



# Code-Switching in Sermon Interpreting: The Case of English and Tshivenda

Ofhani Israel Tshovhewaho

Department of African Languages, University of Venda, Thohoyandou, South Africa

## Email address:

ofhani.tshovhewaho@univen.ac.za

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**Abstract:** Studies in code-switching (CS) during sermon deliveries, have been approached from various angles involving many language combinations, however, minimum literature is present on combinations involving English and Tshivenda. This study investigates this phenomenon which occurs often in churches where sermons are interpreted from English to Tshivenda and vice-versa. Following a sociolinguistic framework, it seeks to understand reasons for code-switching by pastors in selected recorded sermons. This study is conducted from the speech accommodation theory which posits that speakers adjust their speech styles to express their attitudes and intentions towards other interlocutors. Literature presents general reasons for code-switching: lack of facility, lack of register, to emphasize a point, to show identity with the group, to address a different audience, to attract attention, for pragmatic reasons, mood of the speaker, habitual experience, and semantic significance. For this study, two audio sermons, one involving a regular but untrained interpreter and another, involving a novice interpreter, were transcribed. Data was analyzed for code-switching elements observed and a determination made for possible reasons for code-switching linked to each utterance. Conversation analysis, an approach that investigates the sequential organization of talk to gain understanding of how participants organize talks in social interaction, was used to analyze data. The study found that pastors code-switch more than interpreters as they try to emphasise, clarify and explain certain points. Interpreters' linguistic challenges forces the preachers into code-switching when the former omitted portions of utterances, uttered unfinished statements, and gave inaccurate approximate interpretations. These compelled the bilingual preachers to code-switch in the quest to assist the interpreters.

**Keywords:** Interpreter, Sermon, Code-Switching, Conversation Analysis, Utterance

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## 1. Introduction

Studies have shown that sermons that are interpreted display trends of code-switching, (Adams & Beukes, [1]; Chen, [8]; Hokkanen, [13]; Saragih, [19]; and Unomah, [20]). Such practices have been reported in many languages, however, no studies have been conducted that involve a English-Tshivenda context. Code-Switching refers to a situation when individuals speaking in certain languages decide to use words from another language and then revert to the languages they commenced with. Winford [22] describes the phenomenon in the context of bilingualism - "bilingual speakers alternate between codes within the same speech event". A code is a kind or variety of language which Unomah [20] describes as "a language of difference utilized by people to communicate with others".

Sermon interpreting has become a norm during the delivering of messages in many churches all over the world. Saragih [20] defines 'sermons' as "communication acts informed by religious believers' understanding of their faith...the activity of conveying and discussing faith and truth to others". Unomah [20] conceptualizes a sermon as "an address or delivery made by a preacher or member of the clergy with a goal of giving knowledge or instruction to the members of a church"; she also calls this act 'preaching'. South African churches are not an exception to this practice, specially, charismatic churches where preachers prefer to use English as the language of message delivery. The trend can be mainly observed in urban churches, where attendees come from various linguistic places and in rural areas where listeners might speak only one language. In urban areas, preaching in English is intended to reach the multi-lingual

audience, where attendees may have one or more languages, although, preachers in rural churches may preach in English as a matter of preference. In both cases interpreters are used, and most of them, if not all, are untrained volunteers who are either used often or who are just picked to interpret on a particular day (ad hoc interpreters). The interpreter must be excellent in the source language as well as the target language, thus, interpreters, must at least be bilinguals.

Bilinguals are often faced with the challenge of shifting between languages, either from constraints or as a choice. There are two views regarding the use of code-switching; there are those who regard it as a constraint and who see it as an asset from a linguistic point of view. Linguistic code-switching is done when you need the best word, or because you are comfortable with a certain word, or when you want to prove that you belong somewhere (place and language). Al-Qaysi [2] presents some factors that condone the behavior of code-switching: lack of equivalent words in the target language, bridging gaps in conversations, avoiding misunderstanding, adding emphasis, and showing proficiency in another language.

Those who regard code-switching as a choice believe that speakers resort to it to shape meaning or for sociolinguistic purposes. Wardhaugh [21] mentions that people code-switch - to assert rights, vary situations and signal a topic change. Al-Qaysi [2] adds that people code-switch - to show solidarity, reflect social status, shift a topic, for affection, and, to persuade listeners. These are expanded hereunder:

- 1) Showing solidarity: speakers will usually do this in multi-cultural settings to show that they are aware of the existence of other groups present in the same meeting or listening to the same speech. Presidents of multi-cultural countries prefer different languages to show that all the people belong to one country, and no one group is undervalued. Code-switching, therefore, becomes a political instrument aimed at demonstrating unity, in this instance.
- 2) Reflecting social status: in situations where speakers use the vernacular, they will sometimes code-switch to show that using the vernacular is a choice and not an indication of incompetence in the common socially-higher language. Code-switching, therefore, becomes a stratifying tool in this regard. A pastor may want to prove that he/she belongs to the upper echelon and that members should not think that he/she uses vernacular because of language limitations.
- 3) Topic shift: there are certain things that may not be well understood in one language since languages are not equal nor have same functions. There are certain topics that can be difficult to understand because of cultural issues. A speaker may want to emphasize, clarify, or express humour in the language that better expresses his/her thoughts.
- 4) Affection: it is usually accepted that it is easy to swear in a language other than your own (although this needs to be researched). Generally, speakers find it easy to express some approval or disapproval of certain

tendencies in another language, hence, expressing anger or grief can sometimes be done easily in the other language; code-switching in this context becomes a social tool to deal with human infirmities. The researcher has observed situations where pastors have used the 'F' word on the pulpit; whether it is because of ignorance, or habitual use of the word, hence for the speaker it has lost its vulgarity. The researcher posits that it is because interlocutors are comfortable with such words in another language.

- 5) To persuade the listeners: this almost like showing solidarity for it is used to impress the minority audiences that they are being valued, shown through the speaker using their language for code-switching.

Malik [15] also mentions ten (10) functions of code-switching: (1) lack of facility, (2) lack of register, (3) mood of the speaker, (4) to emphasize a point, (5) habitual experience, (6) semantic significance, (7) to show identity with the group, (8) to address the differences in the audience, (9) pragmatic reasons, and (10) to attract attention.

Blom and Gumperz cf. Hymes [6] suggest three constraints that affect code choices: setting, social situation, and social event. The setting is the physical environment in which the social life of speakers operates; the social situation refers to the audience of a certain event in a particular time. The last constraint, the social event, relates to how a social situation is described.

Coulmas [9] introduces the concept of language contact, mentioning its side effects such as - borrowing, interference, mixed discourses, pidginization and code-switching. The main cause of code-switching is a situation in which two languages exist parallel to each other, people tend to know their home language, and learn the other, also known as 'cousin language' or languages that are used simultaneously - bilingualism (Unomah [20], Hakuta [12]). Bilinguals are likely to use words available in their language systems to communicate; such pickings or choices are either made voluntarily or because of constraints. Poplack [17] and Barredo [4] differentiate between three types of code switching - tag-switching, inter-sentential code-switching and intra-sentential code.

## 2. Literature Review

Adams and Beukes, [1]; Chen, [8]; da Silva, de Soares and Esqueda, [10]; Kotze, [14]; Odhimbo, Musyoka, and Matu, [16]; Ratnasari, (2017); Saragih, [19]; and Unoma, [20]; have reported on experiences related to code-switching and language preferences in churches. Ratnasari [18] investigated the reasons of code-mixing by preachers in one church, the Bethany Salatiga, in Indonesia which was chosen because it uses English in its sermons. The study discovered that preachers used English terms because - they were familiar and well known, to make things interesting, to suit the urban environment, and to use these more accurate words if alternatives were not available in the local language. Concerns about this study arise from the fact that the context

and the sample could have been expanded and the preachers were specially instructed to preach in the local language while code-mixing poses some question marks on the purpose of the study.

Chen [8] conducted a similar study in the Chinese Christian Church in the United States of America aimed at understanding the reasons for code-switching. The study was done from a Communication Accommodation Theory perspective, which is related to Speech Accommodation Theory. The author recorded more than four hours of bible discussions focusing on situations where code-switching was observed. The aim was to connect code-switching with aspects such as interlocutors' gender, education and home language. When the study failed to produce concrete results, a second study was done where she analyzed videos and conducted interviews. The videos were accessed via the church's website and she used discourse analysis to check the occurrences of code-switching. In addition, she interviewed the pastor on the reasons for code-switching during sermon delivery and attitude towards code-switching; she established that the pastor mainly used code-switching to accommodate the audience and to convey meaning. This study did not emphasise any other pertinent determinants of code-switching.

A study by Saragih [19] sought to describe the practice of code-mixing in sermons by pastors who use local languages as a medium of delivery. For the analysis, the author used the Religious Communication Theory which considers delivery of sermons as just another way of communicating. This theory posits four principles of communicating effectively:

- 1) the ability to control what a speaker says,
- 2) the ability to control emotions and feelings towards the words spoken,
- 3) the ability to control tone and voice, and
- 4) the ability to observe/hear and arrange every word being said.

This study was done from a qualitative point of view and data was gathered from questionnaires which were intended to find out how respondents viewed code-mixing. Sixty (60) priests were selected to respond to questions relating to - the practice of code-mixing, frequency of code-mixing, reasons for code-mixing, language used in code-mixing, and perceptions on code-mixing. The findings were as follows.

- 1) Frequency: code-mixing was used sometimes, and not always.
- 2) Reasons: these included - to emphasize a message, meaning and content, to adjust to a current language situation and the nature of the congregants.
- 3) Language: people normally switched to the lingua franca/target language of the area.
- 4) Attitude: pastors tolerate it as aiding the communication whereas the congregation generally showed satisfaction with the use of code-mixing.

The study concluded that code-switching is used in churches to clarify meaning and to socialize and express identity.

The African Church in Kenya is not an exception as the

results of a research there on language practices during church sermons, conducted by Odhimbo, Musyoka and Matu [16] revealed. The languages involved were English and Kamba, used in sermons delivered in Pentecostal churches, however, the study's focus area was on communication strategies. Five Pentecostal churches were purposely sampled based on their norm of code-switching between English and Kamba and using interpreters. Semi-structured interviews were conducted, and participants were ten (10) church members and five (5) interpreters. The sermons were audio-taped and analysed and the following strategies were observed:

- 1) Message abandonment: interpreters would begin to talk but could not continue.
- 2) Omission: the interpreter purposely avoids interpreting a difficult term.
- 3) Approximation: giving a less precise meaning as the term was considered difficult.
- 4) Incomplete sentences: omitting large portions of the target language's message.
- 5) Filtering: selecting and summarizing long sentences.

The study also discovered that interpreters used other strategies to achieve their goals of communicating effectively since some of the above strategies failed. The interpreters, for instance, appealed or requested the preachers for help by miming or they added more information, than given by the preacher, to make their utterances better understood. The focus of this study by Odhimbo, Musyoka and Matu [16] was on the tactics used when working online, however, it ties well with this study on code-switching since the churches in question do sermon interpreting.

Kotze [14] explores code-switching by studying the role of the pastoral interpreters. These are untrained and not remunerated and their function is to facilitate communication in religious settings. The study used mixed method design and fourteen (14) freelance pastoral interpreters in the Dutch Reformed Church. Some of the interpreters had only received informal training through interpreting religious workshops and only helped to deliver services. Structured questionnaires and semi-structured group interviews were conducted where respondents answered questions in English. In the results, interpreters stressed the importance of background knowledge before going to interpret. They also believed that a good grasp of the message and the pastors' environment were pillars in delivering effective interpreting.

A study by Adams and Beukes [1] examine the experiences of congregants of a Pentecostal Charismatic Church in Soweto. Data was collected from congregants over a period of two (2) months. Questionnaires were used, and participants were members over eighteen (18) who had been attending church for at least six (6) months. In the results, majority of the respondents preferred English as a language of preaching; only 27% believed that sermons should be a mixture of both English and indigenous African languages (IAL). Members also recommended that to manage multilingual situation, the current use of code-switching and code-mixing should be encouraged. They believed that

messages of the church should be understood by all members, hence, a language or combination of languages that people can relate to should be used to reach them. The study concluded that English remains a dominant medium of worship and encouraged the use of interpreting services and code-switching during sermons.

The literature above presents studies that explored, described, and investigated reasons for code-switching during sermon interpreting, although, most of them were conducted outside South Africa. Even though some have been cited in South Africa, none has been done in Limpopo Province which involved Tshivenda and English. Also, none explored the use of code-switching by preachers and interpreters in one study.

Theoretically, this study is supported by the speech accommodation theory which claims that speakers can attain certain objectives and purposes by adjusting, maintaining, and decreasing social interaction (Unoma [20], Boztepe [7]). This theory posits that speakers adjust their speech styles as a way of expressing their attitudes and intentions towards other interlocutors. Bell [5] believes that this is the reason for speech variation, which includes code-switching.

Pastors resort to code-switching, to attain communication success as this allows them to reach members of congregation from distinct cultural, ethnic, and linguistic repertoires so that they can all comprehend the message (Unoma [20]). This study sought to explain the reasons preachers change their ways of communication when preaching, for example, code-switching.

### 3. Methodology

#### Sermon 1

Situational issues: sermon recorded at a wedding ceremony.

The Church where the ceremony took place was in Pretoria, and the congregants spoke Tshivenda, Setswana, and Xitsonga. The proceedings were done without interpreting, however, when the pastor ascended the podium to preach, he called his regular interpreter to translate into Tshivenda, while he communicated in English, although, it was not clear whether all other groups (non-Venda) understand English. The researcher recorded the sermon and transcribed it which served as data to ascertain whether the pastor or the interpreter code-switched, and if they did, into which languages. The analysis included determining the kind of code-switching done, using Al Qaysi [2]'s classification of the reasons for code-switching. In this classification, what Al Qaysi labels as reasons, are also regarded as functions of, or motivations for code-switching by other scholars, (Coulmas [9]). Auer [3] on the other hand, prefers to use the term 'situations' for code-switching. The data analysis is reported upon in the following sequence:

- 1) Statement uttered
- 2) Speaker
- 3) Code-switched element
- 4) Type of code-switching
- 5) Motivation/Reason/Situation/Function

#### Sermon 2

Situational issues: message was recorded in an ordinary Sunday church service.

A normal Sunday service: all members present understand Tshivenda, however, the pastor preached in English because his sermon would be shared with the members in the mother church who speak at least four different languages in addition to Tshivenda. Since it was at one of the rural branches, the pastor did not travel with his usual interpreter but invited one volunteer while already on the pulpit. My interest was to observe whether code-switching, if any, will be used by the preacher and the interpreter. The sermon was recorded and transcribed, then analyzed for instances of code-switching. The headings for analyses were same for sermon 1 above.

### 4. Data Analysis

#### Sermon 1

##### Situation A

1. Statement uttered
2. Listen as I continue to explain this... *hupfi mini? Hu pfi arali vhone zwa soko itea vha fhambana, a vho ngo tea u tushela munna wavho. I tshi isa phanda yo ri na munna ha ngo fanela u tushela musadzi wawe, mara arali zwa nga itea, hu pfi vha dzula vho ralo. Vha kho mpfa?* Or else, you reconcile. (What does it say? It says that if somehow it happens that you separate, do not leave your husband. It goes on to say that a husband must never leave his wife, but if that may happen, it says they must say single. Am I understood?)
1. Speaker: Pastor.
2. Code-switched element: *hupfi mini? Hu pfi arali vhone zwa soko itea vha fhambana, a vho ngo tea u tushela munna wavho. I tshi isa phanda yo ri na munna ha ngo fanela u tushela musadzi wawe, mara arali zwa nga itea, hu pfi vha dzula vho ralo. Vha kho mpfa?* (What does it say? It says that if somehow it happens that you separate, do not leave your husband. It goes on to say that a husband must never leave his wife, but if that may happen, it says they must say single. Am I understood?)
3. Type of code-switching: inter-sentential.
4. Motivation: To emphasise. Although the interpreter is present, the pastor feels he had to do it himself. He speaks the target language, Tshivenda and is comfortable explaining and clarifying in it than he had done in English.

##### Situation B

1. Statement uttered: *Vhone vha kho mbudzisa vha ri mara uyu Yesu hafhu o amba a ri vha nga talana hu na vhpombwe? O zwi amba gai? Kha Mateo chapter 5 thi?* He said it in Matthew chapter 5. (You are asking me that, but this Jesus said that they could divorce if there was adultery? In which book? In Mathew chapter 5, is n't?)
2. Speaker: Pastor.
3. Code-switched element: *Vhone vha kho mbudzisa vha*

*ri mara uyu Yesu hafhu o amba a ri vha nga talana hu na vhpombwe? O zwi amba gai? Kha Mateo chapter 5 thi?* (You are asking me that, but this Jesus said that they could divorce if there was adultery? In which book? In Mathew chapter 5, is n't?)

4. Type of code-switching: Inter-sentential?
5. Motivation: To emphasise. The interpreter did not interpret into English but waited until the pastor had communicated his message with the audience. He only interpreted the English part.

#### Situation C

1. Statement uttered: Source Language (SL): But you must understand the context in which Jesus was speaking. Target Language (TL): *Vha fanela u pfesesa context ye Yesu a vha a tshi khou amba khayoy.* (You need to understand the context in which Jesus was speaking).
2. Speaker: SL: Pastor TL: Interpreter.
3. Code-switched element: context.
4. Type of code-switching: Intra-sentential code-switching.
5. Reason: Lack of facility. The interpreter failed to recall the Venda word for 'context' and decided to borrow it.

#### Situation D

1. Statement uttered: Source language: That is why we come with many reasons. Target Language: *Ndi ngazwo ro tshi da na dzi reasons nnzhi-nnzhi.*
2. Speaker: SL: Pastor in English. TL: Interpreter in Tshivenda.
3. Code-switched element: reasons.
4. Type of code-switching: Intra-sentential.
5. Motivation: habitual experience, rather than lack of facility, for the interpreter opts for a word which local speakers have become accustomed to and which may not be difficult to understand.

#### Situation E

1. Statement uttered: *A thi nga do vhala heyi bugu ya Vhakorinta ngauri hu na zwithu zwinzhi zwo ambiwaho hafha,* (I will not read the book of Corinthians because it raises many issues) it talks about those who are married to unbelievers and how they need to behave, but I have got the message for unbelievers, those who are children of God, *ri khou shonisa muvhuso wa Mudzimu; ri khou shonisa muvhuso wa Mudzimu. Vhushaka ha munna na musadzi ho imela vhushaka ha kristo na tshivhidzo.* (We are putting the kingdom of God to shame; we are putting the kingdom of God to shame. The relationship between husband and wife represents the relationship between Christ and his church).
2. Speaker: Pastor.
3. Code-switched element: *A thi nga do vhala heyi bugu ya Vhakorinta ngauri hu na zwithu zwinzhi zwo ambiwaho hafha, ..... , ri khou shonisa muvhuso wa Mudzimu; ri khou shonisa muvhuso wa Mudzimu. Vhushaka ha munna na musadzi ho imela vhushaka ha kristo na tshivhidzo.* (I will not read the book of

Corinthians because it raises many issues... We are putting the kingdom of God to shame; we are putting the kingdom of God to shame. The relationship between husband and wife represents the relationship between Christ and his church).

4. Type of code-switching: Inter-sentential.
5. Motivation: To emphasise and lack of facility. The pastor is emphasizing a point showing that Christians are debasing the kingdom of God by their deeds. Apart from the desire to emphasise, it seems there was no other way, the pastor would have been able to achieve the impact, apart from using the vernacular.

#### Situation F

1. Statement uttered: *Ho thomiwa nga mitshelo ye ya vha I kha muri, ha diwa nga matari e a vha e kha muri, ha diwa tsinde la muri u swikela Caterpillar I tshi dzehena ya tupula muri wa sala midzi I exposed. Hu tshi nga situation i hopeless. Ndi khou toda u amba na muñwe muthu masiari a duvha la namusi.* (It started with the fruits that were in the tree, then attacked the leaves that were on the tree, then went on to attack the tree trunk until the Caterpillar uprooted the tree leaving the roots exposed. Like the situation was hopeless. I would like to talk to someone this afternoon).
2. Speaker: Pastor.
3. Code-switched element: Caterpillar...exposed...situation...hopeless...
4. Type of code-switching: Intra-sentential.
5. Motivation: Lack of facility for 'caterpillar' and 'exposed'. Semantic significance can be attributed for the insertion of 'situation' and 'hopeless'.

#### Sermon 2

##### Situation A

1. Statement uttered: Source language: Today we could not record the Sunday School message.  
Target language: *Namusi a ri ngo kona u recorder mulaedza wa Sunday School.*
2. Speaker: SL: Pastor  
TL: Interpreter.

3. Code-switched element: recorder and Sunday School.
4. Type of code-switching: Intra-sentential.
5. Motivation: Lack of facility for 'recorder' and 'habitual experience' with the term 'Sunday school'. The audience understand both words.

##### Situation B

1. Statement uttered: Pastor: The covenant of Christian conduct.  
Interpreter: *Zwine mutendi a tea u vha zwone.* Pastor: *mhh...mulanga.... on human sexuality...vhuvha.*
2. Code-switched element: *mulanga...vhuvha.* (covenant...gender).
3. Type of code-switching: intra-sentential.
4. Motivation: Topic shift. The preacher is helping the interpreter with the relevant terminology. The language used by the preacher is technical, and he was forced to switch several times as also in the following examples:  
Pastor: We are now on the matter of warnings against

adultery and fornication.

Interpreter: *Zwino ri kha tshipiḁa tshine ra tea u vha ri tshi amba nga* adultery... (*na mini?*...) asking the preacher. (We are now in the item where we must be talking about adultery... (and what?).

Pastor: Adultery. *Nga vhuḁombwe na vhuḁavhu*. (About adultery and fornication).

The interpreter code-switched because he lacked facility; not only did he fail to interpret the word 'adultery', but he also requested to be helped with the next one, 'fornication'. His explanation (*Thi zwino ro soko dzhena ri songo thoma roḁhe*/ By the way we just joined, but we did not start together), shows that he was aware that he was doing badly but believed he should have been briefed or made acquainted with the text (Colossians 3: 1-15).

The preacher made a topical shift by explaining the meaning of the two words - 'adultery', and 'fornication'. Other examples where the preacher code-switched to explain are seen in the following words and phrases:

- 1) The doctrine of eschatology as *pfunzo ya vha vhutshilo vhu ḁaho*: inter-sentential code-switching. The interpreter could not explain, therefore, he just referred to the phrase as "the doctrine which the pastor spoke about".
- 2) Holy living as *vhutshilo vhuḁhethwa*: (inter-sentential code-switching). The interpreter had said "*zwiteḁwa zwa uri muthu a nga tshilisa hani*", or 'principles on how a person can live right'.
- 3) Promises as *pfulufhedziso*: inter-sentential code-switching) The interpreter wrongly explained the word as "*Na zwoḁhe zwine vha khou ḁoḁa*" or 'and everything that you need'.
- 4) Put on as *kha vha ambare*.
- 5) Put to death as *vhuḁahani*... (tag switching) When the interpreter did not hear the word uttered by the preacher, he simply asked; "*kha vha zwi vheye kha mini?*" or "On what must you put that?"
- 6) Repentance as *u rembuluwa*... (tag switching) When the interpreter said: "*Vho vhidzelwa uri vha...*" and got stuck. It is not clear whether it was because he did not hear the word, or because he did not understand, causing the preacher to add an answering tag.
- 7) Lust as *nyemulo*: (tag switching) The interpreter did not know the meaning of the word
- 8) Evil desires as *lutamo luvhi*. The interpreter only said *lutamo* or desire.
- 9) Greed as *u funesa zwithu zwi songo ḁaho*: (inter-sentential code-switching). The interpreter did not know the meaning of the word, so he appealed to the audience, and one interpreted it wrongly as *vhutshivha* (being mean), forcing the preacher to explain.
- 10) Idolatory as *u gwadamela midzimu Isili*. (The interpreter translated it as *vhuḁombe* or adultery). This was a reception issue as he probably did not hear the word clearly.
- 11) Rid yourselves of all such things as *kha vha bvule*

*zwithu zwoḁhe*. The interpreter stammered to say, '*kha vha, vha...*'. This is tag switching.

12) Rage as *vhuḁhali*. The interpreter just said...ehh... (Another tag switching by the preacher).

13) Malice as *u vheḁga*. The preacher also uses a questionable word for malice, interpreting it as 'to hate'. The language seems to be posing challenges for both participants. This is another example of tag switching.

14) Slander as *u semana kana maḁamba*. Another questionable interpreting of the bible by the preacher who translates 'slander' as 'swearing with many'. (Tag switching)

15) Filthy language as *luambo luvhi milomoni yashu*. The interpreter used a euphemism and said, 'things which are not right when we talk'. (Tag switching).

At this point the interpreter asks for one of the congregants to come and assist, however, the latter did not take the challenge, so, the former had to continue. It was obvious that the interpreter had grown uncomfortable at not getting it right. At some point he had interpreted the 'purposeful life' as; '*vhutshilo vhu re na ndeme* or valuable life', '*Vhutshilo vhone ha vha tsumbo* or exemplary life', '*vhutshilo vhuḁhethwa* or holy life', and '*vhuḁhogwa-ḁhogwa* or importance'.

#### Situation C

The next section showed no differences since it was the same scenario of a pastor preaching in English and the interpreter either not hearing clearly, or not knowing the meaning or simply getting stuck due to the complexity of the concepts the preacher was talking about. The preacher assisted through tag switches to provide the correct interpretation. The following situations were observed.

The pastor tag-switched patiently, however, the interpreter grew agonized and agitated. The causes may have been due to not hearing clearly, not knowing the meaning of the words and phrases or tiredness. The interpreter even asked the pastor to allow him to interpret while sitting but the pastor refused. There were 14 more cases where the preacher tag-switched when the interpreter just translated the first few words and left the difficult ones without even attempting to translate. Most of these were from reception and memory issues. For example:

Pastor: They won't pat you and praise you.

Interpreter: .....(Quiet).

Pastor: And patience.

Interpreter: *Na u...* (And to...)

#### Situation D

In some instances, the interpreter seemed very tired, was not concentrating and ended up interpreting wrongly. As in the following cases:

Pastor: We might hurt one another.

Interpreter: *Ri songo vha vhone vha vhaḁsana*. (We must not hurt one another).

Pastor: Outside this world.

Interpreter: *Kha heḁi shango*. (In this world).

#### Situation E

Some inter-sentential code-switching observations were also made and all of them were topic shifts where the preacher

was explaining and emphasizing points. It should be observed that dialogues tend to be expanded (longer sentences) during inter-sentential code-switching than in tag, and intra-sentential code-switches.

Pastor: *Muvenda uri mulomo a u dalelwi nga mulambo. Naho wa difhima na zwine wasa vhe zwone mulomoni, so, vhone vha tshi amba, riṇe ro vula maṭo*, we want to see that in you. *Zwine vha khou zwi amba zwi khou tanziela Yesu naa?* Don't tell me that you are a Christian, and your life goes the other way. (Venda proverb says it is easier said than done, even if you pretend to be otherwise, remember, when you speak, our eyes are open... Does your talk testify that you have Jesus?...)

In the section above the pastor uses a Venda proverb, later a Venda expression to emphasize the need to practice what we preach.

The last example also includes intra-sentential code-switching, and it is as follows:

Pastor: *Ee, I to vha milayo ya vhatendi, I to vha ṭhodea, a vha khou to humbelwa lini*, it is a matter of must! *Ri khou anḡana aḡho tshivhidzo? Hoyu mulaedza u khou to...haḡsha ipfi ḡa Mudzimu a ḡi khou ri*, no, *ha arali vha tshi funa vha nga ita hezwi...eh..eh!* God is not saying so...he gave us...this is...*a nga si soko tendela murwa wawe uri a fe tshifhambanoni uri nṇe ndi tshile zwine nda funa lini*. Impossible! *U ḡo vha e si Mudzimu a tshilaho lini*. (Yes, these are christian precepts, they are required, you are not being being asked,... Are we together church? This message is...here the word of God is not saying,... that if you like you may,... God cannot just allow his son to die on the cross so that I can live anyhow. He would not be the living God if he did so).

Code-switched items in the Tshivenda are - 'it is a matter of must', 'so', 'no', 'God is not saying', 'he gave us', 'this is' and 'impossible'. By opting for inter-sentential code-switching, the pastor seeks to be assertive and convey his ideas without being interrupted by the interpreter. He holds the floor longer, thereby creating situations where turn-taking was flaunted on many occasions by the uncomfortable interpreter. In the process the pastor used tag switches (so, no, impossible) and intra-sentential switches.

## 5. Findings and Recommendations

This section highlights the findings and recommendations of this study.

### 5.1. Findings

In relation to sermon 1, the interpreter, although not a professional interpreter, was a regular interpreter who was acquainted with the preacher, code-switched less than the pastor. He resorted to inter-sentential code-switching due to lack of facility. The text used was technical and it seemed the interpreter did not have time to read it in the target language before the preaching began. It was not clear, if the preacher gave the interpreter the text before as he was called to the stage when the preacher had already ascended the stage. Advance preparation could have assisted the interpreter to do

better. In advance preparation, an interpreter receives documents of the conference relating to the working languages beforehand. These would include programmes, lists of presenters, presentation documents or speeches and background information regarding the conference; interpreters should also attend rehearsals and briefings if such are available. Other helpful hints for thorough preparation include getting a terminology list relating to the field in question and studying it in advance (Gile, [11]). In the sermon in question, the preacher should have given the interpreter the text to be read beforehand so that he could research on the difficult items. Where possible, the data must be sorted for easy reference and having reference documents like textbooks, dictionaries and handbooks is very helpful. Three of the preacher's s code-switches were inter-sentential and these could also be due to lack of facility. The preacher, however, code-switched intra-sententially as he was attempting to clarify, emphasise and to explain. The preacher can speak both Tshivenda and English, however, since his audience were mainly Venda people, he seemed to want to emphasize certain points in the target language. Few cases of the preacher's code-switching could be attributed to habitual experience and lack of facility. To sum up, in sermon 1, the preacher code-switched more than the interpreter to clarify, emphasize and to discuss better in the target language.

Sermon 2 presents a novice interpreter who was just called upon to help. He did not code-switch much, probably, because he was not competent in English. Each time he run into difficulty, rather than to code-switch, he would appeal to the preacher, hence, lots of tag switches had to be done by the preacher. The interpreter also interpreted wrongly on at least two occasions, and that forced the preacher to code-switch inter-sententially. There are at least ten instances of tag-switching by the preacher and five of inter-sentential code-switching. In their study Odhimbo, Musyoka and Matu [16] investigated the norm of code-switching by interpreters in African churches (Churches found in Africa usually attended by indigenous people) which found that interpreters behaved in the following way which led preachers to code-switch:

- 1) Message abandonment: Interpreters began to talk but could not continue.
- 2) Omission: The interpreter purposely avoids interpreting difficult terms.
- 3) Approximation: Giving a less precise meaning.

While in some instances the preacher code-switched to explain, emphasise, elaborate and clarify, similarly, message abandonments, omissions, and approximation led the preacher into code-switching. For example:

Pastor: They won't pat you and praise you.

Interpreter: .....(Quiet).

Pastor: And patience.

Interpreter: *Na u....* (And to...)

In these instances, the interpreter omits to interpret the whole sentence, and secondly, he begins to talk but does not finish the sentence. The reasons are unknown since the interpreter was not interviewed; however, it could have been reception in the first case; perhaps he did not hear properly, or

he was still digesting the meaning. In the second instance, it seems he did not recall the meaning of the word, however, in the following example, the interpreter appeals to the preacher for help which could be an indication that he either did not hear the uttered word or did not know its meaning. The interpreter could recall the word 'adultery' and was able to borrow it as it was, therefore, it might suggest that his memory or word retention was poor and had forgotten the word 'fornication' instead of being unable to interpret it.

Pastor: We are now on the matter of warnings against adultery and fornication.

Interpreter: *Zwino ri kha tshipida tshine ra tea u vha ri tshi amba nga* adultery... (*na mini?*...) asking the preacher. (Now we are on the item where we have to be talking about adultery.... (and what?))

Pastor: Adultery. *Nga vhubombwe na vhubavhu*. (About adultery and fornication)

Emphasis, like in sermon 1 above, occurred when the preacher attempted to focus on certain critical issues in the message, and these were mainly done in the vernacular or the target language. The preacher obviously was inconvenienced for relying on a novice he just picked from the congregation, because he ended up doing a lot self-interpretation.

## 5.2. Recommendations

Code-switching in churches is bound to happen if pastors feel that their messages are not well explained in a particular language as was evidenced in the two sermons in this study. I, therefore, recommend that:

1. Pastors should use regular interpreters than novice interpreters who may not be able to deal with the church jargon. Churches should consider employing full-time/paid interpreters.
2. Pastors should give their interpreters a text (book, chapter and verses) that will be used on a particular day before the sermon starts in order to give interpreters time to acquaint themselves with the relevant terminology. This is advanced preparation, and it helps interpreters to anticipate and be in line with the preacher during sermon interpreting.
3. Pastors should be careful when picking interpreters if their regular ones are not available, they must choose those who they know are proficient in the relevant languages, hence, interpreters must not be chosen when the pastor is already on the pulpit.
4. It is important for pastors to monitor the speed of their speeches especially when they are captivated by the topic and the atmosphere; they should be mindful of the interpreters who may not be in the same spiritual realm.

## 6. Conclusion

Preachers code-switched more than interpreters in the two sermons studied as their attempts to drive home certain points led them into inter-sentential code-switching. Preachers code-switched when clarifying, explaining, and emphasising.

A competent interpreter could have avoided the prevalence of tag-switches in sermon 2, which were attributed to the picked-up novice interpreter not being familiar with some of the terms used. Most of the tag-switches were induced by the interpreters who omitted, started sentences which they could not finish, and in some instances gave approximate inadequate translations. These accounts for why preachers were found to be code-switching more than interpreters.

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