Motivation for Amharic-English Code-switching Practice: Evidence from Radio Talk Show

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Abstract

This paper aims at investigating the reasons Amharic-English bilingual speakers switch to English in Amharic speech. Descriptive with qualitative approach was designed to achieve its objective. Radio talk show programs were purposefully selected to collect data from three radio stations: Fana, Voice of America and Deutsche Welle Radio (Amharic service). The data were transcribed phonetically and analyzed thematically. This paper presents detailed evidence to show the reasons and functions of Amharic-English code-switching among bilinguals and what triggers them to switch to English in their Amharic utterances. The analyses of data offered a window through which we observed the underlying discursive functions of Amharic-English code-switching in radio talk show. These encompass a wide range of functions as a device for quoting, repeating, emphasizing and clarifying position. It also functions as a distance strategy and a mechanism for filling a lexical or pragmatic gap. The results of the study revealed that Amharic-English code-switching can serve as a strategic tool to avoid communication breakdown. Moreover, the study provides many cases in which bilingual speakers consciously/unconsciously employed switching to English in their Amharic speeches. Hence, it was possible to conclude that code-switching behaviour cannot always be an sign of linguistic deficiency but rather a strategic tool for successful communication. In conclusion, code-switching can be motivated mainly by sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic or contextual factors.

Keywords: Code-switching, Amharic-English bilingual speaker, communication, strategy

Introduction

In daily life people usually use forms of language in different social situations such as language switching and mixing when the languages are

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in contact. Wei (2006) claim that languages contact occurs in situations where speakers use more than one language in the same place at the same time. People in multi/bilingual communities can have opportunities to express their ideas, feelings, and thoughts in different ways. Hamers and Blanc (2000) indicate that people who have mastered two languages often demonstrate an interesting phenomenon known as code-switching by combining words or phrases from the two languages together during the course of speech or writing. Linguistic findings revealed that code-switching can be viewed as a result of language contact. Obiamalu and Mbagwu. (2008), for example, claimed that code-switching is a linguistic behaviour that arises as a result of language contact. In the same vein, Cheng and Butler (1989) upheld code-switching is a natural phenomenon that happens when two bilingual speakers engage in discourse

Heugh et al. (2007) indicated that Amharic and English have been in contact with each other in Ethiopia dates back to 1908, when the Europeans, in particular French, Italians, and British landed on Ethiopia for different purposes: railway, factory administrations and education. After the introduction of modern education in the country, these foreign languages were operating in the country as a medium of education for Ethiopians who pursue studies beyond traditional church system.

In 1941, when Italians were ousted from Ethiopia, English has been elevated to the status of being a dominant language of instruction at all levels of education. English has also continued to reign in the linguistic domain in much wider fields than ever before. Governmental and non-governmental schools have played significant roles in the spread of English in education in Ethiopia since then.

In this context, it is observed that educated Ethiopians get challenged with the option of choosing of their preference code when conversing among themselves. The alternating use of more than one language in their conversations has become an integral part of graduated Ethiopians' speech styles. Such vernacular language-English code-switching takes place in communication among people who share the knowledge of English in different circumstances.

Evidence has shown the practice of Amharic-English code-switching in Ethiopian media particularly on radio talk shows. It is expected that the hosts and the guests are eloquent speakers of Amharic, and mass media is believed to play an authoritative role in popularizing and maintaining the standard form of the language. However, it is axiomatic that language uses in radio talk show broadcasts tend to be characterized by extensive uses of English in their discourses even though not all radio talk show listeners have shared knowledge and mutual understanding about the code-switch to. This issue has remained unarticulated in the field of sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic circle. This paper is aiming at identifying the motivational bases for bilingual speakers to switch to English in Amharic speech.

Theoretical Issues in Code-switching

The term 'code' could mean different things in various fields of study. For example, Gardner-Chloros (2009, p. 11) points out that the term code was originally taken from the field of communication technology when signal were switched signals between systems. In the field of linguistics, the term 'code' itself is defined differently. Researchers like Gafaranga (2007) and Muysken (2000) use code and language as equivalent so that they can interchangeably. In the current study, the term 'code' can be viewed as a verbal component that can be considered synonymous with language.

Many scholars define code-switching as the alternative use of two or more languages. For instance, Valdés (1978) considered it simply as "the alternation of two languages at the word, phrase, clause, and sentence levels" (p. 65). Poplack (1980) defined code-switching as "the alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence, or constituent" (p. 583). Furthermore, Gumperz (1982, p. 59) considered code-switching as the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems. Myers-Scotton (1993) defined it as the selection by bilinguals/multilinguals of forms from an embedded language in utterances framed by a matrix language during the same conversations. The present study blends the definitions given by Poplack (1980) and Valdés (1978) as it seems to be more comprehensive and relevant to this work.

Taxonomy of Code-Switching

On the basis of the length and nature of the juxtaposed elements, Poplack (1980) identified three different types of code-switching which occurred in her data, namely inter-sentential, intra-sentential switching and extra-sentential switching (or tag switching).

1) **Inter-sentential switching** occurs at a clause or sentence boundary where each clause or sentence is in one language or another. A well-known example from Puerto Rican bilingual Spanish/English speech is the statement: "Sometimes I'll start a sentence in English *y termino en español"*.

2) **Intra-sentential switching** takes place within a clause or sentence boundaries. It is found to be the most frequently switched in bilinguals' utterances, though it involves the greatest syntactic risk because it is expected that the switching should respect the rules of two languages.

3) **Tag-switching** There are several names proposed for English expressions involve inserting a tag phrase (e.g. you know, so, I think, I swear, I mean, well, of course, anyway, ok, all right, among others) from one language into a clause or sentence in a different language.

Code-Switching Vs. Code-Mixing

The different research works have attempted to distinguish between code-switching and code-mixing. For example, Gumpertz (1982) and Auer (1998) claimed that code-switching is inter-sentential and may be subjected to discourse principles and that it is motivated by social and psychological factors. Other scholars such as Ritchie & Bhatia (2004) considered code-mixing as an intra-sentential code-switching. It is constrained by grammatical principles and may be motivated by social-psychological factors. Muysken (2000, p. 1) employed 'code-mixing' as a generic term, being more neutral, and 'code-switching' for 'rapid succession of several languages in a single speech event. However, Gafaranga (2007) used 'code-switching' as an umbrella term for possibly different phenomena such as, 'code-mixing', language-mixing etc.

Despite the fact that the distinctions between these terminologies seem to be endlessly debated, this study used the most agreed definitions of code-switching and code-mixing. The distinction appears to be as follows: Code-switching can be viewed as an alternation of Amharic and English

within a single utterance at word, phrase level and/or sentence level. In other words, code-switching is conceptualized as a term embracing the concepts of code-mixing.

Review of Code-Switching Research

Code-switching has been examined in different language contacts in various countries. Several researchers have studied the functions, characteristics, determining factors and effects of code-switching in a wide range of linguistics domains.

Research on code-switching began in the early 1960's the pioneer investigator being Gumperz (1964), who was the first to pay attention to code-switching as the focal point of investigation. Code-switching has been studied from different parameters: Linguistic, sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic.

Research from the linguistic perspective has focused on understanding the structural aspects of code-switching. The goal of grammatical approach is to determine the syntactic and morphological characteristics of code-switched utterances. Several studies (Woolford, 1983, Joshi, 1985, Poplack,1980, Dearholt & Valdés-Fallis, 1978, Pfaff, 1979 among others) demonstrated grammatical constraints on code-switching between the code-switched language pairs (Spanish and English) in a particular research site (the United States).

Gumperz (1982) attempted to look for regularities in social functions in several settings across language communities and language pairs. Gumperz has been dedicated to answering the questions of why bilinguals code-switch. It is also concerned with how code-switching could be affected by social factors. Psycholinguistic studies have focused on bilingual's speech ability to keep his/her language systems separately. In this section, worldwide code-switching researches will briefly be reviewed.

Studies on code-switching in Ethiopian context have been dealt by a number of researchers. Much of their research works are carried out in Ethiopian educational settings. The aims of code-switching research have been to identify it as a pedagogical tool performed by teachers and students. For example, a study conducted by Taffese (1988) was to find

out the extent (if any) of use vernacular (Amharic) while teaching English by teachers in junior secondary schools in Addis Ababa. Similar studies on code-switching in foreign language classrooms have been made by Kenenisa (2003), Nuru (2008) Milky (2008) Kenenisa intended to investigate and classify the various reasons and functions of the uses of the L_1 (Affan-Oromo and Amharic) in the English classrooms.

Furthermore, a number of researchers such as Baye (2013), Bikila (2008), Dawit (2004), Micheal (2001), Fikre (2012) and Zelealem (1998) showed interests in investigating the role of code-switching in versatile community contexts in Ethiopia. Their works have focused on grammatical constraints where a switch can occur within a sentence. They also focused on identifying the grammatical and social functions of code-switching in the naturally occurring utterances in Ethiopia.

Therefore, it has been indicated that code-switching on radio contexts has not received any attentions. Though the mass media products are designed to reach the lager population, it is easy to observe that using English in Amharic discourses appears to be a common media language. This motivated the researcher to conduct a study on functional aspect of Amharic-English code-switching in radio show settings. This study examined the data from the perspectives of, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and communication. Hence, the results of this study would bridge a considerable gap in the areas of sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and communication.

Methods

Research Design and Data Source

This study intended to describe and explain motivation for Amharic-English code-switching practice in radio talk show programmes. To achieve this objective, descriptive with a qualitative approach was designed to gain the required data on the phenomenon as it naturally occurs. The data was obtained from radio talk show programs which were aired for over a year period (from February 3, 2012 to July31, 2013).

The radio talk show programs were chosen as a data source because the language uses in the radio talk shows seem to be a reflection of the actual discourses in a society. As it is an applied linguistic research, the applied

linguistics focuses mainly on connecting the linguistic knowledge with how languages are used in the real world (Sarangi, 2005). The language uses in radio talk show programmes evidenced a reasonable choice in a sense that the host-guest interactions is believed to be a potential source of naturalistic data and the media discourse has played an important role in shaping and reflecting the language practice in a particular community. Scholars like Tolson (2006) claimed that the spoken discourse on radio tends to be a typical example of 'ordinary talk' (p. 132). Furthermore, Bell (1995) pointed out that studying the media discourse is crucial 'for what it reveals about a society and for what it contributes to the character of society' (p. 23).

Sampling

The participants of the study were radio show hosts/presenters and guests. In this study, a radio talk show is a radio format that refers to a combination of informative and entertaining radio programme in which a host discusses with a guest who is invited in his/her capacities as a parent or a student, an academician, a medical doctor, an economist, a celebrity, a politician, etc The radio talk show programmes such as *Guest DJ, Live Sport Talk Show, Protocol Talk show, Addis Menged, Hakimowon Yiteyku , Yebahil Medirek, Mestawit, Esetageba , Yewtatoch Medirek, Yetiyakiewo Melse* etc were purposefully selected for practical reasons: accessibility and availability. In this case, I had accessed the data from websites of the above-mentioned radio stations.

Transcription

Once code-switching utterances had been identified, the next duty in the research process was to engage into transcribing the corpus. It is because Kvale (1996, p. 93) regarded transcriptions as the "solid rock-bottom empirical data". In the same vein, Jenks (2011) added that transcripts are used to generate empirical findings and share analytic observations.

Thus, transcriptions were carefully done because it was likely to be a very crucial part of code-switching researches (Ogechi, 2002). Code-switched utterances were transcribed using International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) to provide accurate representation of the phonemic features of the utterances. To maintain the reliability of the transcriptions, two experts who studied linguistics checked against the original source independently. Code-switched data were thematically organized and categorized in relation to their functions. It is so because the data served as a basis for the analysis.

However, the current study mostly followed the two-line presentation approach: The first line of the example displays the transcription of the actual utterance which is broadly transcribed phonemically, whereas the code-switched utterance is marked in **bold** script and the second line shows free English translations that were available immediately below the utterances.

Data Analysis Procedure

After the selected discourses on the programs had been listened carefully, the utterances were transcribed. Then, the code-switched data were thematically organized and categorized in relation to their functions. The data were analyzed and interpreted under the theoretical models proposed by Gumperz (1982) and Zentella (1997). The models helped to install a framework for the present study whereby I could examine functional aspects of Amharic-English code-switching observed in radio talk shows.

Results and Discussion

The collected data used in the present study were analyzed within the theoretical framework of Gumperz's (1982) classifications of discursive functions of code-switching in bilingual discourses and Zentella's (1990) model that dealt with psychological factors of language use that usually influences bilingual code switching. Although, there are linguistic or grammatical aspects of the two or more languages that normally motivate the occurrence of code switching. However, this study mainly focused on social factors due to the fact that the study relied on the sociolinguistic investigation of code switching.

1) Quotes

Gumperz (1982) claims that quoting someone's speech is one of the discourse formations that entail code-switching; he explains that a speaker tends to switch when he/she wants to quote someone's speech and to report it either as a direct quotation or as a reported one. In this study, data show some cases where code-switching occurs at a point wherein speakers recalled someone else's speech and wants to report it directly or indirectly.

As illustrated in the following examples, speakers have switched to English in order to quote directly what a celebrity said as in (1) or to indicate what the speaker read as in (2). The quotes have been made in English because the speakers wish to probably preserve the original meaning of the messages and they appear to give their listeners reassurance that they are experts and have domain knowledge in the field.

(1) *juˑzən bolɨt mətto metr sijaʃənf* '**ai æm kləʊz tu ai legənd**' *alə hulət mətto metr sijaʃənf* '**aɪ æm ai legənd**' *alə*

'When Usain Bolt won a hundred meter (race), he said, "I am close to a legend"; when he won a two hundred meter (race), he said, "I am a legend".

(2) *bə-jə-**hotel**-u jɨ-s'afə-al* **tɪpɪŋ ɪz not** ə**laud** *jɨ-l-al*

'It is noticed in every hotel; it said, 'Tipping is not allowed.'

Similarly, the following utterance provides a case where the host switched to English to quote what a politician had said. While switching to English, the speaker acts as an animator of the original quotes.

(3) Host: *jə-k'ədm-o-u t'ək'ɨlaj* **minsɨtr** *ʔaləm ak'əf nək'əfet-a-n as-tak-o and gazet'əɲa lə-anəssa-lla-tʃə-u t'jak'e ɨnna jə-t'jak'e-u-ɨn mə-nəʃa sjat'at'lu 'itɨjoβɨja* '**ɪz not sam banana rɪpʌblik**' *bɨ-allə-u-al jə-tə-ʃɨmədəmədə-tʃ bə-lela-otʃ bəgo fək'ad laj jə-tənt'ələt'ələ-tʃ bənway laj bə-k'ɨrak'ɨnb-o bezza jə-ɨmmɨ-tɨ-tə-addər al-jɨ-dələ-tʃ-ɨm.*

Host: when the former of Prime Minster of Ethiopia (Meles Zenawi) was asked a question by a journalist, he rejected and undermined the question which was premised on international criticism (against Ethiopian government foreign policy); he said that Ethiopia is not some banana republic; It is not a country which is dependent on the will of others and is governed by the ransom.

In example (3), the talk show host directly quoted the speech of the Late-Prime Minster of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi to express his ideological position against the international criticism on his government's policy. In addition, the speaker's (in 3) motivation behind the switched utterance seems that he targeted not only to respond to a journalist's question but to

show his stand against the underlying assumption of the question as well. Moreover, he interpreted the quote that Ethiopia need not be an attenuated and dependent country on foreign aids respectively.

(4) Guest: *bə-kɨrb gɨze bil get jə-Microsoft wanna halafi jə-al-u-t lɨt'k'əs "itɨjoβɨja* **haz mor fud to fid its pipl hu nid in eids ðan eni aðər kantri in ðə wəld"** *ji-alə-al-u.*

'Bill Gates, the CEO of Microsoft, recently said, "Ethiopia has more food to feed   its people who need in aids than any other country in the world.'

Host**:** *itɨjoβɨja kə-jətm hagər-otʃ jə-bələt'ə jə-mɨgb ɨrdata kə-ɨmiʃ-u səw-otʃ all-w-at*

'Ethiopia has more food to feed its people who need in aids than any other countries in the world.'

Guest**:** *bə-amarɲa awo bət'am ɨgzerjɨst'ɨlɲ aməsəgn-alə-hu*

'That is right in Amharic. God bless you. Thank you.'

In the above excerpt, the guest switched to English to report what Bill Gates, the Microsoft's manager, said in (4). However, the show host followed up by repeating the guest's speech in an Amharic literal translation. By this, the guest was so happy and thanked the host for the translations. The guest's intention of quoting Bill Gates' speech was just simply to create an impression of how important his arguments have been. However, this instance suggests that the host tends to be inclined to build affinity with the audience via the meaning of the utterance in Amharic that is familiar with the audience. In other words, when deciding on the choice of codes, the host tends to prioritize the language preference of the target audience of the radio programs.

The examples presented from (4) to (6) can serve as an evidence to claim, some speakers tended to switch to English for citing well-known sayings or proverbs.

(5) *bə-ɨnglizɲa nə-u bəhwalla wədə amarɲa lə-mə-tərgom ɨmokr-alə-hu* **ðeər   iz ei seijɨŋ, "lʌk ɪz waːt hæpəns wen ɪt miːts prepəreiʃəns"** *jə-ɨmmi-ll nəggər alə* **əukei ðat ɪz wʌn miːts** *təzəgadʒ-tə-h kə-al-honə ɨdlum bi-mmət'a-m* **juː kaːnt teik ðə ədvaːntɪdʒ əv ɪt** *malət nə-u*

'It is in English. I will attempt to translate into Amharic later. There is a saying, "Luck is what happens when it meets preparations," it is saying like that you make ready in advance for a particular event, and one (chance) can meet you. If chance comes to you but you are not ready for it, it means that you cannot take advantage of it.'

(6)   *ɨskə-ahun ... ɨngdeh* **polətiks meiks streindʒ bedfeləus.** *jə-***polətika** *səw-otʃ bɨzu nəggər jɨ-adərgə-al-u fɨtləfit jə-ɨmmi-t'ə-al-u jɨ-məslə-al-u bə-hʷala k'utʃ bɨ-lə-w jɨ-bəla-all-u jɨ-t'ət'ə-all-u*

'up to now … well politics makes strange bedfellows. Publicly, politicians often do many things; they are likely to fight each other. However, when they are alone, they eat and drink together.'

As can be noticed in (5), the speaker promised to translate the saying into Amharic before he directly quoted the English saying. Instead of translating, the speaker had kept on switching to English explaining the issues in detail. The speaker went on switching to English because he might probably intend to call for attention of the listeners whereas the speaker in (6) used to explain the American election process in Amharic. In the middle of his speech, he switched to English to describe the political system of the United States. He also interpreted the meaning of the proverb in Amharic. Probably the speakers' purpose of directly quoting famous American expressions in (5) and (6) has been to enliven their speech and to make the stories more realistic. This is agreed with Nishimura's (1995) finding. Nishimura (1995) claimed bilingual speakers would switch back to the original language of utterances to accentuate a more lively effect on the listeners.

Thus, looking back to the examples from (1) to (6), we may feel that bilingual speakers are likely to use inter-sentential code-switching to quote and to report speeches and that these examples provide evidence that the speakers made conscious decisions to switch to English for quoting or reporting speeches made in the past.

2) Interjections

Poplack (1980) refers to tag-switching. Interjections are believed to be utterances used as sentence fillers or connectors. In this case, code-switching serves to mark an interjection or utterance filler.

In the corpus data, there were a substantial number of instances where speakers demonstrated their abilities to switch back to English serving as sentence fillers. To see this, one may consider the following examples.

(7)   *ahun ɨnna-ntə gar kə-mə-drəss-e bəfet* **aɪ wiʃ** *ɨne jɨh-n nəggər bɨ-awk' norro bə-tə-fəta nəbbər*

   'Before it appealed to you I wish if I had known this case, I would have given a solution'

(8)   *bə-dəm bwanbwa gəbtə-w fɨre-w-n li-ja-bəlaʃ-u jɨ-tʃɨla-l-u* **oukei** *jɨh-n ma-wək' ja-sɨ-fəlgə-al*

   'They (bacteria) get into blood vessel, they could damage the testicle. Okay. It is necessary to know this.'

 (9)   *wɨʒmɨbr mə-fɨt'ərr-u bə-sport zurja* **ju**: **nou** *lə-hɨbrə-təsəb-u t'ɨru al-jɨ-dəllə-m; jɨh-n li-jɨ-adərgɨ-u jə-tʃal-u-b-ət ɨnnə-ɨssu* **ju**: **nou** *ɨntn*

   'Creating distortion at sport environment you know it is no good for communities; it is possible to happen, they could you know well.'

 (10)   *kə-hagər wɨt' jə-mmi-mət't'a-w jə-waga tʃ'ɨmari bɨzu e e e* **aɪ θɪŋk** *təs'no asa-dr-w-all mələt al-ja-sɨ-dəfrɨ-m*

   'There are many imported inflations ehhh I think it is not possible to say that it has an impact on.'

Furthermore, some speakers used tag-switches in their Amharic utterances as a strategy of taking time to think over what to say especially when they were asked questions. The data demonstrates such instances where in speakers frequently employed the expressions such as "*well*" and "*you know*" as delaying mechanisms. The interjection, well sometimes collocates with *"ɨngdeh"* and some hesitation markers.

Here are excerpts that well with *ɨngdeh* or with/without hesitation have been employed in situations where speakers have been searching for the appropriate words to say the next. In other words, code-switching functions as a strategic tool of taking time to think in order to sustain their discourses to the appropriate function.

 (11)   Host꞉ *bə-ʔakobo ɨnna gambela akababi mɨn sɨrra lɨ-tə-sərr-u nə-u?*

'What kind of job do you like to do in Akobo, Gambella and its surrounding?'

Guest: **wel** e e e ɡɑmbelɑ **ju**: **nou**

'Well Gambela you know ….

(12)   Host: *bɪzu amət məkena aʃɨkərkrə-w-all. jə-məkina adəga dərss-o-bb-wot   ja-wɨk'ə-all?*

'You have been driving car for long. Have you ever had an accident?

Guest: *awo (ehh)* **aɪ trai tu du   mai best** *gɨn* **ju**: **nou** *adəga e.e. jə-me-adərɨ-w* **aɪ   θɪŋk** *ɨssu sɨlə-honə nə-u*

'Yes, I try to do my best but you know accident happens I think it is because...'

(13)   Host: *bərkatta jə-***biznis** *dɨrdʒit-otʃ ɨndə-mi-ja-dərg-u-t ɨnn-gəmta-llə-u ɨndə-jə   hagər-otʃ-u bahɨl mɨn jɨ-məsɨla-ll?*

'We expect many business organizations could do according to culture of the countries. What do you think?'

Guest: **wel** (.) *ɨngdih* **lisən** *sɨlə-m-awɨk'-atʃə-w hagər-otʃ ba-wərra jɨ-ʃalə-ɲ-all*

'well …well Listen. I would like to talk about the countries I know.'

(14)   Host: *lə-akababi t'ɨbəka mɨn ʔɨ-jə-tə-dərəgə nə-u?*

'What has been done for environmental protection?'

Guest: **wel** *ɨnɨgdih* **at ðə end ɔf ðə dei ɒbviəsli** *jə-wɨ t' səw-otʃ…*

'Well well at the end of the day, obviously, foreigners….'

3) Reiteration

The term reiteration means emphasizing the points by expressing them exactly in another language. The data revealed there were a number of cases that speakers tended to switch to English and then repeated the same message into Amharic literally. At times, they repeated in somewhat modified form to reiterate the intended message in English. The purpose of such a discourse function may be to clarify what was said before in more elaborated way. The examples presented below

demonstrate how switches back and forth between Amharic and English have made in order to reinforce the intended messages.

(15)   *doktər jonas bə-sɨrra-w laj bət'am* **mətikjules** *jə-honə tɨnnʃ-u-n* **deteil** *wɨst' gəbb-t-o jə-me-səra səw nə-u*

'Doctor Yonas is very meticulous in his job. He is a man who does small thing in detail.'

(16)   K'ut'a **lɨmɨt** *jɨ-norə-w-all wəsən jɨ-norə-w-all gẹdəb jɨ-norə-w-all*

'Emotion must has a limit, a boundary, [and] a limit.'

(17)   *jə-***ɪnfleɪʃn** *wəjm dəgmo jə-waga nɨrət tʃɨgr bə-kətəma tə-kəsto-all*

'**inflation** or otherwise, an increase in price has been observed in the towns.'

It can be note that the above switched utterances have been reiterated to amplify the messages in Amharic. A case in (15) illustrates that the speaker embedded an English term 'meticulous' in her Amharic discourse. After switching to English, she went back to Amharic clarifying the meaning of the English term in Amharic. Further, a similar strategy has been used by the speakers in (16) and (17). The speakers repeated the meanings in Amharic what had just been stated in English. Accordingly, the speaker switched back and forth between Amharic and English to underscore the meaning of the English terms. Hence, the discourse function of reiteration has been to hallmark the central point of discussions.

By extension, the data illustrated how the switched utterances have been used to amplify the 'central' messages in Amharic. As depicted in the examples presented below, it can be deduced that the speakers often believed in switching to English in order to make their points more understandable for their listeners.

(18)   k'ɨdɨm ato bərhe k'əbet'ə təsɨfa **pesimist** *ajnət astəjajət nə-u jə-sət'u-t*

'Earlier Mr. Berhie offers pessimist (sic) type of opinion.'

(19)   ɨna gar hulu nəggər allə **evriθɪŋ ɪz əveiləbl hɪə**

'**We have everything, everything is available here.**'

(20) *məngɨst hulət gudajo-tʃ laj jɨ-satəf-all andə-ɲa-w* **fizikal infrəsrʌktʃər** *məssərətə lɨmat jə-mini-alə-w laj hulətə-ɲa-w* **hju:mən divelǝpmǝnt** *jə-səw habt lɨmat laj*

'The government has been involved in two cases: the first involvement is in physical infrastructure what we call infrastructural development and the second one is in human development.'

The above excerpts attest that bilingual speakers applied code-switching as a strategy to reiterate the meaning of the code-switched words, phrases, or sentences supporting listeners' comprehension level. As such, the discourse function of reiteration involve in the form of Amharic to English as in (18) and (19), while in (20) showed how the speaker switched to English to highlight the point of discussion.

Furthermore, the data provided examples of the reiterative discourse function to elaborate on how several speakers employed code-switching to emphasize the intended messages.

(21) *bət'am aməsəgɨna-llə-hu bət'am* **θaŋk ju**: *jə-me-l dəbdabe dərrəsəɲ*

'I received a letter saying that thank you very much, thank you very much.'

(22) *mə-fərəm bət'am kəbad bət'am* **peinfəl** *bi-honɨ-m*

'Making a sign (of agreement) tends to be very hard, very painful.'

The bilingual speakers as in (21) and (22) repeated the message expressed in English by adding an Amharic intensifier '*bət'am'*. This could explain how the speakers may have intentions to stress the implications of the messages. Hence, switching to English with Amharic intensifier can serve as an emphasizing strategy. What was more to explain was that the reiterative utterance might indicate how speakers switched to English mainly to hold the listeners' attentions to the points being discussed. A similar observation is made by Blommaert (1992) analyzing the social functions of Swahili-English code-switching behaviors among academic staff member at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. He argues that the staff repeatedly employed code-switching to English as an indicator of their being in the academic circle

and perhaps to attract listeners' attentions as speaking in English. However, the data revealed instances of code-switching wherein reiterations were only to signal ending speaking.

4) Message Qualification

As reviewed in the literature, code-switching posits functions of the stretch of diverging interpretations. At times, it deals with avoiding ambiguities thereof boosting intelligibility levels. Switches can also serve as a strategy of elaborating concepts with linguistic signs containing detailed information more than original utterances.

The current data demonstrated how speakers switched to English to elaborate the concepts by repetitions, reformulations, clarifications, and exemplifications. The following examples explain how speakers engaged in code-switching for message qualifications.

(23) bə-**kaʊntər** *bə-mɨ-tɨ-hed-bə-t gize* **kaʊntər** *maلət* **ʃɔrt pas** *al-jɨ-dələ-m* **juː hæv tu plei ɒf**

'When you are running for a counter [attack], counter does not means a short pass, you have to play off.'

(24) *jə-tə-ləjaju* **æntibaɪɒtɪk**-*otʃ all-u* **penəsɨlɪn** *wəjm* **penəsɨlɪn əminəʊ penəsɨlɪn æntibæktɪəriəl əminəʊ** *mədɨhanit-u-n*
'There are different antibiotics like penicillin, amino-penicillin or antibacterial amino tablate.'

*(25) lə-ine kə-**mɒnitri pɒləsi** akwaja sɨ-na-jə-w aka-hed-u təsfafe ɨjə-honə nə-u **kəntrækʃənəri** sa-jɨ-hon bət'am **ikspænʃənəri** jə-honə nə-u*

'For me when we see (it) from monetary policy perspective, the direction in which it moves did not become contractionary but it became very expansionary.'

The above examples illustrated how bilingual speakers used Amharic-English code-switching to clarify the message. Thus, it seems logical to state that switches to English can serve as an elaboration of preceding utterances.

The examples in (23) and (24) show that the speakers used English to express the main messages, but they employed the same code, English to

qualify the messages. The speaker in (23) applied a specific expression to elaborate the concept of counterattack. The central message in (24) is antibiotics, which is in English. However, the speaker offered illustrations to help listeners understand the meaning of antibiotics using the same code to qualify the concept through exemplifications.

5) **Personalization versus Objectivization**

This Gumperz's (1982) functional typology of code-switching explains the interface between personalization and objectivization function. Bilingual speakers may express their personal feelings and facts in one language then in other language. In other words, switches back and forth between languages serves as a reflection of a speaker's involvement in a message or personalization and an indicator of a speaker's distance from a message or objectification.

There have been certain examples in the data that showed how some speakers developed a tendency of their personal involvement in a message in English as in examples of (26) and (27).

(26) *awə t'ənikara məsərət sət'ə-w-na-ll jə-ine məmhir tɨlk' ɨrdata adrɨgə-w-lɨ-ɲa-l ina* **aɪ æm veri fɒnd meməri ɒf ðəm**

'Yes, my teachers provided a solid foundation for (my success). They offered me a great contribution and I am very fond of their memory'

(27) *jɨhn ma-məzazə-n alə-b-ɨn wəjɨm ɨrgɨt'ə-ɲa ka-l-hon mət'əjək' nə-u ɨnda-lku-h* **aɪ travəld ɨkstensɪvli**

'We need to think of this or if we are in doubt, ask for. As I told you, I travelled extensively.'

It is easy to observe from the above-mentioned examples that the bilingual speakers tended to use English to talk about their own internal feelings or actions. For instance, in the case of (26), the speaker switched to English to disclose his own personal feelings towards his teachers. Similarly, the same strategy was employed by the speaker in example (27) wherein code switching was used to reveal personal involvements in the message (i.e. travelling). This example demonstrates how bilingual

speakers tend to switch to English in Amharic speeches to indicate their own actions in the messages.

The study, however, provides instances where the speakers use an opposite direction. They switched from English to Amharic to show their distance from the message. Consider the following examples:

(28)   **wi**ː **nevər noʊ** *fəlagi-w kə-tə-məzəgəbə-w ɨt'ɨf lehon jɨ-tʃɨ-lal*

'We never know the registered (house buyers) could be double.'

(29)   **æz fɑːr æz aɪ noʊ leibər məʊbɪlɪtɪ ɪz əlauʊd** *səratəna jə-tɨm li-hed jɨ-tʃɨla-l haja bə-məto jə-mi-hon nə-u bə-məngɨst tək'ət'ɨr-o jə-mi-səra nə-u*

'As far as I know, labour mobility is allowed, workers may work anywhere. About 20 percent of the workers are government employees.'

It has been noted from the examples that bilingual speakers' utterances often began with personalized statements in English. Then, they switched to Amharic to distance themselves away from the topics being discussed. In a case of example in (28), the speaker switched back to Amharic to guess the possible number of the house buyers. This does not imply any personal involvements in the issue, but rather it explained an objective fact. By extension as, in example (29), the speaker switched back to Amharic. His switch to Amharic may serve as a strategy of distancing himself away from the specific topic (i.e. the workers' rights).

6) Parallelism

Zentella (1997) defined parallelism as a practice of copying the previous speaker's code-switches. There are instances where switches to English are marked with a parallelism pattern in the current data. The following excerpt illustrates repetitions in code-switching as a means to show the relation of host-guest interactions. The first speaker, the show host, switched to English that caused the guest to imitate the host's speech pattern. The host's choice of English triggered the guest for active use of the English word, *double*.

(30)   Host: *bə-ləndən* **oʊləmɪpɪk** *hulət medalia-otʃ* **dʌbl** *tɨ-sər-ja-lə-ʃɨ tə-bɨlo tə-t'əbɨk'-o nə-bbər?*

'Were you expected to receive two medialias double in London Olympic?'

Guest*:* *bə-dəni-b nə-bbər* **treınıng** *jə-adərə-ku-t* **dʌbl** *lə-mə-wisəd bedʒinig* **oʊləmıpık** *laj* **dʌbl** *agini-tʃa-lə-hu*

'I had trained well to win double. I got double in Beijing Olympic.

As can be noted from the excerpts in (30), the language choice of the bilingual speakers is likely determined by their conversational partners. In other words, speakers appeared to keep up with a similar style of the preceding speaker's code-switched behaviour. This analysis leads to the conclusion that the bilingual speakers learn to mix languages in a way that matches the stimulus they receive.

7) Social Distance

The data provide a case in which the language choice reflects the degree of a social distance between the participants. The solidarity they share and the power gap that exists have been realized in the following excerpt. It is extracted from a longer transcript; a show host interviewed two politicians on telephone. The chairperson (guest 1) is from Washington DC whereas the spokesperson (guest 2) is from London. Their discussions focused on their political programmes.

(31)   Guest 1꞉ *jih jə-sidist wər* **ıʃu**꞉ *a-ji-dələ-m*
                        'This is not a six-month issue.'

Guest 2꞉ *jih raji ində tilik' nə-u ina inidə* **ıʃu**꞉ *hono mə-k'irəb ja-lə-b-ət a-ji-məslə-ɲi-m*
                        'This is a big vision and I do not think we considered it as an issue.'

Host꞉ **ıʃu**꞉ *wəjim jih gudaj hono mə-k'irəb jə-alə-bə-ti-m jə-me-lə-w jə-ris-w-o hassab nə-u gin gudaj nə-u bizu səw-otʃi-n ja-nəgagərə nə-u*

'Your opinion implied that this is not considered as an issue, but it is an issue for many people.'

Guest 1꞉ *... gidi jə-lə-m* **ıʃu**꞉ *jə-mə-hon ja-lə-mə-hon lə-ɲa ji-tə-w-li-n.*

'this being an issue or not; let it be our concern.'

Guest 2: *hulum ak'əf jə-honə kʊnfərəns lə-ma-zəgadʒət mənɨgɨst*

tə-t'əjɨk'wa-l doktər ʃɨtajə lə-zih nə-u **ɪʃuː** *a-jɨ-dələ-m*
jə-me-l-u-t

'The government was asked to facilitate a conference in which all parties will participate. That is why Dr. Shitaye claimed this is not an issue.'

The above extracts reflect a case where code-switching could be understood as a way to create social distance. Note that Guest 1 began using the English word, *issue*. His speech behaviour oxygenated the proceeding speakers to switch to English. Thus, the next speaker, Guest 2 imitated the code-switching pattern of the preceding speaker. In a similar vein, the show host switched to English, but he reiterated the meaning of the English word in Amharic. However, both Guest 1 and 2 repeatedly switched to English in their speech. It appears that as if they agreed upon code to re-employ switches to English in all possibilities and they wanted to show off their harmonious relationships working for the same political organization. The participants constructed a collaborative floor on which the collaboration has been marked by mimicking the leader's code-switching behaviour. Guest 2 did not attempt to use the Amharic equivalent term the host proposed. This leads us to assume that Guest 2 might show his affinity with the leader's political ideology. His intention seems just to demonstrate the solidarity they share. Guest's move tends to be a deliberate effort to confirm his political loyalty to the leader's word. As Goffman (1981) stated, in institutionalized interactions, the power-role holder is bestowed upon the host/presenter. The host normally controls the development of the discourse through framing and questioning. The host can usually ask the questions and decide when to raise a topic, and when to move to the next question. It is within this power, the host places the guest or the caller in the role of answerer.

However, it is interesting to note that this power is challenged in the interaction between the host and the guest. Let us look again at the extract in (31). The context indicates that though the host dictated the guest to use Amharic term, the guests undermined the host's suggestion and continued using the English term 'issue'. The guests broke the formal frame of the institutionalized interaction and aligned their footing against

the wishes of the host. Note that, the guests appear to perform linguistic divergence from the mass and they might not know their language choice established separateness with monolingual listeners. It could be inferred that the guests may view switching as the language of power. Thus, it is possible to argue that code-switching can be used as a distancing strategy to demark the power relation between the host and the participants.

8) Lexical Gaps

In the preceding section, how bilingual speakers deliberately and strategically switched to English in Amharic utterances to achieve particular communicative goals have been discussed. In this section; however, a great deal of effort was made to identify the possible triggers for code-switching between Amharic and English. Chan, 2004) argued that psycho-linguistically a speaker can be pushed to choose code-switched expressions to express his intentions or ideas. Hence, the data will be analyzed from two perspectives: the speaker's language deficiency and lack of equivalent terms in the matrix language, Amharic.

The data revealed a number of evidences to support for the commonly held claim that code-switching could be a result of speakers' language deficiency. The examples presented below have illustrated this point that code-switching reflects the existence of lexical gaps. Particularly, in a context in which a speaker cannot retrieve an appropriate word in Amharic; he/she is then forced to switch to English replacing a forgotten lexical item. The following examples proved cases wherein speakers failed to remember a target word in Amharic. In other words, pauses and hesitations have been observed before the switches into English.

(32)   *midrok itɨjoβija ɨntɨn (e e e .)* **spɒnsər** *si-jə-adərg jə-mi-jə-agəɲə-u t'ɨk'm mɨndɨn nə-u? jə-mi-mət't'a-u səw ɨdʒg bi-jə-ans* **kəonsərvətɨv** *jə-mi-bə-alə-u anəgagər bə-amarɲa mɨn ɨndə-mi-bə-al al-awk'-ɨm*

'When MIDROC Ethiopia what is it called? e e e sponsored, what is the benefit from which it received? There is a term 'conservative'; I do not know what is called in Amharic.'

(33)   *dəgimo ɨntɨn ɨntɨn (.) all-at mɨndɨn nə-u jɨh* **kʌmfərtəbl** *nə-tʃ*
'Further what is its name? What is its name? (.) She has what is it called? She is comfortable.'

(34) ja-frika wanʧ'a ba-nd amət wɪst' jə-mi-zəgadʒ ka-ləm wanɨʧ'a
    gar ɨntɨn **əʊvərlæp** ɨntɨn lə-ma-dɨrəg
    'The African Cup of Nations is made once in a year. It can what
    is it called? e e overlap with the Word Cup'

(35) ande jə-mi-rəgɨt'ə-w ɨntɨn (.) **dɪstəns** bət'am səfi nə-u
    'a single step he takes; what's its name? (.) distance is very
    wider.'

(36) abəba arəgawi ahun ja-llə-ʧɨ-bə-t ɨntɨn (.) **pi**:**k**-wa laj
    ak'wam-wa t'arra laj jə-nəka gɨze nə-u
    'Abeba Aregawe's current condition what's it called? (.) peak
    Her performance reaches at the highest level.'

Noticeably, the above examples demonstrated that the speakers were forced to use English words to fill the gaps in their Amharic lexical knowledge. For example, the utterances, *bə-amarɲa mɨn ɨndə-mi-b-al al-awk'-m*, 'I do not know what is meant to say in Amharic', in (32) and *ɨntɨn* 'what is its name?' in (33) have implied that the speakers were enforced to switch to English. This happened because the speakers were unlikely to recall the appropriate words to express their thoughts about *conservative* and *comfortable* in Amharic; whereas in examples from (34) to (36) showed *ɨntɨn* with pause was marked before switching. Pauses and hesitations have been understood as signals of struggling for choosing appropriate words. The speakers appealed for assistance saying *ɨntɨn* and their requests received no responses at all; as a result, the speakers tended to switch to English. It was rationally to claim how code-switching can function as a contextualization tactic to resolve communication breakdowns.

This result agrees with the findings of Clyne's (1967, 1987) who argued that a trigger word can be frequently preceded by a hesitation and a pause and he considered a trigger word as a vehicle for code-switching. Furthermore, this finding agrees with Mirhasani & Mamaghani's (2009) conclusion which indicated how code-switching could bridge the gap in the discourse function. In addition, it is assumed as a compensatory strategy to help speakers feel more secured in cases of limited vocabulary resources.

Let us now look at an example showing how code-switched utterance emerged from a situation in which a speaker was unable to choose the right word in his linguistic repertoire.

(37)　　Guest꞉ *kə-sudan gar bə-mi-tigənaɲəta-tʃɨ-n lɨ-na-lɨfɨin-tʃɨla-lə-n*
jə-me-lɨ sɨmet le-fət'ər   jɨ-tʃɨ-allɨndəine ɨmɨnət jɨh sɨmet jə-bələt'ə ɨntɨn le-hon jɨ-tʃɨla-l (.) e e
　　'We might create passion for our qualification because we are assigned to play with the Sudan [team] but for me this feeling might be more something like (.) eh eh'

Host꞉ **æmbɪʃəs**
Ambitious'

Guest꞉ awo '**jes**'

In the above example, the guest and the host were talking about the possible results of a football game between the Ethiopian and the Sudan national teams. The guest started struggling to recall the Amharic term for *ambitious*. The guest indirectly told the host that he was incapable of producing the required term. He displayed expressions of his limited vocabulary knowledge, *ɨntɨn' lɨ-hon jɨ-tʃɨla-l* 'it could be something like' and followed up linguistic features such as pause and hesitation. In this instance, before the communication appeared to be breaking down, the host provided the required term in English to make the communication easier and smoother. The guest's appeal for assistance was successful, but it was expressed in English. Hence, one would assume that code-switching could strategically serve for having smooth interactions. What is more, I have noted that the data demonstrate instances where code-switching might occur when speakers were facing difficulties in recalling or getting the appropriate terminologies and expressions in Amharic. This would lead to the point that lexical gap triggers speakers to draw upon words from English to resolve communication breakdown. This would, therefore, lead us to assume that code-switching could be an important communicative tactic to fill lexical gaps in Amharic. Zentella (1997) calls this strategy as a 'crutching' analogous to a physically impaired person a leg depends on using a pair of crutch to keep walking. Similarly, a

speaker is at a loss for a target word in one language can keep on speaking by switching to another language. By the same token, Chan, (2004) considered that when a speaker experiences lexical gap or loses exact equivalents in the lexicon of the speaker's native language and then switching to another language can be 'unavoidable' (p.9). Other scholars (e.g. Myers-Scotton & Jake 1995) pointed out that a lexical gap exists when there is no lemma in the mental lexicon to support an actual surface lexeme (p. 272). In other words, the term refers to a concept or an object that does not exist in the speech community. Further, Grosjean (1982) added that speakers switch when they cannot find an appropriate word or expression or when the language being used does not have the items or appropriate translations for the vocabulary needed.

Moreover, the data showed many instances in which some speakers subconsciously tend to switch to English in Amharic utterances. It would be considered as a subconscious linguistic habit because the speakers seemed to be unaware while they were demonstrating code-switching. This aspect of code-switching has been reflected in the following examples:

(38)   **plʌs** *dəgmo jə-budn sɨrra-wɨ-n mansat tɨ-tʃila-lə-h*
         'plus and you can talk about the team's work.'

*(39)   (…) ma-t'arɨja-w laj sɨ-ta-jə-w **plʌs** dəgimo kə-tarekɨ sɨ-ta-jə-w*
         … 'when you look at the semi-final plus and you look at from historical.'

(40)   **eni weər** *jətɨm bota sɨ-tɨ-hed*
         'If you go anywhere anywhere,'

*(41)   wədə məhal **sentər** jə-tə-dərəgə kwas məkənə*
         'The ball which was passed to the box was not wasted.'

*(42)   tətʃ'awatʃo-tʃu-m ahunɨm **stɨl** jɨ-wəd-u-ɲ-all*
         'The players now still love me.'

(43)   *tɨ-tʃila-ləh* **ju**: **cæn**
         'You canyou can.'

(44)   *jə-ɲa t'ɨjak'e bət'am k'əlal* **sɨmpl** *nə-u*
         'Our question is very simple simple.'

(45)   *səw-otʃ* **ʌndərstænd** *ja-dərig-u-ha-l ji-rəd-u-ha-l*
          'The people understand you they understand you.

Furthermore, there exist instances in the data that bilingual speakers seem to habitually use English terms that are related to occupations, education, business and medicine. This could happen as a result of the frequency of exposure to certain items in English. The sentences like (46-51) are illustrative.

(46)   *dəbidabe-u-n* **daɪrektər-u** *a-ji-dəllə-m jə-sətʾə-n*
          "It is not the director who gave us the letter'

(47)   *kə-zza   bəfet* **ɪnfekʃən** *kə-hon-ə kullalet laji*
          'If it was [an] infection earlier, it could possibly be seen on kidney.'

(48)   *mədihanet* **ælərdʒi** *li-honi ji-tʃila-l-u*
          'Medicine[s] could possibly be allergy'

(49)   *lumame* **elɪmentəri** *tʃʾəriʃə*   **haɪ isku**:l   *addis abəba təmari-ku*
          'I completed elementary [school] in Lumame; I learned high school in Addis Ababa.'

(50)   *sikwar bəfit ɨna* **ɪkspɔ**:**rt** *ina-dərig nə-bbər*
          'We used to export sugar before.'

(51)   *wədə itɨjoβija* **ɪnvestər**-*otʃ ma-mi-tʾat nə-u*
          '[Our aim] is to bring investors to Ethiopia.'

As indicated in the aforementioned examples from (46) to (51), the speakers had neither linguistic nor contextual motivations for code-switching between Amharic and English. It might be due to habitual uses of the English terms in daily life. Therefore, it seems logical to claim that Amharic-English code-switching is often a result of subconscious linguistic habits.

We will examine the second possible cause for code-switching, i.e. lack of equivalent terms in Amharic. The data demonstrated several cases where English words and expressions did not seem to have exact equivalents in Amharic. Because of this, the speakers have been using English words or expressions to convey intended messages. The utterances in (52-54) happened to be good examples to explain how code-switching aimed to fill lexical gaps.

(52)   Guest**:** *jə-HIV/AIDS jə-ma-kəm jɨh* **tri**:**tmənt** *jə-mɨ-nɨ-lə-w ajɨnət nə-*

      w anɨdanide **tərm-**otʃ *tinɨʃ* (.)

       'to cure HIV/AIDS we call it a sort of '**treatment**'. Sometimes trems a bit

    Host: *hɨkmɨna*

        'treatment'

    Guest*: wədə amarɲa ɨnɨtin ja-sɨ-tʃəgɨra-l mɨn ɨnɨdə-honə alla-wɨkɨ-m gɨn jə-su bə-tɨkɨkɨl jɨ-gəlɨs'ə-wa-ll ala-wɨkɨ-m*

       '(to translate) into Amharic 'what is it?' It is difficult what is it called? I do not know but (eh.eh) I am not sure whether or not the word, 'treatment', expresses correctly.'

(53)   Guest**:** *betɨ-h wɨsɨt' bə-***ɪntərnet** *jə-mɨ-ta-gəɲə-w mərədʒa tɨlɨk'*

     hajɨl nə-u bə-ɨngɨlizəɲa k'wank'wa t'ɨru adɨrɨg-o jə-me-gəlɨs'ə-w and səw **empower** *mə-hon*

    'At home through internet you can access information that gives you power. There is a clear expression in English, 'empower'.

    Host: *hajɨl gulɨbət jə-me-(ta-)gəɲi-bə-t jə-mija-bərətata-bə-*

t

       'It makes you be a strong and powerful (person).

(54)   Guest: *anɨdet seɨt t'ɨk'at kə-dərəsə-ba-t bə-hwala bə-ɲa at'ərar*

     pəʊst-trɔ:**mætɨk stres dɨsɔrdər /PTSD/** *jə-me-ba-lə-w nəggər all-ə* **trɔ**:**mætɨk** *bɨ-t'əra-w jɨ-ʃalal bə-nəggəra-tʃɨ lajɨ gɨlɨt' ja-lə k'alat jə-lə-m hajle mɨnalɨbat tagɨzəɲa-lə-h wədə amarɲa lə-mɨa-mɨt'at bət'am jɨkəbɨda-l.*

     'After a woman has been convicted of assaulting, we call it **post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).** It is good if I use traumatic. Any way there is no a precise term. May be Haile would help me translate it into Amharic. It is very difficult.'

   Host: **scaɪns**-*awisɨlə-honə nə-u*

'It happens because it is a scientific term.'

As indicated in (52) the guest was explaining how he was selected to participate in an AIDS conference in America. He described the issues discussed in the conference. While he was informing the main points arose, he inserted in his speech English word *treatment*. Having realized that he switched to English in his talks, he stopped narrating the story and began commenting on switching his language. The host provided an equivalent term in Amharic, the guest seemed unhappy with the provided equivalent term concepts. Finally, the guest concluded that Amharic lacks adequate terminologies to express the concept of treatment.

Ii is clearly shown in (53) that the guest used a number of technical terms, which have supposedly been untranslatable into Amharic. She claims that English word, *empower* is more meaningful than the Amharic equivalent term though the host reiterated or clarified the concept of empower in Amharic.

This study offers the utterances, as illustrated in the examples (32 to 54), can be explained in terms of Grosjean's (2004) theoretical model which deals with psycholinguistic motivations for code-switching. According to Grosjean language model, when bilinguals well-learn languages, they usually go through their daily interactions with other bilinguals and they are quite unaware of mixing one language over another. In other terms, code-switches can be triggered due to the frequent exposure of such items in another language. Bilinguals develop the habitual use of certain lexicons in one of their two languages because these items are more commonly used in either language but not both. Consequently, bilinguals' code-switch to the specific items is unconsciously triggered, and bilinguals are often unaware of their alternation between languages. The other factor for unconsciously triggered code-switches is related to the untranslatability of a given item into another language. This occurs when a speaker is found to be in a difficulty to find an appropriate synonym in another language.

Aforementioned discussions of discourse function focused on analyzing Amharic-English code-switching data under the models proposed by Gumperz (1982) and Zentella (1997). However, the data generated unravel other sources of motivation for code-switching.

Conclusion

This study attempted to investigate the discursive functions of Amharic-English code-switching practices in radio talk shows context. In the talk shows, participants' code-switching behaviours were interpreted in terms of communicative discourse strategies proposed by Gumperz (1982) Zentella (1997) and the result of the corpus analysis suggested that Amharic-English code-switching appears to serve sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic and contextual functions. Socially, it serves the users as a device for quoting, repeating, emphasizing and clarifying position. It also functions as a time-taking strategy, an identity marker, and so forth. Psychologically, code-switching serves as a mechanism to fill a lexical/pragmatic gap. For instance, the evidences presented in this study indicated that the Amharic expression, *intin* 'what's its name 'something' gives listeners a signal that the speakers would switch to English when it is usually succeeded by a hesitation and/or a pause. This expression could be considered as a preface to code-switching. It was found that such a code-switching serves as a device to draw the listener's attention.

In addition, Amharic-English code-switching can serve as a strategic device to avoid communication breakdowns. The results of the study have demonstrated that Amharic-English code-switching can also function a distancing strategy to demark the power relation between the host and the guests who participated in radio talk shows and establish solidarity through Amharic-English code-switching.

In light of the findings presented, it is possible to conclude that code-switching behavior cannot always be an icon of linguistic deficiency. It is rather a strategic tool for successful communication. Within the radio talk shows, we have noted that most of bilingual speakers employed Amharic-English code-switching consciously or unconsciously to express their ideas, feelings and exchange experiences and stories they want to convey. This supports Myers-Scotton (1993) who claimed that the choices that a speaker makes in using a language are not just choices of content, but are 'discourse strategies' (p. 57).

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