A Survey of Code-Switching among Hausa-English Learners in Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechenic, Sokoto

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Abstract: *This paper studies the phenomenon of code-switching seeking to identify its causes and problems associated to the falling level of proficiency in English Language. The study selects a group of learners from Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic as its sample. Fifty Hausa-English learners were randomly selected and data was collected using a structured questionnaire. However, the frequency of code-switching among respondents during interaction was 56% very often. This shows that they code-switch frequently in conservation. With regards to the reason why the respondent switch,46 % are of the opinion that they are Hausa natives and 16% are lacking fluency in English. Investigation also recorded that 48% opinion that they code-switch regularly with friends and 52% with the members of peer groups. Structurally, the investigation shows that the constituent of Hausa Language often employed in code-switching are largely phrases. About 50% responded '' phrase '' while 36% ''bare words'' . The investigation also shows that students rarely code-switch during academic activity such as lectures when they interact with a lecturer/instructor or when they are assigned the task of presenting a paper. In the whole, the enquiry is able to deduce that code-switching among second learners of English is as a result of their inability to express themselves better in the second language. This calls for the need to intensify effort in finding effective method of teaching/learning English in our institutions particularly at primary and secondary levels.*

Key words: *Code-switching, Code-mixing, bilingualism, First language, Second language ,survey.*

INTRODUCTION

It is generally believed that language is not only a system of employing significant noises through the organs of speech to refer to thing, persons and ideas to facilitate communication and promote understanding between people but also a major factor which influences our ways of thinking. People all over the world speaks different languages depending on their cultural background which basically function in the same way that is making communication possible. Some people are monolingual[able to speak only one language],bilingual [able to speak two languages],and multilingual[able to speak three or more languages],Bilingual or Multilingual sometimes switch from one language to another [between two or more languages] this is called code-switching.

Hausa, one of the many endoglossic languages in Nigeria came into contact with English language right the first decade of the twentieth [20th] century when Hausaland was taken up as a colony by the British. As a result of this contact, many Hausa speakers particularly those who attend school where English has been the language of instructions, have learnt to speak English. This group has become bilinguals because of the contact and consequently the ability to speak Hausa and English languages. This group of Hausa speakers code-switch from English to Hausa and vice versa for various reasons. The two languages cooperate to produce grammatically accepted code-switch sentences.

WHAT IS CODE-SWITCHING?

Anne, et.al (2020) defined codeswitching as "the abililty to engage in fluent codeswithing is a hallmark of the flexibility and creativity of bilingual language use". Also Richard (2019) sees code switching as practice of moving back and forth between two languages or between two dialrcts of the same language at one time. "Speakers of more than one languague are known for their ability to code switch or mix their language during their communication" (Aranoff and Miller 2019). Marjan(2018) define code switching as " the use of codeswitching as the use of two languages within a sentence or discourse". According to Wardhaugh(2000:100)Codeswitching " is when people are usually required to select a particular set of codes whenever they choose to speak" .Code-switching is the ability of bilinguals to alternate between languages in their linguistic repetorire[Gumperz,J and Herendez,1976]

TYPES OF CODE-SWITCHING.

Poplack S .[1980] goes a further to outline two major types of code-switching ,these are ;Inter-sentential, Intra-sentential and Tag scode-switching.

I. **INTER-SENTENTIAL CODE-SWITCHING**
    This type of switching occurs at sentence boundaries –words or phrase at the beginning or the end of a sentence. This type is seen most often in fluent bilingual speakers. For example, ''I like this your phone. Nawa ta ke '' [How much is it]

II. **INTRA-SENTENTIAL CODE-SWITCHING**
    In intra-sentential code-switching, the shift is done in the middle of a sentence, with no interruptions, hesitations, or pauses to indicate a shift. For example, "Let me see in kayi assignment din da kyau''. [whether you did the assignment correctly].

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research has been undertaken due to enormous challenges that students faced when speaking English at school. Most of the Hausa-English students hardly speaks English language through out in conversations with their mates in school. Majority of Hausa-English learners code-switched while speaking English language in the school. Therefore, this problem leads to this research in order to investigate and to find out the causes and solutions of this problem.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This research will be guided by the following objectives.

1. To examine the degree of code-switching among the Hausa-English learners in Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic, Sokoto.
2. To identify the reasons why the students code-switched.
3. To find out the possible solutions to the problems.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following question are formulated to guide the conduct of this research:

1. What is the degree of code-switching among Hausa-English learners in Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic, Sokoto.
2. What is the reasons why the students code-switch?.

3. What are the possible solutions to their problem.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are quite number of literature dealing with this subject matter of this research . Nuhu and Abubakar (2016) conducted a research on a topic titled "code-switching Among Hausa Bilinguals in the 21st century''. The research revealed that the Hausa bilingual usually code-switched from Hausa language to other various languages, especially in Arabic and English. Based on this study, the researcher focused on Arabic and English which the current study may look at Hausa and English code-switching. Also, Jatau (2019) conducted a research on a topic titled: "Code-switching and mixing Among Hausa/English Bilinguals. A linguistic and socio-psychological survey ". The research revealed that Hausa/English Bilinguals code-switch from English to Hausa language in their conversation.

In an another related literature, Dorcas et al (2018) conducted a research on the topic titled: The effect of code-switching on English language teachers and learners at two schools in Sibbinda circuit. The research found out that code-switching has the aspect of the lesson taught and also helps learners to participate in the lesson especially those that have learning difficulties.

Zbou and Wei (2007) conducted a research on a topic titled: Code-switching as a result of language Acquisition: A case study of a 1.5 Generation child from China . The study found out that their use of code-switching is an important issue in understanding their language choice and language development.

METHODOLOGY

Fifty (50) respondent were randomly selected for the study whose mother's tongue (L1) is Hausa. The selection is said to be randomly because it was done regardless of the students' state of origin, ages, and course of studies. The study was conducted in Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic, Sokoto.

To investigate the reason why Hausa-English learner code-switch, the following questions were asked by the researchers in the questionnaire and were also responded accordingly.

1. **Do you code-switch to Hausa in your English conversation?**

The above question requires an option of yes or no where the respondent's views varied in different opinions as 76% of the respondent agreed that they code-switch from English to Hausa while 24% were of the contrary views to other respondents as mention earlier.

Table 1. The degree or level of switching.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Often	10	20%
Very often	28	56%
Rarely	12	24%
Total	50	100%

The table shows that 20% of the respondents code switch often,56% very often and 24% rarely code switch. This shows that code switching becomes a habit and they hardly speak in any of the two languages without switching. The 12 respondents representing 24% rarely code switch from one language to another. Such individuals are able to separate the two languages.

2. Why do you think Hausa comes into your speech when you speak English?

Table 2. Reasons why respondents code-switch.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of fluency in English	16	32%
Hausa is my mother tongue	23	46%
Fluency in Hausa language	11	22%
Total	50	100%

The table above shows that 32% code switch as a result of lacking fluency in English language. The 23 respondent who represented 46% were of the view that Hausa is their mother tongue and the 22% claimed that fluency in Hausa make them to switch from English to Hausa.

3. When speaking with what type of people do you often change from English to Hausa?

Table 3. People with whom respondents switch.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Friends	24	48%
Peer groups	26	52%
Total	50	100%

The above table shows that Hausa-English learners code-switch when they are speaking with different groups of people. From the table, 24 out of 50 respondents representing 48% code-switch only when speaking with friends, 26 representing 52% code-switch when conversing with groups who speak the language with a native-like proficiency.

4. In the discussion of what topic do you switch from English to Hausa?

Table 4. Topic leads to switching

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Any topic	12	24%
Family topic	15	30%
Friendly topic	23	46%
Total	50	100%

The respondents indicated that they code-switch when discussing on topic regardless of its types. From the table above, it can be observed that 12 students representing 24% code-switch when in English on any topic, 30% code-switch when speaking on family topic (mostly topic which concerns the speaker and the listeners especially when they come from the same family, town, or state). While 56% code-switch mostly on friendly topic.

What constituents of Hausa do you often employ in your English conversation when you code-switch?

Table 5. Constituents of Hausa employed in switching.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Bare words	18	36%
phrases	25	50%
sentences	07	14%
Total	50	100%

The table above shows that 18 respondents representing 36% are of the opinion that they employed Hausa bare words into their English conversation, 50% responded phrases while 14% sentences.

In what interactive condition do you speak English without code-switching?

Table 6. The condition in which the participants interact without code-switching.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
During official meetings	11	36%
During paper presentation	25	28%

In a formal discussion	14	28%
Total	50	100%

The above table indicates that 11 respondents representing 22% do not code-switch during official meeting, 50% during paper presentation, while 28% in a formal discussion. This shows that students rarely code-switch during academic activity.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This research is set to investigate the reason of code-switching and problem among the second learners of English in Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic, sokoto. It was found out that 76% code-switch frequently while only 24% rarely code-switch from English to Hausa. It is therefore deducing that, majority of Hausa-English speakers code-switched to Hausa in their English conversation at different places and occasion.

Besides, the researchers also found out that, code-switching generates the spirit of belonging makes speakers switch freely with others who share the two language and who also code-switch. Most importantly it facilitates inter personal communication.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research has summarily investigated on why people often code-switch. The study therefore, throws light on this language phenomenon by demystifying issues ranging from its wide spread features , reasons and consequences to the speakers of language involved.

RECOMMENDATIONS

At this juncture, therefore, the researchers finds it necessary to recommend that code-switching should be discouraged in the classroom. The authority concerns also need to intensify effort in finding effective method of teaching/learning English in our institution particularly at primary and secondary levels. Parents should encourage their children to speak English without code-switching to Hausa language.

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