Bilingual Simple Verbs In The Igbo-English Mixed Code: Implications For The Structure of Codeswitching

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ABSTRACT

The paper examines bilingual sample verbs in Igbo-English bilingual speech, that is, single-word verbs whose components derive from the two languages. Bilingual simple verbs are studied in contexts of intrasentential codeswitching and it is shown that their distribution is significant in distinguishing the patterns of codeswitching. Two patterns of codeswitching in the three-way typology proposed in Muysken (2000) are identified, namely insertion, in which Igbo provides the morphosyntactic structure of the clause, and alternation, in which neither language dominates the other. Bilingual simple verbs occur in the insertional pattern, in which the Igbo grammatical frame forces morphological integration of inserted English verbs, and are not attested in the alternational pattern.

Keywords: Codeswitching, Bilingual, Igbo, Codemixing

INTRODUCTION

Codeswitching or mixing refers to the use in daily conversation of elements belonging to more than one language, consciously or unconsciously, by speakers who have two (or more) languages in their repertoires when speaking with other speakers who are bilingual in the same languages. Codeswitching is attested in the speech of bilinguals around the world. The present study is based on the speech of speakers who are bilingual in English and Igbo, a West-Congo language native to south-east Nigeria. Codeswitching research has progressed under three main perspective: the psycholinguistic perspective focuses on the altering of the human internal mechanism as the basis for the coding and decoding of speech in two forms; the sociolinguistic perspective has as emphasis the social and psychological motivations for codeswitching; the grammatical or structural perspective interprets codeswitching as a phenomenon subject to grammatical rules and constraints.

Codeswitching among Igbo-English bilinguals is generally associated with the younger generation, and the use of the mixed code, commonly known as Engligbo, is so prevalent that [1], has claimed that Igbo-English mixture “has become so natural to Igbo speakers that they can hardly make a sentence in Igbo without the use of one or two words of the English language.” Previous studies on Igbo-English code switching or mixing have mainly adopted a sociolinguistic perspective, highlighting its functions as a conscious discourse strategy [2], the motivations for its use by [3]and its contribution to the status of Igbo as a “seriously endangered language” [4]. A grammatical perspective is adopted in [5], in which some
structural aspects of the mixed code are considered. However, the structural
patterns observable in the Igbo-English language pair vis-a-vis other language
pairs have not been explored. This study fills that gap.

The paper studies Igbo-English bilingual simple verbs (single-word verbs whose
components derive from both Igbo and English) using spontaneous
codeswitching data collected over four
years in a variety of social settings.
Igbo-English bilingual simple verbs are
examined in the light of the typology of bilingual verbs outlined in the literature
and as a window to the structural
patterns of Igbo-English bilingual
speech, vis-a-vis other language pairs.

[6] notes that bilingual verbs in general
may have the function of vocabulary
extension, serve a stylistic function, or
point to lexical loss as a result of
language attrition or erosion. Although
the symptoms of lexical loss or attrition
among Igbo speakers, especially in
relation to the Igbo verbal category, may
be implicated by the use of bilingual
verbs among Igbo-English bilinguals, the
scope of the paper does not extend to
the relationship of Igbo-English
codeswitching to language
endangerment, attrition or shift or
suggestions for reversing those trends.

The rest of the paper is structured as
follows: Section 2 examines the
phenomena of code-switching and code-
mixing and clarifies the use of terms in
the paper, noting that monolingual
sentences and sentence fragments do
not yield bilingual verbs. Section 3
presents the typology of intrasentential
switching set forth in [6] and notes the
two major structural patterns realised in
Igbo-English codeswitching. Section 4
highlights previous work on bilingual
verbs and identifies bilingual simple
verbs as a subset of bilingual verbs.
Section 5 gives a description of how the
processes of codeswitching produce
bilingual verbs and provides the basis
for the recognition of the class of bilingual simple verbs. Section 6 focuses
on bilingual simple verbs in-structures
in which an Igbo clausal frame forces
morphological integration of inserted
English verbs. Section 7 distinguishes
clause-peripheral insertion and
alternation using the criterion of
morphological integration, and provides
evidence for insertion as the dominant
switching pattern in the language pair.
Section 8 draws a conclusion on the
discussion in the paper.

Code Switching and Mixing

Studies on the structure of bilingual
speech generally distinguish two
phenomena in the way bilinguals
combine elements of the languages in
their repertoire. Sometimes the
linguistic units of the two languages are
found "across sentence boundaries
within the same speech events", and at
other times "within the same sentence
and speech event" [7]. The following are
examples of the two phenomena from
Lingala-French bilingual speech [7]:

(1) Na-ke-iKimwenza. Je reviens dans une heure.

‘I am gone to Kimwenza. I will return in an hour.’

(2) Mobalinayo-akoyodeuxfois par jour.

‘Your husband calls you twice per day.’

In (1) the speaker switches
intersententially from Lingala to French,
while in (2) material from both
languages are found in the same clause.
The two phenomena are distinguished
by the fact that in (1) the grammatical
systems of the languages remain
discrete, while in (2) the grammatical
systems of the two languages interact.

Various terms have been
proposed in the literature to capture the
distinction between the two phenomena,
the commonest being the use of the
term 'codeswitching' (or code-switching
or code switching) for the phenomenon
represented by (1) and 'code-mixing' (or
code mixing) for the phenomenon
represented by (2) (e.g. [7]; [6]).

However, the use of the two terms in
the literature by various authors is far from
consistent, and has created much
controversy, ambiguity and confusion.
[8] uses the term codeswitching for both
phenomena and distinguishes switching
between sentences, and switching
within the same sentence or sentence

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fragment, with the terms "intersentential codeswitching" and "intrasentential codeswitching" respectively. [9], however, argues that the unit of analysis of codeswitching is more appropriately a Complementizer Phrase (CP)a clause with acomplementizer node, since a sentence may include more than one such clause. On that basis, she proposed the terms intra-CP' and 'inter-CP' codeswitching in place of her earlier terms. The position taken in [8] in the use of the cover term "codeswitching" and the modifiers "intrasentential" and "intersentential" to distinguish the two switching phenomena, where necessary, is adopted in this study.

Igbo-English intersentential codeswitching is illustrated by the following examples:

(3) Otu a ka o di ebe niile. 'What I am advising is that you have to go back to him.' That's the way it is everywhere. What I am advising is that you ...

(4) Hapununuanyi. Why use us to cast the votes? 'Just leave us alone. Why use us to cast the votes?'

(5) Ana m achoputa o sindina-achianyi'n'aka. Hope you understand? I've found out that it is the fault of our leaders. Hope you understand'

In (3) through (5), the speaker switches intersententially from Igbo to English and the grammatical systems of the participating languages remain discrete.

1 Tone is marked on Igbo material as follows: high tone is unmarked (e.g. u); low tone is marked with a grave accent on the vowel (e.g. u) but is unmarked where a low tone vowel has a diacritic mark.

2 In Igbo-English bilingual data presented in this study, Igbo linguistic material is in normal font while English material is in bold print. In data quoted from other sources, switching is marked in italics.

The verbs in intersentential codeswitching, as exemplified above, are monolingual in Igbo (di = 'be'; hapununu = '(just) leave alone'; achoputa = 'finding out'; si = start from; achi = "are ruling"), or in English ('am advising'; 'go back'; 'use'; 'cast', 'understand').

Monolingual verbs' are also found in stretches of monolingual speech within a sentence, as in (6) - (9).

(6) O di-ghi happy about all these things. s/he be-Neg happy about all these things '

(7) O siro mbiabut I will go and see him. He say-NEG I come but I will go and see him 'He did not say I should come, but I will go and see him,'

(8) I was trying to call you to find out ma ɔbia-la. I was trying to call you to find out if he come-PERF 'I was trying to call you to find out if he has come.'

(9) That child will eventually prove you wrong because ọ ga-a-guro a-gagu o-rogia kwu kwetaranagi certificates. PART-go read-BNF you book bring-BNF you certificates 'That child will eventually prove you wrong because s/he will go and study and bring you certificates.'

Note the (monolingual) Igbo verbs in (6) - (9) (biala = 'has come'; siro =~ 'did not say'; bia = 'come'; dighi = 'is not'; ga-agap = 'will go'; guoro = 'read for'; wetara = 'bring for') and English verbs 'trying', 'call', 'find out', 'go', 'see' and 'prove'. Monolingual sentences and sentence fragments do not yield bilingual verbs, i.e. when codeswitching is applied intersententially, as in (3) through (5), or intrasententially in an alternational pattern, as in (6) through (9), only monolingual verbs occur.
The processes that yield bilingual verbs necessarily require interaction between the grammatical systems of two languages. As such, this study is basically about intrasentential switching, as exemplified by the followingsentences:

(10)  O disappoint-i-ri  m
s/he disappoint-V-PAST me
'He/she disappointed me.'
(11)  How are you surenao ga- a-
work-u?
how are you sure that it
PUT- PART-work-V
'How are you sure that it will work?'

Note the bilingual verbs 'disappoint-i-ri'and 'a-work-u'in (10) and (11), respectively.

**Structural Patterns in Intersentential Codeswitching**

Several authors have noted that in intrasentential switching, elements from the participating languages interact in different patterns in different data sets [6]. Different researchers attribute the structural patterns in codeswitching to various extralinguistic factors. [10] identified four strategies for combining languages intrasententially in the corpora studied in her works, namely, smooth code-switching at equivalence sites, flagged code-switching, constituent insertion and nonce borrowing, and interpreted them as recurrent patterns of speech behavior or bilingual norms of the communities from which the data are drawn. Similarly, [11] identified three codeswitching patterns: insertion, alternation and leaks, which they attribute to different mechanisms at work in the speech of bilinguals.

[6] notes the variations in the mixing patterns attested in different data sets, and describes his work as an attempt to "tie together a set of intermediary results" of major works on codeswitching (p. 2). Concerning [6] work, [12] observe that "whereas previous approaches to codeswitching predicted that a specific model would account for all patterns to be found in any speech community, Igbo verb roots usually end with a CV syllable structure. Therefore an additional vowel is often added by bilingual speakers to English verbs that end in a closed syllable. The added vowel has no morphosyntactic significance. A similar observation is made for Swahili verbs [13] and Finnish nouns [14] within the context of codeswitching.

[6] proposes that the pattern will vary according to both linguistic and extralinguistic factors." [6] proposal is a three-way typology for the classification of intrasentential codeswitching patterns into insertion, alternation and congruent lexicalization. He claims that the patterns correspond to the main, competing structural approaches to codeswitching in the literature, and that their occurrence in specific settings is determined by the typological characteristics of the languages involved, as well as psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic factors. According to [6], the insertional pattern underlies codeswitching models which assume an asymmetry between the participating languages, with the 'matrix language' dominating the mixed clause and providing the-morphosyntactic frame into which elements of the 'embedded language' are inserted. The insertion approach is exemplified by the Matrix Language Frame model of [8] [9] which assumes that the matrix language provides the grammatical structure within the maximal syntactic category of the clause (S-bar or CP), and elements of the embedded language, ranging from single lexical items to multi-word constituents are inserted into the structure.

Insertions generally exhibit a nested abas structure [6], as illustrated in the following examples:
(12)  Anakula plate mbilizamurram. 'He eats two plates of maize.'
(Swahili-English; [8]
(13)  E wogreendress ko. 'S/he wore a green dress.'
(Adanme-English; [5]
(14)  Igbo-English
Kedu provision i make-i-
rimakandinkeozo?
what provision you make-V-
PAST for people of other
'What provision did you make for the other people?
[6] notes that the insertion pattern of codeswitching is frequent in colonial settings and in recent migrant communities and that it may also signal asymmetry in speakers' proficiency in the two languages (p. 9). Much of the African codeswitching data reported in the literature have been noted to exhibit a dominantly insertion pattern in which a matrix language can clearly be identified [6], and in which the matrix language would usually be an African language [15], as cited in .

The second codeswitching pattern is alternation, which involves "a true switch from one language to the other, involving both grammar and lexicon" [6], or a process in which the speaker "can best be seen as speaking now one language, now another" [11], [6] notes that the alternational pattern of codeswitching is characteristic of "stable bilingual communities with a tradition of language separation", and that alternation may occur clause-centrally at major syntactic boundaries, or clause-peripherally, as in (14) through (18).

Note that (16) - (18) are Igbo-English examples.
(15) si j 'avais la maison, ma's'amrina : kultemma. if I had the house, I would never eat there'
(Arabic-French; [11])
(16) Owoowahas low market value. 'Our currency has low market value'
(Yoruba-English; [16])
(17) Those people write ri m, si m that there is no problem.
'Those people wrote me (and) told me that there is no problem.'
(18) Enwere m strong belief that we'll make it.
'I have strong belief that we'll make it.'
(19) I na-agwakwa your friends about that room di vacant?
'Have you been telling your friends about that vacant room?'

In the third codeswitching pattern, congruent lexicalization, the two participating languages have a largely shared grammatical structure, and lexical items from either language are inserted into the shared structure. The back and forth switching can be so frequent that "basically anything goes in congruent lexicalization" [6]. [6] also suggests that, with few exceptions, congruent lexicalization underlies the study of style shifting and dialect/standard variation rather than bilingual language use proper (p. 4). This makes insertion and alternation the two dominant patterns in

intrasentential codeswitching [6].

Although [6] claims that different codeswitching patterns arise from the distinct processes of insertion, alternation and congruent lexicalization at work in specific bilingual settings or contact situations, it has been noted that elements from two languages may be combined in various patterns in the same data set, although one pattern would usually dominate [12]. This observation holds true for Igbo-English codeswitching.

Bilingual Verbs in Language Contact

Literature

Bilingual verbs, i.e. verbs whose components derive from two languages, have been studied as products of codeswitching (e.g. [7]; [6]). Under this view, [6] identifies four main types of bilingual verbs cross-linguistically, namely:

(i) Inserted verbs
(ii) Verb + (adjoined) helping verb
(iii) Verb (in nominalized form) + helping verb
(iv) Verb (in infinitive form) + helping verb

Only the first of these represents bilingual simple verbs, i.e. single-word bilingual verbs. The other three types are bilingual complex verbs, consisting of a helping verb in one language and a lexical verb in the other language. [6] acknowledges that the patterns (ii) -- (iv) all yield bilingual compound verbs, but argues that while the patterns (iii) and (iv) (with nominalized or infinitive complements) have an insertion strategy, the verb complexes that result from adjunction (pattern ii) have an alternational pattern in the data sets he studied.

The process of insertion is one by which "the new verb is inserted into a position corresponding to a native verb, in adapted form or not" [6]; emphasis in the original). [6] identifies three subtypes of inserted verbs: some inserted verb stems do not receive inflection because the recipient language has no verbal inflection; some inserted verb stems are used directly...
like a matrix verb without any morphological adaptation; some inserted verb stems are used indirectly in adapted form, with an affix of the matrix language used to accommodate them before normal inflectional patterns of the matrix language are applied. Other works on bilingual verbs in the literature generally regard them as borrowed verbs. [18] remarks that much of the data cited in [6], come from studies on code-mixing and that Muysken’s classification does not distinguish between established loan verbs and nonce forms or code-switches. However, he describes the work as "not only a rich source of data and discussion, but also the cornerstone for all following studies on borrowed verbs" (p. 21). Furthermore, Wichmann and [18] compare their loan verb accommodation strategies (for established loan verbs) with those proposed in [6] in a way that suggests that the same strategies for bilingual verbs are used for codeswitching and nonce loans on the one hand, and established loans on the other. They distinguish four patterns of integration in verbal borrowing - the light verb strategy, direct insertion, indirect insertion, and paradigm transfer - but note that [6] classification of bilingual verbs divides the light verb strategy in their own classification into three subtypes (presumably, (ii), (iii) and (iv) above), collapses direct and indirect insertion in their own classification (presumably, Muysken’s type (i) above), and ignores the category of paradigm transfer in their classification.

Even though the above classifications of bilingual verbs are based on the phenomena of codeswitching and borrowing, which some authors consider distinct phenomena (e.g., [19]; [20]) it has been argued that the two are quite related. Back, us [7] wonders how a pattern that is ruled out for the initial stages of the borrowing process can end up being the default pattern once that process is underway, and concludes that "lexical borrowing is the diachronic counterpart of synchronic codeswitching." [6] notes that insertional codeswitching is "akin to (spontaneous) lexical borrowing/" Similarly, [17], considers code-switching and borrowing as "similar phenomena from a theoretical point of view" and [13], claims that there is little reason to differentiate codeswitching and borrowing as processes. [18], further hints that "the mechanism used for code-switching is predestined to be used productively and thus lead to the conventionalization of forms thus accommodated. Once established, however, such "switch verbs" should be considered true loan verbs. Taking these facts together, this study makes a distinction between bilingual simple verbs, which are products of the strategy of insertion (with direct and indirect insertion as subtypes) and bilingual compound or complex verbs, which are products of the light verb strategy. Bilingual simple verbs are derived in Igbo-English codeswitching by the direct insertion of English verbs (and verbal segments) into an Igbo clausal frame and their affixation with Igbo inflectional morphemes. The following sections provide a detailed description of the process.

**Bilingual Simple Verbs as Products of Codeswitching**

It was noted above that intersentential codeswitching does not yield bilingual verbs, i.e. verbs are monolingual in each of the participating languages since the grammatical systems of the languages remain discrete, as in (3) - (5). It was also noted that bilingual verbs are not realised in stretches of monolingual speech in intrasentential switching, as in (6) - (9). However, intrasentential codeswitching involving lone English verbs in an Igbo grammatical frame, as in (20) and (21), generally yields morphologically integrated (bilingual) verbs.

(20) onwe-ghi ego i-send-I umuyao bodooyibo he have-NEG money INF-send-V children his country foreign. 'He does not have money to send his children to a foreign country.'

(21) O register-ram for the exams. s/he register-PAST me for the exams 'S/he registered me for the exams.'

The lone English verbs in (20) and (21) are affixed with the Igbo infinitival and past tense, morphemes, respectively.
This agrees with the observation that morpho-syntactic mixing is typical of intrasentential switching, in which the grammatical rules of the participating languages interact [7]. Similarly, [6] observes that "morphological integration, as a diagnostic feature of insertions, is particularly striking in the case of verbs." It is pertinent to note, however, that some researchers consider the lone verbs in (20) and (21) above, not as instances of codeswitching, but as representing the 'nonce' or momentary type of borrowing. This position derives from the view of codeswitching as "the juxtaposition of sentences and sentence fragments, each of which is internally consistent with the morphological and syntactic (and optionally phonological) rules of the language of its provenance" [19], or "the alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence or constituent" [20]; emphasis mine). Under this perspective, codeswitching and borrowing are considered distinct phenomena true codeswitching involves multi-word fragments "which remain morphologically and syntactically unadapted to recipient-language patterns" [21], while lone other-language items overwhelmingly surface with the patterns of the language in which they are incorporated [...] evidence that they have been borrowed into that language, despite the lack, in some cases, of any dictionary attestation or diffusion within the community" [22]. Under this view, morphosyntactically integrated lone items (usually major-class content words like verbs and nouns) are categorized as borrowings of the 'nonce' type, a term attributed by [22], and [23] to [24], who used it for borrowing that is not yet established in terms of phonological integration, recurrence in the speech of an individual and distribution across the community.

[20], proposed two major syntactic constraints on codeswitching the Equivalence Constraint and the Free Morpheme Constraint (FMC). The latter constraint is directly related to the concept of bilingual verbs. It states that "codes may be switched alter any constituent in discourse provided that constituent is not a bound morpheme" [20]. By predicting that codeswitching is only possible between constituents that are not bound morphemes, the FMC rules out switches between a bound morpheme of one language and a free morpheme of another, such as English-Spanish 'eAT-iendo' ('is eating') [20], and by implication the morphologically integrated/bilingual verbs 'i-send-T and 'register-ra'in (20) and (21) above.

However, the Free Morpheme Constraint is assumed not to be violated if the stem has been phonologically integrated into the language of the bound morpheme, as in the case of borrowing [25]; [20]; [23]. It has, however, been noted that phonological adaptation has proved unreliable as a criterion in the determination of the status of forms as either codeswitching or borrowing [9]. [26], adopts the nonce borrowing hypothesis and the Free Morpheme Constraint in his analysis of lone English verbs in otherwise Igbo discourse. He classifies lone English verbs in his corpora, such as those in (22) and (23), as nonce borrowings [26].

(22) O work-u-ghi. It work-V-NEG 'it did not work.'
(23) Ha wed-i-rin’uloukambeukakabuuka. They wed-V-PAST PREP church when church still was church They wedded in church when the church was still authentic.'

By considering the morphologically integrated lone English verbs in (22) and (23) as nonce loans, [26], adopts the position taken in earlier works within the variationist framework [20]; [22]; [23]. However, [13] argues that integrated verbs, such as those in Swahili-English codeswitching, are counterexamples to [20] Free Morpheme Constraint. Similarly, this study proposes that integration is not significant in distinguishing between codeswitching and borrowing in Igbo-English bilingual speech. Following [11], [15] and [13], it is assumed that whereas a borrowed form can be predicted to reoccur in the recipient language, a codeswitched form has no predictive value or shows no frequency of occurrence in a data corpus or in a speech community.
This study admits as codeswitching the process of attaching inflectional morphemes of Igbo to English verbs, which results in bilingual simple verbs. The process is discussed in detail in the following sections.

**Igbo-English**

**Bilingual Simple Verbs**

This study classifies as bilingual simple verbs Igbo-English bilingual verbs that consist of a single word. They are derived by the direct insertion of English verbs into positions ordinarily reserved for Igbo verbs and the direct inflection of the inserted verb with Igbo affixes, without morphological adaptation in the form of a natively or verbalizing affix. Bilingual simple verbs are found in insertion structures in which Igbo is the matrix language. Inserted English verbal items range from lone verbs to phrasal items. The processes of insertion that result in bilingual simple verbs are described in the following segments.

6.1 Insertion into an Igbo Clausal Frame. The insertion of lone or multiword English verbal expressions into the verbal slot when the clausal frame, and consequently the inflectional element (INFL), is in Igbo generally results in bilingual simple verbs. In the following examples, the verb *send* is inserted into Igbo discourse in a variety of segment types, but with full integration in all instances:

(24) O ga- e-send-inwayai-nyegi the money.

he PUT-PART-send-V child his INF-give you the money 'He will send his child to give you the money.'

(25) Ka m send-i-e to Mrs. A.

Let me send-V-OVS lo Mrs. A.

'Let me send to Mrs. A.'

(26) O di-kwa necessary i-send-i-rigi that thing?

it be-ES necessary TNF-send-V-BN you that thing. 'Is it still necessary to send you that thing?'

In (24) the English verb *send* has been inserted as a lone element into an Igbo clausal frame. Lone English verbs nested in an Igbo grammatical frame are without exception, morphosyntactically integrated into Igbo. In (25) *send* is inserted with a particle *to*, while in (26), it is inserted with a direct object *that thing*, although the indirect object (expressed in Igbo) intervenes between the verb and its direct object, an order of constituents shared by both languages. The examples (25) and (26) illustrate the fact that English verbs may be inserted into otherwise Igbo discourse in multi-word English verbal segments which may be set collocations (including phrasal verbs), as further illustrated in (27) and (28), or expressions consisting of a verb and a constituent it subcategorizes for, such as its direct object, as further illustrated in (29) and (30).

(27) Mgbeona- e-pick-i upbumgbeanyi nona your 

noda slope. when it PROG-PART-pick-Vup be when we be PREP slope. 'It picks up when we are on the slope.'

(28) Ha ga- e-reduce-u yato nothing. They PUT-PART-reduce-V

him to nothing

'They will reduce him to nothing.'

(29) 0 na- e-lead - church

na be fa. he PROG-PART-lead church PREP place their 'He leads the church in their place.'

(30) January, February, m na- a-bata, 

m publish-i-e another one.

January, February, I PROG-PART-return I publish-V-OVS another one 'In January or February when I return, I (will) publish another one.'

The examples (27) and (28) contain the fixed expressions *pick up* and *reduce to nothing*. In (29) and (30), the verbs *lead* and *publish* select the objects *church* and *another one*, respectively. Note the absence of a determiner before *church* in (29), suggesting an overall Igbo grammatical structure in the sentence and syntactic integration of the inserted English verb phrase.

In all the examples, (24) through (30), the grammatical frame is in Igbo. The inflectional affixes simply attach to the English verbs following them, resulting in full morphological integration. The English verbs are attached with Igbo affixes in the same manner and to the same extent as Igbo verbs in similar positions. [7] and [8], have noted the same fact for Lingala-French and Swahili-English *codeswitching*, respectively. They cite examples of verbs of the embedded language (French and English) exhibiting inflectional morphology characteristic of verbs of
the matrix language (Lingala and Swahili).
The difficulty in classifying individual switches unambiguously as belonging to a specific codeswitching pattern has been noted [12]; [6]. A case in point is the analysis of the expressions 'send that thing', 'reduce to nothing', and 'publish another one' as insertions in (26), (28) and (30), respectively, in view of the fact that clause-peripheral switching may be an indication of the alternational pattern [6]. The option of analyzing such switches as instances of alternation will be further considered in Section 7. Integration will be shown to be the criterion for distinguishing insertion and alternation, and bilingual simple verbs will be shown to be realised only in the insertional pattern.

**Subcategorisation Restrictions.** Igbo-English bilingual simple verbs sometimes result from subcategorisation requirements of Igbo grammar. Two constructions will serve as illustrations. First, a verbal expression occurring in the subject position of an affirmative sentence in Igbo must appear in infinitive form. English has a similar requirement applies to the English equivalents of the Igbo verbs.) English clausal complements selected by these verbs contain verbs that are inflected for the infinitive, as in the following examples:

(33) O kwesi-i-graduate this year. hesupposc-IND INF-graduate this year 'He is supposed to graduate this year.'

(34) E kwesi-ri i-check-I ya e-check-i.

IMPERSON.PN ought-IND INF-check-V it HRM-check-V 'It ought to be checked'

(35) O cho-ro i-dictate-ri m ihe m ga-e-me.
s/he want-IND INF-dictate-BNF me thing 1 FUT- PART-do. 'S/he wants to dictate to me what to do.'

(36) O cho-gi i-recommend m for that work. he want-NEG INF-recommend me for that work 'He didn't want to recommend me for that work.' [27]

(37) Obi o ga-e-kwe-kwaya i-continue na-a-kwu

Heart it FUT- PART-allow-ES him INF-continue PROG- PART-stand n'anwu

PREP-sun 'Will he have the courage to continue standing in the sun?

For verbs that subcategorize for an infinitival clause, such as kwesi, cho and kwe in (33) through (37), the English complement clauses should be seen as insertions, in line with the observation in [6] that the presence of selection may signal insertion or congruent lexicalization. Thus the bilingual verbs contained in the complement clauses result from lexical selection by the Igbo verb in the matrix clause. The reverse situation, in which English verbs such as 'be supposed' and 'need' are used in the matrix clause, was also recorded. The Igbo verb in the complement clause appears in the infinitive form, as in (38) - (41):

(38) Ha suppose-ru i-ma the hitches.

They be supposed-IND IMF-know the hitches They are supposed to know the hitches.'

(39) A suppose-ru i-nwe one month's training.
The verb, but not always, follows the integrated elements of one language have been attested in Igbo, but not in English In such constructions, Igbo is clearly the matrix language. Examples are the bound cognate noun construction and the serial verbs construction.

The bound cognate noun construction

The bound cognate noun is a nominal derivative of all active verbs in Igbo [28]. The nominal is cognate with the verb root, and is formed from the verb root with a harmonizing a-le-prefix. The bound cognate noun follows the verb and its direct object/complement within the verb phrase, and often, but not always, serves a semantic function of emphasis. Igbo-English bilinguals often insert English verbs into the Igbo bound cognate noun construction, as in the following examples:

(42) Government suppose-ru i-upgrade the standard of public schools.
    Government suppose-TND INT-upgrade the standard of public schools
    The government is supposed to upgrade the standard of public schools."
(43) A-ga m e-need i-move my people.
    VOC-RT I PART-need INF-move my people. I will need to move my people.'

The integration of the English verbs in the matrix clause and clausal complement in (42) and (43) is a good illustration of the matrix-embedded language dichotomy both verbal expressions are insertions from the embedded language, and the matrix language, Igbo, supplies the functional elements in the clause. Bilingual verbs result from the attachment of matrix language affixes to the inserted verbs of the embedded language.

Bilingual Simple Verbs in Structures Not Attested in English. In bilingual speech involving languages that are typologically dissimilar, it is often possible to identify structures that clearly belong to one of the languages. In such structures, it is obvious when elements of one language have been inserted into the grammatical structure of the other language. In Igbo-English bilingual speech, there are constructions that are attested in Igbo, but not in English In such constructions, Igbo is clearly the matrix language. Examples are the bound cognate noun construction and the serial verbs construction.
construction -- the English verb is inserted in integrated form in the verbal slot and the bound cognate noun in the construction is derived from the English verb using the regular derivational pattern for Igbo verbs.

**The serial verb construction**

The serial verb construction (SVC) has been described as "a row of verbs one after the other ... (in which) the verbs stand next to each other without being connected" [29], as cited in [4]. The SVC is common in some Benue-Congo, Kwa and Kru languages of Niger-Congo, although it is not limited to the phylum [30]. Unlike coordination and subordination which are common to both Igbo and English, verb serialization is attested in Igbo but not in English. Emenanjo [28],notes that the SVC is used to express a wide range of semantic notions in Igbo, including comparison, instrument, manner, accompaniment, direction, dative, simultaneity, purpose and sequence. In codeswitched serial verb structures in Igbo-English bilingual speech, therefore, Igbo is clearly the matrix language.

[16], has noted certain restrictions in serial verb constructions in Yoruba-English codeswitching. An observation of the serial verb construction in Igbo-English codeswitching suggests that some restrictions apply in the construction. The examples (49) - (52) suggest a strict ordering of verbs from the two languages.

(49) M ji 'nwayo na- e-build up my thesis.

I take gentleness PROG-PART-build up my thesis.'

(50) Otu a ka o si end-i-e manner this FOC it use end-V-OVS 'That is how it ended.'

(51) I ga- a-bia present-i-e ya. you PUT-PART-come present-V-OVS 'You will come and present it.'

(52) A-ga m e-deputa otu akwukwo publish-i-e ya. VOC-FUTI PART-write one paper publish-V-OVS it 'I will write one paper and publish it.'

The examples (49) through (52) illustrate a general tendency for Igbo to provide the initial verb in the serial construction. The contrast between (53a) and (53b) below further lends credence to the assumption that switching of verbs in the SVC is generally from Igbo to English. (53a) was recorded in actual speech, while the hypothetical (53b), in which the initial verb is in English, was adjudged by respondents as unacceptable, or to be minimally acceptable if used within the context of creating humour.

(53) a. Aga m a-ga check-i-e ya.

VOC-FUTI I PART-go check-V-OVS it 'I will go (and) check it.'

b. I will go (and) - ha-a ya.

I will go and check-OVS it 'I will go (and) check it.'

The ungrammatically of (53b) strongly suggests a requirement for Igbo, the matrix language, to provide the first of the serial verbs. Throughout our corpus, no case of an English verb as the first of serial verbs and an Igbo verb as second was found. In the only example in the corpus of an English verb as the first of serial verbs, the second verb is a bilingual complex verb:

(54) Postgraduate Board ga-e-meet-i e-me-e ya approve postgraduate board PUT-PART-meet-V do-OVS it approve 'The postgraduate Board will meet and approve it.'

Note the morphological integration of the English verbs, as well as syntactic integration (marked by the absence of a determiner in the subject noun phrase), suggesting that the morphosyntactic frame is in Igbo.

Integration as a Diagnostic Feature of Insertion

It has been assumed in this study that bilingual simple verbs derive from insertional CS. However, the question might be asked as to whether this is a general assumption, i.e. whether alternational CS does not yield bilingual simple verbs under any circumstances, especially in view of the observation in
[6], that alternation is a possibility when the switched element is at the periphery of a clause. Therefore, it needs to be determined, in relation to the occurrence of bilingual simple verbs in Igbo-English CS, when a switch into an English verbal segment at the periphery of a clause constitutes an insertion or an alternation. [6], has, however, observed that some of such cases may be undecided: for example, would a switch from a subject in Language A to a verb phrase in Language B be a case of alternation, subject insertion or VP insertion?

It is suggested for Igbo-English CS that the feature of morphological integration disambiguates insertional and alternational switching involving a verbal segment at the periphery of the clause, as in the following example:

(55) Ndi be anyi have lived in peace for several decades now.

people place our have lived in peace for several decades now
'Our people have lived in peace for several decades how
The switch in (55) represents a true alternational switch from a subject in Igbo to a verb phrase in English. Neither Igbo nor English can be said to dominate the entire clause in (55). The inflectional element (INFL) is in English and the verb lived reflects English morphology. It is noted that intrasentential alternational switching of the sort represented by (55) involves the use of an English auxiliary verb and is quite rare in Igbo-English CS. A great majority of English verbs are inserted directly into the verbal slot in a clause framed in Igbo. This results in morphological integration, even when the inserted verb occurs in clause peripheral multi-word segments, as in (56) and (57):

(56) Ha si na ha ga-support-u President.
The say that they PUT- PART-support-V president 'They said that they will support the President/
(57) Anyi na-a-complain about what the government is doing.
we PROG-PART-complain about what the government is doing We are complaining about what the government is doing.'

The examples (56) and (57) contain bilingual verbs, unlike (55), which contains a monolingual English verb. Only monolingual English verbs can occur in the type of configuration represented by (55), which signifies alternation, and only bilingual verbs can occur in the type of configuration represented by (56) and (57), which signify insertion. The two configurations are distinguished by the criterion of integration, which [6], has noted to be a major diagnostic feature of insertions. The inserted verbal segment in (56) is also syntactically integrated into Igbo, as indicated by the absence of a determiner in the expression support president.

From the foregoing data, the occurrence of bilingual simple verbs in Igbo-English codeswitching is related to the distinction between insertional codeswitching, in which Igbo is the matrix language, and alternational switching, in which the clause as a whole is not dominated by either language. A switch into English before INFL represents true alternation, with monolingual (English) verbs resulting, as in (55), while a switch after Igbo INFL indicates insertional codeswitching, which results in verbal integration, as in (56) and (57). The importance of verbal integration (which is indicative of Igbo INFL and an overall Igbo clausal frame) as the diagnostic feature of insertion is underscored by the fact that in insertional switching, the inflection on the main verb determines the matrix language of the clause, to the extent that it seems irrelevant which of the languages supplies the element in subject position, whether Igbo as in (58) and (59) or English, as in (60) and (61).

(58) Onye mu-ru ya e-play-i-ghi his or her role.
person bear-IND him PFX-play-V-NEG his or her role
'His parent (lit. the person that bore him) did not play his or her role.'
(59) O reduce-u-ru the price.
s/he reduce-V-PAST the price
'He reduced the price.'
(60) Some batteries a-run-u-go down.
some batteries PFX-run-V-PERF down
'Some batteries have run down.'
(61) The government then na-a-sponsor ndi inspectors.
The government then (always) sponsored inspectors.

The examples (58) through (61) indicate that morphological integration of English verbs can be predicted to occur whenever the inflectional element is in Igbo. Even when both the subject NP and VP positions are filled with English material, as in (60) and (61), the clause as a whole is framed in Igbo.

It is observed that insertion is the dominant pattern in Igbo-English CS. Evidence for this comes from the pervasiveness of bilingual simple verbs. The corpus for the study contains a total of 149 bilingual verbs, out of which 134 are simple verbs and 15 are complex verbs. This suggests that insertion is the primary strategy for the derivation of bilingual verbs in this language pair. Further evidence comes from the directionality of switching.[27] notes concerning Igbo-English CS that it is usually Igbo language based speech events that are flooded with English words and expressions and not the other way round." His description of the directionality of switching in this language pair corresponds to the insertional pattern, which has been noted to be unidirectional with an obvious matrix language, while alternation and congruent lexicalization are bidirectional [12]. Igbo-English CS represents unidirectional switching and can best be described as Igbo with elements of English inserted. This description corresponds to the sociolinguistic basis for the definition of the matrix language, according to which bilinguals who engage in codeswitching perceive the matrix language as "the language we are speaking" [13]. Igbo-English bilinguals who use the mixed code perceive it as discourse in Igbo, the matrix language in spite of the pervasiveness of bilingual verbs and other inserted English elements.

CONCLUSION

The study provided a description of bilingual simple verbs in Igbo-English codeswitching and the process by which they are derived. A structurally-oriented analysis was provided in the study, according to which the inflection on the main verb not only determines the matrix language of the clause but also distinguishes the insertional and alternational patterns. A switch into English before INFL represents alternation and results in monolingual (English) verbs and a switch after Igbo INFL signals insertional codeswitching and results in bilingual simple verbs. Using morphological integration and lexical selection as major diagnostic criteria for the insertional pattern of codeswitching, the study illustrated that bilingual simple verbs occur whenever English lone verbs and verbal segments- are inserted into a morphosyntactic structure provided by Igbo. Particularly striking as instances of insertion are English verbs and verbal segments in structures attested only in Igbo, in which the matrix language is undoubtedly Igbo. Alternational codeswitching involving English verbal segments is rare in the language pair, and does not yield bilingual verbs. The study concludes that the two codeswitching patterns realised intrasententially in the language pair are insertion and alternation. Bilingual simple verbs constitute the overwhelming majority of verbs in Igbo-English bilingual speech, an indication that insertion is the dominant pattern of switching.
Abbreviations Used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>inattested form</td>
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<tr>
<td>BNF</td>
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REFERENCES


