

ON THE STATUS OF LONE ENGLISH VERBS IN IGBO-ENGLISH BILINGUAL SPEECH

Ihuoma I. Akinremi

University of Jos, Nigeria.

homaremi@gmail.com

Abstract

The paper addresses the controversy in language contact literature about lone items as constituting either codeswitching or borrowing. Whereas multi-word constituents are readily classified as codeswitching, the status of lone items is often in dispute. Some researchers admit them as codeswitching (e.g. Myers-Scotton, 1992, 1987, 2002), while others (e.g. Poplack & Meechan, 1998; Sankoff, Poplack, & Vanniarajan, 1990) classify them, on the basis of morphosyntactic integration, as instances of momentary borrowing or 'nonce' loans. The claim that lone English verbs in Igbo-English bilingual speech are nonce borrowings is examined, and it is noted that integration is realised on English verbs, without exception, by the same features and to the same extent whenever the grammatical frame is in Igbo. Integration is shown: (i) to differentiate lone English verbs and lone items of other categories, (ii) to highlight the non-selective nature of Igbo verbal affixes, and (iii) to mark the distinction between two major patterns in Igbo-English codeswitching, namely, insertional and alternational codeswitching. Insertional codeswitching consistently yields morphosyntactically integrated English verbs, making integration insignificant in distinguishing between codeswitching and borrowing. The paper therefore argues for a codeswitching account of (integrated) lone English verbs in discourse framed in Igbo.

Résumé

Cet article s'adresse à la controverse dans la littérature du contact des langues, concernant des éléments isolés comme soit alternance de langues, soit emprunts. Alors que des éléments à plusieurs mots sont facilement classés comme alternance de langues, le statut des éléments isolés est souvent contesté. Certains chercheurs les admettent comme des alternances (ex: Myers-Scotton, 1992, 1987, 2002), tandis que d'autres (ex: Poplack et Meechan, 1998; Sankoff, Poplack, et Vanniarajan, 1990) les classent, sur la base d'intégration morphosyntaxique, en tant que cas d'emprunt momentané (ou emprunts 'nonce'). On examine dans cet article, l'assertion que les verbes anglais isolés dans le discours du bilingue igbo-anglais sont des emprunts momentanés. On a bien noté que l'intégration s'applique, sans exception, à tous les verbes anglais par les mêmes traits et au même degré lorsque le cadre grammatical est en igbo. Cette étude a montré que l'intégration sert (i) à distinguer entre les verbes anglais isolés et les éléments isolés d'autres catégories, (ii) à souligner la nature non-sélective des affixes verbaux igbo, et (iii) à marquer la distinction entre deux modèles principaux d'alternance des langues igbo-anglais, à savoir, l'insertion des éléments et l'alternance des langues. Sans exception, l'insertion des éléments produit des verbes anglais qui sont intégrés morpho-syntaxiquement. L'intégration n'est plus significative pour distinguer entre l'alternance de langues et l'emprunt.

1. Introduction

Contact between English and the languages of Nigeria began with the coming of British traders and explorers to the coastal areas of Nigeria in the 17th century, their subsequent exploration of the hinterland and colonization of the entire country (Elugbe and Omamor, 1991). Obeng (2004:9) notes several ways in which the coming of European merchants, missionaries and colonialists "further complexified the linguistic landscape of West Africa." In the geographical entity known as Nigeria, there are approximately 521 indigenous languages (Lewis, 2003). Igbo, a West Benue-Congo language, is native to the South-East geopolitical zone and parts of the adjoining South-South zone, and is recognized as a national language, along with Hausa and Yoruba, while English is accorded the status of official language. English has assumed the status of a language of wider communication in terms of its use as a medium of national communication, integration and education at different levels (Bamgbose, 1991). In a dominant-subordinate relationship with the indigenous languages, English is assigned

superior roles and is the language of prestige and power. The National Policy on Education stipulates the teaching of English as a subject from primary to tertiary level, in addition to its use as the medium of instruction almost throughout the educational process – beginning from the late primary level and exclusively at the secondary and tertiary levels. Igbo, like other indigenous languages, is restricted as a medium of instruction to the early primary level (see Olaofe, 1990). In practice, however, the provisions of the Policy are generally not enforced, and English is often the only medium of instruction from the first day of school in urban areas with mixed populations (see Gani-Ikilama, 1990) and in private nursery and primary schools (Eze, 1997; Ugorji, 2005). Some studies carried out in the Igbo homeland report that Igbo is not used as a medium of instruction in primary schools (Odinye and Odinye, 2010) and that its use by pupils within the school environment is often prohibited, and defaulters are punished (Apakama, 2010; Mbata, 2010; Ugorji, 2005).

A speech habit observable among Nigerians who have been schooled in the system described above, and who are proficient in English and a Nigerian language, is the combination of elements of two languages in a single sentence or discourse. The paper investigates this phenomenon among speakers of Igbo, using naturally occurring conversations of adult Igbo-English bilinguals recorded in a variety of social settings, as well as examples published in the literature. The paper proceeds as follows: Section 2 describes the Igbo-English language contact situation and its linguistic manifestations, including bilingualism and codeswitching. Section 3 reviews the definitions of, and assumptions about, the language contact phenomenon under study, and clarifies the use of the term ‘codeswitching’. Section 4 examines the two main analyses of lone other-language items in language contact literature, with particular reference to verbs; Section 5 focuses on integrated and unintegrated lone English items, while Section 6 considers the integration of multi-word English verbal segments in Igbo-English bilingual speech. Section 7 highlights insights to be gained from the integration of English verbs and Section 8 draws a conclusion on the discussion.

2. Igbo-English Contact and Associated Phenomena

Most educated Nigerians, including Igbo speakers, are bilingual in English by necessity rather than by choice – a consequence of the use of English as the language of formal education. It has been observed that many Igbo-English bilinguals have developed a positive attitude towards English, viewing it as a symbol of prestige and westernization (as well as the language of upward socioeconomic mobility), while Igbo is socially devalued, with little or no prestige attached to its knowledge and use (Afuba, 2006; Azuonye, 2003). Also reported among Igbo-English bilinguals is a general preference for English in domains previously reserved for Igbo, including informal domains such as the family (Afuba, 2006). The invasion of the family domain by English has been observed even in the families of L1 Igbo-speaking couples (Eme, 2004, as cited in Odinye and Odinye, 2010). The consequences of this scenario include a general lack of motivation of the younger generation to learn and use the Igbo language (Odinye and Odinye, 2010) and the tendency for Igbo speakers with any amount of formal education to show their identification with the ‘prestige language’ by switching to English words and expressions as frequently as possible. Such switching represents the conscious, deliberate use of the mixed Igbo-English code (Obiamalu and Mbagwu, 2008) and may be a “conscious display of the knowledge of a prestigious language” (Ahukanna, 1990:97) or a conscious discourse strategy (Nwoye, 2003).

However, observation of Igbo-English bilinguals further reveals that they often use codeswitching in a way that tends to form “such an integral part of the community linguistic repertoire that it could be said to function as a mode of interaction similar to

monolingual language use” (Poplack, 1988, as cited in Auer, 1999:318). In this regard, Onumajuru (2007:61) notes that among Igbo-English bilinguals, codeswitching “has become so natural . . . that they can hardly make a sentence in Igbo without one or two words of the English language.” The spontaneous and unconscious use of the Igbo-English mixed code has been reported in informal language use (Ahukanna, 1990; Onumajuru, 2007) as well as in formal settings in which Igbo is supposed to be the only medium of discourse (Obiamalu and Mbagwu, 2008). This practice represents “codeswitching as the unmarked choice” (Myers-Scotton, 1997) or the “unmarked” way of speaking in a community (Auer, 1999) and may not result from inability to carry on a conversation entirely in one of the languages, or limited proficiency in one of the languages involved (Appel and Muysken, 1987; Auer, 1999; Muysken, 2000; Woolford, 1983), or the need to fill lexical gaps (Bentahila and Davies, 1983; Muysken, 2000). In this regard, Ansre (1971) observed speakers of West African languages who introduced English expressions into utterances in their native languages and noted that they could have spoken exclusively in their native languages if they so desired. His examples of Ewe, Twi and Yoruba sentences containing English expressions are similar to those recorded in Igbo-English bilingual speech. The use of the Igbo-English mixed code, popularly known as ‘Engligbo,’ is very pervasive. ‘Engligbo’ is generally not stigmatized, although it provokes negative attitudes among language purists and cultural nationalists, linguists and non-linguists alike (e.g. Onumajuru, 2007; see also references cited in Ahukanna, 1990).

3. Switching vs. Mixing

The phenomenon characterised by the combination of material from two languages in a discourse or within a sentence has been studied for several decades by researchers who have used such terms as “codeswitching”, “code mixing”, “code-changing”, “code shifting”, “language mixing”, “language alternation” and “code alternation” to refer to it. In language contact literature, the two terms most commonly used for this phenomenon are codeswitching (alternatively spelled as “code-switching” and “code switching”) and code-mixing (or code mixing). The use of the two terms by different authors often results in ambiguity and confusion, as there is no general agreement on the meanings of the terms, which often depend on the perspective adopted by the researcher. The definitions given by Poplack (1980, 2001, 2004) on the one hand, and Auer (1999) on the other, will serve to illustrate the point that there are no general definitions of the terms.

Poplack (1980:583) defines codeswitching as “the alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence or constituent.” Another definition of codeswitching (Poplack, 2004) is “the utterance-internal juxtaposition, in unintegrated form, of overt linguistic elements from two or more languages, with no necessary change of interlocutor or topic.” She further describes codeswitching as the “mixing” of elements from two or more languages at any level of linguistic structure, and refers to the occurrence of such mixing within the confines of a sentence as intrasentential (code-) switching (Poplack, 2004).

Auer (1999) adopts a pragmatic and conversational perspective and distinguishes “language mixing” which involves “frequent intrasentential juxtapositions of the two languages” from ‘code-switching’ which occurs “at major syntactic and prosodic boundaries (at clause or sentence level)” (Auer, 1999:312). The distinction of switching and mixing in Auer (1999) provides further insight into the controversy surrounding the two terms. Both Auer (1999) and Kachru (1978) use mixing to refer to a phenomenon which they consider a later stage in the development in a bilingual community of a new speech variety characterized by more integration of the two languages in contact. Auer (1999) argues that the grammatical format (integration or otherwise) of elements does not

determine their status as codeswitching, and proposes a continuum of language alternation phenomena with codeswitching and fused lects at the extreme positions, and language mixing at a point in-between. The major criterion he uses to characterize codeswitching is the local pragmatic force attributed to the juxtaposition of two languages by participants in a speech event, which distinguishes it from language mixing. Thus, he proposes that it is in fact possible for a language mixing mode to be used in a locally meaningful way, resulting in codeswitching of a second order (a case of language mixing being used to achieve codeswitching), or for codeswitching to lose its pragmatic value and turn into mixing.

Furthermore, the transition from codeswitching to language mixing on the continuum proposed in Auer (1999) is said to include phases in which the “older” codeswitching alternational pattern co-occurs with the “newer” insertional language mixing pattern. Distinctions of this sort and the difficulty of keeping them apart point to the fact that the controversy surrounding the use of ‘switching’ and ‘mixing’ to describe bilingual speech behaviour will be around for a very long time.

To further buttress this point is the fact that the terms “switching” and “mixing” elicit different interpretations from different researchers and have been a major point of disagreement in the literature. For example, on the one hand, Haugen (1950, as cited in Myers-Scotton, 2002:3) has faulted the use of the term “mixing” for the juxtaposition of elements of two languages in the same clause: “As a description of a process it might seem to have a certain vividness that justifies its use, but on closer inspection it shows disadvantages which led later linguists, such as Sapir and Bloomfield, to abandon it [...] Mixing implies the creation of an entirely new entity and the disappearance of both constituents; it also suggests a jumbling of a more or less haphazard nature.” On the other hand, however, other researchers (e.g. Bokamba (1989), Sridhar and Sridhar (1980, as cited in Jacobson, 1998:52)) have proposed the adoption of the term “code-mixing” for intra-sentential alternation, and “codeswitching” for inter-sentential alternation to capture the distinct claims made by the two phenomena. A somewhat similar view held by Muysken (2000) is that codeswitching “suggests something like alternation,” for which reason he distinguishes (intrasentential) mixing and (code-) switching.

A further perspective on the distinction between “switching” and “mixing” comes from researchers who use codeswitching as a cover term for inter-sentential and intra-sentential alternation, and employ the term “code mixing” for the latter (e.g. Wardhaugh, 2006). Another cover-term use is the adoption of the terms “(language-) mixing” and “codemixing” for codeswitching, borrowing and other phenomena in which lexical items and grammatical features of more than one language are found in the same sentence (Pfaff, 1979; Muysken, 2000). Another position is that of Myers-Scotton (1998:106) who does not distinguish codeswitching (CS) from codemixing (CM), claiming that “much confusion surrounds the term ‘CM’ and its addition to the literature seems unnecessary. Some who use ‘CM’ seem to intend it as a synonym for CS and others seem to differentiate CM as being intrasentential while CS is intersentential. To make this distinction, the modifiers ‘intrasentential’ and ‘intersentential’ can be used with CS.”

The study adopts the position of Myers-Scotton in the use of the term “codeswitching” to refer generally to the combination of elements from two different linguistic systems in the same sentence or discourse. A distinction is made in the study between intersentential and intrasentential codeswitching, as in (1) and (2) below, respectively.

- 1 Òtu à kà ọ dì ebe niile.¹ *What I am advising is that you have to go back to him.*²

That's the way it is everywhere. What I am advising. . . .

- 2 Ọ sì nà ya dì *very happy*, nà ya mà ị nà Lagos.

S/he said that s/he was very happy, that s/he knew you in Lagos.

The discourse in (1) illustrates codeswitching between a full clause in Igbo and one in English, while in (2), elements of Igbo and English are used together within a clause. This study focuses on intrasentential codeswitching, as in (2), for which the term “codeswitching” is often used in an unqualified manner.

Furthermore, following Muysken (2000), a three-way typology of bilingual speech is assumed in the study, according to which intrasentential codeswitching, (termed “(intrasentential) code-mixing” by Muysken) involves the patterns of insertion, alternation and congruent lexicalization. According to Muysken (2000) the three patterns not only represent the different processes at work in codeswitching, but also correspond to the dominant models of codeswitching research. The three patterns are described in the following paragraphs.

In the insertional pattern of codeswitching, one language clearly dominates the other by providing the grammatical structure into which elements of the other language are inserted. Muysken (2000:63) notes that insertions generally exhibit a nested *a b a* structure, in which there is grammatical relationship between the fragment preceding and the fragment following the inserted element. Furthermore, inserted elements could be constituents of several types, ranging from single lexical items to multi-word constituents. The following are examples of Igbo-English insertional codeswitching.

- 3 À-ma-ọ m *pressure* ọ nò n' ime ya.
VOC-know-NEG I pressure s/he be PREP inside it³
I do not know the pressure s/he is facing.

- 4 Ọ ma-ọ nà *the youth of the church* nà-à-watch ya.
s/he know-NEG that the youth of the church PROG-PRT-watch him/her⁴
S/he did not know that the youth of the church were watching him/her.

In (3) and (4), the ‘matrix language’ is identified as Igbo, i.e. the Igbo language provides the grammatical framework into which English elements have been inserted. The inserted English elements may be lone lexical items (e.g. ‘pressure’, ‘watch’) or longer expressions (e.g. ‘the youth of the church’.)

Muysken (2000:9) notes that insertion is common in colonial settings and in recent migrant communities and may also signal asymmetry in speakers’ proficiency in the two languages. It has also been noted that much of the African codeswitching data reported in the literature exhibit a dominantly insertional pattern in which a matrix language can be identified (Auer, 1999; Muysken, 2000). Kamwangamalu (1989, as cited in Bentahila and Davies, 1998:30) has observed that the matrix language in such instances would usually

¹ Tone is marked as follows: high tone and its variant, downstep, are unmarked (e.g. u); low tone is marked with a grave accent on the vowel (e.g. ù).

² Codeswitching is marked in italics throughout the study. In Igbo-English bilingual data, Igbo material is in normal font, while English material is in italics.

³ VOC = vocative part of a discontinuous subject pronoun; NEG = negative suffix; PREP = preposition

⁴ PROG = progressive aspect marker; PRT = participle prefix

be an African language. Muysken (2000) has identified the insertional pattern in such models as the Matrix Language Frame of Myers-Scotton (1997, 1998, 2002).

The alternational pattern of codeswitching has been described as one in which “one language is replaced by the other” within a sentence, or in which there is “a true switch from one language to the other, involving both grammar and lexicon” (Muysken, 2000:5). Bentahila and Davies (1998:49) describe it as a process in which the speaker “can best be seen as speaking now one language, now another.” Muysken (2000) further notes that alternation occurs at major clause boundaries, or at the periphery of the sentence. The following are Igbo-English examples:

- 5 **Ànyị** **nà-a-complain** **about what the Federal Government is doing.**
 we PROG-PRT-complain about what the Federal Government is doing
 We are complaining about what the Federal Government is doing.
- 6 **Ndị** **ha** **nà** **ya** **mèkòtà-rà** **dị** **in support of her leaving the job.**
 those they and her relate-IND be in support of her leaving the job⁵
 Her relatives are in support of her leaving the job.

In both (5) and (6) the speaker can be said to be speaking Igbo up to the beginning of the English expressions. Muysken (2000:8) has noted that alternation is characteristic of “stable bilingual communities with a tradition of language separation” and underlies such works as Poplack (1980).

Muysken (2000) describes the third codeswitching pattern, congruent lexicalization, as involving the sharing of grammatical structure by two languages, with words from both languages inserted more or less randomly into the structure. There is grammatical convergence of the two languages (i.e. the languages involved share the grammatical structure of the sentence, fully or in part), as well as a wide variety of single switched lexical items, the presence of homophonous diamorphs and bidirectional switching. Muysken (2000) claims that with a few exceptions, such as the work of Clyne (1967), congruent lexicalization underlies the study of style shifting and dialect/standard variation (e.g. Labov (1972) and Trudgill (1986)), rather than bilingual language use proper.

The patterns identified in this study within the three-way typology of bilingual speech presented above are insertion and alternation.

4. Analyses of Lone Items in Language Contact Literature

Although multi-word constituents are consistently classified as instances of codeswitching, there has been much disagreement among scholars over the classification of “lone other-language items” (Poplack and Meechan, 1998) or “single-lexeme embedded language items” (Myers-Scotton, 1997). The controversial lone items are usually major-class content words like nouns, verbs and adjectives (Muysken, 2000; Poplack and Meechan, 1998), and constitute the greatest proportion of mixed speech phenomena (Berk-Seligson, 1986; Myers-Scotton, 1998; Poplack and Meechan, 1998; Poplack, Sankoff and Miller, 1988).

Lone items are basically classified as borrowing or codeswitching, following Poplack (1980) and Myers-Scotton (1992, 1997), respectively. The lack of agreement about how lone items in bilingual speech should be classified has resulted in the lack of a clear-cut distinction between codeswitching and borrowing as language contact

⁵ IND = indicative suffix

phenomena. The diagnostics used and the conclusions reached by proponents of the two positions are so dissimilar that it has been suggested that “efforts to distinguish codeswitching, codemixing and borrowing are doomed” (Eastman, 1992:1). However, disambiguating codeswitching and borrowing as forms of language mixture remains vital, because, as Mustafawi (2002:219) notes, grouping lone items “with the wrong category may obscure the patterns of behavior of the true members of that category.” Determining the status of lone items is crucial in this regard.

This study seeks to determine the status of lone English verbs in Igbo-English bilingual speech, such as those in examples (7) through (10):

7 **Ha a-na-ghị e-represent anyị ọfuma.**
 They PFX-PROG-NEG PRT-represent us well⁶
 They do not represent us well.

8 **A condemn-ù-rù ya.**
 IMPERS.PN. condemn-V-PST him/her⁷
 S/he was condemned.

9 **È-believe-ù-ghị m nà ọ dị ọtù ahụ.**
 VOC-believe-V-NEG I that it be manner that
 I do not believe that it is that way.

10 **Ihe à bù ihe ha manufacture-rò bute-re anyị.**
 thing this be thing they manufacture-PST bring-BNF us⁸
 This is what they manufactured and brought to us.

Integrated lone lexical items, such as the English verbs ‘represent’, ‘condemn’, ‘believe’ and ‘manufacture’ in the above examples have been given conflicting analyses in the literature. The study examines them with a view to determining whether there are any special features that characterize them as instances of either codeswitching or borrowing. The lexical category of verb is ideal for the investigation because whereas other lexical categories in Igbo generally lack inflection, the verbal inflectional system is elaborate. The verbal is the only category in Igbo that can take affixes, and especially inflectional affixes (Emenanjo, 1978). In addition, verbs are generally known to provide striking examples of integration in insertional codeswitching (Muysken, 2000:63).

4.1 Lone Items as Instances of ‘Nonce’ Borrowing

The perspective that lone items in bilingual speech are instances of borrowing of the ‘nonce’ type is based on the work of Poplack (1980, 1993, 2004), and is upheld in a large body of studies, most of which adopt the variationist framework (e.g. Pfaff, 1979, Poplack, Sankoff and Miller, 1988; Sankoff and Poplack, 1981; Sankoff, Poplack and Vanniarajan, 1990).

Nonce words have been described as spontaneous coinages which may be produced by a speaker to fulfill various text-specific functions, including filling in conceptual/lexical gaps and creating stylistic effects, as employed by Lewis Carroll (*Jabberwocky*), while observing the word formation rules of the language (Bussmann, 1996). A nonce word may be consciously invented or accidentally used on a single

⁶ PFX = prefix used in certain verb forms with a noun (phrase) or plural pronoun subject

⁷ IMPERS. PN. = impersonal pronoun; V = syllable structure vowel; PST = past tense marker

⁸ BNF = benefactive suffix

occasion by a speaker; for example, a speaker may coin an alternative approximation because he cannot remember a particular word (Crystal, 2008). It is assumed that “the statistical frequency of such formations being used again determines whether they will make the transition from the creation of a one-time neologism to a lexicalized word codified in a dictionary” (Bussmann, 1996:805; see also Crystal, 2008).

The descriptions of nonce words in Bussmann (1996) and Crystal (2008) are based on their use in monolingual speech. Scholars who endorse the category of nonce words in bilingual speech use the term somewhat differently to indicate a pattern of borrowing of single content words or compounds (e.g. Poplack, Sankoff and Miller, 1988). The current use of the term ‘nonce borrowing’ in language contact literature has been attributed to its use by Weinreich (1953/1968) for borrowing that is not yet established in terms of phonological integration, recurrence in the speech of an individual and distribution across the community (Poplack, 2004; Sankoff, Poplack and Vanniarajan, 1990). Nonce loans may even be momentary borrowings (Sankoff, Poplack and Vanniarajan, 1990), hence their description as “linguistically integrated momentary or nonce borrowings” (Sankoff and Miller, 1988:52), probably when used in a manner similar to filling in lexical or conceptual gaps, as noted for monolingual speech in Bussmann (1996).

The assumption that nonce words in monolingual speech may transit from one-time coinages into dictionary-attested neologisms (Bussmann, 1996; Crystal, 2008) has been adopted for bilingual speech, with the recognition of two categories of borrowing – nonce and established – which have similar linguistic characteristics, such as morphological and syntactic integration, but differ in terms of “those that occur only once in our corpus (‘nonce’ borrowings) and those used by many speakers (widespread loans)” (Poplack, Sankoff and Miller, 1988:50). Similarly, Sankoff, Poplack and Vanniarajan (1990:71) claim that nonce borrowings “differ from established loanwords in that they are not necessarily recurrent, widespread, or recognized by host language monolinguals.” In other words the two patterns of borrowing differ according to whether or not the forms have achieved currency and acceptance in the speech community. Thus, nonce borrowings may be structurally similar to established loan forms in adapting to the features of the recipient language, but are differentiated from the latter by their lack of dictionary attestation and diffusion in the community (Poplack, 1993; Poplack and Meechan, 1998; Poplack, Wheeler and Westwood, 1989).

However, Myers-Scotton (1997:23) has argued that the introduction of the category of nonce loans is unjustified, noting that “researchers increasingly reject “nonce borrowing” as a resting-place out of harm’s way for single lexemes which are not clearly established borrowings...” She argues that removing single-lexeme items, most of which are morphosyntactically integrated, from codeswitching data makes it difficult to assess competing models of structural constraints on codeswitching since the data to which they are applied are simplified (Myers-Scotton, 1997:23; see also Jake, Myers-Scotton and Gross, 2002; Myers-Scotton, 1992).

In the nonce borrowing view of lone items, the processes that yield codeswitching and borrowing are assumed to be different, even though they may show resemblance in their surface manifestation. This assumption is reflected in the claim that “code switching and borrowing remain distinct processes, even at the level of the single word. Whereas in code switching, the speaker alternates between one coherent grammar (and lexicon) and another, according to certain predictable syntactic constraints on switch points, in borrowing only one grammatical system is brought into play” (Poplack, Sankoff and Miller, 1988:93). In addition to this structural difference, codeswitching and borrowing are further differentiated on the basis of morphosyntactic integration. Borrowing (established and nonce) is conceived as the adaptation of elements of one language to the morphological and syntactic patterns of another language, such that borrowed elements

pattern according to the grammar of the recipient language. Conversely, a complete lack of integration characterizes codeswitched elements, which pattern according to the donor language grammar. According to this view, codeswitched constituents are generally multi-word fragments “which remain morphologically and syntactically unadapted to recipient-language patterns” (Poplack, Sankoff and Miller, 1988:52). On the contrary, morphosyntactically integrated lone elements (with the exception of a small proportion) are considered nonce borrowings. Poplack and Meechan (1998:136) argue that “whatever the linguistic properties of the language pair examined, ranging from typologically distant to nearly identical, and the diagnostic employed – phonological, morphological, or syntactic, lone other-language items overwhelmingly surface with the patterns of the language in which they are incorporated [...] This is evidence that they have been borrowed into that language, despite the lack, in some cases, of any dictionary attestation or diffusion within the community.” This position has been called the nonce borrowing/loan hypothesis (Poplack and Meechan, 1998; Sankoff, Poplack and Vanniarajan, 1990).

The use of integration as the defining principle in distinguishing borrowing and codeswitching is based on the view of codeswitching as involving an alternation of constituents from participating languages, in line with the Free Morpheme Constraint (Poplack, 1980; Sankoff and Poplack, 1981), stated as follows:

The Free Morpheme Constraint

Codes may be switched after any constituent in discourse provided that constituent is not a bound morpheme.

(Poplack, 1980:585-586)

The constraint predicts that codeswitching is only possible after a constituent that is not a bound morpheme, and rules out switches between a bound morpheme of one language and a free morpheme of another, such as ‘eat-*iendo*’ in the Spanish-English example (11) below:

11 **estoy* eat-*iendo*.

I-am eat-ing

I am eating. (MacSwan, 1999:41)

Poplack (1980) argues that the sentence (11) is not possible as codeswitching by reason of the Free Morpheme Constraint which disallows a switch between a stem in one language (English ‘eat’) and a bound morpheme in another language (Spanish *-iendo*). However, such a sequence would not be ill-formed if the stem has been phonologically integrated into the language of the bound morpheme, as in the case of borrowing (MacSwan, 2000; Poplack, 1980; Sankoff, Poplack, and Vanniarajan, 1990).

Eze (1998) adopts the variationist approach to analyze his Igbo-English corpora, using a combination of the morphological criterion of affixation and the morphophonemic criterion of the Igbo rule of vowel harmony. On that basis, he classifies the lone English verbs in the following examples as nonce borrowings (Eze, 1998:187).

12 *Ọ* work-ù-ghì.

It work-V-NEG

It did not work.

13 *Ha wed-ì-rì n’ ụlọụkà mgbè ụkà kà bù ụkà*

They wed-V-PST PREP church when church still was church

They wedded in church when the church was still authentic.

Eze (1998) notes that lone English verbs, like ‘work’ and ‘wed’ in (12) and (13), respectively, observe similar patterns as their Igbo counterparts in terms of affixation and the application of the Igbo rule of vowel harmony. Following Sankoff, Poplack, and Vanniarajan (1990), he regards the morphologically integrated lone verbs as nonce loans rather than violations of the Free Morpheme Constraint.

4.2 Lone Items as Instances of Codeswitching

The codeswitching analysis of lone items is based on the assumption that the morphosyntactic processes involved in the surface realization of codeswitching and borrowing are similar (Myers-Scotton, 1992, 1997). Myers-Scotton claims that single codeswitching forms “are always integrated into the syntax and often into the morphology of the ML” (matrix language) (1992:31), and that most borrowed forms “are entirely – or almost entirely – morphosyntactically integrated into the recipient language” (2002:42). Likewise, Treffers-Daller (1991) considers codeswitching and borrowing as similar from both a theoretical and practical point of view.

In the codeswitching view of lone items, codeswitching and borrowing are differentiated on the basis of community and social function frequency and the predictability feature of the elements. Predictability means that a borrowed form can be predicted to reoccur because it has a status (and possibly a dictionary entry) in the recipient language, while a codeswitched form cannot be predicted to reoccur, i.e. it has no predictive value or shows no frequency of occurrence in a data corpus (Myers-Scotton, 1992:20). Similarly, monolingual speakers can use borrowed forms while only bilingual speakers engage in codeswitching (because borrowed forms have an entry in the mental lexicons of the donor and recipient languages, while codeswitches are only accessible for use in one language) (Bentahila and Davies, 1983; Kamwangamalu, 1992; Myers-Scotton, 1992, 1997, 2006).

The codeswitching view of lone items is adopted in insertional accounts of codeswitching, such as the Matrix Language Frame (Myers-Scotton, 1997), which assume an asymmetrical relation between the participating languages, i.e. that the constituents of one language (the embedded language) are inserted into a structure provided by another language (the matrix language), which sets the overall grammatical frame of a code-switched complement phrase (CP) or S-bar (Myers-Scotton, 1998). In a bilingual or mixed constituent, the matrix language determines the order of constituents and provides the system morphemes or functional categories (Jake, Myers-Scotton and Gross, 2002; Myers-Scotton, 1997, 1998, 2002).

The following are examples, recorded in the literature, of lone verbs of one language in discourse framed in another language.

- 14 **Matatu i- -li- -overturn na kugonga basi**
 small bus it- PST -overturn and to-hit bus
 The matatu overturned and hit a bus.

Swahili-English (Myers-Scotton, 1992:34)

- 15 **A ñe mĩ help-e**
 They COP me help-PRES.PROG⁹
 They are helping me.

⁹ COP = copula; PRES = present

Adajme-English (Nartey, 1982, p. 185)

- 16 **Tatbqa tat-gratter**
you keep DUR-scratch¹⁰
You keep scratching.

Moroccan Arabic-French (Bentahila and Davies, 1983:315)

- 17 **Mobali nayo a-telephon-aka yo deux fois par jour**
Spouse of you he-telephone-HAB you two times per day¹¹
Your husband calls you twice per day.

Lingala-French (Bokamba, 1989:279)

The lone embedded language (i.e. English or French) verbs in the above examples are inflected with tense-aspect and subject-verb agreement affixes from the matrix language (i.e. Swahili, Adajme, Moroccan-Arabic or Lingala). Myers-Scotton (1997) regards such forms as counter-examples to the Free Morpheme Constraint.

Integration of lone embedded language verbs can also be observed in the following Igbo-English examples.

- 18 **A nà- è-show-i-cha ya nà TV.**
IMPERS.PN. PROG PRT-show-V-ES it PREP TV¹²
It is even shown on TV.

- 19 **E mee kà m ga check-ì-e.**
later that I go check-V-OVS¹³
I will go and check it later.

- 20 **Ì mean-ì-rì ya?**
you mean-V-IND it
Do you mean it?

The lone English verbs in (18) through (20) are inflected with Igbo tense-aspect and extensional affixes in exactly the same way Igbo verbs would be inflected in those positions. For example, (18) would be expressed in (unmixed) Igbo with the Igbo verb **è-zi-cha**. The Igbo verb stem **zi** and its English counterpart 'show' bear the same affixes: the Igbo participial prefix **e-** and extensional suffix **-cha**.

5. Integrated and Unintegrated Lone English Items

Lone English elements in otherwise Igbo discourse are drawn from virtually every syntactic category. Lone lexical items such as noun and adjective are exemplified in (21) and (22), respectively, and lone grammatical items such as conjunction and (postpositional) particle of a phrasal verb are exemplified in (23) and (24), respectively.

- 21 (a) **Ha b̀nye anyị nke anyị kà ànyị me-wa nà side anyị.**
they give us that of us so that we do-ES PREP side our

¹⁰ DUR = durative

¹¹ HAB = habitual

¹² ES = extensional suffix

¹³ OVS = open vowel suffix

Let them give us ours, so that we do (it) at our own side.

- (b) **Ọ nà- è-mebì-ri anyị business.**
 s/he PROG PRT-spoil-ES us business
 S/he is spoiling our business.

- 22 (a) **Happy afọ ọhụrụ.**
 happy year new
 Happy New Year!

- (b) **Unù dì-kwà lucky o.**
 you (pl.) be-ES lucky DSC¹⁴
 You are really lucky.

- 23 (a) **Ha chọpụtà-rà that o sì ndị na- a-chi anyị**
 they find out-PST that it come from those PROG PRT-lead us
n' aka.
 PREP hand
 They found out that it is the fault of our leaders.

- (b) **I ché nà ọ бү because nà i nà- e-wèta**
 you think that it be because that you PROG PRT-bring
ego.
 money
 You think that it is because you bring (in) the money.

- 24 **M na- à-gbanye ya, ọ na-ghị à-bịa on.**
 I PROG PRT-switch on it it PROG-NEG PRT-come on
 When I switch it on, it does not come on.

A basic difference between the lone English verbs in (18) – (20) and the lone items of other categories in (21) – (24) is that, unlike lone items of other categories, the verbs are generally morphologically integrated into Igbo. The integration of lone English verbs in Igbo-English bilingual speech is so pervasive that in a conversation about voter registration recorded for this study, five out of six occurrences of the verb ‘register’ were inflected with Igbo tense-aspect affixes, as follows:

- 25 **Ihe ahụ e jì è-register a-dị-ghị enough.**
 thing the IMPERS.PN. use PFX-register PFX-be-NEG enough
 The materials used to register (voters) are not enough.

- 26 **Ò nwe-ghi onye n' ime anyị register-a-nụ.**
 it get-NEG person PREP inside us register-V-ES
 None of us has registered.

- 27 **Onye ọbụlà pụtà register-a.**
 person every come out register-OVS
 Everyone should come out and register.

- 28 **How many days kà ha gà- e-jì wèè register-sịa?**
 How many days that they FUT PRT-use to register-ES¹⁵

¹⁴ DSC = discourse particle

How many days will they need to register all (voters)?

- 29 **The next thing, ò resolve-ù-ò ì-hapù i-register.**
 The next thing s/he resolve-V-OVS INF-leave INF-register¹⁶
 The next thing was that s/he resolved not to register.

The verb ‘register’ is realised with a variety of tense-aspect and extensional affixes in contexts of insertional codeswitching, as represented in (25) through (29). Note that in addition to the verb ‘register’, other English language elements have been inserted into the Igbo grammatical frame in positions outside the projection of the lone verbs: a (predicative) adjective ‘enough’, a time phrase ‘how many days’, a noun phrase ‘the next thing’ and a verb ‘resolve’.

Integrated English lone verbs are predicted to occur in contexts in which a matrix or base language can be clearly identified and the grammatical frame is in Igbo, as in (25) – (29) above. It is noted that English verbs are integrated when the inflectional element (INFL) preceding them is in Igbo. This point is further discussed below. Unintegrated English lone verbs may, however, occur in contexts of alternational codeswitching. For example, the verb ‘register’ is unintegrated in example (30) below:

- 30 **À-dì-ghì-kwa m sure that one million Nigerians can register all over the country.**

VOC-be-NEG-ES I sure that one

I am not sure that one million Nigerians can register all over the country.

In (30) the verb ‘register’ occurs in a stretch of discourse in English in which it is not inflected after the modal auxiliary ‘can’, in line with English grammar rules. This represents the alternational pattern and contrasts with the insertional pattern, in which the matrix language, Igbo, sets the grammatical frame into which English verbs are inserted.

Another context in which lone English verbs are not inflected with Igbo affixes is when the light verb strategy is employed, as in (31) and (32).

- 31 **Ha mè-rè indicate nà ha a-ma m-bia.**
 they do-PST indicate that they PFX-NEG PFX-come
 They indicated that they would not come.

- 32 **Ọ bù m mè-rè ya introduce.**
 It be I do-PST him/her introduce
 It was I that introduced him/her.

The use of a “light” verb (Wichmann and Wohlgemuth, 2008; Wohlgemuth, 2009), also known as “operator” verb (Edwards and Gardner-Chloros, 2007), “dummy” verb (Eze, 1998) or “auxiliary/helping” verb (Muysken, 2000), like ‘do’ or ‘make’ and their equivalents in other languages, as a strategy for the integration of other-language verbs has been reported cross-linguistically as a loanword and a code-mixing/switching strategy. The present study focuses on integrated lone English verbs, as in (18) through (20) and (25) through (29), and does not extend to unintegrated verbs, as in (31) and (32). However, it is observed that in sentences that employ the light verb strategy there is a clear matrix language. In (31) and (32) the grammatical structure is in Igbo in line with

¹⁵ FUT = future marker

¹⁶ INF = infinitive marker

the observation that the bilingual compound/complex verb (Edwards and Gardner-Chloros, 2007; Muysken, 2000) or ‘do’ (verb) construction (Myers-Scotton, 2002) consists of an operator verb element supplied by the matrix language and a lexical verb from the embedded language (Myers-Scotton, 2002). The lexical element usually “supplies the core semantic content of the construction” (Edwards and Gardner-Chloros, 2007:74), while the light verb is a grammatical element. In (31) and (32), the light verb **mé** (‘do’), which may carry (Igbo) inflectional affixes, is used to introduce a lone unintegrated English verb. Eze (1998) classifies Igbo sentences with the “dummy verb” **mé** (‘do’) and a lone English verb as a type of serial verb construction.

In summary, it has been illustrated in this section that lone English verbs in otherwise Igbo discourse are integrated and inflected as if they were Igbo verbs, but words of other categories are generally unintegrated. However unintegrated English verbs may occur in stretches of English discourse in the alternational pattern and in the light verb construction.

6. Integration in Multi-Word Verbal Segments

In addition to lone occurrences, integrated English verbs are found in multi-word English verbal segments. Consider the following sentences.

- 33 **A-bịà-rà m, ànyị à-na- è-live in peace.**
 VOC-come-PST I we PFX-PROG PRT-live in peace
 I came (and) we lived in peace.

- 34 **Drink à nà- è-me mmadụ è-put-ù-o on weight.**
 drink this PROG PRT-make person PFX-put-V-OVS on weight
 This drink makes one put on weight.

- 35 **Sị ha mix-ì-e up.**
 tell them mix-V-OVS up
 Tell them to mix up.

- 36 **I-settle down ebe à nà- è-si ike.**
 INF-settle down place this PROG PRT-be hard
 To settle down here is difficult.

- 37 **E-weigh-ì-chàrà m those options.**
 VOC-weigh-V-ES I those options.
 I weighed all the options.

- 38 **Ọ dì-kwà necessary ì-send-ì-rị gị that thing?**
 It be-ES necessary INF-send-V-BNF you that thing
 Is it still necessary to send you that thing?

- 39 **O finish-ì-go secondary school.**
 s/he finish-V-PERF secondary school¹⁷
 S/he has finished secondary school.

- 40 **À-support-ù-rọ m that idea.**
 VOC-support-V-NEG I that idea

¹⁷PERF = perfective aspect marker

I do not support that idea.

- 41 **O ji nwayò na- e-build up his thesis.**

he take gradualness PROG PRT-build up his thesis

He is gradually building up his thesis.

- 42 **Government suppose-rù ì-upgrade the standard of public schools.**

government suppose-IND INF-upgrade the standard of public schools

The government is supposed to upgrade the standard of public schools.

- 43 **Ọ gà- a-graduate this year.**

s/he FUT PRT-graduate this year

S/he will graduate this year.

The multi-word English verbal segments in the above examples are either set collocations, such as ‘live in peace,’ ‘put on weight,’ ‘mix up,’ ‘settle down,’ and ‘weigh those options’ in (33) through (37), or a verb followed by an expression required by its subcategorisation structure, such as ‘send that thing,’ ‘finish secondary school,’ ‘support that idea,’ ‘build up his thesis,’ ‘supposed to upgrade the standard of public schools’ and ‘graduate this year’ in (38) through (43). Although the multi-word verbal expressions are in English, the verbs they contain bear Igbo inflection, indicating an overall grammatical structure in Igbo into which the verbal expressions have been inserted. In (38), for example, the bivalent English verb ‘send’, which is inflected with Igbo affixes, is inserted together with its direct object (‘that thing’), but the indirect object **gị** (equivalent of ‘you’) is expressed in Igbo, the language that provides the overall grammatical structure. These observations conform to the Matrix Language Principle, stated as follows:

The Matrix Language Principle

There is always an analyzable or resolvable frame structuring the morphosyntax of any CP (Complementizer Phrase). This frame is called the Matrix Language.

(Myers-Scotton, 2002:8)

The occurrence of the English verbal expressions in (33) – (43) also confirms an assumption made in the literature that insertion may involve single items as well as whole phrases, i.e. in insertional codeswitching several types of constituent of one language may be inserted into a structure framed in another language (Auer, 1999; Bentahila and Davies, 1998; Muysken, 2000). The data presented thus far have illustrated the insertion of lone English verbs, and verbs with other constituents within their projection.

It is thus observed that morphological integration is realised on all English verbs preceded by Igbo INFL to the same degree and by the same features – they are fully integrated, whether they are lone elements or occur in multi-word segments. The occurrence of English verbs as lone elements or in a multi-word segments is therefore merely incidental, and integration does not present a full account of lone English verbs in Igbo-English bilingual speech, contra Eze (1998). In other words, lone verbs in Igbo-English bilingual speech represent codeswitching as much as multi-word verbal segments. A codeswitching account is therefore proposed for English lone verbs in discourse framed in Igbo.

The fact of integration of English verbs may indeed constitute an argument against borrowing as it is inconceivable that multi-word English expressions like those in (33) through (43) have been borrowed, albeit momentarily, simply because the English verbs they contain have been integrated into Igbo. The nonce-borrowing analysis of lone verbs on the basis of integration is therefore not tenable in the light of this. In addition, the fact

that only competent Igbo-English bilinguals are capable of using multi-word English verbal expressions, such as those in (33) through (43), suggests that they are codeswitched expressions. Conversely lone English verbs may constitute codeswitching if they are not available in the mental lexicon of monolingual Igbo speakers. Therefore, integration is not significant in distinguishing between codeswitching and borrowing in Igbo-English bilingual speech. This position is consistent with that assumed in Kamwangamalu (1992), Myers-Scotton (1998, 2002) and Treffers-Daller (1991).

7. Insights from the Integration of English Verbs

Certain insights can be gained from the fact of integration of lone English verbs in Igbo-English bilingual speech. The first is that the inflectional element INFL is fundamental in determining the form of the verb (integrated or unintegrated). In the examples cited above, English verbs are inflected with Igbo affixes in the insertional pattern in which the grammatical structure is in Igbo. The Igbo inflectional affixes simply attach to the English verbs following them. This assumption is supported by an observation made in respect of Yoruba-English codeswitching (Lamidi, 2009). Yoruba has no tense-aspect affixes, and in insertional codeswitching all English verbs appear in their bare forms (without affixes) because INFL is in Yoruba. In the Igbo-English case, English verbs are affixed with Igbo elements, on the basic assumption of an Igbo grammatical frame into which English elements are inserted. Muysken's (2000) suggestion that verbs provide striking examples of integration in insertional codeswitching is also pertinent here – inserted English verbs are integrated morphologically into Igbo because they are preceded by Igbo INFL represented by the functional elements tense, aspect and negation.

The grammatical category of verbal inflection (INFL) must be assumed to be in Igbo to enable verbal integration, even when the subject is in English, as in (42) above, and (44) below.

- 44 *The government then sponsor-rò ndị inspectors.*
 the government then sponsor-PST PL inspectors¹⁸
 The government then sponsored inspectors.

The combination of elements in (42) and (44) is such that, with the exception of two Igbo grammatical elements, all the positions in the structure are filled with English material. This lends credence to the proposal of an abstract level of grammatical structure in codeswitching (Myers-Scotton, 2002, 2005), in respect of which Lipski (1992:198) claims that “most bilingual speakers form the sentences first at some abstract semantic level.” There seems to be an abstract structure in (44), which is provided by Igbo (as indicated by the grammatical elements), and into which the following English elements have been inserted: a noun phrase in subject position, a verb, and a noun phrase in object position.

However, English grammatical structure is observable in the alternational pattern of codeswitching, as represented in (45).

- 45 *Ndị be anyị have lived in peace for several decades now.*
 People place our have lived in peace for several decades now.
 Our people have lived in peace for several decades now.

¹⁸ PL = plural

Assuming the structure NP INFL VP for the clause (Chomsky, 1986:19), the alternational pattern in (45) is such that after the subject position, which is in Igbo, the rest of the sentence is in English. The difference between the English grammatical structure in (45) and an Igbo one (as described above) is the inflectional element, which is in English, and which requires the following English verb to reflect English morphology. Note, however, that an Igbo verb is unacceptable after English INFL, as the contrast between the hypothetical (46a) and (46b) (derived from (45)) suggests.

46 (a) **Our people è-bie-la n' ùdo ọtụtụ afọ.**
 our people PFX-live-PERF PREP peace several years
 Our people have lived in peace for several years.

(b)***Our people have bìe/bìe-la /bì-ed n' ùdo ọtụtụ afọ.**¹⁹
 Our people have live/live-PERF /live-ED PREP peace several years
 Our people have lived in peace for several years.

In (46a) the English expression in subject position is followed by an Igbo verb with Igbo inflection, indicating that INFL is in Igbo in the alternational codeswitching pattern. The sentence (46b), which differs from (46a) only in the expression of INFL in English, is unacceptable whether the Igbo verb bears an English affix (**bi-ed**), an Igbo affix (**bìe-la**) or no affix (**bìe**). Comparing this with (45) indicates that English INFL may only be followed by an English verb in the alternational pattern of codeswitching.

Secondly, the integration of lone English verbs provides an insight into the nature of Igbo verbal affixes. In Igbo-English insertional codeswitching, the inflectional affixes are supplied by Igbo, and English verbs are treated exactly like Igbo verbs. The ease with which English verbs receive Igbo affixes can be likened to a strategy described as “stem insertion and direct affixation of native inflectional and derivational affixes” (Muysken, 2000:191), which is reported to be very frequent in agglutinative languages (Muysken, 1995, 2000; Myers-Scotton, 1997). Muysken (2000:76) has noted the non-selective nature of agglutinative affixes and has proposed that for non-selective affixes, “a lexical base in one language is equivalent to one in another language....” An illustration of this is found in Lingala-French codeswitching, for which Bokamba (1989:280) reports that “the French verb root occurs precisely where a typical Lingala verb would appear, and it shows the characteristic subject-verb agreement and tense/aspect morphological markings.” Similarly, Myers-Scotton’s (1997:23) Swahili-English data show that an English verb can be “treated as a verb stem inflected with Swahili tense/aspect prefixes just as a Swahili-origin verb stem would be inflected.” Lone English verbs in an Igbo grammatical structure exhibit similar characteristics. Thus, Eze (1998) notes the overwhelming similarity between Igbo verbs in an unmixed context and lone English-origin verbs in Igbo contexts. He concluded that “the English-origin verbs are functioning as Igbo, irrespective of their etymological origin” (Eze, 1998:188; emphasis mine).

The non-selective feature of Igbo affixes is illustrated by the fact that Igbo tense-aspect affixes attach to verbs (and verb-like elements) following them, irrespective of what language the verbs are expressed in. The following examples further illustrate this fact.

47 I **ruo-la the height of your career. Ò nwe-ghi-zi ihe ọzọ**
 you reach-PERF the height of your career. It get-NEG-ES thing another

¹⁹ ED = English past tense suffix

ị **gà-** **à-sị** **nà** **ị** **was-ù-rù.**
 you FUT PRT-say that you was-V-PST

You have attained the height of your career. There is nothing else of which you can say 'I was' (literally: '...that you was').

48 **È** **nwe-ghi** **ihe** **e** **crèche-tàlù; è**
 IMPERS.PN. get-NEG thing IMPERS.PN. crèche-BNF IMPERS.PN.
nwe-ghi **ihe** **a** **nursery-tàlù.**
 get-NEG thing IMPERS.PN. nursery-BNF

The crèche and the nursery (school) were of no benefit (literally: 'there was nothing gained by 'crèche-ing' and nothing gained by 'nursery-ing').

49 **Í** **tie** **gị** **ihe** **kịtāà,** **ị** **ma-ra** **ihe** **Daddy** **nà-** **è-say-i.**
 I hit you thing now you know-IND thing Daddy PROG PRT-say-V
 If I should flog you, you'll understand what Daddy is saying.

In (47), the past tense irregular English verb ('was') is treated as a verb stem, and a past tense suffix is attached to it. In (48) the English nouns 'crèche' and 'nursery' are used as verbs, and (49) contains the English verb 'say' (for which the speaker could easily have used the Igbo equivalent, **kwu**, but used the English 'say' to mimic a child's response of 'Daddy, I don't know what you're saying' when she was spoken to in Igbo). The examples (47) through (49) seem to illustrate what has been described as a process by which "bilinguals reach across into the other language to find something equivalent, and establish the newly found item as neutral with respect to the first language" (Muysken, 2000:35). The examples highlight the fact that Igbo tense-aspect markers are non-selective affixes which attach to whatever verbal element follows them.

8. Conclusion

The study has analyzed Igbo-English bilingual speech, in which English verbs occur either singly or in longer expressions. Lone English verbs were not isolated from multi-word verbal expressions for analysis, and the study has proved that there is insufficient morphosyntactic evidence to categorize them separately from other verbs. Multi-word English verbal expressions were shown to contain English verbs which have been integrated into Igbo, and morphological integration was shown to be realised on all English verbs to the same degree and by the same features, i.e. all English verbs are fully integrated, whether they are lone elements or occur in multi-word segments. It was, therefore, concluded that the occurrence of English verbs as lone elements or in multi-word segments is merely incidental. Added to the fact that multi-word English verbal expressions are only possible in the speech of competent Igbo-English bilinguals, it was observed that Igbo-English codeswitching may involve the insertion of single English verbs or English verbs with other constituents within their projection.

The study noted that full morphosyntactic integration of English verbs is consistent in the data whenever the grammatical structure (and therefore the inflectional element) is in Igbo. Integration reveals the basic distinction between an insertional pattern of codeswitching, in which the grammatical structure (and consequently the inflectional element) is in Igbo, and alternational codeswitching, in which the inflectional element is in English. Insertional codeswitching consistently yields morphosyntactically integrated English verbs through the attachment of Igbo affixes to the verbal stems following them.

It was further noted that although integration does not disambiguate codeswitching and borrowing, neither does it provide sufficient argument for a borrowing analysis of

lone English verbs, it reveals a basic difference between lone English verbs and lone items of other categories: unlike lone items of other categories, English verbs are generally morphologically integrated into Igbo. Integration also reveals the non-selective nature of Igbo verbal affixes, as a result of which English verbal stems are treated as the equivalent of Igbo stems.

The major distinction identified in the study between codeswitching and borrowing is that while a borrowed form can be predicted to reoccur because it has a status (and possibly a dictionary entry) in the recipient language, a codeswitched form has no predictive value or shows no frequency of occurrence in a data corpus. Consequently, monolingual speakers can use borrowed forms, which have an entry in the mental lexicons of the donor and recipient languages, while only bilingual speakers are capable of using (foreign origin) codeswitched forms, which are only accessible for use in one language. On this basis, lone English verbs may also constitute codeswitching if they are not available in the mental lexicon of monolingual Igbo speakers. This position goes against the nonce-borrowing hypothesis held by some researchers in the contact linguistics literature, while lending support to the position assumed elsewhere in the literature that lone items can represent codeswitching.

References

- Afuba, I. (2006). Who will save the Igbo language? Retrieved from <http://www.igbobasics.com/Revive%20Igbo%20Language.html>
- Ahukanna, J. G. W. (1990). Bilingualism and code-mixing in language use in Nigeria: The case of Igbo-English bilinguals. In E. N. Emenanjo (Ed.), *Multilingualism, minority languages and language policy in Nigeria* (pp. 175-185). Agbor: Central Books.
- Ansre, G. (1971). The influence of English on West African languages. In J. Spencer (Ed.), *The English language in West Africa* (pp. 145-164). London: Longman Group.
- Apakama, L. M. (2010). Language choice and the Igbo language in contemporary times: An appraisal of the state of Igbo language. *Nka: A Journal of the Arts and Languages*, 11, 1-6.
- Appel, R., and Muysken, P. (1987). *Language contact and bilingualism*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Auer, P. (1999). From codeswitching via language mixing to fused lects: Toward a dynamic typology of bilingual speech. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 3(4), 309-332.
- Azuonye, C. (2003). Igbo as an endangered language. *Uwa Ndi Igbo: Journal of Igbo Life and Culture*, 3, 40-68.
- Bamgbose, A. (1991). *Language and the nation: The language question in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Bentahila, A., and Davies, E. E. (1983). The syntax of Arabic-French code-switching. *Lingua*, 59, 301-330.
- Bentahila, A., and Davies, E. E. (1998). Codeswitching: An unequal partnership? In R. Jacobson (Ed.), *Codeswitching worldwide* (pp. 25-49). Berlin: Mouton.
- Berk-Seligson, S. (1986). Linguistic constraints on intrasentential code-switching: A study of Spanish/Hebrew bilingualism. *Language in Society*, 15, 313-348.
- Bokamba, E. G. (1989). Are there syntactic constraints on code-mixing? *World Englishes*, 8(3), 277-292.
- Bolonyai, A. (2005). English verbs in Hungarian/English codeswitching. In J. Cohen, K. T. McAlister, K. Rolstad, and J. MacSwan (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 4th International Symposium on Bilingualism* (pp. 317-327). Somerville, MA: Cascadia Press.
- Bussmann, H. (1996). *Routledge dictionary of language and linguistics*. (G. Trauth and K. Kazzazi, Trans. & Eds.). New York: Routledge.
- Carroll, L. (1872). *Through the looking-glass, and what Alice found there*. London: Macmillan and Co.
- Chomsky, N. (1986). Lectures on government and binding: The Pisa lectures (4th ed.). Dordrecht: Foris Publications.
- Clyne, M. (1967). *Transference and triggering: Observations on the language assimilation of postwar German-speaking migrants in Australia*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff.
- Crystal, D. (2008). *A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics* (6th ed.). Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Eastman, C. M. (1992). Codeswitching as an urban language-contact phenomenon. In C. M. Eastman (Ed.), *Codeswitching* (pp. 1-17). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

- Edwards, M., and Gardner-Chloros, P. (2007). Compound verbs in codeswitching: Bilinguals making do? *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 11, 73-91.
- Elugbe, B. O., and Omamor, A. P. (1991). *Nigerian Pidgin (Background and prospects)*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books.
- Eme, C. A. (2004). Improving Igbo language use at homes and communities. *Unizik Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 5, 302-313.
- Emenanjo, E. N. (1978). *Elements of modern Igbo grammar: A descriptive approach*. Ibadan: Oxford University Press.
- Eze, E. (1997). Aspects of language contact: A variationist perspective on codeswitching and borrowing in Igbo-English bilingual discourse. Doctoral thesis, University of Ottawa.
- Eze, E. (1998). Lending credence to a borrowing analysis: Lone English-origin incorporations in Igbo discourse. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 2(2), 183-201.
- Gani-Ikilama, T. O. (1990). Use of Nigerian Pidgin in Education: Why not? In E. N. Emenanjo (Ed.), *Multilingualism, minority languages and language policy in Nigeria* (pp.219-227). Agbor: Central Books.
- Haugen, E. (1950). The analysis of linguistic borrowing. *Language*, 26, 210-231.
- Jacobson, R. (1998). Conveying a broader message through bilingual discourse: An attempt at contrastive codeswitching research. In R. Jacobson (Ed.), *Codeswitching worldwide* (pp. 51-76). Berlin: Mouton.
- Jake, J. L., Myers-Scotton, C. and Gross, S. (2002). Making a minimalist approach to codeswitching work: Adding the matrix language. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 5(1), 69-91.
- Kachru, B. B. (1978). Towards structuring code-mixing: An Indian perspective. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 16, 27-46.
- Kamwangamalu, N. M. (1989). Codemixing and modernization. *World Englishes*, 8, 321-332.
- Kamwangamalu, N. M. (1992). 'Mixers' and 'mixing': English across cultures. *World Englishes*, 11(2-3), 173-181.
- Labov, W. (1967). *Sociolinguistic patterns*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Lamidi, M. T. (2009). Switch junctions in Yorùbá-English code-switching. *California Linguistic Notes*, 34(1).
- Lewis, M. P. (Ed.). (2003). *Ethnologue: Languages of the world* (16th ed.). Web Version. Dallas, TX: SIL International. Retrieved from <http://www.ethnologue.com/web.asp>.
- Lipski, J. M. (2005). Code-switching or Borrowing? No sé so no puedo decir, *you know*. In L. Sayahi, and M. Westmoreland (Eds.), *Selected Proceedings of the Second Workshop on Spanish Sociolinguistics* (pp. 1-15). Somerville, MA: Cascadia Proceedings Project.
- MacSwan, J. (2000). The architecture of the bilingual language faculty: Evidence from intrasentential code switching. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 3, 37-54.
- Mbata, C. O. (2010). The Igbo people and their language: A crisis of identity. *Nka: A Journal of the Arts and Languages*, 11, 69-78.
- Mustafawi, E. (2002). Lone English-origin nouns in Arabic: Codeswitches or borrowings? In S. Burelle, and S. Somesfalean (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Canadian Linguistic Association* (pp. 219-231). Montréal: Université du Québec à Montréal.
- Muysken, P. (1995). Code-switching and grammatical theory. In L. Milroy, and P. Muysken (Eds.), *One speaker, two languages: Cross-disciplinary perspectives on code-switching* (pp. 177-198). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Muysken, P. (2000). *Bilingual speech: A typology of code-mixing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (1992). Comparing codeswitching and borrowing. In C. M. Eastman (Ed.), *Codeswitching* (pp. 19-39). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (1997). *Duelling languages: Grammatical structure in codeswitching* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (1998). Structural uniformities vs. community differences in codeswitching. In R. Jacobson (Ed.), *Codeswitching worldwide* (pp. 91-108). Berlin: Mouton.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (2002). *Contact linguistics: Bilingual encounters and grammatical outcomes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (2005). Uniform structure: Looking beyond the surface in explaining codeswitching. *Rivista di Linguistica*, 17(1), 15-34.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (2006). *Multiple voices: An introduction to bilingualism*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Nartey, J. (1982). Code-switching, interference or faddism? Language use among educated Ghanaians. *Anthropological Linguistics*, 24(2), 183-192.
- Nwoye, O. G. (2003). Code-switching as a conscious discourse strategy: Evidence from Igbo. *Multilingua*,

- 12(4), 365-385.
- Obeng, S. G. (2004). West African languages in contact with European languages. In G. Echu, and S. G. Obeng (Eds.), *Africa meets Europe: Language contact in West Africa* (pp. 9-22). New York: Nova Science Publishers.
- Obiamalu, G. O., and Mbagwu, D. U. (2008). Motivations for code-switching among Igbo-English bilinguals: A linguistic and socio-psychological survey. *Ogiri: A New Journal of African Studies*, 5, 27-39.
- Odinye, I., and Odinye, I. (2010). Preventing the extinction of the Igbo language. *Ogiri: A New Journal of African Studies*, 7, 85-93.
- Olaofo, I. A. (1990). The relevance of linguistic teaching and learning to the implementation of the national language policy. In E. N. Emenanjo (Ed.), *Multilingualism, minority languages and language policy in Nigeria* (pp. 50-60). Agbor: Central Books.
- Onumajuru, V. C. (2007). Code-mixing among Igbo speakers. In O. Ndimele, (Ed.), *Nigerian languages, literatures, cultures and policy reforms: Festschrift for Ayo Bamgbose* (pp. 61-68). Port Harcourt: M and J Grand Orbit Communications Ltd. and Emhai Press.
- Pfaff, C. W. (1979). Constraints on language-mixing: Intrasentential code-switching and borrowing in Spanish-English. *Language*, 55, 291-318.
- Poplack, S. (1980). Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish Y TERMINO EN ESPAÑOL: Toward a typology of code-switching. *Linguistics*, 18, 581-618.
- Poplack, S. (1988). Contrasting patterns of codeswitching in two communities. In M. Heller (Ed.), *Codeswitching: Anthropological and sociolinguistic perspectives* (pp.151-186). Berlin: Mouton.
- Poplack, S. (1993). Variation theory and language contact. In D. Preston (Ed.), *American dialect research* (pp. 251-286). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Poplack, S. (2001). Code switching: Linguistic. In N. J. Smelser, and P. B. Baltes (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of the social and behavioral sciences* (pp. 2062-2065). New York: Elsevier.
- Poplack, S. (2004). Code-switching. In U. Ammon, U. N. Dittmar, K. J. Mattheier, and P. Trudgill (Eds.), *Soziolinguistik. An international handbook of the science of language* (2nd ed.) (pp. 589-596). Retrieved from <http://www.sociolinguistics.uottawa.ca/shanapoplack/francais/pubs/articles/Poplack2004.pdf>
- Poplack, S., and Meechan, M. (1998). Introduction. How languages fit together in codemixing. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 2(2), 127-138.
- Poplack, S., Sankoff, D., and Miller, C. (1988). The social correlates and linguistic processes of lexical borrowing and assimilation. *Linguistics*, 26, 47-104.
- Poplack, S., Wheeler, S., and Westwood, A. (1989). Distinguishing language contact phenomena: Evidence from Finnish-English bilingualism. *World Englishes*, 8(3), 389-406.
- Sankoff, D., and Poplack, S. (1981). A formal grammar for code-switching. *Papers in Linguistics*, 14, 3-45.
- Sankoff, D., Poplack, S., and Vanniarajan, S. (1990). The case of the nonce loan in Tamil. *Language Variation and Change*, 2, 71-101.
- Sridhar, S. N., and Sridhar, K. (1980). The syntax and psycholinguistics of bilingual code-mixing. *Canadian Journal of Psychology*, 34, 407-416.
- Treffers-Daller, J. (1991). Towards a uniform approach to code-switching and borrowing. In *Papers for the workshop on constraints, conditions and models* (pp. 259-279). Strasbourg: European Science Foundation.
- Trudgill, P. (1967). *Dialects in contact*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Ugorji, C. U. C. (2005). The Igbo language: Endangerment and empowerment. In O. Ndimele (Ed.), *Trends in the study of languages and linguistics in Nigeria: A festschrift for Philip Akujūobi Nwachukwu* (pp. 161- 170). Port Harcourt: M & J Grand Orbit Communications Ltd.
- Weinreich, U. (1953/1968). *Languages in contact*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Wichmann, S., and Wohlgemuth, J. (2008). Loan verbs in a typological perspective. In T. Stolz, D. Bakker, and R. S. Palomo (Eds.), *Aspects of language contact: New theoretical, methodological and empirical findings with special focus on Romancisation processes* (pp. 89-121). Berlin: Mouton.
- Wohlgemuth, J. (2009). *A typology of verbal borrowings*. Berlin: Mouton.
- Woolford, E. 1983. Bilingual code-switching and syntactic theory. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 14(3), 520-536.