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Patterns of Codeswitching in Mixed Yoruba-English Interrogative Sentences*

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This paper investigates the division of labour[1] operative in naturally occurring bilingual discourse. It attempts to establish the grammar of intersentential codeswitching (ISC) in mixed Yoruba-English interrogative sentences. The paper seeks to find out what constitutes the asymmetry between the participating languages (Yoruba and English), as they supply important grammatical structures in order to produce a well-formed mixed Yoruba-English interrogative sentences. Asymmetry in the division of labour is

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[1] This social science term was borrowed from Myers'-Scotton (2009: 81) To us, this metaphor beautifully describes what operates in codeswitching when two languages are used in a discourse to supply the morpho-syntactic structure.

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observed in two ways: first between the type of morpheme involved in the switch (content or system morpheme, depending on whether they assign/receive thematic roles or they do not), and second, how the morphemes are assigned roles and this depends on which language is the Matrix Language (ML) and which is the Embedded Language (EL). The paper observes that in Yoruba-English bilingual speech, when uniformity of structure is juxtaposed with asymmetry, structures of the ML are preferred according to the MLF principles (Myers-Scotton 1993; and Myers-Scotton 2011). The paper argues that even in this not-so-much investigated area of codeswitching in mixed Yoruba-English sentences, in the code switching structure, the ML is invariably Yoruba and as a consequence determines the permissible and non-permissible combinations for well-formed structures, contrary to what some scholars have claimed.

Key words: *codeswitching, codemixing, interrogative sentences, Yoruba-English, Matrix Language Frame, inter-sentential codeswitching, intrasentential codeswitching, asymmetry, thematic roles, borrowing*

Introduction

Languages in contact consequently influence each other. Such influence is felt in a number of ways; one is borrowing and another is codeswitching (CS). Borrowing is usually restricted to vocabulary or lexical items. Even so, the distinction between borrowing and codeswitching, no matter how thin, should be established. Field (2002: 3) says, "*The term borrowing will be used primarily to refer to the integration of forms into a recipient language"*. In his study on borrowing or loanwords into Igbo language from English language, Eze (1998) makes an interesting observation. Using loanwords as a synonym for borrowing, he says:

> Loanwords are distributed among syntactic slots in the same way as native words. Codeswitches, on the other hand, follow their counterparts in their language of origin. This incontrovertibly demonstrates not only that the two manifestations of language contact are different, but that with appropriate data and methodology such as the variationist framework affords us, the two phenomena can be consistently and crucially distinguished.

Owino (2003: 26), quoting Crystal (1987) explains that borrowing involves introducing a word or other linguistic feature from one language to the other. Loanwords, he says, are vocabulary borrowings which fill '*a semantic or stylistic slot not occupied by a native word'*. Loanwords or borrowing relates to lexical items which help native words fulfill certain semantic or stylistic roles. Whereas loanwords are either fully integrated into the recipient language as part of it and used by its speakers as one of the vocabulary item, with some speakers not even recognizing the item as a loan, or newly borrowed lexical items which serve certain linguistic purpose in discourse; CS is far broader, as it encompasses both lexis and, grammar or syntax.

According to Poplack (1980), CS follows a set of grammatical rules of the languages of interaction, and any departure from them makes the sentence unacceptable. CS is a process where the initiator of speech or the speaker switches from one code or language to another as conditioned by the situation, audience or subject matter (Essien. O .1995).

Field (2002: 184,185) describes codeswitching this way:

> Code-switching involves running syntactic analyses. In production, it involves the establishment of entry and exit points in the linear speech stream, so-called switch points at which the language not in use is deactivated to an extent. These analyses mark syntactic boundaries between phrasal and/or clausal constituents of two separate language systems…code-switching entails the identification and construction of phrasal and clausal frames whose individual (or collocations of) constituents may originate in either language…Occasionally, these frames may appear to be mixed, consisting of elements of both an embedded and matrix (or base) language.

CS and codemixing(CM) have at times been distinguished. Essien (199 5:272) defines CM *"as a language phenomenon in which two codes or languages are used for the same message or communication."* Singh (1985:34) employs the term CS for intra-sentential switching and reserves the term CM for any diglossic situation where only one language is activated at a time, or situations where the code alternation points to

structurally identifiable stages or episodes of a speech event. Poplack (1980) goes a step further to outline three major types of CS:

i. *Tag-switching* which involves the insertion of a tag in one language into the grammatical frame of another language.
ii. *Intersentential switching* which occurs at a clause or sentence boundary, where each clause or sentence is in one language or another.
iii. *Intrasentential switching* which involves switching which occurs within the clause or sentence

A closer look at Poplack's typology shows that only two types of CS really exists, inter-sentential CS and intra-sentential (CS). For example, Poplack's tag-switching is a type of intra-sentential CS since it involves lexical insertion. More explanation is provided later in this paper on inter-sentential and intra-sentential CS types.

Bokamba (1989), cited in Amuda (2006:91) distinguishes between codeswitching and codemixing thus:

> Code-switching is the mixing of words, phrases and sentences from two distinct grammatical (sub) systems across sentence boundaries within the same speech event… code-mixing is the embedding of various linguistic units such as affixes (bound morphemes), words (unbound morphemes), phrases and clauses from a co-operative activity where the participants, in order to infer what is intended, must reconcile what they hear with what they understand.

To see the point of Bokamba, consider the examples below. They illustrate how CM has been explained. The examples contain language mixing between Ibibio and English, Igbo and English and Yoruba and English[2].

[2] Yoruba belongs to the Kwa family of the Niger-Congo phylum in West Africa. It is one of the three major indigenous languages spoken in Nigeria; the other two are Igbo and Hausa. Ibibio is a minority language in Nigeria.

1. Ǹkpọ odo aya***affect*** anye ***permanently***
The thing will affect him/her permanently
2. Amam onye iwu ***very well***
I know you very well (Essien, 1995: 272)
3. Moti ***consider*** gbogbo ***circumstances*** (Essien, 1995: 272)

In the examples above, (1) is Ibibio-English codemixing in which the words ***affected*** and ***permanently*** are inserted into the grammatical frame of Ibibio, the host language. Note that each is a single lexical insert. Example (2), with phrasal insert, is Igbo-English codeswitching. Unlike (1), the inserted phrasal item, ***very well,*** is an adverbial phrase,. Example (3) is a case of Yoruba-English codemixing, comprising single lexical inserts, ***consider*** and **circumstances**; such is the view of some scholars on codemixing. Muysken (2008:253) calls codemixing insertion. Apple & Muysken (2005:118) call codemixing '*intra-sentential switches'*. Therefore, Myers-Scotton (2009:81) defines codeswitching thus:

> code-switching refers to two distinctly different languages in the pattern described as "classic code-switching". Such switching is defined as the use of two linguistic varieties in one clause, but with all of the morpho-syntactic structure that provides the frame for the clause coming from one variety only.

Myers-Scotton sees no distinctions between CS and CM. She however distinguishes between types of CS: intra-sentential CS and inter-sentential CS. We provide example of intra-sentential switching between Spanish and English in (4) below, taken from Myers-Scotton (2006:240):

4. Porque son **two fans**, el le cambio los **fans**
because be two fans he it changed the fans
'Because there are two fans, he changed the fans.'

This example is not different from (1) to (3) above. Myers-Scotton (2006) explains that (4) above is an example of a specific type of **intra-sentential switching,** which is, **intra-clause switching**. This indicates that the two

usages are a form of hyponyms in which the higher (intra-sentential switching) subsumes the lower (intra-clause switching). Besides, inter-sentential switching could be between two clauses in the same sentence. Thus example (4) includes two clauses; each showing intra-clause switching, that is, *el le cambio los **fans*** 'he changed the fans'. None of the switching is found between two clauses. The clause in (4) where the single lexical item '***fans***' is inserted into Spanish grammatical frame, is an independent clause showing codeswitching within the clause; it includes elements from both Spanish and English. Intra-sentential codeswitching is what Myers-Scotton has called *classic codeswitching*.

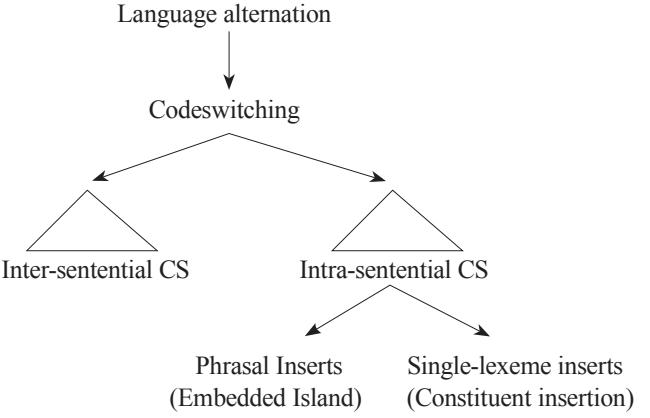
Inter-sentential CS involves two full sentences and it could be switching between two clauses in the same sentences. In (5) below is an example of Korean-English inter-sentential codeswitching taken from (Chung 2996: 302), a conversation between family members:

5. Father: *U-seo jaranik'a.* (I told you to go to sleep.) Go to bed. *Grundae* (By the way), homework-*un da hat-ni*? (Are you done with your homework?) (hugging his daughter) I love you, *Sarang* [the daughter's Korean name]. (facing to me) *Dangsin-do* (you, too), I lovey

In the (5), a case of inter-sentential or inter-clause codeswitching is found in the father's speech, '*U-seo jaranik'a.* (I told you to go to sleep.) Go to bed.' Both, "*U-seo jaranik'a* (I told you to go to sleep.)' and 'Go to bed' are separate clauses. Whereas the first clause is in Korean, there is a switch to English in the second clause. Thus intra-sentential/intra-clause CS is what some have called codemixing and inter-sentential/inter-clause codeswitching has been called CS. We do not agree with such distinction. To us the two terms are instances of codeswitching with different structures.

Interestingly, Sridhar (1996) makes it clear that whereas codemixing occurs intra-sententially; code-switching occurs inter-sententially. Consequently, in this paper, the single term, code switching, is used for both cases. Following Myers-Scotton (2006), this paper uses the term CS to cover both so-called CM (lexical inserts) and CS (phrasal inserts), using Yoruba-English interrogative sentences, within the framework of using

the Matrix Language Frame (MLF). CS is a case of language alternation. Myers-Scotton's view of CS adopted in this paper can be diagrammed:



Model of Codeswitching

This is the CS view adopted in this paper. To us, CS is a consequence of language contact; it is language alternation. CS subdivides into inter-sentential CS and intra-sentential CS. The latter subcategorises into phrasal inserts and single-lexeme inserts. Thus all cases of so-called CM are actually example of CS. The rest of the paper is arranged as follows: immediately after this section, we look at the Matrix Language Frame (MLF) and the principles underlining it. Thereafter, we review CS literature in Yoruba-English mixed sentences. Following this, we present the data for the study for analysis. We then conclude.

2. The Matrix Language Frame (MLF)

The Matrix Language Frame claims that there is a *matrix language* in all bilingual constituents (that, is projection of Complementizer Phrase[3]). The

[3] The Complementizer Phrase (CP) is the highest unit projection in by lexical items, i.e. the highest level in a tree of syntactic structures (e.g. NP, VP, etc). It is headed by the Complementizer (COMP. e.g. that, if, whether, for). Myers-Scotton (2002: 54) defines the CP as "a syntactic structure expressing the predicate-

background to the MLF is the work of Myers-Scotton (1993a: 82-120)). There, she examines a Swahili/English corpus consisting of recorded conversations in Nairobi. She observes some asymmetrical relationships between the participating languages in CS and proposes the non-linear approach which is quite different in approach from those based on the generative syntax model. The model says that switched items have an identifiable Matrix Language and between this language and the participating language called the Embedded Language (EL), there is always an asymmetrical relationship such that the ML always dominates the EL in a mixed clause. The model hinges on three principles:

i. *The Morpheme Order Principle (MOP)* which says in ML + EL constituents consisting of singly occurring EL lexemes and any number of ML morphemes, surface morpheme order (reflecting surface syntactic relations) will be that of the ML. Specifically, MOP claims that only one language supplies the order of morpheme in the clause showing CS
ii. *The System Morpheme Principle (SMP)* which says that in ML + EL constituents, all system morphemes which have grammatical relations external to their head constituent (i.e., which participate in the sentence's thematic role grid) will come from the ML. Put Simply, SMP predicts that One type of System Morpheme must come only from one of the participating languages in CS. This type has been called the 'outsider' System Morpheme, since it depends on the information that is outside the maximal projection for its occurrence. In other words, it coindexed with outside information in order to build structures *across phrases* in the larger clause (Myers-Scotton, 2009)
iii. *The Abstract Level Model (ALM)* which outlines three level of abstract grammatical structure. Myers-Scotton (2011) explains that

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argument structure of a clause, plus the additional syntactic structures needed to encode discourse-relevant structure and logical form of that clause". It is argued that the CP is a more exact / unambiguous unit of analysis than both the "clause" and the "sentence".

> *'not all are equally salient or even present in all morpheme types'*. Simply put, the model assumes that the grammatical structure of a mixed constituent is abstract since syntax is realized by lexical items, which have underlying representations that are abstract and complex in nature, This abstract representation is otherwise called lemmas. Lemmas are language-specific non-phonological set of information about lexical items or lexeme in a language which is responsible for the lexeme's distribution as a surface-level element (Amuzu, 2013 in preparation). Lemmas are stored in a language user's mental lexicon. The levels referred to are the lexical-conceptual structure (details about the semantic and pragmatic representation of lexeme), predicate-argument structure (the lexeme's syntactic properties, details about its thematic structure that would be mapped on to grammatical relations), and morphological realization patterns (specifications about a language's word order restrictions, agreement, tense / aspect, case marking system, etc— for realizing the grammatical relations among lexemes' surface configurations).

According to the MOP, the ML determines the order of the elements in ML + EL constituents. The SMP requires that content morphemes can only be drawn from the ML, given the distinction that the model makes between *content morphemes* – assigners or receivers of thematic roles (e.g., nouns, verbs, some pronouns and prepositions) and *system morphemes* – which neither assign nor receive thematic roles (e.g., determiners and affixes). The SMP also predicts that there is a fundamental difference in the distributions of the morphemes. Finally, by the ALM, the role of the embedded language is even more restricted by allowing only certain embedded language content morphemes to occur in mixed constituents.

Since its first proposal, the MLF has undergone modifications, and two of the most recent are in Myer-Scotton (2009, 2011) where she makes clearer the unique roles of the MOP and SMP as being the testable hypothesis at the heart of MLF model. She provides the roles below:

i. *Morpheme Order Principle*: Only one language supplies the order of

morphemes in the clause showing CS.

ii. *The System Morpheme Principle*: One type of system morpheme must come only from one of the participating languages. This type is called the "outsider" system morpheme under the 4-Model that …. It is called an "outsider" because it depends for its occurrence and form on information that is outside the maximal projection in which it occurs; that is, it is co-indexed with outside information. This co-indexing builds structure *across phrases* in the larger clause.

It should be made clear that the System Morpheme Principle does not in any way imply that *all* system morpheme must come from one language; it is noted strongly that "*this never was how it was intended"* (Myers-Scotton 2009: 85). These two principles apply more to what we investigate in this paper – intra-sentential codeswitching

The 4- Model of morpheme classification refines the System Morpheme and adds precision to the MLF model. It identifies four ways by which morphemes are identified:

i. *Content Morpheme* and *Early System Morpheme*. Whereas content morphemes are directly or conceptually activated by a speaker's intentions (e.g. nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs etc), Early System Morpheme are indirectly activated to add specificity or modification to the meaning of the Content Morpheme; they are accessed at the level of the mental lexicon (e.g. determiners, affixes and satellite elements in phrasal verbs, negation, plural marker etc.).

ii. *Late System Morphemes*: Some System Morphemes are structurally-assigned; they carry out language specific requirements for well-formedness, especially for large phrases and full clauses. They are not activated or salient in production until the level of formulators; hence they are called Late System Morphemes (e. g. copular and possessive linker). The formulator is the production mechanism that puts together the larger constituents that are critical in indicating the hierarchical structure of the clause and other relationship among elements. The formulator receives directions from the lemmas (abstract entries in the mental lexicon which support the surface

realization of the actual lexemes) in the mental lexicon about how these constituents are to be assembled (Myers-Scotton, 2006, 2011).

iii. *Bridges and Outsiders*: These are the two types of Late System Morphemes. Bridges are System Morphemes which depend on well-formedness conditions within the maximal constituent in which they appear (e.g. the preposition ***of*** joining two possessive/ associative noun phrases: tail *of* the dog), and complementizers that join together two clauses. Outsiders on the other hand are types of System Morpheme which co-index relations across phrases; their forms depend on information outside of the phrase in which they occur. For example, prepositions/verbs are case assigners but other elements such as determiners or nouns are case-marked. Hence agreement markers and case-marking morphemes are good examples of these types of morphemes.

In summary, the MLF is based on three premises:

i. The ML and the EL do not participate equally in constituent structure Not all morpheme types are equal and so not all can come equally from both languages.
ii. Whereas, content morphemes which assign or receive the roles predominantly come from the ML, system morphemes may come from both languages since they may or may not participate in the sentence thematic grid.
iii. Both languages are always 'on' when a speaker engages in codeswitching although the ML is always more active.

Despite its popularity as a model of CS analysis, MLF model has been attacked. Scholars like MacSwan (2000,2005a&b), van Gelderen & MacSwan, 2008) have argued that the CS is lexically-based and does not necessarily call for an ML. Specifically, MacSwan (2000: 43) contends that, *'nothing can constrain codeswitching apart from the requirement of the mixed grammars'* since differences in languages are basically parametric without any sacrosanct, set-aside, inherent grammatical principle for CS. Therefore, this study is interested in verifying the truth of that argument

by testing the applicability of MLF model to mixed Yoruba-English interrogative sentences.

3. Earlier Research on Yoruba-English Language Contact and CS

The earlier studies on the contact between English and Yoruba focus on both sociolinguistics and grammatical aspects in relation to the influence of English on Yoruba. Salami (1969) discussed loan/borrowing, and distinguishes between fully and partially assimilated English loan words. Akere (1980) investigated CS strategies of Ijebu, a dialect of Yoruba, using Ikòròdú[4] as his focal point. In his study, he found that even in community meetings where the indigenous language was supposed to be used, CS was resorted to. He argued that such verbal strategy was predicated upon by the *'social cultural factors of status, integrity, and self-pride, which derive variously from an individual's local and/city connections…. manipulated or evoked for the purpose of achieving communicative ends'*. Another scholar of interest is Amuda (1994) whose study concentrated on the CS strategies of educated Yoruba-English bilinguals. He concluded that *'code-switching…. is a significant factor for the maintenance of bilingualism in the community'* (1994:121). Some scholars, including Bamgbose (1971) showed that the history of contact between English and Yoruba culminated in the process of assimilation and acculturation, leading to a reinventing of the linguistic repertoire of the Yoruba-English bilingual speaker in order to accommodate English loan words and assimilated forms. One of such reinvention, he argued, was bilingualism or language contact, a precursor of loan words and vernacular-English mixing or CS in the discourse of West African bilinguals (Bamgbose, 1971)

Scholars' attentions have been drawn to the syntactic aspects of Yoruba-English CS. Banjo (1983, 1996) and more recently, Lamidi (2003) have observed that Yorùbá–English CS, functional elements such as determiners, inflection elements such as tense, modal, aspect, and agreement, from English grammar are barred in favour of those from Yorùbá. These scholars argue that nouns can occur in either English or Yoruba, if there are multiple

[4] One of the major towns in Lagos State, Nigeria, West Africa.

lexical heads; but the functional heads will be invariably Yoruba. Ayeomoni (2006), in his analysis of language use in Yoruba speech community observes that the grammatical class of code switched items of his study was always nouns. He further observes that the phonological shapes of such words '*have already been adapted and assimilated into Yoruba'*. His study thus tends towards psycholinguistics of code switching which he calls *'cognitive processes in incipient bilingualism'* (167).

Lamidi (2004, 2008, and 2009) chose to do his CS analysis within Generative Syntax. In his analyses, Lamidi looks at switches at the word boundary, morpheme boundary, within the Determiner Phrase constituents, the serial verb constructions as well as at sentence and clause boundaries. Lamidi (2004, 2008 and 2009) observe that functional heads in Yoruba such as 'pé' and 'kí' belong to the class of complementizers. In Yoruba-English CS, they determine whether or not certain elements can be switched from one language to the other. He also observes that English personal pronouns (subject) are barred from occurring in Yoruba-English CS * we do not dwell on this in this paper. Even so, two of his examples on the use of 'kí' in Yoruba-English CS are of interest to us. Consider 'a' and 'b' below.

a. Adé fẹ́ **kí** a pray.
'Adé wants us to pray'.

b. Ayọ gbà **kí** Òjó assist àwọn labourers yẹn.
'Ayo allowed Òjó to assist those labourers'.

Lamidi (2004:82)

As in example 2 below, examples 'a' and 'b' are contracted in 'c' and 'd' to prove that Yoruba is the ML in the CS corpora. This is the usual case in informal speech, the domain of CS. More is said about ML below

c. Adé fẹ́ **ká** pray.
'Adé wants us to pray'.

d. Ayọ gbà **kÓ**jó assist àwọn labourers yẹn.
'Ayo allowed Òjó to assist those labourers'.

Bamgbose (2004) focuses on the sociolinguistic construct of linguistic imperialism when he concludes that the contact between English and African languages such as Yoruba is regrettably characterized by increased power and prestige of English at the expense of other languages, a consequence of the spread and domination of Anglo-American culture and unfortunate positive attitudes and preference for English at the expense of one's own language. Bamgbose's study does not present any serious linguistic analysis; it is purely sociolinguistic in scope.

This study sets out to add to investigate the grammatical patterning of CS in mixed Yoruba-English naturally occurring sentences through the lenses of the MLF model proposed by Myers-Scotton. We intend to present the extent to which the principles underlying MLF model is operative in the CS discourse of Yoruba-English bilinguals. To the best of our knowledge, scholars have not singled out the aspect of CS for investigation. Thus this is an unusual area of study and a good addition to the earlier study on Yoruba-English CS.

We observe that the interrogator in mixed Yoruba-English intra-clause discourse, our focus in this study, is invariably Yoruba, and that the interrogator is usually blocked from occurring in English whenever the two languages are codeswitched. In other words, in such sentences, it seems that the Yoruba language determines the grammatical structure of the discourse.

To this end, the study intends to answer the following two research questions:

a. What is the structure of mixed Yoruba-English interrogative sentences?
b. How is it that EL nouns are so quickly and seemingly easily inserted into ML frames?

4. The Structure of CS in Yoruba-English Interrogative Sentences

Interrogative sentences are sentences used to ask questions. They are used for requests. Depending on the questioner's intention, a yes-or-no answer may be given or a full answer supplied. Auxiliaries, for example, have syntactic properties which make them amenable to inversion unlike the

main verb (e.g it is a dog> Is it a dog?), with the auxiliary coming first. This seems to be the situation in most languages of the world. And going by the recommendation of Generative syntax, it is part of the UG (Chomsky (2013). Syntactic operations in Wh-word[5] is even more interesting where *wh-movement* operation is allowed. In the *wh-movement* operation, ***who*** can be moved to the front of the whole sentence and positioned in front of the auxiliary (e.g. He had said someone would do something> he had said who would do what?/who had he said would do what?). Radford (2009) observes that a closer look at interrogative sentences such as the one above provides evidence that there are UG principles which constrain the way in which movement operations may apply. An interesting property of the questions is that they contain two auxiliaries (*had* and *would*) and two wh-words (*who* and *what*). Now, if we compare (who had he said would do what?) with the corresponding echo-question (he had said who would do what?); we find that the *first* of the two auxiliaries (*had*) and the *first* of the wh-words (*who*) is moved to the front of the sentence in the former). If we try inverting the second auxiliary (*would*) and fronting the second wh-word (*what*), we end up with ungrammatical sentences.

Using the ML frame, this study investigates how auxiliary verbs and wh-words operate in mixed Yoruba-English interrogative sentences. We begin our discussion with the yes/no questions with auxiliary verbs. We observe that the auxiliary interrogator which triggers[6] the switch is invariably Yoruba's. The examples are taken from naturally occurring sentences either recorded by the researchers of taken from the works of earlier researchers.

5. YES/NO QUESTIONS WITH AUXILIARY VERBS

When Yoruba is the ML in interrogative CS corpora, thus supplying

[5] A Wh-word is a question word like *who/where/when/ etc* beginning with *wh* (Radford, 2009)

[6] The idea of trigger (s)/triggering is borrowed from Clyne (1967) In triggering, according to Clyne, an item of ambiguous affiliation (i.e., one belonging to the speaker's two languages) triggers off the switch from one language to the other.

the question maker, the interrogative morpheme (a system morpheme) changes[7], depending on the presence or absence of the progressive marker 'n'. If the progressive marker is present (see example 1), then a full NP, with the head from the EL and the specifier from the ML (by movement rule), is usually allowed immediately after the interrogator as its complement. After the interrogator, the ML supplies the VP; elements from the EL are

[7] The question marker can be any of the following: Ṣé/Ǹjẹ́/Àbí/ Bẹ́ ẹ̀ as in the example:

Ṣé/Ǹjẹ́/Àbí/ Bẹ́ ẹ̀ **boy** yẹn ń padà bọ̀?
Or
Ìgbà wo ni **boy** yẹn ń padà bọ̀?
QM FOC **boy** DET PROG return come
'When is the boy returning?'

But when the progressive marker ń bearing a HT is present, some question markers are disallowed from surfacing. Consider:

*Kí ni **boy** yẹn ń padà bọ̀?
QM FOC boy DET. PRG.M return come
'What will the boy returning?'
*Báwo ni **boy** yen ń padà bọ̀?
QM FOC **boy** DET PROG return come
'How is the boy returning?' (Different sentence from the default sentence, hence with different meaning)
Contrast:
Ki ni **boy** yen wí?
QM FOC boy DET say
What did the boy say?

Báwo ni **boy** yen?
QM FOC **boy** DET
How is the/that boy?

Note: The categorical status of the MT 'ni' in Yorùbá syntax has continued to be controversial. Bowen (1858) referred to it both as a verb and as a particle; other scholars including Abraham (1958), Delano (1958), in Awobuluyi (1992) have called it a verb, a marker, particle and expletive. Awobuluyi (1992) says it is a focus marker. More recently, Adesola (2006) sees it as a particle while Ilori (2010) says it is a focus marker. The controversy is far from being over! To us in this paper, 'ni' is focus marker, an emphasize.

disallowed at this point, except the second NP 'bọ̀' is deleted[8] and replaced with an element from either EL or ML. Some question markers cannot be the INF, of the IP in mixed Yoruba-English sentences (see footnote). Does this make English the ML[9] determining the morpheme structure? A surface reading may yield such an answer, but remember that 'boy' is only an insertion within the grammatical frame of another language. Besides, modern usage by new generation of native speakers of Yoruba has proved that Yoruba is the ML. For example, all the question markers, except 'Ǹjẹ́' (for stylistic reasons) can be moved to the end of the sentence but the inserted nominal element from the El cannot (consider 'a' and 'b'). In addition, both content and system morphemes come from Yoruba, the base language. Of course, a content morpheme, 'boy' comes from English. But this does simply confirm the potency of the MLF model. Myers-Scotton (2009: 85) says, "*Unfortunately, some researchers interpreted the System Morpheme Principle as stating that all system morphemes must come from one language; this never was how it was intended"*. Thus the insertion of a content morpheme from EL does not violate the MLF model; it is inconsequential.

Even when there is no progressive form as in the response of SB (student B), the fact of ML/EL dichotomy is not compromised.

Now, consider example 2 where 'Ṣé' an IP, changes from the copula to the dummy verb, DO. It seems that in mixed interrogative Yoruba-English sentences, 'Ṣé' assumes two distinct forms (copula and dummy), depending on the nature of its complement VP. It seems that 'Ṣé' does not become a copula except it has a possessive VP as the C of the IP (that is has/have/need), and at times the sentence ends in a content morpheme from the EL (see example 2)

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[8] An example is: Ṣé/Ǹjẹ́/ **man** yẹn ń **care** fun/ tọ́jú) e?

[9] See Lamidi (2004, 2008, 2009 and 2013) for a thorough discussion on how Yoruba has consistently been the ML in a mixed Yoruba-English sentence. The only exception cited by Lamidi, 2013: 325):

Anything to fenu gbé?
Anything to use + mouth carry
'Anything to eat?'

Example 1
Setting: in a restaurant at Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education (AOCOED), Lagos, Nigeria. It is evening, Females students discussing after a meal; perhaps ruminating over what had happened earlier during the day.

SA: Ṣé **boy** yẹn ń padà bọ̀?[10]
QM boy DET. PRG.M return come
Is the boy returning?
SB: Sé ìwọ **need** ẹ ni?
Q M 2sg PRON. **need** 3.Ssg EMP.
Do you (actually) need him?
SA: Mo fẹ́ kó **assist** mi
1sg love DEM.+2sg +NOM. **assist** 1sg +ACC.
I want him to assist me.

Compare the above with (a & b) below:

a. Ṣé/Ǹjẹ́/Àbí/ Bẹ́ ẹ **boy** yẹn ń padà bọ̀?
b. Boy yẹn ń padà bọ̀ ṣé/ àbí/ bẹ́ ẹ̀?
Boy DET. PRG.M return come QM
'The boy returning, is he?'

Example 2
Setting: School campus (AOCOED), two students, a male and a female conversing on helping each other.

Male: Ṣo **l'account**?
DO+2sg HAVE+account
'Do you have an (a bank) accouint?'
Female: Ṣé **bank account**?
DO+2sg bank account?

[10] Ṣé **aunt** yẹn ń padà bọ̀?
Becoming:
Ṣ'**aunt** yẹn ń padà bọ̀?

'Do you mean a bank account? (You mean a bank account?)'
Male: **Yes**. Ṣo ní?
Yes. DO+ 2sg HAVE
'Yes. Do you have?'
Female: Kí ló ń **happen** ọ̀rẹ́? Ṣo fẹ́ **credit** **account** mi ni?
QM BE PRG.M happen friend QM +2sg love credit account 1sg PART.
What is going on friend? Do you want to credit my (bank) account?
Male: **Answer me first**; o l'**account** à bó ò ní?
Answer me first 2sg HAVE+account CONJ.+2Ssg HAVE
Answer me first; do you have an account (a bank account) or not?
Female: Mo ní.
BE HAVE
'I hve/do'

In examples 1 and 2 above, each of the constituents follows the Yoruba, not the English, word order. This example supports the Morpheme Order Principle (MOP) of the MLF model because these constituents and everything else in the clauses follow Yoruba order, indicating that only one language supplies morphemes order. This indentifies Yoruba as the ML. Again, in (example 2), the auxiliary HAVE (ní) showing possession comes from Yoruba and more significantly, this morpheme is attached to the noun 'account', an English lexical constituent, to form a structure which obeys the rules of Yoruba grammatical frame where the deletion[11] process in highly observed in order to avoid hiatus for well-formedness (normally, the HT[12] will have become a floating tone put on the next vowel if the word 'account' were Yoruba) to be realized. Of course, the possessive verb 'ní' may be separated from account (e.g. ní **account**, yielding the same

[11] For a discussion of how deletion operates in Yorùbá, especially in loan words, see Akinlabi (1993) and Orie (2012)

[12] Yoruba is a three-toned language: High Tone (HT in wá= come), Mid Tone (MT in wà) and a Low Tone (LT, usually unmarked). For a discussion on Yoruba tonal system, see Akinlabi (2004)

meaning but the informality characteristics of spoken language will have to be compromised; the sentence will no longer be natural. The vowel in 'ní', 'í' the vocalic element together with its HT tone (́) is deleted to allow for assimilation.

Note also that the MT appendage to the adjective 'fine' in (v) is necessary for the insertion of the verb it precedes. The point is that a feeding rule process operative in Yoruba in which phonological processes take place in succession is observed. First, the verbal element is deleted; then its HT delinks paving way for the succeeding LT in order to insert the English verb, 'understand'. Take note too of the second person plural pronoun, used for a singular referent. This is an honorific pronoun used in the plural form in Yoruba for singular referent for the purpose of honoring the referent. These instances support the system Morpheme Principle that requires such morphemes to come from only one of the participating language. Lastly, the question trigger is invariably the Yoruba close-ended yes-no polar interrogative trigger. This too marks Yoruba as the ML in all the clauses.

We explained above that the MLF model provides the morphosyntactic frame for the sentence, within which lexical items from the EL may occur. All this takes place in what is called the ***classic codes witching***. In classic code switching, the grammatical structure of one language prevails. Myers-Scotton (2006:241) defines it thus: "*Classic code switching includes elements from two (or more) language varieties in the same clause, but only one of these varieties is the source of the morphosyntactic frame for the clause"*. By morphosyntactic frame is meant all the abstract grammatical requirements that would make the frame well-formed in the language in question – word order, morpheme order and necessary inflectional morphemes.

The examples analysed above therefore prove that Yoruba is the ML and not otherwise, and that should the order be reversed, the sentences become ungrammatical and ill-formed. Compare the two examples below- the second is ill-formed when the Morpheme Order Principle is tampered with:

Kí	ló	ń	**happen**	ọ̀rẹ́?	Ṣo		fẹ́	**credit account**		mi	ni?
QM	BE	PRG.M	happen	friend	QM	+2S	love	credit	account	1sg	FOC

*What is **Ṣẹ́ẹ̀lẹ̀ring** friend? Do you want to **fowó** s'account me ?

Even though the single example here may be syntactically 'well-formed', it is unusual and definitely substandard, even by L2 users of English!

6. Wh Question

Wh-question is another area where the power of ML over EL is attested as shown in the following example:

Example3

SA: Ilé àwọn **ladies** yẹn ni mo ti **get all information nípa Prof!**
House +PREP 3PL ladies DET FOC 1sg AUX+PST get all information PREP DET+Prof.
'I got all information about the Prof. from those ladies' recidence!'.

SB: Somọ̀ pé mo **try** láti **convince** Ṣadé **about it**, ó ní kò **possible**?
QM+know DEM 1sg try PREP convince Sade about it 3sg. Said NegM possible
'Did you know that I tried to convince Sade about it, and she said it is impossible?'

SA: Ní báyìí, ó ti **possible.**
PREP now 3sg possible
'Now, it's possible'

When Yoruba is the ML in CS corpora, there is no trouble retaining double determiners and double prepositions (see Example 3). In example 3, two prepositions (grammatically required null preposition, after '**residence**' and surface 'nípa' '**about**') and two determiners (grammatically required null determiner before '**Prof**', and surface post-nominal 'yen', '**those**') are found. Are these forms of determiner and preposition 'doubling'[13]

[13] Myers-Scotton (2009: 87) observes a similar thing in CS with Arabic as the ML and English, Dutch, French, etc. as EL. Whereas Myer-Scotton's observes that '*a pronoun from Arabic seems to double a pronoun from the EL*', the doubling in this

redundant? In fact, the two determiners and prepositions perform different functions. The first determiner is the demonstrative, '**those**' which performs a referent function. The second determiner 'is the D of the DP with an NP as its complement; this determiner is a null determiner, which is believe to be invariably present with a count noun. In this context both must be present. Interestingly, it is not socially acceptable for either of the determiners to come from the EL.

The case with the preposition is similar. The second preposition is easily found in English structures; it is the head of the PP, 'nípa Prof', '**about the Prof.**'; it is at the 'C' of the 'DP".

But what about the first preposition? The first preposition is a special preposition, required for well-formedness, which may at times surface (as in 'ní ilé…' with other parts of the sentence in example 3 intact) or remain unseen as a lexical item as it is in example3. It is the preposition 'ni'. 'It will be good to note that the preposition, 'ní' in Yoruba is locative; it means, 'in' or 'at'. About it, Folarin Schleicher (2008: 12) says: On the other hand, the preposition **ní** is used to mean "in" or "at."

For example:

Túnjí wà ***ní*** ojà	Tunji is ***at*** the market
Kúnlé wà ***ní*** ṣọ́ọ̀ṣì	Kunle is ***in*** church
N kò sí ***ní*** ilé	I was not ***at*** home

But there is more to this preposition. Significantly, Schleicher's book is meant for the inexperienced learners of the Yoruba language, hence is silent about the nuances of usage of this preposition. What is its purpose in the CS corpora? It seems it is there to add some grammatical information to the noun. It seems to be emphasizing that the speaker never expected what happened, going by a previous discussion (see the response of speaker B and then the conclusion of speaker A). This is further confirmed by the focus marker[14] 'ni' removing any doubt as to where the man was found, 'in'

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paper does not affect the EL in the same way. It seems to be the normal practice in the language.

[14] Note the difference between 'ní' with a HT and 'ni' with a MT. The later has

not 'beside' her house.

Recgnizing that the two determiners, and especially the two prepositions have different functions is necessary to defeat any analysis of redundancy. This is also critical to the application of MLF. This also proves that Yoruba is the ML, not English.

7. Conclusion

Contrary to the argument of MacSwan and his associates that there is no ML in CS, there is an active operation of the MLF in and the application of its principles to Yoruba-English mixed constituents. We proved that the CS structure is highly governed by the Yoruba grammatical frame so much so that any attempt to soften the construction will produce ungrammaticality. Like others before it, this study also confirms the universal application of Myer-Scotton's MLF model and Classic Code switching.

Intuitively, as native speakers of Yoruba who use the language for everyday linguistic activities, and from our observation of the speech of fellow native speakers of the language, as indicated by the data presented in this study, we can conclude that the MLF model has really become by far the one of the most popularity theories of CS. This study has proved that as far as Yoruba-English mixed constituents are concerned, there is an ML-EL dichotomy in bilingual speech.

It is likely that new pattern of CS with Yoruba as one of the participating languages will emerge. Evidence indicates that they are already emerging as we see with the example in Lamidi (2013:325, 326). He himself said, '*there are structures in which English is the matrix language, but these are rather scanty'*. He even gave an example of '*ife omo oyinbo is real*' (untranslated by him), where the verb 'is' is inflected for person and number, as against what operates '*if Yoruba had donated the future tense'*. This indicates that the feature of English grammar as the ML dictates what obtains in the sentence. It is possible to think that examples like the ones by Lamidi may, in future prove MacSwan right at last. It is even possible that in the future,

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always been controversial as indicated above. Following Ilori (2010) and Awobuluyi (1992), we call the latter a focus maker.

CS corpora involving Yoruba-English or any other participating language may suggest that both languages supply the frame-building abstract structure, bringing about exceptions to the application of MLF model to Yoruba contrary to the claim in this paper and previous researches. Only time will tell. No matter what the future holds, at present, his argument has no grip on Yoruba-English mixed constituents where the ML is invariably Yoruba.

KEY TO ABBREVIATION USED:

QM: Question Marker
BE: any form of the BE verb
PL.DM: Plural Demonstrative
PL: Plural
1,2,3: 1st person, 2nd person, 3rd person
MOD: Modal Auxiliary
SG: Singular
PSS: Possessive
PART.: Particle
PRG.M: Progressive Marker
INT.M: Interrogative Marker
PRG.M: progressive Marker
DET.: Determiner
PRON: Pronominal
EMP: Emplatic/Aemphasis
DEM: Demonstrative
NOM.: Nominative Case
ACC: Accusative Case
SA: Student A
SB: Student B

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