

WORKING PAPERS

JOURNAL OF ENGLISH STUDIES

VOLUME 11, NO. 2, APRIL, 2020

ISSN: 1118-16013
eISSN: 2736-0334

Working Papers: Journal of English Studies

© Department of English Studies, 2020

ISSN: 1118-16013

eISSN: 2736-0334

Vol. 11, No. 2, April, 2020

Published by

Tismek Global Publishers®

Port Harcourt, Rivers State.



www.tismek.com | mails@tismek.com | +234-703-455-9895

Formatted, printed and bound in Nigeria by Tismek Global Publishers®.

Code choices as catalysts in interpersonal relations in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's novels

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Abstract

Speakers in conversations either stick to one code, or alternate from one to another depending on a number of factors. This practice is generally known as code switching or code mixing. In multilingual societies like Nigeria, participants in speech events have always had to choose from the various codes available to them when communicating with one another depending on factors like the social relationship between the participants (addressee based code switching), the domain of speech (situational code switching), as well as the social act (the ideology) the speaker intends to achieve (ideological or metaphorical code switching). Ideologies of social distancing and social closeness stare us when we read the novels of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. In this paper, it is argued that although most theories of code switching and code mixing link it to multilingualism. However, this paper introduces the pragmatic window. Hence, this research applies the principle of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine the ideological frameworks projected through code switching and mixing in Adichie's novels. It was observed that characters switch codes to express a certain ideology such as cultural or emotional closeness and distance.

Keywords: CDA, Code switching, ideology, interpersonal relation.

1.1 Introduction

This essay examines code switching as a pragmatic act deployed by Chimamanda Adichie in her novels to construct an ideology of social relations and cultural identity. Adichie writes on issues that bother on domestic violence, love, hatred, and racism. She weaves her story around her experiences with life in the United States of America and Nigeria as she alternates her living in these two countries. The Igbo language filters into her novels, a reflection not only of her Igbo cultural identity, but a discourse strategy to x-ray interpersonal relations. By this, certain ideologies like social distancing and closeness are enacted through code alternation between Igbo and English languages.

Code choice has been grouped under the terminology of code switching and code mixing. Code switching “refers to a situation in which a speaker uses a mixture of distinct language varieties as discourse proceeds” (Adrain Akmajian *et al* 307). It could be a switch from a formal to an informal variety of a language; a standard to a nonstandard variety; or from one language to another. To mix code on the other hand is to use more than one code or one variety of a code in a single discourse. Miriam Meyerhoff sees code switching as “the alternation between varieties or codes across sentences or clause boundaries” adding that it is “often used as a cover term including code mixing as well” (116). For clarity, code mixing “generally refers to alternations between varieties, or codes, *within* a clause or phrase” (our emphasis) (Meyerhoff 120).

Code switching is a phenomenon through which language users express a range of meanings. “People who speak more than one language are generally very sensitive to the differences in the vitality of the languages they use and ... [they] are equally aware that in some contexts one variety will serve their needs better than another” (Meyerhoff 115). So, in the pursuit of the things of life, choice of code can determine whether we achieve our aims or not. The choice of code alerts the participants in the interaction of the context and social dimension within which the conversation is taking place. Ahmad Abdel Tawwab Sharaf Eldin says “speakers may switch from one code to another either to show solidarity with a social group, to distinguish oneself, to participate in social encounters, to discuss a certain topic, to express feelings and affections, or to impress and persuade the audience” (80). Code switching to impress or persuade the audience can be referred to as metaphorical code switching in which the code switcher does so with the intention of achieving other aims rather than mere communication for exchange of information.

Hence, code switching is therefore a form of social practice, not necessarily a display of multilingualism. This is the orientation of CDA as it analyses the social practice being performed in language use. CDA studies language use as a form of social practice, that in which speakers are performing social acts. Since CDA is suitable in text interpretation, this paper carries out a critical discourse analysis of Adichie’s *Half of a Yellow Sun* (henceforth *HYS*) and *Purple Hibiscus* (henceforth *PH*) to determine whether code switching can perform discourse functions of social distancing and closeness.

1.2 Research Problem

Many of the studies on Adichie's works examine cultural assertion from literary perspectives, with few linguistic studies examining discursive strategies. There is yet a work that combines a sociolinguistic phenomenon such as code switching from a critical discursive cum pragmatic perspective. Hence, this paper investigates the situations in which the characters in Adichie's *HYS* and *PH* code-switch and their thematic, discursive, and pragmatic significance. More so, the study examines the benefits and drawbacks of code-switching done by the characters in Adichie's *HYS* and *PH*.

1.3 Research Methodology

This research is qualitative which is "concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behaviour ... a function of researcher's insights and impressions" (C. R. Kothari 5). This study is mainly based on the researchers' interpretation of the novels studied. As F. Erickson has it, it is better to refer to a qualitative research as an "interpretive enterprise" (119).

Our source of data includes the novels selected for analysis while materials such as textbooks, theses, articles were secondarily sourced from journals and the Internet. Five stages were involved in the course of this study. First, we did a thorough reading of the novels and then identified the instances of code switching and code mixing. Our method of data sampling was constrained by space hence we opted for the random convenience sampling. This was followed by a description of the texts in which we analyse the available contexts of instances of code switching; an interpretation of the speech acts that such discourse strategies are used to achieve (such as social closeness and social distancing); and then an explanation of the ideological base of the discourse.

1.4. Theoretical Framework

This paper hangs on the principles of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). According to Deborah Schiffrin, Deborah Tannen, and Heidi E. Hamilton, "discourse has generally been defined as anything beyond the sentence. The study of discourse is the study of language use" (1). That is, a discourse study looks at how language is used and to what end which usually tilts towards ideology and power. CDA is an approach to the study of discourse which cuts across many disciplines. To Marianne Jorgensen and Louise J. Phillips, "CDA provides theories and methods for the empirical study of the relations between discourse and social and cultural developments in different social domains" (60).

Norman Fairclough divided the stages of doing a critical discourse analysis into three, thus: (a) analysis of text, (b) analysis of processes of text production, consumption and distribution, and (c) socio-cultural analysis of the discursive event (23). Practitioners of CDA developed and outlined the principles of CDA summarised below:

- 1) Language is a social tool that allows the expression and representation of the world.

2) Discourse or the language is not only a significant social practice but also a considerable contribution to represent abuse of power, partiality, struggle, oppression and domination and other social practices ...

4) The linguistic characteristics and features have a purposeful representation regardless of the fact whether the choices are made consciously or unconsciously (Al Nidaa Hussain Fahmi Khazraji 126).

Item four (4) above defines our purpose in this paper in that choice of language code in Adichie's novels is believed to have a purpose, that of creating social distancing or social closeness among the characters.

Despite its robust aim, CDA has received some criticisms, especially in terms of its approach to language study. Ruth Breeze, for instance claims the main accusation against CDA is that "of operating somewhat randomly, moved by personal whim rather than well-grounded scholarly principle" (498). As Slembrouck points out "CDA continues to be unclear about its exact preferences for a particular social theory" (qtd. in Breeze 501). Instead of narrowing its intellectual base, "trends over the years seem to have broadened [it]" (Breeze 501). But CDA cannot afford to be limited in approach since, according to Fairclough, it has "become a very diverse area of study, with a variety of approaches in each of a number of disciplines" (*Social Change* 12).

The present study adopts Fairclough's social theory of discourse. Fairclough uses discourse "to refer to spoken or written language use" in which case he regards "language use as a form of social practice, rather than a purely individual activity or a reflex of situational variables" which "implies that discourse is a mode of action, one form in which people may act upon the world and especially upon each other, as well as a mode of representation" (Fairclough, *Social Change* 62-3). To Fairclough, discourse is a type of social act in which actors influence society, and are in turn influenced by society.

This essay examines code switching as a discourse factor deployed by Adichie to aggregate character role playing and societal dimensions, such that both the characters and the societies as portrayed in the novel have a symbiotic relationship which amplifies the literary values of the texts. To Fairclough, "social conditions determine properties of discourse" (16) meaning that language is a social practice determined by social structures.

This paper examines the social acts of distancing and closeness being enacted by characters in Adichie's novels through code switching and code mixing. While speakers in a multilingual society may switch codes, CDA demystifies it by exposing or unearthing the underlying ideology for such switches in that there is always power behind discourse.

1.5 Review of Related Literature

Adichie's fiction has received a lot of scholarly attention, specifically critics from the linguistic and literary disciplines.. However, it is imperative to note that her works have received little or no scholarly attention from a blend of pragmatic and sociolinguistic

approach. This approach pontificates that code switching and code mixing can become a tool in the hand of a fictional writer (like Adichie) to project discursive and pragmatic acts of social distancing and closeness in interpersonal relations. This is seen as a constructed ideology of cultural identification.

Niyi Osunbade does a pragmatic investigation of implicatures of domestic discourse in Adichie's novels towards identifying the implicatural dimensions that emerge in the discourse in the novels and showing how they facilitate access to her thematic concerns. The study is "an investigation of the pragmatic processes by which implicit meanings of conversations conveyed are interpreted in the domestic contexts of language use in Adichie's novels, *PH* and *HYS*, within the ambit of Gricean theory of implicature" (92). The paper illustrates that the characters in *PH* and *HYS* flout the maxims to project implicit meanings like tribalism, subjugation, self-centredness, resistance and domestic violence. Osunbade's study differs from ours in many ways which include data, scope and content purview.

Efosa Julius Legemah and Steve Bode Ekundayo examine the use of language in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, and how it portrays contextual, cognitive, and social identities. They are driven by the fact that the 21st century writers are compelled to capture various unique identities, quest for freedom, and self-assertion (Legemah and Ekundayo 46). In one of their analyses, they point out that Jaja and Kambili are made to only say what pleases Papa, and therefore create a false identity in the open while their real identities are hidden (55). They conclude that the contextual use of language in the novel projects the thematic preoccupation of the author. It is important to note here that language has been (and still remains) the surest means of identity and this is what Legemah and Ekundayo reiterate in *Purple Hibiscus*. To borrow a leaf from the above, this paper aligns with Legemah and Ekundayo's, however we divert to look at not just one language, but a blend of two: the Igbo language and English; with emphasis on its significance in helping to construct cultural affirmation.

Chuka Fred Ononye believes Adichie's knowledge of the English and Igbo language structures is instrumental in her use of colloquialisms, transliteration, and code mixing in *Purple Hibiscus*. He

takes a text-linguistic approach, relying on insights from David Jowitt's view on Popular Nigerian English (PNE), Michael Halliday's systemic functional grammar, and aspects of stylistics discourse, in examining some of the structural features of NEFs in Chimamanda Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* (*PH*), with a view to establishing how the Igbo variety of the PNE has motivated the use of NEFs in the novel. (81)

Ononye is of the view that Adichie nativises the English language to sooth the Igbo speaker needs, leading to the creation of an Igbo variety of Popular Nigerian English (PNE). We vary from Ononye in two respects. First, our paper uses two of Adichie's novels as data source. Second, it focuses on code choices as pragmatic features reflecting cultural identity and social distance as well as social closeness.

Nsa Asuquo Okon & Bassey Effiom set out to analyse "the twin aspects of Code-Switching and Code-Mixing, and Translation devices in Chimamanda Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* to evaluate their effectiveness in localizing the text" (363). Their work uses the framework by Pierre Bourdieu (1977a) to examine code switching and code mixing in *HYS* as devices performing pragmalinguistic functions of foregrounding, identity, focus, distance and neutralisation. On identity, our paper is similar with them. However, Okon and Effiom observe that in *HYS*, "instances of distance are not common. The reason may be that many of the major characters are Ibos, and those who are not, understand the language as well" (369). We vary from them here as our paper avers that a lot of the cases of code switching and code mixing in the novel are pragmatic tools of the characters to enact not only cultural identity, but social distance and social closeness. Besides, our scope also includes *PH*, another of Adichie's novels.

Faith O. Ibhawaegbele and Justina N. Edokpayi study the use of code switching in Nigerian novels to reflect the interplay of the Nigerian language and culture in an English speaking world (12). According to them, "code-switching and code-mixing are some of the stylistic strategies devised to tackle the problems of language in Nigerian prose fiction, thereby catering adequately for the varying Nigerian local situations, culture and environment" (18). This study uses *A Man of the People* by Chinua Achebe, *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and *Everything Good Will Come* by Sefi Atta as illustrative texts concluding that "the use of code-switching and code-mixing are demonstrations of some of the attempts by Nigerian novelists to reflect the realities of the use of English in Nigeria" (18). Faith O., Ibhawaegbele and Justina N. Edokpayi's study appears closer to this study in content and focus, though this study is more specific in scope.

Daria Tunca considers mind-style as a critical factor in the narrator's presentation of issues of freedom and oppression in *Purple Hibiscus*. She questions the critical consensus regarding the narrative voice of the text. She reconsiders the description of Kambili's account as detached and unemotional (2). Tunca is of the view that a re-examination of the narrator's discourse enhances a deeper understanding of how the issues of freedom and oppression are woven into the novel (2). Her analysis of *Purple Hibiscus* relies on Halliday's ideational perception of language, which makes her uphold that "Kambili's description of her experiences follows her psychological evolution" (4). In one of her analyses, Tunca observes that Kambili's struggle to articulate her feelings and opinions to those around her marks the discrepancy between the way she relates with her family and the way she narrates events to the readers (4). Tunca concludes that Kambili's psychological conflict is echoed in Adichie's prose as a result of the parallels drawn between the domestic world of *Purple Hibiscus* and the condition of Nigeria at large (15).

Of all available literature, the works of Ibhawaegbele and Justina and Okon and Effiom appear closer to this study. In as much as we acknowledge the use of code switching in these novels, our paper studies same from a critical perspective rather preferring to see such usages

as forms of social practice towards the enactment of the ideology of social distancing and social closeness.

2.0 Data Analysis

2.1 Synopsis of the Novels

a. *Half of a Yellow Sun (HYS)*

The novel takes place in Nigeria before and during the Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970). *HYS* revolves around Odenigbo, a university professor; Mama, his mother; Ugwu, his house boy; Olanna, Odenigbo's educated lover; Kainene, Olanna's twin sister; Richard, Kainene's lover; Amala, a village girl Mama wants Odenigbo to marry; and Baby, a product of Odenigbo's affair with Amala. The novel shows the interplay of ambitions and personal interests and portrays the efforts of the characters in resisting as well as submitting to impositions as the civil war begins and ends.

b. *Purple Hibiscus (PH)*

PH is a story on the political instability and economic challenges of the postcolonial Nigeria told from the perspective of family life. The story comes from the character of a fifteen-year-old Kambili Achike, a member of a wealthy family dominated by her devout and fanatic Catholic father, Eugene Achike. Eugene subjects his father (Papa Nnukwu) and immediate family to psychological cruelty. The novel presents characters like Auntie Ifeoma, Eugene's sister; Beatrice, Eugene's wife; Jaja, his son; and Pa Nnukwu as building and destroying personal relationships, a direct effect of the social situation of political, economic and group tension.

2.2 The Enactment of Social Closeness in Adichie's *HYS* and *PH*

From the study of Adichie's *HYS* and *PH*, several instances of code switching are observed. A critical analysis of the social practice projected through this linguistic feature of code switching reveals the ideology of intimacy pract. Here is the pract of peace talking or a call for peaceful relation through switching from English to a mother tongue. The study reveals that participants in discourse who switch codes or mix codes from English to a mother tongue do so to come closer to or bring the other participant(s) closer. This is called intimacy pract. In a multilingual society like Nigeria, members have at least two languages from which one is the mother tongue, likely the first language of the discourse participants. Instances from Adichie's *HYS* and *PH* prove to us that the practice of switching codes, especially from a second language (English in this case) to a mother tongue or a first language is an enactment of intimacy between or among the participants as illustrated in the following texts.

TEXT 1:

"*Nna anyi*, are you not tired of predicting your own death?" Auntie Ifeoma said, starting the engine. "Let us hear something new!" She called him *Nna anyi*, our father. I wondered if Papa used to call him that and what Papa would call him now if they spoke to each other. (*PH* 90)

Here, Auntie Ifeoma, the only one closer to Papa Nnukwu addresses him in the Igbo language, an unlikely situation if it were a discourse between Papa Nnukwu and Eugene, his only son whom in this discourse, Papa Nnukwu accuses of neglect. The phrase, *nná anyi* is a kind word which makes the addressee feel wanted and welcome. Thus, when Eugene tells his wife and children his efforts towards his father's (Pa Nnukwu's) burial, no one answers him until he falls back to this Igbo word to call his immediate family's attention, pity and cooperation:

TEXT 2:

After prayers, as Mama dished out the food, Papa said, "These pagan funerals are expensive. ... I wondered why Papa was saying this, what had prompted him. The rest of us remained silent while Mama finished dishing out the food. "I sent Ifeoma money for the funeral. I gave her all she needed," Papa said. After a pause, he added, "For *nná anyi's* funeral." "Thanks be to God," Mama said, and Jaja and I repeated her. (PH 204)

Eugene refuses to attend his father's funeral because it is pagan oriented yet he sends money for the funeral. While he fumes over the excessive demand from the funeral rites, his family remains silent, refusing to offer him any consolation; a protest against his refusal to allow them to attend and participate in the burial - his father's burial, their grandfather's burial. But when he resorts to address Pa Nnukwu as *nná anyi*, instead of 'our father,' he ultimately bribes his family making them feel he loves his now late pagan father. By this, he indirectly invites them to the discourse, to see things through his own eyes, to be close to him than usual, forcing out a non-existing cordial relationship with his family.

In the same light, the supposed quarrel between Olanna and Odenigbo's mother, in *HYS*, is played down through code mixing by whoever wants to gain favour or acceptance from the other. At the hospital where Olanna and Odenigbo come to visit Amala at Baby's birth, Olanna tries to be herself, to be dramatic, to assume all is well:

TEXT 3:

"Mama, *kedu?*" Olanna asked. She wanted to seem in control to determine how things would proceed" (*HYS* 286).
 Olanna's question in Igbo is an invitation for a previously non existing intimacy between her and Mama. Unfortunately, Mama turns down this invitation by responding in another tongue, "I am well," Mama said." A further proof that Olanna's Igbo for Mama is a sort of lobby is the fact that she rather addresses Amala, in the same environment, an illiterate person as Mama, in English: "How are you?" Odenigbo and Olanna asked, almost at the same time" (*HYS* 286). Thus, the cases in **TEXT 2** and **TEXT 3** above are similar. We find the characters switching codes as a pragmatic act of lobbying their addressees. In the case of Eugene, there is partial success because his addressees reluctantly responded giving him the impression that they buy his opinion on demonising the Igbo tradition of burial rite. Meanwhile, from the available context in the text, Mama, Jaja and the narrator do not buy

into Eugene's opinion however they responded. In the case of Olanna, there is no success because Mama refuses to respond to her greetings in Igbo, and this by implication means she does not approve of Olanna's relationship with Odenigbo. The ideology constructed here, at the macro level of author to audience discourse is that of cultural validity. That is to say, no matter how well read or exposed one may be, without one's cultural validation, the true essence of existence and happiness remains unfulfilled.

Olanna and Mama have been in a cold war over Mama's position that Olanna is not fit to marry her son, Odenigbo because Olanna lacks the quality of a true Igbo wife. For this, Olanna wishes Mama death: "What is it? she asked and felt a sharp horror at the hope that sneaked into her mind: that his mother had died" (HYS 265).

When the table turns and Mama has to be the one in need of some favour from Olanna when she brings Baby to Olanna for babysitting, she resorts to Igbo, a language she hitherto would not want to converse in with Olanna:

TEXT 4:

Mama brought the baby, wrapped in a brown shawl that had the unpleasant smell of *ogiri*. She sat in the living room and cooed to the baby until Olanna came out. Mama got up and handed the baby over.

'*Ngwanu*. I will visit again soon,' she said. She seemed in an uncomfortable hurry, as if the whole business was one that she was quick to finish. (HYS 291)

Amala has rejected Baby and Mama will not babysit her neither can she take her to Amala's relations for babysitting. Mama has to be calm both in words and actions to Olanna so she (Olanna) can carry this burden she did not originally create. Meanwhile, Olanna has to take it up not for anyone, but herself (HYS 292), possibly to secure Mama's approval of her stay in the house.

In the same light, the ability to communicate in a similar mother tongue with one with whom you share some similar linguistic background makes you welcome in a strange land. It draws you closer to the other:

TEXT 5:

"The problem with Igbo people is that they want to control everything in this country. If you are arrested for any crime, as long as you can say *keda* they will let you go" (HYS 261). In **Text 5**, Olanna meets a very handsome Hausa man on a flight from Kano to Lagos en route Nsukka. The man mistakes her for a Fulani because of her facial built. On this assumption, he starts talking ill of the Igbo people. Olanna only smiles at him not giving any impression that she is Igbo. But when this man speaks the Igbo language wrongly, she corrects, "we say *kedu*, not *keda*" (HYS 261). The man is shocked to learn that Olanna is Igbo. He had been free with her on this flight, and offered her a newspaper, drawing her attention to the page that has the story of the removal of an Igbo as the Vice Chancellor of the University of Lagos: "they have finally removed that Igbo vice chancellor from the

University of Lagos" (*HYS* 260). The moment he realises Olanna is Igbo, he withdraws from her and "mumbled something that sounded like *sorry* before he turned away and began to look through his briefcase" (261).

The implication of what plays here is that anyone who can say *kedu* before an Igbo man in authority in Lagos is favoured. This underscores the value of code switching as a way of showing one's identity to give one a good face before the other. Olanna's Hausa flight mate had taken her for a Fulani, a closer person to the Hausa than Igbo. Thus, speaking one's mother tongue with someone whom one shares the same mother tongue in a strange land is a way of reminding the person that you are from the same background, a sort of bribery. It creates a feeling of nostalgia and strengthens communal bond.

2.3 The Enactment of Social Distancing in Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *Purple Hibiscus*

Generally, bilingual persons have a language they are prone to communicate in at every point in time irrespective of their knowledge of many languages. This tendency can somehow be related to the nature of the audience and the speaker's opinion or attitude towards both the discourse and the participants. Hence, to a great extent, a careful reading of Adichie reveals that the participants in most of the discourse have a dominant language which they use when in the best frame of mind. A shift in code choice means a shift in attitude.

When Olanna confronts her father over an accusation of cheating on her mother in *HYS*, she decides to communicate in English to avoid the temptation of being unconsciously involved in the warmth of normal human emotion, friendliness or compassion. This helps Olanna pontificate her anger, and dissociate herself from what her father has done.

TEXT 6:

'Dad,' she said again. She would speak mostly in English. It was easy to be formal and cold in English. 'I wish you had some respect for my mother.' That was not what she had intended to say. My mother, instead of Mum, made it seem as if she had decided to exclude him, as if he had become a stranger who could not possibly be addressed on the same terms, could not be my father. (*HYS* 250)

Her resort to English is a practice she takes to create social distance between her and her father because in this discourse, her father has offended her mother and she is out to confront him.

Similarly, Eugene in *PH* speaks mainly English when he is civil and Igbo when emotional.

TEXT 7:

Papa was staring pointedly at Jaja. "Jaja, have you not shared a drink with us, *gbo*? Have you no words in your mouth?" he asked, entirely in Igbo. A bad sign. He hardly spoke Igbo, and although Jaja and I spoke it with Mama at home, he did not like us to speak it in public. We had to sound civilized in public, he told us; we had to speak English. (*PH* 21)

Sounding civilized means to sound unemotional, and impersonal. In this text, Eugene and his family are accessing the quality of a new product (Cashew Juice) from his company. All but Jaja make complimentary comments on the new product. For Eugene, switching from English to Igbo means becoming emotional, and uncivil to others. So, his switch from his usual civil code, English, is a sign to his children that he is angry with Jaja who refuses to make comments on the quality of the new product.

In most contexts, refusal to speak Igbo or any other mother tongue to a supposed closer person with whom one shares a mother tongue is an act of distancing oneself from that person. Olanna always prefers to speak to Ugwu in Igbo except when she is not happy, when she needs to show her disapproval of his opinion.

TEXT 8:

What are you talking about, for heaven's sake? Olanna asked in English. Because she hardly ever spoke English to him, it sounded cold, distancing. Mama used bad medicine on my master, mah. ... I saw her putting something in his food. Then I saw her rubbing something on Amala's body, and I know it is the medicine that she used to tempt my master.' Rubbish, Olanna said. It sounded like a hiss, *rubbish*, and Ugwu's stomach tightened. (HYS 278)

In this text, master has just had sexual intercourse with Amala, a village girl brought to him for marriage by his mother. Ugwu tries to defend his master by claiming it was done under the influence of some charm. Olanna disapproves of this. To distance herself clearly from Ugwu in this matter, she resorts to English. In the same way, Master, asking for his meal, tells Ugwu:

TEXT 9:

Serve my food *osiso!*

'Yes, sah, Ugwu said. Will madam come again soon, sah?'

'Serve my food! Master repeated. (279).

Here, Olanna has just left home against Ugwu's plan that his *jollof* rice was going to be a reconciliation meal (278). He inquires from Master if Madam will come again soon. But Odenigbo is not in the mood to discuss the issue of his quarrel with Olanna. So, he does not only give a strange response, but also speaks entirely in English, avoiding a mix of Igbo into his privacy. Odenigbo is likely angry and would not discuss the misunderstanding between him and his girlfriend with Ugwu. What the author does here is to parallel Odenigbo's switch to Igbo with the rise of his temperament. That is to say, the angrier Odenigbo gets, the less Igbo you find in his utterances.

3.0 Conclusion

Having seen its potency in establishing mutuality and stabilising cordiality, Adichie makes her characters in *PH* and *HYS* switch codes as a ploy to lobby other characters to achieve what they want. In this essay, we have been able to prove that the bilingual characters in *PH* and *HYS* switch codes for pragmatic reasons. The paper shows that code switching as deployed by the author is strategic and intentional because the characters switch codes for interpersonal and ideological effects. It is on this note that this paper, among other things, sees code switching as an instrument of projecting social distancing and closeness, lobbying cultural identification and assertion. This, by extension, represents the Nigeria society where the mother tongue of discourse participants, is often used when one party wants to be socially closer to the other while English is used to portray social distancing in most instances.

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