vois ce que je veux dire… moi je dis … je vais à la markolit [...] Charon eh bien c' est le roch mèmchala*

' *dinning room*,I use the word *dinning room* he he …I don't say we are going to listen to the news, I say we are going to listen to the *news* […] a *terrorist attack* for example […] I cannot say it in French… how do you say in French " there has been a *terrorist attack*" ? I go to the infirmary. For example; we got our *budget*, I won't be able to say that in French; I go to the *postoffice*, not to the postoffice […] one can ask me:" how did you travel yesterday?", and I will tell immediatly "*by train*" (laughing)… I won't say "by train"… you see what I mean… I say " I go to the *grocery*" […] Charon well it's the *Prime Minister*'

Yaakov and Stviko also point out that concepts describing their daily life cannot be expressed in French, even if they could be translated in French; Yaakov explains (11) there are words which express the specificity of the kibbutz society, and it is difficult to find French equivalents that will yield the same ideas.

(11) *tu comprends tu vas à la mirpaa tu vas pas à l'infirmerie* […] *il y a une grosse différence*

'you understand you go to the *infirmary*, you don't go to the infirmary […] there's a big difference'

Most of the interviewees confide that their present-day French differs substantially from the French they used to speak:

(12) *je parle souvent avec ma sœur au téléphone…je vois qu'elle construit mieux ses phrases que moi ou qu' elle emploie des mots ou des termes que je connais…je sais qu' i z existent, mais … elle parle un plus joli français que moi* (Chula)

'I often speak with my sister by phone… I see she builds sentences better than me or uses words or terms I know … I know they exist but … she speaks a nicer French than me'

Hence, respondents know that a linguistic gap separates them from non-Israeli French locutors :

(13) *je vois ça avec mon frère… quand mon frère est là (...) et qu'on discute… je dois chercher mes mots… des mots que j'ai pas utilisés depuis longtemps il faut les chercher* (Yaakov)

'I see that with my brother … when he is here (…) and we discuss things… I have to search for my words… words I haven't used since a long time I have to search for them'

When, moreover, the respondents are asked by the interviewer in which language they whisper tender words to beloved ones, the common answer is "in Hebrew". Some say that even if it

happens they also use French, Hebrew remains undoubtedly the prefered language. Bibo (C1) laughs when he tells about his wife's reaction to French loving words:

(14) *Quelquefois je l'appelle chérie… alors elle rit mais elle me répond pas!* ('sometimes I call her *darling*… then she laughs but she does not answer me').

All in all, respondents still stand behind their past decisions to come to Israel and – for the kibbutz members – to settle in a collective village:

(15) si c'était à refaire je le referais (…) les règles du jeu ont changé …mais je regrette absolument pas (Tsviko)

'If I had to do it again I would do it (…) the game rules have changed… but I absolutely do not regret'

Regarding the language matter, however, one perceives more ambiguous reactions and hesitation. Respondents still endorse the imperative of speaking Hebrew to assert their national identity, but when looking retrospectively at their past language behavior, they do not hide their regret they did not speaking French with their children or, at least, teaching them the language as a foreign language. Yaakov thinks it was a real error due particularly to the fact they were young and not realistic enough:

(16) *c'est une erreur en fait due à l'adolescence… on voulait une langue nationale on était prêt à ne pas parler dans la langue nationale qu'on possédait…et ça c'était une erreur*

'It's a mistake due to adolescence… we wanted a national language we weren't ready to speak in the national language we possessed… and this has been a mistake'

Some of the subjects insist that they feel especially bad when they hear their own children today, who meanwhile have become adults, blaming them about not having taught them French.

CS in discourse

Looking now at the linguistic aspects of the respondents' discourse (C1 and C2) and focusing especially on CS, it appeared clearly that this phenomenon is of the greatest incidence among respondents of both corpora and that they concern many domains of linguistic activity. They may belong to daily life:

(17) *les feuilles du gader sont complètement sèches*

'the leaves of the *hedge* are completely dry'

(18) *je dois acheter deux tasses sakum des trucs de lettres sabon kelim sratim*

'I need to buy two cups flatware stuff for letters washing stuff for the dishes films'

They often emphasize or clarify what has been already said in French (19); they may also simply express some attrition and are the outcome of locutor's difficulties to remember the accurate French word (20).

(19) *c'était comme une pension…pnimia* /'it was like a boarding house … a boarding house'(Maxime, C1)

(20) *y a des mots qui me sortent pas que je voudrais dire en français… je les dis en hébreu* (Genie, C2) /' there are words which don't come which I would like to say in French… I tell them in Hebrew'

CS appears often when speakers need missing precise terms:

(21) *ekh omrim betsarfatit chakhakhti tsvi ajil ajala… nu bekhajaj chakhakhti…bein on trouve une bête*

'how do you say in French deer stag hind …really on my life I have forgotten … let's say he finds an animal'

Yet, CSs are especially salient with respect to two spheres of linguistic activity: the linguistic structuration of semantic fields pertaining to the local public scene, on the one hand, and locutors' subjective experiences, on the other. It is to these two spheres that we now turn.

The public sphere

In C1, we found 951 different borrowings- nouns in majority (644), followed by tags, adverbs, verbs and adjectives. Most of the borrowed terms are related to the Israeli public sphere – such as immigration and ethnic cleavages, education, work, economy, health, religion, army, politics, public institutions or environment. The borrowings include general concepts referring to these areas of activity, as well as elements associated with them: *paar/social* gap and *kipuakh*/discrimination, for instance, as well as (lack of) *nimus*/ politeness, and *khutspa*/ lack of consideration, all related in various manners to immigration and related normative judgments.

As a whole, borrowings delineate semantic fields that respond to a quite regular structural model- a concept which outlines the field, actors, institutions, activities or contents of activities, and eventually additional markers. Some of the semantic fields are more structured than others, yet they all more or less fit into the same pattern, as we see in the following two examples of semantic structures- immigration (22) and work (23):

(22) the concept : alja/*immigration to Israel*

.the actors : garin / *pioneer group*, khanikhim / trainees, olim,/ immigrants, olim khadachim,/ *new immigrants male)*, ola khadacha/ *new immigrants female (f)*, achkenazim/ Ashkenazi Jews, sefaradim/ Sepharadic Jews, jekim,/ Jews from German origin, chaliakh,/ *emissary*, madrikhim/ *instructor,* khavèr/ *kibbutz member (m)*, khavéra/ *kibbutz member(f)*

. the institutions : akhchara/ preparatory stage, sokhnut/ immigration agency, aljat anoar/ *youth immigration agency*, kèn/ *club*, kénim/*clubs*, makhanè/*camp*, makhon/*institute*, ulpan/ H*ebrew acquistion school*

.the content : ajarot pituakh/*developing towns*, aséfa/*assembly*, chikunim/ cheap *appartments*, ckhuna/ *neighborhood*, chkhunot/ *crowded districts* , kibuts,/ *collectiv village*, mochav chitufi,/*cooperativ village*, sidur avoda/ *work distribution*

the markers :oalim/ *tents*, gola/*diaspora*, ivrit/*Hebrew*, maabarot/*transit camps*

(23) the concept : <u>parnasa</u>/ *job*, <u>kalkala</u>/*economy*

the actors : <u>joatsot</u>/*advisers (f)* ; <u>kablan</u>/ *building contractor*; <u>mecharètèt</u>/ *cleaner lady*; <u>menaèlèt</u>/ *manageress*; <u>merakèzèt koakh adam</u>/ wo*man power centralisator* ; <u>ovèdèt sotsialit</u>/*social worker (female)* ; <u>ozèrèt</u>/ *helper* ; <u>chutaf</u>/*associate* ; <u>roé khèchbon</u>/*certified accountant*

the institutions : <u>istadrut</u>/*syndicat* ; <u>sidur avoda</u>/*work repartition* ; <u>kablanut</u>/ *work for a fixed sum;* <u>pensja</u>/*pension* ; <u>bituakh léumi</u>/*national security service*

. the content : <u>mosakh</u>/ *garage*; <u>èsèk</u>/*business* ; <u>avodat khaklaout</u>/ *agricultural work*; <u>lul</u>/ *henhouse*; <u>misradé livuj</u>/ *escort service*; <u>tetsuga</u>/*exposition*

. the markers : <u>gruchim</u>/ *pennies*; <u>mitun</u>/ *economical recession*; <u>avtala</u>/ *unemployment*; <u>kèrèn</u>/ *fund*; <u>misim</u>/ *taxes*; <u>turija</u>/ *spade*; <u>tèkèn</u>/*standard*

Kibbutzniks' narratives also are loaded with numerous CSs - lexical-units as well as whole Hebrew sequences, nay even matrix language alternations. Like in C1, CSs are primarily connected to Israel's public sphere (24) but to this is to be added the specifics of kibbutz life - kibbutz socializing, education, work, public office and others (25):

(24) *hitnatkut* (di*sengagement); khaver knèsèt (parliament member), avoda (Labour party), kupat kholim (health insurance), bituakh machlim (complementary insurance).*

(25).Kibbutz society: *khavérim (*kibbutz' members*), aséfot (assemblies) vaadot (commissions)*

.Education: *baté jeladim* (children's homes), *ganim* (kindergarten), *bét sefer ézori* (regional school)

.Work: *pardes* (orangery), *falkha* (extensive agriculture), *mifalim* (factories), *adachot* (lenses)

.Public offices: *merakéz mechek, gisbar, mazkir* (economical manager, treasurer, secretary).

Some French equivalents or paraphrases might be found (see Eilon, 2002; Avrahami, 1998) but speakers prefer Hebrew terms which bear semantic nuances that, in their view, are not expressed in French. In fact, one distinguishes, here too, collective borrowings used by almost all the interviewees, and unpredictable nonce borrowings which are most often linked to the semantic fields mentioned above.

Subjective utterances

CS phenomena also appear to also be a support for subjective utterances. CSs, indeed, are also frequent when locutors speak of themselves, their lives and their feelings. Personal events and subjective experiences cause them most often to switch their discourse from French to Hebrew. This is the case, for instance, of a nurse when she speaks of noisy children under her guidance (26) and of Mikhal who tells how nice she was welcomed when she arrived in Israel (27):

(26) *quand je voyais les enfants se bagarrer et crier je leur disais <u>ma atem khochvim ze kneset po?</u>*

'when I used to see the children scuffle and shout I used to tell them *<u>what do you think this is a parliament meeting here</u>*'

(27) *On me disait boi tikansi boi tichi* ('one used to tell me *come on get in come on let's have a drink*')

Hebrew appears time and time again when locutors operate a kind of comeback to their personal experience and stop for an introspective look. Ruta (C1) when telling about her difficulties at the time of her immigration says for example:

(28) *ejn li cheifa comme ça…je sais pas comment t'expliquer … quand j'étais jeune j'avais beaucoup plus de …de cheifot …lo hajiti kakha j'etais comme ça…moi je voulais pas rester en Israel aval avec le temps itragalnu ekh cheomrim*

'[nowdays] *I have no desires* like that… I don't know how to explain that… when I was young I had much more … *desires* … *I wasn't like that* I was like that … I …I didn't want to remain in Israel *but* with time *we got used as we use to say*'

Rosette, when describing her ex-husband, speaks in French as long as the description is intended to be objective, yet she codeswitches to Hebrew when she adds her own opinion:

(29) *C'est un type tu vois très intelligent [...] aval ba khevra… bichvili haja eser aval rak bichvili… ata lo jakhol lijot levad… ata khaj bekhol zot beejze cheou misgeret… im khaverim…ve … tu peux pas vivre seul*

'It's a person you see very clever […] *but in society… for me he was ok but only for me… you cannot live alone… you live in a certain context… with friends… and* you cannot live alone'

CSs in all these constitute markers of the self and of self's look on others. Ora (C1), for instance, talks with much emotion about her friend who just lost her husband:

(30) oh bein elle est vaillante hein elle est vaillante […] elle est *beseder at jodaat….hi mamach beseder … ze haja nora veajom* […] *nora ve ajom ma beofen pitomi* on lui dit ton mari est mort … 'oh well she is brave oh she is brave […] *she is ok you know… she is really ok… this was awful and terrible [...] it was awful and terrible really suddenly* one tells her your husband is dead…'

In a same vein, Rivka (C1) turns to Hebrew with speaking with compassion about her two sick friends:

(31) il est très faible … *jech lo beaja im atsamot u olekh bekochi* (…) *i meod meduket (...) i lo jekhola laset et ze*

'he is very weak… *he has a bone- problem he hardly walks* […] *she is much depressed* […] *she can't bear it*'

Ida (C1), who takes care of a young Ethiopian immigrant facing difficulties of adjustment, tells also in Hebrew, how she invests herself in teaching her how to manage with her money and not be cheated in the bus :

(32) *Je prenais des boutons des allumettes … qu'elle arrive a payer l'autobus… ani lo mora aval kakha khachavti ani akhnis la baroch… ve ba otobus lo jesadru ota*

'I used to take buttons matches … she should manage to pay in the bus… *I 'm not a teacher but like that I thought I will put her something in the head…and in the bus they won't cheat her'*

Besides long sequences, Hebrew idioms and phatics add subjective and expressive nuances to the French discourse:

(33) *lo mekubal; ma ani agid lakh;* si la *savta* avait des *galgalim; khas ve khalila; kol hkavod lakh; che lo neda*

'not acceptable; what could I say; if grand-ma could go on roller skates; God forbid; congratulations to you; let's never experience such a thing!'

Likewise, single-item borrowings and long sequences with affective connotations were also collected among kibbutzniks; they concern not only events pertaining to their personal life (34), but also subjective opinions about kibbutz affairs. Sara (35), when answering to the question "*are you satisfied by the kibbutz' developments*", uses the Hebrew word *memurmèrèt* not just because she does not find the French term for '*disappointed*', but because Hebrew seems here more "telling" as a means of expressing feelings. When Chula describes the end of World War II, she switches to Hebrew as well (36). Moreover, idioms, proverbs and phatics are very present here as well (37; 38)

(34) je suis *zeev boded* … j'ai pas de *gaaguim (Joel) /* 'I'm a lonely wolf …I do not feel any nostalgy'

(35) j'*ai été memurmèrèt…je saurais pas le dire en français (Sara)/* I have been disappointed… I wouldn't know how to say that in French'

(36) quand j'ai vu les déportés … tout ça ... comme on dit *zè asa li macheu* (Chula)/ '*when I have seen the concentration camp prisoners ...all this… as one says it did me something'*

(37) *behèkhlèt* (for sure), *bediavad* (retroactively), *zéu* (that's it), *tov* (well), *beseder* (o.k)

(38) *kmo barad be-jom bahir* /'like hail storm in the middle of a nice day'

In sum, CSs - borrowings and segmental CS - express in both corpora, a certain public and cultural reality which could not be voiced by French substitutes with the same easiness. And the same is also true for affective and subjective utterances that are quite expressive of respondents' very identity.

In brief, CS phenomena give expression to two major tendencies which both relate to identity. Hebrew elements intermingling in French discourse underscore belongingness to the Israeli or kibbutz settings. This seems to mean that regarding all-societal issues, speakers see themselves *as insiders*. In a same vein, locutors also go mostly back to Hebrew when expressing feelings that come up from the depths of their beings.

Conclusions

All hypotheses offered by the literature are sustained by numerous CS occurrences which we found in our data. Though, identity has also appeared as a powerful factor in the role of Hebrew in the discourse about both public and subjective topics. As mentioned by researchers elsewhere, our Francophone subjects exhibit indeed a tendency to codeswitch when it comes to cultural items and local aspects of daily life. This is generally explained by attrition, semantic nuances or the absence of appropriate equivalents. Moreover, up to a point, their switch to Hebrew may be seen as typical of the experience of immigration.

Though, the amplitude of the tendency to codeswitch among our subjects leads us to the conviction that one finds here as well a desire motivated by a national ideology to identify with the new society and culture and to accept detachment from past identities and cultures. The determined attitude of our subjects to involve themselves in the Hebrew language and culture is clearly bound to the fact that they find more appropriate to express themselves in Hebrew on many topics and matters - even in the context of a French speech event. Regarding some issues, they flatly find impossible to speak in another language - French substitutes, they say, cannot translate the specifics of kibbutz or Israeli experience. They still know French, but when asked about their life experience in French by an interviewer who is bilingual herself, they definitely mix their French with Hebrew. Some locutors are even unable to stick to French as matrix language even when the interviewer insists on keeping to this language.

To be sure, respondents regret today that they have attrited somehow their native language, and, mainly, that they were unable to convey it to their sons and daughters, and thereby caused them to loose the opportunity to acquire a valuable linguistic capital. At the same time, they confide that things could not have been otherwise at the epoch of their immigration when the revival of Hebrew was still at the top of the public agenda – 10 or 15 years only after the creation of the State.

Yet, despite these expressions of regret, the importance of CSs in respondents' present-day discourse about public topics is concomitant with its role in subjective and affective utterances. We observe that Hebrew elements convey not only the new world of our subjects but also their deepest "self". This came out in narratives where statements of critique, judgment, appreciation or depreciation came out in Hebrew. Locutors recall their parents or friends in French but when the tune becomes emotional, the speech turns to Hebrew. Interjections which punctuate the discourse and put into words subjective nuances are in Hebrew as well. Locutors utter neither the French "oh la la", nor other phatics popular in spoken French, but rather the Hebrew "*oj va voj*"(ouch!), "*be-khajekha*" (On your life), "*barukh hachem*" (God is blessed) or other expressions coming "straight from the heart". The natural character of CSs explains, in part at least, the fluidity and coherence the speech where none never apologies for switching from one language to the second.

In conclusion, we find that the ideological background clearly impacts on the Francophones' linguistic behaviour. The unreserved adoption of Hebrew by respondents has had the unavoidable consequence that offspring have lost a chance to gain control of French. But, instead, they belong to a generation for whom Hebrew is definitely a mother tongue – despite the fact that it was not the original tongue of parents. A no less serious consequence refers to the changes that took place in the French of those Francophones, its erosion, performance difficulties and intermingling with Hebrew. In the context of a vigorous mono-linguistic language policy, Francophones acted the way they did on behalf of an idea that is still around 50 years later, but which, nowadays, does not prevent them anymore to think that they could have done better with their French. This discussion of a case of relations between language choice, and identity and ideology confirms our theoretical proposition: a voluntary ideological perspective has favored not only the erosion of L1 and amplified codeswitching processes, but also the lack of L1 retention and its nearly complete loss in the second generation. CS phenomena give here expression to the endorsement of a new national identity and a feeling of belongingness to the wider collective.

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