

**University of Alberta**

Power and identity: negotiation through code-switching in the Swiss  
German classroom

by

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## **Abstract**

This thesis focuses on the negotiation of power and identity between Swiss students and instructors in the Swiss classroom. Although *Schriftdeutsch*<sup>1</sup> is the official language of secondary schools in Switzerland, speakers often practice code-switching, which serves many conversational functions (Auer 1998). This paper examines how German-speaking Swiss use code-switching strategies to negotiate power and identity in the classroom. My data is drawn from interactions in the classroom and a short interview. Using a constructivist methodology based on conversation analysis (Antaki & Widdicombe 1998; Meinhof & Galasinski 2005; Pavlenko & Blackledge 2004), I analyse classroom discussion in terms of the discourse functions of code-switching and how Swiss German is used to negotiate power and identity in interaction. This thesis reveals an unmarked classroom situation and shows that code-switching fulfills important functions in classroom discourse.

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<sup>1</sup> see Introduction

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## 1. Introduction

After sitting in on two days of classes, I invite four students at a *Kantonsschule*<sup>1</sup> in Switzerland to a candid discussion about language use in the classroom. They gather round to tell me what they think of using their local dialect of *Schwiizertütsch*, or Swiss German, in school<sup>2</sup>:

Interview Excerpt 1: Swiss German in School

Sm: **Ig fing's eifach in, in WG und das abe Zeichnen und, um, im Sport fing's eigentlech guet wemir Mundart erklärt und ig fing's süsch au guet jetzt so gmischt bis jetzt fingi eifach guet. Auso wenn's so e chli mehr persönlich wird oder so öppis oder irgendwie, so nes Byspiu oder so, und dann au Mundart eibringe, das fingi au nid schlächt**

Kf: **Mm hmm**

Sm: **oder irgendwie, goht, die Sproch, das isch ( ) rede und**

Kf: **mm hmm**

Sm: **das gehört zu uus und das fingi au guet**

Sm: ***I find it just in, in economics and such but art and, um, in sport I find it actually good when we explain in Swiss German and I find it otherwise good now too, like mixed up until now, I find it pretty good. So if it gets like a bit more personal or something like that or somehow, like an example or something, and then also using Swiss German, I find that not bad either.***

Kf: **Mm hmm**

Sm: ***or somehow, the language goes, that is ( ) speak and***

Kf: **Mm hmm**

Sm: ***it belongs to us and I find that good too***

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<sup>1</sup> Secondary school

<sup>2</sup> See page 51 for transcription conventions

I then ask them what they think of using and learning *Schriftdeutsch*<sup>3</sup> in school:

Interview Excerpt 2: *Schriftdeutsch* as a Second Language

Sm: **Das isch, wie, das isch wiene, das isch scho wiene zweite Sproch wo mir muess lerne**

Sm: ***That's, like, that's like, that's totally like a second language that we have to learn***

Interview Excerpt 3: Speaking *Schriftdeutsch*

Sm: **Auso, ig muess au säge, ig fing's eifach asträngend Hochdütsch z'rede**

Sm: ***So, I have to admit, I just find it exhausting to speak High German***

These students' opinions towards *Schriftdeutsch* are not unusual. Rash (1998) and Steiner (2008) have noticed similar attitudes in the classroom that even affect competence (Steiner 2008: 183). But proficiency in *Schriftdeutsch* is important for students to function in the world outside of Switzerland and both students and instructors are encouraged to use the language. A by-law from Kanton Solothurn<sup>4</sup> in Switzerland describes acceptable language use in the Swiss classroom:

1. An den Mittelschulen ist der Unterricht im Klassenverband in Schriftdeutsch zu erteilen.
2. In den Fächern Hauswirtschaft, Instrumentalunterricht, Singen, Turnen, Werken und Zeichnen kann Dialekt gesprochen werden.

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<sup>3</sup> Standard German, for a discussion of this term, see page 4

<sup>4</sup> province of Solothurn

Theorieunterricht im Klassenverband ist in Schriftsprache zu erteilen.

(Verordnung über die Unterrichtssprache and den Mittelschulen: 414.62. Bereinigte Gesetzessammlung Kanton Solothurn)

1. *In middle schools, classroom instruction will be given in Schriftdeutsch<sup>5</sup>.*
2. *Dialect may be spoken in the subjects of home economics, music, singing, physical education, wood and metalwork and art. Classroom instruction in theoretical concepts will be given in Schriftsprache<sup>6</sup>.*

*(By-law relating to classroom language in high schools: 414.62. Revised Law Library of Kanton Solothurn)*

The by-law makes clear that *Schriftdeutsch* is to be encouraged and used in most of classroom life, from the teaching of entire subjects to the discussion of theoretical concepts. As the official language of the classroom, *Schriftdeutsch* carries with it an authority that Swiss German does not. But despite its lack of authority, Swiss German still finds a place in classroom discourse, sometimes outside of the Kanton's stated boundaries. These issues give rise to several questions: what role does Swiss German play in the classroom? How do speakers use both languages to their conversational advantages? This thesis explores the classroom interactions of a Swiss German secondary school to answer these questions.

Past studies of Swiss schools have found that Swiss German functions in many ways, from marking asides and jokes to introducing

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<sup>5</sup> Standard German: it is useful to note here, that *Schrift* literally means "written"

<sup>6</sup> Standard language



subject matter and symbolizing Swiss identity (Rash 1998; Steiner 2008; Sieber & Sitta 1986; Werlen et al forthcoming). Similarly, code-switching behaviour in general has been shown to be highly functional, allowing speakers to change footing, contextualise speech, and negotiate identities and power relationships (Alfonzetti 1998; Auer 1998; Franceschini 1998; Goffman 1981; Martin-Jones 1995; Milroy & Wei 1995; Oesch Serra 1998; Wei 1998). While these studies have explored and described Switzerland's language situation and conventional uses of code-switching, there is little recent research on code-switching behaviour specifically in the Swiss classroom (Steiner 2008). This thesis further examines code-switching as a means for negotiating identity and power relationships in a classroom setting, of which there has been no previous research. Exploring how both students and instructors use language in school may provide a valuable resource for future studies on code-switching and classroom bilingualism as well as for educators in multilingual situations.

In this thesis, I will use a number of linguistic terms in my description of the Swiss situation. First, I will try to avoid the term "Standard German". The idea of a standardised language implies a hierarchy of styles, whereby one dialect is considered more correct and more accepted than others. As a linguist, I do not believe this ideology should be supported. The connotations that the term "Standard German" evokes also don't fit the German-speaking Swiss situation; although *Schriftdeutsch* is considered useful, it does not occupy the hierarchical

space of a typical standard language. Likewise, I avoid the term “High German” because it can lead to confusion, since the term originally refers to the geography of mountains, and is also problematic because of its possible association with diglossia and “H” vs. “L” varieties. I choose instead to refer to the standardised classroom language as *Schriftdeutsch*. *Schriftdeutsch* is a Swiss term, which literally means “written German”, but in usage it refers to spoken language as well and refers collectively to the set of varieties that Germans might call ‘Hochdeutsch’. The Swiss varieties of *Schriftdeutsch* are mutually intelligible with Standard German in the rest of the German-speaking world, differing slightly in lexicon and phonology. Second, I will refer to both *Schriftdeutsch* and Swiss German as languages. This choice is supported by the fact that students themselves classify the two variants as languages (see Interview Excerpt 2, above). I also chose to consider Swiss German a language so as to avoid the hierarchical nature of the language/dialect dichotomy. Both codes are equally correct and perfectly functional for their speakers.

The purpose of this study is to explore how students and instructors use code-switching to index identity and negotiate power relationships in the Swiss German classroom. Data used in the analysis come from 4.5 hours of transcribed classroom interaction in Biology, History, and Geography classes and one focus group discussion where language use and attitudes were discussed. These transcriptions were then analysed in terms of the discourse functions of code-switching and how Swiss German

is used to negotiate identity and power. This was done using a constructivist approach to identity (Antaki & Widdicombe 1998; de Fina 2003; Greatbatch 1998; Mckinlay & Dunnett 1998; Meinhof & Galasinski 2005; Ochs 2005; Widdicombe 1998b) and a method of analysis based on conversation analysis (Alfonzetti 1998; Myers-Scotton 1998; Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain 2009) exploring the implications behind what speakers say. Power negotiations were analysed through the notion of hierarchy and solidarity described by Tannen (2003) and through positioning (Harré & van Langenhove 1991).

Data in this thesis show a much deeper social function for Swiss German in the classroom than what has been previously described. In my analysis, I find that code-switching is used to manipulate the social and institutional relationships that exist in schools between students and instructors. By choosing to use Swiss German or *Schriftdeutsch* in certain conversational contexts, speakers are able to index their shared identity as German-speaking Swiss as well as exploit and even influence power relationships. This study also reveals an unmarked classroom situation where students tend to use Swiss German while their instructors are speaking *Schriftdeutsch*. By deviating from this situation, speakers can give the function of their code-switch a more marked quality.

Necessarily, some limitations to this study must be noted. This thesis only explores the classroom behaviours of one school, and one level of schooling in Switzerland. Recording was restricted to only three

courses which typically use *Schriftdeutsch*<sup>7</sup>, and to a twenty minute focus group discussion with four students. Unfortunately, time restrictions did not allow for video recording and so non-verbal actions which may have been relevant to the negotiation of relationships in the classroom (such as eye contact and facial expressions) were not observable. Suggestions for further research address some of these concerns (See Chapter 5).

This research study is presented in 5 chapters. Chapter 1 describes the context of the study, how it is situated in past research, the purpose of the study, the findings, and some limitations to the study. The second chapter reviews relevant literature, including code-switching definitions and functions, the situation in Switzerland, the negotiation of power and definitions and the negotiation of identities. Chapter 3 details the methodologies used for both the collection and the analysis of my data, the latter of which incorporates both conversation analysis and interactional sociolinguistics (including the concepts of: positioning, footing, hierarchy and equality) . In Chapter 4, various examples are analysed and discussed. The results and implications are then discussed in Chapter 5 along with a summary of the entire study and conclusions.

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<sup>7</sup> Biology, History, Geography classes were observed - see the By-law relating to classroom language in high schools on page 2

## **2. Literature Review**

The previous chapter introduced some of the background of language use in German-speaking Switzerland, including attitudes towards *Schriftdeutsch* and Swiss German in schools. It also provided a basic summary of the research questions examined in this study and briefly discussed the basic findings. In this next chapter, I examine previous research in the areas of code-switching, including grammar and social function, before describing how code-switching will be analysed in this thesis. I then move on to discuss the situation in Switzerland and code-switching in Swiss schools. The third section explores previous studies and concepts of the negotiation of power and I finish with an examination of identity, including how views of identity have evolved and a review of different approaches to analysing identity in interaction.

### **2.1 Code-switching**

Code-switching is characterized by the use of more than one language or variety and is a common characteristic of bilingual speech. Dabène and Moore (1995) describe two different types of bilingual speech: complementary bilingualism, where the two languages are used to compensate for “insufficient mastery of either code” (ibid: 37), and functional bilingualism, where both languages are used to fulfill a discursive function (ibid: 37). Although data for this thesis is collected in a classroom setting, the students are sufficiently capable in both

*Schriftdeutsch* and Swiss German to practice functional bilingualism. This competency is evidenced by both my own observations<sup>8</sup> and students' self-reporting in questionnaires (see Appendix 7.1). All students (and instructors) rated their abilities in *Schriftdeutsch* as either 4 or 5 on the 5 point scale. All students are proficient speakers of both codes, and often use them both in the classroom, sometimes switching between them.

Research in code-switching has tended to follow two basic paths. The first explores the grammar of code-switching, with the hopes of discovering a central theory that might describe the patterns of language alternation. The second path examines the social and discursive functions of code-switching behaviour and seeks to understand how meaning is constructed through the use of various codes. This thesis is situated within the latter approach, exploring code-switching according to its functionality in interaction.

### **2.1a: The Grammar of Code-switching**

The first path of code-switching research examines how each language's grammar may restrict or encourage switching. Researchers interested in how speakers alternate languages have sought to determine whether there exists an underlying grammatical theory of code-switching, regardless of language. Poplack and Meechan (1995) assert that

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<sup>8</sup> Besides my observations in the classroom during my data collection, I observed students using *Schriftdeutsch* during an exchange year in Switzerland. The very fact that I was able to function as a monolingual speaker of *Schriftdeutsch* with my classmates shows that they were competent speakers.

speakers may change code only “at ‘equivalence sites’, i.e. points around which constituent order in the two languages is homologous” (ibid: 200). These sites allow speakers to move freely between languages because the grammatical systems of each language are equivalent. Myers-Scotton (1995) also posits a Matrix Language Frame Model, where switching “is governed by a set of abstract principles” (ibid: 234). Through this model, code-switching is regulated by grammatical constraints, which may allow researchers to predict switches. However, some studies have found that code-switching behaviour actually violates these constraints (Franceschini 1998, Ramat 1995), with speakers switching at sites where the two languages are not homologous. As such, it seems more study is needed on the grammar behind code-switching and its use.

Another subject of interest in this line of research has been the difficulty in determining whether an utterance is, in fact, a code-switch. This involves concepts such as lexical borrowing, where words adopted from one language are integrated into another. As a result, speakers may use two languages while being proficient in only one. But Muysken (1995) argues “code-switching is different from lexical borrowing, which involves the incorporation of lexical elements from one language in the lexicon of another language” (ibid: 189). Loanwords involve adaptation “to the morphological and syntactic (and usually, phonological) patterns of the recipient language” (Poplack & Meechan 1995: 200) whereas code-switching maintains the grammatical consistency of each code (ibid: 200).

In other words, speakers who code-switch keep each language separate and subject to their own rules, while loanwords are adapted to the rules of the borrowing language.

Identifying loanwords is sometimes still difficult however, especially when the two languages in question are closely related. Poplack (1988) describes one method:

if the same word was used by many speakers and hence uttered with Spanish phonology and morphology, and if in non-equivalent Spanish-English structures (e.g. adjective placement), it followed Spanish rules, then we could consider it a loanword and not a code-switch (ibid: 221).

Loanwords tend to be used more often and by larger sections of the community as well (Dabène & Moore 1995: 34). This is logical, as not all speakers of a language will necessarily be bilingual. If many speakers are using a word, even those who do not speak the language from whence it came, it is reasonable to assume it is in fact a loanword.

As the goal of this thesis is to examine the negotiation of relationships through code-switching, grammatical constraints are not relevant here. Indeed, Franceschini (1998) writes:

linguistic research methodology and its underlying assumptions have resulted in long and sometimes tortuous discussions about what should or should not be considered code-switching, code-mixing, borrowing, transfer, insertion, transcodic markers - or whatever the concepts in use may be. These debates have tended to obscure the fact that subsumed under the heading of



CS<sup>9</sup> is a large number of differently motivated but not clearly understood forms of bilingual behaviour (ibid: 51-52).

The present study seeks to understand some of these forms of bilingual behaviour and therefore employs a different approach to code-switching. Instead of examining the grammaticality of code-switches, this thesis investigates code-switching from an interactional perspective. This approach looks at the functional aspects of language alternation and how speakers use it to contextualise their discourses.

### **2.1b: The Functionality of Code-switching**

The second path of code-switching research examines its function in bilingual discourse. Led by researchers like Peter Auer, this approach is situated within interactional sociolinguistics and uses conversation analysis as a methodology to examine how switches convey meaning. As Wei (1998) explains,

Rather than focusing on the perceived, symbolic values of the different languages, the CA<sup>10</sup> approach tries to establish the meaning of code-switching by examining in close detail the types of interaction which involve the very act of language alternation (ibid: 173).

Research in this field has found that code-switching fulfills a number of roles in conversation, such as showing dispreference (Milroy & Wei 1995),

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<sup>9</sup> code-switching

<sup>10</sup> conversation analysis

restarting an interaction (Wei 1998), or simply marking an utterance (Alfonzetti 1998: 195). It contextualises conversation, similar to non-verbal marking in monolingual conversation (Wei 1998: 169), and it allows speakers to “vary their roles, reflecting different footings with different interlocutors” (Franceschini 1998: 64). Although the language used in a switch may convey meaning, often the direction of the switch is not relevant. What is important in those cases is creating contrast and thereby drawing attention to the switch site (Ramat 1995: 52, Tiemer 2004: 6, Wei 1998: 161). In this way, code-switching serves to mark a linguistic act and signify meaning, functioning much in the same way as other conversational markers do for monolingual speakers:

code-switching contextualises turn-taking, pre and embedded sequences and preference organisation, parallel to the way in which various kinds of prosodic, phonetic and indeed non-verbal marking contextualise such material in monolingual conversations (Wei 1998: 169).

As such, code-switching is another meaningful linguistic resource available to bilingual speakers that provides them with numerous functions in discourse.

As a characteristic of bilingual interaction, the usefulness of code-switching has been noted in many studies, from creating a shared identity (Franceschini 1998) to creating new semantic forms (Oesch Serra 1998). In fact, Martin-Jones (1995) laments “it is impossible to compile a comprehensive inventory of the functions of code-switching. The number

of possible functions is infinite” (ibid: 99). Studies have also shown that code-switching has social and communicative meaning that is interpreted by participants (Alfonzetti 1998; Franceschini 1998; Wei 1998). As Wei (1998) asserts, it “contextualises turn-taking, pre and embedded sequences and preference organisation” (ibid: 169). Heller (1988) observes that code-switching

provides a clear example of the ways in which individuals draw on their linguistic resources to signal changes in the different aspects of context which they wish to foreground, to make salient, thereby opening opportunities for the redefinition of social reality, exploiting or creating ambiguity in the relationships between form and context to do so (ibid: 10).

As Heller describes, speakers use code-switching in a creative way, interpreting and co-constructing meaning with their conversation partners.

Code-switching is also used to mark subtle shifts in the conversation, which can be achieved through changing footing. Goffman (1981) defines a change in footing as “a change in the alignment we take up to ourselves and the others present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance. A change in our footing is another way of talking about a change in our frame for events” (ibid: 128). Moving in and out of formalities, engaging in small talk, asides, introductions and even adjusting verb tenses are all examples of changing footing. These changes, however, must be indicated somehow and Goffman (1981) notes that “a code switch is sometimes used as a

mark for this shift” (ibid: 151). As Gumperz (1982) puts it, “speakers must signal what is to be chunked together and what is to be kept separate, whether some stretch of talk is complete in itself or whether it is a subpart of a larger utterance” (ibid: 31). Such acts are signaled with linguistic cues as an indication to participants that an utterance carries special meaning. In this sense, code-switching acts as a contextualisation cue, which serves to “channel interpretations in one direction or another” (Gumperz 1982: 18).

Contextualisation cues can also serve to position speakers in relation to each other. Harré and van Langenhove’s (1991) concept of positioning is related to footing, in that participants assign themselves and others a location within the discourse. One may position one’s self (or others) to espouse certain qualities such as power, or to play certain roles such as negotiator. Speakers position themselves and others continually; conversationalists are always assigning and being assigned roles which change during the interaction (Harré & van Langenhove 1991). How positioning functions depends very much on the context of the conversation (Wolf 1999: 78) and speakers can position themselves in different ways (Dailey-O’Cain & Liebscher 2008; Harré & van Langenhove 1991; Wolf 1999). Dailey-O’Cain & Liebscher (2008) describe two types of positioning:

*narrative* positioning, i.e., formulating one’s identity as “I am X” and stating explicitly how one sees oneself and hopes to be seen by others, and

*formulaic* positioning, by which conversation participants formulate their identities through the use of contextualisation cues (ibid: 6)

Data in this thesis reveal how speakers apply formulaic positioning, by using contextualisation cues such as code-switching to mark changes in footing. Such functionality makes code-switching a valuable resource for bilingual speakers.

Myers-Scotton (1998) provides another useful tool for analysing code-switching with her Markedness Model. Based on the idea that certain stylistic or code choices can have different reactions than others in the same situation, the model shows how language varieties can be chosen to “enhance rewards and minimize costs” (Myers-Scotton 1998: 19). Myers-Scotton (1998) establishes the concept of rights and obligations sets, which refers to “what participants can expect in any given interaction type in their community” (ibid: 23). These rights and obligations sets are dynamic and dependent on context and, by manipulating speech variation, speakers can also manipulate the expectations of interaction. Myers-Scotton (1998) describes this through a set of maxims (ibid: 26):

The unmarked choice maxim: whereby speakers use the unmarked choice when they wish to access the rights and obligations set of that interaction.

The marked choice maxim: whereby speakers use the marked choice when they wish to establish a new rights and obligations set.

The exploratory choice maxim: whereby speakers switch between the marked and unmarked variants to find alternative rights and obligations sets.

The deference maxim: whereby speakers use the variant which expresses deference to show special respect.

The virtuosity maxim: whereby speakers use the necessary variant to continue the conversation or to accommodate all speakers who are present.

By establishing the unmarked choice in any situation, the analyst can then determine when speakers deviate from that unmarked situation and interpret the reasoning for the marked usage. In this way, the Markedness Model is a useful tool in analysing the functions of code-switching.

### **2.1c: Code-switching in this Thesis**

This thesis explores the functionality of code-switching in interaction. For the purposes of this study, code-switching is defined as the alternation of two or more varieties within one conversational turn (Auer 1998: 1). Whether intersentential (between sentences) or intrasentential (within a single sentence), all switches between Swiss German and

*Schriftdeutsch* are considered. This definition is further organized into two categories; discourse-related and participant-related. Switches are separated into these two categories in order to determine their basic function. Discourse-related code-switching expresses a change in the context of the conversation (Auer 1998) and serves to organize the discourse into relevant sequences as well as marking significant utterances (Ramat 1995: 51). Alfonzetti (1998) gives the example of discourse-related code-switching used to demarcate side comments:

In side sequences or side remarks, speakers have to solve the problem of signaling a momentary interruption of the main discourse, first, and then of going back to it. Besides the devices normally used in monolingual discourse, like repair-initiators and continuation or resumption techniques, bilingual speakers can exploit the contrastive juxtaposition of the two codes (ibid: 191).

The following excerpt, taken from a classroom discussion, is an example of a discourse-related switch.

#### Classroom Excerpt 1: Discourse-related Switch

- 1      Tf: **guet** (1s) **bitte zuelose** (2s) **AUso** (4s) **eh** (4s)  
       Tf: **good** (1s) **please listen** (2s) **SO** (4s) **eh** (4s)
  
- 2      di=e probe (.) die probe ging (2s) um den aufbau  
       the=e test (.) the test was about (2s) building
  
- 3      des (.) de dna.  
       (.) dna.

The teacher is trying to accomplish two goals with this utterance: first, to get the students' attention focused back on her, and second, to introduce the topic of discussion, the test. Where a monolingual speaker may use volume, tone, gesture, or any number of extralinguistic cues to signal a shift between these two parts, this bilingual teacher uses both codes available to her. The switch occurs between the call for attention and the introduction of the topic, signaling a change in structure and serving to demarcate each part of the utterance.

In contrast to the function of organizing discourse, participant-related code-switches take into account the interlocutors' language preference or competence (Martin-Jones 1995: 99, Auer 1998). In this case, the switch would say something about the participants; for example, it may signify a change in power relations or a reference to social identity:

#### Classroom Excerpt 2: Participant-related Switch

- 1 Tm: andre=as (.) andreas (1s) zum dritten und  
Tm: *andre=as (.) andreas (1s) for the third and*
- 2 letzten mal (1s) heh? Es geht  
*last time (1s) heh? It's okay*
- 3 Sm1: **z'letscht mau?**  
Sm1: ***the last time?***
- 4 (.)  
(.)
- 5 Tm: **letschte mau**  
Tm: ***the last time***



Here, the teacher alternates from *Schriftdeutsch* into Swiss German in response to the student's question in Swiss German. The discourse theme has not changed in any way, nor does the switch serve to re-organize the conversation. His switch into Swiss German is a direct reaction to what the student has said. In fact, the instructor even repeats the student's utterance, almost word for word, in the same code as the student. He has moved into the student's preferred code, perhaps to index their shared identity and underscoring the fact that they are speaking one on one and not to the class as a whole. This constitutes a participant-related code-switch.

In analysing power and identity in code-switches, participant-related switches are more fruitful than discourse-related switches because they shed light on the speakers' relationship. Because both identity and power involve relationships between speakers or groups, switches that provide more information on these relationships are used in this thesis. As stated above, a participant-related switch is a direct reaction to interlocutors and can therefore be analysed for power and identity.

Code-switching patterns can also shed light on speakers' relationships. Auer (1995: 125-126) describes a number of possible patterns, where the letters represent languages and the numbers represent speakers:

Pattern 1a: A1 A2 A1 A2//B1 B2 B1 B2

Pattern 1b: A1 A2 A1 A2 A1//B1 B2 B1 B2

In both pattern 1a and 1b, once the language choice changes, both speakers continue in the new language (B).

Pattern 2a: A1 B2 A1 B2 A1 B2 A1 B2

Pattern 2b: A1 B2 A1 B2 A1//A2 A1 A2 A1

In pattern 2a and 2b, the speakers alternate and negotiate their language preferences. Pattern 2a shows each speaker using her preferred language in the interaction. Pattern 2b shows speaker 2 switch into language A. In both cases, the switches are preference-related.

Pattern 3a: AB1 AB2 AB1 AB2

Pattern 3b: AB1//A2 A1 A2

In pattern 3a, both speakers are switching constantly, which serves to keep the language choice open. Pattern 3b shows the speakers finally settling into a preferred language of interaction. Most of the code-switching instances in this thesis involve the patterns 2a and 2b, with pattern 2a representing the unmarked situation (see discussion of the Markedness Model, above). Both students and instructors negotiate the language of

preference, and the switch to the others' preferred code sheds light on their identities and power relationships.

As has been discussed in this section, code-switching research has followed two basic paths. The first path involves the grammaticality of alternating languages and the second involves the functions of code-switching in bilingual interactions. This thesis is situated within the latter approach, examining for the most part participant-related switches. These types of switches reveal information about identity and power relationships by saying something about the speakers themselves. In the following section, previous code-switching literature in Switzerland is discussed in detail.

## **2.2: The Situation in Switzerland**

Speakers in Switzerland grow up using local variations of Swiss German and are introduced to *Schriftdeutsch* in school (Rash 1998: 55). When this introduction happens depends very much on the *Kanton*<sup>11</sup> in question and has been a subject of debate in Switzerland (ibid: 54-55). The adoption of *Schriftdeutsch* in the classroom has been treated as teaching a foreign language and researchers have encouraged learner-oriented teaching styles (ibid: 55-56). Rash (1998) even asserts that instructors “should not insist that their pupils speak HG<sup>12</sup> at all costs:

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<sup>11</sup> Province

<sup>12</sup> High German, which in this thesis is referred to as *Schriftdeutsch*

speaking HG is only the second most important goal in the classroom, the most important is that children should speak” (ibid: 56). Such a view stresses the importance of introducing students gently to *Schriftdeutsch* in schools. However, student attitudes towards *Schriftdeutsch* tend to be negative (Steiner 2008). To counteract negative associations and to improve student competence, many Kantons are interested in introducing *Schriftdeutsch* as early on as Kindergarten (Gyger 2007). The issue is evolving and already there are various studies that explore the feasibility of this idea (see Gyger 2007).

As noted in the Introduction to this thesis, the official language of the *Mittelschule*<sup>13</sup> in Solothurn is *Schriftdeutsch*, but both Swiss German and *Schriftdeutsch* overlap in many realms, from the workplace to television. The coexistence of both languages has made Switzerland a fruitful centre for the study of code-switching and the following section explores some of the early research in Switzerland as well as an examination of previous studies in Swiss schools.

Among linguists, German-speaking Switzerland's language debate began with Charles Ferguson's (1971: 1) paper about a phenomenon called diglossia; a situation in which two or more varieties of the same language are used in different social situations or domains. He describes the two varieties as high and low, where the high variety is used in more formal and the low in less formal domains. He uses German-speaking

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<sup>13</sup> Middle school

Switzerland as a defining example, in which Standard German is the high variety and Swiss German dialects the low variety. Because the use of the varieties is domain-specific in diglossia, there are no situations which permit the use of both simultaneously. This means that, theoretically, code-switching would not be found in truly diglossic conditions.

However, more recent research has shown that in Switzerland a much different situation has evolved (Kolde 1986, Sieber & Sitta 1986), in which Swiss German speakers switch between *Schriftdeutsch* and Swiss German. In an attempt to redefine the Swiss language situation to fit these observations, scholars have developed terms such as “medial diglossia” (Ramseier 1988: 264) in which languages are chosen based on whether they are spoken or written; “productive/receptive diglossia” (Kolde 1981) where speakers produce only one form and receive another; and “functional diglossia” (Rash 1998: 50) in which languages are allocated certain functions. Ris (1979) goes so far as to suggest that Swiss German dialects should be considered a language in their own right and therefore the situation in German-speaking Switzerland is bilingual (ibid: 55).

Both languages have associations that may affect speakers’ attitudes towards them. Switzerland’s dialects have come to symbolize national unity in times of cultural threat during the country’s history (Rash 1998: 264). Likewise, Swiss dialects have served as symbols of Swiss identity, distancing Swiss Germans from their German neighbours during the 1920s and 30s and even representing democratic values in more

recent years (Barbour & Stevenson 1990: 212). Conversely, *Schriftdeutsch* in Switzerland has often been met with negative attitudes. Steiner (2008) finds competence and attitudes towards *Schriftdeutsch* are worsening (ibid: 183) and even mentions that speakers would often rather use French or English than *Schriftdeutsch* (ibid: 179). Studies have shown, however, that pre-school aged children tend to enjoy mimicking *Schriftdeutsch* (Steiner 2008: 183), due partly to the fact that they are exposed through media at an early age (ibid: 185). However, these positive attitudes change with schooling, where the language of the classroom is officially *Schriftdeutsch*, and students come to associate the code with marks, fear, and judgment (Rash 1998: 56). Teachers themselves are often “as uncomfortable with this regulation as their pupils, and neither party strictly adheres to the use of HG<sup>14</sup>” (Rash 1998: 55). Steiner (2008) explains how teachers will respond differently to students depending on the language they use; for example, utterances in Swiss German are met with interest in the content, whereas utterances in *Schriftdeutsch* are focused on not only for the content, but also correctness (ibid: 257). The very name given to *Schriftdeutsch* by the Swiss, “*Schriftsprache*”<sup>15</sup>, shows how its speakers feel about it: *Schriftsprache* is a written language (Steiner 2008: 180) and often considered a second language at that. In fact, interview transcripts show

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<sup>14</sup> *Schriftdeutsch*

<sup>15</sup> “writing language”

that some students find speaking *Schriftdeutsch* outside of Switzerland embarrassing:

Interview Excerpt 4: Our High German

Sm: **Auso und im, auso, ig meine, auso mir söt eifach hier Hochtüütsch rede, auso, auso, rede aber wemir uuf Düütschland würde go, mir rede uuses Hochtüütsch womir hier ir Schuel lehre, lehre, wir, lachesi, lachesi gliich aui uus (laughter) sagesi Schwiizertüütsch. Auso vo däm her imach e, gliich nid so na grosse Ungerschiid.**

Sm: ***So, and in, so, I mean, so we really should speak, so, so, speak High German here, but if we were to go to Germany, we speak our High German that we learn, learn here in school, we, they make fun, they still all make fun of us (laughter) they say Swiss German. So, in that respect, I don't think there's that big of a difference.***

When students were asked to fill out the questionnaire (see Appendix 7.1), many participants indicated that they were less proficient in *Schriftdeutsch* than Swiss German (a 4 rating compared to a 5 rating). The negative attitudes towards *Schriftdeutsch* by students can be problematic for its use in Swiss schools, where it is considered the official language of the classroom.

## **2.2a: Code-switching in Swiss Schools**

Because German-speaking Switzerland is no longer considered to be strictly diglossic in nature, code-switching between Swiss German and *Schriftdeutsch* is common in schools, which have been the site for much

research. Switches fulfill a conversational and communicative function, and at times even serve to distance the student or teacher from the formality of the classroom (Steiner 2008). Werlen et al (forthcoming) describe switching using the concept of *bricolage*, where the ‘they-code’ (*Schriftdeutsch*) and ‘we-code’ (Swiss German) combine to form a new we-code. Moreover, switching tends to fulfill classroom functions, forming different instructional domains for each language:

Informal greetings and preparations for a class to begin, as well as remarks not relating to the academic content of a class, tend to be in dialect. Conversations between pupils, and also one-to-one conversations between teachers and pupils will generally take place in dialect, as will unsolicited, spontaneous remarks and interruptions by children. In fact every aspect of the class which does not directly relate to “textbook” material may make use of dialect (Rash 1998: 55).

Steiner (2008) describes more functions of Swiss German use, including disciplinary acts, apologies, agreements, illustrations, corrections and contradictions, shifts in the level of formality, requests for help, and comprehension checks. Sieber and Sitta (1986) describe Swiss German as the “*Sprache der Freizeit*”<sup>16</sup> while *Schriftdeutsch* is the “*Sprache der Arbeitszeit*”<sup>17</sup>, although they admit that Swiss German can move into the working domain of *Schriftdeutsch*. This can happen when Swiss German is used and accepted in certain subjects as described in the Kanton By-

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<sup>16</sup> “language of recreation”

<sup>17</sup> “language of work”



Law (see Introduction). Sieber and Sitta (1986) go on to describe those subjects which use *Schriftdeutsch Kopffächer*<sup>18</sup> and those that use Swiss German *Herz- und Handfächer*<sup>19</sup> (ibid: 61). Ultimately, the relationship between the two codes in the classroom is complex, and Steiner (2008) describes it as “*stufenabhängig, fächerspezifisch, situationsbezogen und einstellungsbedingt*”<sup>20</sup> (ibid: 289).

Although there has been much research on Swiss German’s domains in the classroom, little work has been done on its role in classroom conversation. As the official language of schools, *Schriftdeutsch* has an authority that Swiss German does not. Because Swiss German can at times symbolize Swiss national identity and *Schriftdeutsch* is often connected with classroom learning, the two codes may be exploited to take advantage of these associations. In fact, the use of each code can serve to manipulate power relationships between students and teachers. The next section discusses some of the previous research in this area.

### **2.3 The Negotiation of Power**

In multilingual contexts, not all languages give speakers equal access to resources and power (Djité 2006; Zentella 1997). As such, speakers must constantly negotiate and manipulate their own linguistic choices to achieve influence: “language choice and use in multilingual

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<sup>18</sup> Head subjects

<sup>19</sup> Heart and hand subjects

<sup>20</sup> “dependent on level, subject-specific, subject to situation, and conditional on attitude”

contexts show individuals and communities to be very active agents, whose language practices reveal an incredible capacity to empower themselves where and when it matters most” (Djité 2006: 2). This ability has been the focus of much past research, as the following section will show.

There are many strategies for influencing (Ng & Bradac 1993: 64-65) and research has shown that certain linguistic qualities can signal a more or a less powerful code (ibid: 19). Connections have also been established between interruption and attractiveness, and frequency of talk and leadership (ibid: 77-78). This study focuses on the case of the classroom, where Ng and Bradac (1993) assert, the teacher “remains in control of the structure of the talk exchange (who speaks and for how long), its content (topic and focus), and the evaluation of the content” (ibid: 61). This power balance has implications for both students and instructors.

As this thesis will show, code choices also play a role in the struggle for control in the Swiss German classroom. Ng and Bradac (1993) provide a model, where accent (or Swiss German) affects the perception of the speaker’s group membership, which, in turn, leads to a judgement of that group’s status and therefore a judgment of the speaker’s status itself (ibid: 40). At the same time, the Swiss classroom is the domain of *Schriftdeutsch* and the instructors are “empowered *universally* to subject the linguistic performance of speaking subjects to examination and to the legal sanction of academic qualification” (Bourdieu 1991: 45). In other

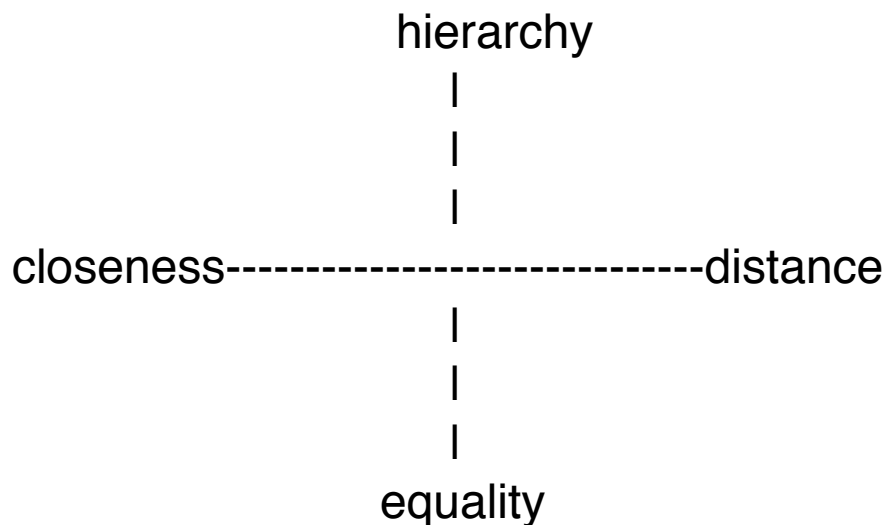
words, it is up to the teachers to enforce proper use of the prescribed classroom language, which puts them, and *Schriftdeutsch* itself, in a position of authority.

As much as language creates power, it can also obscure or depoliticize power through mitigation. Speakers do this in myriad ways, including high intonation, gentle voicing, disclaimers, hedging, parenthetical verbs, and a rising tone at the end of an utterance. (Ng & Bradac 1993: 110-112). But why would a speaker in a position of authority need to mitigate at all? Ng and Bradac (1993) describe it as restoring “the addressee’s face wants after these have been trampled on” (ibid: 115) or making “influence attempts more palatable to the targets of influence and at the same time lessen their own accountability” (ibid: 7). Research in institutional settings has also shown that those in more powerful positions tend to use mitigation strategies when dealing with less powerful participants (Harris 2003).

Tannen’s (2003) study on ventriloquizing (animating the voice of someone or something that is also present) examines how speakers may use mitigation to show authority while at the same time connecting in solidarity. She shows this through a grid (see Figure 1, next page) whereby hierarchy and equality form an authority axis and closeness and distance form a connection axis. Certain linguistic acts can be positioned on the grid so as to create authority and solidarity simultaneously. Tannen (2003) asserts that, “in studying interaction, we need to understand power

(or hierarchy, or control) not as distinguished from solidarity (or connection, or intimacy) but as inseparable from and intertwined with it” (ibid: 50). The following analysis brings this idea into the Swiss classroom, exploring students’ and instructors’ power relationships. Tannen’s (2003) grid allows participants the option of seeking control but also saving face by reaching out in solidarity at the same time. In other words, it provides a useful mitigation strategy that is even accessed in the Swiss classroom.

Figure 1: Tannen’s (2003: 53) Grid



As was discussed in this section, language and power are often linked. The authority bestowed upon *Schriftdeutsch* as the official language of the classroom makes it a more powerful code than Swiss German. Mitigation can also be used to make powerful statements less harsh and Tannen’s (2003) grid on authority and solidarity provides a

useful tool in analysing mitigation in linguistic acts. Speakers may also negotiate power by indexing their identities, which is the topic of the following section.

## **2.4 The Negotiation of Identity**

A speaker's identities are often complex and changing. Identities can be different from moment to moment and the same speaker can construct many identities (Dailey-O'Cain & Liebscher 2008). In this section, I will explore how views of identity have expanded over time from seeing identities as simply categorical to seeing them as processes. The last section will explore some of the approaches to analysing identities in interaction. This involves co-construction, negotiation, and manipulation, showing that identities are more an action than a description; more a verb than a noun.

### **2.4a: Evolving Views of Identity**

Identity has been discussed and researched from a wide variety of perspectives. Some researchers consider identity to correlate directly with ethnicity (Edwards 1998), while others view identity as a categorical affiliation (Widdicombe 1998b). But identity can also be viewed as a fluid concept, co-constructed and negotiated in interaction (de Fina 2003; Harré & van Langenhove 1991; Mckinlay & Dunnett 1998; Meinhof & Galasinski 2005). This thesis adopts the latter view, where speakers constantly

negotiate and re-construct their own identities and those of their conversation partners. This view of identity allows the researcher to analyse the nuance and creativity which speakers employ to make their identities relevant. As this thesis is preoccupied with how speakers reference identities through conversation, the focus will be on interactions, where all participants play a role in constructing identity. The following section explores some of the evolving views of identity in past literature.

Edwards (1998) describes identity as a sort of selection process, whereby speakers select one identity over another to “perform and manage various kinds of interactionally sensitive things” (ibid: 19). He views identity as simply another category, functioning to locate a speaker as a member of a group, which can then be invoked for various reasons (ibid: 32). Similarly, Widdicombe (1998b) compares subcultural identity to category affiliation, where speakers are pressured to conform to membership norms and lose their individuality (ibid: 52). He states that “a reference to a person’s social identity is also a reference to their membership of a specific category” (ibid: 52-53), however, he admits that identity can be negotiated (ibid: 70). Alternately, Harré and van Langenhove (1991) view identity as more complex and fluid. Through the use of positioning, or locating oneself in conversation in relation to context and to other speakers, participants may in fact construct their identities as opposed to simply referencing categories (Meinhof & Galasinski 2005:15). In other words, “the discursive construction of national, regional or local

identity consists in positioning oneself as part of a particular ethnic, regional or local group” (ibid: 15). Harré and van Langenhove (1991) make clear that the act of positioning is a continuous and creative one: “persons are constantly engaged in positioning themselves and others. The concrete forms such positioning will take differ according to the situations in which they occur. One individual can thus undertake several varieties of positioning” (ibid: 395). This leads to the idea of identity as a co-constructed social phenomenon. As Mckinlay and Dunnett (1998) describe, “the processes through which people make out, challenge or defend their sense of self for themselves (or for others) is often a complex matter of negotiation and active formulation in which identity can be seen to be discursively constructed” (ibid: 48). De Fina (2003) adds that identities “are ‘achieved’ not given, and therefore their discursive construction should be seen as a process in which narrators and listeners are constantly engaged” (ibid: 38). Meinhof and Galasinski (2005) stress the cooperative work of identity construction, emphasizing that speakers do not construct identities in isolation but rather “draw upon socially available resources with which we construct our experience of ourselves and the reality surrounding us” (ibid: 7). However, this construction is often conflictual and speakers sometimes are forced to reformulate (De Fina 2003:38). Inasmuch as identity is a cooperatively constructed concept, it is also negotiated amongst participants. McKinlay and Dunnett (1998) describe it as “always open to reformulation by participants” (ibid: 35),

whereby identity constructions are “negotiated, rejected or achieved” (Widdicombe 1998b: 70) by the participants.

Besides being co-constructed and negotiated, identity can be considered a process, with each identity construction representing “ a snapshot...a fast-shutter photograph freezing the runner in a never-ending run” (Meinhof & Galasinski 2005: 8). This study views identity as a process, constructed during interaction and in constant flux as opposed to a stable social category; in other words, something participants do and not something they are (Widdicombe 1998a: 191). Situated as a part of and inseparable from the interactional contexts in which they are constructed, identities are less about “who I am” and more about “where I am” in relation to conversation partners. Using a constructivist methodology to examine identity means that analysts must show how speakers treat each other as members of a category, or how identity is indexed by both participants (Antaki & Widdicombe 1998: 7). The focus is on *co*-construction, stressing the idea that “constructing an identity is a collaborative enterprise” (McKinlay & Dunnett 1998: 50).

#### **2.4b: Analysing Identity**

There have been many approaches to analysing identity, including the sociopsycholinguistic approach which assumes a direct correlation between language and ethnic identities, the interactional sociolinguistic approach in which identities are fluid and constructed in interaction, and



the post-structuralist and critical theory approach which considers language choices in the context of larger socioeconomic systems (Pavlenko & Blackledge 2004: 4-10). The present study employs the latter two approaches, examining how participants construct and negotiate their identities in the context of the immediate conversation as well as in the context of the sociopolitical world around them.

A constructivist approach recognizes that identity is not a stable category but rather an activity in constant flux that “depends on the changing positions we take up or resist” (Widdicombe 1998a: 201). During a conversation, many different identities may be made relevant “within even a single turn at talk. It is therefore necessary to examine how participants invoke and accept or contest the relevance of identities on a moment-by-moment basis” (Greatbatch & Dingwall 1998: 131). Ochs (2005) views the construction of identity as a type of evolution where speakers are free to shift positions, thus reconfiguring the identities of themselves and their interlocutors (ibid: 298). Through the manipulation of language, speakers have the ability to make relevant different identities at different times.

This view of identity as a fluid concept means speakers must negotiate with each other during the course of an interaction. As such, discourse identities are “continually negotiated and renegotiated within a localized social context” (Meinhof & Galasinski 2005: 8). Widdicombe (1998b) stresses that group membership or non-membership is constantly

being rejected or achieved (ibid: 70) and participants may re-negotiate when categorizations lead to problems in identity assignment, exemplifying that social identities and categories cannot be assumed (McKinlay & Dunnett 1998: 35). Together with identity's ever-changing qualities, the entire act can be seen as "an ongoing process of becoming: always provisional, always subject to change" (Meinhof & Galaskinski 2005: 8).

In keeping with the idea that identity is not merely a category to be accessed, this approach focuses on how identities are actually constructed in conversation. As Antaki (1998a) explains, it is "not that people passively or latently have this or that identity which then causes feelings and actions, but that they work up and work to this or that identity, for themselves and others, there and then" (ibid: 2). Like negotiation, identity construction involves all participants and draws upon many social resources available to participants (Meinhof & Galasinski 2005: 7). Linguistic choices may be manipulated to make relevant certain relations and contexts which then form as constructed identities for the speaker as well as his or her interlocutors (de Fina 2003: 234). This context is important, for identities can "mean different things at different times and places" (Antaki & Widdicombe 1998: 8) and participants have the ability to control these meanings through negotiation and construction. Thus, taking into account the ever-changing nature of identities and their negotiation

and co-construction amongst participants, identity can be viewed more as process than a category; more as a verb than a noun.

Through manipulation, negotiation, and reference, identities are naturally situated within the context of politics and power. Many studies acknowledge identity construction as inseparable from power and political relations (Widdicombe 1998a; Zentella 1997; Carli et al 2003; Pavlenko & Blackledge 2004). Zentella (1997) goes so far as to claim that “whether we choose to discuss it or not, there is no language without politics” (ibid: 14). Power relations may be made obvious when identities are questioned or rejected (Pavlenko & Blackledge 2004: 19; Doran 2004: 96) in contexts as narrow as a conversation or as broad as sociopolitical situations. The present study is preoccupied with the identity and power relationships between standard and non-standard varieties where unequal regard exists between speakers of official languages and speakers of unofficial languages (Pavlenko & Blackledge 2004: 15; Widdicombe 1998a: 203).

This section has discussed identity research from a wide variety of perspectives. Views of identity have evolved from being merely categorical, to discursive and co-constructed, to a process that is ongoing and ever-changing. This thesis espouses the view that identity is a co-constructed and varied phenomenon that is constantly being negotiated and renegotiated. This study also employs a constructivist analytical approach, where identities are analysed within a social context and speakers may manipulate linguistic acts to make relevant certain

relationships. The following section explores the methodology used in further detail.

### **3. Methodology and Data Collection**

The previous chapter reviewed past literature relevant to this thesis, including code-switching, the situation in Switzerland, the negotiation of power, and the negotiation of identity. In the following chapter, I will expand on the methodology used in the present study. The next section describes the concepts of positioning and footing, and expands on Tannen's (2003) grid used for analysing power relationships. The final section describes in detail the process of data collection.

#### **3.1 Methodology**

As outlined in the previous chapter, I am concerned primarily with how Swiss speakers use code-switching to negotiate identity and power in the classroom. My view of identity and power relationships as co-constructed in conversation implies a methodology which takes into account speaker interaction and the wider context. As such, this thesis follows in the tradition of interactional sociolinguistics and conversation analysis to analyse natural and spontaneous conversation in order to take into account the implications of speakers' utterances and how they are interpreted in interaction. This thesis takes conversation analysis as a method of analysis (Antaki & Widdicombe 1998; Meinhof & Galasinski 2005; Pavlenko & Blackledge 2004) rather than a theory. By using any number of contextualisation cues (Gumperz 1982) such as hesitations, exhales or even a switch of codes, speakers can guide interpretation in a

certain direction. By looking at what contextual resources speakers are using, conversation analysts can explain what is happening in conversation on a deeper level (Hopper 1991) and see how meaning is co-constructed. Conversation analysis tends to use an emic perspective, where only the internal elements of the conversation are explored. However, I approach my analysis in terms of its larger context, often including external information that can be made relevant in talk through more indirect ways. In addition, utterances are examined in relation to each other and to the discourse as a whole, taking into account the context of the conversation. The analysis also follows a post-structuralist and critical theoretical approach which considers language within the context of sociopolitical and economic and cultural structures (Pavlenko & Blackledge 2004: 10).

The analysis uses the concept of positioning (briefly discussed in section 2.1c), in which speakers either locate themselves or are located by others in conversations (Harré & van Langenhove 1991, Liebscher & Dailey-O’Cain 2009; Liebscher & Dailey-O’Cain 2007; Pavlenko & Blackledge 2004, Giampapa 2004). As a reflection of conversation itself, positioning is ongoing and dynamic:

each of the participants always positions the other while simultaneously positioning him or herself. Whenever somebody positions him/ herself, this discursive act always implies a positioning of the one who is addressed. And similarly, when somebody positions somebody else, that always implies a positioning of the

person him/herself (Harré & van Langenhove 1991: 398).

In terms of identity, conversational positioning plays a large role in linking speakers to certain roles or groups (Harré & van Langenhove 1991, Meinhof & Galasinski 2005). Positioning can be defined as “the process by which selves are located in conversation as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced story lines, informed by particular discourses” (Pavlenko & Blackledge 2004: 20). Because identity is a co-constructed and negotiated process, it is therefore useful to examine how individuals position themselves linguistically and socially in discourse. As opposed to simply accessing a categorical membership, positioning implies that speakers manipulate their identity constructions and locate themselves and other conversation members in a certain space (Giampapa 2004: 193). The question becomes not ‘who I am’, but more ‘where I am’ in relation to the conversational context. For example, depending on where a speaker is located within her narrative, she may position herself or be positioned as “powerful or powerless, confident or apologetic, dominant or submissive, definitive or tentative and so on” (Harré & van Langenhove 1991:395).

Positioning of self and others often involves power imbalances. Indeed, Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) mention that speakers may feel tension between self-chosen positioning and how they are being positioned by others which can lead to resistance. As a co-negotiated

construct, identity and power must constantly be re-negotiated and accepted or rejected. Positioning is one way speakers may do this. Wolf (1999) also describes how participants use positioning to gain control over the outcome of the conversation (ibid: 83). By positioning themselves and others, speakers attempt to control the dynamic of the interaction and influence their own conversational options (ibid: 69-70). Therefore, the location of the participants in relation to the conversational context becomes important.

Related to positioning is Goffman's (1981) concept of changing footing. As discussed briefly in section 2.1, a change of footing is a shift in tone, and "an alteration in the social capacities in which the persons present claim to be active" (ibid: 126). As speakers move in and out of different types of embedded speech - for example, talking about the past, talking about present feelings, moving from autobiographical "I" to observer "she" - they adjust to a different footing. Similar to positioning, speakers are constantly changing footing and determining the placement of their co-participants accordingly. This thesis applies this concept to the analysis of classroom code-switching.

This study also utilizes Tannen's (2003) grid of hierarchy and solidarity to show how certain utterances may situate along the axes. As discussed above in section 2.3, Tannen's study explores how speakers may use mitigation in power relations. She devised a grid (see page 31), with an axis of hierarchy and equality and an axis of closeness and



distance. The idea is that speakers may locate themselves through discursive acts anywhere along these two axes. For example, a speaker may interact with her conversation partner in such a way as to imply equality and closeness between them. This would situate their relationship in the bottom left box of the grid. Alternatively, she may act so as to situate the relationship in the top right, implying a hierarchical association with distance. Speakers may, however, move through any area of the grid, situating their relationships as equal but distant or also hierarchical but still close. The latter situation involves the phenomenon of mitigation, whereby a speaker attempts to reduce the severity of her hierarchical authority by simultaneously reaching out in solidarity to create a closer relationship. Tannen's (2003) grid provides a useful tool in analysing Swiss German discourse in schools. Employing her strategy, I demonstrate how students and instructors try to connect and simultaneously exhibit authority by switching codes in the classroom.

Special consideration needs to be taken when dealing with code-switching between two very closely related languages such as a *Schriftdeutsch* and Swiss German. Ramat (1995: 59) observes that, due to structural equivalence, a standard language and dialect may have many potential switch sites which means switching can be triggered much more easily. Depending on how similar the codes are, it may in fact be difficult to determine which elements belong to which language (Franceschini 1998: 58). These issues must be taken into account during analysis of standard

and dialect code-switching. In this thesis, possible code-switches were analysed for linguistic consistency to determine they were not in fact lexical borrowings. For the most part, Swiss German utterances were phonologically very distinct from any *Schriftdeutsch* (despite a sometimes heavy Swiss accent). As a result, lexical borrowings from *Schriftdeutsch* into Swiss German were discernible but also extremely rare in the data collected.

### **3.2 Data Collection**

Data for this thesis were collected in the *Kanton* of Solothurn, which is situated in Northwestern Switzerland, in the German-speaking area. In 2001/2002, I lived in this area as an exchange student with Rotary International and I attended school at the *Kantonsschule*<sup>21</sup>, learning *Schriftdeutsch* and Swiss German in the process. The *Kantonsschule* caters to students who wish to continue with University education, as opposed to apprenticeships and industry careers. As a former student, I was able to approach contacts I had made during my exchange year and organize to observe classes in the school.

One class was recruited for data collection through a Swiss informant. I was in contact with two instructors, one male and one female, through email before entering the classroom to record. Both instructors are in their forties, native Swiss and competent speakers of both Swiss

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<sup>21</sup> secondary school

German and *Schriftdeutsch* (among other languages). The courses I observed were Biology, History and Geography, the latter two being taught by one instructor. I specifically chose these subjects because they do not fall under the courses where Swiss German may be used for instruction according to the *Kanton's* By-law (see page 2). As such, any use of Swiss German for instruction ignores the prescribed classroom norm. The data consist of transcripts of approximately 4.5 hours of group interaction recorded over two days of classes, whereby students and instructors discussed past and future exams and worked through assignments. During this time, I was present in the classroom, recording and taking observation notes of when speakers switched codes, but never participating in the class' discussions. Before recording commenced, students completed a basic questionnaire based on language abilities and preferences (see Appendix 7.1) as well as a consent form (see Appendix 7.2 and 7.3). Because eighteen is the Swiss age of adulthood, students under that age were not able to give their own consent. To remain true to my ethics application filed in Canada, I noted any utterances spoken by a student under eighteen so as not to include them in the subsequent analysis. This left thirteen out of nineteen students who were of legal age of consent. Four of these students are female and nine are male. Of the students under eighteen, three are female and three are male, resulting in a classroom total of seven females and twelve males. All the students and instructors are from Switzerland and, when specified, came from areas

very close to Solothurn geographically. Moreover, all students and instructors are also bilingual in *Schriftdeutsch* and Swiss German, as was reported in the questionnaire.

The day after the classroom recordings were finished, I recruited four male students for an additional focus group discussion. Unfortunately, I was not able to find any female students over eighteen to participate. In the focus group, lasting approximately 20 minutes, the participants discussed language practices in the Swiss German classroom as well as their attitudes towards Swiss German and its place in secondary school. In addition to building upon classroom data, explicit focus group information aids in guiding and supporting interpretations. The subsequent analysis draws upon the responses in this group discussion (as Interview Excerpts) as well as the classroom interactions.

After gathering and transcribing the classroom interactions, I then looked more closely at any code switches I had noted in the classroom. In some instances it was immediately recognizable that the switch indicated a change in the classroom dynamics, but other instances required more investigation. After coding and comparing my examples, I was able to recognize patterns and see how both instructors and students were using Swiss German and *Schriftdeutsch* to their advantages.

This chapter presented the methodological approaches used in this thesis. In addition to an interactional, discourse analytical approach, the analysis will make use of the concepts of positioning, footing, and

Tannen's (2003) grid of hierarchy and solidarity. This chapter also briefly discussed the issues in dealing with closely related languages such as Swiss German and *Schriftdeutsch* and finished with a detailed description of the data collection. In the next chapter, I utilize these methodological approaches to analyse a number of excerpts from both the classroom and the interview.

#### **4. Analyses**

The analyses in this thesis include excerpts taken from both classroom instructors and their students in Biology, History, and Geography as well as interactions from the interview. Careful examination of the excerpts shows how speakers use footing to signal inclusion (Classroom Excerpt 5) and shifts in power (Classroom Excerpt 6). Classroom Excerpts 7 and 8 show examples of mitigation. Finally, Classroom Excerpts 9 and 10 explore the unmarked classroom situation and demonstrate how speakers deviate from it in order to highlight the functions of their code-switch.

The following analyses employ a number of methodological concepts, as was discussed in the previous chapter. This includes Goffman's (1981) concept of footing (see section 3.1), where speakers change footing by enacting different roles and changing focus (Franceschini 1998: 64). As a feature of conversation, changes in footing occur constantly and classroom discourse involves many opportunities to shift "in and out of the business at hand" (Goffman 1981: 126). By changing footing, speakers are able to layer their discourse with meaning. In fact, changes in footing occur with "each increase or decrease in layering - each movement closer to or further from the literal" (ibid: 154). Speakers signal this change through the use of contextualisation cues (Gumperz 1982).

This thesis also makes use of positioning in the following analyses, as was briefly discussed in section 3.1. Similar to changes in footing, positioning involves the location of speakers in conversation (Harré & van Langenhove 1991; Pavlenko & Blackledge 2004). As Harré and van Langenhove (1991) note, “the stories people tell about themselves will differ according to how they want to present themselves” (ibid: 400). Like changing footing, positioning is constant and ongoing. As one speaker positions herself, she likewise positions her conversation partners accordingly. This analytical technique sheds light on both power and identity relationships.

When analysing power in the classroom, Tannen’s (2003) grid (see page 31) provides a useful methodological tool. As discussed in section 2.3, speakers may situate themselves along either axis to occupy different quadrants. In the following analyses I will draw on this idea to show how both students and instructors negotiate power in the classroom through mitigation and submission using code-switching.

#### **4.1 Markedness in the classroom**

Discussion patterns in the Biology, History, and Geography classes that I observed were similar in all three courses. Most of the class time was spent going over past exams or assignments to prepare for future exams. Class was conducted in a lecture style, with the instructor discussing topics and students for the most part asking questions of

clarification or replying to the instructor's questions. Often, students would chat amongst themselves quietly in Swiss German while the instructor was speaking in *Schriftdeutsch*. Instructors tended to speak in *Schriftdeutsch* while students would speak in Swiss German. Although this differs from the prescribed norm (see *Kanton By-law*, page 2), it can be viewed as the unmarked situation for these classrooms (see discussion of Markedness Model in section 2.1b).

The subsequent excerpts, which exemplify this unmarked situation, utilize the following transcription conventions:

K (researcher)

T (teacher)

S (student)

m (male)

f (female)

normal (*Schriftdeutsch*)

**bold (Swiss German)**

*italics (English translation)*

= (elongated)

CAPITALS (louder)

(.) pause

(1s) 1 second pause

( ) unintelligible

[ ] overlap



The first excerpt provides an example of the lecture style used in the classroom. The instructor is going over what her students should know for the upcoming exam and asks a question to check comprehension. In this example, the instructor uses *Schriftdeutsch* while the student uses Swiss German, which is the typical, unmarked classroom situation:

#### Classroom Excerpt 3: A Student Reply

- 1 Tf: u=h adenin die (short exhale) nucleotid musst  
Tf: *u=h adenine the (short exhale) nucleotide you*
- 2 ihr nicht wissen aber das hier schon (1s) DEN  
*don't have to know but this one you do (1s) THIS*
- 3 namen sollt ihr die kennen aber das sind die  
*name you should know but those are the*
- 4 phosphat (.) was so viel bedeutet wie?  
*phosphates (.) which so many mean what?*
- 5 (3s)  
(3s)
- 6 Sm: **das adenin mit drü phosphat**  
Sm: ***the adenine with three phosphates***
- 7 Tf: mit drei phosphat.  
Tf: *with three phosphates.*

In this example, the instructor is discussing the assignment and asks for student input. Her discussion is entirely in *Schriftdeutsch*, including her question. The student, in turn, responds in Swiss German, changing the language of interaction momentarily. The instructor picks up the reply by recasting in *Schriftdeutsch* in line 7. By doing so, she remains in the official language of the classroom, while the student uses his own

preferred code. This pattern is typical of the classroom interaction that I observed.

The next excerpt shows a similar situation from the same class:

#### Classroom Excerpt 4: Pattern of Discussion

1 Tf: em (.) nucleotide sind aus dem ( ) (.)  
Tf: *em (.) nucleotides are out of ( ) (.)*

2 jemand hat ( ) bewegung geschrieben  
*someone has ( ) written ( ) animation*

3 (.)  
(.)

4 Sf1: **frau meyer (.) choit ihr mir ([ ])**  
Sf1: **miss meyer (.) can you ([ ]) me**

5 **kation mangi schwer (.) mangi che=mischi (.)**  
**cation some heavy (.) some che=mical (.)**

6 **härstellig**  
**assembly**

7 Sm2: ([ ])  
Sm2: ([ ])

8 Tf: ja herste=llung (.) nicht?  
Tf: *yeah asse=mbly (.) no?*

9 (.)  
(.)

10 Sf1: **jo**  
Sf1: **yeah**

11 Tf: wie (.) wie ( )  
Tf: *like (.) like ( )*

12 Sf1: [ja ebe chand jo chemisch  
Sf1: [yeah but it can be meant

13 **gmeint sii**

***chemically***

- 14 Sm3: **jo=o** ([ ] ) **das?** (laughter)]  
Sm3: **ye=ah** ([ ] ) **that?** (laughter)]
- 15 Tf: ja aber dann musset du mehr schreiben (1s)  
Tf: *yeah but then you have to write more* (1s)
- 16 dann (.) erreichen (.) zwei Sätze zu (.) zum ( )  
*than (.) two sentences (.) to reach to (.) to ( )*
- 17 nicht (.) dann muss es mehr sein.  
*not (.) then it has to be more.*

Through the entire exchange, the instructor steadfastly uses *Schriftdeutsch*, while the students just as steadfastly use Swiss German. The structure in this classroom follows the unmarked pattern 2a<sup>22</sup>: A1 B2 A1 B2 A1 B2. Not only do the students use Swiss German freely in a supposedly *Schriftdeutsch*-based classroom, but the instructor also does not correct their language choice. The instructor's response in line 7 could be seen as a recast, but the pattern continues as the conversation continues. There is no indication in the subsequent excerpt (Pattern of Discussion), that the students' code choice is problematic. In fact, discussion continues to flow with each party using his or her own choice of code. These two excerpts demonstrate the unmarked classroom situation, whereby instructors use *Schriftdeutsch* and students use Swiss German. The following analyses, on the other hand, explore marked occasions, where instructors and students stray from typical classroom interaction

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<sup>22</sup> See page 21

and where code-switching is exploited by participants to signal power relationships.

## 4.2 Footing and identity

Code-switching is often an indication of a change of footing (Goffman 1981: 151), and can also be used to signal inclusion. The instructor in this first example is determining how to divide his class into groups to go through an in-class assignment. He uses Swiss German to indicate a change in footing and to index his shared identity with his students as a Swiss person.

### Classroom Excerpt 5: Inclusion

- 1 Tm: das em (2s) **machemir so** (1s) arbeits  
Tm: *that um* (2s) **let's do it like this** (1s) work
- 2 ( ) ig (.) uh  
( ) i (.) *uh*
- 3 (.)  
(.)
- 4 jede hälfte klasse macht das eine (.) das andere  
*each half of the class do the one (.) the other*
- 5 (2s) ja::: (.) **wie machemir's** (.) macht ih::r  
(2s) *yea::: (.) how should we do it (.) yo::u do*
- 6 (4s) ( ) (1s) modinizierungstheo (.) theorie o  
(4s) ( ) (1s) *modernisationtheo (.) theory o*
- 7 def (.) def(.) mm::: ihr zwei herren **au no**  
def (.) def(.) *mm::: you two gentlemen as well*
- 8 modinizierungstheorie (.) und die anderen (.) die  
*modernisation theory (.) and the others (.) the*

9 ganze rest.  
rest of it.

In this excerpt, the instructor is speaking in front of the class in *Schriftdeutsch*, which is typical of the classroom interaction I observed. But he interrupts the prescribed norm to switch into Swiss German at various points in his monologue. The switches in line 1 and 5 fulfill a social and discursive function. Each switch implies a change in footing (Goffman 1981), where the instructor layers more discursive and social meaning. The switch serves as a contextualisation cue, signaling to the other participants that something has shifted. In the case of this example, the instructor switches to signal a change in pronouns. He is no longer discussing what the entire class will do, but rather what the entire class *and himself* will do. To indicate this change, each switch occurs when he uses the pronoun “we”. In this way, the instructor is indicating a shift in tone, and positioning himself within his own narrative to be categorized with his Swiss students. As such, he is drawing attention to the fact that he shares the identity of speaker of Swiss German with his students. This is accomplished not only through the use of the pronoun “we”, but is also made more obvious through the use of the shared Swiss German code. This short excerpt shows how code-switching may have social and discursive meaning.

#### **4.3 Losing control**



37 (laughter)  
(laughter)

38 Tf: nein (.) hat das (.) da mein (.) mein normale  
Tf: *no (.) did that (.) there my (.) my normal*

39 ( ) (.) wenn ich in zehn minuten durchkomme (.)  
( ) (.) *when i finish it all in ten minutes (.)*

40 soll es euch auch reichen (.) bis jetzt ist es  
*it should be enough for you (.) until now it's*

41 immer (.) ist es immer aufgefallen  
*always (.) it's always stood out*

42 Sf1: [die muesst es  
Sf1: [that has to be

43 ( )  
( )

44 S: ([ ) uufgabe  
S: ([ ) assignment

45 Sm2: [jo  
Sm2: [yeah

46 (.)  
(.)

47 **wenni (.) wennine uufgabe muesse mini lösige**  
**if i (.) if i had to answer my own questions in**

48 **muesse löse (.)**  
**the assignment (.)**

49 **häti auch zähn minute!**  
**it would only take me ten minutes too!**

50 (chuckling)  
(chuckling)

51 Tf: nei=n (1s) ich mache die aufgabe (.) ich hab  
Tf: *no= (1s) i do the assigment (.) i always only*

52 die lösungen immer erst ( ) fertig  
the answers ( ) finished

In this excerpt, the instructor is speaking in front of the class in *Schriftdeutsch*, which is the unmarked and prescribed classroom situation. But trouble ensues beginning at line 25, when she makes a rather controversial remark. Various students complain in Swiss German, which is consistent with the unmarked classroom situation. But as the instructor speaks again, she is interrupted rather rudely by a student using Swiss German. Her subsequent switch into Swiss German departs from the classroom norm and is thus marked. In line 38, she switches once more back into *Schriftdeutsch* as she attempts to regain control of the conversation. The rest of the exchange follows as unmarked, whereby the instructor speaks *Schriftdeutsch* and the students speak Swiss German.

The sequence begins with the instructor's controversial remark (lines 25-28), followed by the students' uproar. The instructor tries to refine her original statement only to be interrupted by a swearing student who switches the language of the classroom into Swiss German (lines 34-35). The student's comment is inappropriate in such a formal and institutional setting and serves to challenge the authority of the teacher. One might imagine that, had the student used *Schriftdeutsch* to make his comment, it would have come across as less offensive, having recognized the authority of the teacher. However, the comment is in Swiss German and problematic for the instructor's perceived control of the classroom. This



fact is highlighted by the instructor's code-switch, which directly follows the student's outburst.

This switch is a reaction to the student's comment and is therefore participant-related. The instructor's utterance ("ne!") is in Swiss German, the code used by the students leading up to and following line 36. By choosing to switch into the preferred code of her students, the instructor is making explicit the connection that she shares with her pupils: she and they are both speakers of Swiss German. This switch can be seen as a connecting act and moves the utterance further along the equality axis of Tannen's grid. The instructor moves out of her role of teacher and indexes her shared identity of a speaker of Swiss German. By switching out of the official code of the classroom, the instructor appeals to the students' sense of solidarity. This serves to position the instructor as defendant in the argument. As she attempts to justify her comments in the following lines (38-41), she stumbles into *Schriftdeutsch* and moves the code away from that preferred by the students. Her utterance is marked by hesitations and false starts as well as the switch. Indeed, Moyer (1998) remarks that "code-switching does not exist in isolation as a meaning-creating device; it groups together with other contextualisation cues in order to jointly produce meaning inferences" (ibid: 217). Through the use of numerous contextualisation cues, including a change in code, the instructor is signaling an attempt to reposition herself in the conversation as an authority figure and relocate her role as instructor. Instead of reaching out

to the students, she now distances herself and enacts her power by using the authoritative language of the classroom. Consequently, the code-switches signal a change in classroom authority.

#### 4.4 Mitigation

The next excerpt is from the same conversation, which continued on in *Schriftdeutsch*. In this excerpt, we see how an instructor may use mitigation in the classroom.

##### Classroom Excerpt 7: Authority and Solidarity

- 54 Tf: [nein wusst ihr  
Tf: [no you know
- 55 (.) wie musst ihr schreibt so viel (1s) ihr (.)  
(.) *how you have to write so much (1s) you (.)*
- 56 schreibt (.) zu viel!  
*write (.) too much!*
- 57 Sm3: [jo  
Sm3: [yeah
- 58 **aber luegt jetzt mau di uufgabe (.) dna (.)**  
***but look now here at the question (.) dna (.)***
- 59 **wo's(.) wo's fufzä Pünkt gid (.) do**  
***that's(.) that's worth fifteen points (.) here i***
- 60 ***chani nid ( ) si do vii inne schriibe***  
***can't ( ) here lots to write in***
- 61 Tf: [darfi schnau?  
Tf: [may i?
- 62 (.)  
(.)

63 Sm3: ja **ÄR HET** jo eini **gschriibe!** (creaky voice)  
Sm3: **yeah HE wrote one!** (creaky voice)

64 (.)  
(.)

65 Tf: okay  
Tf: *okay*

66 Sm3: [**är het gseh oh luegt mau ig ha**  
Sm3: [**he saw oh look a minute i have**

67 (1s) (paper rustling)  
(1s) (paper rustling)

68 Tf: fünfzehn Punkte  
Tf: *fifteen points*

69 Sm3: [**oh ( ) gschriibe** (laughing voice)  
Sm3: [**oh ( ) wrote** (laughing voice)

70 (1s)  
(1s)

71 Tf: das sind fünfzehn punkte  
Tf: *that's fifteen points*

72 Sf4: **er schriibt vii**  
Sf4: **he writes a lot**

73 (.)  
(.)

74 Tf: **ne=i schriibt ni vii** (1s) ich hab die  
Tf: **no= he doesn't write a lot** (1s) *i have the*

75 ([laughter) ([laughter)  
([laughter) ([laughter)

76 Tf: wichtige  
Tf: *important*

77 (laughter) (2s)  
(laughter) (2s)

78 Tf: nur das schreiben was gefragt ist und nicht

Tf: *only write what was asked and nothing*

79 sonst irgendwas  
*else*

80 S: [dasch au ( )]  
 S: [that's also ( )]

81 (.)  
 (.)

82 Tf: konzentriert euch auf das ( ) ist  
 Tf: *pay attention to that ( ) is*

83 Sm2: [aber är macht  
 Sm2: [but he also

84 **no zeichnige  
 had drawings**

85 (1s)  
 (1s)

86 Tf: Okay  
 Tf: *okay*

Similar to the other examples, this interaction begins as unmarked, with the instructor speaking *Schriftdeutsch* and students speaking Swiss German. In line 61, the instructor switches into Swiss German but resumes her use of *Schriftdeutsch* again in line 65. Unmarked discussion ensues until line 74, where the instructor once again uses Swiss German before moving back into *Schriftdeutsch*. The remainder of the excerpt is unmarked and typical of classroom interaction.

The first marked switch occurs at line 61, where the instructor asks for a student's exam paper in Swiss German. This switch serves as an aside to the conversation (the instructor moves back into *Schriftdeutsch*

directly after), and can be classified as discourse-related. The change of code indicates a change of footing as well. The subject has gone from the exam question worth fifteen points to a specific student's exam paper. The switch could also relate to the audience. As has been observed in previous studies (see Steiner: 2008), instructors have a tendency to use Swiss German when speaking one on one with students and *Schriftdeutsch* when speaking to the entire class. In another recording, the instructor in the present study even repeats a concept in Swiss German to one student during a class break that she previously discussed in *Schriftdeutsch* with the entire class. This tendency was recognized by students in the interview as well:

#### Interview Excerpt 5: The Barrier

- 1     Sm: **uh (.) wen mir zu dem lehrer öppis**  
      Sm: **uh (.) when we go to the teacher to**
- 2     **geh go bespräche**  
      **discuss something**
- 3     **unter vier augen (1s) und wenn mir das**  
      **in private (1s) and if we do that**
- 4     **uuf hochdütsch macht**  
      **in high german**
- 5     (1s) **ja da chunnt das in so künschtlech übere so**  
      (1s) **yeah then it just seems so fake**
- 6     Kf: **ja=a**  
      Kf: **yea=h**
- 7     Sm:     **so nid natürlech und (.) wenn mir das**  
      Sm:     **just not really natural (.) when we discuss**

- 8     (.) **uuf mundart midem lehrer bespricht** (1s) **da=**  
       (.) **that in dialect with the teacher** (1s) **then= we**
- 9     **het me so** (.) **jo** (.) **chumme viu persönellecher**  
       **have** (.) **yeah** (.) **it's more personal**
- 10    **wiu der lehrer chunnt irgendwie** (.) **anders über**  
       **because the teacher seems somehow** (.) **different**
- 11    **sich midäm** (clears throat) **hochdütsch isch no so**  
       **with the** (clears throat) **high german it's**
- 12    **wiene** (.) **so wie dazwische**  
       **like a** (.) **so like between**
- 13    Sm:                                 [**gränze**  
       Sm:                                 [**barrier**

As the instructor asks the student for his exam paper, she switches to make clear that she is speaking to only one student. This shows how implicit language norms of the bilingual classroom operate.

The second marked switch occurs at line 74, where the instructor contradicts a student's comment in the same code as the student: Swiss German. This switch can be interpreted as participant-related, as it is a direct response to what the student said before. In terms of footing, the switch occurs where pronouns change from "he" to "I". The instructor is moving from observer to autobiographer, and marks this change with a change of code. The instructor is also still trying to remain in a position of authority during the argument with her class. She directly contradicts the student's suggestion that "he writes a lot", but may not wish to seem overly harsh in her contradiction. She solves this difficulty by using the student's preferred code, which cloaks her rejection in a more playful tone and



5 (2s)  
(2s)

6 T: **ihr siid spot**  
T: **you're late**

7 S: **mir ghörts lüte ganz schlächt dor usse**  
S: **we can't hear the bell out there**

8 (1s)  
(1s)

9 T: **dann muesst haut nid go rauche ( )**  
T: **then don't go and smoke ( )**

10 S: **suesch chani ( )**  
S: **otherwise i can ( )**

11 S: [ja mir dürfe ja doch haut gar  
S: [yea we're not even allowed

12 **nüm**  
**anymore**

13 (short laugh)  
(short laugh)

14 T: **ebe (.) dann raucht noch ( ) du gar nid**  
T: **see (.) then don't even ( ) smoke**

15 (laughter) (3s)  
(laughter) (3s)

16 S: ( ) **nid z'rauche**  
S: ( ) **not to smoke**

17 (laughter)  
(laughter)

18 (students murmuring) (10s)  
(students murmuring) (10s)

19 T: **die frage (2s) zu den seiten fünfundsechsig bis**  
T: **the question (2s) to the pages sixty five to**



- 20 neunundsechsig (.) die frage die auf heute lösen  
*sixty nine (.) the question that must be answered*
- 21 musste (.) das sind (.) so fra=gen wie ich  
*by today (.) those are (.) like que=stions that i*
- 22 (.) sinnvoll finde.  
*(.) find useful.*

In this example, the instructor begins class, as usual, in *Schriftdeutsch*.

However, she switches into Swiss German in line 6 to address students who are coming in late. As is expected, the students respond in Swiss German and the two parties converse in Swiss German until line 19, where the instructor resumes the lesson in *Schriftdeutsch*.

The excerpt begins with instructor beginning the lesson after a break in *Schriftdeutsch*, while students chat amongst themselves in Swiss German. Once the late students arrive however, the instructor switches into Swiss German in line 6 and a playful discussion takes place until line 16. The switch indicates a change in footing, from serious classroom discussion to a sidelong joking back and forth. This use of Swiss German is typical of past studies that found the language spoken for informal classroom settings (Steiner 2008: 232-233). It is anticipated that the instructor will remain in *Schriftdeutsch* and continue in her role of teacher, but by switching codes, she dissolves this assumption and connects with her shared identity as a Swiss person. Moreover, her bantering and joking creates an intimate atmosphere of friendship that is supported by her choice of code.

As the students arrive late, they may expect to be reprimanded. However, by using Swiss German, the instructor manages to discipline and joke at the same time. This allows her to occupy Tannen's axis of authority while simultaneously connecting to her students in solidarity. By accessing their shared identity as Swiss people through her use of Swiss German, the instructor can achieve her disciplinary goals while allowing the students to save face. Once again, code-switching functions as a tool for mitigation.

After this lighthearted exchange, the instructor switches back into *Schriftdeutsch* in line 19. She pauses for two seconds, which serves as a contextualisation cue to signal a return to serious classroom discussion, thereby also changing the footing. In this way, the instructor can use code-switching to access different roles and identities as well as a tool for disciplinary action.

#### **4.5 The Unmarked Situation**

As was briefly discussed in section 4.1, data from this thesis show a classroom situation contrary to the prescribed one, in which students consistently use Swiss German and instructors use *Schriftdeutsch*. This is evident in Classroom Excerpt 9, where the instructor momentarily struggles to maintain her role of instructor separate from her identity as fellow Swiss German speaker.

Classroom Excerpt 9: Confusion of Roles

- 1 S1: **und wieso heisst es damit adeni=n (.) drü**  
S1: **and why is that called then adeni=n (.) three**
- 2 **phosphat**  
**phosphates**
- 3 (1s)  
(1s)
- 4 T: wa weil da noch ein zucker ist!  
T: *yeah, because there's still a sugar there!*
- 5 S1: ([ )  
S1: ([ )
- 6 S2: **aber heisst jetzt adenin drü mal zucker**  
S2: **but does that mean adenin times three sugars**
- 7 **oder ( ) phosphat?** (laughing voice)  
**or ( ) phosphates?** (laughing voice)
- 8 S1: [ah]  
S1: [ah]
- 9 T: weil ( ) ist das zu ( )  
T: *because ( ) is that too ( )*
- 10 S1: [**das os**]  
S1: [**the os**]
- 11 (.)  
(.)
- 12 S1: **os** ( )  
S1: **os** ( )
- 13 S3: ([ )  
S3: ([ )
- 14 T: das da ( ) **ne abkürzig** (.) eh (.)  
T: *that there ( ) the abbreviation* (.) eh (.)
- 15 abkürzung (.) adenasin (.) ist die abkürzung

- abbreviation (.) adenasin (.) is the abbreviation
- 16 von adenin (.) rewo=sin  
of adenin (.) rewo=sin
- 17 (2s)  
(2s)
- 18 S4: **das chommt doch immer (.) adenin rewo sin zäme**  
S4: **that always comes (.) adenin rewo sin together**
- 19 **adenosin**  
**adenosin**
- 20 T: ja (.) **isch guet?**<sup>23</sup> ja.  
T: **yeah (.) all right? yeah.**

As is typical of the data set, the student asks a question in Swiss German and the instructor responds in *Schriftdeutsch*. The discussion goes back and forth, following the unmarked situation until line 14, where the instructor switches momentarily into Swiss German (“*ne abkürzig*”). She then pauses, mutters, pauses again and repeats the utterance in *Schriftdeutsch*. This self-repair is indicative of a confusion of roles. The instructor could have continued on in Swiss German, or merely switched to *Schriftdeutsch* at the next utterance, knowing that her students would still understand her. She in fact pauses in her speech, which draws attention to the switch and perhaps indicates a moment of reflection on her part. By repeating the word again in *Schriftdeutsch*, she indicates her awareness of her role as instructor and her responsibility for using the

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<sup>23</sup> This switch could be defined as discourse-related and therefore not relevant to the power and identity issues discussed in this section. The instructor uses Swiss German to “check” her students’ comprehension, switching and therefore marking her check as separate from the rest of her lecture.

standard language<sup>24</sup>. The switch back into *Schriftdeutsch* reinforces her role as a classroom instructor and therefore as an authoritative figure.

For the most part, classroom code-switching follows Auer's (1995) 2a and 2b patterns (see section 2.1b) with students consistently using Swiss German and instructors consistently using *Schriftdeutsch*. Steiner (2008) explains this code-switching pattern as "didaktischer Adressierung"<sup>25</sup> (ibid: 228), where, if the instructor believes her utterance to be useful to all students, she will reply in *Schriftdeutsch* even if the student is using Swiss German. Although it is understandable that instructors wish and may even feel pressure to use *Schriftdeutsch* in the classroom, it is surprising that students do not also use *Schriftdeutsch* as much as possible. It is also interesting that instructors do not enforce the prescribed norm in the classroom, allowing their students to continue addressing them in Swiss German while they themselves use *Schriftdeutsch*. This is indicative of the fact that a negotiation of classroom language choice has resulted in the unmarked situation where students use Swiss German and instructors use *Schriftdeutsch*. In this situation, neither party uses the other code unless they wish to mark their utterance in some fashion. In past studies (see Steiner 2008, Rash 1998), code choice in the Swiss classroom can be seen as a microcosm of a diglossic Switzerland: Swiss German and *Schriftdeutsch* have specific domains of

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<sup>24</sup> Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain (2003) found similar uses of self-repair in the classroom (376)

<sup>25</sup> "didactic address"

use, whether they relate to formality, content, or audience. Yet, as the analyses above have shown, this is not always the case. Both codes are used for their discursive function in indexing shared identities and negotiating power relationships. Very rarely did I observe students using *Schriftdeutsch* in the classroom. This further supports the existence of an unmarked classroom situation (at least in the courses observed) where the instructors attempt to use the official school language while students tend to continue using Swiss German, even when the instructor does not<sup>26</sup>.

Furthermore, it appears that students don't consciously realize that this situation exists in their classroom. Interview data reveal that students are unaware of—or perhaps unwilling to admit to—their own refusal to switch when confronted with *Schriftdeutsch*:

#### Interview Excerpt 6: Answering in *Schriftdeutsch*

**Sm: Das isch mir auso, wenn di, di Lehrer mir mit Hochdütsch aaredet dann mir stoh immer Hochdütsch antwortet**

**Sm: For me that's like, when the, the teacher talks to me in High German, then we always answer in High German**

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<sup>26</sup> I experienced a similar situation with my host father in Switzerland during my exchange year. He was of the opinion that I should be learning only *Schriftdeutsch* and I was trying to learn to speak Swiss German. The result was that I would speak only Swiss German with him and he would speak only *Schriftdeutsch* to me, even though he would use Swiss German with other speakers. This power struggle continued even when I went back to Switzerland to visit in the intervening years. Finally, on my trip to gather data for this thesis, I “gave in” and spoke *Schriftdeutsch* with him, using a more standard phonology. He was delighted and instantly began speaking Swiss German with me!

Yet, analysis of classroom discussion shows this is rarely the case. This shows that the interviewed students' expressed attitudes towards *Schriftdeutsch* use in the classroom are different from the attitudes they express through usage. Similarly, when asked whether they noticed their instructors' use of Swiss German, students were unaware of how much and when it was used:

#### Interview Excerpt 7: Instructors Using Swiss German

Sm: **Mir merkt's vielleicht im ( ) hets davon gwohnt, au jede Lehrer het si eigeni Art, bruucht mängisch mehr Dialäkt oder weniger Dialäkt. Und irgendwie das, das realiziert mir gar nid richtig au im Ungerricht**

Sm: ***We maybe notice it in ( ) we've gotten used to it, also every teacher has his own way, uses sometimes more dialect or less dialect. And somehow we, we don't even really notice that in class.***

Perhaps this is simply a case of limited awareness, whereby choice of code is a mostly unconscious phenomenon. Or perhaps my status as an outsider had something to do with the expressed attitudes. Students know what the prescribed classroom norm is and interview data shows that they feel it is important. They may realize that, according to the prescribed norm, they *should* be using *Schriftdeutsch* in class when responding to their instructors. And so, when asked about it directly, they claim that they *do* use the prescribed norm. Whatever the reason for the discrepancy, the fact remains that students steadfastly continue using Swiss German, while

instructors attempt to use *Schriftdeutsch*. With this in mind, the self-correction in line 14 could be analysed in a different way. Perhaps the instructor corrects her slip in order to maintain her use of *Schriftdeutsch*, upholding the prescribed classroom norm, or the unmarked situation. She has not switched for any discursive reason, and by correcting herself, she draws attention to the fact that she is specifically using *Schriftdeutsch*. Additionally, this unmarked situation hints at the existence of a deeper power struggle. As the official language of the classroom, *Schriftdeutsch* is thus imbued with symbolic authority. The instructor can reinforce her own authority by using *Schriftdeutsch*, as was observed in the previous analyses (see Classroom Excerpt 6: Shifts in Power). By refusing to use the preferred language of the instructor, as well as that of the educational institution, students are rejecting this classroom authority on two fronts. First, they reject the authority of the actual instructor by refusing to use her preferred language in class. Second, they reject the authority of the secondary school by choosing their own classroom code and refusing to follow the language recommendations of the *Kanton*<sup>27</sup>. As a result, both students and instructors maintain the unmarked situation, each using their own preferred language for the majority of their discourse, and switching codes to mark and fulfill discursive functions.

#### **4.6 Markedness and Submission**

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<sup>27</sup> See Introduction



One way to test the markedness of situations is to see if meaning is produced when the unmarked state is violated. As has been shown in the above examples, the instructor uses *Schriftdeutsch* and switches into Swiss German to index identity, change footing, and negotiate power in the classroom. However, the following excerpt is one of the only examples of a student-initiated code-switch to *Schriftdeutsch* in the entire data set. The classroom discussion is focused on an assignment and two students are whispering between themselves while the instructor is lecturing.

#### Classroom Excerpt 10: Submission

- 1 Tf: könnt ihr bitte das gequatsche sein lassen  
Tf: *could you please leave that yackety-yak*
- 2 Sf1: **ebe es goht um das**  
Sf1: **but it's about this**
- 3 Tf: ja (.) aber ich möcht (.) es hat kein sinn  
Tf: *yeah (.) but i'd like (.) it makes no sense*
- 4 dass ihr (.) neben gespräche führt  
*for you (.) to have a discussion on the side*
- 5 (.)  
(.)
- 6 Sf1: ja  
Sf1: *yeah*
- 7 (.)  
(.)
- 8 Tf: okay (.) ( ) um was geht's?  
Tf: *okay (.) ( ) what's the problem?*
- 9 (1s)  
(1s)

- 10 Sf1: keine ahnung  
Sf1: *no idea*
- 11 (1s)  
(1s)
- 12 Tf: was war denn deine frage nach hinten?  
Tf: *what was your question there in the back?*
- 13 (.)  
(.)
- 14 Sf1: aha nein (.) ich habe gerade (.) gerade ( )  
Sf1: *oh i see no (.) i was just (.) just ( )*

In this excerpt, both the student and the instructor deviate from the unmarked situation. The instructor is using *Schriftdeutsch* to discipline and the student, as is typical, answers in Swiss German. The instructor remains in *Schriftdeutsch* to both chastise the student and ask her what her problem is. The student then uses *Schriftdeutsch* to answer the instructor, which deviates from the typical classroom situation. In this way, she marks her utterance and highlights its discursive and social functions.

The sequence begins with the instructor's disciplinary utterance (spoken in *Schriftdeutsch*), and is eventually followed by a question in line 8, which is spoken in *Schriftdeutsch*. Even though this reinforces the instructor's preferred code, it violates a different norm. While the instructor is speaking one on one with the student, she does not use the student's preferred code, ignoring the tendency to use Swiss German in direct conversations. Instead she continues using *Schriftdeutsch*, which gives

the question a more outspoken, interrogative quality, while marking it at the same time. In the next line, the student switches from Swiss German into *Schriftdeutsch*, the language of the classroom and the authoritative language of the instructor. This switch is participant-related because the student responds to the instructor's question in part by switching codes. In 4.5 hours of classroom interaction, this was one of the only examples of a student switching into *Schriftdeutsch* in reaction to the instructor. All other examples show the *instructor* switching into Swiss German in reaction to the *student's* preferred code. This trend makes the above example of a student switching *out of* Swiss German very unusual. She has in fact departed from the above mentioned unmarked situation of using Swiss German, even when addressed in *Schriftdeutsch*. This switch is therefore highly marked, making its function easily perceived by the instructor and her peers.

But what is the function of this switch? In lines 3-8, she has been disciplined and then questioned in front of her classmates and is most likely embarrassed. By moving into *Schriftdeutsch*, the student is relating to the authority of the instructor, showing submission in the face of disciplinary action. She and the instructor also pause in between each line, which makes the entire exchange more intense and awkward. Through these contextualisation cues, the student positions herself lower on the hierarchy axis while simultaneously positioning the instructor higher. She also increases the distance between them by dissolving the linked identity

of fellow speakers of Swiss German. This action is necessary to save face and by marking her function by switching *into Schriftdeutsch*, the student makes her intentions clear to those familiar with the class atmosphere. In terms of Myers-Scotton's (1998) Markedness Model, the student is accessing the Deference maxim (see page 17). By accessing the code most often used to show deference, the student is submitting and showing respect to her instructor. The fact that this is also the marked code in this situation makes it all the more powerful.

The previous analyses have shown how code-switching functions in the Swiss classroom. By moving between Swiss German and *Schriftdeutsch*, both students and instructors are able to negotiate their identities and power relationships. Instructors may signal inclusion, a change in classroom authority, and mitigation through switching. Swiss German serves to cushion disciplinary action and criticism, as well as to index shared identity as Swiss speakers. When students switch from Swiss German into *Schriftdeutsch*, it can serve to recognize the authority of the instructor and, through a departure from the unmarked situation, it marks this function clearly.

## 5. Conclusion

In the previous chapter, I showed how students and instructors use code-switching to negotiate their identities and power relationships in the classroom. In the following chapter, I will present some interpretations of the study. To begin, I will summarize the findings from the analyses, followed by a discussion. I will then explore some of the implications of this thesis and end with some conclusions.

### 5.1: Summary of Findings

The above analyses have demonstrated how code-switching is a strategy employed by both instructors and students to negotiate power and identity in the classroom interactions which I observed. The first excerpts established the unmarked classroom situation, where students use Swiss German and instructors use *Schriftdeutsch*. In the next section, the instructor uses code-switching to indicate a change in footing and to signal his shared identity with his students. By switching from *Schriftdeutsch* to Swiss German whenever he uses the pronoun “we”, the instructor changes tone and includes his students. This also demonstrates his and his students’ shared identity of speakers of Swiss German. This shows how code-switching functions and carries with it discursive meaning that is interpreted.

In the third section, the instructor uses code-switching to signal a change in classroom authority. After being insulted and having her

authority challenged, the instructor switches into Swiss German. As Swiss German is the preferred code of her students, the instructor is appealing to her students' sense of solidarity. This moves her closer to her students on Tannen's (2003) axis of solidarity while positioning her lower on the hierarchy axis. Her subsequent switch *back* into the language of the classroom serves to reposition her as instructor and helps her to regain her challenged authority. In this way, code-switching in the Swiss classroom can function in the dimension of power relationships.

In the next section, code-switching is used to further negotiate power relationships through mitigation. As can be seen in Classroom Excerpts 7 and 8 (Authority and Solidarity; Classroom Discipline), the instructor cushions her contradiction and disciplinary actions through the use of Swiss German. This is accomplished by positioning herself further down the hierarchy axis and closer along the solidarity axis of Tannen's (2003) grid. In Classroom Excerpt 7, the instructor switches in to Swiss German when she directly contradicts a student, helping to mitigate her actions. This is also an example of a previously documented classroom norm, where one-on-one discussions are usually in Swiss German, whereas utterances aimed at the entire class are usually in the official classroom language. Classroom Excerpt 8 involves a different situation, where the instructor uses Swiss German to make her disciplinary action less harsh. Again, she uses the students' preferred code to mitigate her actions, while at the same time indexing their shared identity. These two

examples show how code-switching in the Swiss classroom can be utilised to negotiate power situations through mitigation, where either party may lose face.

The fourth section of the analysis discusses the unmarked classroom situation, where students routinely speak Swiss German and instructors *Schriftdeutsch*, resulting in a pattern of A1 B2 A1 B2. In Classroom Excerpt 9: Confusion of Roles, the instructor momentarily lapses into Swiss German and pauses, mumbles and then repeats the word again in *Schriftdeutsch*. This shows that the instructor is aware of the prescribed classroom norm - she is expected to use *Schriftdeutsch* - and she highlights this norm by correcting herself in an obvious manner. This also indicates a confusion of roles, where she reinforces her role as instructor and her responsibility for using *Schriftdeutsch* in the classroom. Despite this obvious correction in *Schriftdeutsch*, her students continue to use Swiss German, rejecting the authority of both the instructor and the official classroom language.

The final analysis shows how the unmarked situation can be violated to show submission in the face of a threat. Classroom Excerpt 10 is the only example where a student switches into the instructor's code of choice. This is done as an act of submission, in response to a disciplinary action carried out in *Schriftdeutsch*. The instructor first deviates from another unmarked situation: when speaking one on one, both parties will use Swiss German. Instead, the teacher chastises the student using the

code of authority, making her action much more harsh and positioning her very high on Tannen's hierarchy grid, while distancing herself at the same time. The student's reaction is to switch into the teacher's code, departing from the unmarked practice of using Swiss German in the classroom. This action is very rare and therefore highly marked. It makes obvious to the instructor and to the student's peers that she is submitting to the instructor by recognizing her authority. As a result, code-switching can be used to renegotiate power relationships in this classroom by marking utterances.

## **5.2: Discussion**

Drawing on positioning theory (Harré & van Langenhove 1991), footing (Goffman 1981), power and solidarity (Tannen 2003), and markedness (Myers-Scotton 1998), as well as numerous theoretical constructs of both power and identity (de Fina 2003 ; Meinhof & Galasinski 2005 ; Ng & Bradac 1993; Tannen 2003), the findings of this study expand on the work of previous research in the area of code-switching functions and power and identity. This study also sheds light on interactions in bilingual classrooms in general and the relationship between *Schriftdeutsch* and Swiss German in the Swiss secondary school. The above examples demonstrate how power, solidarity and identity are intertwined and how speakers can access them through code-switching.

This thesis also reveals the unmarked classroom situation, where students tend to speak Swiss German and instructors *Schriftdeutsch*. This



differs from the prescribed norm, where *Schriftdeutsch* is supposed to be used consistently by both students and instructors. Arguably, it is not because students are *unable* to speak *Schriftdeutsch* that they do not speak it in the classroom. I observed some instances where they did in fact use *Schriftdeutsch* (see section 4.5), and self-reporting shows competence in both languages. Their refusal to speak *Schriftdeutsch* may signal their discomfort with the language, which was discussed in section 2.2. This apparent unease has led Swiss policy makers to adopt the use of *Schriftdeutsch* in schools as early on as Kindergarten, in the hopes that students will become more comfortable with the language<sup>28</sup>. How and when *Schriftdeutsch* is presented may have consequences for its use. Having grown up in Swiss German, these students are being introduced to what is essentially a new language<sup>29</sup>. Preliminary studies have shown that early introduction of *Schriftdeutsch* leads to more active speakers with stronger vocabulary (Gyger 2007: 42-44), but research is ongoing<sup>30</sup>. This thesis has a practical application, in that it sheds light on how these two language choices affect classroom interaction.

Alternately, students' refusal to speak the official language of the classroom could signal a refusal to submit to the dictation of the

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<sup>28</sup> Added to this debate is the issue of immigrant children who do not speak Swiss German and their ability to comprehend in a Kindergarten class which uses only Swiss German

<sup>29</sup> This perspective was shared during the focus group interview: see Interview Excerpt 2: *Schriftdeutsch* as Second Language in the Introduction to this thesis

<sup>30</sup> A four-year study of students in Northwest Switzerland who were introduced to *Schriftdeutsch* in Kindergarten will be finishing in Fall 2009

educational institution and sometimes of the instructor. By flagrantly violating the prescribed norm, students subvert the power held over them by those with higher institutional authority and claim Swiss German as their own self-prescribed classroom language. By doing so, they also provide themselves with the ability to manipulate the unmarked situation, and can deviate from it to renegotiate power and submit to or refute classroom authority, as the analyses have shown. Moreover, by not enforcing the prescribed norm, the instructors are co-participants in creating the unmarked situation. As such, code-switching becomes a powerful tool in Swiss schools, useful for negotiating power relationships and indexing shared identity. It follows that, if the use of *Schriftdeutsch* in the classroom were more formally dictated, students stand to lose many of the functions of code-switching described in this thesis. By not allowing students (and instructors) the option of negotiating power and identity through switching codes, educational institutions would be interfering in classroom behaviour in more ways than they may know. This thesis could have implications for further language policy debates, as it provides examples of both languages being used in the classroom in a functional way. For speakers in these classrooms, the prescribed norm is nothing more than a guideline which is not even followed. By establishing their own unmarked classroom situation, speakers can deviate from it and fulfill the important functions described in this thesis.

### 5.3: Implications for Further Research

Although this study gives a detailed account of language use in Swiss classrooms, it has implications for parallel language situations such as bilingual classrooms in general, and especially for those involving dialects and standard languages. Further study may explore how bilinguals use language in similar situations, such as classroom interaction in general. The analyses in this thesis explore the dynamics of power and identity in a hierarchical atmosphere, and a similar study may indicate comparable usage for other languages.

As globalization brings more and more people into contact, proficiency in *Schriftdeutsch* for Swiss students will become a higher priority. Already, Swiss citizens are discussing the possibility of introducing *Schriftdeutsch* into Kindergarten classes (Gyger 2007). Some *Kantons* like *Zürich* have already supplied recommendations for its use. As more students are exposed to *Schriftdeutsch* at an earlier age, attitudes may change and students may no longer associate *Schriftdeutsch* with correctness, marks, and judgement as Rash (1998) describes. Future studies could explore how attitude changes affect the use of both languages in the classroom. Perhaps code-switching will no longer function in quite the same way as described in this thesis.

Research of this type could also have pedagogical and even political implications for Switzerland. If having access to two codes in school proves fruitful for students and instructors, strong

recommendations for their use may interfere with the functions of code-switching in the classroom. Instructors may also be made aware of their own and their students' uses of code-switching to better negotiate classroom learning and discipline. As Switzerland grows and changes within a global world, perhaps the shared identity linked to Swiss German will become more pronounced and cultivated in a school setting.

Further research in this field may include studies of code-switching functions for power and identity in other domains, such as workplaces and Universities, or courts of law and religious institutions. It would be interesting to see how code-switching strategies might change in situations that differ from the classroom. Studies of different instructors and courses in Swiss schools may also prove fruitful. Investigations into code-switching behaviour in elementary school could shed light on the development of these skills.

#### **5.4: Conclusions**

The role that Swiss German plays in the classroom is determined in part by the social and interactional discourse between students and instructors. While Swiss German enjoys a niche functioning for acts such as introducing, making asides, disciplining and the like, it fulfills a deeper role as a manipulator of classroom power and identity. Through code-switching, speakers negotiate and construct these shared identities and power relationships.

This thesis is situated within the code-switching research tradition of Peter Auer (1998), in that it examines code-switching behaviour within the context of interactional sociolinguistics. In this way, code-switching can be a contextualisation cue (Gumperz 1982) that signals a change in footing and serves to position speakers in relation to each other. Through positioning (Harré & van Langenhove 1991) and markedness (Myers-Scotton 1998), participants make relevant certain identities and renegotiate power relationships.

Identity is viewed in this thesis as a fluid concept, that is ever-changing and constantly redefined. Identities are co-constructed in interaction and negotiated, supported, and resisted by participants (de Fina 2003; Meinhof & Galasinski 2005). By using code-switching to index a shared identity, participants may wish to act in solidarity, leveling the hierarchy that exists between them. Such an act may be accompanied by authoritative content and, through a switch of codes which equalizes the relationship, allows the speaker to save face through mitigation. Using Tannen's (2003) grid, this thesis shows how speakers in the Swiss German classroom use code-switching to position themselves in relation to the hierarchy and closeness of their relationships.

Although much work has been done on the situation in German-speaking Switzerland, there is little research in the area of functional code-switching in the classroom. What studies there are, tend to focus on the domains of Swiss German in schools (Rash 1998; Steiner 2008),

neglecting the deeper functions of code-switching for constructing identities and power relationships. This thesis describes an unmarked classroom situation, where students interact in Swiss German, even with their instructors who mostly use *Schriftdeutsch*. However, it is possible to deviate from this unmarked situation from moment to moment, and such deviations have consequences. When students switch from Swiss German into *Schriftdeutsch*, the deviation serves to mark the function of the code-switch. As was described in this thesis, this act can signal submission, making the gesture clear to both instructor and peers. Such creativity and ability to manipulate norms in discourse sheds light on the interaction of speakers in society in general.

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## 7. Appendices

### 7.1 Questionnaire

**Name:**

Mann \_\_\_\_ Frau \_\_\_\_ Alter \_\_\_\_\_

1. Welche Sprache(n) sprechen Sie?
2. Welche Sprache(n) sprechen Sie zu Hause?
3. Woher kommen Sie?
4. Bitte bewerten Sie Ihre Sprachkenntnisse in Hochdeutsch:  
1 (nicht gut) 2 3 4 5 (sehr gut)
5. Bitte bewerten Sie Ihre Sprachkenntnisse in Mundart:  
1 (nicht gut) 2 3 4 5 (sehr gut)
6. Welche Sprach(n) sprechen Sie in der Schule?

**Name:**

Male \_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

1. What language(s) do you speak?
2. What language(s) do you speak at home?
3. Where are you from?
4. Please rate your language ability in High German:  
1 (not good) 2 3 4 5 (very good)
5. Please rate your language ability in Swiss German:  
1 (not good) 2 3 4 5 (very good)
6. Which language(s) do you speak at school?

## 7.2 Interview Consent Form

### Formular - Interview

Danke, dass Sie in meiner Studie mitmachen. Ich heiße Keely Kidner und ich bin Graduate-Studentin an der University of Alberta, in Edmonton, Kanada. Ich untersuche, wie Schüler und Lehrer im Klassenzimmer kommunizieren. Ich bitte Sie, zuzustimmen, sich während zwei Kursen aufnehmen zu lassen. Sie werden auch gebeten, eine kleine Selbsteinschätzung über Ihre sprachliche Fähigkeiten vorzunehmen. Nach der Studie, werden Sie gebeten, in einem kurzem Interview mit mir und den anderen Freiwilligen mitzumachen. Bitte lesen Sie den folgende Abschnitt und unterschreiben Sie, wenn Sie mit den Bedingungen einverstanden sind.

Ihre Teilnahme ist **freiwillig** und Sie müssen nicht mitmachen, wenn Sie nicht wollen. Ihre Teilnahme hat auch keinen Einfluss auf ihre Noten. Im Fall, dass Sie zu jeder Zeit entscheiden nicht weiter mitzumachen, Sie können sich jederzeit von der Studie, ohne Konsequenzen zurückziehen. Sie müssen keine Frage beantworten, die Sie nicht beantworten wollen. Die Selbsteinschätzung und Aufnahmen werden nur von mir und meiner Supervisorin angesehen. Sie werden für 5 Jahre unter Verschluss gehalten. Ihr Name wird nicht benutzt und Ihre Identität wird namenlos bleiben.

Wenn Sie Fragen haben, können Sie mich über die folgende Adresse kontaktieren: [kkidner@ualberta.ca](mailto:kkidner@ualberta.ca).

Ich habe das Formular gelesen und verstanden und ich bin mit den Bedingungen einverstanden:

Name (bitte schreiben):

Ich bin 18 Jahre oder älter:

Unterschrift:

Datum:

### Interview Consent Form

Thank you for participating in my study. My name is Keely Kidner and I am a Graduate student in Applied Linguistics at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada. I am looking at how students and instructors speak in the classroom. To that end, I am asking you to agree to being recorded during two of your courses. After the study, you will be asked to participate

in a short interview with the myself and the other recording volunteers. Please read the following carefully and sign below if you agree to the terms.

Please be assured that your participation is **voluntary** and you do not have to participate in this study if you do not want to. Your grades in this course will NOT be affected in any way by your decision to participate or not to participate. If you decide at any time that you want to withdraw from the study, you may stop without any negative consequences. Your recordings will only be heard by myself and my supervisor. Your name will not be used and your identity will remain anonymous at time of writing.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at [kkidner@ualberta.ca](mailto:kkidner@ualberta.ca).

I have read and understood the consent form and I agree to its terms:

Name (please print):

Signature:

Date:

### 7.3 Classroom Consent Form

#### Formular - Schüler/in und Lehrer/in

Danke, dass Sie in meiner Studie mitmachen. Ich heiße Keely Kidner und ich bin Graduate-Studentin an der University of Alberta, in Edmonton, Kanada. Ich untersuche, wie Schüler und Lehrer im Klassenzimmer kommunizieren. Ich bitte Sie, zuzustimmen, sich während zwei Kursen aufnehmen zu lassen. Sie werden auch gebeten, eine kleine Selbsteinschätzung über Ihre sprachliche Fähigkeiten vorzunehmen. Bitte lesen Sie den folgende Abschnitt und unterschreiben Sie, wenn Sie mit den Bedingungen einverstanden sind.

Ihre Teilnahme ist **freiwillig** und Sie müssen nicht mitmachen, wenn Sie nicht wollen. Ihre Teilnahme hat auch keinen Einfluss auf ihre Noten. Im Fall, dass Sie zu jeder Zeit entscheiden nicht weiter mitzumachen, Sie können sich jederzeit von der Studie, ohne Konsequenzen zurückziehen. Sie müssen keine Frage beantworten, die Sie nicht beantworten wollen. Die Selbsteinschätzung und Aufnahmen werden nur von mir und meiner Supervisorin angesehen. Sie werden für 5 Jahre unter Verschluss gehalten. Ihr Name wird nicht benutzt und Ihre Identität wird namenlos bleiben.

Wenn Sie Fragen haben, können Sie mich über die folgende Adresse kontaktieren: [kkidner@ualberta.ca](mailto:kkidner@ualberta.ca).

Ich habe das Formular gelesen und verstanden und ich bin mit den Bedingungen einverstanden:

Name (bitte schreiben):

Ich bin 18 Jahre oder älter:

Unterschrift:

Datum:

#### Standard Consent Form

Thank you for participating in my study. My name is Keely Kidner and I am a Graduate student in Applied Linguistics at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada. I am looking at how students and instructors speak in the classroom. To that end, I am asking you to agree to being recorded during two of your courses. You will also be asked to fill out a short questionnaire about your background. Please read the following carefully and sign below if you agree to the terms.

Please be assured that your participation is **voluntary** and you do not have to participate in this study if you do not want to. Your grades in this course will NOT be affected in any way by your decision to participate or not to participate. If you decide at any time that you want to withdraw from the study, you may stop without any negative consequences. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. The completed questionnaires and recordings will only be seen and heard by myself and my supervisor. They will be stored for five years in a locked cabinet accessible only to the researcher. Your name will not be used and your identity will remain anonymous at time of writing.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at [kkidner@ualberta.ca](mailto:kkidner@ualberta.ca).

I have read and understood the consent form and I agree to its terms:

Name (please print):

I am 18 years old or over:

Signature:

Date: