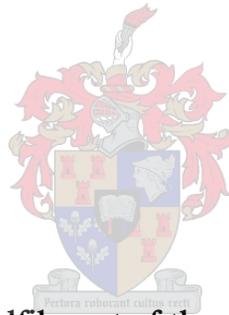


**The functions of teachers' code switching  
in multilingual and multicultural high school classrooms  
in the Siyanda District of the Northern Cape Province**

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## **Declaration**

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained herein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof and that it has not previously, in its entirety or in part, been submitted at any university for the purpose of obtaining any qualification.

Date: 2 November 2009

## Abstract

Code switching is a widely observed phenomenon in multilingual and multicultural communities. This study focuses on code switching by teachers in multilingual and multicultural high school classrooms in a particular district in the Northern Cape Province of South Africa. The aims of this study were to establish whether teachers in the classrooms concerned do code switch and, if so, what the functions thereof are. With these aims in mind, data were collected from four high schools in the Siyanda District, during 13 lessons in total. These lessons were on the subjects Economic Management Sciences, Business Studies and Accounting.

The participants in the study were 296 learners in Grades 8 to 12 and eight teachers. Data were collected by means of researcher observations and audio recordings of lessons. These recordings were orthographically transcribed and then analysed in terms of the functions of code switching in educational settings as identified from the existing literature on this topic as well as in terms of the Markedness Model of Myers-Scotton (1993).

The answer to the first research question 1, namely whether teachers made use of code switching during classroom interactions was, perhaps unsurprisingly, “yes”. In terms of the second question, namely to which end teachers code switch, it was found that the teachers used code switching mainly for academic purposes (such as explaining and clarifying subject content) but also frequently for social reasons (maintaining social relationships with learners and also for being humorous) as well as for classroom management purposes (such as reprimanding learners). The teachers in this data set never used code switching solely for the purpose of asserting identity. It appears then that the teachers in this study used code switching for the same reasons as those mentioned in other studies on code switching in the educational setting.

The study further indicated that code switching by the teachers was mainly an unmarked choice itself, although at times the sequential switch was triggered by a change in addressee. In very few instances was the code switching a marked choice; when it was, the message was the medium (see Myers-Scotton 1993: 138), code switching functioned as a means of increasing the social distance between the teacher and the learners or, in one instance, of demonstrating affection.

Teachers code switched regardless of the language policy of their particular school, i.e. code switching occurred even in classrooms in which English is officially the sole medium of instruction. As code switching was largely used in order to support learning, it can be seen as good educational practice. One of the recommendations of this study is therefore that particular modes of code switching should be encouraged in the classrooms, especially where the medium of instruction is the home language of very few of the learners in that school.

## TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background to this study	1
1.2 Research questions and aim of the study	2
1.3 Structure of the thesis	2
1.4 Terminology issues	3
1.4.1 Code mixing	3
1.4.2 Borrowing	3
1.4.3 Code switching	4
1.4.4 Other core terms	4
<b>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 Code switching research in the educational context in Southern Africa	6
2.2 An overview of code switching research in South Africa	14
<b>CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>16</b>
3.1 Introduction	16
3.2 Code switching as a sequence of unmarked choices	16
3.3 Code switching itself being the unmarked choice	17
3.4 Code switching as a marked choice	18
3.4.1 Code switching bringing unity among marked choices	19
3.4.2 Marked code switching in increasing social distance via authority /anger	19
3.4.3 Marked code switching as ethnically-based exclusion strategy	20
3.4.4 The message is the medium	20
3.4.5 Marked code switching for aesthetic effect	21
3.5 Code switching as an exploratory choice	21
<b>CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>22</b>
4.1 Introduction	22
4.2 The Northern Cape Province and the high schools involved	22
4.3 Participants	25
4.4 Data collection procedures	25
4.5 Data analysis procedures	27

<b>CHAPTER 5: THE DATA – CODE SWITCHES, THEIR FUNCTIONS AND THEIR MARKEDNESS</b>	<b>29</b>
5.1 Introduction	29
5.2 Code switching in dual medium School HOA	29
5.2.1 HOA Teacher Mr P	29
5.2.2 HOA Teacher Mr K	33
5.2.3 Functions and markedness of code switching in School HOA	34
5.3 Code switching in parallel-medium School HOR	34
5.3.1 HOR teacher Mr T	34
5.3.2 Functions and markedness of code switching in School HOR	35
5.4 Code switching in English-medium School DET 1	35
5.4.1 DET1 Teacher Mr L	35
5.4.2 DET 1 Teacher Mr B	38
5.4.3 DET1 Teacher Mr Y	39
5.4.4 Functions and markedness of code switching in School DET1	40
5.5 Code switching in English-medium School DET 2	41
5.5.1 DET 2 Teacher Ms M	41
5.5.2 DET 2 Teacher 2 (Ms S); Subject: Accounting	41
5.5.3 Functions and markedness of code switching in School DET 2	42
<b>CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS</b>	<b>43</b>
6.1 Introduction	43
6.2 The functions of the code switches	43
6.3 The markedness of the code switches	48
<b>CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION</b>	<b>52</b>
7.1 Summary of the main points	52
7.2 The contribution of the study and implications for educational practice	52
7.3 Limitations of the study	53
7.4 Directions for further research on this topic	54
7.5 Concluding remarks	54
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>55</b>

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to this study

This thesis discusses the functions of code switching during teachers' interactions with their learners and examines the teachers' motivations for employing code switching. South Africa has moved from being an officially English-Afrikaans bilingual country in the past (while even during that time actually being multilingual in practice) to an officially multilingual country with 11 official languages, namely Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda and Xitsonga. Given that South Africa has these 11 official languages and many non-official languages, there is widespread bilingualism (and indeed multilingualism) in this country. In this context, it is common practice for bilinguals to use both of their languages in their everyday conversations; hence the phenomenon of code switching is often observed. This code switching takes place during intercultural communication and in communication among people of the same culture who share knowledge of more than one language.

Regarding linguistic rights, the Constitution of South Africa (1996) states that "all official languages must enjoy parity of esteem and must be treated equitably" (South African Constitution, 1996:4). Furthermore, Section 29(2) of the Constitution states that "everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable" (Ministry of Education 2002: 3). Also, the 1997 Language in Education Policy (Department of Education 1997) allows schools to determine their own language policy in consultation with parents and the community served by the school. The policy further states that no child should be excluded from a school on the basis of his/her language.

In the Siyanda District of the Northern Cape Province – in which I have been working as a teacher since 1988 and as a subject advisor for the subjects Economics and Business Studies since 2004 – there are 19 high schools, of which 13 officially have Afrikaans as sole medium of instruction, two have English as sole medium of instruction, one is an Afrikaans-English dual-medium school (in which Afrikaans-speaking and English-speaking learners are in the same class and receive their tuition in both languages) and three are parallel-medium (in which there are an

Afrikaans stream and an English stream, i.e. the two language groups are in different classes). Note that there are no schools in this district in which an African language is officially a medium of instruction. Yet, during my visits to schools in this district, I have observed that code switching has become common practice in classrooms, especially where the medium of instruction involves the use of English (whether as sole medium of instruction or in combination with Afrikaans). This code switching is not in line with the official language policies of these schools, and this raised the question as to why it occurs. My assumption was that teachers and learners made use of such code switching for very specific purposes, i.e. that such code switching performed specific functions. The present study was done in order to test this assumption: I set out to establish what functions code switching has in high school classrooms, and I focused on code switching between Afrikaans, English, isiXhosa and Setswana in four different high schools in the Siyanda District.

## **1.2 Research questions and aim of the study**

The aim of this study was to identify specific functions of code switching occurring in high schools in the Siyanda District of the Northern Cape Province. With this aim in mind, the following research questions were formulated:

- Question 1: Do teachers during classroom interactions in the high schools concerned make use of code switching?
- Question 2: If code switching does indeed occur, what is the nature (in terms of markedness) and what are the functions of teachers' code switching?

## **1.3 Structure of the thesis**

As stated above, this thesis focuses on the prevalence and functions of code switching in secondary school classrooms. As such, Chapter 2 provides an overview of literature on this phenomenon. The theoretical framework is discussed in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 sets out the methodology used to answer the research questions posed in Section 1.2 above. The data is presented in Chapter 5 and discussed in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 concludes this thesis by, amongst other things, pointing out the insights gained, the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research on the topic of code switching in educational settings. Before turning to the literature review, terminological issues are clarified below.

## 1.4 Terminology issues

For the sake of clarity, I will differentiate between the terms “code mixing”, “borrowing” and “code switching”. Each will be discussed below, and then I will define other terms important to the research presented in this thesis.

### 1.4.1 Code mixing

McCormick (1995: 194) defines “code mixing” as referring to speech in which the alteration between the two languages used consists of shorter elements, often just one single word. The following is an example of such code mixing between Welsh and English, taken from Deuchar (2005: 619):<sup>1</sup>

(1) **Ia, mae o'n reit** camouflaged **yn dydi**

*‘Yes, he is quite camouflaged isn't he’*

### 1.4.2 Borrowing

As stated by Kieswetter (1995), borrowings are words that have been integrated phonologically and morphological into the host language. McCormick (1995) refers to the same phenomenon as “convergence”. McCormick (1995) differentiates between two types of convergence, namely lexical convergence and syntactic convergence. Lexical convergence occurs, for example, where English imports an Afrikaans word into its lexicon. A typical example of such a borrowing would be *braai*, as shown in the following example given in Van Dulm (2007: 10):

(2) We had a nice **braai** on the beach last Sunday

A feature of syntactic convergence is the violation of verb-placement rules, especially in Afrikaans. An example of such convergence, given by McCormick (1995: 205), is found in (3) below (although it is questionable whether *study* can be regarded as a loan word in standard varieties of Afrikaans). In (3), one notices that the word order in the Afrikaans sentence is closer to that of English.

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<sup>1</sup> In this thesis, examples of code switching will be presented in the following manner: English parts of utterances will be in normal type face, other languages in bold (followed by the name of the language in square brackets, where it is not obvious from the text which language the speaker is using), and English glosses will be in italics. Comments will be presented in parentheses.

- (3) **Ons moet study altwee**      *instead of*      **Ons moet altwee bestudeer**  
*'We must study both'*

### ***1.4.3 Code switching***

The term “code-switching” refers here to alternations of language within a single conversation, often involving switches within a single speaker turn or a single sentence (McCormick 1995: 194). Code switching is distinguished here from other, related phenomena which are common in bilingual conversations, namely borrowing and code mixing (discussed above). Firstly, code switching is different from borrowing, the latter involving “the incorporation of lexical elements from one language in the lexicon of another language” (Muysken 1995: 189). McCormick (1995: 200-203) differentiates between two types of code switching, namely situational code switching and conversational code switching. In McCormick’s (1995) study, she found that her informants switched between English and Afrikaans based on the situation in which they found themselves. She mentions, for instance, that they spoke Afrikaans to their neighbours but English during meetings such as those held by the local rugby club (McCormick 1995: 200-201). Conversational code switching, according to McCormick (1995) seems to be unconscious, for example for delivering the punch line of a joke. For the purposes of this study, single-word switches were not included as evidence of code switching (these were taken to be instances of code mixing and as such fell outside the scope of the present study). Also, where the teachers’ code switching is analysed, I considered the language they themselves (and not their conversational partner) spoke last to identify instances of code switching.

### ***1.4.4 Other core terms***

#### **Markedness:**

In this thesis, “marked” refers to “unexpected” (see Myers-Scotton 1993: 75), which means that where code switching is labeled as “marked”, such code switching is unexpected in that context. As stated by Myers-Scotton (1993: 75), speakers “have a sense of markedness regarding available linguistic codes for interaction” (which means that they know which code (or language) would be the most appropriate to use in any situation), “but choose their codes on the persona and/or relation with others which they wish to have in place” (which means that the choice to switch codes can at times be a deliberate one).

**Matrix language:**

Myers-Scotton (1993: 4) refers to the matrix language as the main language, i.e. the dominant language, during code switching interactions.

**The embedded language:**

The embedded language, according to Myers-Scotton (1993: 3), refers to the other language being used in code switching, i.e. the non-matrix language which is used to a lesser degree in the code switched interaction.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter gives an overview of the literature on the code switching research done in educational settings in Southern Africa. In section 2.2 an overview of Kamwangamalu (2000) and (1998) is given, which provides a brief overview of the state of code switching research in Africa (i.e. not necessarily in the context of education).

### 2.1 Code switching research in the educational context in Southern Africa

**Adendorff** (1993) studied English-isiZulu code switching among isiZulu-speaking teachers and their learners, investigating the functions of CS in three high school classrooms as well as during school assembly. He (1993: 23) reports that code switching from English to isiZulu during an English lesson was used by the teacher concerned for academic reasons but also in order to maintain “social relationships in the classroom”. Regarding code switching for academic reasons, the first function of such switching, identified by Adendorff (1993), is that of building up learners’ understanding of subject matter. In this case, an English teacher switched between English and isiZulu in order to explain a poem to his learners. An example of code switching for this purpose takes place when the teacher explains the following line in the poem: *And soonest our best men with thee do go, Rest of their bones’ and souls’ delivery!* The teacher’s explanation is given in (4) below (verbatim from Adendorff 1993: 10):

- (4) We are born and we die again.  
We live for a very short time and die.

**Siphila isikhathi esincane siphinde sife futhi.**

*‘We live for a very short time and thereafter we die’*

A second function of code switching, identified by Adendorff (1993), is to help learners interpret subject matter. The example of the English poem is given here again. Note that in the second part of (5) below the teacher is now no longer merely telling learners what the subject matter is but is explaining the poem to the learners.

- (5) We are born and we die again.  
We live for a very short time and die.  
**Siphila isikhathi esincane siphinde sife futhi.**  
*'We live for a very short time and thereafter we die'*  
**Njengaye lo** it looks **wayenesikhathi esincane ehlili emhlabeni.**  
*'Just like the poet, it seems he lived for a short time'*  
Thereafter you must know that we are passers-by but we will live again.

A further function identified by Adendorff (1993) is when the English teacher in question provokes learners in an attempt to involve them in the discussion of the poem. An example is when he poses the question in (6) to the learners in isiZulu:

- (6) **Sikhona isihogo?**  
*'Is there a bell at all?'*

This question is provocative, because the teacher is raising an issue on which not all learners agree. With this question, the teacher manages to engage even the passive learners in the class. As stated by Adendorff (1993: 11), the question is posed in isiZulu because this is the code which is “the code of teacher-pupil unity” and “reaches everyone in the classroom”. The question arises as to whether the teacher would have elicited such intense responses from the learners had the question been posed in English.

From (4) to (6) above, as stated by Adendorff (1993: 10), the code switching into isiZulu fulfills an academic function. Code switching is also used for social reasons, as when the teacher switches from English to isiZulu in (7) below:

- (7) When we are asleep and dreaming.  
When we are asleep we dream and **yonke** into **oyiphuphayo.**  
*all that we dream about is recorded in our minds*

This switch caused laughter amongst the learners. One could say that the teacher's switch is an attempt to gain credibility from his learners because the learners started laughing when he code switched to isiZulu. Adendorff (1993) also reports on code switching by a Biology teacher. This teacher also employed code switching for reasons of solidarity, for example inserting **Kuyezwaka**

**angithi?** (which according to Adendorff's (1993: 12) informants means 'What I have said so far isn't so difficult, is it?' / 'I'm helping you' / 'I'm on your side') in English discourse, to mark his solidarity with his learners.

According to Adendorff (1993: 14), code switching from English to isiZulu is also used as a means of exercising classroom management. For example, the Biology teacher mentioned above says the following (Adendorff 1993):

(8) **Musani ukuvula izincwadi zenu.**

*'Do not open your books'*

(9) **Hhayi bo, vala wena!**

*'Close your book over there!'*

**Kieswetter's** (1995) study investigated code switching among African high school learners in three schools: a rural school in kaNguwane (situated close to the Kruger National Park), a Soweto (township) school and a former Model C<sup>2</sup> (English-medium) school. Kieswetter (1995) makes particular reference to the languages used in his research, namely English, isiZulu and Siswati. He identified, described and analysed code switching in terms of social motivations for its use and in terms of linguistic patterns. The patterns of the three schools were compared, and Kieswetter (1995) found that the speech patterns are influenced by the participants' backgrounds and identity, relationships with each other and the context within which they interact.

Kieswetter's (1995) findings at the kaNguwane (i.e. rural) school showed that learners used code mixing once per every 1.52 lines of transcribed discourse, whereas code switching occurred every 19.2 lines of transcribed discourse. The dominant language of these learners was a Nguni language (either isiZulu or Siswati), with English being the embedded language. According to Kieswetter (1995: 33), these learners mostly spoke their Nguni language, as they came from an

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<sup>2</sup> The term "Model C" referred to White-only schools managed by The House of Assembly in the pre-1994, apartheid regime of South Africa. Such schools are now open to learners from all races. Schools for so-called Coloured learners were managed by The House of Representatives, those for Black learners by The Department of Education and Training and those for Indian learners by The House of Delegates (see Christopher 1994: 64).

environment in which little English was spoken; they code switched into English to demonstrate that they indeed possessed knowledge of this language.

Kieswetter's (1995) data furthermore showed that learners at the Soweto (township) school code mixed every 1.3 lines of discourse, while code switching every 8 lines. It means that the conversations of the Soweto learners are similar to those of the rural learners in terms of the overall pattern of code switching exhibited. Code switching for the Soweto learners (as for the rural learners) is the unmarked choice, while the dominant language is isiZulu, with English and occasionally Afrikaans being the embedded language.

According to Kieswetter's (1995) study, the isiZulu learners who attended an English-medium former Model C school code mixed every 3.29 lines of discourse, while code switching took place every 1.17 lines, which is far more frequently than the code switching in the conversations of rural and township learners. The learners in the former Model C school are surrounded by mother tongue speakers of English (both fellow learners and teachers); they therefore heard English often. In general, they and their parents placed great value on knowing English and speaking it well – they were sent to a former Model C school for this very reason (Kieswetter 1995: 72). However, they do not speak only English: They use isiZulu to “frame their ethnic identity” and then switch to English to “indicate their simultaneous identities, social position, status, and level of education” (Kieswetter 1995: 72).

While Kieswetter's (1995) study did take place within an educational context, she focused on code switching in learner speech and not on code switching in classrooms between teachers and learners. Her study is thus not easily compared to that of Adendorff (1993) who also worked with code switching in speakers of a Nguni language, as Adendorff (1993) focused on teacher-learner interaction and the functions of code switching performed by the teachers.

**Ncoko, Osman and Cockcroft** (2000) studied code switching among multilingual learners in two primary schools in the Gauteng Province. They investigated code switching in a classroom situation (thus in a formal context) and on the playground (in an informal context). Only the findings on the classroom situation is relevant to the purposes of this study, and the playground findings are thus not reviewed here.

The first function of code switching identified by Ncoko et al. (2000) is a social one, performed when learners use a particular language to show defiance, solidarity, etc. Ncoko et al. (2000) note that defiance occurs when a learner uses an impermissible language with the aim of defying the school regulations. Ncoko et al. (2000) point out that learners at the schools at which they collected their data are not allowed to use an African language at school, because the school has an English-only policy. Ncoko et al. (2000: 232) give an example of a “defiant” boy who kept disrupting the lesson and for his punishment then had to hand out worksheets for the teacher. While performing this task, he spoke in English to the English-speaking learners and addressed multi- and bilingual learners in different African languages.

A second function of code switching is a phatic function, which can be positive or negative.<sup>3</sup> Ncoko et al. (2000) state that code switching has a phatic function when it serves to narrow social distance, or if it is indicative of a relationship of solidarity. It is negative if it serves to increase social distance. The example in (10) below, an extract from an English-isiZulu conversation between two primary school learners, serves to illustrate the phatic function of code switching.

- (10) Learner A: Can I use your koki pens?  
 Learner B: No, they dry quickly.  
 Learner A: Oh! Please, **ngizowavala mangiqeda ukuwa-user**.  
*‘I will close them after using them’*  
 Learner B. No, I don’t want you to use them.  
 Learner A. **Nqiyakucela** [isiZulu], **toe** [Afrikaans].  
*‘Ob, please, I beg you’.*  
 Learner B. No.  
 Learner A. **Kulungile**.  
*‘It’s fine’*  
 I am not going to let you use my wax crayons.  
 Learner B. Who cares.

Ncoko et al. (2000) point out that the above conversation started in English, which is the permissible language of the school. Then Learner B responded negatively, and Learner A decided

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<sup>3</sup> According to the Oxford English Dictionary ([www.oed.com](http://www.oed.com)), the meaning of “phatic” is the following: “Of, designating, or relating to speech, utterances, etc., that serve to establish or maintain social relationships rather than to impart information, communicate ideas, etc.”

to repeat her request in isiZulu on the basis of drawing on the principle of solidarity, since both Learners A and B belong to the same ethnic and linguistic group. Ncoko et al. (2000) state that Learner A hoped that Learner B would reconsider her request, and added that Learner B rejected the bid for solidarity by not allowing Learner A to use her koki pens and refusing to switch to isiZulu, and then at the end of the conversation Learner A switched back to English.

**Setati, Adler, Reed and Bapoo** (2002) investigated code switching in Mathematics and Science classes, and state that teachers of these subjects face difficulties in multilingual or non-English mother tongue classrooms because of the double challenge of teaching their subjects in English, whilst their learners are still learning English as a language.

A first function of code switching identified by Setati et al. (2002) is code switching as pedagogic strategy. Setati et al. (2002) add that code switching practices are necessary in schools where English is being learned at the same time as it is being used as the language of learning and teaching. Setati et al. (2002) also noticed in their research that learners in rural areas are only exposed to speaking, reading and writing English in formal context. Code switching could support classroom communication in general as well as exploratory talk, the latter being an integral part of learning. “Exploratory talk” refers to a particular type of learner talk, namely when the learner is talking about the subject matter at hand in an attempt to understand this matter better. In this sense, exploratory talk is a necessary part of talking to learn and is likely to be most effective in learner’s main language (Setati et al. 2002).

A second function of code switching identified by Setati et al. (2002) is to assist learners in their understanding of concepts and ideas and in their communicating of these understandings. A further function is when the teacher uses code switching as a teaching strategy. An example of the latter would be when the teacher code switches to Xitsonga and thereafter repeats in English what she said because Xitsonga is the language which the learners understand best but English is the language in which the learners read and answer their question papers.

**Setati and Adler’s** (2000) study was on code switching in 10 rural and urban primary and secondary schools in the Northern and Gauteng Provinces. They found that code switching was used for academic purposes, namely to explain and clarify subject matter in Mathematics and Science classrooms which officially have English as medium of instruction. Based on their observations, Setati and Adler (2000: 252) recommend that code switching should be encouraged

as a means to enable learners to talk more freely in class, and that learners should be encouraged to use their main language as a learning resource.

Arthur's (2001) study was on code switching in primary schools in Botswana. Arthur (2001) investigated the function of code switching in two Grade 6 classrooms. The first function identified by Arthur (2001: 63) is that code switching is used for class and lesson management. An example of this use of code switching, given by Arthur (2001: 63), appears in (11), where the teacher switches from English to Setswana when exhorting learners to project their voices:

- (11) **Buela go godimo, tsala ya me.** [Setswana]  
*'Speak up, my friend'*

A second function identified by Arthur (2001) is that of using code switching to encourage learner participation. An example of this is given in (12), where the teacher asks a question ("Do you mean you are not thinking?" in English but then switches to Setswana to encourage the learner to answer the question.

- (12) We have different thoughts.  
 Do you mean you are not thinking?  
**A ko eme rra.**  
*'Stand up [polite address form]'*  
**Tlhe mma a ko o mpolelele gore wena o bone o kare go a rang.**  
*'Please [polite address form] tell me how you see what is going on'*  
**Lefa e le ka Setswana mpolelele.**  
*'Even in Setswana tell me'*  
**O akanye sengwe fela.**  
*'Think of anything'*  
**Se o ka akanyang gore go ka brafala.**  
*'Think of any that could be happening'*  
 Okay. What creature is this?

Rose and Van Dulm's (2007) study on code switching was conducted in an all-girls former Model C high school in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. Rose and Van Dulm's (2007) paper focuses on the functions of code switching between English and Afrikaans in five

classrooms, namely two Afrikaans Second Language, two Life Orientation and one Geography class. The learners were in Grades 8 to 10.

The first function of code switching in the classroom identified by Rose and Van Dulm (2007) is a social one that revealed that code switching has a role to play in building and maintaining relationships between and among teachers and learners. An example of this function of code switching, given by Rose and Van Dulm (2001: 10), appears in (13), where the teacher and learners did not deliberately aim to be sociable, but the code switching still elicited a humorous response.

- (13) Teacher: **Hoofstuk ses, nommer een tot tien.**  
*'Chapter six number one to ten'*
- Learner: Oh.
- Teacher: Okay, **ons gaan nie nou hare doen nie, lê, of op jou arms, want jy is te moeg om te werk en jy werk vanmiddag wanneer ons gaan naweek hou. Die ander ouens gebruik die tyd.**  
*'We aren't going to do (someone's) hair now, lie, either on your arms because you are too tired to work and you work this afternoon when we go off to enjoy the week-end. The other guys use the time'*
- Learner: **Asseblief kan** Melissa with stay me?  
*'Please can'*
- Teacher: **Hoekom?**  
*'Why?'*
- Learner: Because it feels so nice, it makes me go to sleep.  
 (referring to Melissa playing with the learner's hair)
- Teacher: **Nee, maar gaan omval. Kom sit dan hierso.**  
*'No, but you are going to fall over. Come sit here then'*

Other functions identified by Rose and Van Dulm (2007) is that code switching can assist with intercultural communication in classrooms, with expanding teachers' explanations, with confirmation that a learner has understood what was explained, with classroom discipline (where code switching is used when reprimanding learners); and with identity marking.

The discussion now turns to **Ferguson's** (2003) review of the literature on classroom functions of code switching in post-colonial context, as this provides a succinct summary of the above mentioned functions of code switching in the educational context. Ferguson (2003) clusters the functions of code switching into three broad categories, namely:

- (i) Code switching for curriculum access. Here code switching is used to help learners to understand the subject matter of the lesson;
- (ii) Code switching for classroom management discourse, for example, to motivate, discipline or praise learners, to deal with late-comers and disruptions, to gain and keep learners' attention or to encourage classroom participation;
- (iii) Code switching for interpersonal relations. According to Ferguson (2003: 43), the classroom is not merely a place of learning; it is also a "social and affective environment in its own right". Ferguson (2003: 43) mentions that teachers who use only English are often perceived as distant; for this reason, teachers code switch to other languages and thus manage the "affective environment of the class". Such code switching also indicates that teachers acknowledge their dual identities: They are members of the teaching profession but (often) also members of the local community.

## **2.2 An overview of code switching research in Africa**

Kamwangamalu's (2000) article focuses on the state of code switching research in Africa and compares it to code switching research in the global context. In his overview of the research done on code switching, he sought to address the following question: Why do bilingual speakers engage in code switching? He found that code switching can serve a wide range of functions in bilingual interactions. Kamwangamalu himself does not study the use of code switching in the educational setting, but he does make the following observation (which is highly relevant to the present study): Despite the many communicative functions served by code switching, it carries a stigma as regards to its use in education, because many people view the use of code switching in education as a mark of linguistic deficiency (Kamwangamalu 1998). According to Kamwangamalu's (1998) findings, code switching has many functions in the classroom. Similarly to what was stated in the previous section, he states that code switching can be used for classroom management, for transmission of content, for expressing solidarity downwards with the learners, for emphasizing a point and so on.

I now turn briefly to some of the models proposed for code switching, reviewed by Kamwangamalu (2000):

Kamwangamalu (2000) describes the Ideological-Political Model of code switching (cf. Meeuwis and Blommaert 1998). In terms of this model, code switching is linguistic capital and “one of the most powerful ... strategies that people have at their disposal and which they use to achieve predetermined social goals, such as the exercise of power over others” (Kamwangamalu 2000: 65). On this model, code switching does not merely occur, say, for ease of communication, but as a political choice.

A second model which Kamwangamalu (2000) looks at is his own (1998) Codes-in-Between Model. This model suggests that in addition to a “we-code” (the language used with one’s in-group, such as family members) and a “they-code” (the language associated with more formal, out-group relations, mostly those in the public domain), the “code-in-between” is used as a neutral strategy, which enables the speaker to achieve goals, which may not be political. According to Kamwangamalu (2000: 66), these goals would include gaining prestige and status.

According to the Interactional model (a third model discussed by Kamwangamalu 2000), code switching can serve a wide range of functions in bilingual interactions, such as expressing modernization, confidentiality, solidarity or ingroup identity, sympathy, intimacy and so on. Kamwangamalu (2000) states that code switching can also be used in other fields, such as education. The functions of code switching in education listed by Kamwangamalu (2000: 60) were given above.

Lastly, Kamwangamalu focuses on Myers-Scotton’s Markedness Model, which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, in which I set out my theoretical framework.

## **CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The focus of the research presented in this thesis was on identifying the motivations for code switching observed in four selected high schools. The research was largely conducted within the broader framework of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Data were also analysed within the specific framework offered by Myers-Scotton's (1993) Markedness Model, which will be discussed in this chapter.

Myers-Scotton's (1993) Markedness Model is widely used by many linguistic researchers, such as Kieswetter (1995), Auer (1998), Lawrence (1999) and Ncoko et al. (2000), in their studies of code switching. This model identifies four categories of code switching, each fulfilling different social needs. These four categories are the following: (i) code switching as a sequence of unmarked choices, (ii) code switching itself being the unmarked choice, (iii) code switching as a marked choice and finally (iv) code switching as an exploratory choice. Each of these will be explained below but before doing so, I wish to mention that code switching choices are also seen as being governed by the speakers' relationships and their "goals regarding their social position" (Nconko et al. 2000: 228), as I will now explain. Ncoko et al. (2000: 228) point out that all linguistic choices are seen as negotiating some "rights and obligations balances", which are based on the norms of the "community of the speakers". Ncoko et al. (2000: 228) furthermore state that these balances are based on what is expected, or unmarked, for speakers engaged in a particular conversation. Ncoko et al. (2000) add that Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model is largely speaker-orientated, as the speaker tries to negotiate his/her position in a conversational context.

### **3.2 Code switching as a sequence of unmarked choices**

According to Myers-Scotton's (1993) Markedness Model, code switching as an unmarked choice can be divided into two types, namely sequential unmarked code switching and code switching itself being unmarked. I will be discussing the first type in this section. Ncoko et al. (2000) point out that unmarked code switching is the normal, expected type of code switching, the type one would expect for a particular situation. According to Myers-Scotton (1993: 114), this type of code switching is triggered by a change in situational factors within the conversation, such as when the

speaker realises that the listener is a member of the same linguistic community as the speaker. In such a case, switching to the shared mother tongue will be the unmarked choice.

Another example of sequential unmarked code switching is given in (14) below. This example is from Lawrence (1999: 269), where an informant during a group interview explains the experiences he had with his Afrikaans-speaking and isiXhosa-speaking students. Note that the informant switches to English to relay what he had said to his students in English. It is to be expected that he would repeat his English conversation in English; therefore sequential unmarked code switching can be said to take place in the excerpt in (14).

(14) **Dit is `n politieke, uhm geskiedkundige uhm politiese weerstand teen die vorige regime.**

*'It is a political, uhm historical uhm political resistance against the previous regime'*

**Ek het my student gesê** I told them You are the generation, we've lost a generation,

*'I told my student'*

but in our new South Africa we have to transform, we have to build a new South Africa.

Somebody has to suffer and bear the brunt of **wat ook al of iets soos daai.**

*'whatever or something like that'*

To lift us out of. – **ek het dit gesê in die klas – en toe sê ek**

*'I said it in class – and then I said'*

Unfortunately it's you **maar toe sê hulle** No, no, no, why must we do it?

*'but they then said'*

**Maar dit is `n kwessie van uhm die tale kan, maar daar is sekere situasies waar die politiese, die** cultural en **daai geskied** historical uhm resistance **hy's nog daar.**

*'But it's a matter of uhm the languages can, but there are certain situations where the political, the cultural and that history historical uhm resistance it's still there'*

### 3.3 Code switching itself being the unmarked choice

According to Lawrence (1999: 270), code switching itself is the unmarked choice where the speakers involved are all bilingual – in such circumstances, there is no need for a change in the situation before code switching commences. Myers-Scotton (1993: 117) adds that the speaking of two languages in the same conversation is also a way of following the unmarked choice maxim.

Myers-Scotton (1993: 123) refers to the example of urban Africans for whom switching between the official language and an indigenous language is the unmarked choice for interaction. In the example, Myers-Scotton (1993: 123) uses the conversation of two school teachers who are native speakers of Shona. The teachers are discussing the relative progress of the girls versus the boys in their school. One teacher produces the discourse given in (15) below:

- (15) **Manje zvakafanana nekuti kana uri kuita Grade one manje saka vana vazhinji vechisikana ku-primary vanogona sitereki. Vanokasika ku-absorb zvinhu.** But as time goes on **vana kuenda ku-Grade five, six, seven, and Form one vanonoka kuita catch-up mu-ma-lessons.** But once they catch up they go ahead.

*Now, for example, it is the same when you are in Grade one now so that many of the girls [understand] much better. They hurry to absorb things. But as time goes on, children go to Grade five, six, seven, and Form one boys are late to catch up with lessons. But once they catch up with lessons. But once they catch up, they go ahead.'*

This serves as an example of unmarked code switching because both participants speak English and Shona, and no change in the situation triggered the observed code switching.

### 3.4 Code switching as a marked choice

Kieswetter (1995: 16) states that during marked code switching, the speaker changes some aspects of the rights and obligations balance within a particular situation in order to “pass a meta-message”. Myers-Scotton’s (1993: 131) view on code switching as a marked choice is that the speaker simply dis-identifies with the expected rights and obligations set. Myers-Scotton (1993) adds that the conversation takes place in a relatively conventionalized interaction, and then a marked code choice takes place to indicate a change in the rights and obligations set between participants.

Myers-Scotton (1993: 131) adds that in making a marked choice, the speaker is in effect putting aside any presumptions which had been based on societal norms for that circumstance, and that every participant respects each others’ different views. An example of such code switching is provided by Lawrence (1999: 270), given below as (16). This example comes from Lawrence’s (1999) data on Afrikaans-English code switching:

- (16) Kan ek net gou iets daarby sê. Ek wil net sê dat . . . hoekom? **Why don't we promote the English language the . . .** want ek gaan vir jou sê ek het Afrikaanse studente, Afrikaanssprekende studente wat sê ma' hulle praat nie Engels nie . . . hulle verstaan nie Engels nie.

*'Can I just quickly add something to that. I just want to say that . . . why? Why don't we promote the English language the . . . because let me tell you I have Afrikaans students, Afrikaans-speaking students who say but they do not speak English . . . they do not understand English'*

As Lawrence (1999: 270) explains, in (16) above the speaker tries to negotiate for a possible solution for the language problem on his university campus. When he changes from Afrikaans to English, he tries to strike a different, or changed, balance between the costs and the rewards: He is busy with an identity settlement of English (and he uses the English language to this effect) and “dis-identifies himself” by choosing English as the marked choice over Afrikaans, which would have been the unmarked code.

Myers-Scotton (1993:132-142) points out various purposes of code switching as a marked choice. Each of these will be discussed below.

#### ***3.4.1 Code switching bringing unity among marked choices***

There is a single, general motivation for making the marked choice, even though a number of specific effects may result, depending on the context. Myers-Scotton (1993) adds that speakers engage in marked code switching to indicate a range of demonstrations from anger to affection, and to negotiate outcomes ranging from demonstrations of authority or of superior educational status to assertions of ethnic identity.

#### ***3.4.2 Marked code switching in increasing social distance via authority /anger***

One of the most common uses of marked code switching is to express authority, along with anger or annoyance. Myers-Scotton (1993: 132-133) points out that one “can rarely attribute just a single purpose to marked code switching”, because those who allowed to express their anger are often also those who also have authority. The following Swahili-English example (17) of code switching being used to express annoyance – originally given in Scotton and Ury (1977) – is cited by Myers-Scotton (1993: 133):

(17) Bus passenger: **Nataka kwenda Posta.**

*I want to go to the post office'*

Conductor: **Kutoka hapa mpaka posta nauli ni senti hamsini.**

*From here to the post office the fare is 50 cents'*

(Passenger gives money for which he should get change)

Conductor: **Ngojea change yako.**

*Wait for your change'*

(Bus nears post office and passenger has still not received his change)

Bus passenger: **Nataka change yangu.**

*I want my change'*

Conductor: Change **utapata, Bwana.**

*You'll get your change'*

Bus passenger: I am nearing my destination.

Conductor: Do you think I could run away with your change?

### ***3.4.3 Marked code switching as ethnically-based exclusion strategy***

In the multi-ethnic cities of Africa, people are very much aware of their own ethnic group membership and of that of others. Myers-Scotton (1993) points out that people far from their homeland sometimes turn to those they can identify as sharing the same language in an attempt to “ease the strains of urban anonymity”. Myers-Scotton (1993) also notes that the value of keeping ethnicity salient is that fellow ethnic-group members can help a person to get a job or a place to live. In such instances, code switching will be used to keep the nature of the conversation private from those not belonging to the ethnic group in question.

### ***3.4.4 The message is the medium***

Code switching as a marked choice often complements its referential message, e.g. that anger is the message of the speaker's words and the marked code choice is associated with authority and as such it can stand on its own in its indexical function regarding rights and obligations sets (Myers-Scotton 1993: 138). The marked choice can be used as a message of its own in at least two ways. Firstly, when a marked choice carries a repetition or referential content, this content is redundant, so the “real” message lies with the change in social distance which the marked choice is negotiating. Secondly, a marked choice referential message does not have to be understood for its social message of communicative intent to succeed (Myers-Scotton 1993: 138).

### 3.4.5 *Marked code switching for aesthetic effect*

A final example of code switching as a marked choice is given by Myers-Scotton (1993) because it occurs in a retelling of an incident and may or may not have occurred in the original. Myers-Scotton (1993) gives an example of a conversation which took place almost entirely in Swahili, in Nairobi between a Kisii man and two Luyia men, and that none of the men have high levels of education. Not only was Swahili the unmarked choice, but code switching was not characteristic of these speaker's conversation. The Kisii man told the listeners about having been stopped by a policeman. Myers-Scotton (1993) adds that the retelling of the incident was entirely in Swahili up to a climax, when the Kisii man reports about the police taking another person into custody. At this point, the Kisii man reports that the policeman said *Let's go*, which he then repeats in Swahili (*Twende*). One cannot verify whether the policeman really used English, but even if he had used English, the code switch is still marked and takes place for effect, as the listeners would have understood the story equally well had the Kisii man used *Twende* instead of *Let's go*.

### 3.5 Code switching as an exploratory choice

According to Myers-Scotton (1992), code switching as an exploratory choice occurs when strangers *explore* each other's language preferences. Myers-Scotton (1992) added that speakers may initially find themselves in an uncertain situation, in which case the speaker will start the conversation in one code but will switch to another, depending on the code in which the conversational partner responds. In the following isiZulu-English example (18) – originally given in Myers-Scotton (1992) – exploratory code switching is being used. In the example, the speaker initiates the conversation by speaking in isiZulu, not knowing that the addressee cannot understand isiZulu. IsiZulu is used as the exploratory language, but once the speaker found out that the addressee cannot speak isiZulu, he then changes to the dominant language, which is English.

- (18) Speaker:       **Heyi! Wena, awazi yini ukuthi i-tuck shop nge-first break ayivlulwa.**  
                           *Hey! You! Don't you know that the tuck shop is not opened at first break?*
- Addressee:    What are you talking about? I do not understand.
- Speaker:       I am sorry. Are you from Zaire?
- Addressee:    No, from Nigeria. I can only speak English.
- Speaker:       Okay, I just saying, the tuck shop only opens at second break.

## **CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Data for the present study were gathered in classrooms in four high schools in the Northern Cape, specifically in the Siyanda District. Section 4.2 contains a brief discussion of the linguistic profile of this province (as per 2001, which is the latest census data available on languages in South Africa), as well as on the four schools. A total of eight teachers and 296 learners participated in the study; the characteristics of these participants are given in Section 4.3. The manner in which data on code switching were collected in the classrooms is discussed in Section 4.4, and the manner in which the data were analysed is briefly set out in Section 4.5.

### **4.2 The Northern Cape Province and the high schools involved**

The Northern Cape Province is the largest province in South Africa in terms of area square kilometres (Statistics South Africa 2008: 3). It is approximately 372 889 square kilometres in size. In contrast to its size, the Northern Cape is the South African province with the smallest population, namely 902 300, with an equal distribution in terms of gender (Statistics South Africa 2005: 9). The so-called Coloured<sup>4</sup> group is the biggest population group in the province, estimated at 63,71%; followed by Black Africans (24,47%), Whites (11,74%) and Indians/Asians (10,09%). The home languages which are spoken in the province are Afrikaans, estimated to be spoken by 81,65% of the population, followed by Setswana (13,62%), isiXhosa (2,57%), English (0,78%), Sesotho (0,66%), with other languages estimated at 0,39% (Statistics South Africa 2001: 17). About 30,86% of the population falls in the age group 5 to 19 years, which means that this is more or less the percentage of the population of the Northern Cape which should currently be receiving their school education. Approximately 10.36% of the population is high school age, and should thus be in the Further Education Training phase of their school career. This is the phase in which the learners in this study were.

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<sup>4</sup> I acknowledge that the use of ethnic labels is a sensitive matter. The intention is not to cause any offence. Due to the fact that the educational sector in South Africa is not yet fully integrated (by this I mean that not all schools are ethnically diverse), I deem it necessary to mention the ethnic background of the teachers and learners concerned.

The study was conducted in Siyanda, which is one of the five districts of the Northern Cape Province, Siyanda being the third largest of these five. The seat of Siyanda is Upington. As is the case for the province as a whole, the majority of this district's 209 883 people speak Afrikaans. Siyanda has 19 high schools in total: six have English as medium of instruction (two as sole medium of instruction, three as part of parallel-medium instruction and one as part of dual-medium instruction). The other 13 schools' medium of instruction is Afrikaans.

In terms of the specific schools at which I collected the data for this study: For clarity and in order to protect the identity of those concerned, I will give labels to the schools: They will be known as HOA, HOR and DET1 and DET2, respectively. The first school (**HOA**) is a former Model C high school. This school is now open to learners from all ethnic groups and accommodates learners from all over the Siyanda District in its boarding facilities. The school is situated in the town center of Upington itself. This school is fed by several primary schools throughout Upington and surrounding settlements as well as by primary schools from Namibia (Upington is close to the border between South Africa and Namibia). Most learners at this school come from middle-class homes, and this school usually fares the best of all the schools in the Siyanda district, and indeed in the Northern Cape Province, in terms of Grade 12 results.

The language of teaching and learning in School HOA was historically Afrikaans. At present, it is predominantly Afrikaans, but follows a dual-medium system: Provision is made for English as language of teaching and learning, as many of the parents who want their children to attend this school requested that the learners' language of teaching and learning should be English. Most of the school's 620 learners (517 in total) are mother tongue speakers of Afrikaans with English as a second language. Learners who have English as language of learning (103 learners) are not placed in a separate class; Afrikaans-speaking and English-speaking learners are together in one classroom. During my visits to the school, I observed that it is common practice to use both English and Afrikaans as the language of teaching and learning for subjects taught to multilingual classes.

Another school involved in the study (**HOR**) is a merger between schools that were formerly (pre-1994) managed by The Department of Education and Training (for Black learners) and The House of Representatives (for so-called Coloured learners). School HOR is situated in Daniëlskuil, a small settlement approximately 230 kilometers east of Upington. This school is fed by three primary schools, which are attended by children from the small community of

Daniëlskuil as well as by children of labourers from the surrounding mines. As such, the learners in School HOR are predominantly from low-income families. This school usually fares very poorly, compared to the other schools in the district, in terms of Grade 12 results.

School HOR is a parallel-medium school; its language policy is that all subjects are offered in English and also in Afrikaans, to learners in separate classes. The school is situated in an Afrikaans-speaking community, but it accommodates learners from the nearby Finch mines who are predominantly Setswana speakers. Of the school's 812 learners, 457 were Afrikaans first language with English as a second language; 355 of the learners had English as language of learning – most of these 355 were mother tongue speakers of Setswana with English or Afrikaans as their second language. During my visits to this school, I observed that subjects are commonly offered in English for the Setswana-speaking learners and in Afrikaans for the so-called Coloured learners, i.e. the Setswana learners and the so-called Coloured learners were mostly in separate classes.

The **DET1** school is situated in Upington in Pabalello, a predominantly Black township. Almost all of the learners speak Afrikaans as their home language. The school attracts learners from two primary schools situated in Upington and from Kimberley, as well as a few learners from the Eastern Cape (who speak isiXhosa as home language) and from the nearby town of Kuruman (who speak Setswana as home language). The learners in this school mostly come from low-income families and this school is classified as a so-called “no fees” school, which means that very few of the parents can afford to pay school fees and thus it is not expected from them. The medium of instruction at School DET1 for all subjects offered is officially English only. However, during my visits to School DET1, I observed that it was common practice to use both English and Afrikaans as the medium of instruction for any subject being taught in a multilingual classroom. Setswana and isiXhosa were also used at times, but to a lesser extent than English and Afrikaans.

The **DET2** school is situated in Postmasburg in the Boichoeko township (approximately 170 kilometers to the east of Upington). The community in this township speaks predominantly Setswana. The school attracts learners from the Postmasburg area and from the surrounding Beeshoek Mines. Most of the learners come from low-income families and almost all speak Setswana as home language and Afrikaans or English as a second language. The majority of the teachers have Setswana or isiXhosa as their home language, but they can all speak Afrikaans as

well; only two of the 25 educators were mother tongue speakers of Afrikaans, with no knowledge of Setswana or isiXhosa. The medium of instruction at the school is officially English only. As for School DET1, it was noticed during my visits to this school that it is common practice to code switch in the multilingual classroom; in the case of School DET2, such code switching mostly occurred between English and Setswana.

### **4.3 Participants**

The participants in the study were eight teachers who taught to a total of 296 learners in the classes observed. The learners were drawn from Economic Management Sciences, Business Studies and Accounting classes. In total, 130 male learners and 166 female learners participated. These learners were in Grades 8 to 12; most of these learners were aged 14 to 19, but in all schools apart from HOA, there were a very small number of much older learners (some aged 25). Six of the eight teachers were male teachers and two were female.

### **4.4 Data collection procedures**

Due to the nature of the research, I had to pay attention to a number of ethical concerns. As I was required to conduct research in public schools, I had to obtain the consent of a number of role players in Education. Written permission to gather data for the study was obtained from the District Director of the Siyanda Education District, and from the headmasters of the four respective schools. Permission was also obtained from the teachers in whose classes the study were to take place. Teachers were informed beforehand and in writing that the visits to their classes were solely for research purposes. Neither the teachers nor the learners were told what the study was about – this was an attempt to prevent any conscious code switching (or lack of code switching) and to ensure that the teachers and the learners were relaxed and spontaneous in their conversations.

I also had to inform the labor unions of my planned visits to Schools HOR, DET1 and DET2, because of an agreement between the Department of Education and the labour unions that no-one will be allowed to do classroom observations, except for the purposes of Integrated Quality Management Systems.

To obtain access to the schools to collect the necessary information, I posted or faxed letters to the principals, educators and labour unions concerned. However, two weeks after sending the letters, no principal or teacher had responded to my correspondence. I then attempted to phone all the principals to confirm that they had received my letters. This was more difficult to accomplish than expected, as the principals were often in meetings or at workshops. Of the eight schools to which I sent letter, I managed to contact six principals telephonically (one after five attempts). Four of these six principals granted me permission to conduct my research at their schools. The reason cited by the other two principals for not being able to grant my request for permission was their staff members' workload. Many of the other principals also mentioned that their teachers are behind on their work schedules due to the national industrial strikes of educators which took place in 2007 (at the time when the data for this study were collected).

I collected all data myself. Data were collected by means of researcher observation and audio-recordings of communicative interactions during formal class time. Data were collected in the classrooms of eight different teachers at the four high schools; to be specific, one teacher at HOR, two teachers each at HOA and DET2 and three teachers at DET1. The number of times each specific teacher was visited is stated in Chapter 5. Classes in three different subjects were observed, namely Business Studies, Accounting, and Economic Management Sciences. The data collection took place over a period of three weeks and audio recordings were made of each class.

#### **4.5 Data analysis procedures**

The data were orthographically transcribed. I could transcribe the English and Afrikaans parts myself, but as I am not a proficient speaker of isiXhosa and Setswana, two persons assisted me in transcribing the isiXhosa and Setswana parts: for isiXhosa, a mother tongue speaker of this language who is a teacher and subject advisor for History; and for Setswana, a mother tongue speaker of Setswana who is a teacher of Business Studies. I then analysed the transcribed data in terms of markedness and the functions of code switching. This was done by classifying switches in terms of marked or unmarked according to Myers-Scotton's taxonomy (see Chapter 3 and below) as well as in terms of the functions of code switching as identified from the literature on code switching in the educational setting (see Chapter 2).

The following categories were used for classifying code switches in terms of markedness:

- A. Code switching as a sequence of unmarked choices
- B. Code switching itself being the unmarked choice
- C. Code switching as a marked choice
  - C1. Code switching bringing unity among marked choices
  - C2. The use of marked code switching to increase the social distance via authority /anger
  - C3. Marked code switching as ethnically-based exclusion strategy
  - C4. The message is the medium
  - C5. Marked code switching for aesthetic effect
- D. Code switching as an exploratory choice

From the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, the functions of code switching were summarised as follows:

#### Function 1. Code switching for academic reasons

- 1.1 Explaining and clarifying subject matter (Setati and Adler 2000; Ferguson 2003; Rose and Van Dulm 2007)
- 1.2 Building up learners' understanding of subject matter (Adendorff 1993; Setati et al. 2002)
- 1.3 Assisting learners in interpreting subject matter (Adendorff 1993)
- 1.4 Confirming that learners have understood what was explained (Rose and Van Dulm 2007)
- 1.5 Encouraging learners' participation (Adendorff 1993; Arthur 2001; Ferguson 2003)
- 1.6 Supporting classroom communication (Setati et al. 2002)
- 1.7 Supporting exploratory talk (Setati et al. 2002)

#### Function 2. Code switching for social reasons

- 2.1 Maintaining social relationships in the classroom (Adendorff 1993; Ferguson 2003; Rose and Van Dulm 2007)
- 2.2 Humour (Adendorff 1993; Rose and Van Dulm 2007)
- 2.3 Reasons of solidarity (Adendorff 1993; Ncoko et al. 2000)
- 2.4 Showing defiance (Ncoko et al. 2000)

- 2.5 Increasing social distance (Ncoko et al. 2000)

Function 3. Code switching for classroom management purposes

- 3.1 Classroom discipline, e.g. reprimanding learners (Rose and Van Dulm 2007)
- 3.2 Dealing with late comers and disruptions (Ferguson 2003)
- 3.3 Gaining and keeping learners' attention (Ferguson 2003)
- 3.4 Giving general instructions to the learners (This was implied in some of the studies but not mentioned my name.)

Function 4. Code switching for establishing identity

- 4.1 Demonstrating possession of knowledge of a language (Kieswetter 1995)
- 4.2 Marking identity (Rose and Van Dulm 2007)

## CHAPTER 5: THE DATA – CODE SWITCHES, THEIR FUNCTIONS AND THEIR MARKEDNESS

### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will present instances of code switching observed in the classrooms in question. The interactions presented here are representative of what was observed in each classroom, and errors of grammar were not corrected in the transcripts. These instances of code switching will be presented per classroom per school. After each instance, I will state the possible function that the switch in question has, as well as the type of switch in terms of markedness. The reasons why a certain switch was classified as such will be illustrated in the next chapter.

### 5.2 Code switching in dual medium School HOA

#### 5.2.1 HOA Teacher Mr P

I visited Mr P (a so-called Coloured mother tongue speaker of Afrikaans) three times and in total observed approximately 80 minutes of his lesson time. The following are instances of code switching which were observed (markedness and functions of teachers' switches are placed in curled brackets after each instance of code switching; refer to Section 4.5):

(19) (Grade 10 Accounting lesson. Topic: Credit purchases, Credit discount, Paying creditors)

Mr P: **Dokument nommers moet numeries agtermekaar volg.**

*'Document numbers must follow each other numerically'*

Document numbers must have a numerical sequence. {1.1, B}

(teacher laughs)

**Piet, sê vir die klas watter dokument kom eerste.** {2.1, A}

*'Piet, tell the class which of the documents come first'*

Piet: **Hoekom begin Meneer eerste met my?**

*'Sir, why do you start with me?'*

Mr P: **Ons moet ook van twee af begin.**

*'We also have to start at number two'*

(class laughs)

(20) (Grade 11 Business Studies lesson. Topic: Establishment of a new enterprise)

Mr P: **Blaai na eenheid 4 op bladsy 61. Ons sal kyk na die totstandkoming van ’n nuwe besigheid.**

*‘Turn to unit 4 on page 6. We will look at the establishing of a new enterprise’*

Mr P: What do you need to establish a business? {1.5, B}

Learner: Need capital.

Mr P: **Ja, ons het geld nodig.** {1.1, B}

*‘Yes, we need money’*

You also need a business plan, {1.1, B}

**’n sakeplan.** {1.1, B}

*‘a business plan’*

**Dit is wat ons met julle bespreek het.**

*‘That is what we have discussed with you’*

**Aspekte in sakeplan, sluit in**

*‘Aspects in business plan, includes’*

(teacher starts listing aspects; see below:)

**Watter tipe besigheid?**

*‘Which form of enterprise?’*

**Onderneming gevestig word, moet kan oorleef.**

*‘Enterprise established, must be able to survive’*

Once a business is established it needs to survive. {1.1, B}

You followed on page 61. It needs to be solvent. The assets must be more than the liabilities. It must have enough money to pay current expenses.

Make sure, Johan, you now what the meaning of concepts are.

**Risiko’s wanneer ’n nuwe besigheid gevestig word** {1.1, B}

*‘Risks when a new business is started’*

(teacher lists risks:)

Other business competitors. {1.1, B}

Worker who steals. Consider all these risks. You have to make a plan how to minimize it.

**Maniere om nuwe besighede aan te skaf.** {1.1, B}

*‘Ways in which to obtain new enterprises’*

Ways to establish new businesses. {1.1, B}

Purchasing on existing businesses. Give an example of existing businesses. Butchery. Share with us.	
<b>Deel met ons.</b>	{1.5, B}
<i>'Share with us'</i>	
Give some examples of a franchise.	{1.5, B}
Learner: McDonalds	
Mr P: Your own premises, where you do your business.	
<b>Oraait, jy follow there?</b>	{1.4, A}
<i>'Okay, you'</i>	
(addressing a specific learner)	
<b>Tantieme</b>	{1.1, A}
<i>'royalties'</i>	
royalty it is the percentage of the profit.	{1.1, B}
<b>Betaal 'n gedeelte van die persentasie aan die franchise.</b>	{1.2, B}
<i>'Pay a portion of the percentage to the franchise'</i>	
(21) (Grade 10 Accounting lesson. Topic: Writing of bad debts and Interest received transactions in general journal)	
Mr P: <b>Maak julle handboeke oop, by Oefening 5 B.</b>	
<i>'Open your textbooks, at Exercise 5B.'</i>	
Open your textbooks at Exercise 5B.	{3.4, B}
<b>In die Algemene Joernaal moet ons voorsiening maak vir Debiteurekontrole.</b>	{1.1, B}
<i>'In the General Journal, we need to make provision for Debtors' control'</i>	
Make provision for debtors control in the General Journal.	{1.1, B}
<b>Ons brondokument sal wees die joernaalbewys.</b>	{1.1, B}
<i>'Our source document will be the journal note'</i>	
The journal note.	{1.1, B}
<b>Hoekom? Die debiteur se rekening word as oninbaar afgeskryf.</b>	{1.3, B}
<i>'Why? The debtor's account will be written of as bad debt'</i>	
The owner of the business writes debtor account off for bad debts.	{1.1, B}
That receive note.	
<b>Daardie nota wat hy ontvang van die bestuur, dien as sy bewys.</b>	{1.1, B}

*'That slip which they will receive from management will serve as their evidence'*

**Die bewys word gebruik as sy joernaal bewys.**

*'The evidence will serve as his journal slip'*

**Byvoorbeeld: op 1 Oktober 2007 verskyn saldo's in die boeke van die onderneming.**

*'For example, on the 1st of October 2007 the following balances appear in the books of the businesses'*

**Op 26 Oktober 2007, word Janna se rekening met 24% per jaar vir four maande belas op agterstallige rekening.**

*'On 26 October 2007, Janna's account is taxed with 24% per annum for four months on accounts in arrears'*

On 26 October 2007, Janna pays interest of about 24% per annum,  
Back-dated account for four months. {1.1, B}

That entry will be done in the general journal. Account debited:

Personal Account of Debtor and Account Credited: Interest Received.

**Die transaksie word gedoen in die algemene joernaal. Die rekening wat gedebiteer word, is die persoonlike rekening van die Debiteur;**

**Rekening Gekrediteer: Rente Ontvang.** {1.1, B}

*'The transaction is done in the general journal. The account which is debited is the personal account of the Debtor, Account Credited: Interest Received'*

**Debiteur betaal rente van 25% per jaar op agterstallige rekening; vir hoe lank?**

*'The debtor pays 25% interest per annum on his back-dated account; for how long?'*

The debtor pays 25% interest per annum on his backdated account;  
for how long? {1.1, B}

Learners (in unison): **Vir 3 maande, Meneer.**

*'For 3 months, sir'*

Mr P: **Hoe sal die rekening bekend staan wat ons krediteer?** {1.5, A}

*'How will this credit account be known?'*

Learners (in unison): **Rente ontvang**

*'Interest received'*

(22) (Grade 10 Accounting lesson. Topic: Trading discount)

Mr P: **Wat van die handelskorting?**

*'What about the trade discount?'*

What about the trading discount? {1.1, B}

**Skryfbehoeftes word geskryf in die diverse kolom.** {1.1, B}

*'Stationery will be written in the sundry account.'*

Stationery will be written in the sundry account. {1.1, B}

Mr Claasen, read for us the transaction on the date on 28th of November.

Learner: **Meneer, ek het die verkeerde transaksie gelees.**

*'Sir, I have read the wrong transaction.'*

Mr P: There are two transactions.

**Kan jy nie Engels lees nie?** {2.2, A}

*'Can't you read English?'*

(class laughs)

### 5.2.2 HOA Teacher Mr K

I visited this classroom of Mr K (a White mother tongue speaker of Afrikaans) once and observed his teaching for a total of approximately 30 minutes. This classroom is in a dual-medium school, but as will be noted below, Mr K teaches in Afrikaans only. I include one excerpt of the lesson here, to indicate the lack of code switching:

(23) Grade 10 Accounting lesson. Topic: Transfer form Subsidiary journal (Debtor Journal) to the Debtor Ledger

Mr K: **Noem die kodes vir krediet en kontant wat gebruik sal word in die Debiteure Grootboek.**

*'State the codes for credit and cash which should be used in the Debtor ledger'*

Learner: **01 is die kode vir kontant en 02 is die kode vir krediet.**

*'01 is the code for cash and 02 is the code for credit'*

Mr K: **Wie is klaar met die transaksie-ontleding?**

*'Who has finished the transaction analysis?'*

**Die persone wat klaar is, moet die kodes in die Debiteure-grootboek neerskryf.**

*'The persons who have finished must write codes down in their Debtors Ledger'*

**Dit is belangrik dat julle die hulpjoernale moet herken.**

*'It is important for you to recognise the subsidiary journals'*

Learner: **Die brondokument, wat is dit?**

*'What is the source document?'*

(note that the learner does not receive an answer to this question:)

Mr K: **Julle kan nou voortgaan om die debiteure-grootboek te doen.**

*'You may now go ahead with the completion of the debtors ledger'*

### **5.2.3 Functions and markedness of code switching in School HOA**

In this school, only one of the two observed teachers made use of code switching; the other teacher spoke only Afrikaans, despite the school's language policy requiring teachers to speak both English and Afrikaans during the same lesson.

Mr P made use of code switching mainly for academic reasons, and mostly to explain and clarify subject matter. To a lesser extent, he used code switching to build up learners' understanding of subject matter and to assist them in interpreting subject matter. He also code switched to confirm whether learners have understood his explanations and to encourage them to participate in classroom discussions or answering his questions. Code switching was also used to maintain social relationships between him and his learners as well as to give general instructions to them. In terms of markedness, Mr P did make use of code switching as sequential unmarked choice, but mostly code switching itself was the unmarked choice.

## **5.3 Code switching in parallel-medium School HOR**

### **5.3.1 HOR teacher Mr T**

I visited the classroom of Mr T once and in total observed approximately 30 minutes of his lesson time. Mr T is a Black teacher (born and raised in Daniëlsskuil) who speaks isiXhosa and Setswana, but he considers his home language to be Afrikaans. He can teach in English, Afrikaans, isiXhosa or Setswana, but in the excerpt below only speaks English and Setswana:

(24) (Grade 12 Business Studies lesson. Topic: Representation of data)

Mr T: Data can be presented in different ways.

Can you think of some of these examples?

Learner: Line graph, Histogram, Pie-chart and Tables.

Mr T: Divide yourself in age groups, 1982 to 1989.

Learner 1: **Moutabana wa re eng ke rona ba re tsetweng su pele pele ga 1982?**

*'Sir, what about us, whose birthdays are before 1982?'*

Learner 2: **Bathho be batsetse ba godile.**

*'These guys are old'*

Mr T: **Ee badgodile.**

{2.1, 2.2, A}

*'Yes, old, but not cold'*

(everybody in the class laughs)

### ***5.3.2 Functions and markedness of code switching in School HOR***

The teacher in this English-Afrikaans parallel-medium school taught in English, but code switched to Setswana for purposes of maintaining social relationships with his learners and for displaying humour. The instance of code switching observed is code switching as a sequence of unmarked choices (teaching in English but then switching to Setswana when the situation changes, i.e. when a learner jokes in Setswana).

## **5.4 Code switching in English-medium School DET 1**

### ***5.4.1 DET1 Teacher Mr L***

Mr L, a Black teacher, was born and raised in Upington and then studied and worked in the Eastern Cape Province. Like Mr T, he can speak English, Afrikaans, isiXhosa and Setswana. I visited his classroom twice and in total observed approximately 60 minutes of lesson time. The following instances of code switching were observed during this time (note the frequent code mixing, and that the official medium of instruction is English):

(25) (Grade 11 Business Studies lesson. Topic: Characteristics of forms of ownership)

Mr L: The sole proprietorship has a single owner. Use of capital can be his own or borrowed capital. If he don't have enough money, then he must borrow it.

But the manners in which you establish a enterprise depend on credit worthiness.

**Verstaan? Jy sien as jy bank toe gaan, as jy geld wil leen, gaan die bank kyk hoe hy die mense kan help; hoe lyk sy inkomste.**

**Die bank gee net die persoon die hoeveelheid geld wat hy kan bekostig.** {1.2; 1.4, B}

*'Do you understand? When you go to a bank to borrow money, the bank will look at your income before deciding whether to help you. The bank only gives the person that amount of money which he can afford to pay back.'*

**'n Ander kenmerk is dat daar personal kontak moet wees.** {1.1, B}

*'Another characteristic is that there should be personal contact.'*

**Die bank na gelang jou posisie sal kan jou help, sê dan moenie worry nie, ek sal jou help, want more sal jy weer die geld terug betaal.**

*'The bank looks at your financial position to see if you could be helped. They say, "Don't worry, we will help you, because you are in a position to pay back the bank's money".'*

A sole proprietorship is not a legal entity. Foschini has legal entity. {1.1, B}

**As jy vir Foschini geld skuld en nie jou skuld betaal nie, kan Foschini regstappe neem.** {1.2, B}

*'If you owe Foschini money and you don't pay your debt, then Foschini can take legal action'*

**As ek R 10 000 in die besigheid sit, is die R 10 000 die eienaarskapitaal van die besigheid.**

*'If I put R 10 000 in the business, the R 10 000 is the owner's capital of the business.'*

**Indien Silwana nie sy skuld kan betaal nie, kan hulle hom sue.**

*'If Silwana cannot pay his debt, can they can sue him.'*

**Silwana kan sy voertuig verloor om sy skuld te delg. Die skuldeisers kan hom verkoop.**

*'Silwana could lose his vehicle to pay his debt. The creditors can sell it'*

Partnership **besigheid dissolved na dood van een partner. Dan moet die besigheid van oor af begin.**

*'Partnership business dissolved after the death of one partner. Then the business has to start from scratch'*

Partnership **was gemaak as gevolg van shortcomings van die sole proprietorship.**

*'Partnership was establish because of shortcomings of the sole proprietorship'*

**Kyk in die Yellow Pages phone book vir verskillende partnerships.**

*'Look in the Yellow Pages phone book for the different partnerships'*

(makes a joke:)

Mr L: **Byvoorbeeld** Brothers. **Of dink julle ek het hom nog nooit gesien nie?**

*For example Brothers. Or do you think that I have never seen him?*

(learners laugh)

Mr L: Name the different forms of ownerships [Revision]. {1.4, 1.5, C2}

Learners (shout in unison): Sole proprietorship, Partnership, Close Corporation

Mr L (angrily): **As julle nie jul hande opsteek nie, loop ek met die ry af en.** {3.1, C4}

*'If you don't raise your hands, I will walk down this line and.'*

**Gee my dan**

*'Then give me'*

some of the characteristics {Function unclear, B}

**van `n** sole proprietorship. {Function unclear, B}

*'of a sole proprietorship'*

Learner: When the owner dies, the enterprise stops to exist.

(26) (Grade 9 Economic Management Science lesson. Topic: Factors of production)

Mr L: Can you tell me the different factors of production, which the household owns?

Learner: Land

Mr L: **Ken julle nie die ander** factors **nie.** {1.5, B}

*'Don't you know the other factors?'*

Capital is another factor and interest is the remuneration. {1.2, B}

**Wat is `n** budget? {1.5, B}

*'What is a budget?'*

Learners (in unison): **Dit is `n** document, **Meneer.**

*'It is a document, Sir'*

Mr L (angry): **Ek vra net een mens. Praat met my, nie met mekaar nie.** {3.1, C4}

*'I'm only asking one person. Speak to me, not to each other'*

Government **moet** budget for expenses, for example {1.2, B}

*'must'*

**ons weet ons ouers kry geld, die grants, kindergeld.** {1.3, 2.2, B}

*'We know that our parents get the money, the grants, child grants'*

Government **kry ook geld van** income tax.

*'Government also gets money from income tax.'*

**Hoe sal die government die ekonomie laat groei?**

*'How will the government cause the economy to grow?'*

Tools to measure the economy. {1.1, B}

**Wat is daai** {1.5, B}

*'What are those'*

tools to measure {Function unclear, B}

**die economy growth?** {Function unclear, B}

*'the economy growth?'*

**Daai ding wat gesê word die Total Production vir `n particular year, die Gross Domestic Product. Nog nooit gehoor van Gross Domestic Product nie?**

*'That thing which is called the Total Production for a particular year, the Gross Domestic Product. Never heard of the Gross Domestic Product?'*

Learner: **Ons het al daarvan gehoor.**

*'We have heard of that'*

#### **5.4.2 DET 1 Teacher Mr B**

Mr B is a Black Namibian who now lives in South Africa. He speaks Nama (as first language), Afrikaans and English, but no isiXhosa or Setswana. I visited this classroom twice and in total observed approximately 60 minutes of lesson time. The following instances of code switching were observed during this time (Note that English is the official medium of instruction at this school):

(27) (Grade 10 Business Studies lesson. Topic: Different business locations)

Mr B: **Noem die** different business locations. {Function unclear, B}

*'Name the'*

Learner 1: **Meneer, enige voorbeeld?**

*'Sir, any example?'*

Learner 2: **Kan ek dit op die bord skryf?**

*'May I write it on the board?'*

Mr B: **Skryf neer die** {1.5, A}

*'Write down the'*

butcheries in Paballelo.

{1.6, B}

Learner: **Hier is nie** butcheries **nie, slegs** guests houses.

*'Here aren't any butcheries, only guest houses'*

(28) (Grade 8 Economics and Management Sciences lesson. Topic: Inflation life cycle)

Mr B: Can you tell me which the six steps are in the inflation cycle?

Learner (shouts): **Kan ek maar antwoord, Meneer.**

*'May I answer the question, Sir?'*

Mr B: Yes, start with number one.

Give now another person a chance to answer.

Learner: **Meneer, ek soek ook 'n kans.**

*'Sir, I also want a chance to answer'*

Mr B: If the cost of living increases, what do we need?

What cause inflation?

Learner: **Iemand trap my.**

*'Someone is kicking me'*

Mr B (serious): **Hê, stop jou nonsens.**

{3.1, B, C4}

*'Hey, stop your nonsense'*

### 5.4.3 DET1 Teacher Mr Y

Mr Y is a former inhabitant of the Eastern Cape Province. He is a mother tongue speaker of isiXhosa; he speaks English as a second language but very little Afrikaans and no Setswana. I visited him once and observed approximately 40 minutes of his lesson time. The following instances of code switching were observed:

(29) (Grade 10 Accounting lesson. Topic: Accounting cycle)

Mr Y (teaches in English, but then, in reaction to learners making noise):

**Hayi, hayi** [isiXhosa]

{3.1, C4}

*No, no'*

(learners become quiet)

(teacher asks one learner to clean the black board:)

Mr Y: **Daar is 'n stukkie toiletpapier, Manie.**

- 'There is a piece of toilet paper, Manie'* {2.1, 3.4, A}  
 (learner, not Manie, laughs)  
 Mr Y: Why are you laughing? {3.1, C4}  
 Learner1: **Daardie papier is nie skoon nie.**  
*'That paper is not clean'*  
 Learner2: **'n Voorbeeld van 'n trial balance, Meneer?**  
*'An example of a trial balance, Sir?'*  
 Mr Y: Look at page 115.  
 Learner3: **Nee, Meneer, op** page 114.  
*'No, Sir, on page 114'*  
 (it starts to rain)  
 Learner4: **Vanaand gaan ons lekker slaap.**  
*'Tonight we will sleep well.'*

(30) (Grade 10 Accounting lesson. Topic: Accounting cycle)

- Mr Y: Are you saying that cash flow is the change.  
 Learner (addressing another learner): **Jakes, gee my pen of ek vat jou boek.**  
*'Jakes, give me my pen or I will take your book'*  
 Mr Y: **Hayi, hayi, sanulwenza mamelani njalo.** [isiXhosa] {3.1, A}  
*'No, no, don't do that. Pay attention.'*  
 (class becomes quiet)

#### ***5.4.4 Functions and markedness of code switching in School DET1***

The teachers at this officially English-medium school used English and Afrikaans to convey academic content; they used code switching for all academic functions apart from supporting exploratory talk mentioned by Setati et al. (2002). The teachers also made use of code switching for social purposes, namely to maintain their relationships with their learners and for humour. Code switching was also used to manage the classroom, specifically to reprimand learners and to give general instructions. In terms of markedness, the code switching is sequential unmarked choices, the unmarked choice itself, as well as marked (where it was used to assert authority and where code switching as a medium conveyed the teachers' message).

## 5.5 Code switching in English-medium School DET 2

### 5.5.1 DET 2 Teacher Ms M

Ms M, a Black teacher, originates from Bloemfontein. She speaks Sesotho and also Setswana, isiXhosa and English, but very little Afrikaans. I visited her classroom once and in total observed approximately 45 minutes of lesson time. The following instances of code switching were observed (Note that the official medium of instruction is English):

(31) (Grade 11 Business Studies lesson. Topic: Business environments)

Ms M: The entrepreneur is the one who controls the other resources.

**E ka go re ene ke motho.** [Setswana] {1.6, 2.3, B}

*'Yes, he is the person'*

How can business control suppliers?

Learner: By not buying from them.

Ms M: **O e kereile mo bukeng?** {2.1, 2.3, C1}

*'Did you get it in the book?'*

In order for suppliers to maintain the relationship with business, they must be reliable, honest and always be able to supply in time. {1.2, 1.3, A}

**Ke bona ba bumelelang gore ba batla lo patalua ke mong.** {1.2, B}

*'They themselves, they agree who will pay them'*

In order for suppliers to compete with those suppliers, they need to be honest and always be able to supply. {1.2, B}

**A kere jannong imagin.**

*'Let me tell you how'* {3.3, B}

If a supplier is not reliable, will you still make use of that supplier, even if he or she is not reliable? {1.1, B}

**E mena gore gongwelegongwe ko o tlatwa o le teng.** {1.1, B}

*'It means everywhere you are the supplier must reach you.'*

### 5.5.2 DET 2 Teacher 2 (Ms S)

Ms S, like Ms M is a Black teacher from Bloemfontein. She speaks Sesotho and also Setswana and English, but very little Afrikaans and no isiXhosa. I visited her classroom once and in total

observed approximately 45 minutes lesson time. The following instances of code switching were observed:

(32) (Grade 10 Accounting lesson. Topic: Adjustments)

Ms S: Take out your work and go to page 138.

**Nina abangenayo, lo dira lerathla.** {3.1, 3.2, C2, C4}

*'You who have entered the room now, you are making a noise'*

**OK, a retloheleng se re se dirang**

*'OK, if you don't shut up, you must go out of the class'*

or else you'll get. {3.1, 3.2, C2, C4}

**Dikeledi etssamang no.3 ga kere no. 4** {3.3, 3.4, B}

*'The adjustment you are going to do are no.3 and the other learner must do no. 4'*

To write off, you must credit Barnard. {1.1, B}

**Ga kere?** {1.4, 2.3, B}

*'Not true?'*

Because he can't afford to pay his account, **né**.

Again we are taking this amount to the debtors' control

**Ga kere?** {1.4, 2.3, B}

*'Not true?'*

### ***5.5.3 Functions and markedness of code switching in School DET 2***

The two teachers observed at this school (both females) used code switching for all academic purposes except for encouraging learner participation and for supporting exploratory talk. In terms of social functions, code switching was used for reasons of solidarity and to maintain social relationships in the classrooms. In this school, code switching was also used to perform all four classroom management functions. In terms of markedness, code switching itself was mainly an unmarked choice, but at times code switching was indeed the marked choice, specifically where it was used to show affection to the learners, to increase social distance between teacher and learners and where code switching itself as medium covered the intended message.

## CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

### 6.1 Introduction

The results will be discussed in this chapter according to the functions of the switches by the teachers (Section 6.2) as well as to the markedness of these switches (Section 6.3). In this chapter, I present frequency counts of the switches observed in the transcriptions presented in Chapter 5. Recall that these transcriptions were deemed representative of interaction in the classrooms concerned. By giving the frequency counts, I am not implying that these frequencies are absolute and are therefore fully representative of the actual code switching in these classrooms; instead, they are meant to give a *very general* indication of the frequency with which functions and types of markedness occurred. In each section, illustrations from the data will be presented. These illustrations will take the form of excerpts from transcribed classroom interaction and will be renumbered in this chapter.

### 6.2 The functions of the code switches

The number of times each function of code switching occurred in the schools collectively is indicated in Table 1.

As can be seen from Table 1 overleaf, some functions of code switch did not occur at all, particularly the functions pertaining to supporting exploratory talk, increasing of social distance, demonstrating possession of knowledge and marking identity. The function occurring most was 1.1, i.e. teachers most frequently used code switching to explain and clarify subject matter, as shown in excerpt (33).

(33) **Dokument nommers moet numeries agtermekaar volg.**

*'Document numbers must follow each other numerically'*

Document numbers must have a numerical sequence.

Here, the teacher states content matter in Afrikaans and then repeats it verbatim in English. The teacher concerned is teaching in a dual-medium class, but even teachers in the English-only

school made use of code switching for this purpose, as shown in excerpt (34) below Table 1, where the teacher clarifies in Setswana that subject matter which was previously stated in English.

**Table 1:** *Distribution of the functions of the teachers' code switching*

Function	Number of switches fulfilling this function
1.1 Explaining and clarifying subject matter	30
1.2 Building up learners' understanding of subject matter	8
1.3 Assisting learners in interpreting subject matter	3
1.4 Confirming that learners have understood what was explained	5
1.5 Encouraging learners' participation	8
1.6 Supporting classroom management	2
1.7 Supporting exploratory talk	0
2.1 Maintaining social relationship in the classroom	4
2.2 Humour	3
2.3 Reasons of solidarity	4
2.4 Showing defiance	0
2.5 Increasing social distance	0
3.1 Classroom discipline, e.g. reprimanding learners	8
3.2 Dealing with late comers and disruptions	2
3.3 Gaining and keeping learners' attention	2
3.4 Giving general instructions to learners	3
4.1 Demonstrating possession of knowledge of a language	0
4.2 Marking identity	0

(34) If a supplier is not reliable, will you still make use of that supplier, even if he or she is not reliable. **E mena gore gongwelegongwe ko o flatswa o le teng.**

*'It means everywhere you are the supplier must reach you'*

The three functions jointly occurring second-most were 1.2, 1.5 and 3.1. Function 1.2 (building up learners' understanding of subject matter) is illustrated in excerpt (35). Here, the teacher gives the subject matter in English and then switches to Afrikaans to illustrate what was said in such a manner that learners will be able to understand it.

(35) A sole proprietorship is not a legal entity. Foschini has legal entity.

**As jy vir Foschini geld skuld en nie jou skuld betaal nie, kan Foschini regstappe neem.**

*'If you owe Foschini money and you don't pay your debt, then Foschini can take legal action'*

As regards function 1.5 (encouraging learners' participation), excerpt (36) serves as example. In this excerpt, the teacher asks the class in English to give examples and then repeats the request in Afrikaans, so as to encourage the whole class to answer, probably in whatever language they feel comfortable with.

(36) Give an example of existing businesses. Butchery. Share with us. **Deel met ons.**

*'Share with us'*

Excerpt (37) gives an example of code switching being used for purposes of classroom discipline, in this case for reprimanding learners. Thus far, the more frequently used functions all pertained to clarifying the subject matter; here we have the first non-academic function. The teacher teaches in English (and the school is an English-medium one) but when learners break the classroom rules, he "threatens" them in Afrikaans, saying that he will "pick on" learners in turn if they do not raise their hands when they know the answer to his questions.

(37) Teacher: Name the different forms of ownerships

Learners (shouting out the answer): Sole proprietorship, Partnership, Close Corporation

**Teacher: As julle nie julle nie jul hande opsteek nie, loop ek met die ry af en.**

*'If you don't raise your hands, I will walk down this line and'*

The function occurring third most was 1.4 (confirming that learners have understood what was explained), followed closely by 2.1 (maintaining social relationship in the classroom) and 2.3 (reasons of solidarity). Excerpt (38) illustrates the confirming function. When the teacher asks a particular learner whether his explanation was clear, he switches from English to Afrikaans (and then back to English).

(38) Your own premises, where you do your business

**Oraait, jy follow there?** (addressing a specific learner)

*'Okay, you'*

Excerpt (39) demonstrates code switching being used to maintain the social relationship between the teacher and a specific learner. Here the teacher teaches in English and then addresses an Afrikaans-speaking learner (Piet) in Afrikaans, as Afrikaans is Piet's home language. One can then see Piet addressing the teacher in Afrikaans and the teacher then jokes with Piet in this language, saying that he cannot always first ask the learner sitting right at the front of the class to answer the questions; sometimes teachers need to ask the learner second from the front.

- (39) Teacher: Document numbers must have a numerical sequence.  
(teacher laughs)  
Teacher: **Piet, sê vir die klas watter dokument kom eerste?**  
*'Piet, tell the class which of the documents come first?'*  
Piet: **Hoekom begin Meneer eerste met my?**  
*'Sir, why do you start with me?'*  
Teacher: **Ons moet ook van twee af begin.**  
*'We also have to start at number two'*

As regards using code switching for reasons of solidarity: In excerpt (40), the teacher makes a statement in English, namely that an entrepreneur is in control of certain resources. She then switches to Setswana and says, "Yes he is the person". This Setswana utterance does not add anything to what had been said in English; it appears therefore that the switch took place merely to acknowledge that the teacher knows that many of the learners speak Setswana and that she will try to accommodate them, despite the official medium of instruction at the school in question being English.

- (40) The entrepreneur is the one who controls the other resources.  
**E, ka go re ene ke motho**  
*'Yes, he is the person'*

Functions that occurred the least were 1.3 (assisting learners in interpreting subject matter), 1.6 (supporting classroom management), 2.2 (humour), 3.2 (dealing with late-comers and disruptions), 3.3 (gaining and keeping learners' attention) and 3.4 (giving general instructions to learners). Each of these will now be discussed in turn.

Excerpt (41) shows that the teacher teaches in Afrikaans, repeats a key term in English and then switches back to Afrikaans instead of continuing in English, in order to help learners interpret what had just been said.

(41) **Ons brondokument sal wees die joernaalbewys.** The journal note.

*'Our source document will be the journal note'*

**Hoekom? Die debiteur se rekening word as oninbaar afgeskryf.**

*'Why? The debtor's account will be written off as bad debt'*

An example of code switching being used to support classroom management is given in excerpt (42). Here, the teacher was speaking English and then switched to Afrikaans to manage classroom activities, i.e. to get learners to perform a certain task related to the teaching.

(42) **Skryf neer die** butcheries in Paballelo.

*'Write down the'*

As regards humour, excerpt (43) shows that the teacher was giving an instruction in English, but when a learner made a possibly derogatory remark about older learners in the class, the teacher does not continue speaking English but switches to Setswana to diffuse the situation with humour.

(43) Teacher: Divide yourself in age groups, 1982 to 1989.

Learner 1: **Moutabana wa re eng ke rona ba re tsetweng su pele pele ga 1982?**

*'Sir, what about us, whose birthdays are before 1982?'*

Learner 2: **Bathho be batsetse ba godile.**

*'These guys are old'*

Teacher: **Ee badgodile.**

*'Yes, old, but not cold'*

In excerpt (44), the teacher switches from English to Setswana in order to deal with late-comers who are causing a disruption. Note that she does not reprimand them directly here; she merely points out that they are disturbing the classroom activities.

(44) Take out your work and go to page 138. **Nina abangenayo, lo dira lerathla.**

*'You who have entered the room now, you are making a noise'*

There were two instances of code switching being used to gain and keep the attention of learners. One is given in (45) below. Here, the teacher switches from English to Setswana to point out to learners that she is now going to explain something important.

- (45) In order for suppliers to compete with those suppliers, they need to be honest and always be able to supply. **A kere jannong imagin.**

*'Let me tell you how'*

In excerpt (46), the teacher at this English-medium school switches from English (in which she was “threatening” rowdy learners) to Setswana in order to tell the class what she is expecting from them:

- (46) **Dikledi etsamang no. 3 ga kere no. 4.**

*'The adjustment you are going to do are no.3 and the other learner must do no. 4'*

### 6.3 The markedness of the code switches

Table 2 indicates the frequency of code switches in terms of their markedness. As can be seen from this table, there were no instances observed in which code switching was an exploratory choice (D). The reason for this is obvious: Teachers know their learners' linguistic repertoires very well and thus do not need to explore this. Also, in terms of code switching as a marked choice, code switching was never chosen as an ethnically-based exclusion strategy (C3) or for aesthetic effect (C5). Again, one can understand why C3 would not occur in a classroom situation: It is unlikely that a fair and sensitive teacher will use a particular language to deliberately exclude some of his/her learners from what is being said in the classroom.

**Table 2:** *Distribution of the teachers' code switching in terms of markedness*

Markedness or unmarkedness	Number of switches
A. Code switching as a sequence of unmarked choices	10
B. Code switching itself being the unmarked choice	56
C1. Code switching bring unity among marked choices	1
C2. The use of marked code switching to increase the social distance via authority /anger	3
C3. Marked code switching as ethnically-base exclusion strategy	0
C4. The message is the medium	7
C5. Marked code switching for aesthetic effect	0
D. Code switching as an exploratory choice	0

As can be seen from Table 2, in most instances the code switching itself was the unmarked choice. This type of unmarked choice occurred 56 times in the transcripts presented in Chapter 5. As stated by Lawrence (1999: 270), code switching itself is the unmarked choice where the speakers involved are all bilingual (as was the case in all of the classrooms observed, with some speakers being multilingual), and in such circumstances, there is no need for a change in the situation before code switching commences. This is what was usually observed in the classrooms. Excerpt (47) illustrates code switching itself being the unmarked choice. The teacher is addressing the whole multilingual class and is supposed to teach in English only, yet she switches between English and Setswana without there being any change in the situation (i.e. in her audience, in the subject matter or in the activity).

(47) In order for suppliers to maintain the relationship with business, they must reliable, honest and always be able to supply in time.

**Ke bona ba bumelelang gore ba batla lo patalua ke mong.**

*'They themselves, they agree who will pay them'*

In order for suppliers to compete with those suppliers, they need to be honest and always be able to supply. **A kere jannong imagin.**

*'Let me tell you how'*

If a supplier is not reliable, will you still make use of that supplier, even if he or she is not reliable? **E mena gore gongwelegongwe ko o tlatwa o le teng.**

*'It means everywhere you are the supplier must reach you'*

In some instances (10 to be precise), code switching was a sequence of unmarked choices. As pointed out by Ncoko et al. (2000), such code switching is the expected type of code switching for a particular situation. Myers-Scotton (1993: 114) adds that this type of code switching is triggered by a change in situational factors within the conversation. In the data, this type of switching mostly occurred when the teacher moved from addressing the class as a whole in Language A to addressing a particular learner, whose home language is Language B, in Language B, i.e. the change in addressee was the change in situational factors within the conversation (see Myers-Scotton 1993: 114). An example of such switching appears in excerpt (48), where the teacher addresses the class as a whole in isiXhosa and then switches to Afrikaans to address Manie, a learner whose home language is Afrikaans (although the medium of instruction in this classroom is officially English).

(48) **Hayi, hayi.**

*No, no'*

(learners become quiet)

(teacher asks Manie to clean the black board by saying:)

**Daar is 'n stukkie toiletpapier, Manie.**

*'There is a piece of toilet paper, Manie'*

(another learner, not Manie, laughs)

Why are you laughing?

There were seven instances in which code switching as a medium was the message, i.e. where the code switch as a marked choice complemented the referential message of what was being said. The excerpt in (49) shows that the teacher switches from English to Afrikaans to sternly reprimand a learner who was kicking another learner during the lesson time. Instead of continuing his teaching in English, the teacher uses Afrikaans in this English-medium class for this reprimand.

(49) Teacher: If the cost of living increases, what do we need? What cause inflation?

Learner: **Iemand trap my.**

*'Somebody is kicking me'*

Teacher (serious): **Hê, stop jou nonsens.**

*'Hey, stop your nonsense'*

In three instances, marked code switching was used to increase the social distance via authority or anger. In excerpt (50), the teacher is joking with the learners in Afrikaans, but then after the joke returns to the lesson per se and switches to English to tell learners, by implication, to stop joking around and, directly, to list what he had been teaching on before the light-heartedness commenced.

(50) **Kyk in die** Yellow Pages phone book **vir verskillende** partnerships.

*Look in the Yellow Pages phone book for the different partnerships'*

(makes a joke:)

**Byvoorbeeld** Brothers. **Of dink julle ek het hom nog  
nooit gesien nie?**

*For example Brothers. Or do you think that I have never seen him?'*

(Learners laugh)

Name the different forms of ownerships.

Lastly, there was one instance of marked code switching bringing unity among choices. According to Myers-Scotton (1993), speakers engage in marked code switching to indicate a range of demonstrations, from anger to affection, and to negotiate outcomes ranging from demonstrations of authority or of superior educational status to assertions of ethnic identity. In excerpt (51), the teacher switches from English to Setswana to praise a Setswana-speaking learner who answered her question in English. In this instance, the teacher is code switching to demonstrate affection for the learner and appreciation of her attempt.

(51) Teacher: How can business control suppliers?

Learner: By not buying from them.

Teacher: **O e kereile mo bukeng?**

*'Did you get it in the book?'*

## **CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION**

### **7.1 Summary of the main points**

This study investigated the functions and markedness of code switching by teachers in a specific school district in the Northern Cape. The answer to the first research question 1, namely whether teachers made use of code switching during classroom interactions, was “yes”. In terms of the second question, namely why teachers code switch, it was found that the teachers used code switching mainly for academic purposes (such as explaining and clarifying subject content) but also frequently for social reasons (maintaining their social relationships with their learners and being humorous) as well as for classroom management purposes (such as reprimanding learners). The teachers never used code switching solely for establishing their identity. It appears then that the teachers in this study used code switching for the same reasons as those mentioned in other studies on code switching in the educational setting.

The code switching of the teachers in this study was mainly an unmarked choice itself, but at times the sequential switch was triggered by a change in addressee. In very few instances was the code switching a marked choice; when it was, the message was the medium (see Myers-Scotton 1993: 138), or code switching was used to increase the social distance between the teacher and the learners, or in one instance to demonstrate affection. It appears then that Myers-Scotton’s (1993) Markedness Model is a useful theoretical framework when analysing code switching in the educational setting.

### **7.2 The contribution of the study and implications for educational practice**

I found that the school’s official language policy was not always adhered to: In School HOA, in which the official media of instruction is English and Afrikaans in one classroom, Mr K taught in Afrikaans only (despite some learners in his class having English as language of learning), which is against the language policy of the school. Some of the teachers in this dual-medium school reason that their official language policy is (still) Afrikaans-only, and that they only need to accommodate the English-speaking learners when such need arises.

In HOR (a parallel-medium school), the observed teachers were meant to teach in English only, but at times they switched to Setswana. In DET1, the medium of instruction is English only, yet teachers used English and Afrikaans and to a very limited extent isiXhosa in order to accommodate their learners. As in the case of DET 1, the medium of instruction in DET 2 is English only; yet teachers at this school spoke both English and Setswana during lesson time.

My findings reveal that code switching occurred in the observed classrooms for a reason – not only social reasons but for academic reasons and for classroom management. As such, the code switching constituted good academic practice and should therefore be encouraged in the classrooms, especially where the medium of instruction is the home language of very few of the learners in that school.

This study highlighted the discrepancy between schools' language policy and their classroom language practices. One implication of this finding is that parents should be informed of the real medium of instruction of a particular school so that they can make informed choices with regards to their children's school placement in the future.

### **7.3 Limitations of the study**

The study was done in only one district in the province and only four of the 19 high schools in this district. Only six of the schools which I originally contacted responded to my communication and of these only four reacted positively. The principals and teachers I approached gave many reasons why it was not possible to accommodate me, such as the workload of the teachers, the involvement of labour unions and also disinterest on the teachers' side. The limited number of schools limits the generalisability of the study's findings.

I had to visit the schools during school hours, which are also my working hours. As such, and because of limited leave allowances, I was limited in terms of the times available for data collection. In 2007 (the year in which the data were collected), there were national strikes by teachers, which made visits to schools challenging. Two of the selected schools were very far removed geographically from where I am based; therefore it was not possible to visit them as often as I would have desired.

#### **7.4 Directions for further research on this topic**

In this thesis, the teachers were recorded during classroom interaction and their code switching behaviour was then analysed based on these recordings. A limitation of this study, which should be addressed in future studies, is that I did not conduct interviews with the teachers on their code switching behaviour. It would be good to establish whether teachers are aware of their code switching and specifically of the reasons why they switch languages during lesson time. Also, learners could be interviewed to establish whether or not they find the teachers' code switching helpful, especially with regards to understanding the lessons/subjects.

#### **7.5 Concluding remarks**

Despite the limitations of this study, the findings have the potential to make a limited contribution to educational practice in South Africa. Whereas the use of code switching in the educational setting is stigmatized by some (see Kamwangamalu 1998), I found that it is used widely, even in classrooms with officially only one language as medium of instruction. This finding could inform classroom practice in the sense that code switching should be encouraged for the benefit of the learners who do not speak the official medium of instruction as home language but also for the benefit of those teachers who are currently required to teach in a language which is not their home language. Given that South Africa is a multilingual country, the practice of using one language only in a multilingual school should be reconsidered.

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