

**CONSTRAINTS BASED CODE-SWITCHING DURING THE ENGLISH
LANGUAGE LESSON IN A MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOM IN KENYAN
PRIMARY SCHOOLS: A STRUCTURAL PERSPECTIVE**

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ABSTRACT

This study is a descriptive survey of code-switching in selected lower primary classes in selected Kenyan schools. The study investigated code-switching in English lessons and its implications on second language proficiency in lower primary schools in Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to find out how languages are used in an English lesson in lower primary classrooms. It also sought to identify the syntactic elements of code-switching used by teachers and learners in lower primary school level during classroom discourse as well as to analyse the syntactic constraints resulting from grammatical rules of the two or more languages. Finally, the study sought to establish how code-switching could be used as an effective communication strategy in an ESL classroom. The study was guided by three theories: Lado's Contrastive Analysis, Myers-Scotton's Matrix Language Framework and Baker and Westrup's Presentation, Practice and Production (PPP) Framework. Three (3) public primary schools in Kasarani Sub County in Nairobi County were used in the study where nine teachers were interviewed. The data were mainly collected through audio-video recording and supplemented by interviews and observation. A discourse and grammatical analysis of data was done then presented. The data were presented in forms of tables, excerpts from text books and texts from the recorded data. The findings revealed that teachers switched from English into other languages during the English lesson. Code-switching enhanced language development as observed in learners' performance on learning activities during vocabulary lessons. Strict adherence to ML frame enhanced L2 development. The study recommends use of code-switching rules during target language lessons but with caution. Support of local languages development and a structural analysis of their grammar are necessary for their effective use in teaching a target language. The study has implications for teacher educators and Applied Linguistics theory development.