Code Switching and Code Mixing of Swahili Spoken in Goma Town

Mutabaruka Chiza Faustin

Abstract: Our concern is Code-switching and code-mixing, evidence from Swahili spoken in Goma. I intended to depict not only the motives that push Goma people to use French words in their utterances but also discover whether the French words used block effective communication.

To reach this objective, I used qualitative methods research among which one on-one interview consisting on getting into contact with people using switch or mixing code, asking them questions in order to discover and understand their utterances on one hand and observing people uttering Swahili in order to take notes after. Carrying out this research, I explained French words that are used in Swahili utterances; I also explained the causes of that push people use French words in Swahili utterances.

Keywords: jargon, code switching, code mixing, effect, Swahili

Résumé: Notre travail porte sur **le mélange et le changement des codes, l'évidence du Swahili parlé dans la ville de Goma**. Je vais non seulement chercher à découvrir si les mots Français utilisés dans les allocutions Kiswahili bloquent la communication effective mais aussi expliquer les motifs qui poussent les habitants de Goma utiliser les mots Français dans leur Kiswahili parlé. Pour atteindre cet objectif, je vais utiliser les méthodes de recherche qualitatives en appliquant d'une part la technique d'interview qui consiste à entrer en contact les gens, leur poser des questions pour découvrir les mots Français utilisés et d'autre part observer les gens et noter les dires après. Traitant ce travail, je vais expliquer les mots Français utilisés dans les dire des gens qui habitent à Goma.

Mots clés: jargon, Changement de code, mélange de code, effet, Swahili.

I. Definitions of Some Concepts

1.1 Swahili

Bethany Calderwood (2023) in his work ''Swahili Language History'' defines Swahili as a language spoken along much of the Eastern coast of Africa. For some people, it is a first language; for others, it serves as a lingua franca, a trade language used to bridge the communication gaps between people of different first languages.

Bethany added stating that according to linguists, Swahili is a part of the Niger-Congo language family and, as such, is a sub-group of Benue-Congo branch, which is a branch of the linguistic category of Bantu languages.

1.2 A code

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines it as a system of words, letters, numbers or symbols that represent a message or record information secretly or in a shorter form: to break/crack a code (to understand and read the message).

1.3 Code-switching

Richard Nordquist (2019) defines a code switching or code-switching,(CS) as the practice of moving back and forth between two dialects or registers of the same language at one time. Code switching occurs far more often in conversation that in writing. It is also called code-mixing and style shifting. He said that it is studied by linguists to examine when people do it, such as under what circumstances do bilingual speakers switch from one to another, and it is studied by sociologists to determine why people do it, such as how it relates to their belonging to a group or the surrounding context of the conversation(casual, professional, etc.).

Code-switching occurs when speakers alternate two or more languages in the same conversation in which the speaker starts by one language and end with a different language (. Milroy and Muysken (1995)

According to László Varga (2010), a code switching is the ability to change from one variant to another. For instance, a doctor switches codes when he speaks of a bone as tibia to his colleagues in the hospital and as shinbone to his family at home.

1.4 Code-mixing

Code-mixing is the mixing of two or more languages varieties in speech. Some scholars use the terms ''code-mixing'' and ''code-switching'' interchangeably, especially in studies of syntax, morphology, and other formal aspects of language. (en.m.wikipedia.org).

Code-mixing refers to the hybridization of two languages which uses for example an English root word and Spanish morphology (bilinguistics.com).

Code mixing refers to the transfer of linguistic elements of words from one language to another or mixed together. Code-mixing and code-switching are common nowadays because of a language contacts day by day. Many languages are getting closure and hence languages are getting contaminated (www.englishfn.com).

Code mixing refers to the embedding of linguistic units such as phrases, words and morphemes of one language into an utterance of another language (www.linkedin.com)

According to Judy Woon Yee Ho (200 7) code mixing is the change of one language to another within the same utterance or in the same oral or written text.

1.5 Code-meshing

Code-meshing is an instructional approach that invites multiple languages and language varieties within the classroom, (AY Lee, 2018).

Code meshing is an approach to communication that assumes that all dialects and languages are equal in their complexity and value. In practice, it acts exactly as the name suggests: combining, or meshing, different''codes'' within one context (liberalarts.oregonistate.edu).

1.6 A jargon

A jargon is a specialised terminology that is unique to a specific field or activity, usually used in a professional context.

A jargon is words and terms a specific group of people uses-usually related to work that others might find difficult to understand (www.studysmaster.co.uk).

A jargon is the language, especially the vocabulary, peculiar to a particular trade, profession or group or it is unintelligible or meaningless talk or writing, gibberish (www.dictionary.com).

Richard Nordquist (2019) states that a jargon refers to the specialized language of professional or occupational or occupational group.

1.7 Style

According to László Varga (2010), a style is conditioned by the language users' relative social status and attitude towards their interlocutors (e.g. they can talk to equals, to people in higher or lower social positions, to older or younger people, to children, they may talk to someone who they have never seen before or to someone who is an old friend of theirs, etc.) We recognise a neutral or unmarked style, which does not show any obvious colouring brought about by relative social status and attitude.

1.8 A pidgin

Sasha Blakely (2023) defined a pidgin as a linguistic communication system employed by groups of people who do not share a common language. Pidgins generally develop in situations of trade, colonization, enslavement, and other environments in which members of different language groups need to learn to communicate effectively.

According to László Varga (2010), a pidgin is usually the simplified version of a European language, containing features of one or more local languages, used for occasional communication between people with no common language, in West Africa or in the Far East. For example, Melanesian Pidgin English (called Tok Pisin) is used in Australian New Guinea and the nearby islands.

1.9 A creole

A creole is a language that comes from a simplified version of another language, or the mix of two or more languages (www.vocabulary.com)

A creole is a mother tongue that originates from contact between two languages (www.vocabulary.com)

1.10 An idiolect

David Wright (2022) stated that idiolect refers to an individual's unique variety and/or use of language, from the level of the phoneme to the level of discourse.

According to László Varga (2010), an idiolect is the amount of a language that an individual possesses.

1.11 A diglossia
Richard Nordquist (2018) stated that diglossia is a situation in which two distinct varieties of a language are spoken within the same speech community. Bilingual diglossia is a type of diaglossia in which one language variety is used for writing and another for speech. When people are bidialectal, they can use two dialects of the same language, based on the surroundings or different contexts where they use one or the other variety.

John McWhorter(2022) stated that diaglossia is Greek for two tongues, but that doesn't really help us. Diaglossia is a term that linguists often use to refer to something else about the way nonstandard varieties of a native language or dialects are distributed in real life across the globe.

1.12 A register
Richard Nordquist (2019) defined the register as the way a speaker uses a language differently in different circumstances.

Harold Schiffman (1997) in his article Linguistic Register defines a register as a set of specialized vocabulary and preferred (dispreferred) syntactic and rhetorical devices or structures, used by specific socio-professional groups for special purposes.

It is again a property or characteristic of a language and not of an individual or a class of speakers (ccat.sas.upenn.edu).

According to László Varga (2010), the language is being used. Each field of interest, activity, occupation is associated with a special vocabulary, and it is mainly these vocabulary differences that underlie the different registers.

1.13 Bilingualism
L.s Verplaetse, E. Schmit, (2010) defined bilingualism as a speaker's ability to use two languages for communication. Due to the complexity of its nature, the study of bilingualism relies on several fields within linguistics, anthropology, psychology, neuroscienceand education.

1.14 Multilingualism
Multilingualism can be defined as the ability of societies, institutions, groups and individuals to engage, on a regular basis, with more than one language in their day-to-lives (K Stein-Smith ,2020)

Richard Nordquist (2019) defined multilingualism is the ability of an individual speaker or a community of speakers to communicate effectively in three or more languages (www.thought.com).

1.15 A speech community
Richard Nordquist(2019) says that a speech community is a term in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology used to describe a group of people who share the same language , speech characteristics, and ways of interpreting communication. Speech communities may be large regions like an urban area with a common, distinct accent (think of Boston with its dropper's) or small units like families and friends.

1.16 A dialect
David Crystal, PalveIvic (2023) Said that a dialect is variety of a language that signals where a person comes from. The notion is usually interpreted geographically (regional dialect), but it also has some application in relation to a person's social background (class dialect) or occupation (occupational dialect). The word dialect comes from the ancient Greek dialektos ''discourse, language, dialect,'' which is derived from dialegesthai ''to discourse' talk.''

1.17 A language
A language is a system of conventional spoken, manual (signed), or written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, express themselves (Robert Henry Robins, David Christal).

A language is a body of words and the systems of their use common to people who are of the same community or nation, the same geographical area, or the same cultural tradition. It is also a communication by voice in the distictively human manner, using arbitrary sounds in conventional ways with conventional meanings, speech (www.dictionary.com).

A language is a method of communication used by a particular country or region. It consists of sounds, written words, and grammar (www.studysmater.co.uk)

1.18 Sociolect

Richard Nordquist (2019) in Social Dialect or Sociolect Definition and Examples states that in sociolinguistics, social dialect is a variety of speech associated with a particular social class or occupational group within a society; also known as a sociolect, group idiolect, and class dialect.

According to László Varga (2010), a sociolect is a variety of language used by people in the same sociocultural position.

II. Presentation of Data, Analysis and Findings

Introduction

In this chapter, I am going to present data which are the utterances collected. After collecting them, I analysed them in order to get findings.

2.1 Presentation and analysis of data

2.1.1 French nouns used in Swahili utterances

. Dada yangualizala**garçon**

My sister has given birth to **a boy**

This Frenchword '' **garçon**'' has an equivalent word in Swahili which is ''Kiyana'' but it is not often used here in Goma as people are accustomed to using the code switching.

. Huyu**fille** niwakiyana

This utterance means '' this **girl** is beautiful''

The word ''**fille**'' means ''girl'' in English, it is equivalent Swahili word is ''**msika**'' or ''**msichana**''. This word ''**fille**'' is used in Swahili in the sense of code switching. This word used by all the category of the people old, young as children.

. **Client** wangualiuza**ciment**mingileo.

In Engilsh it means '' my **customer** bought much **cement** today''.

The word ''**customer**'' has an equivalent word in Swahili which is '' mteja'' but that is rarely used here in Goma. The word ''mteja'' is used by some people who need to show that they know standard Swahili.

The word ''**ciment**'' means ''**sakafu**'' in Swahili. This word ''**sakafu**'' is not commonly used here in Goma; it is rarely used at school precisely in the classroom.

. Mwahi**quartier**baliua**bandit**

This utterance means '' in this **quarter**, they killed a **bandit**''

The Swahili word of ''**quartier**'' seems to be inexistent. People who want to speak a standard Swahili use ''**quarter**'' an English word.

The word ''**bandit**'' inSwahili means ''**mjanja**'' or ''**bandiya**''. The word ''bandit'' is used by the majority of the population of Goma. Rarely, some people use ''**mjanja**'' to mean a person who tells lies in order to get something or someone who does not accept that he did something bad. ''**Bandiya**'' is used by people who pretend to use standard Swahili especially on radio to mean people who **steal** and **kill** in the quarter.

2.1.2 French verbs used in Swahili Utterances

. Mcuruzihuyu**balimufrapper**

The above utterance means: ''they have **stolen** this trader'' In English.

The word ''**balimufrapper**'' is made of the Swahili part ''balimu'', ''ba'' showing the plural, ''li'' indicating the simple past and ''mu'' the pronoun ''him'' then the French word ''frapper'' that means '' to beat''. In this utterance the verb is used as a jargon to mean ''to crook'' or ''to steal''. Goma people use in this case a code mixing.

. Mvula**ilinibloquer**nikakosanjia

The above utterance in English means: ''the rain **blocked me**, I **miss the way**''.

The word ''**ilinibloquer**'' is built up with the Swahili part ''**ilini**''; ''**I**'' which means ''**it**'', ''**li**'' the form of the past tense, ''**ni**'' means ''me'' and the French word ''**bloquer**'' means ''**to block**'' is used in a code mixing to mean ''**ilinizuwiya**'' in Swahili.

. **Unanidevoir**zamingi, jikazeunilipe.

The above utterance in English means: ''you **owe much**, do your best to pay me''.

The verb ''**unanidevoir**'' is made of two parts ''**unani**'' Swahili part that means ''**u**'' to mean ''**you**'', ''**na**'' the form of the present tense, ''**ni**'' to mean ''**me**'' and the French word ''**devoir**'' to mean ''**ukonadeniyangu**''. Goma people like usingcode mixing insuch way.

. Alipata bwana wa**kumuconsoler**

The above utterance in English means: ''she got a husband to **console her**''.

The verb ''**kumuconsoler**'' mixes two languages ''**kumu**'' Swahili which is '' **ku**'' the form of infinitive, ''mu'' to mean ''**her**'' and the French verb ''consoler'' to mean ''**kutuliza**'' in Swahili. This word is used in great part by young people in a code mixing.

2.1.3 French adjectives used in Swahili utterances
. Ule garçon ni**avanturier**The above utterance means: ''that boy is an **adventurer**'' in English.The word ''**avanturier**'' means ''**mzinduzi**'' in Swahili. This word ''**avanturier**'' is used in Swahili conversation as a Swahili word. Goma people are not used to the Swahili word ''minduzi'' it is neither used.
. Papa ule anakuwaka**deserreurs**
In English, the above utterance means: ''that father is a **humbug**''.
The word ''**deserreur**'' means ''**mpuhuzi**'' in Swahili. The word ''deserreur'' is used in Swahili communication by Goma people in a code switching.
. **Petit**yangu, nisaidiye
In English, the above utterance means ''my **young brother**, help me''.
The word ''**petit**'' means ''**mdogo**''. The utterance should be ''**mdogo**yangu, nisaidiye''.
Goma people are accustomed to using the French word **''petit''** in their speeches and is most of the time addressed to someone who owes respect.
. **Grand**yangu, nisaidiye
In English, the above utterance means: '' my **elder**, help me''.
The word ''**grand**'' means ''**mkubwa**''. The two words are used in Goma town but the most popular is ''**grand**'' used particularly by young people.
. usimuone vile, anakuwaka**hypocrite**wasana.
The above utterance means: '' don't see him like that, he is too **hypocrite**'' in English.
The word ''**hypocrite**'' means ''**mnafiki**'' in Swahili which is a known word in Goma but people prefer use the French word in their utterance.

2.1.4 French wishes and reactions used in Goma Swahili
. Mtotowetuumezala, **Félicitations**
In English, this above wish means: ''**congratulation**''.
The wish ''**félicitations**'' means ''hongera'' in SSwahili but not used in Goma town. The word ''**félicitations**'' is used by Goma people in their all utterance applying the code switching.
. **A tessouhaits**
The above wish means ''**bless you** '' in English.
In Swahili ''a tessouhaits'' means ''ubarikiwe'' but it is not used in Goma town. Goma people use the French expression ''A tessouhaits''.
. **Bonne fête,** aseleoutabatilisha
In English, the above wish means: ''**enjoy your party**''
The French wish **''bonne fête''** means ''**siku kuunjema''** in Swahili but not often used. The French expression is used by all the people without distinction.
. **Joyeux anniversaire**
In English, the above wish means: **''happy birthday''.**
The French wish **''joyeuxanniversaire''** means **''heriyakuzaliwa''** in Swahili**.** This French wish is used In Goma town by people using Goma Swahili as if there were no equivalent Swahili word.

2.1.5 French adverbs used in Goma Swahili
. Jana nilifika**bien**
The above utterance in English means: ''yesterday, I arrived **well''.**
The adverb ''**bien**'' means ''**muzuri**'' In Swahili. Even if the Swahili adverb ''**muzuri**'' exist, the adverb is used in great time in Goma town. When people say for example ni aye? They react saying ni bien.
. Utanisaidiya**vraiment**kupanahizipesa
In English, the statement here up means: ''you will help me **really** to give this money''.
The adverb **''vraiment''** means **''kweli''** in Swahili. The adverb ''Vraiment'' is commoly used by people. It has become a tic for some people.
. Siku **trop,**ulishakaendawapi?
The above utterance means: ''**many**'' days, where have you gone''?

2.2 Findings
Here down is the list of findings discovered after the analysis of the way people of Coma speak.
1. After analysing the data, I realised that Goma people use French words where there is no existent equivalent Swahili word on one hand and on the other hand, they use French words where there are equivalent words for the sake of prestige.
2. I noticed that some French words in Swahili utterances were used by a group of people. There are words that are used by young people especially jargons and other words are used uniquely by educated people.
3. The code switching and the code mixing are very common in the communication of Goma people as Goma town is a part of DRC which had been colonized by a French speaking country which impacted the Swahili spoken in Goma
4. Goma people use French words without knowing the person they are addressing to.
5. Some Goma people do not know that Goma is a big town where strangers arrive and are not obliged to know French.
6. Goma people do not know all the equivalent Swahili words so that they may use them in case they are in communication with someone who is from the place where Swahili is an official language.
7. Young people do not know that it is not everybody living in Goma who studied.
8. Goma people use code mixing and code switching while communicating with someone who is not from Goma town especially those from the village.
9. People who are accustomed to speaking standard Swahili to mean the Swahili of East coast should know that there are some words that are not used in Goma and only French words are in use.

III. Interpretation of the Findings

Here down is a list of findings followed by some comments.
1. After analysing the data, I realised that Goma people use French words where there is no existent equivalent Swahili words on one hand and on the other hand, they use French words where there are equivalent words for the sake of prestige.

The finding here above means that Goma people miss some Swahili words because Swahili is neither an official Congolese language nor a mother tongue of a given tribe.

The lack of some Swahili words in Swahili spoken in Goma is due to the fact that Swahili is used as a lingua franca which facilitates communication between people of different tribes. These different tribes have their own languages which are their mother tongue.

The fact of not being either a mother tongue or an official language does not facilitate people who speak Swahili which is their second language know all words that exist in Kiswahili as they master those from their mother tongue.

Apart from the fact quoted above, in Goma town there are other people who live in Goma but they do not know Swahili at all because they came from other provinces where Swahili is not spoken as national language. They tend to learn and use it because it is a language that is mainly used in Goma. This kind of people speaks Swahili using a full code-switching because they have a lack of Swahili words.

People who use French words in their Kiswahili utterances block the effective communication between them and the receiver especially when the receiver does not have a notion of Swahili.

Someone who addresses to an old person who comes from the village and say ''minatokafanyaachat''. If the French word ''achat'' is not known by the hearer, the communication will not be effective as the message transmitted is not understood by the receiver.

The effective communication is again hindered when Goma people communicate with a stranger coming from an English-speakingcountry. The stranger is educated but is not used to speaking French and does not know French neither. When such a person faces French words in a dialogue, the communication is immediately blocked because the message conveyed is not understood by the receiver as it is transmitted by the emitter. These French words become hindrances as they do not facilitate effective communication.

Therefore, Goma people should balance their words when conversing with other people because each person who is in Goma is not compulsorily inhabitant of Goma. He can either be from a given village of one of the territories that make the North-Kivu province or he can be from another province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

2. I noticed that some French words in Swahili utterances were used by a group of people. There are words that are used by young people especially jargons and other words that are used uniquely by educated people.

Goma Swahili mixed with French words is spoken by a category of people. Young for example saying ''**balimuboire**'' they use a code-mixing and a person who is not initiated cannot get the exact meaning they convey. Most of the time jargons and slang from French language are used by young people.

A question to ask here is to know why young people do use jargons from French language in their communication.

Young people use French jargons in their communication when they tend to hide the meaning or as they use them when they are addressing to people with whom they are familiar with.

Young people when they are in an environment where they cannot state clearly the matter or discuss overtly their deal, they either use slang language or jargons in order to hide the meaning. All people who are not informed about the jargons the used will not get the message conveyed likely they are not the addressees of it.

Conclusion

In this work, code switching and code mixing, Swahili spoken in Goma town; I have first defined some concepts relating to the topic then I pointed out Goma Swahili utterances in which I gave some examples of Swahili spoken in Goma. After analysing Goma Swahili utterances, I interpreted the findings I got. Some suggestions were also provided.

References

[1]. AY Lee · (2018). Meshing and Writing Instruction in Multilingual Classrooms University of North alabama https://www.una.edu › praxis-resources › Code ...
[2]. Daisuke Shinagawa & Nico Nassenstein. (2019). On The Variability of Kiswahili In Bujumbura (Burundi); SWAHILI FORUM 26 (2019): 205-239 SPECIAL ISSUE: Variation in Swahili,
[3]. Eric. (2012). Inoculating against Jargonitis, Sword, Helen Chronicle of Higher Education.
[4]. K Stein-Smith (2020). Multilingualism for Global Solutions and a Better WorldAcade https://jltr.academypublication.com › download
[5]. László Varga (2010). Introduction to English Linguistics, A Companion to the Seminar, Eötvös Loránd University Budapest
[6]. Lester MtwanaJao. (2O15). A brief lexico-semantic study of French and Kiswahili, IFRA; Nairobi.
[7]. Milroy and Muysken. (1995). Code-switching as a Result of Language Acquisition, Department of Education (.gov) de Y Zhou 2007
[8]. Nico Nassenstein. (2016). The Linguistic Taboo of Poisoning in Kivu Swahili; Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz
[9]. Nico Nassenstein. (2016). The metroligual use Of Swahili In Urban Ugandan Landscaps and EverydayConversation1; Institute for African Studies & Egyptology, University of Cologne
[10]. Nico Nassenstein. (2016). Mombasa's Swahili-Based 'Coasti Slang' In a Super-Diverse space: Language in Contact on the Beach; Institute for African Studies, University of Cologne
[11]. Nico Nassenstein. (2016). The new urban youth language Yabâcrane in Goma (DR Congo; university of cologne, Germany
[12]. Nico Nassenstein. (2019). The Hakuna Matata Swahili: Linguistic souvenirs from the Kenyan coast. In Mietzner, Angelika & Anne storch,pp 130-156.Bristol:channel view publications.
[13]. Nico Nassenstein and Gerrit J. Dimmendaal. (2O2O). Bunia Swahili and Emblematic Language sfdzvUse; Journal of Language Contact
[14]. Paulin Baraka Bose. (2019). Analysing ways of speaking Kivu Swahili Variation an Ethnic Belonging; Swahili Forum