

**CODESWITCHING AMONG BLACK JUNIOR
PRIMARY PUPILS IN MULTIRACIAL SCHOOLS**

BY

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Oscar Hlanga and my two children, Vuyelwa Lwandiso and Sibongile Ayanda.

It is also dedicated to all my relatives for their encouragement and insistence on hard work.

S O S N C O K O



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- Last, but not least, my children, my parents and my brother and sister for their much needed moral support and encouragement, without which I would not have managed to complete this research.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that

“Codeswitching among Black junior primary pupils in multiracial schools”

is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated by means of complete reference.

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June 1998

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates codeswitching among black junior primary school pupils in two multiracial schools in Gauteng. The main objective of the study is to determine the effects of an English-dominant setting on the language used by black pupils among themselves in multicultural and multiracial schools. It also endeavours to examine the information conveyed by codeswitching apart from the referential information. This dissertation advances the hypothesis that: if black pupils from different language backgrounds interact in multicultural and multilingual schools codeswitching is unavoidable. Two primary schools from the Gauteng Department of Education were targeted i.e. Blairgowrie Primary School and Greenside Primary School. These are 'Model C' schools with pupils from the language background of almost all eleven official languages. English is the medium of instruction.

A qualitative research methodology, which is discussed in some detail, was used to gather data which reflect strong support of the hypothesis. The data was then discussed and analysed against the background of relevant literature. Motivations for bilingualism and multilingualism are also discussed. A number of different functional taxonomies of codeswitching were proposed. Finally, the study concludes with a summary, general suggestions and conclusions relating to implications for teachers and trainee teachers.

OPSOMMING

In hierdie skripsie word kodewisseling tussen swart junior primêre leerlinge aan twee multikulturele skole in Gauteng ondersoek. Die hoofdoelwit van hierdie studie is om die invloed van 'n Engels-dominante omgewing vas te stel op die taalgebruik van swart leerlinge tydens onderlinge kommunikasie in multikulturele, veeltalige skole. Daar word ook gepoog om die buitetalige inligting vas te stel wat deur kodewisseling oorgedra word. Hierdie skripsie onderskryf die hipotese dat: As swart leerlinge van verskillende taal-agtergronde in multikulturele en veeltalige skole kommunikeer is kode-wisseling onvermydelik. Veldnavorsing is by twee primêre skole van die Gautengse Departement van Onderwys, te wete Blairgowrie Primêre Skool en Greenside Primêre Skool gedoen. Hierdie skole is Model C skole met leerlinge met 'n taalagtergrond van bykans al elf amptelike tale. Engels is die onderrigmedium aan hierdie twee skole.

'n Kwantitatiewe navorsingsmetodologie, wat wel in die studie bespreek word, is aangewend om data te versamel. Hierdie data is hierna bespreek en geanaliseer teen die agtergrond van relevante literatuur. Motiverings vir twee-taligheid en meertaligheid word ook bespreek. 'n Aantal funksionele taksonomieë oor kodewisseling word bespreek. Die studie word afgesluit met 'n opsomming, algemene aanbeveling en gevolgtrekkings wat betrekking het op leiding aan onderwysers en onderwysstudente.

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CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The demography of education in the past few years has changed radically. Previously education was divided along racial and ethnic lines. Recently, however, the racial and ethnic divide has been blurred. Schools are more mixed. There is a shift from so-called 'white' schools to 'multiracial' schools. This has changed the linguistic and cultural composition of these schools. Pupils in these schools are from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

The question arises as to what happens to pupils who are from multilingual backgrounds and find themselves in a predominantly English school. How do they cope with the situation? Do they ever codeswitch? If they do, what is their choice of emblematic and matrix language? Which languages out of the eleven official languages are commonly used, and why do they codeswitch? It is basically these questions that prompted this research as well as the researcher's concern about an apparent increase in codeswitching, both by adults and children.

1.2 AIM

This research aims at studying the effects of an English-dominant setting on the language used by black pupils among themselves in multicultural and multiracial junior primary schools. The primary aim is to look at the additional linguistic utterances conveyed by codeswitching apart from the referential information exchanged by the participants.

1.3 HYPOTHESIS

There is an enormous amount of evidence to support the following hypothesis: if the pupils in multiracial schools are going to interact regularly, codeswitching is unavoidable. From the preliminary survey conducted it was abundantly clear that these pupils codeswitch considerably between English and an African language. Their speech is predominantly English but they use an African language as well. This dissertation will answer questions such as: "In which situations do these pupils codeswitch?"; "In which language(s) do the participants switch when one interlocutor has a different home language from the other?"

This study will only deal with the school situation. For practical reasons post-school research will not be carried out.

1.4 RATIONALE

Studies in sociolinguistics in South Africa are relatively new. Traditionally, linguistics have only been concerned with explaining the linguistic structures of languages. Very little attention has been given to language in natural discourse. It is only recently that pioneering studies started showing a keen interest in language use (Herbert and Magwaza, 1994; Mesthrie, 1995).

Although at present there are very few studies on sociolinguistic variables and education (Nontolwane, 1992; Adendorff, 1993; Kieswetter, 1995 and Du Plessis, 1995) none of these studies so far, has focused on younger pupils in primary schools. Nevertheless these studies reflect that there is interesting data for codeswitching at school, and this research will attempt to explore this.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

Data was collected through observation during lunch breaks and during lessons for a reasonable length of time.

Interviews were conducted regarding pupils' language background in general. Although this study concerns the conversations of pupils among themselves as far as possible, it would be incomplete without the profiles from various educators on the language background of the pupils. There were many interesting and relevant issues that came up during the observation. Although pupils were made aware of the project, they were not prepared, nor were they told what was actually expected of them and the focus of the research. A hidden tape-recorder was used to collect data from pupils. This was to avoid conscious codeswitching or, on the other hand, avoidance of codeswitching. All the information gathered was later catalogued, translated into English and analysed according to various components and the theoretical framework (discussed at some length later in the dissertation).

Two primary schools from the Gauteng Department of Education were targeted, i.e.

- Blairgowrie Primary School and
- Greenside Primary School

These schools are 'Model C' schools with pupils belonging to almost all eleven official languages. The medium of instruction in these schools is English.

1.5.1 QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

1.5.1.1 Introduction

A qualitative approach has been considered apt by numerous researchers in different fields and has thus been opted for this research report. An attempt is made below to explain what qualitative research is. This will help in the understanding of the analysis and the basis on which the conclusions are drawn. This methodology is phenomenologically orientated. The primary aim is the understanding of the life world of individuals or groups and the findings are presented in natural language (Schwartz and Jacobs, 1979:4).

1.5.1.2 Major Assumptions of the qualitative methods

- theory and/or hypothesis emerge from the data themselves;
- the objectivity of the study is achieved through ‘close in’ observations and understanding of participants in the natural setting;
- data collection and analysis proceed simultaneously;
- the researcher is the key instrument in data collection and analysis;
- small samples enable researchers to do intensive case studies

The meanings of the social action of the participants was learned through the course of their interaction and observation. As it has been mentioned, data was obtained from pupils between the ages of six and ten years as the focus of this research is only on Junior Primary phase pupils. There was commitment to spend a significant period of time in each school and relevant settings observing and interacting with individuals and targeted groups in order to collect data from them. The quality of the data obtained depended largely on the quality of the relationship between the researcher and the pupils observed and interviewed.

As the information and findings of this research report were to be used to write a dissertation they would become public. It is for this reason that pseudonyms are used in order to avoid offending or injuring any person or school.

1.5.1.3 The Qualitative Tradition Employed

Ethnology of Communication

This tradition is also known as the ethnography of speaking, micro-ethnography or constitutive ethnography developed from work in sociology, anthropology, sociolinguistics and non-verbal communication (Jacob, 1987: 186). This qualitative tradition assumes that both verbal and non-verbal communication is culturally patterned even though the persons communicating may not be aware of this patterning. The context which is

defined is seen as including the participants in an interaction that influences the patterns of communication. The main focus of this tradition is on the patterns of social interaction among members of different cultural groups.

Ethnographers of communication base their studies on participant observation data and on audio or video recordings of naturally occurring interactions.

The machine-recorded data is then indexed and the segments selected for detailed analysis.

1.5.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to gain a better insight into codeswitching in general and in schools in particular a thorough literature survey was carried out on leading sociolinguists who have researched and written extensively on codeswitching. This provided a comprehensive overview of existing research, an essential preliminary step. This substantial literature study served to identify some of the crucial issues pertaining to the topic as well as gaps in the body of knowledge surrounding the function of codeswitching. As a result certain conclusions were drawn and questions emerged for further enquiry.

Although there are many primary and secondary sources in connection with codeswitching in general, it is only recently that sociolinguistic researchers have started showing a keen interest in the natural discourse, i.e. language in use. However, very few of these studies have been able to look at sociolinguistic variables in schooling in the South African context.

Nontolwane (1992) investigated the incidents and causes of codeswitching and codemixing between Zulu as first language and English as second language.

Although the focus is not only on the education context there is very interesting data that highlights important issues that were effectively used in the analysis of this research report. The main determinants of codeswitching and codemixing were: topic, status of participants, individual roles, situation and language choice.

Adendorff (1993) explores an area of sociolinguistic behaviour which is increasingly evident in public and social life in South Africa. Codeswitching amongst Zulu-speaking teachers and their pupils is looked at. The focus is on the functions of code-switching and the implications for teacher education.

Although Du Plessis (1995) was concerned with greetings and partings, there is, in this study, some interesting data for codeswitching at school. From the data on greetings and partings one can conclude that there is indeed very little difference between instances of codeswitching in an informal and a formal situation.

Kieswetter's (1995) study looks at codeswitching amongst African high school pupils. Codeswitching is identified, described and analysed in terms of social motivation and linguistic structural patterns. These patterns are compared and contrasted. It is clearly shown that overall speech patterns are influenced by the participants' background and identity, pupils' relationship with each other and the context within which they interact.

The above sources, which focus on the educational context of codeswitching, were used in conjunction with other general relevant sources on the subject.

1.6 CODESWITCHING, CODEMIXING AND BORROWING

The significance of codeswitching, codemixing and borrowing in linguistics, especially in the study of languages in contact, was first noted in Uriel Weinreich's classic work *Languages in Contact* (Bokamba 1988:23). For the sake of clarity and

understanding, the above basic terms, which are frequently used in the literature on codeswitching, will be discussed.

1.6.1 CODESWITCHING

Myers-Scotton (1988, 1992, 1993(b), 1993(c), one of the authorities on codeswitching, gives a clear definition of codeswitching. She looks at codeswitching as involving two or more languages in the same conversation. These languages are the Matrix Language and the Embedded Language. The Matrix Language provides the morphosyntactic frame for codeswitched utterances, and the majority of morphemes in the given conversation. The choice of the Matrix Language is highly influenced by psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic factors. There could be one or more Embedded Languages providing lexemes in the codeswitched utterances.

Adendorff (1993:11) cites the following example of codeswitching by a school principal addressing pupils at the assembly:

“The following has to do with our school policy. You must listen very carefully to this so that you do not misquote us. *Abantu bafika basi misquotho. Isikole asinayo i-policy ethi uma ufeyilile ungabe usabuya. Generally okuyi-policy engiyichazayo manje, we believe ukuthi uma umfundi esikoleni ehlale unyaka wonke akangaphumelela, kusho ukuthi to a certain extent not kuyo yonke i-extent we have both failed.*”

“The following has to do with our school policy. You must listen very carefully to this so that you do not misquote us. People misquote us a lot. It is not the policy of the school to reject the applicants who want to repeat classes generally our policy that I am discussing with you now we believe that when a student has spent the

whole year and still fails, that means **to a certain extent not the whole extent we have both failed.**

In this example English is the Matrix Language and isiZulu the Embedded Language.

Romaine (1995:121) uses the term codeswitching in the same sense as Gumperz (1982), viz

“the juxtapositioning of words, phrases and sentences within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems”.

Khathi (1992) agrees with many other sociolinguists - among others Poplack, (1980) and Romaine (1995) - on the issues surrounding the perception and definition of codeswitching and the different types of codeswitching.

1.6.1.1 Situational Switch

Wardhaugh (1995:107), like Gumperz (1987:97), distinguishes between situational and metaphorical codeswitching which was originally introduced by Blom and Gumperz (1972).

Situational switch has to do with the change in language to suit the situation in which the interlocutors find themselves. No change in topic is involved.

1.6.1.2 Metaphorical Switch

Metaphorical switch has to do with the change of topic and change in the language used. It will either be message qualification, addressee specification, personalisation, objectivisation or reinteraction.

1.6.1.3 Emblematic Or Tag Switch

In emblematic or tag switching there is a usage of single items from one language used in a sentence that is entirely in another language. Tags have minimal restrictions as far as syntactical rules are concerned, and they therefore do not violate them.

Nontolwane (1992:24) when discussing emblematic codeswitching cites the following example, where the teacher was showing a great concern about pupils' lack of dedication to their school work.

Teacher: *Why ningayenzi yonke i-home work yenu?*

'... don't you do all your homework?'

When she examines the work done by pupils who failed the previous year, to her disappointment and shock, she exclaims:

Teacher: Good Lord! *Kuphela komsebenzi eniwezile lo? Niyazi yini? Once bitten, twice shy. Bengithi nizosebenza kangcono kulonyaka.*

'... Is this the only work you have done? You know what? ... I thought you would perform better this year.'

1.6.1.4 Phrasal Or Clausal Switch

Phrasal or clausal switching involves the switch at a clause or sentence boundary (intersentential). Each and every clause or sentence is in one language or another. This could also occur in speakers' turns (Romaine, 1995: 122-123).

An example from Panjabi/English discourse is given by Poplack (1980).

“Sometimes I’ll start a sentence in English y termino in espanol.”

‘Sometimes I’ll start a sentence in English and finish it in Spanish’.

Another example is from Adendorff (1993:14) during a geography lesson where the teacher complimented one of the pupils.

Teacher: Very good *Sigqemenzana, uyasebenza silwane*.

‘Sigqemezana, you are really working very hard.’

1.6.1.5 Intra-sentential Switch

In intra-sentential switching different types of switching occur within the clause or sentence boundary or word boundaries. Nontolwane (1992:26) cites the following example of intra-sentential codeswitching.

Counsellor: The devil hates you *akakudalanga*, Come on! Every good thing *ivela kuNkulunkulu*.

‘... he did not create you. ... comes from God’

Romaine (1995:123) also gives an example of intra-sentential codeswitching between Tok Pisin and English.

What’s so funny? Come, be good. Otherwise, *yu bai go long kot*.

‘What’s so funny? Come, be good. Otherwise you’ll go to court.’

Sentences can carry all three constituents of codeswitching namely,

1. Those with morphemes from all the languages in use, i.e. the Matrix constituents and the Embedded constituents.

Here are some of the examples from the conversations discussed in Chapter 2.

ama-elephant-s

ama-crocodiles

Prefix (PL) - Noun - suffix (PL)

Kieswetter (1995:44) also gives such examples

aba-clean-i (negative morpheme/a-/ + subject morpheme/ba-/ + verb root 'clean' + negative suffix/-i/)

isi-help-e (subject prefix/i-/ + object prefix/-si-/ + verb 'help' + final vowel /-e/)

2. Those with morphemes from the Embedded Language constituents.
3. Those with morphemes from Matrix Language constituents. This switch is within the sentence boundary or clause. It can also include mixing within word boundaries.

Kieswetter (1995:48) in her research has the following examples

"Awuyi kuma-study ntsambama?"

'Are you not going to **study** this afternoon?'

"Yes, ngabe ngente i-mistake uma ngingahlala ngingaku -invite-i"

'Yes, I would be making a **mistake** if I do not **invite** you'.

Structural Constraints:

Eastman (1992:2) says that codeswitching and borrowing should not be seen as distinct processes, but as part of a single continuum as seen in the Matrix Language Frame. Both borrowing and codeswitching behave the same way morphosyntactically. Myers-Scotton (1988:154) argues that codeswitching

is both more abstract and more specific. She claims that codeswitching is governed by structural constraints. These constraints have to do with the limits on where the speaker may codeswitch within the sentence and are seen as part of lexically controlled semantic and syntactic procedures. The Matrix Language Frame model will predict the forms of codeswitching in terms of whether they are well-formed or ill-formed. This model also concerns the syntactic frame and how it is filled. Once the message has been decided, the content morphemes are inserted including the ML and EL constituents. There are three types of codeswitching constituents.

1. ML and EL constituents. Morphemes from both the Matrix Language and Embedded Language are used.
2. EL Islands. All morphemes in the EL are Islands from the Embedded Language and they follow the grammar of the Embedded Language.
3. ML Islands. All the morphemes in the ML Islands are from the Matrix Language and the grammar of the Matrix Language is used. Myers-Scotton explores three hypotheses i.e. the Matrix Language (ML), Hypothesis, the Embedded Language (EL) Hypothesis and the Blocking Hypothesis.

The ML Hypothesis

The aim of the ML Hypothesis is to determine the morphosyntax of the ML and EL constituents i.e. mixed constituents. The ML hypothesis has two principles, namely the Morpheme Order Principle and the System Morpheme Principle.

The Morpheme Order Principle

The Morpheme Order Principle states that in ML and EL constituents the surface morpheme order should be that of the Matrix Language and should not be violated.

The System Morpheme Principle

According to the System Morpheme Principle if the ML and EL constituents need an externally relevant morpheme it has to come from the Matrix Language. A system morpheme is only considered externally or syntactically relevant if it has external agreement as to its own head. System morphemes are all inflectional affixes which govern the grammar of the language whereas the content morphemes carry the semantic content in the language.

The appearance of the EL morphemes is not excluded. The EL morphemes in this case will not have any interrelation with any item in the sentence. In the event of the EL content morpheme being used and the ML system morpheme not, this will be considered as *bare forms* by Myers-Scotton.

EL Hypothesis

The EL Hypothesis should not be seen as isolated from the Morpheme Order Principle and the System Morpheme Principle. The obligatory EL Islands are predicted by the EL Hypothesis. These EL Islands inhabit all the ML morphosyntactic procedures.

Blocking Hypothesis

In the Blocking Hypothesis it is proposed that all the EL system morphemes and EL content morphemes which do not have any specified agreement with ML content morphemes will be blocked.

Kwamwangamalu (1994:72) quotes Sankoff and Poplack who claim that codeswitching is governed by two universal constraints i.e. The Free Morpheme constraint and The Equivalence constraint. These constraints can be explained as follows:

1. The Free Morpheme Constraint

The Free Morpheme constraint states that there is no switch that can occur between a bound morpheme and a lexical form unless the lexical form has been phonologically integrated into the language of the bound morpheme. Gxilishe (1992:94) uses the following examples in his explanation

yena wa + bona ii-Colours

* *yena wa + see ii-Colours*

‘He/she saw colours.’

Ndi + nga + thi u + ngu + mntu othulayo

* Ndi + nga + say u + ngu + person othulayo

(I would say he/she is a quiet person.)

The radicals stems-bona (see) and -thi are bound morphemes and there cannot be a switch between them and their affixes.

2. The Equivalence Constraint

The Equivalence Constraint concerns itself with codeswitching at the level of the phrase. Codeswitching tends to occur at points where the structural integrity of both languages is preserved, i.e. elements of juxtaposed languages do not violate any of the syntactic rules of either languages. These constraints are questioned by Choi (Kwamwangamalu 1994). Choi argues that codeswitching is governed by the general rule called *Switch Alpha*. This is a switch of anything anywhere. This means that any element can be switched in any place as long as there is maintenance of the particular language integrity. *Switch Alpha* according to Choi is an unspecified universal rule in all codeswitching (Kwamwangamalu, 1994:73).

Kwamwangamalu gives the following examples of codeswitching between siSwati and English:

Why, usho kanjalo, mngani?

(Why do you say that, friend?)

Kule conversation *yabo ba-address-a liciniso* concerning *le-situation*.

'In their conversation they address the truth concerning the situation'.

1.6.2 SOCIAL MOTIVATIONS OF CODESWITCHING

It is generally argued by most sociolinguists that the code choice depends primarily on who says what to whom. Eastman (1992:3) views codeswitching as an urban language contact phenomenon. She argues that codeswitching is unavoidable in an urban setting because people are from diverse linguistic backgrounds and are expected to be engaged and participate completely in everyday conversations.

Wardhaugh (1995:109) discusses code choices. He says whenever people decide to speak they select the code and might decide to switch from one code to another or mix codes depending on the situation. He looks at codeswitching as the strategy used to create or avoid social boundaries, to change or maintain interpersonal relations with the participants' Rights and Obligations. According to Wardhaugh's article codeswitching would be accepted as quite normal in a country like South Africa with more than one official language.

According to Ellul (1978:3) many sociolinguists have attempted to describe the individual's use of language by classifying the utterances according to the different functions they carry out, for instance, the Expressive Function. In this case the focus of the language seems to be on the speaker or sender of the message who is expressing himself. The Directive Function has its focus on the addressee or receiver and some form of reaction is expected. The two functions of codeswitching

are also included by Myers-Scotton in her Markedness Model (1988, 1992, 1993 (a) and 1993 (b) as marked choice.

1.6.2.1 The Markedness Model

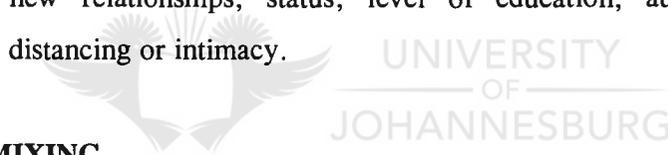
According to the markedness model (Myers-Scotton, 1988, 1992, 1993 (a) and 1993 (b)) making a choice at times carries extra-social meaning: i.e. the choices of languages used are meant not only for mega-message. It not only has to do with conveying the semantic content of the words. The motivation for code choice is socio-psychological. It can either be conscious or unconscious, marked or unmarked. This model is based on social-psychology and socio-pragmatic theories. It is based on these theories and the fact that, with speakers engaged in a conversation, the code choice will be governed by their relationship and their goals regarding their social position. All linguistic choices are seen as negotiating some Rights and Obligations Balances which are based on the norms of the community of the interlocutors.

1.6.2.2 Myers-Scotton's Functions of Codeswitching

- Codeswitching as a sequence of unmarked choice
Switching from an unmarked code to another code according to the situation.
- Codeswitching is itself the unmarked choice
Speakers engaged in codeswitching are seen as doing more than just switching. Underlyingly it is unmarked Rights and Obligations Balance among participants. In this instance the identity of participants is conveyed.
- Codeswitching as making a marked choice
The speaker switches from an expected code to an unexpected code in a particular situation aiming at changing the Rights and Obligations Balance.

- Codeswitching as making an exploratory choice
The participants are in an uncertain situation, i.e. the expected norm and Rights and Obligations Balance is unknown to both the addressor and the addressee. In this instance the addressor will explore choices and then determine the choice that receives a favourable response.
- Codeswitching can be marked or unmarked
Where codeswitching is used regularly and represents the norm, it is considered unmarked, whereas codeswitching used to mark a negotiated social position, political or economic strength represents the marked choice.

Kieswetter (1995:22) gives an exhaustive list of social factors that can be negotiated by codeswitching. She mentions identity, interpersonal relationships, social positions, group solidarity, ethnic identity, exploring new relationships, status, level of education, authority, neutrality, distancing or intimacy.



1.6.3 CODEMIXING

Codemixing involves the mixing of affixes, words, phrases and clauses from more than one language within the same sentence and speech situation. All grammatical rules from all the languages involved are integrated in the discourse. Different types of switches, i.e. tag, intersentential and intrasentential are involved in the same discourse, that is why Poplack (1980) argues that codemixing involves great syntactical risks. This mixture of languages signals two or more identities of the speaker simultaneously.

1.6.4 BORROWING

Bokamba quotes Gumperz where borrowing is defined as:

“... the introduction of single words or short, frozen, idiomatic phrases from one variety into the other. The items in question are incorporated into the grammatical system of the borrowing language. They are treated as part of

its lexicon, take its morphological characteristics and enter into its syntactic structures” (Bokamba 1988:25).

Herbert (1992) looks at the different linguistic changes that have to be undergone by a potential borrowed word before it can be accepted as a borrowed word.

1.6.4.1 Morphological

This linguistic change has to do with the morphemes of the guest language to suit those of the host language.

1.6.4.2 Phonological

This involves the change of the phonemes of the guest language to suit those of the host language.

1.6.4.3 Conditions of Acceptance

After the potential borrowed word has undergone the above modifications it has to be accepted by academics and writers, appear in the dictionary of the host language and be recognized, and used and understood by monolinguals of the host language before it can be a borrowed word.

Lexical borrowings take two forms:

1. Cultural borrowing of objects and concepts new to a particular culture.
2. Core borrowing of concepts and objects even though the host language already has its own lexemes.

1.7 MOTIVATIONS FOR BILINGUALISM AND MULTILINGUALISM

Almost all black pupils in the researched primary schools were either bilingual or multilingual. Bilingualism and multilingualism in these schools result from the marriage patterns some of the pupils are born into. In the cases where endogamy is prohibited and exogamy highly practised, mixed marriages are common. Where, for

instance, the wife is Zulu and the husband Xhosa, the children are bound to be fluent in both languages, although in some cases one language might be dominant.

When one takes into consideration the arrangement of families or groups in the townships where the majority of pupils reside, the families are not arranged or grouped according to their ethnicity. Families will maintain contact with each other by learning and communicating in each others' language. Many families will also learn each others' language because it is considered proper to learn to use the languages of those who live with and around you.

Pupils are also influenced by the media especially TV programmes where codeswitching is extensively used. As there are eleven official languages in South Africa the media is bound to switch from one language to the other in order to satisfy all language groups.

Children acquire their mother tongue from their parents and older siblings. In the case where an African language which is the mother tongue is not an official language and a language of educational opportunity, parents will encourage their children to learn the official language as well. Parents will also try to improve the children's knowledge of the official language by speaking to them in that language as often as possible.

According to Wardhaugh (1995:99) multilingualism and bilingualism are seen as a source of strength as they maintain and enable free communication in the society of people from various linguistic communities. This is one of the reasons why no effort is made in the society to suppress the variety of languages that are spoken. It was found however, that in the primary schools researched the usage of various African languages in the classroom is not permitted, and is discouraged on the school premises.

CHAPTER TWO

2. A CONVERSATIONAL ANALYTIC APPROACH TO CODESWITCHING

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The analysis of the collected data will be partly based on the Markedness theory developed by Myers-Scotton (1983 and 1988). This theory emphasizes the interactive and negotiated nature of face to face interaction. This analysis will also look at the distinctions Ellul makes in codeswitching (1978:4). She analyses codeswitching between Maltese and English. She looks firstly at conversations mainly in Maltese (M) with an occasional word in English (e). The following utterances are given as examples:

Example 1:

“Twaqqax it-ticket ghax, inkella jkollok terga thallas”.

‘Don’t drop the ticket, or else you will have to pay again’

“Le, Emvin mhux naughty; hux m’intix naughty Emvin?”

‘No, Emvin isn’t naughty; you aren’t naughty are you, Emvin?’

In the case of this research report the conversation will either be dominated by English, with an occasional appearance of an African language (Ea) or dominated by an African language with an occasional appearance of English (Ae).

Secondly, where the dominance of one language over the other is not so clear-cut, the changing over from one language to the other is random (ME).

Example 2:

“Put it in the dustbin; igborha u waddabha fid-dustbin”.

‘... pick it up and throw it in the dustbin’

“Gibli s-scissors Joanne”

‘Bring me the ...’

According to this study it will not be clear which language - English or an African language - is dominating the conversation (EA).

Thirdly, Ellul examines instances where the language mainly used is English with an occasional word in Maltese (Em).

“No, issa have a cup of tea?”

‘... now ...’

“Sit down, inkella I won’t push you”

‘... or else ...’

In the case of this discussion the main language will be English and the occasional language will be an African Language (Ea).

Myers-Scotton (1988; 1992; 1993(a) and 1993(b) in the Matrix Language Frame Model also looks at the dominance of one language over the other. The dominating language is termed the Matrix Language and the dominated termed the Embedded Language.

The issue of the structure of codeswitching will not be examined in this study.

According to Ellul (1978:19), where one attempts to account for the occurrence of codeswitching, various factors have to be taken into consideration. One of these factors is the place of operation, i.e. the place where codeswitching is being used. The place of operation can influence the speaker in at least two ways. Firstly, the speaker may be influenced subconsciously by the environment which may elicit the

use of codeswitching, i.e. the motivation for codeswitching may differ from situation to situation. Secondly, the speaker may be very conscious of his environment and use codeswitching deliberately, in the belief that it will help him fit well into the situation in which he finds himself and the people around him. It is partly due to these two factors that the need to divide this discussion into formal (classroom) and informal (playground) situations emerged.

It became obvious when the data was collected that there was not much of interest in the formal situation, but that there are various usages of codeswitching in the informal situation. This was due to the school policies which will be discussed at length in the next section.

2.2 DISCOURSE FUNCTIONS OF CODESWITCHING

2.2.1 CODESWITCHING IN A FORMAL SITUATION

In the two primary schools focused on in this research, dominance of English at school, especially in the classroom, is indisputable. The various educators spoken to all attributed this to school policy.

According to the school policy drawn up by both parents and educators and confirmed by various education officials, English is the medium of instruction. One of the educators mentioned that the parents send their children to their school because they want their children to be taught in English. One of the major considerations attracting the parents is the medium of instruction. If it were not for this, parents would send their children to schools where any African language is the medium of instruction.

To confirm this, time was spent in the classrooms to try to determine whether pupils do codeswitch at all and, if they do, to what extent. Not much was gathered.

It was realized during the research in the classroom that the conversations of some of the preschoolers are characterized by long pauses of 5-10 seconds. The conclusion drawn here was that these pupils still have limited vocabulary because these pauses gradually disappeared in Grade 1 and Grade 2 classes.

To avoid the use of African languages in the classroom most of the classes are arranged in such a way that black pupils are seated well apart in classrooms which are composed of a majority of white pupils.

2.2.1.1 Defiance

Defiance occurs when a pupil uses an impermissible language with the aim of defying the regulations. Pupils of these primary schools know very well that they are not allowed to use an African language at school. In one of the primary schools there was a defiant boy who kept disrupting the lesson and as a form of punishment the teacher asked him to hand out worksheets. For white pupils he asked in English whether they have the worksheets, and for black pupils he asked in different African languages. The teacher quickly reprimanded him because what he was doing was in defiance of the school policy.

2.2.1.2 Multi-functional codeswitching: Phatic and solidarity

Gxilishe (1992:94) quotes Appel and Muysken (1987) who point out that at times codeswitching can occur when one tries to change the tone of the conversation. In this case codeswitching indicates a phatic function. A marked choice can be positive or negative. It can be positive by narrowing social distance, if it is indexical of a relationship of solidarity, or it can be negative in that it increases social distance.

Example 3:

SETTING: Grade 2 class composed of 22 pupils: 9 blacks and 13 whites. The teacher is white, probably in her early thirties. A black girl went to another black girl sitting about three desks away from her to borrow koki pens.

A: Can I use your koki pens?

B: No, they dry quickly.

A: Oh! Please *ngizowavala mangiqeda ukuwa-user*.

B: No, I don't want you to use them.

A: *Ngiyakucela, toe*.

B: No.

A: *Kulungile*, I am not going to let you use my wax crayons.

B: Who cares.

'A: Can I use your koki pens?'

B: No they dry quickly.

A: Oh! I will close them after using them.

B: No, I don't want you to use them.

A: Oh, please I beg you.

B: No.

A: It's fine, I am not going to let you use my wax crayons.

B: Who cares.'

The above conversation started in English, which is the permissible language. But when B responded negatively A decided to repeat her request in Zulu on the basis of solidarity as belonging to the same ethnic group because A wanted B to reconsider her request. A, in other words, tried to soften B's stance by switching. B maintained the distance through

the use of English. At the end of the conversation A switched back to English. In using Zulu A was trying to negotiate for solidarity with B. B rejected the bid for solidarity by not allowing A to use her koki pens and refusing to codeswitch to English. The conversation is dominated by English (Ea).

Grosjean (1982:147) gives a similar example where a Spanish-English bilingual student was speaking to a Puerto Rican student in English about giving her a lift to New York. After a while she switched to Spanish to ask how much it will cost. The Spanish-English student told her that it will cost fifteen dollars. Later in the day she came back to the Spanish-English student and said in English that the trip was too expensive. Grosjean sees the switching of the Puerto Rican student as an attempt to get the cheapest price when she realised that the other student was also Puerto Rican.

2.2.2 CODESWITCHING IN AN INFORMAL SITUATION

In this section a number of different functional taxonomies of codeswitching are proposed, unlike in the above section.

2.2.2.1 Unmarked Codeswitching

It is worth emphasizing once more that codeswitching in these primary schools is the norm. Grosjean (1982:149) states that sometimes codeswitching takes place quite unconsciously. Speakers, including those who condemn codeswitching, are often quite unaware that they are switching from one language to the other. Their main concern is with communicating a message and knowing that the other person will understand them, regardless of whether they speak one or two languages. She also states that codeswitching is the norm rather than the exception in some bilingual or multilingual communities.

Example 4:

SETTING: Bilingual or multilingual Grade 1 boys sitting under a tree at break, having a discussion on an outing to the Zoo. These pupils freely switch from Zulu to English.

A: E-Zoo *sizabona ama*-animals.

B: I am so happy *ngale*-trip.

C: And me, too.

B: *Ama*-snakes, elephants *nama*-crocodiles. How I wish they could say we can ride .

C: *Yo ...! Umbonile loya mfana bekagibele* i-elephant kuyi ... TV, mfana'm?

'Yo ...! Did you see the boy riding on an elephant on TV, my boy?'

A&B: Ja.

A: Haaa! *Ngiyayisaba mina* i-elephant. I think *ihhashi li-* much better.

'Haa! I am scared of an elephant. I think a horse is much better'

Example 5:

Setting: Outside on the sports field, pupils are grouped according to their sport teams and age. Pupils have further grouped themselves according to their races. A group of boys in Grade 3 are waiting for their turn. They are involved in a conversation. The conversation is marked by codeswitching between Sotho and English and a little Zulu and English:

A: *Makgowa a matha, a tswa* number one, all the time.

B: *Ke di-springboks, o a tseba hore springbok ke eng, se a fofa. Springbok ha se matha se ntsha leleme. O ka se di-compare le bona.*

‘A: Whites run very fast, they come **number one all the time**.

B: They are **springboks**, do you know what a **springbok** is, it flies. When the **springbok** runs, it leaves the tongue hanging outside. Do not **compare** yourself with them.’

In the above examples, the boys unconsciously codeswitch and codemix from one language to the other - mainly from Sotho to English (Ae). To them switching and mixing is the norm.

Gxilishe (1992:93) writes that the rules of speaking and generally the norms of interaction are both culture-specific and largely unconscious, that is to say it is common for bilingual people to switch from one of their codes or languages to the other without being in the least aware of this. This is evidence of bilingual competence.

In example 4 English is dominant over the African language (Zulu) (Ea) most probably because what they are talking about is the extension of what was discussed in class. It was discussed in English and besides, for some it was the first time that they had heard about the animals, so they did not know the Zulu names for these animals. In the fifth example the African language (Sotho) is dominant over English (Ae). Participants A and B use the word ‘Ja’ (Afrikaans). This switch is unconscious because of the influence of the media.

2.2.2.2 Codeswitching as Directive

The above analysis leads us to another function of codeswitching namely the directive function. This codeswitching specifies the addressee as the recipient of the message. This switch can be divided into two, viz. inclusive and exclusive.

(i) Inclusive Codeswitching

The speaker switches to the language that a monolingual joining in knows and understands, and the caller may even be invited to participate in the conversation.

Example 6

SETTING: During lunch break two black girls are playing on the Grades 2 and 3 playground. Their conversation is characterized by a switch between an African language (Zulu) and English. Later they are joined by a white girl.

A: *Uyazi ama-prefects ayakhetha.*

B: I know, *thina abanandaba nathi*. They like *ama-Grade 1 prep nama-Grade 1*.

A: *Thina bayasi-shout-a* all the time.

(The white girl joins in - 'C')

C: What did you say?

A: We are talking about the prefects. They are always in favour of Grade 1 prep and Grade 1's.

B: It's not fair because they do allow Grade 1's to play on our playground. *Asambe manje*.

A: *Kulungile*.

'A: You know **prefects** discriminate.

B: **I know**, they do not care about us. **They like Grade 1 prep and Grade 1.**

C: They shout at us **all the time**.

(The white girl joins in - 'C'.)

C. **What did you say?**

A. **We are talking about the prefects. They are always in favour of Grade 1 prep and Grade 1's.**

B. **It's not fair because they do allow Grade 1's to play on our playground. Let's go now.**

A: It's fine'

Example 7:

SETTING: A group of black boys sitting at the gate waiting for their transport to come. It is after school. Their ages are between 7 and 9. They are discussing their sports day which will take place the next day. Two of the boys are dominating the conversation which is characterized by a switch between two languages i.e. Sotho and English. Later in the conversation one other speaker is invited to participate in the conversation and then the switching takes place between Zulu and English.

A: *Ke a itumela* because *ke tlilo matha le ma* Grade 2.

B: Why?

A: *Hobane* I'm under 9.

B: *Yo! Wa-robber.*

A: Class teacher *yaka* said *jwalo*. I can. *Uyakhumbula, Themba ukuthi* last year *thina soyi-*

two ne re matha le ma Grade 1, the time *thina siku-* Grade 2.

C: (Themba) Ja!

A: *Uyabo. Ha ke bue maka,* sonny.

'A: I am happy **because** I am going to run with **Grade 2.**

B: **Why?**

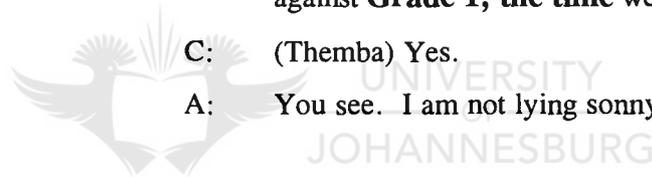
A: Because **I'm under 9**

B: Yo! You are cheating.

A: My **class teacher** said I can. Do you still remember, Themba that **last year** we both ran against **Grade 1, the time** we were in **Grade 2.**

C: (Themba) Yes.

A: You see. I am not lying sonny'



In the sixth example the two black girls switch between Zulu and English though English is dominant (Ea). When they are joined by the white girl, in order to accommodate her, they switch to English. They are inviting her to comment on the issue. Then to indicate that C is not invited to go with them (A and B) the two girls switch to Zulu.

In example 7 the speakers switch between English and Sotho (Ae). A then invites C (Themba) to join because they really want him to comment or rather confirm what the teacher said. For this purpose A switches to Zulu. Speaker A shows signs of being multilingual because he is capable of switching between Zulu, Sotho and English. The question arising from

the switch between Zulu and English when C is invited to comment is: Why does the switch now change from Sotho-English to Zulu-English? One could say, firstly, that codeswitching is directive: i.e. it is meant to include Themba (C) who is a Zulu mother-tongue speaker. Secondly, as Themba is Zulu, A is using Zulu because he is negotiating for an answer that will support him and not oppose him. A does not seem to have sufficient Zulu vocabulary because his speech is marked by Sotho tag-switches i.e. “Ne re matha le ma”. The final sentence starts in Zulu “Uyabo” then the rest of the sentence is in Sotho. It means the switch is between two African languages, i.e. Sotho and Zulu.

(ii) Exclusive Codeswitching

This switching is often conscious and contains negative comments about those excluded. This codeswitching indicates that the speakers share the language and the social distance between them is narrowed at the expense of the others who do not share anything with them at that point. Myers-Scotton gives a common example whereby parents switch to a new code that will conceal information from the children.

Example 8:

SETTING: In the Grade 3 classroom at lunch break. Grade 3 boys are expected to be on the playground. The school prefect is chatting to them and requesting that they go out.

A: If you do not go out I will lock you in.

B: *Uthi uzokhiya*

- C: *Wantina.*
- A: What are you saying?
- B: We are doing work for our teacher.
- A: Oh! Work for your teacher, at break, in the classroom.
- B: *O nahanang? O nahana hore o-boss wa rona..*
Nna ke tla o hijacka ke ye le wena locationing.
- A: **If you do not go out I will lock you in.**
- B: She says she is going to lock.
- C: She irritates me.
- A: **What are you saying.**
- B: **We are doing work for our teacher.**
- A: **Oh! Work for your teacher, at break, in the classroom.**
- B: What do you think? You think that you are our boss. I am going to **hijack** you and take you to the township.

Example 9:

SETTING. Three girls sitting outside the Grade 2 classroom at lunch break, one white and two blacks. The white girl is sitting between the two black girls. The two black girls are both bilingual whereas the white girl is monolingual (English only). One of the black girls is friends with both the other girls whereas each of the other girls is just friends with this one black girl and not friends with each other. The following sketch easily explains the relationship between the girls.

Illustration I:

A

B

C

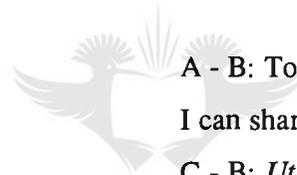
(black) B = friends with both A and C

(white) A = friends with B only

(black) C = friends with B only

A and B always whisper to each other, in English

B and C always talk aloud in Zulu.



A - B: Tomorrow I will ask my mom for tuck money then I can share it with you.

C - B: *Uthini?* ('What is she saying?')

B - C: *Uthi umama wakhe uzomnika imali esizoyidla kusasa* ('She says that her mom is going to give her money that we will spend tomorrow.')

A - B: We are not going to give her anything.

B - A: Yes!

C - B: *Uthini?* ('What did she say?')

B - C: *Uthi wena angeke akuphe izinto zakhe.* ('She is saying she is not going to give you her things'.)

C - A: *Anginandaba* ('I don't care.')

(Their conversation carried on in this fashion.)

This type of switching (exclusive) was common at all the primary schools where black pupils were concealing

information from white pupils. Example 9 above can be multifunctional in the sense that firstly B is using Zulu to C because she does not want A to hear that she (B) is giving all the information to C who is not meant to know. She (B) is doing this because she wants to keep her relationship with A and C. Secondly, through the use of Zulu, B and C are trying to exclude A.

In example 8 above the two black boys are using African languages (Sotho and Zulu) and English in their conversation. In the second line B switched to Zulu and he is not saying anything negative. But later on in the conversation the switch is to Sotho. When the boys were asked why they firstly switch to Zulu and later to Sotho, the reply was that they could not say horrible things in Zulu in case the prefect understands it as they are taught Zulu at the school. Many pupils with similar switching gave the same reason.

In example 8, English is dominant over the African languages (Ea) whereas in example 9 both the languages can get the same credit (EA).

Grosjean writes about how one can switch from one language to the other with the aim of withholding information from the third person who does not know the language of switching and is supposedly part of the conversation. She then shows how this exclusion backfires and leads to embarrassment.

“Two Greek-American students in a crowded student cafeteria, thinking that if they spoke Greek they would not be understood by anyone, started commenting on the

people around them. After five minutes of this, one of the people on whom they had commented extensively, folded his newspaper, turned towards them, and with a large grin on his face said ‘Goodbye’ in Greek” (1982:141).

Although the focus of this research is to study codeswitching amongst black pupils it is worth noting that in these primary schools codeswitching that is meant to exclude the third person is mostly blacks excluding whites. The reason for this is that most, if not all black pupils are exposed to almost all African languages, especially Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, Tswana and maybe Northern Sotho as they are widely spoken in the Gauteng region. Besides, the living arrangement in the townships is also a contributing factor as most of the student population in these schools is from the townships. Even those that are not from the townships are in contact with the township in one way or another. So, one cannot take chances by trying exclusive codeswitching.

2.2.2.3 Codeswitching as an Exploratory Choice

In this code choice strangers try to explore each other’s language choice, i.e. language preference. Speakers do not know what norms apply and therefore do not know what the unmarked Rights and Obligations Balances for themselves and other participants would be (Myers-Scotton 1992:176). Speakers find themselves in an uncertain situation. In this case the speaker will opt for an exploratory choice, i.e. start the conversation in one code choice but switch to another choice depending on the choice of the addressee in his response.

Example 10:

SETTING: Next to the tuckshop, at tea break. A black girl meets another black boy standing next to the tuckshop waiting for the tuck shop to be opened. The black girl starts the conversation.

A: *Heyi! Wena, awazi yini ukuthi i-tuck shop nge-first break ayivulwa.*

B: What are you talking about. I do not understand.

A: I am so sorry. Are you from Zaire?

B: No, from Nigeria. I can only speak English.

A: Okay, I was just saying the tuck shop only opens at second break.

‘A: Hey! You! Don’t you know that the **tuckshop** is not opened at break’

Example 11:

SETTING: In the foyer of the administration building. A black girl sitting on the carpet (B). She is new at the school. Another black girl almost her own age enters the door (A).

A: Hallo, *unjani?*

B: Hallo.

A: *Hawu! Ufike nini kule’ skole.* It’s my first time *ukukubona.*

B: I don’t understand Zulu.

A: Oh! When did you start at this school?

B: I started this morning.

A: Do you understand Tswana? I can speak a little bit of Tswana.

‘A: **Hallo**, how are you?’

B. **Hallo.**

A: Oh! When did you arrive at this school? **It's my first time** that I see you.'

In examples 10 and 11 above the speaker initiating the conversation starts the conversation in Zulu not knowing that the other interlocutor cannot understand Zulu. A took it for granted as it is a common thing, that every black person understands any African language, especially Zulu. Zulu in both conversations is used as the exploratory language. Once A has gathered that B cannot speak any of the eleven African languages A switches to English which A assumes that B knows as it is the medium of instruction for the school. English then dominates the conversation (Ea).

2.2.2.4 Codeswitching as Quotations

One can codeswitch when directly quoting what someone has said in a language other than the one used by the speakers at that time. Switching back to the language that was originally used in the conversation will indicate and even emphasize group identity.

Example 12:

SETTING: Outside the classroom during lunch break three black girls in Grade 3 are chatting to each other about a TV programme. The conversation is in Zulu, characterized by occasional switches.

A: *Uyibonile iBold izolo?*

B: No, *beningakafiki ekhaya bebathini?*

A: *Jo! Phela uTaylor ufuna ukuziveza kuRidge.*

C: Shame, uBrook *wenze njani?*

A: *Babonene noBrook, wathi uBrook she must go back to where she belongs, where she was for the past eight months.*

C: Then?

A: UTaylor *alibele athi* she belongs to Ridge and she belongs to L.A.

B: *Hayi! Ngiyamzwela uTaylor.*

A: UBrooke *athi uTaylor akaboni yini ukuthi* they are a family and they belong together.

‘A: Did you watch **The Bold** yesterday?

B: **No** I had not yet arrived at home. What were they saying?

A: **Jo!** Taylor wants to show herself to Ridge.

C: **Shame**, how did Brooke react?

A: They met with Brooke, Brooke said **she must go back to where she belongs, where she was for the past eight months.**

C: **Then?**

A: Taylor kept saying **she belongs to Ridge, she belongs to L.A.**

B: No! I feel pity for Taylor.

A: Brooke keeps on saying why can't Taylor see **that they are a family and they belong together.**

Example 13:

SETTING: Three Grade 2 boys sitting under a tree at break talking to each other about the instructions given by their teacher prior to break.

A: *O utlwile se Mrs P a se buileng?*

B: *Mme e se* for the first time *a re*, she does not want to see papers.

C: *O nketsa gore ke tshege fa a bua, a re*, “do you understand me, do you understand me.” *O se bua gantsi*.

‘A: Did you hear what **Mrs P** said?

B: It wasn’t **for the first time** she says that **she does not want to see papers**.

C: She makes me laugh when she says “**do you understand me, do you understand me**.” She says that many times.’

In examples 12 and 13 the choice of English was socially appropriate because both the teachers and the characters on TV were white. It would be highly unlikely that the teacher and the TV characters from an English TV programme would know Zulu or South Sotho.

After every quotation the participants switched back to the group language. This could also indicate that although they use a different language for quotations they still belong to the group and still share the same language.

2.2.2.5 Codeswitching as Ethnic Identity

This form of switching is used in an intra-group way. According to Blom and Gumperz (1972) codeswitching can be motivated by group membership and identity (Gxilishe 1992:94). Participants codeswitch between particular languages because they want to be identified with the group that speaks that particular language. Grosjean, like many other sociolinguists, looks at the language as not just an instrument of communication, but also as a symbol of social or group identity (1982:117).

Blommaert views identity construction as having two phases (1992:67) viz:

1. Drawing a boundary between the participants and the rest of the society. This is an anti-social, uncooperative phase.
2. The establishment of mutual role relationship within the communicative event. This is the social, cooperative phase.

The former phase suggests that speakers choose a code that is only understood by a particular group and exclude the rest. It is said to be uncooperative because it is against cooperation amongst all the members of the society. The latter phase is for cooperation in the society. The code is chosen such that it suits every member of the society.

Example 14:

SETTING: School sports day where three girls (A, B, C) are sitting together on the field after competing in their events. Two other girls (D & E) who have just finished their race join them. Four of these girls (A, B, C, D) are Tswana-speaking and one of them (E) Zulu-speaking. Their conversation is characterized by switching between Tswana and English.

A: You won?

B: Yes, came one.

C: I'm sure *o itumetse*.

B: Ja, *maar le wena o tswile* number one.

A: *Nna ke tswile* number four. Every time *o a mpheta*.

D: Nana (E) came last.

A: (Laughing) She came number hundred and four.

E: *Ga ke na sepe*.

D: *Jo!* Next time *uzophuma* number hundred and fifty.

'A: You won?

B: **Yes, came one.**

C: **I'm sure** you are happy.

B: **Yes, but** you also came **number one.**

A: I came **number four.** Every time you come ahead of me.

D: **Nana (E) came last.**

A: **(Laughing) She came number hundred and four.**

E: I don't care.

D: **Oh! Next time** you will come **number hundred and fifty.'**

In the above example when commenting about Nana, who is Zulu-speaking and part of the group, D and A use English which is the language common to all of them. They use English most probably because they want to make sure that Nana, who is not Tswana-speaking understands. The mega-message the two speakers are sending, could be that Nana is not performing well because she does not belong to their language or ethnic group. The only thing they share is the environment they find themselves in at that time is the language of education. Nana negotiates ethnic identity by responding in Tswana. D reminds Nana of her real ethnic identity by switching between Zulu and English. This conversation is dominated by the use of the African language, viz. Tswana (Ae) most probably because ethnic identity is the key issue.

2.2.2.6 Codeswitching as Reiterative

At times codeswitching can be used to repeat what has just been said. In this case codeswitching is meant to reinforce, emphasize, amplify or even clarify

the message that has already been transmitted in one code but may not have been understood. Gumperz (1982:78) writes:

“Frequently a message in one code is repeated in the other code, either literally or in somewhat modified form”.

Example 15:

SETTING: A group of black girls sitting in a circle at lunch break playing one of the games commonly played in the townships. The girl initiating the game is multilingual because she switches freely from one language to another. In this game the initiator has to touch the hands of the other players and sing. When the song and the hand on whom those of the initiator lands, is out of the game. During the game one player did not want to be out of the game and the initiator said:

A: No, no *uphumile*. You are out. *Hhe-e, o tswile*.

B: No, I'm not.

A: You are out, o a *bona he o qadile hape*. That is why I don't want to play with you. *Heyi wena o a bora*. That is why *ke sa batle go tshameka le wena*.

'A: **No, no you are out. You are out.**

No, you are out.

B: **No, I'm not.**

A: **You are out, you see, you have started again. That is why I don't want to play with you.** Hey you, you bore me. **That is why I do not want to play with you'.**

Example 16:

SETTING: Three Grade 3 boys at lunch break. One boy when opening his lunch box realises that his yoghurt has disappeared. The conversation starts in English when the boy (A) starts accusing the other one (B) of theft. Then the whole conversation is characterized by repetition of statements in English and in Northern Sotho).

A: Somebody took my yoghurt from my lunch box. I know who it is.

B&C: Not me.

A: Who is it then? *He-e ke mang ge?*

C: We don't know.

B: *Ga ke tsebe.*

A: You are lying *wena Kgomotso. O e tsere. O maaka,* sonny.

C: *Ga ke re ke a tjho gore ga se nna.*

A: Everybody knows *gore ke wena.*

C: *Gape nna ga ke je di-milk products. Ke tla dirang ka yone?* I don't know *gore e swerwe ke mang.*

A: Somebody took my yoghurt from my lunch box. I know who it is.

B&C: Not me.

A: Who is it then? He-e who is it then.

C: We don't know.

B: I don't know.

A: You are lying Kgomotso. You took it. You are lying, son.

C: I am telling you, it's not me.

A: It's you. Everybody knows that it's you.

C: I don't eat milk products. What am I going to do with it. **I don't know** who took it'.

In the above examples 15 and 16 the participants switch from one language to the other and in other cases phrases are said in one code and repeated in another code, to emphasize and reinforce. In example 16 codeswitching does more than just cause reinteraction. It could indicate the influence of ethnic affiliation in the sense that A and B are Northern Sotho whereas C, the accused, is Southern Sotho. The conversation starts in English, the neutral language in this instance, but when the conversation carries on and the situation becomes tense the speakers switch to their respective languages as a way of creating distance between them as opposing parties.

It is worth noting that in most of the conversations where such codeswitching occurred, it had a phatic influence, i.e. the tone of the conversation was affected.

2.2.2.7 Codeswitching as an Emblem for Group Solidarity

Language can also be used as an emblem of group membership and solidarity. It is quite normal that one is more positive and closer to one's group members than to those of another group. When strangers meeting for the first time realize that they have the same language background they switch to their mother tongue. In this case they are sending the message that, although they are strangers, they have the same background and should get to know each other better. They are also stressing the fact that they all belong to the same group which shares values and experiences (Grosjean 1982:117). This switch is interrelated to codeswitching as ethnic identity.

Example 17

SETTING: A group of Grade 3 boys sitting together at break talking about the game between Bafana Bafana and Congo. This conversation

is characterized by switches between English, Tswana, North Sotho, South Sotho and Zulu although in the beginning of the conversation B switches between English and Zulu.

A: Match *o wa Sunday o ne o bora*.

B: *Why usho njalo?*

A: *Taba ke hore my favourite player Doctor Khumalo ne a sa dlale*

C: *Maar nna ke utlwile gore why ne a sa dlale*

A: *O maaka. Why?*

C: They say, *wa gopola ka match wa last week Sunday o ne a lemala*. But *ga a tlo tlogela* all together. I think next game *o tla e bapala*.

B: For *leyo nto, fela nna* I don't believe you. I'm going to ask *ntate wa ka*. He reads the paper every day.

A: *Ntho eo e ka etsahala. Batho bana ba strict* very bad.

'A: **Sunday's match** was boring.

B: **Why** do you say that?

A: It's because **my favourite player Doctor Khumalo** was not playing.

C: But, I heard why he was not playing.

A: You are lying. **Why?**

C: **They say** do you remember **last week Sunday** he was injured.

But he is not stopping **all together**. I think next game he is going to play.

B: **For** that thing only I don't believe you. I'm going to ask my dad. **He reads the paper every day**.

A: That can happen. These people are **very strict**.'

The above example is mainly in all three Sotho languages and English (AE). The reason for this is that English is the medium of instruction for the school and South Sotho is the home language for speakers A and C, who are dominating the conversation. C also uses a few North Sotho words. One readily sees that B's home language is Zulu. In his first response he switches between English and Zulu. In all his other responses there is tag codeswitching. The sentences are mainly in English with the tag of Sotho and Zulu. He (B) also uses 'nna' and 'I' adjacent to each other which is a tautology. From this conversation one can conclude that B's Sotho is not good and he is also aware of this. That is why he opts for tag switching rather than long Sotho phrases or sentences. If it were not that he wanted to have the sense of belonging and group solidarity he would not switch to Sotho at all.

2.2.2.8 Codeswitching as a Strategy of Neutrality

When writing about how codeswitching serves as a strategy of neutrality Myers-Scotton (1993(a):147) says that bilinguals avoid committing themselves to a single RO set by avoiding speaking only one code. She continues to say

“The speaker recognizes that the use of each of two languages has its value in terms of the costs and rewards which accrue with its use. The speaker decides to choose a middle path regarding these costs and rewards by using two (or more) languages in a single conversation”.

Example 18:

SETTING: During lunch break a group of Grade 3 girls are playing one of the games popular in the townships. Although English is dominating

their conversation (Ea) their conversation is characterized by a quite complicated switch between four languages, viz. English, Zulu, Sotho and Tswana.

- A: *O se ke wa matha, ibhola alibalekanga. O a-robber.*
 B: No, no *o ka etsa jwalo ha o batla.*
 C: It's not fair *thina asenzanga kanjalo luna la-robber.*
 D: *O ka etsa jwalo* as long as *o tla khona ho baleha.*
 A: *Uyakhumbula* yesterday *lona le hanne.*
 C: *Lona* everyday *le tla le melao ya lona e seleng.*

- 'A: Do not run when the ball is not away. **You are cheating.**
 B: **No, no** you can do that if you want to.
 C: **It's not fair** we did not do that you are cheating.
 D: You can do that **as long as** you will be able to run.
 A: Do you remember **yesterday** you refused.
 C: **Every day** you bring your silly rules'

Example 19:

SETTING: A group of Grade 3 boys are discussing a popular movie on SABC 1. The conversation is characterized by a constant switch between English and three African languages viz. Zulu, Sotho and Tswana. The African languages are dominant (Ae).

- A: *Kanti kahle kahle ke mang ntata* Fox?
 B: *Angikho* sure.
 C: *Ba bang ba re ke crook ena, ena ... ehlala e-scrap yard.*
 B: *Lo, oyi-boss yabo Gufat?*
 A: Ja.
 D: Why, *jwano babe ke di-enemies?*
 E: Fox *o tenwa ke bo-crook ba ntate ona. Ha a tsebe hore ke ntate wa hae.*

B: Yo! O a se gata. Fox *wasegata isithuthuthu. Wa etsa hore o nahane hore ho easy ho se palama.*

'A: Exactly, who is Fox's father?

B: I'm not **sure**.

C: Some say its that **crook who** stays in the **scrap yard**.

B: The one who is Gufat's boss?

A: **Yes**.

D: **Why** are they then **enemies**?

E: Fox hates the idea that he is a **crook**. He doesn't know that he is his father.

B: Yo! Fox can ride his motorbike. He makes you think that its **easy** to ride it.'

In these conversations, it was impossible to determine who spoke what language because the participants swiftly switched from one language to the other. With other speakers the switch even involved about three languages in a single utterance. Participants show little knowledge of the African languages they use. They seem not to be too sure whether the language or words they use are Sotho or Tswana. Codeswitching in the above examples is used as sentence fillers. This indicates the inability of the speakers to find words to express what they want to say in one or other code. One might also safely say that with other speakers it is just an easy way out when a speaker cannot find a suitable word to use in an utterance because of insufficient vocabulary.

One can also conclude that the participants belong to all three African languages, viz. Zulu, Tswana and Sotho. Their constant switching between all three languages and English is because they do not want any of these

languages to dominate the conversation and each speaker wants to remain neutral and show no signs of being in favour of any of the participants by using their home language.

2.2.2.9 Codeswitching in Order to Hide One's Identity

Grosjean (1982: 118-120) writes about the attitude of language groups towards themselves and towards each other. A negative attitude towards a language can have profound effects on the users of the language. This can result in the same language group having an attitude towards themselves. The learning and the use of the language can be affected. A speaker belonging to a particular language group that has people who have a negative attitude towards it is bound to hide his ties with that particular language group by avoiding the use of the language by all means.

On several occasions pupils codeswitched because they were trying to hide their home languages. On the first occasion one little Grade 2 boy was standing all by himself at break. I spoke to him in English asking the reason why he was not playing with the other boys who were playing soccer not very far from where we were standing. The boy responded in English but one could easily pick up from his accent that his home language is Tsonga. This aroused my interest and I just switched to Tsonga and continued the conversation. The boy responded quite well in Tsonga. To my surprise when the boys who were playing soccer ran towards us he immediately, without warning me, switched to Tswana. When the boys ran away from us, he switched to Tsonga again. On the second occasion three Grade 2 girls were talking to each other at break. I made my way towards them and overheard them talking in Tsonga. When they started to suspect that I could be hearing them they switched to Sotho. When they were asked about the language they had just spoken they were very reluctant to admit that they were conversing in Tsonga.

On both occasions one can easily draw the conclusion that these pupils were actually codeswitching because they were trying to hide their identity. The reason for the little boy switching, was most probably that he felt comfortable speaking Tsonga to me as he was not sure whether I was also Tsonga or not, but switched to Sotho because he did not want the other boys to hear him speaking Tsonga. Had the girls and the little boy switched to English the reason for their switch would have been different because English is the medium of instruction, but they switched to Sotho which is not a mother tongue for any of them.

It is apparent from what can be deduced from the above data that both the addresser and the addressee are aware of codeswitching and its variety of purposes.



CHAPTER 3

3. SUMMARY, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

3.1 SUMMARY

This research is an attempt to answer a number of basic questions regarding the phenomenon of codeswitching amongst black pupils in so-called multiracial primary schools. It should be emphasized that this research is based on observations on only two multiracial and multicultural primary schools and that any generalization to all multiracial primary schools should be carefully considered. One can summarize the results of the analysis in the following way: pupils use their linguistic abilities to manipulate their conversations according to content and context.

After an analysis of the data a number of different functional taxonomies of codeswitching were proposed. There is empirical evidence that the use of codeswitching by black pupils in multiracial primary schools is highly purposeful and has the following motivations: hiding one's identity, achieving neutrality, phatic, referential, directive (inclusive and exclusive) message qualification, quoting, engaging in exploratory choice, expressing ethnic identity, group solidarity, defiance and reinteraction.

It was realized that although pupils codeswitch, some pupils can communicate quite well and are comfortable in English. What this study has clearly demonstrated is that there is room for codeswitching in the classroom. The status quo should be maintained, i.e. English should be used as the medium of instruction whilst an African language should occasionally be used by the teacher, or by pupils or by both. Some sociolinguistics and teachers feel that codeswitching should definitely be discouraged as a learning and teaching strategy because it retards the acquisition of the target language. However, it has been realized from this research that well-structured and organized codeswitching can be used effectively.

3.2 SUGGESTIONS

From the analysis of the corpus one can safely conclude that codeswitching can be identified as a characteristic of everyday language usage among most black primary school pupils. Strict rules and guidelines are given by school language policies about what language should be used at a given time. The problem arises in multiracial and multicultural primary schools where the medium of instruction is a language other than the pupil's mother tongue and especially when each pupil is at a different level of language competency. Bernstein (1971), a British sociolinguist, hypothesized that the use of restricted or elaborated linguistic codes by working or middle-class children influenced their school performance. Schools' language policies call for amendment. There is room for African languages to be used to a limited extent. Further studies may go some way to identifying which African language or languages should be chosen. Different ways of developing learners' and teachers' proficiency in a particular African language could be found.

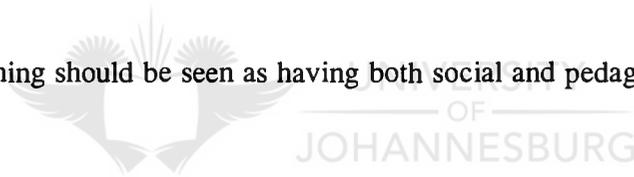
It is impractical to replace English and opt for an African language as this is a technocratic world and English is increasingly the global lingua franca. Nevertheless, African languages should not be isolated. If all subjects taught at school are learned for social usefulness and all subjects are integrated it is improper to isolate African languages and keep languages strictly demarcated.

3.2.1 IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS AND TRAINEE-TEACHERS

Although this section of the research report could be seen as being beyond the scope of this report, it can nevertheless be effectively used by both teachers and trainee-teachers. This study will be part of the ongoing debate about the use of codeswitching as one of the learning strategies in multiracial and multicultural schools. Codeswitching should not be seen as dysfunctional or even as a symptom of deficiencies of the target language and one should not be embarrassed about it.

Hoffmann (1991:113) writes about different conceptions different people have about codeswitching in the classroom. He says that there are people who have a relaxed disposition towards codeswitching; others consider codeswitching a linguistic impurity or a sign of laziness and therefore feel that it should be avoided or corrected. A study like this one would help teachers, trainee-teachers, policy-makers and education planners to see the complexity of the determinants of language choice in the classrooms that can be 'legislated'. Recognising this may help them realistically rethink and accommodate codeswitching in the planning of syllabi, textbooks and any other teaching material for not only multiracial schools, but all schools who cater for bilinguals and multilinguals. Kieswetter (1995:6) says that codeswitching should be seen as a linguistic tool which multilingual speakers have available to them, without it being taught to them and people should be aware of the widespread nature of the phenomenon.

Codeswitching should be seen as having both social and pedagogical effects in the classroom.



3.2.1.1 Social Effects of Codeswitching

Codeswitching creates teacher-pupil unity, especially in the primary phase because the child looks at the teacher as part of his familiar world. The use of mother tongue in the classroom has a great effect: it shows the users that their language and culture has value which will have a beneficial effect on self-perception, attitude, motivation and consequently on achievement as suggested by Gal (1979:72). Pupils do not view the classroom as an independent domain, but as an extension of their familiar social environment. This makes them feel secure.

A study like this one could help teachers and trainee-teachers to understand codeswitching in their classes in terms of the power it brings its users. Adendorff writes that communicative power goes hand-in-hand with social

power. Codeswitching plays a major role in the exercising of communicative power. If one has an ability to communicate, is able to bring messages across and able to manipulate others, one definitely has to acquire and use different communication strategies, one of which is codeswitching. As a result one would have a voice and be listened to.

3.2.1.2 Pedagogical Effects of Codeswitching

The use of codeswitching as a teaching strategy can have great effects for both language acquisition and content acquisition.

According to Martin (1996:133) in order for a child to develop a second language properly, he or she should first receive a strong foundation in his or her mother tongue. The first language will help promote the development of the second language. Pupils in the primary phase, especially, whose medium of instruction is other than their mother tongue could through codeswitching between their mother tongue and the second language promote the development of the second language which would be their language of communication throughout their learning career. Martin (1996:128) cites Guthrie's (1984) communicative functions for codeswitching in the classroom: translation, clarification, checking comprehension, giving procedures and directions as well as acting as a 'we-code'.

Atkinson, (1987); Lin, (1988); Garrett et al (1984) as quoted in Martin (1996:129) provided explanations for the use of the first language in second language classrooms. Their explanations are the same as Guthrie's, although they add as additional reasons saving time, maintaining discipline and helping weak pupils.

Canagarajah (1996) looks at the functions of codeswitching in English in second language classrooms. His study focuses on secondary school teachers in Jaffana (Sri Lanka). Although the use of Tamil is considered inappropriate for English-as-second-language classrooms, Canagarajah's study clearly shows some useful functions of codeswitching for both pupils and teachers for instance: for classroom management, transmission of subject matter, and the negotiation of values, identities and roles.

Codeswitching can be used as a means of encouraging even the passive pupils who feel insecure about their competence with the target language. Their mother tongue would be used to satisfy momentary linguistic needs. Codeswitching would not only be to the advantage of such pupils, but also to the advantage of the educator who would be able to impart the subject matter successfully with better insight, i.e. be able to reach the pupils.

A study like this may help teachers and trainee-teachers to be able to identify the points of codeswitching in a second language lesson and be able to control and minimize the amount of codeswitching. It is worth noting that codeswitching cannot only be used effectively in second language lessons, but also in first language learning - for instance, in an African language lesson codeswitching is unavoidable. There will be a constant switch from an African language to a foreign language as there are terms that do not yet exist in African languages and which are used by African language speakers, but haven't been integrated and adopted into the recipient language. The foreign language in this case is the source language as it gives the term and the African language is the recipient language, as it adopts the term.

As Eldridge puts it

“decreasing mother tongue use in the classroom does not automatically increase the quality and quantity of target

language use, any more than decreasing one's consumption of meat automatically increases one's consumption of cheese" (1996:331).

Eldridge's opinion is that codeswitching seems to be a natural and purposeful phenomenon which facilitates both communication and learning. He then proposes three explanations. Firstly, codeswitching is a strategy that has short-term benefits for the second language speakers, but on the other hand hampers long-term acquisition. Secondly, attempts to reduce it would hinder the acquisition of the second language and lastly it is most likely that there will be a strong relationship between the learners' style abilities and codeswitching.

This research may help teachers and trainee-teachers develop an understanding of what codeswitching entails by looking at the circumstances in which codeswitching is employed and the effects it achieves.

3.3 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it would be fair to consider these suggestions as based on personal observations and interpretations gained through research and the literature studied. They are not meant to undermine the schools researched or their language policies. Whether the conclusions and suggestions prove to be correct remains a question that can only be answered by further empirical research. Hopefully this study has provided a solid factual basis upon which future research can be undertaken.

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