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ALEXANDER ANDRASON
Stellenbosch University
andrason@sun.ac.za
ORCID: 0000-0002-8507-9824

САШКО-LECT: THE TRANSLANGUAGED GRAMMAR OF A HYPER MULTILINGUAL GLOBAL NOMAD PART 1 – METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Keywords: translanguaging, language contact, code-switching, borrowing, mixed-languages

Abstract

This study examines the idiolect of Сашко – a hyper-multilingual global nomad whose language repertoire draws on forty languages, ten of which he speaks with native or native-like proficiency. By analyzing grammatical and lexical features typifying Сашко's translanguaging practices (code-switches, code-borrowings, and code-mixes), as documented in the corpus of reflexive notes that span the last twenty-five years, the author designs Сашко's translanguaged grammar. Instead of being a passive additive pluralization of separated, autonomous, and static monolects, Сашко's grammar emerges as a deeply orchestrated, unitary, and dynamic strategy. From Сашко's perspective, this grammar constitutes a tool to express his rebellious and defiant identity; a tool that – while aiming to combat Western mono-culturalisms, compartmented multilingualisms, and nationalisms – ultimately leads to Сашко's linguistic and cultural homelessness. This paper – the first in the series of three articles – is dedicated to methodological issues: the frameworks that are adopted in the different parts of the study, the method with which the description and analysis of Сашко's idiolect is developed, and the corpus that underlies the empirical research of Сашко-lect.

1. Introduction

In his early forties, Сашко [saʃkɔ] is a hyper-multilingual global nomad. He was brought up in a multilingual environment; since his adolescence he has resided

in eight countries (France, Gambia, Iceland, Poland, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Germany); his language repertoire draws on forty languages, ten of which (English, French, German, Icelandic, Lingala, Mandinka, Polish, Russian, Spanish, and Swedish) he speaks – or has spoken at some point in his life – with native or native-like proficiency. Throughout his nomadic life, Сашко has continuously been asked two questions: "How many languages do you speak?" and "What language do you think in?" He utterly detests them both. In his view, he evidently speaks and thinks in a single language only – his own Сашко-lect.

The present study aims to understand and define Сашко-lect or Сашко's idiolect by answering the following research question: Is it possible to identify some type of overarching – broadly understood – grammar in Сашко-lect and, if so, what are its constant or pervasive elements and properties?

To (re-)construct Сашко-lect, I will follow a bottom-up research strategy. I will proceed from an atomic, analytical, and fragmentary perspective in which grammatical features and named languages are in focus, upwards to a perspective that is global, synthetic, and unitary, takes into consideration extra-grammatical properties apart from grammatical ones, and is speaker, rather than language oriented. The lower-level analysis of Сашко-lect will be concerned with unstable and/or fragmentary grammatical and lexical combinations and amalgamations that take place in Сашко's discourses, using the current approaches to code-switching (Myers-Scotton 1993a, 1993b, 2002, 2006; Muysken 2000; Matras 2009) and borrowing (Aikhenvald, Dixon 2001; Field 2002; Aikhenvald 2006; Sakel 2007; Matras 2007, 2009). The intermediate-level analysis will examine the language-contact profiles of more individual lects employed by Сашко, drawing on a mixed-language approach to language interaction (Bakker, Muysken 1995; Matras, Bakker 2003; Matras 2009; Meakins 2013; Velupillai 2015). The higher-lever analysis will focus on holistic grammar characterizing Сашко-lect in its integrity, making use of a translanguaging approach to multilingualism (Makoni, Pennycook 2007; García 2009; Li 2011, 2018; García, Li 2014; Otheguy, García, Reid 2015; Mazzaferro 2018; Sabino 2018). On all levels of my analysis, I draw on the empirical evidence extracted from a corpus of (mostly reflexive) notes written by Сашко over the last twenty-five years and on a series of recordings in which Сашко commented on his language choices and attitudes.

Given the complexity of the topic and the length of description and analysis, the original text has been divided into three articles. In the present paper, I focus on the methodological issues of my research. First, in Section 2, I familiarize the reader with the composite framework used in this study. I present the mechanisms of code-switching and borrowing (2.1), the concept of mixed languages (2.2), and the paradigm of translanguaging (2.3). Subsequently, in Section 3, in light of these theoretical foundations, I design the method with which I will describe and analyze Сашко-lect in all its diverse aspects. In section 4, I comment on the corpus underlying my research and, related to it, the peculiar linguistic nature of Сашко-lect. Section 5 summarizes the paper. The methodological considerations discussed in the present article constitute the basis for the further parts of my study, published

as two separate articles: "Сашко-lect: The translanguaged grammar of a hyper global nomad. Part 2 – Contact mechanism", in which I study the phenomena of code-switching and borrowing, and "Сашко-lect: The translanguaged grammar of a hyper global nomad. Part 3 – Contact languages and translanguaging", in which I study Сашко's mixed-languages and his translanguaged grammar.

2. Framework

The only manner in which to deal with the complexity of the topic of this paper – a holistic analysis of a person's language(s) – is through "methodological promiscuity" (Wilcox 2017; see also Huffer 2010: 136) or "scavenger methodology" (Halberstam 1998: 13). This type of methodological approach should not be viewed as cherry-picking theories that suit one's argument. It is rather an unavoidable consequence of understanding language as a real-world complex system, which is a widely accepted view in current scholarship (Kretzschmar 2015; see Andrason 2016: 19 and the references therein). That is, any single model of a real-world complex system is incomplete and fragmentary due to the non-additivity of such systems and their inherent emergence (Auyang 1998; Hooker 2011a, 2011b; Cilliers et al. 2013). There is no unique model of a complex system because "no perspective can represent all [its] properties" (Andrason 2016: 19). Instead, "the study of [a] complex system […] necessitates a number of perspectives" with "the exploration of perspectives" constituting the fundamental epistemological principle in the analysis. Distinct perspectives are aimed at dealing with the behaviour of distinct modules – some being, for instance, appropriate for the study of atomic levels, while others being used in the study of global levels. Similarly, different levels of Сашко-lect need to be studied with different methodologies, each designed specifically to a particular level. Echoing Wilcox's (2017 [online]) view on queer studies, "I believe that the methodological and theoretical promiscuities that […] characterize [my approach to Сашко-lect] are a sign of [the …] strength" of my analysis – not its weakness.

In this part of the paper, I will introduce three main types of methodological apparatuses with which the three distinct levels of Сашко-lect distinguished in the present study will be analyzed. In Section 2.1, I will familiarize the reader with the methods within which the most fine-grained and atomistic analysis of Сашко's discourses can be conducted. At this level, mechanisms facilitating contact between the different languages used are in focus, i.e. code-switching and borrowing. Next, in Section 2.2, I will present the framework of mixed languages, which will allow me to approach some of Сашко's discourses more broadly and view them as fully-fledged lects. Lastly, in Section 2.3, I will introduce the main tenets of translanguaging theory that will enable me to adopt the most global and synthetic perspective on Сашко's idiolect, seeing it not only as a lexical and grammatical phenomenon – whether more spontaneous and fragmentary (through the prisms of code-switching and borrowing theory) or more entrenched and unitary (through the prisms of mixed-language theory) – but also as a social one.

2.1. Code-switching and borrowing

Code-switching is a spontaneous non-entrenched use of different input languages within a single conversational unit (Matras 2009: 101). Codeswitching can be insertional, alternational, or congruent (Muysken 2000: 4–8) reflecting, respectively, the relationships of dominance, equality, and similarity that exist between the languages involved in switches (Stam 2017: 11). In an insertional type, the grammar of one language (the matrix code) constitutes the frame of insertion for the other language(s) (the embedded code(s); Muysken 2000: 4). The matrix code predominates quantitatively; provides content and morphosyntactic elements; determines their surface order; as well as anchors and initiates the predication (Muysken 2000: 66–67; Myers-Scotton 2002: 59–60; Matras 2009: 131–134). The elements of the embedded code(s) can be inserted bare; exhibit the source marking, yielding embedded-code islands (Myers-Scotton 2002: 54, 67, 131–134, 139–140); or be morphologically protected by elements provided by the matrix code (Muysken 2000: 4, 31, 64). Alternational code-switching lacks a dominant code. Instead, it permutes structures from two or more codes, thus juxtaposing different matrices (ibid. 31). Different codes contribute to the utterance relatively equally, although to its different parts (ibid. 5). Switches may themselves occur at a phrase level (paraphrases and reiterations) or utterance level (a construction of one code is commented on in (an)other code(s)) (Matras 2009: 105–106). In congruent code-switching, two (or more) codes contribute to the matrix not only equally but also simultaneously, such that no single matrix can be determined; or alternatively, the matrix draws on two (or more) codes concurrently (Muysken 2000: 5, 31, 122–132).

The three forms of code-switching and the codes used therein exhibit distinct tendencies to accommodate elements belonging to determined word classes and morpheme types. In insertional code-switching, the matrix code is the only code that provides outsider late system morphemes,[1] additionally "blocking" those content morphemes with which it is not congruent. In contrast, the embedded code mainly exhibits content morphemes,[2] also allowing certain early system morphemes[3] and, only sporadically, bridge system morphemes (Myers-Scotton 1993a: 120; 1993b; 2002: 59; Myers-Scotton, Jake 1995: 983; Myers-Scotton, Jake 2000, 2009).[4] Alternational code-switching accommodates most lexical classes and morpheme types.

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[1] Outsider late system morphemes (e.g. agreement markers and case affixes) are morphemes whose interpretation depends on the information encoded by constituents located outside the immediate phrase containing that morpheme itself (Myers-Scotton 2006: 269–270; Matras 2009: 132).

[2] Content morphemes (e.g. nouns and verbs) are referential lexemes able to receive or assign thematic roles (Myers-Scotton 2006: 248).

[3] Early system morphemes (e.g. determiners, plural markers, articles, satellite prepositions of phrasal verbs) do not participate in the allocation or reception of thematic roles. They rather "flesh out the meaning" of content morphemes (Myers-Scotton 2006: 268; Matras 2009: 132).

[4] All late system morphemes (outsider and bridge) are conceptually activated late in linguistic production and their main function is to relate content morphemes, "cementing" them into a clause (Myers-Scotton 2006: 268–269). Bridge morphemes (e.g. the possessives markers *of* and *'s*) constitute links between phrases, allowing speakers to yield larger constituents (ibid. 269). Contrary to outsider morphemes, they refer to grammatical information that is located inside "Maximal Projection of [their] Head" (Myers-Scotton 2002: 73).

For instance, it tolerates discourse markers, particles, tags, interjections, conjunctions, and adpositions in addition to nominal and verbal content morphemes. At an utterance-level, alternational code-switching is even more permissive allowing for any array of morphemes. Lastly, congruent code-switching widely tolerates pronouns, auxiliaries, copulas, complementizers, conjunctions, and articles (Muysken 2000: 62–63, 96–99, 129–131).

Borrowing is a permanent change in a language system.[5] The change may relate to matter or pattern (Aikhenvald, Dixon 2001: 2; Aikhenvald 2006: 15; Sakel 2007; Matras 2009: 236). Matter borrowing occurs when "morphological material and its phonological shape from [a donor] language is replicated in [a recipient] language" (Sakel 2007: 15). Borrowability of matter increases with the typological congruency of the languages involved (Field 2002; Matras 2007: 34; 2009: 153)[6] and the semantic and morphotactic transparency of elements being transferred (Moravcsik 1978; Matras 1998, 2007: 44; Field 2002; Aikhenvald 2006: 33–34). It is also contingent on those elements' lexical class and morphemic status (Matras 2007: 34). Content, unique-referent, and culturally novel elements are more borrowable than core, existing, and functional elements (Myers-Scotton 1993a: 163; Myers-Scotton 2006: 212–217; Matras 2009: 161); free morphemes are more borrowable than bound morphemes; and derivational affixes are more borrowable than inflectional affixes (Moravcsik 1978; Curnow 2001: 419, 426–429; Matras 2009: 209–215). As a result of typological studies, the following global scale of borrowability is proposed: nouns/conjunctions → verbs → discourse markers → adjectives → interjections → adverbs → other particles/adpositions → numerals → pronouns → derivational affixes → inflectional affixes (Matras 2007: 24; Matras 2009: 157).[7]

Pattern borrowing occurs in cases where structural and/or semantic patterns of the donor language are replicated by analogy through elements available in the recipient language (Sakel 2007: 15). This type of borrowing may result in replica grammaticalizations where more abstract functions associated with a construction of the donor language are mapped onto concrete lexical elements of the recipient language, creating the impression of the advancement along a grammaticalization path (Matras 2009: 239; Andrason, Visser 2015). It may also result in "polysemy copying" or replication of the entire map of senses of an item (Heine, Kuteva 2005: 100–103; Matras 2009: 239). Pattern borrowing is the highest at the level of sentences and clauses, lower at the level of phrases, and the lowest at the level of words (Ross 2001: 146, 149; Matras 2009: 244). This is encapsulated by the following hierarchy: discourse → text grammar (text → paragraph) → clause grammar (clause → phrase) → word grammar (word → morphology) (adapted from Stolz, Stolz 1996: 112).

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[5] Borrowing is related – and often emerges from – code switching through increased frequency, entrenchment, defaultness and structural integration, on the one hand, and decreased compositionality, stylistic marking, and disruptiveness on the other hand (Myers-Scotton 1993a: 182–207; Matras 2009: 110–111; Velupillai 2015: 8).

[6] Fusional languages are more receptive than agglutinative and especially analytic systems (Field 2002: 41).

[7] For alternative scales see Moravscik (1978), Thomason, Kaufman (1988), Muysken (2000), and Field (2002).

2.2. Mixed languages

Mixed languages constitute one of the many types of contact languages characterized by "split ancestry" (Velupillai 2015: 69), thus having two (or more) parent languages (Thomason, Kaufman 1988; Matras 2009: 288). Crucially, they arise in the context of widespread and prolonged adult bilingualism (Thomason 2001: 197; Matras 2009: 291; Meakins 2013: 159, 188; Velupillai 2015: 69, 81). They do not, therefore, result from communicative needs (Thomason 2001: 197; Matras 2009: 290; Meakins 2013: 181). Instead, they are developed for emblematic and discursive purposes (Matras 2009: 288–291, 305–306). Mixed languages emerge to mark multilingual hybrid identities – whether new or ancestral (Thomason 2001: 198, 2003: 25; Croft 2003; Matras 2009: 291, 304–306; Meakins 2013: 181–183, 216; Velupillai 2015: 70, 77–80) – or to exclude outsiders, thus functioning as secret codes (Thomason 2001: 198; Velupillai 2015: 69–70, 80). Speakers ingeniously play with their languages by manipulating lexical and grammatical elements (Thomason 1997, 1999; Matras 2009: 291). As a result, the mixture is creative, intentional, and controlled (Matras 2009: 288–289; Matras et al. 2007; Meakins 2013: 194; Velupillai 2015: 70) – input languages are compartmentalized, as different parts of a mixed language's grammar and lexicon are being selected from distinct sources (Matras 2009: 291).

Mixed languages emerge by following two evolutionary routes: either a unidirectional or a fusional route (Meakins 2013: 187, 195; Velupillai 2015: 81). During unidirectional processes, which operate in "persistent ethnic groups" (Thomason 2001: 205), one (ancestral) language gradually shifts to another (target) language, stopping half-way (Muysken 2000; Meakins 2013: 187; Velupillai 2015: 81). The typical mechanisms involved are code-switching and borrowing – mixed languages resulting from the regularization and entrenchment of (insertional) code-switching into predictable borrowing-like patterns (Auer 1999; Gardner-Chloros 2009: 35; Matras 2009; Meakins 2013: 189–192, 213–215; Velupillai 2015: 82).[8] Contrary to many other types of contact varieties, in mixed languages features can be copied and, ultimately, borrowed irrespective of the typological distance between the interacting codes (Thomason 2001: 197; Matras 2003: 158; Meakins 2013: 188, 190). This includes syntax, word order, deep word structure, and bound derivational/inflection morphology (Thomason, Kaufman 1988: 74–75; Thomason 2001; Meakins 2013: 188).[9] In fusional processes, the two languages merge catastrophically into a new language (Bakker, Muysken 1995; Bakker 1997: 210; Bakker 2000, 2003; Thomason 2001: 206; Meakins 2013: 195–197; Velupillai 2015: 81, 83). Therefore, this type exhibits a neater compartmentalization of the source-languages' material than

[8] Indeed, mixed languages and insertional code-switching coincide structurally and both exhibit tendencies for grammar-lexicon separation (Matras 2009: 290). Some scholars (e.g. Bakker 2003: 129) negate the contribution of code-switching to the genesis of mixed languages. For an overview of this debate consult Matras (2009: 290).

[9] One type of borrowing typical of such mixed languages is relexification – the insertion of words, especially content lexemes in their (more or less) original phonological form, from the donor language to the base language (Matras 2009: 246; Meakins 2013: 193; Velupillai 2015: 83). Some propose that mixed languages are best explained as cases of "extreme borrowing" (Field 2002: 16). Others reject that idea (Bakker 1996, 1997).

mixed languages travelling the unidirectional route (Thomason 2001: 205–207; Meakins 2013: 195; Velupillai 2015: 83). Overall, mixed languages result from "the conventionalization of conscious language mixing by a more diverse population of bilinguals" (Matras 2009: 299).

Structurally, a mixed language draws on its source languages in relatively equal proportions (Matras 2009; Meakins 2013: 159; Velupillai 2015: 69, 71). Each feeding system contributes, however, to the distinct parts of the resultant system. The following splits or compartmentations of source languages are possible: grammar vs. lexicon (Bakker 2003; Meakins 2013: 159, 189, 213; Velupillai 2015: 71–73); noun(-phrase) vs. verb(-phrase) (Bakker 2003; Meakins 2013; Velupillai 2015: 71, 73–74); form (free content morphemes) vs. structure (bound morphemes and syntax) (Field 2002: 13; Bakker, Mous 1994: 5; Bakker 1997: 213; Velupillai 2015: 75); and "content-reference" (referential lexical vocabulary) vs. "predication-anchoring" (finite verb inflections) (Matras 2009: 305). Such splits are seldom neat – the intertwining usually being more intense (Matras 2000: 79) and the compartmentalization of the source languages being messier (Field 2002: 14). In extreme cases, both lexicon and grammar have "dual origins" (Bakker 2000: 30; Matras 2000; Meakins 2013; Velupillai 2015).[10]

Contrary to many other types of contact varieties, mixed languages do not involve impoverishing phenomena – they are not simplified versions of their sources. Instead, they either maintain the complexity of the feeding systems or attest to further complexification. This enrichment results from the concurrent incorporation of the complexities of the two source languages and the development of hybridized (phonological, morphological, and syntactic) novelties (Matras 2009: 288, 305; Meakins 2013; Velupillai 2015; Meakins et al. 2019).

2.3. Translanguaging

Translanguaging theory is "a new epistemological paradigm" in research on multilingualism (Mazzaferro 2018: 5; Li 2018).[11] As indicated by its name, it studies (the act of) translanguaging or the (construction of) multilingual idiolects, viewed holistically and pluri-disciplinarily in terms of deliberate and cohesive semiotic practices and reflexive ideologies (García 2009; García, Li 2014; Mazzaferro 2018; Sabino 2018). In translanguaging theory, it is the concrete individual and their (extra-)linguistic performances that constitute the primary object of interest rather than external,

[10] See paralexification, where two lexicons exist in parallel (Meakins 2013: 193–194; Velupillai 2015: 83).

[11] It is however (closely) related to studies on crossing (Rampton 1995), bilanguaging (Mignolo 2000), code-meshing (Young 2004; Canagarajah 2006, 2011), transidiomatic practices (Jacquemet 2005), polylingualism (Jørgensen 2008; Møller 2008), heteroglossia (Bailey 2007), third spaces (Gutiérrez 2008), heterography (Blommaert 2008), multivocality (Higgins 2009), metrolingualism (Otsuji, Pennycook 2010), and translingual practice (Canagarajah 2013) (for a discussion of these terms and their differences from translanguaging consult García, Li 2014: 36–42).

socially constructed "named" languages such as English and their "ideal" speakers (Mazzaferro 2018: 3; Sabino 2018: 48).

Translanguaging emerges in the context of multilingualism and high mobility where drawing on a number of languages and mixing them constitutes a pervasive routine and where multilingual discourses are not obstructed by artificial language boundaries (García 2009; Pennycook 2016: 212; Mazzaferro 2018: 7). In such contexts, multilinguals' idiolects do not consist of activating independent or disjointed language-systems – or switching between languages – but rather involve an integrated orchestration of multilingual resources (García 2009; Canagarajah 2011: 1; Zhu et al. 2017; Mazzaferro 2018: 5). There is only one language – the translanguaged idiolect or a holistic complex mental grammar, an organic (re)combination of grammatical and lexical features offered by external named languages (Mazzaferro 2018: 3). In other words, languages on which the multilingual's idiolect draws are not used as separated entities and do not constitute "autonomous skills" – instead, they yield a heterogenous yet coherent system (García 2009; García, Flores 2012: 239; Sabino 2018: 36) – the patterned heterogeneity crafted and performed by an individual (Sabino 2018: 34). This translanguaged system is not additive and resultant but nonlinear and emergent (García, Flores 2012: 239; García, Otheguy 2014: 639; Sabino 2018: 35). Therefore, a multilingual individual cannot be equated with a pluralized monolingual, and a multilingual idiolect is not synonymous with a collection of independent monolingual abilities (García, Li 2014: 43).

Translanguaging transcends code-switching, borrowing, and code-mixing even though it draws on grammatical and lexical devices recognizable through those mechanisms and contact-language types (García 2009; Zhu et al. 2017; Mazzaferro 2018: 5). First, as mentioned above, translanguaging emphasizes the unitary character of an idiolect as a single grammar instead of switching, borrowing, or mixing. Second, translanguaging expands to all ranges of trans-semiotic and trans-disciplinary practices that typify multilinguals during the (re-)construction of their discourses and meaning-making processes (García 2009; García, Li 2014: 42; Mazzaferro 2018: 2, 6–7; Sabino 2018: 36). Apart from narrowly understood grammar, this includes the multimodality of gestures, the (trans)formation of spaces, and the purposeful manufacturing of reflexive ideologies (Li 2011: 1223; García, Li 2014: 43; Mazzaferro 2018: 3, 6).

As an expression of ideology, translanguaging centers creativity (García, Li 2014: 42; Mazzaferro 2018: 4), freedom (García, Li 2014: 42), and problematizing received wisdoms (García, Li 2014: 42; Mazzaferro 2018: 4). Translanguaging engages and disrupts. It constitutes an act of resistance (Mazzaferro 2018: 6) to (the ideologies of) monolingualism, standard language norms, additive bilingualism and parallel monolingualisms, nationalism and nation-states (Li 2011: 1223; García, Li 2014: 43; Mazzaferro 2018: 3, 6) – all still pervasive in Europe and the global North (Sabino 2008: 29; Wiese [forthcoming]: 7). By revendicating their agency (García, Li 2014: 24; Mazzaferro 2018: 3–4), translanguaging ultimately liberates the oppressed individual from the chains of the (most) powerful actors in the (linguistic) ecosystem (García, Li 2014: 42).

3. Method

In this study, I follow a bottom-up procedure in research design and execution. I begin with the atomic, analytical, and fragmentary level of description in which the scope of analysis is limited to purely grammatical components. At this level, I focus my attention on named languages viewed as ontologically external to the speaker themselves. Gradually, I ascend to description levels that are increasingly more global, synthetic, and unitary. I concurrently expand the scope of my analysis towards more pluri-disciplinary components, extra-grammatical and extra-linguistic ones. I also transfer my attention to a more individual-centred one, in which languages are viewed as integral to and/or indissoluble from their source – the particular and unique speaker. Accordingly, in the context of multilingualism, I initially study contact mechanisms that operate in multilingual discourses. Subsequently, I study the linguistic products of such mechanisms or the specific contact languages developed. Lastly, I study the linguistic and extra-linguistic culmination of the use of contact mechanisms and contact languages – or the holistic idiolect and its carrier, the "contact individual" (see Figure 1 below).

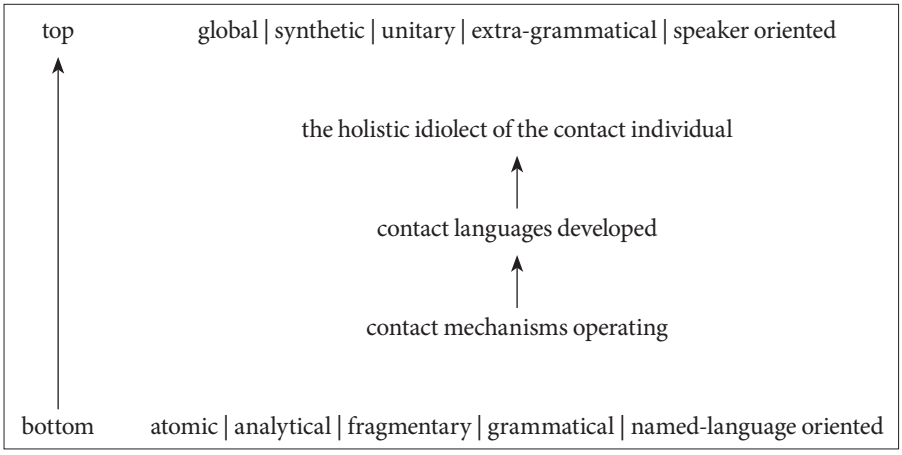

Figure 1. A bottom-up research method on multilingualism

In research on Сашко's discourses, the above-mentioned bottom-up approach translates onto the following three-part method. First, I will test Сашко's discourses for the presence of the main types of contact mechanisms distinguished in scholarship – i.e. insertional, alternational, and congruent code-switching on the one hand, and matter and pattern borrowing on the other hand and those discourses' compatibility with properties associated with each such contact mechanism. Second, I will verify whether Сашко's discourses provide evidence for the emergence of contact languages, specifically mixed languages, and whether the properties of such language mixes are congruent with those identified in scholarship. Third, I will propose the translanguaged grammar of Сашко-lect or a set of pervasive properties

that characterize and define Сашко's idiolect holistically. I will determine the socio-historical or socio-economic properties typifying Сашко-lect, the main pillars of its mental grammar, and the destructive and constructive ideologies involved (see Figure 2 below).

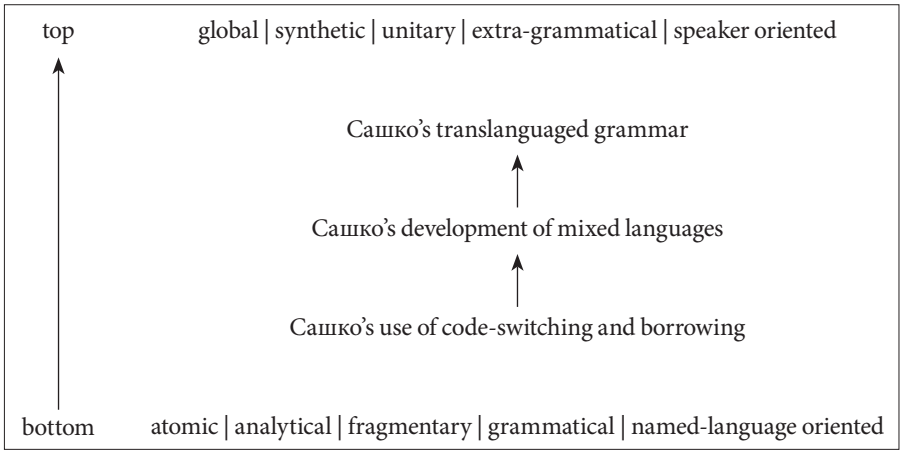

Figure 2. A bottom-up research method adapted to the study of Сашко-lect

4. Сашко-lect – its corpus and linguistic status

The evidence presented in this research draws primarily on a corpus of more than five hundred heterogenous texts (glosses, notes, comments, reflections, and memoirs) that range from one sentence (or one utterance) to five pages. This corpus spans twenty-five years – the oldest entry dates from 1995, the most recent was written in 2019.

Despite its comprehensiveness, in terms of both chronology and size, the above-mentioned corpus has a limitation. The vast majority of texts are reflexive. They constitute forms of self-expression and/or a unidirectional manner of communication in which the source of the discourse is in focus. In other words, in those texts, the addressee is the author himself (i.e. Сашко) or they are imaginary (i.e. the interlocutors intended or mentioned are not actually involved in the exchange). This means that most discourses included in the corpus were not developed to communicate with other participants and are not concerned with real recipients. Nevertheless, the corpus also contains a number of non-reflexive texts. These discourses were directed to specific external addressees, with whom Сашко had conversed daily at certain points of his life. These texts carry determined communicative functions, whether phatic or conative, not only emotive, poetic, and referential that typify the reflexive texts. Additionally, this extensive corpus-based and written grammatical-lexical material was complemented with a collection of metalinguistic comments made by Сашко himself – or a series

of audio-recordings in which Сашко explains and clarifies his language choices and varieties used.

Overall, although the linguistic material on which my study of Сашко-lect draws is genre-, text-, and situation-selective – attesting mainly, albeit not exclusively, to a single type of genre, text, and communicative situation, and a constrained variety of linguistic functions – it does allow for generalizations that extend beyond the self-reflexive part of the corpus. As emphasized by Сашко himself, the corpus material used unveils the various aspects and complexities characterizing Сашко-lect in its integrity. In other words, the different facets of Сашко-lect described in this article have been deployed in real-world settings in a gamut of commutative contexts that involve a wide range of participants, partners, friends, family, colleagues, and *others*. Material that would document these types of interactions across a similar time span to that attested by my corpus (i.e. covering twenty-five years) is not available. The only material available are the notes written by Сашко which, as explained above, are mainly reflexive.

That being said, it is important to realize that, when envisaged holistically, Сашко-lect is neither shared by a community nor has it emerged as an intergenerational variety "negotiated" through the interaction of many (successive waves of) users. It is the language of a single person by definition, like any other idiolect. What distinguishes Сашко-lect from many other idiolects is its radical idiolectal nature – the consequence of the extreme multilingualism of its speaker. This radicality, however, stems not from Сашко-lect itself but rather reflects the environment whose linguistic repertoires can accommodate Сашко's discourses only partially. Indeed, Сашко has not encountered another speaker of Сашко-lect – a person with whom he could use the entirety of his linguistic repertoire. Certainly, it is a universal (and tautological) rule that no other person than the speaker themselves speaks that speaker's idiolect. However, in "normal" situations, the consequences of this fact for communication with other speakers are minimal given that, within a monolingual or bilingual community, various idiolects tend to be highly similar. Misunderstandings that would be critical, and furthermore the total failure in comprehension of a message are rare. For Сашко-lect, in contrast, the gap between Сашко's idiolect treated in its totality and the idiolects of his interlocutors or other members of any given community in which he has lived is abysmal. Far-reaching and even critical misunderstandings are easily possible. From that maximal perspective, i.e. when viewed as the total set of all resources – and only from that perspective – Сашко-lect is a solitary exercise and/or disruptive communicative act directed towards recipients who have no tools to decipher the message conveyed by Сашко.

The above implies that although the different versions of Сашко-lect may vary according to the linguistic competencies of the interlocutor(s) engaged with, they need not do so. That is, even though certain aspects of Сашко-lect used in a particular situation take into consideration the environment and (actual or potential) interlocutors, many others are only determined by Сашко himself with no requirement and willingness of linguistic adjustments to the system(s) of potential recipients. Indeed, in many environments which Сашко-perceives as hostile, the lack of such

adjustments is particularly evident. Even in environments that are not perceived as hostile, Сашко may often use any of his resources irrespective of the characteristics of the interlocutors because he knows these interlocutors will accommodate all (or most) forms of Сашко-lect, enabling the maximal freedom of expression.

5. Summary and prelude to Part 2

The present study is dedicated to examining Сашко-lect or the idiolect of Сашко – a hyper-multilingual global nomad whose language repertoire draws on forty languages, ten of which he speaks with native or native-like proficiency. This article – the first in a series of three – familiarizes the reader with the methodological issues of my research: the frameworks that are adopted in the different parts of the study; the method with which the description and analysis of Сашко's idiolect is developed; and the corpus that underlies the empirical research of Сашко-lect. To be exact, I explained the details of the theory of contact mechanisms, i.e. code-switching and borrowing, the theory of particular types of contact languages typical of long-term and profound multilingualism, i.e. mixed-languages, and the theory of a multilingual's idiolect, i.e. translanguaging. I explained the bottom-up method guiding my description and analysis of Сашко-lect, ascending from the level that is atomic, analytical, fragmentary, grammatical and named-language oriented, to the level that is global, synthetic, unitary, extra-grammatical, and speaker oriented. Lastly, I explained that my research on Сашко-lect draws on the qualitatively limited corpus containing mainly reflexive discourses.

In the next part of the study, entitled "Сашко-lect: The translanguaged grammar of a hyper global nomad. Part 2 – Contact mechanism", I will describe and analyze two principal language-contact mechanisms operating in Сашко-lect, namely, code-switching and borrowing.

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