

## **Review of PhD dissertation**

### **Pannon Egyetem University of Pannonia**

#### **A study on code-switching between Afaan Oromoo and English in an informal context**

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The doctoral dissertation by Mihiretu Wakwoya provides a systematic investigation of code-switching between Afaan Oromoo (specifically the Maccaa dialect) and English within informal spoken interactions. Employing the Matrix Language Frame (MLF) model in conjunction with the 4-M model as its principal analytical frameworks, the study seeks to determine the Matrix Language in bilingual clauses, assess the extent to which morpheme order and system morpheme distribution conform to theoretical predictions, and examine the integration of English lexical items into the morphosyntactic structure of Afaan Oromoo. The research is grounded in an extensive dataset comprising approximately twenty-one hours of recorded interactions involving fifty-six participants, with quantitative analysis based on a fully transcribed subset of three recordings, yielding 879 analyzable clauses. The findings indicate that Afaan Oromoo predominantly functions as the Matrix Language, while English primarily contributes embedded lexical elements that are structurally accommodated within Afaan Oromoo grammar.

A key strength of the dissertation lies in its empirical contribution to the relatively underexplored domain of Afaan Oromoo–English code-switching. By focusing on naturally occurring informal discourse, the study effectively situates its analysis within authentic communicative contexts, thereby enhancing the validity of its findings. Furthermore, the alignment between the theoretical framework and the research objectives is well-articulated, as the analysis consistently engages with core principles of the MLF and 4-M models, including the Morpheme Order Principle and the System Morpheme Principle. The inclusion of illustrative examples further substantiates the

analysis, while the consideration of typological factors—particularly the agglutinative nature of Afaan Oromoo—adds depth to the interpretation.

The revised version of the dissertation demonstrates notable improvements over the earlier submission. The conceptual framing has been refined, especially in relation to the definition and scope of informal interaction. Additionally, the treatment of sociolinguistic variables has been clarified, with factors such as age, gender, educational background, language proficiency, and interactional context explicitly incorporated to contextualize the data. This enhancement strengthens the methodological rigor of the study.

Another significant advancement is the clearer distinction drawn between code-switching and borrowing. Addressing a previously identified concern, the revised dissertation provides a more explicit theoretical and methodological account of this distinction, thereby improving the transparency and consistency of the analytical procedures used to classify English-derived elements within the dataset. The overall organization of the dissertation has also been improved. The literature review is more comprehensive, and the methodological chapter is more systematically structured, including a detailed discussion of corpus design and data selection. These revisions contribute to greater coherence and readability, while the improved referencing and editorial precision enhance the scholarly presentation of the work. In terms of analytical contribution, the dissertation offers a robust account of structural patterns in Afaan Oromoo–English code-switching. The findings regarding the dominance of Afaan Oromoo as the Matrix Language, the integration of English lexical items, and the applicability of the MLF and 4-M models are clearly articulated and supported by empirical evidence. The argumentation is logically developed, and the overall writing style adheres to established academic conventions.

In conclusion, the dissertation is methodologically sound well-structured, and makes a meaningful contribution to the field of code-switching studies. Its original focus, solid empirical foundation, and the substantive revisions undertaken collectively justify its acceptance for final defense.



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