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ROLE OF CODE-SWITCHING IN TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SELECTED SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BOTSWANA

by

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DEDICATION

This piece of work is dedicated to my late father Royal Seitsiwe Mathula, the man who shaped my life and instilled in me the value of education.

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Embarking on a Ph. D is no easy task, and one would not know it until you find yourself swimming through the deep and dark waters in search of new knowledge. However, the main source of hope is one's supervisor who acts as the 'life-saver' through the long and arduous journey. Professor Vic N. Webb of the Department of Afrikaans' Centre for Research in the Politics of Language was my 'life-saver' and my immense gratitude goes to him. He guided me from the research proposal stage until the finalization of this thesis. His constructive criticism taught me how to apply my mind fully and to develop scholarly analysis that enabled me to critically interrogate my data in order to arrive at the conclusions of this thesis. Without his guidance, encouragement and advice I would not have been able to produce this piece of work. His professional assistance ensured that I remained focused on my goal.

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you do not have to be a blood relative to be of such immense assistance. They have proven that sometimes 'water may be thicker than blood'.

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SUMMARY

This qual-quan case study investigated the role of code-switching (CS) in education in four senior secondary schools in Botswana. CS is a communicative strategy used in many places, including Botswana, during formal and informal social occasions. CS also occurs in education; however, its occurrence i**s** viewed as a somewhat problematical phenomenon – that it signals the speaker's lack of proficiency in the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT). The study also investigated if CS in the classroom contravenes the country's Language-in-Education Policy (LiEP), which states that English is the medium of instruction throughout the education system (Botswana Government White Paper No.2 of 1994).

The study found that CS occurrence in teaching and learning has positive and negative educational effects. However, its use has adverse implications for the LiEP of Botswana. Consequently, recommendations are made on the effective use of CS and on the revision of the LiEP.

The study is divided into nine chapters. Chapter One is the introduction and covers: Botswana's language situation, including the status of English generally and in education in particular, the statement and analysis of the problem, research questions and the importance of the study.

Chapter Two gives a comprehensive review of the literature on CS generally and CS in education in particular. The key words are: code-switching, code-mixing, borrowing, nonce-borrowing and re-borrowing / double-plural. Botswana's LiEP is also discussed with respect to language planning, education and educational development.

Chapter Three discusses the research design and the data-collection methods. These include: the research sites, sample selection and sampling procedures, data-collection instruments and their administration, and the independent and dependent variables used in data-collection. The importance of pre-testing the research instruments, ethical aspects observed and problems encountered during the data-collection stage are also highlighted. The role of the University of Pretoria's Statistics Department is also

explained. Hymes' mnemonic of SPEAKING used in the analysis of the qualitative data is also described.

Chapter Four presents the quantitative analysis of the respondents' demographic details, and highlighting the differences and similarities identified.

Chapters Five and Six present the results from the quantitative analysis of the teachers' and learners' data. The former presents the teachers' evaluation of the learners' language proficiency in class; the latter presents the learners' subjective self-evaluation of their own English proficiency and their evaluation of teachers' proficiency in English. Furthermore, both chapters respectively present the teachers and learners' views on the role of English, Setswana and other indigenous languages in education as LoLT, and their attitude towards CS in education. The significance or the non-significance of the analyzed results is also presented.

Chapter Seven presents the results from the qualitative analysis of the data (through the application of Hymes' mnemonic of SPEAKING) obtained through lesson observations.

Chapter Eight deals with the interpretation and discussion of the results through answering the main research questions.

Chapter Nine presents the study's summary, conclusions and recommendations on CS in the classroom and on Botswana's LiEP. The study's limitations and implications for further research are also discussed.

KEY TERMS

Code-switching

Intra-sentential code-switching

Inter-sentential code-switching

Tag-like / emblematic code-switching

Code-mixing

Nonce borrowing

Borrowing proper

Re-borrowing

Language shift

Language planning

Language policy

Language in education policy

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AG: Agree

A: Always

B: Boys

BG: Boys and Girls

Bio: Biology

C: Class

C/mates: Classmates

DA: Disagree

Eng: English

ES: English and Setswana

Exam: Examination

F: Female

F and F: Fashion and Fabric

Flu: Fluent

Frq: Frequency

G: Girls

HA: High Ability

HE: Home Economics

Hist: History

HL: Home Language

Ika: Ikalanga

Imp: Important

LA: Low Ability

L and L: Language and Literature

Lit: Little

Ln 1: Leaner One

Ln 2: Learner Two

M: Male

MA: Medium Ability

MF: Missing frequency

Mod. Flu: Moderately Fluent

Naa: Not at all

Not Imp: Not Important

NW: Not that Well

NS: Not Sure

Nv: Never

Ques: Question

RQ: Research Question

S: Sometimes

Sets: Setswana

S/mates: Schoolmates

T: Total (within tables)

T: Teacher (within transcriptions)

V Imp: Very Important

VW: Very Well

VM: Very Much

W: Well

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BICS: Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills

BGCSE: Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education

CALP: Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

CM: Code-mixing (noun / verb)

CS: Code-switching (noun / verb)

EL: Embedded Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

F 4: Form Four

F 5: Form Five

HFFC: High Function Formal Context

HFIC: High Function Informal Context

HFLFC: High Function Less Formal Context

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

LP: Language Planning

LPP: Language Planning and Policy

LiEP: Language in Education Policy

LiCCA: Language in contact and conflict in Africa

LFFC: Low Function Formal Context

LFIC: Low Function Informal Context

LoI: Language of Instruction

LoLT: Language of Learning and Teaching

LWC: Language of Wider Communication

ML: Matrix Language

MLF: Matrix Language Frame

MLP: Matrix Language Principle

MoE: Ministry of Education

MT: Mother Tongue

MTBE: Mother Tongue-Based Education

MTBBE: Mother Tongue-Based Bilingual Education

N: Nominal value

NCE: National Commission on Education

NCE 1: National Commission on Education (No. 1)

NCE 2: National Commission on Education (No. 2)

PanSALB: Pan South African Language Board

PSLE: Primary School Leaving Examinations

Qual-Quan: Qualitative-Quantitative analysis

ROS: Rights and Obligations Set

S 1: School One

S 2: School Two

S 3: School Three

S 4: School Four

SAALT: South African Association for Language Teachers

ToR: Terms of Reference

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

The following symbols were used in the transcriptions of lessons (and also in the extracts reproduced in the text) based on Arthur's conventions (2001, 59):

Te= teacher

Ln= learner

Lns= Learners in chorus

C= class

( ) indicate unclear speech

[BLOCK CAPITALS] indicate comment on an act taking place during the lesson

{ } indicate overlapping speech

Learners' names have been deleted from the transcriptions

Normal sentence punctuation has been used as far as possible, for easy readability of the transcriptions to lay readers.

Commas have been used to indicate normal pauses in the speech; but long pauses or hesitations have been indicated with three full stops (…) or by word [silence]

Plain font has been used in the reproduction of the transcriptions in English in a lesson delivered in English and Setswana in a lesson delivered in Setswana.

Bold represents Setswana *code-switching* in an English text and English *code-switching* in a Setswana text.

Italics represent translations of Setswana into English.

Code-switching texts in English in a Setswana lesson are not translated into Setswana

There are no direct translations for the following frequently used Setswana tags, but are literally used to mean:

- 'Ga kere': 'you agree with me' or 'it is so'
- 'A re a utlwana' : do we understand each other
- 'A re mmogo' : are we together
- 'ke a utlwala sentle' : Am I well-understood
- 'mma' : polite form of address for females meaning 'madam'
- 'rra' : polite form of address for males meaning 'sir'
- 'ee' : short response meaning 'yes'
- 'nnyaa' : short response meaning 'no'
- 'eemm.' contracted form of 'ee mma'

- ‘eerr.’ contracted form of ‘ee rra’
- ‘ee?’ used in the form of a question to solicit a response or to check if the learners agree with the teacher
- ‘mm?’ used to check if learners are following what the teacher is saying
- ‘heh?’ used to imply that one has not understood or to check if the learners are following what the teacher is saying; meaning depends on contextual use.
- ‘aammh’ used to provide a pause in the speech as the speaker still figures out what word to use or what to say.