

The Morphosyntax of Code-Mixing: The Efik-English Perspective

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Code-mixing is a product of language contact. It is an indispensable communicative strategy of the bilingual performer within the socio-cultural paradigms and beyond. The result is drawing from the resources of two languages, which invariably overlap in terms of the structure and system of rules. In this paper, we examine the morphosyntactic dimension of this sociolinguistic phenomenon, using the Efik-English bilinguals as our reference point. We discuss the verbal underpinnings behind code-mixing as a linguistic behaviour and conclude that though language mixing seems to reflect shared experience, and underlines the speaker's involvement (mood) and the desire to be well understood, it however, forms complex structures which are not represented in the conscious mind of the bilingual speaker.

Keywords: code-mixing/switching, morphology, syntax, sociolinguistics, Efik and English

1. Introduction

Efik belongs to the Niger-Congo family and is sub-classified as a Lower-Cross language of the Delta-Cross sub-family (Faraclas 1989), that is spoken predominantly in Southern Cross River State, Nigeria. Efik is one of the so-called minority languages in Nigeria. It is spoken by a population of over 2 million people as a first language and 3.5 million people as a second language in Nigeria, and it has had a widespread influence along the entire Southeastern coast of Nigeria. In Cross River State where it is mainly spoken, it is given some recognition in the mass media, education, public mobilization and orientation on government policies and programmes.

Beginning with the Portuguese, and later the British, the Efik people had a long history of contact with Europeans. The British had a sustained contact with the Efik people for over 100 years, initially as trade partners and later as missionaries and colonial administrators. The contact of a dominant language with a lesser known one has had its attendant effects, which are mainly manifested in borrowing. This has affected every facet of the Efik language: pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. In this way, Efik has become partially assimilated to English, and speakers of Efik also assimilate into English culture. This assimilation process justifies the popular saying *Efik édi mmákára* 'The Efik (people) are English' among the Efik.

Two areas in which the sustained dominance of English has been reinforced in Efikland are through education and the mass media. English is compulsory from primary school to the first year of the university (for students who are not English or Linguistics majors). Oral and written proficiency in English is a ticket to good employment and English is used in fields crucial to economic development: politics,

agriculture, aviation, government and so on. Print and electronic media publish and anchor their message in English to attract a wider audience. This privilege is a source of strength denied Efik or any other indigenous language in Efikland. Another factor contributing to the use of English is the heterogeneous nature of the Efikland, which accommodates people with wide linguistic diversity; however, as the seat of government, only English is used within government circles. This state of affairs justifies Akindele and Adegbite's (1999:46) claim that "the English language has become an invaluable legacy of the British which has provided Nigerians with yet another means of expressing their culture." From this background, it is evident that code-mixing is a near natural phenomenon within the sociolinguistic setting the Efik language and speakers have found themselves.

The concepts of code-mixing and code-switching are often used interchangeably as the ability to draw from the repertoire of two languages in a communication situation. In this paper, we delimit our scope to code-mixing, which according to Redlinger and Park (1980:339) refers to the combining of elements from two languages in a single utterance. It emphasizes linguistic hybridization. The thrust of this paper is that since language mixing involves the use of two languages within social intercourse, one can draw sufficient grammatical information from it, hence our discussion of the aspects of morphology and syntax. In addition, we also consider some of the causes, effects and the implications of code-mixing for the growth of Efik, given the challenges of globalization and the renewed agitation for language purity and linguistic excellence. We gather samples of code-mixed utterances from a cross section of Efik-English bilinguals, and also seek to know their motivations for language mixing as well as the circumstances or social demands for this language behaviour. Our emphasis in the interpretation of the data is not just descriptive but analytical. In what follows, we examine the causes and effects of code-mixing.

2. Code-mixing in the lexicon

Code-mixing is a prominent feature of bilingual speech behaviour. It does not necessarily entail having grammatical and pragmatic competence in the two languages. The level of bilingual competence varies depending on the language input and language proficiency of the bilingual. Several factors, linguistic and non-linguistic, are responsible for the output of code-mixing. The internal resourcefulness of Efik does not accommodate certain universal concepts and cultural items with equivalent referents, hence the recourse to English. For instance, forms like *window*, *cup*, *cupboard*, *pen* and *pencil* do not have names in Efik. They are either transliterated or borrowed. The pattern of borrowing is such that the sounds are made to assimilate in the direction of Efik phonology. Efik bilinguals simply code-mix these forms in their performance in

oral communication because the Efik vocabulary cannot provide equivalent forms of expression. It is not uncommon to hear expressions like:

- (1) a. Nọ mí cup únwọñ mmoñ
 IMP.give¹ me cup PROG.drink water
 ‘Give me a bowl for (drinking) water!’
- b. Bassey bèrì window órò
 Bassey IMP.close window DET
 ‘Bassey close that window!’
- c. Àfò bọ pen fò
 you take pen your
 ‘You take your pen.’

The transliterated forms of the English words *cup*, *window* and *pen* are respectively *íkó únwòñ mmoñ*, *úsúñ ófùm* and *étó nwèd*, which have the following cultural meanings: ‘a bowl for drinking’, ‘door for air’, and ‘stick for writing’ respectively. The coined Efik counterparts for these words are formed mostly by compounding and analogy; hence they do not give room for economy. In this way, the radius of preference of the English forms is expanded.

From the data, we found that the economy factor mostly plays out when code-mixing involves compound words:

- (2) a. Ní yòm í-díká church
 I want 1SG-PRES.go church
 ‘I want to go to church.’
- b. Été mì á-sàñà plane
 father my 3SG-walk plane
 ‘My father travels by airplane.’
- c. Mbọk dép newspaper no mi
 please PRES.buy newspaper give me
 ‘Please buy a newspaper for me!’
- d. Ní-dù ké university ídáháemì
 1SG-AUX in university now
 ‘I am in the university now.’

¹ Abbreviations: ADJ-adjective, ADV-adverb, AUX-auxiliary, CONJ-conjunction, DET-determiner, ES-extensional suffix, FUT-future tense, IMP-imperative, N-noun, NEG-negation, NP-noun phrase, PAST-past tense, PERF-perfective tense, PL-plural person, PRES-present tense, PROG-progressive tense, Q-Question, SC-subject concord, SG-singular person, and VP-verb phrase.

The words *church*, *plane*, *newspaper*, and *university* are formed by compounding in Efik as follows:

- (3) a. church → úfòk-ábàsì [house + God]
 b. plane → úbóm-ófùm [canoe + air]
 c. newspaper → bábrù-mbùk ñkpò-ntìbè [paper + news + something + happen]
 d. university → úfòk-ñwèd ñtà-ìfìòk [house + book + experts + knowledge]

Efik-English bilinguals prefer the English translation equivalent of these endocentric compound words in code-mixing basically for reasons of economy. These compound forms are often discussed in terms of semantic compositionality or what Katamba (1993) calls “semantic transparency”, that is, the meaning of the whole is predictable from the meaning of the parts. The use of the English equivalents of these compound words by the Efik-English bilinguals in their code-mixed utterance counts as an appropriate statement or reply, and makes explicit the amount of information that is required. In this way, code-mixing can be seen as an index of communicative competence.

Apart from having equivalent referents for individual lexical items, forms that can express certain ideas, notions, concepts or technical vocabularies can easily be transferred from English to Efik. Forms like *phoneme*, *morpheme*, *grapheme*, *syllable*, and *complimentary distribution* are difficult and complex conceptions whose equivalent expressions cannot readily be found in most African languages. They have to be borrowed to reflect their academic value. This kind of borrowing promotes code-mixing. Another factor that is responsible for language mixing among Efik-English bilinguals is education, which is closely linked with peer group influence. People code-mix in an attempt to make clear statements about their educational status. This is especially common among young people. They find it fashionable to code-mix in social interactions to show that they are beneficiaries of western influence and education. This feat is not entirely denied to the uneducated and under-educated. Essien (2000:8) has argued that even the uneducated or semi-educated code-mix in an effort to hide their ignorance or complex. They may not be fluent speakers of English but are conversant with a few English words which they interpose at intervals across Efik sentences.

Closely linked with education is the issue of a generational gap, which provides another motivation for code-mixing. From the data, it was observed that the up-coming generation mixes language more frequently than older people, especially those that are not so highly educated. The trend is seen as an emerging style of discourse in informal situations among youths who are inclined to societal influences, while the elder

generation's reaction to such influences tends to be more negative. The range of code-mixed language among young people varies from expressing politeness as in *Daddy émesiéréé* 'daddy good morning', giving a touch of affection, *Nyòm ndíkút darling mmi* 'I want to see my darling' or to expressing anger, *mmoñ deal yé àfò mfín* 'I will deal with you today.' The social context defines the extent to which code-mixing is achieved. This is because context determines language choice (Wardhaugh 1986).

The need to express one's identity may also inform the desire for code-mixing. This is particularly so when one is soliciting one kind of favour or another from the listener, thus injecting a personal note into a hitherto formal situation. One can also code-mix as a way of showing solidarity or identifying with a course of action, and preventing the "outsider" from knowing too much of what is going on (Robins 1989). This is usually achieved by speaking Efik into which a number of English words interspersed. Language mixing can also be used to achieve certain semantic effects. The meaning of some ambiguous words can clearly be distinguished in context by code-mixing. For instance, the word *ényóñ* has more than a single semantic interpretation in (4).

(4) Carpenter mmọ ké ényóñ

The construction in (4) has two possible interpretations. In one sense, the carpenter is upstairs, and in the other, the carpenter is on the roof. It is only when such a word is code-mixed that the meaning becomes explicit as in (5):

- (5) a. Carpenter mmọ ké roof
 Carpenter AUX on roof
 'The carpenter is on the roof.'
 b. Carpenter mmọ ké upstairs
 Carpenter AUX on upstairs
 'The carpenter is upstairs.'

Again the preposition *ke* in Efik can represent English 'on', 'at', 'in', 'to', and 'of' as in (6):

- (6) a. ké ényóñ ókpókóró
 on top table
 'on the table'
 b. ké ésìt úfọk-ńwèd
 at inside school
 'at the school compound'

- c. ké ínùá ésié
in mouth his/her
‘in his mouth’
- d. ñtõñ ké ñtõñ
ashes to ashes
‘ashes to ashes’
- e. óboñ ké Bakassi
king of Bakassi
‘the king of Bakassi’

The data show that one of the ways to make the meaning of *ke* clearer is through code-mixing, which defines the context of its application and usage.

People also code-mix as a way of avoiding verbal taboos. The Efik-English bilinguals generally prefer English-based slang in place of Efik taboo words and expressions.

- (7) a. Úfán órò é-nyènè ákámhá prick
friend DET 3SG-have big prick
‘The guy has a big penis.’
- b. Èkà ésié é-dì ídíok air-force
mother his 3SG-AUX bad air-force
‘His mother is a notorious witch.’
- c. Été órò é-nyènè úbøk-gum
man DET 3SG-have hand-gum
‘The man has a gummy hand.’ (lit. a thief)

The slang words *prick*, *air-force* and *gum* are highly euphemistic. Their respective equivalent forms *ékpóró*, *ífót* and *ínọ* would appear too direct and offensive in a normal social interaction. It is through language mixing that such impolite forms can be subtly dispensed with.

People also code-mix as a way of avoiding ideophones. These are words that are named from the sounds usually associated with such objects.

- (8) a. Nọ mí spoon (íkpañ ídáñ)
IMP.give me spoon
‘Give me a spoon!’

- b. Bọ tray émi (ákpáñ kpáñ)
 IMP.take tray DET
 ‘Take this tray!’
- c. Ó-mó-kút dove ókò? (mbómó nkùkù)
 2SG-PERF-see dove DET
 ‘Have you seen that dove?’

The picturesque nature of these ideophonic forms, which appear colourful and aesthetical, make them appear longer than the English equivalents, which are the preferred forms. Gramley (2001:221) summarizes the motivation for language mixing thus:

...it follows implicit rules and can be used to show solidarity and intimacy as well as emphasis. ...it is also used to express a meaning more effectively, to employ a language of a particular domain, or to evoke cultural associations. The switching or mixing of codes helps the speaker to establish identity, to embellish a point, to reflect confidentiality or privately.

From here, the study reveals that language mixing plays a vital role in the bilingual’s overall communication process and is an invaluable strategy for the comprehension of meaning. In the discussion that follows, we examine the morphology of code-mixing.

3. The morphology of code-mixing

The data show that Efik lexical elements and morphemes may be adapted morphologically to English in the code-mixed utterances of Efik-English bilinguals. The personal prefix (subject concord, SC) marker in Efik can be attached to English verbs to mark number and person:

- (9) a. Ndì ó-mó ó-conclude útóm órò.
 Q 2SG-PERF 2SG-conclude work DET
 ‘Have you finished the assignment?’
- b. Efiõñ é-register údómó ésiè
 Effiong 3SG-PERF.register exam his
 ‘Effiong has registered for his exams.’

- c. Àfò prepare ídáhámì.
 you PRES.prepare now
 ‘You must prepare now.’

The subject concord in (9a) and (9b), *o* and *é*, are sensitive to the environment of the verbs in the respective interrogative and declarative sentences. Apart from the SC, such verbs can also carry morphemes which mark grammatical categories such as tense, aspect, mood, and negation. We discover that there is vowel harmony between the vowel of the tense marker and that of the SC in (9a). The perfect tense marker in Efik is *-me*, but due to the influence of the preceding and following vowels, it changes to *-mo*. Phonologically, there is assimilation of the vowel of the SC and the vowel of the first syllable of the English verb in (9a) and (9b). The latter is the trigger of the assimilation and the former is the target. The imperative construction in (9c) is the only type of sentence that cannot carry subject concord with English verbs. There is compelling evidence to show that these SC prefixes are expressed phonologically. The first person singular morpheme /n-/ has three allomorphs which are /n-/, /m-/ and /ñ-/. The relationship between the three nasal consonants and the following English consonant in code-mixed utterances is phonologically conditioned.

- (10) a. Ñ-conclude dídié?
 1SG-conclude how
 ‘How do I conclude it?’
 b. M-plagiarise ké
 1SG-plagiarise NEG
 ‘I do not plagiarize.’
 c. Ñ-destroy kpúkprú?
 Q.1SG-destroy all
 ‘Should I destroy everything?’

The relationship among the allomorphs is phonetically motivated. The velar consonant in (10a) harmonizes with the English initial velar consonant of the verb root. The bilabial nasal is followed by a bilabial consonant in (10b) and the alveolar nasal agrees with an alveolar consonant in (10c). The homorganic nasal assimilation is realized the same way in code-mixed forms as in native monolingual forms. The only difference is that code-mixed utterances accept non-existing clusters like [mp] in (10b), which the phonotactic rules of Efik do not recognise. Syntactically, the nasal consonants function as the subjects of the verbs. Conversely, it is discovered that the extensional suffixes, which are usually attached to verbs in Efik, are lost if the English

verb is used in code-mixing:

- (11) a. Dɪb-bé ɔfɔn
 hide-ES well
 ‘Hide (yourself) well!’
 b. Kɔñ-ñɔ ñkwâ
 put.on-ES necklace
 ‘Put on (your) necklace!’
 c. Sín-né ɔfɔñ
 wear-ES clothes
 ‘Wear (your) clothes!’

- (12) a. Hide ɔfɔn
 hide well
 ‘Hide well!’
 b. Put on ñkwâ fò
 put on chain your
 ‘Put on your chain!’
 c. Wear ɔfɔñ fò
 wear clothes your
 ‘Wear your clothes!’

In (11), *dɪb* ‘hide’, *kɔñ* ‘hang’, and *sín* ‘put’ are the roots of the verbs in (11a), (11b) and (11c) respectively. In Efik, the extensional suffixes perform the function of a reflexive pronoun. They emphasize that an action is performed by the subject or agent in question, and often make use of the self. However, these suffixes are not applicable to the English verbs in the code-mixed utterances in (12a-c). To predict the allomorph that is selected in each case in (11), rules like (12d) and (12e) are required:

- (12) d. select [-bv] before a labial consonant
 e. select [-nv] before an alveolar consonant

The data also showed that English verbs do not undergo any form of inflection for tense or aspect when they are code-mixed in Efik utterances. In (9a-c) for instance, we have seen that the past tense form of the English verbs marked by the suffix *-ed* are detached from the verb. This is as a consequence of the presence of the SC with the verb. In a typical code-mixed utterance, singular nouns in English are correspondingly plural formations in Efik:

- (13) a. Kpúkprú members é-yé-dí
 every members 3PL-FUT-come
 ‘Every member will come.’
 b. Kpúkprú lecturers é-dì úkém
 every lecturer PRES-AUX same
 ‘Every lecturer is the same.’

The reason for this structural difference is that while in English the determiner *every* modifies only singular countable nouns, its corresponding equivalent in Efik *kpúkprú* ‘every’ is usually followed by plural countable nouns. Code-mixing helps to highlight this kind of differences.

Derivational processes change the category of words from one class to another. In Efik, nominalization is a dominant derivational process, where verbs, adverbs and adjectives can be changed to nouns or nominal elements. In the code-mixed utterances of Efik-English bilinguals, the nouns formed by nominalization within the VP, which function as the complements of the verbs, are mostly affected by the phenomenon:

- (14) a. Bèrì the ladder nọ mí
 IMP.lean the ladder give me
 ‘Position the ladder for me!’
 b. Kọbì the prisoner
 IMP.lock the prisoner
 ‘Detain the prisoner!’
 c. Brê the game ọfọn
 IMP.play the game well
 ‘Play the game well!’

- (15) a. Bèrì ébérí nọ mì
 IMP.lean ladder give me
 ‘Position the ladder for me!’
 b. Kọbì ñkpọkọbí
 IMP.lock prisoner
 ‘Detain the prisoner!’
 c. Brê mbrê ọfọn
 IMP.play game well
 ‘Play the game well!’

In the analysis that follows, we examine the syntax of code-mixing from the

dimension of Efik-English.

4. The syntax of code-mixing

In our study of Efik-English bilinguals, we noted from the data that every constituent of the sentence; subject, verb, object, complement, determiner, modifier and adjunct are affected by code-mixing. There is no clear-cut or systematic principle on which a particular item code-mixes in any given communication situation. In other words, the application of any language item within the structure is arbitrary, though rule-governed. In the discussion that follows, we examine how some of these constituents of the sentence are employed in code-mixing. In the structure of a simple sentence in Efik, which has the SVO pattern, the definite article *the* is used to modify a noun, which functions as the complement of the verb:

- (16) a. Àmì ñ-kot-ké the nwed
 I 1SG-read-NEG the book
 ‘I do not read the book.’
 b. Ényé í-má-há the moto
 s/he 3SG-love-NEG the car
 ‘S/he does not like the car.’
 c. Etim ó-kút the ébuá
 Etim 3SG-see the dog
 ‘Etim has seen the dog.’

The definite article precedes the noun within the object NP. The entire object NP can undergo code-mixing where we have (16) as (17):

- (17) a. Àmì ñ-kot-ké the book
 I 1SG-read-NEG the book
 ‘I do not read the book.’
 b. Ényé í-má-há the car
 s/he 3SG-love-NEG the car
 ‘S/he does not like the car.’
 c. Etim ó-kút the dog
 Etim 3SG-see the dog
 ‘Etim has seen the dog.’

However, it is not possible to have the Efik equivalent of the definite article, *órò*

‘the’ in a code-mixed utterance when the accompanying noun is in English (or Efik):

- (18) a. *Àmì ñ-kot-ké book órò
 I 1SG-read-NEG book DET
 ‘I do not read the book.’
 b. *Ényé í-má-há car órò
 s/he 3SG-love-NEG car DET
 ‘S/he does not like the car.’
 c. *Etim ó-kút dog órò
 Etim 3SG-see dog DET
 ‘Etim has seen the dog.’

From here, we see that the definite article follows the head noun in Efik while it precedes the English head noun. This evidence shows that there is a parametric variation in the order of noun and determiner in English and Efik (while English is D-N order, Efik is N-D order). This also reveals that word order is relevant in code-mixing. The impression here is that code-mixed utterances involving the use of the English indefinite article generally follows the rules in English. The indefinite article *a* or *an* does not exist in Efik. It can only be used contextually with the form *kiét* ‘one’ or *ndómókiét* ‘any’. The only difference is that while the former is used with affirmative sentences, the latter can only be used with negative sentences:

- (19) a. Àmì ñ-kot-ké ñwéd ndómókiét
 I 1SG-see-NEG book any
 ‘I have not seen a book.’
 b. Àmì m-mó-kút ñwéd kiét
 I 1SG-PERF-see book one
 ‘I have seen a book.’
- (20) a. Ényé í-má-há mótò ndómókiét
 s/he 3SG-love-NEG car any
 ‘S/he does not like a car.’
 b. Ényé á-má mótò kiét
 s/he 3SG-love car one
 ‘S/he likes a car.’

- (21) a. Etim í-kú(t)-wé ébuá ndómókiét
 Etim 3SG-see-NEG dog any
 ‘Etim has not seen a dog.’
 b. Etim ó-kút ébuá kiét
 Etim 3SG-see dog one
 ‘Etim has seen a dog.’

The absence of a direct equivalent of the indefinite article accounts for the reason why it is not code-mixed in the utterance of Efik-English bilinguals.

In examining the structure of NP in the code-mixed speech of Efik-English bilinguals, the data show that the head of the phrase is borrowed from the guest language. It may take the initial, final or medial position in its relationship with other constituents of the NP:

- (22) a. pastor nnyìn yè útóm ésié
 pastor our and work his
 ‘our pastor and his work’
 b. ákámhá table été mì
 big table father my
 ‘my father’s big table’
 c. ékprí édíyê angel
 small pretty angel
 ‘a small pretty angel’

In (22a), the structure involves NP co-ordination where the N *pastor* is the overall head of the phrase. There are two NPs within the structure which are separated by the conjunction *ye* ‘and’. This is a case of head first position of subject NP, where the overall head is post modified, unlike its English equivalent, where the head is premodified by the determiner. Our investigation reveals that the Efik-English bilinguals prefer the form *pastor* (English) instead of *okworo-ikọ* (Efik) for reasons of economy.

In (22b), the head of the NP, *table*, occurs within the phrase. It is premodified by an adjective and complemented by nominal elements. In this way, the head of the phrase is found in the central position in its relationship with other constituents of the phrase, whereas in (22c), the head of the phrase *angel* is preceded by two attributive adjectives which modify it. Here, it is clearly evident that the head of a NP can occur finally within the phrase. The motivation for language mixing involving the form *angel* here is that it does not have an equivalent referent in Efik.

Apart from the fact that English verbs interspersed in Efik sentences during code-mixing can take tense, concord, aspect, number, and person allomorphs, they can also take negative allomorphs in the language:

- (23) a. Kû-gossip ówó
 NEG-gossip person
 ‘Don’t gossip someone!’
- b. Ñ-gossip-ké ówó
 1SG-PROG.gossip-NEG person
 ‘I am not gossiping someone.’
- (24) a. Kû-discuss ñkpọ ndómókiét
 NEG-discuss something any
 ‘Don’t discuss anything!’
- b. Ñ-discuss-ké ñkpọ ndómókiét
 1SG-PROG.discuss-NEG something any
 ‘I am not discussing anything.’

In (23a) and (24a), the examples show that the verbs *gossip* and *discuss* respectively carry the prefixal negative marker allomorph *kû-*, which is applicable only in imperative constructions. They do not carry overt subjects. In (23b) and (24b), the verbs can also take the suffixal negative allomorph *-ké*, which is used to negate simple declarative and interrogative sentences in Efik. However, we note that the *-hx* negative allomorph, which is also suffixal, is not used in code-mixed utterances. An examination of the phenomenon of Negation in Efik (Mensah 2001) reveals that those involving suffixation are motivated by the syllable structure of the language. The *-ké* NEG allomorph is used with any form of a verb with more than one syllable, while the *-hx* NEG allomorph is only applicable to verbs with a single syllable. We however, discovered that whenever an English verb is code-mixed in a negative construction involving what ought to be a NEG suffix marker in Efik, it carries the *-ke* allomorph irrespective of the syllable pattern of the English verb, in violation of the principle of NEG in Efik. The single syllable verbs in English take the *-ké* allomorph in NEG:

- (25) a. Ñ-come-ké
 1SG-PROG.come-NEG
 ‘I am not coming.’

- b. Ñ-go-ké
 1SG-PROG.go-NEG
 ‘I am not going.’
- c. Ñ-chew-ké
 1SG-PROG.chew-NEG
 ‘I am not chewing.’

In Efik, where the structures are not code-mixed, the verbs in (25) will take the *-hx* NEG suffix, since they are single syllable verbs as in (26):

- (26) a. Ñ-dí-hé
 1SG-PROG.come-NEG
 ‘I am not coming.’
- b. Ñ-ká-há
 1SG-PROG.go-NEG
 ‘I am not going.’
- c. Ñ-tá-há
 1SG-PROG.chew-NEG
 ‘I am not chewing.’

In ergative constructions involving code-mixing, we discover that the verb and the definite article of the object complement are mostly affected:

- (27) a. Umo é-break the úsán
 Umo 3SG-PRES.break the plate
 ‘Umo breaks the plate.’
- b. The úsán ó-bómmó
 the plate 3SG-PAST.break
 ‘The plate is broken.’
- (28) a. Etim á-scatter the ñkwáitiát
 Etim 3SG-PRES.scatter the gravel
 ‘Etim scatters the gravel.’
- b. The ñkwáitiát á-suánná
 the gravel 3SG-PAST.scatter
 ‘The gravels have scattered.’

In (27a) and (28a), the forms, *break* and *scatter* are the verbs of the respective

sentences. The subject or external argument of the verb initiates the action identified by the verb. The object complement or the internal argument of the verb assumes the subject position in (27b) and (28b) respectively. We discover that the verbs *break* and *scatter* carry subject prefixes, which is a requirement of the syntax of the Efik language. Umo and Etim are the emphasized subjects while *e-* and *a-* are the unemphasized subjects (Kari 2003). The implication is that the structures in (27a) and (28a) can still be meaningful without the emphasized subjects, if the listener has a pragmatic knowledge of them, but not vice-versa.

However, the verbs in (27b) and (28b) are realized by derivatives. The roots of the verbs are *bóm* ‘break’ and *súán* ‘scatter’ respectively. According to Essien (1983), the suffixes attached to such verbs do not perform the function of an agent, but merely indicate the absence of explicit agents, and occur with verbs that can take ergative nominal, and nominative nominal, with the ergative nominal acting as the subject of the sentence. In code-mixed utterances of Efik-English bilinguals, the verb and the definite article of the object complement are affected. There is the movement of the object complement NP to assume the subject position involving ergativity; the verb is no longer affected by language mixing.

In relative clause constructions, it is discovered that verbs are mostly the constituents that are code-mixed in the utterances of Efik-English bilinguals:

- (29) a. Émì édi ndìto é-ké-bully-dé Bassey
 these AUX children 3PL-who.PAST-bully-ES Bassey
 ‘These are the children who bullied Bassey.’
- b. M-mòdiño éte órò é-ké-preach-dé mfín
 1SG-PRES.know man DET 3SG-who.PAST-preach-ES today
 ‘I know the man who preached today.’
- c. Émì édi éyén é-ké-win-dé mbúbá órò
 this AUX child 3SG-who.PAST-win-ES competition DET
 ‘This is the child who won the competition.’

Relativization is achieved in code-mixing by the suffixation of the form *-dé* and the attachment of the subject prefix to the verb. The *-dé* suffix has been said to be an extant form (Urua 1990), and grossly unproductive in synchronic Efik morphology. It is a verbal derivative or extentional suffix, which is underlyingly toneless in the lexicon, and only acquires later the tone of the adjacent syllable. The *ké-* prefix functions as a past tense marker. The attachment of these allomorphs to the verb is a direct transfer from what is obtained in a monolingual’s utterance in Efik. For instance, the relationship between the verbs and morphemes is expressed in (30):

- (30) a. e-ké-miá-dé
 3PL-PAST-bully-ES
 ‘who bullied’
- b. e-ké-kwọ̀ọ̀-dé (íkọ̀)
 3SG-PAST-preach-ES
 ‘who preached’
- c. á-ká-kán-dé
 3SG-PAST-win-ES
 ‘who won’

In (30), the roots of the respective verbs are *mia* ‘bully’, *kworo* ‘preach’ and *kan* ‘win’. Note the change in the SC from *e-* in (29c), where the root verb is in English, to *a-* in (30c), where the root verb is in Efik. This is due to the harmony between the vowel of the tense marker and that of the root verb with the SC.

5. The implications of code-mixing

At the neurolinguistic and psycholinguistic levels, code-mixing offers useful insights in understanding the mechanism which underlies the processing of meaning from two linguistic codes. Ahukanna (1990) maintains that code-mixing serves as a springboard for the formulation of theories and hypotheses about the representation of two languages in the brain. Bilingual development has the same cognitive mechanism as monolingual development (Goodluck 1991 and Hoffman 1991). Two opposing views are associated with language development: Skinner’s behavioural or mechanical theory and Chomsky’s mentalistic or cognitive theory. The former argues that children learn language through stimulus-response association by imitating the speech of adults and acquiring the same through practice and reinforcement (Yule 1998). The opposing viewpoint claims that every normal human infant has a mechanism called universal grammar, which activates automatically for the child to acquire language. This later position is a more potent and natural theory of language development. Finch (2000:21) argues that “grammatical knowledge...is a mental property, that is, it represents the way in which our minds work.” Hoffman (1991:104-105) submits that “the older bilingual child and adult bilingual are credited with possessing two different language systems, which they can keep apart; they can switch from one to the other, and they can show code-mixes.” The cognitive competence of the bilingual varies in the two languages especially for the adult.

Another psycholinguistic implication of code-mixing is that it is basically an unconscious process. Gumperz (1982:59) maintains that “participants immersed in the

interaction itself are quite unaware which code is used at any one time.” Crystal (1987:363) also argues that

The phenomenon is evidently a complex and subtle one, with speakers usually being totally unaware of the extent to which they have been switching (*or mixing*) in a conversation. If interrupted, they may even be unable to say which language they were using in their last sentence.

It is observed from the data that code-mixing can only occur if the language of discourse is an indigenous language (in our case, Efik). This is when the mixing originates subconsciously or unconsciously. However, the Efik-English bilingual is conscious of his innate capacity if the language of discourse is English.

To the sociolinguist, code-mixing provides veritable raw materials to investigate how socio-cultural rules and socio-pragmatic knowledge can be simultaneously acquired in the two codes with the goal of achieving appropriate language use within the social milieu.

Some schools of thought and many custodians of indigenous languages or purists argue that language mixing is a negative influence on the host language. It is said to be a mark of imperfect linguistic knowledge. Hoffmann (1991) argues that some bilinguals often view code-mixing as a form of linguistic impurity or a sign of laziness. Crystal (1987:363) also maintains that “monolinguals often dismiss or satirize language switching, using such pejorative labels as ‘Franglais’, ‘Spanglish’ or ‘Tex-Mex’....” Ahukanna (1990:175) confirms these views:

...against the background of campaigns and government policies to develop Nigerian languages with the long-term objective of finding a nationally acceptable official language; the practice of code-mixing is viewed in certain quarters as linguistic sabotage directed against indigenous languages.

He goes further to reaffirm that code-mixing could lead to the pidginization of Nigerian indigenous languages. We, however, see code-mixing from a different perspective. It aims at achieving consistent and achievable meaning to make the message easily understood. Code-mixing has come to remain with us given the overbearing influence of westernization and globalization. The majority of younger Efik generations cannot construct simple recognizable Efik sentences without incorporating English words.

When the frontiers of human activities are daily increasing but there is no commensurate expansion of the vocabulary to accommodate new innovations,

inventions, and ideas, the need for code-mixing would be over-riding. We also see no serious threat language mixing poses to any language because it is mostly used in informal settings. If a language is expressed or appreciated in writing or the written form, it still maintains its purity, standards, and linguistic excellence. We do not subscribe to the view that code-mixing is an expression of lack of knowledge of a language. Zentella (1981:223) argues that code-mixing is not a sign of lack of fluency; rather, "...it is a part of the full linguistic repertoire of fluent bilinguals and is predominantly directed at in-group members only." Gramley (2001) maintains that it is a firm part of proficient bilingualism. We see the phenomenon as a trend, a form of transition, which a language naturally undergoes. Language is dynamic; hence, it is subject to change and growth. We should therefore, see code-mixing as an index of growth and enrichment or what Mensah (2004) calls "linguistic revivalism and expansionism".

To the language planner, code-mixing poses a great challenge. It is either to be jettisoned or accommodated. In favour of the argument to discountenance code-mixing, Ahukanna (1990:185) submits as follows:

If there is no conscious and vigorous effort in language use to stem the tide of unidirectional code-mixing which favours English to the detriment of the mother tongue, a linguistic situation may be reached which may result either in the pidginization of the mother tongue or its complete elimination by the dominant English language.

He therefore recommends the modernization, standardization, and production of textbooks and literature as well as making the teaching and learning of indigenous languages compulsory in primary and post-primary schools. However, even if these developmental indices are put in place for the mother tongue or indigenous language, the phenomenon of code-mixing cannot be dispensed with. This is because the phenomenon does not bring about competition but complementation of the two languages involved.

Language mixing is a way of reinforcing borrowing as a natural means of enhancing the internal resourcefulness of a language. In Efik for instance, English words such as *computer*, *paw-paw*, *mango*, *soldier*, *zinc*, *paper*, *tumbler* and so on, have gained currency into the lexicon of Efik. What we now see is the orthographic alteration of the spelling system, which is adapted to align with the phonology of the Efik language. Therefore, in developing metalanguage for an indigenous language, its vocabulary has to be modernized to enable technical terms from scientific inventions and technological innovations to be translated in a consistent way, and certain

principles agreed on for the introduction of these new terms and concepts.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, we examined the morphosyntactic dimension of code-mixing, using the Efik-English bilinguals for our case study. We discussed the motivations and justifications for language mixing and analysed aspects of the morphology and syntax of this speech behaviour. We considered some of the implications of language mixing to psycholinguistic, neurolinguistic and sociolinguistic research. We also examined the significance of this sociolinguistic behaviour to language planning and maintenance, considering the influence of globalization and the threat posed by westernization. The phenomenon of code-mixing is rule-governed, and the choice of elements affected by code-mixing is arbitrary. It follows the rules of either language depending on which constituent of the sentence is code-mixed. We do not view language mixing as a negative influence on the indigenous language (in our case Efik), due to the dominance of English, as it is widely postulated (Ahukanna 1990), rather; it is becoming an invincible trend in the speech behaviour of bilinguals. It can help to build up the vocabulary of the indigenous language to enable it develop to meet the demands placed upon it as a means of wider communication.

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[Received 20 February 2010; revised 19 May 2010; accepted 30 June 2010]

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語碼混用的構詞句法：埃菲克語—英語的觀點

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語碼混用是語言接觸後的產物。在社會文化的規範內外，這都是雙語的使用者不可或缺的溝通策略。這樣的結果來自於兩種在結構及規則系統上一定會有所重疊的語言。在本篇文章，我們以埃菲克語—英語的雙語人士為例，檢視了這個社會語言現象的構詞句法層面。我們討論語碼混用做為一個語言行為背後的語言基礎，並推斷雖然語言混用似乎反映了共同經驗、強調說話者的投入（或語氣）及想要被完全了解的渴望，但是這樣的行為也形成複雜的結構，而這樣的結構並沒有表現在雙語人士的意識中。

關鍵詞：語碼混用/轉換、構詞、句法、社會語言學、埃菲克語、英語