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Facets of the Concept of Syntactic Control of Matrix Language in Codeswitching Instances in Mwea East Sub-County

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Abstract
This paper focuses on the facets of the concept of syntactic control of matrix language in code switching instances in a multilingual society, that is, Mwea East Sub-County, Kirinyaga County where eight languages are spoken. Observations and Audio tapes were used to collect data in specific language domains. The data were examined within the sketch of Myers-Scotton's Matrix Language Framework that deals with morphosyntactic frame of code switching instances. The result of the investigation established that code switching is a rule-governed linguistic behaviour and so has a grammar. The data shows that for a multilingual speaker, the process of alternating between two languages requires a nonrandom, sophisticated cognitive and linguistic manipulation of their languages. Thus, CS is systematic because each participating language is systematic, particularly in the ways that form-meaning sets are structured. This study hopes to provide insights on the code-switching phenomenon in a multilingual society. Additionally, the findings of this study will be of value for the development of code-switching studies in the sociolinguistic area.
Keywords: Code Switching, Syntactic Control, Matrix Language, Multilingualism

1.0 Introduction

Code-switching (CS) today is mostly defined as the alternate use of more than one code (i.e. language, dialect, speech variety) in the same conversation or verbal interaction (Li, 2008). According to Jake and Myers-Scotton (2009), code-switching can be defined as language use that consists of material from two or more language varieties at any level from the discourse to the clause. CS is viewed as a bilingual/multilingual practice that is used not only as a conversational tool, but also as a way to establish, maintain and delineate ethnic boundaries

and identities. Most researchers in language research use the term 'bilingual' for users of two languages, and 'multilingual' for three or more (McArthur, 1998).

CS occurs in a language contact situation. Language contact sometimes occurs when there is an increased social interaction between people who are living in neighborhood and have traditionally spoken different languages. But more frequently it is initiated by the spread of languages of power and prestige (Faltis, 1989). Mwea East Sub County is a multilingual society where eight languages are spoken. Mwea has as its neighbours people who speak different codes. Examples of such areas are; Mbeere District (where Kimbeere is spoken), Muranga and Nyeri counties (where Gikuyu is spoken), Machakos County and Mwingi where Kikamba is a native language and Embu County which is the traditional homeland of the speakers of Kiembu. Crystal (1987) observes that in a multilingual society, a certain language may be more frequently used than others depending on the needs of the speaker. Scotton (1993) who investigated age and education besides other variables, concurs with him. These variables do influence ML as they expose speakers to various levels of social interaction and knowledge of many languages that are spoken varying emphasis.
Thus, in CS instance speakers may attach more weight on certain codes than on others.

The concept of Matrix Language (ML) is crucial among bilingual mixtures and systematicity that accompany the emergence of new language varieties. In CS studies, the dominant language is often called the ML, into which elements from the Embedded Language (EL) are inserted (Jacobson, 1977; Myers-Scotton, 1993). The presence of eight codes in Mwea makes ML a complex matter. Myers-Scotton (1993) observes that the user of ML has it that the ELs should conform to the syntactic structures of it (ML) in all attributes such as spelling and pronunciation. Myers-Scotton further notes that there are three types of Islands in CS instances and that each one of the Islands in CS instances must conform to the speakers attempt to communicate. These (Islands) are ML Island, ML + EL Island and EL Island. Each Island stands distinctively in the CS instance but they have some harmony in the speakers attempt to communicate. Every Island has a form of syntax that is controlled by only one code (Gibbons, 1987; Myers-Scotton, 1993; Bhats and Chengappa, 2003).

The tendency to consider linguistic facets focuses on examining the structural principles that govern the patterns of CS, and on investigating linguistic factors and constraints, that block switching to occur at certain points. Thus, the structural and linguistic dimensions of CS explains the linguistic rules that govern CS, identifies the formal constraints that either allow or prevent code switches from occurring at certain points and establishes to what extent these are language-specific or universally applicable. In fact, Hudson (2010) indicates that the positive side of the structuralism approach is focusing of attention on the complex internal structure of language.

According to Myers-Scotton (2006) Code switching is one of the most studied topics in language contact phenomena. Using the syntactic approach, researchers have explored some

constraints and proposed models for CS, such as the Free Morpheme and Equivalence Constraints (Sankoff and Poplack, 1981), the Phrase-structure Congruence Constraint (Woolford, 1983), the Functional Head Constraint and the Word Order Integrity Corollary (Belazi et al., 1994), and the Matrix Language Frame Model (Myers-Scotton, 2002). Thus the current research is hoped to provide considerable evidence that CS is not random but systematic and the facets of syntactic control.

Theoretical Framework

2.1 Matrix Language Model

The current study is done within the Matrix Language Frame model developed by Myers-Scotton (1993, 2006). The concept of the MLF model is influenced by psycholinguistic theories Grosjean, (1988), that is, differential activation of base language and guest language, the different retrieval process of closed class items and open items in Garret's (1975) speech error study and Levett (1989) in the mental lexicon linking conceptual information and grammatical function. According to Myers-Scotton code-switching is an asymmetrical process in which the two languages play unequal roles. In several revised / versions of the model Myers-Scotton defines the base or matrix language (ML) on the one hand and the embedded language (EL) on the other. It is the matrix language that plays the main role in generating code switches and determining the grammar of the entire utterance. The ML dominates the EL.

Thus, the language that builds the morphosyntactic frame is the ML and the participating language is the EL. Two principles are proposed to identify the ML: the Morpheme Order Principle and the System Morpheme Principle (Myers-Scotton, 2006).

The Morpheme-Order Principle: In ML+EL constituents consisting of singly-occurring EL lexemes and any number of ML morphemes, surface morpheme order will be that of ML.

The System Morpheme Principle: In ML+EL constituents, all system morphemes which have grammatical relations external to their head constituent will come from the ML (Myers-Scotton, 1993:83)

This perspective relates with the current study in that users of language switching order their words, (in the language mixup), in such a way that the language that serves the speakers needs better, has more emphasis than other codes in the mixup. The two principals were applied in the analysis of the facets of CS. The Morpheme Order Principle is applied: ''In mixed constituents consisting of at least one EL word and any number of Matrix Language morphemes, surface word (and morpheme) order will be that of the Matrix Language'' (Myers-Scotton, 2006:244).

3.0 Research Methodology

3.1 Research design

A Descriptive survey research design was used to guide the current study that is concerned with describing characteristics of a problem (Creswell, 2003; 2014). Descriptive research is a type of

qualitative research. Therefore, words were used to describe the findings instead of numerical data (Cresswell, 2014). The data that was gathered was obtained via observations and field based notes over an extended period of time and audio recording. This research has a purpose to examine the facets of syntactic control of the concept of ML in CS instances in Mwea East sub-county, Kirinyaga County, Kenya, as a case study. The issue explored therefore is the structure of CS. The study is guided by the following question:

i) What are the facets of the concept of syntactic control of ML in CS instances in Mwea East Sub-County?

4.0: Data Analysis

4.1 Free Morpheme constraint

The 'free morpheme' entails the forbidding of CS "between a bound morpheme and a lexical form unless the latter has been phonologically integrated into the language of the bound morpheme" (Sankoff and Poplack 1981:5). Thus, CS cannot occur between bound morphemes. The current data showed that CS only occurred in free morphemes as reflected in the data collected in church domain. The following data was collected from a church domain using tape recording. The researcher then listened and identified codeswitched instances that had free morphemes occurring as switches. Examples are shown below:

(i) **Ku***INTERAKTI* **na** *KASTOMA* **ta kirikaniroini ni wega**
[To …with …like in the Bible is good.]

(ii) **Ku***RIKOGONAIS***aga uria mareka njaa.**
[To … what they are doing outside.]

(iii) *Kipindi cha kuTESTIFY*
[Chance to ...]

(iv) *Ikiwa* **gaka** *nikavinda kakwanza* **ka ku***FELLOWSHIP na sisi*, *TAKE THE CHANCE*.
[If this is your first time to … with us…]

(v) …*AND THEN akaniambia ni waJOIN.*
[…he told me to …… them.]

(vi) *Mungu akunGRANT FAVOUR*
[May God … you.]

The above data yield various instances of switches within free morphemes. It is worth noting that the most switched free morpheme is a Noun and Verb in church domain. Examples of Nouns are *TESTIMONY* and verbs *kuINTERAKTI, kuRIKONGONISaga, kuTESTIFY, kuFELLOWSHIP niwaJOIN, AkunGRANT a SPEND* among others. Thus, free morphemes were freely switched providing that the constituent is not a bound morpheme. This broadly defined constraint basically amounts to the claim that switching can occur between words but not within words. The current results confirm Muysken (1995) assertion that states that free-morpheme Constraint is the view that code-switching cannot occur between bound morphemes.

Table 1 below gives a summary on free morphemes that were switched in church domain.

Table 1: Free Morphemes code switches

Data No.	Codeswitched instance	The languages used	The ML
(i)	*KuINTERAKTI*	Kiswahili/ Engish	Kiswahili
(iii)	*KuTESTIFY*	Kiswahili/ Engish	Kiswahili
(iv)	*KuFELLOWSHIP*	Kiswahili/ Engish	Kiswahili
(v)	*NiwaJOIN*	English/ Kiswahili	Kiswahili
(vi)	*AkunGRANT*	Kiswahili/ English	Kiswahili

Participants in the church domain used Kiswahili because it was expected that everyone could understand Kiswahili.

4.2 Equivalence Structure Constraint

The 'equivalence of structure' constraint advanced by (Poplack 1980) is one of the most influential constraints that have attracted much attention. According to Poplack:

"code-switches will tend to occur at points in discourse where juxtaposition of L1 and L2 elements does not violate a syntactic rule of either language, e.i., at points around which the surface structures of the two languages map onto each other. According to this simple constraint, a switch is inhibited from occurring within a constituent generated by a rule from one language which is not shared by the other" (Poplack 1980:586).

The equivalence Constraint states that code-switching can occur only in positions where "the order of any two sentence elements, one before and one after the switch is not excluded in either language (Muysken, 1995). In the collected data the aspect of equivalence structure was reflected in the data collected from the sports domain. The data below was collected by tape recording method in inter-village sports meeting venue, where different speakers talked on land and education and observation.

i) *KANGWENDERUA NG'OMBE YAKWA NI AGENI* *na watu* **a mucii**?
[how comes that my cow is to be sold by aliens and family members?]
The speaker has competence in Kiembu.

ii) ATONGOI NA NDUKU NIACEO *AND THEY HAVE COME*
[The leaders and Nduku are fine …]
The speaker has Kikamba as her L1 and is more competent in it than in English.

iii) *kuESCAPE RESPONSIBILITY ya BOY CHILD ni vibaya kwa sababu ya kuwa LEADERSHIP akisoma kesho*
[To… is so bad because he is supposed to be in...]
The speaker has more competence in Kiswahili than in English.

iv) *mwana wa mvulana akiachwa nyuma MUCH maisha yake kuwa BAD sana*
[If the boy child is left so much behide his life might be…]
The speaker has competence in Kiswahili and this made English fit in Kiswahili syntax

v) **Nithiire na nda***FAIDI thaka ikivinyuria no maratathi makwa ninierwo ni macere niundu wa kwamba kuthii kunyua caai*" **no ninguthaka namba ya kana.**

[I went and…young men running but then I was told that my documents are late because of first going to take tea. But I will play number four.]
The speaker has Kimbeere as her L1 and is more competent in it than either in Kiswahili or English.

vi) **Nii nyendaga gwika maundu makua na kihoto hatari na** *KORAPSHONI*. **Kana hatari na ungumania.**
[I like doing my things in a transparent manner whereby there is no…]

The speaker had Gikuyu as her L1 and this made her have more competence in Gikuyu than in English. The English word 'corruption' has been forced to fit in the Gikuyu syntax that determines the combination of sounds thus making Gikuyu the ML.

The data above shows equivalence Constraint that is CS can occur only in positions where "the order of any two sentence elements, one before and one after the switch is not excluded in either language. The above switches were allowed because they obeyed the two structures of the languages. Table 2 below shows data from the court of law and further explains the concept of equivalence constraints in CS.

Table 2: Sample of equivalence constraints in court domain

Data No	Codeswitched instance	Languages involved	ML	ML inferred motivation
(i)	*ME kuANDASTANDI*	English / Kiswahili	Kiswahili	Communication
(ii)	..*BY kwerewanwo*	English/ Kiswahili/ Gikuyu	Gikuyu	Communication
(iii)	*Musunganzi kanisari*	Gikuyu/ Kiswahili/ Kimbeere	Kiswahili	Communication
(iv)	…*ME* **mumiru**	English/ Kimeru	Kimeru	Communication
(v)	*Lakini elewa vile unasema IN THIS COURT*	Kiswahili/ English	English	Socialisaxion
(vi)	… *IN MY HOUSE niKIITI* **mbembe**	English/ Kiswahili	Kiswahili	Linguistic competent
(vii)	**…ma***kinita***ga**	Kiswahili/ Gikuyu	Kiswahili	Communication

The Equivalence Constraint dictates that intrasentential switches will only be made by any bilingual speaker (regardless of the speaker's proficiency in his or her L2) at points in discourse where juxtaposition of L1 and L2 elements do not violate a syntactic rule of either language, i.e. at points around which the surface structures of the two languages map onto each other. In the above data the speakers used particular lexical items or language constituents and made a switch from one code to the other at points where they switch did not violate the rules of either grammar. The inferred motivation behaviours in this domain were: Communication, Higher morphemic count, Position of codes, Convergence, Domain type, Socialisation and Linguistic competence.

4.3 Functional Head Constraint

According to Muysken (1995) the functional head constraint states that CS cannot occur between a functional head (a complementizer, a determiner, an inflection, etc.) and its complement (sentence, noun-phrase, verb-phrase). They have found that code switches between a functional head (a complementizer, a determiner, aninflection etc) and its complement (sentence, noun-phrase, verb-phrase) do not happen in natural speech. In addition, the Functional Head Constraint is language independent. Complementizers are traditionally referred to as 'clause introducers'.

Languages have different types of clause introducers. For example, English has different types of complementizers that introduce different types of clauses. The most common ones are: ***that, if and for***. They perform different types of functions by introducing different types of clauses. For example, that is used to introduce a finite declarative clause, if is used to introduce finite interrogative clause, while for is used to introduce non-finite clause. The data below was collected in a wedding reception domain and marriage domain; there was the use of languages partly at informal level and partly at formal level. The current data however showed that there are instances of the violation of the constraint in CS instances collected from the wedding domain below:

i) Tugwita **wona twa***FIIDI* **tutigatinde na** *yula*.
[We shall go after…. ***so that we don't go hungry***, the whole day…]
SINCE TIME IS FAR GONE ningetaka **tu***WAIND UP ili watu waTRAVEL kukiwa mchana.*
[… I would like us to wide… ***so that people may*** … when its day time…]

ii) **mwathani nitwauga** *ni waro muno na mavinda mama maaro watuvee .Twakuira utupeleke kithanji kivoro kinya miciiri yetu na utuevererie maAKSIDENTI kuria varavarari.*

(Lord we thank you so much because of this good chance ***that you have given us.*** We request you to take us safely back to our homes and please don't allow accidents on the roads to come to us.)

Gikuyu has some set of complementizers that perform different functions. Most of them introduce more than one type of clause. Examples include ***twa, tu*** and ***ma.***

The language feature of the complement f-selected by a functional head, like all other relevant features, must match the corresponding feature of the functional head. The assumption of this constraint is that code-switching does not take place between functional heads and their complements. Just like in a monolingual grammar, there is a close relationship between a functional head and its complement that will not allow the two to come from different languages.

4.4 Code Switching between a noun and its Predicate

The data collected among the youths exemplified CS switching languages after subject pronouns. The following data was collected form a youth camp that included high school boys and girls and other participants whose age ranged from 17-25 years. The youth camp administration allowed the participants to use only Kiswahili and English only. The bolded words below shows the subject pronouns:

(i) ***maBOSI*** ***wetu*** ***wali****PLAY* *na peza zetu sana.*
[***our***… with ***our*** money so much]

(ii) ***mimi*** *naKAM lakini hiyo KOMBO ilituCHALENJI sana.*
[***Am*** to … but that composition was …to us.]

(iii) ***Sisi tuna****CHINJI lugha ilitwelewane kwasababu tumetoka kuingi.*
[***We***…languages so as to understand one another for we come from different places.]

(iv) ***tu****nafundishwa kulima na BUSINESS ili kuinua IKONOMI ya huku na tuSTANDi kimaisha*
[***W***e are taught farming and … so that we promote … of this place and we be self reliant.]

(v) ***kuna ma****PLASI tofauti tofauti huko ambacho lugha fulani sinasumsangwa FOR EXAMPLE SIAGINI ni kikamba,makutano- pande moja kimbeere.*
[***There*** are different … where different languages are spoken here…Siagini they speak Kikamba, Makutano in one side they speak Kimbere.]

The above data shows switching into English after Kiswahili pronouns. The sentences show switching to English after Kiswahili pronouns. This may be due to the agglutinative nature of Kiswahili Language. Table 3 below further clarifies CS switching after Kiswahili subject pronouns:

Table 3: Code switching between a noun and it's a predicate in Kiswahili pronouns into English predicate

Data No	Codeswitched instances	Languages involved	The ML	Inferred Motivation
(i)	***Wali****play (they played)*	Kiswahili / English	Kiswahili	Convergence
(ii)	***Mimi*** *naKAM (Iam coming)*	Kiswahili / English	Kiswahili	Domain type
(iii)	*…**tuna**CHINJI (we change)*	Kiswahili / English	Kiswahili	Domain type
(iv)	*…**Zina**SPIKIwa* *They are spoken*	Kiswahili / English	Kiswahili	Domain type
(v)	*…**tu***standi (we stand)	Kiswahili / English	English	Domain type
(vi)	**…ma***PLASI*	Gikuyu / English	Gikuyu	Peer influence

The camp administration allowed only English and Kiswahili to be used in communication. This was for the purpose of making the participants, who were mainly high school students, to further learn the two languages even as they (students) participated in the other operations of the camp.

4.5 CS in preposition Phrase and Noun phrase

Another syntactic aspect of CS is switching of Object Noun phrase. Data collected from the Gumbato domain meeting shows instances of Object Noun Phrase.

(i) **Muri eega inyuothe a member a Ngumbato** ya **uteithania**?
[How are you … ***of Ngumbato of Uteithania***?

(ii) **Tukwaria githweri onaguakinya ithabu ria mbeca**.
We are going to discuss ***in Kiswahili*** even when it comes to money issues.

(iii) *TURESARA* **niathiire *kuaPOLOGAISanira*.**
[The treasurer went ***to apologise***.]

(iv) *Tuthiicage IN GOOD TIME.*
[We be going …]

(v) **Twaririe atia** *mkutano huo mwingine?*
[What did we say ***in the previous meeting***?]

The Gumbato data also revealed switches occurred in the object of sentence as shown below:

(vi) **Iyo nio** *tambia* **iitu**
[That is our behaviour]

(vii) *BIRITHONI* **niyo mbaino**.
[… is the fine.] (the object)

(viii) **Kwina mbeca tukuheo kuma** *thirikari* **nene**.
[There is money that we are to get from the central government.]

4.6 Congruent lexicalization

The current data also revealed aspects of code mixing as reflected in congruent lexicalization. Congruent lexicalization is code-mixing between language pairs that share close morphological and phonological ties. The notion of congruent lexicalization underlies the study of style shifting and dialect/standard variation, as in the work of Labov (1972) and Trudgill (1986), rather than bilingual language use proper (Muysken, 2000). Congruent lexicalization is a situation, where the two languages share a grammatical structure, while lexical elements come from either language.

Table 4 below reflects cases of congruent lexicalization as reflected in the current data.

Table 4: Cases of Congruent lexicalization

Data	**Langauges involved**	**Facet of dominance**	**ML**
(i)**tura***tamuka* **maritwa ma** Gikuyu **tuki***WOSHIPU* [We are mentioning words in Gikuyu as we …]	Gikuyu/ Kiswahili/ English	syntactic/ morphemic/ obligations/ semantics/ pronunciational	Gikuyu
(ii)**mu***KRISTIAN***o** [A …]	English/ Gikuyu	syntactic / pronunciational semantic/ phonogical	Gikuyu
(iii)**ku***EMBASAIS***anga** [To …]	Gikuyu/English	syntactic/ morphemic/ obligatoriness/ semantic	Gikuyu
(iv)*TURESARA* **mathire ku***APOLOGAIS***anira** [… went to …]	English/ Gikuyu	phonological/ pronunciational/ morphemic/ syntactic/ obligatoriess	Gikuyu
(v)*kuSASPENDwa* [To be suspended]	Kiswahili/English	syntactic/ morphemic/ pronunciational	Kiswahili

The above table shows facets of ML dominance in code switched instances. ML dominates the syntax of code switching instance. The current research confirms that ML has syntactic dominance in that it controls syntax. Table 4 above shows that switching is grammatically unconstrained and can be characterized in terms of alternative lexical insertions.

4.7 CS in the Verb Phrase

The following data was collected in a school domain. The setting for the data collection was when the students were doing their general cleaning under the supervision of the teacher on duty. Forson (1979) notes that in CS only one of the two languages involved builds the structure and the other language provides the lexical and less frequently grammatical items. Forson argues that: in a situation where two systems are available to him, as in code-switching, the speaker is likely to prefer the structurally simpler of the two. The Code switches that occurred in the Verb Phrase shows that swithes of VP from Kiswahili/English that because Kiswahili tense/aspect markers are simpler than their English counterparts, they are more likely to be used in CS than English ones as shown in the examples below:

(i) *Hii kazi iko na* **maCHALLENGE** *sana*.
[This work has many …]

(ii) *Na* ***kuSWIPU*** *huko maWASHROOM*?
[How about sweeping …?]

(iii) *Hata huko kuwe kumeKILINIWA vizuri*
[Even there should be … up well]

(iv) *MaHONOURABLE watatuVISIT kesho*.
[… shall visit us tomorrow.]

(v) *SO MANY GUESTS wameINVAITIWA*
[… have been ...]

(vi) *Mundosi naye apenda MONEY anjenge maCLASS*)
[The head himself likes … to construct…]

(vii) *Ni lazima THE CLASSROOMS BE CLEANED.*
[It's a must that …]

5. Conclusion

The foregoing study shows that the structure and syntax of CS is rule-governed. Thus, for a multilingual speaker, the process of alternating between two languages requires a nonrandom, sophisticated cognitive and linguistic manipulation of their languages. The data shows that items from the languages that participate in CS do not occur at random rather they are guided by the grammatical rules of the languages involved. The findings show that code-switching is a rule-governed and logical phenomenon, and not a random one.

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