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The structural and pragmatic features of code-switches in the dialogues of the novel “The Marseille Caper” by Peter Mayle

Abstract

This article studies the interdependence between structural and pragmatic aspects of code-switches (CS) observed in the dialogic speech of the novel «Marseille Caper» by Peter Mayle. The matrix language of bilingual utterances is English and the embedded language is French. The article provides a detailed description of the classification of code-switches according to types and the functions they perform. Different types of code-switches have been identified: intersentential (44 units), intrasentential – within a phrase (insertions – 25 units, embedded language islands – 36 units), parenthetical switches – 20 units. The study has shown that the intrasentential type (81 units) is the most frequently used code-switch type in the bilingual characters' speech. Besides, intrasentential type occurring within a simple sentence is more popular in comparison with parenthetical switches with the embedded language islands being predominant. It is argued that the most common pragmatic function in the bilingual characters' speech is the subject-thematical one represented by the embedded language islands. It is revealed that the code-switches in the novel perform mainly subject-thematic (62 units), emotional (18 units) and emphatic (18 units) functions. The subtype of intrasentential type – parathetical switches – is represented by the greatest variety of functions (7).

Keywords: code-switches, language contacts, matrix language, embedded language, fiction bilingualism, pragmatic functions.

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For citation: Gunko, A. L. Strukturno-pragmaticheskie osobennosti pereklyucheniya kodov v rechi personazhey proizvedeniya «Marsel'skaya avanturya» Pitera Meyla [The structural and pragmatic features of code-switches in the dialogues of the novel “The Marseille Caper” by Peter Mayle]. *Teoreticheskaya i prikladnaya lingvistika* [Theoretical and Applied Linguistics], 7 (3), 69–78. doi: 10.22250/2410-7190_2021_7_3_69_78.