

Referee's report

Ahmad Hijazi Tayel Awawdeh has handled his dissertation titled: "Systematic analysis of codeswitching functions among Maghreb Arabic-French-English trilingual speakers" for obtaining a PhD degree at the Multilingualism Doctoral School of the University of Pannonia in the branch of linguistics.

The selection of the theme is special, awareness-raising, and unique in its kind, on the one hand, in terms of the investigation of multilingualism, the uniqueness of the three languages mentioned above, and the aspects examined i.e. psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, pragmatic and semantic functions. With the unique content of the dissertation, the hiatuses of previous multilingual researches, the unique combinations of the 3 languages, and taking into account the recruitment and the search for participants for the research, as well as the manual transcription, we can hold in our hands a time-consuming, thorough, comprehensive and unsurpassed work.

The dissertation is well structured, and the abstract is an excellent condenser of the entire research content.

The doctoral candidate outlines the concept and background of bilingualism and multilingualism in the initial phase of his dissertation, from the perspectives of diverse linguistic researchers and from a number of aspects that he compares. Subsequently he emphasizes that the use of English was most pronounced in the fields of science and technology, as well as in education, business and travel; French in the fields of media and administration, as well as in cognitive expressions; and Arabic in the fields of literature, culture, family and social gatherings as regards the frequency of the topics in the corpus. English and French dominated the corpus in relation to cognitive and subconscious expressions, desires, as well as the transmission of evaluation, opinions, critical thinking and judgements. The candidate also examines language preference and dominance in

his research, and highlights that the three language use is more complex and unpredictable than bilingual language use, and L3 implies greater language learning skills and more language learning strategies.

The observation of the factors influencing code switching is an intriguing and gripping area of psycholinguistics, and it is to be appreciated that the doctoral candidate examined the topic not only from the aspect of the insights of his research, but was also curious about when the population of his corpus uses code-switching, based on the opinions of the people participating in the research. He synthesized the extracted answers and compared them with the literature. In addition, he also drew attention to an important phenomenon, namely that the shift in dominance moves over time, due to certain sociolinguistic factors, such as marital status, school and employment. A hierarchy is formed among languages, which can also change, and code-switching can also serve as a tool to highlight important information, in terms of topics and cultural associations, in connection with a painful memory, in the case of more effective explanation, in the conclusion of an argument, and in the case of negative connotations when speakers mostly use English and French. There was code-switching in the corpus in terms of seriousness, disinterest, identity marker, strengthening belonging to a group, adaptation to the previous speaker, practicality, passion, religion and faith. In addition, the code-switching also served socio-cultural and pragmatic purposes in the examined speech sequences.

In terms of results, we can talk about a qualitative research, because although the number of people examined in the corpus is not representative, the research itself is multifaceted and covers several segments. In the case of spontaneous speech sequences, a representative sample cannot be expected, but the most authentic and reliable data can be derived from spontaneous manifestations, according to the opinion of many linguists, with which I also agree. I am aware of the fact from the experience of my own Greek-Hungarian bilingual research, that the recording

and manual transcription of spontaneous speech sequences are very time-consuming and an enormous labour. As a consequence, expecting speech sequences for a larger number of population is not justified and almost impractical, knowing that in many cases the speakers interrupt and overlap each other, and the number of code switching is also very frequent. The five-hour audio material and the five topics provide a sufficient corpus, in connection with which the researcher offered the themes of daily routine, travel, women's rights, communication and cultural celebrations. Concerning the researcher, it was important to ensure informality, attractive topics, meeting in person, and a tranquil environment. The parents of the participants in the groups of 5 were all native Arabic speakers and were born in Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria. The participants in the study learned Arabic from birth, French from the age of 6 and English from the age of 11. In terms of the corpus, English was the second most commonly used language.

In terms of methodology, the use of the questionnaire and the combination of audio recording and metalinguistic interview were also diverse in terms of their methodology, and it is useful to understand the motives behind the identity of multilinguals and their code-switching.

The in-text references were thorough, but I would have used fewer references in the descriptive part of the corpus and the results. Despite the fact, that the candidate did not find any significant difference between gender and code-switching, gender bound discrepancies regarding communicative strategies might have been investigated in spontaneous speech sequences. In the introductory part of the dissertation, I would have placed less emphasis on the literature of the discourse of bilinguals and on bilingual researches, as the focus of the thesis is on the language use of trilinguals. There were a few repetitions in the dissertation, mostly the code switching of the 3 languages, the motives and the topics, such as: daily routine, travel, and holidays. When recording the spontaneous speech

sequences, I am not sure that I would have provided guided topics for the sake of authenticity, regardless of the fact, that the informants did not know each other.

The observation of the phonetic prolongation when struggling to retrieve the right word(s) for instance the letter “l” in the Arabic definite article ‘al meaning "the" was a remarkable choice of observation for evoking the right expression.

As a summary, the dissertation is exemplary, suppletory and unique in terms of the choice of three languages, pragmatic and semantic functions, and the hiatuses of multilingual researches. The candidate made the right decision when he recorded and transcribed spontaneous speech sequences in addition to the questionnaire, because this gave him more validity, authenticity, and credibility in terms of the results. The themes and the synthesis of code-switching, the added values to investigate the origin and motives of code-switching, are extremely fruitful and vital both in bilingual and multilingual researches as well.

Heartfelt congratulations to the candidate.

Questions:

- 1, Was it possible to derive more data from the spontaneous speech sequences or from the questionnaire?
2. Was the questionnaire self-compiled or based on an existing questionnaire?
3. Why was it necessary to list topics for the respondents instead of starting the discourse on their own?
4. Why did you consider it important to ask in the questionnaire the language shift of the participants while counting?



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