



Code-Mixing As a Sociolinguistic Device in Hausa Contemporary Literature

Alkasim Haruna *

PhD candidate, School of Education and Modern Languages, College of Arts and Sciences, Universiti Utara Malaysia

Anne Althea Christopher

Senior lecturer, School of Education and Modern Languages, College of Arts and Sciences, Universiti Utara Malaysia

Rohizah bt. Halim

Senior lecturer, School of Education and Modern Languages, College of Arts and Sciences, Universiti Utara Malaysia

Abstract

Nigeria is a part of sub-Saharan Africa, which has a diverse linguistic system, with many different languages spoken by over 170 million people (Powlak, 1998; Newman, 2000). Hausa language is one of the three major languages. Hausa contemporary literature is popular Hausa literary form of writing that provides reading materials for pleasure and entertainment to the youth. The country has many literary writers in the southern and northern parts. This study looks into the role of code-mixing in some selected Hausa novels from Hausa contemporary literature writers. The study also reviewed some research works that looked into the influence of code-mixing in literary writing. This paper employs a qualitative method for analysing of the selected code-mixing appearing in the three novels. The findings revealed that code-mixing is one of the linguistic devices used for communicative purposes among the characters in the Hausa literary texts.

Keywords: Hausa contemporary literature texts, Hausa code- mixing, sociolinguistics

INTRODUCTION

Hausa is the name given to groups of people in the northern part of Nigeria. Hausa is their language of communication in their daily life activities which includes business, markets, trading, religious activities, to mention a few (Chamo, 2012) Similarly, the Hausa language has over 170 million speakers. It also one of the Chadic language family which puts itself as a member of Afro-asiatic family (Newman, 2000). In addition, the Hausa language is one of the three major languages spoken in Nigeria and the second major language after Swahili in West Africa.

However, English is an official language in Nigeria, which commands a lot of respect and position in the society. This respect and position which are visible in schools,

government agencies, parastatals and departments that has contributed immensely to the process of code mixing among different ethnic groups in Nigeria and particularly among Hausa speakers. Consequently, code-mixing which appears in radios, televisions, magazines and popular literatures (books) has given rise to a hybrid language (Khalid, 2006). There is an urgent need to analyse code-mixing in Hausa contemporary literature Ehsan and Aziz (2014).

Previous studies in the context of language have enumerated and analysed the influence of code-mixing/code-switching, such as the works of Yusuf (2012) Ehsan and Aziz (2014), Rasul (2006), Rebekawati (2013). Although these studies help us to understand the process of code-mixing among different language speakers, however, none of these studies have attempted to analyse this important research problem among Hausa native speakers. This paper is an attempt to fill in this wide gap that was left wide open by previous researchers.

Brief History of the Hausa Contemporary Literature

Hausa contemporary literature is a form of writing which is popularly known as “Adabin Kasuwa” or commercial fiction written purely in Hausa language by urban youth in northern Nigeria (Furniss, 2000; Furniss & Adamu, 2012; Kiyawa, 2013).

In the early 1990s these young writers formed some association or clubs which served as a catalyst for the production of this new literary work in all areas of the northern part of Nigeria. These writer associations such as: Ruwan Dare in Kaduna, Raina Kama, Jigon Hausa and Ruwan Bagaja is based in Kano state (Adamu, 2006). Similarly, most of these writers focus their attention on emotional concern, such as: love, marriage, power relations, co-wives jealousy, deception, entertainment and crime (Furniss, 2003).

In addition, these books have some unique features which include: using simple grammar, a small number of pages, very cheap and are sold in an open market everywhere in Hausa cities in Nigeria (Malumfashi, 2011). Interestingly, the majority of these young writers used images as a form of persuasive appeal on the cover pages of their novels such as beautiful girls, flowers, golden rings, horror pictures, beautiful houses, flashy cars to mention a few (Furniss, 2003).

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to show the role of code-mixing as one of the literary and sociolinguistics devices used by the Hausa contemporary writers to make the novel more attractive and to get the attention of the readers. To make the novel enjoyable, the author must be creative to express and beautify the language through word selection to make it interesting and attract the reader’s attention.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definitions of Code-Mixing/Code-Switching

Numerous scholars have defined code-mixing in different ways. Code-mixing as a “form of language practice in which individuals draw on their linguistic resources to accomplish conversational purposes (Auer, 1995) cited in (Dahl, Rice, Steffensen, & Amundsen, 2010). Furthermore, Brice and Anderson (1999) defined code-switching as the alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence, or constituents” (p.17). In a similar vein, Bhatia and Ritchie (1999) as cited in (Kia et al., 2011) defined code-mixing a various linguistic units (words, phrases, clauses and sentences) primary from two participating grammatical systems across sentence boundaries within a speech event (p.5). In another development, Ho (2007) defined code-mixing as a “change of language to another within the same utterance or in same oral/written text” (p.2).

Studies on Code-mixing/Code-switching

In their study, Kia, Cheng, Yee, and Ling (2011) investigates the code-mixing in entertainment news of Chinese dailies produced in Malaysia, which includes; (i) Guang Ming (ii) Mun Sang (iii) China Press. A questionnaire was distributed to 200 participants from different age groups, educational levels, background and professionals. A total of 1000 of code-mixed sentences which appeared in the entertainment news were chosen for the study. Furthermore, a quantitative approach was employed for the analysis. The results showed 281 different English words with mixed-coded sentences were found in the Chinese magazines. It was suggested that further research should look into the Chinese and Malay dailies produced in Malaysia.

In contrast, Ibhawaegbele and Edokpayi (2012) observed code-switching as stylistic devices in some selected Nigerian prose fiction. The objective of the study was to explore the role of character interpretation of culture and their dialect in a multi-lingual society. The study cited some code-switching and code-mixing instances that appeared in the selected the three novels. The books were written in English by Nigerian prominent Igbo writers from which samples were chosen from Igbo and other languages. Furthermore, the study discussed 26 different code-switching appears in the novels. Similarly, 12 different examples of code-mixing were explained. Finally, the study shows the role of English language used by the Nigerian literary writers which justified the use of code-mixing in African prose fictions.

In addition, Likhithongsathorn and Sappapan (2013) investigated English pop song listeners in Thailand. The objective of their study was to understand a new phenomenon regarding the use of code-mixing and code-switching in English pop songs in Thailand. A questionnaire was administered to the listeners; the data were collected through a random and purposive sampling of 240 out of 308 words. Findings have shown that English words appeared more than Thai words especially nouns. It also

indicated that English nouns were found to be the highest number in the code-mixing followed by verbs in the pop songs.

In contrast, Ehsan and Aziz (2014) analysed code-mixing in Pakistani news radio. The data collected were 30 samples. The data were classified into tabular form written in Urdu and English language for the analysis. The findings indicate that newscasters used code-mixing in the news production, especially in science and technology to convey the messages to their respective audiences.

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research methodology is used in this research. Data was collected through a selection of samples of conversation from the 3 novels. The method of the research is the descriptive approach. According to Leedy (1980) descriptive, sometimes called the normative method, is employed to process the data by the researchers through observation. The descriptive qualitative method does not need new theories but new facts to prove the truth of the theory.

Similarly, sociolinguistics is concerned with the social life of people, and also deals with the relationship between language and society (Hymes, 2003) Therefore, the objective of this present study is to examine the social interaction among the characters and highlight some code-mixing that appears in the selected Hausa 3 novels to fill the gap.

FINDINGS

Table 1 shows some examples of code-mixing used by both male and female characters during their conversation right from the beginning up to the end of the story which shows that English language dominates almost all social interactions among youth.

Table 1. Examples of code-mixing/code-switching from the novel of Mai qaunata
Literary (My love)

'Budurwar ta yi yunqurin ba shi ice cream a bakinsa'	'A girlfriend tries to give her boyfriend ice cream in his mouth'
'Ya sa hannu ya qwace cokalin ice cream daga bakinta'	He used his hand to take the spoon of ice cream from his girlfriend'
'Al-mustapha yasa hannu a cikin aljihunsa ya xauko wallet xinsa'	'Al-mustapha put his hand in a pocket to take his wallet'
'Idan ni beauty ce ke kuma beautiful ce domin ba abin da na fi ki'	'If I am beauty I will describe you as handsome because you lack nothing'
'Hajiya ki fesa mana gobe zan je beauties mall na siyo wani'	Hajiya you can spray all the perfume because tomorrow I will go to beauties mall to buy a new one'
'Nabeela ta fesa turare mai qamshin twin brothers ne'	'Nabeela sprayed twin brothers perfume on her' body'
'Ta yi parking da motarta'	'She parked her car'

Table 2. Examples of code-mixing/code-switching from the novel of Ramuwar gayya Literary (Revenge)

'Al- Mustapha ya nufi inda motarsa take ya xauko fire extinguisher'	'Al-mustapha went to his car and picks a fire extinguisher'
'Ba'a tsaya ko'ina ba sai operation room'	They took him directly to the theatre room
'Ba tare da ya vata lokaci ya qarasa wajen qaramar television xin flasm'	'He went direct to watch flasm TV'
'Hajiya tana kallon Qur'an television station'	'Hajiya Karima is watching Qur'an television station'
'Umma ta bar shi cikin broken heart'	'Umma left him in a terrible situation'
'Baka iya controlling xin temper xinka Maryam ta ce	'Maryam can't you control your temper
'Ai bana watsup ina cikin deep problem'	'I am not using WATS up' I have a problem'
'Ba zan iya haquri da irin wannan blind love xin'	'I will not endure this blind love'
'To naji yaya you always win'	'I had it brother you always win'
'Ke ce masoyiyata ta haqiqa'	'You are my real wife'
'Sorry na barka kai kaxai'	'Sorry I left you alone'

Table 2 explored the nature and extent how code-mixing of English and Hausa languages occurred when communicating with one another among characters in the novel.

Table 3. Examples of code-mixing/code-switching appeared from the novel of Matan Zamani Literary (women now days)

'Rabi ta ce da naje office din accountant ne na kai masa takardu'	'Rabi said as I went to the office of the accountant to submit some documents'
'Asma'u wallahi ba ni da wani malami da ya wuce managing director'	'Asma'u I don't have any priest then the managing director'
'Tsaya-tsaya my sweet heart'	'Wait a while my sweet heart'
'Na haqura my sweet heart'	'I leave it my heart'
'My dear zan so na san son da kake yi mini'	'I leave it my heart'
'Ka yi haquri my dear akwai lokaci'	'My dear I want know how much you love me'
'Da gaske ka ke my dear'	'Please exercise patience my dear there is time of....'
'Ok ai na tuna'	Really my dear'
'Ban tava kawo irin wannan complaint xin ba'	'I have never make such complaint'
'Dariya ya yi yace fantastic'	'He laughed and said fantastic'

Table 3 shows some examples of code-mixing that appeared in the novel which seems that characters used mixed languages as means of communication and interact with each other to express their ideas, emotions and feelings clear and understandable among themselves.

DISCUSSION

This study reveals that code-mixing/code-switching is a linguistic phenomenon whereby two languages are mixed during conversation with the characters/speakers. The analysis of some selected sentences appeared mostly among the characters of the 3 novels. These sentences were extracted and analysed by indicating the Hausa/ English words. In addition, code mixing is often and most of the times spoken during interaction among both females and their male counterparts right from the beginning of the story right up to the end in the selected Hausa novels.

The language of the characters shows some linguistic devices used mostly to entertain their target readers which shows they are conversant with two languages at all times. Code-mixing/code-switching is frequently done in delivering their messages between male and female characters in the 3 novels analysed. Code-mixing/code switching were used by the characters and most of the words are commonly occurring, especially as 'loan and borrowed words' which have entered into the Hausa language from English that was shown in the 3 tables.

The role of code-mixing/code-switching played a significant role in the development of the characters' bilingual creativity status, filling some lexical words and changing the characters/speaker's role during conversation and other social interaction among themselves.

Based on what I have read from various studies conducted on code-mixing in English and Hausa none of these studies is similar or carried out in the Hausa popular literature, though I also, reviewed one study of code-mixing that focused on English and Igbo language both in Nigeria. However, there are some studies carried out on code-mixing such as: Urdu radio news, Chinese entertainment news, English and Bahasa, Serbian and English, pop songs and others. All findings of this studies are not similar to the present study.

CONCLUSION

Based on the illustrations, various examples of conversation and expressions of the emotions occur in boyfriend and girlfriend conversation right from the beginning of the story up to the end of the selected (3) novels. One might agree that using code-mixing in the Hausa contemporary literature is one of the primary strategies employed by the characters for delivering their messages among themselves. Furthermore, the study indicates the majority of these writers of Hausa contemporary literature attended at least a secondary school education which gives them room for combining Hausa and English languages in their style of writing these love story books. In addition, most of the readers of these books are youth and they enjoy reading the books as they concern about love and marriage, lifestyle of urban socialization, to mention a few.

The present study suggested that there is a need to select more novels that can give more insights about language mixing either in African literature or other contemporary literatures.

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