ABSTRACT

Linguistics, code switching is a team referring to using more than one variety of language. It mainly takes place within a sentence although further research reveals that it is also possible within a conversation where one sentence maybe in one language and another in a different language, yet the setting does not change. The two are intrasentential and contextual code switching respectively. The study hypothesized that the key principles of code switching are topic, setting and participants. It also hypothesized that Gile's Communication Accommodation theory would be applicable in the data collected. The CAT theory views code switching from a cognitive point of view; the conversants' analysis of the topic before they switch. The data used consisted of observed instances of discourse in the Oshwal High School, some of which the researcher was also a participant- observer. Being a multilingual institution, Oshwal High School provided ground for a fruitful research. On the one hand, code switching within these utterances was looked at from the point of view of the theories posited by different scholars, and specifically the Communication Accommodation Theory. On the other hand, a group of informants filled questionnaires on their linguistic and academic backgrounds, and their attitude towards switching codes by themselves or others around them. The findings of the study show that although there were cases where the CAT theory seemed to work, on other instances there seemed to be other reasons motivating the switches'. No one theory is sufficient to explain the variables for code switching, and the motivation is a combination of many factors, some being cognitive, and others brought about by external factors. The Communication Accommodation Theory is therefore, not enough to explain the social motivation for code switching. It is valid, but leaves some gaps that can only be filled theories posited by other scholars in the field.