
A Socio-Linguistic Study of Code switching and code mixing among Mambila-Hausa Bilinguals

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Abstract

This study focuses on “sociolinguistic analysis of code-switching and code-mixing: a case study of Mambila/Hausa bilinguals. The work seeks to investigate code switching as a functionally motivated act and the various functions that trigger code-switching, especially among Mambila/Hausa bilinguals. The work provides a detailed explanation of the nature of code-switching, the purpose of such switches, their typologies, and their manifestations by interlocutors, either at the word or sentential levels. It also examines types of switches, such as inter-sentential switches, intra-sentential switches, tag switches, etc., which occur by tagging certain phrases used in utterances of another language and congruent lexicalization, among others. The other aspects deal with inclusion, exclusion, identification of speakers' home place, easy expression, and analysis of the negative pointer to language endangerment as they code switch in worship centres, markets, schools, and during political rallies, as the case may be. This is done either to conceal information and exclude speakers of other dialects, etc. Since the Mambila people live in different villages and speak different dialects, this study is unique. This work focuses only on the Gembu dialect of the Mambila language, which is more central and where most of the dialects reside. The method of data collection is through oral interviews and recording on the spot as a primary source. The secondary sources include relevant literature, internet sources, journals, articles, and other publications. This work is anchored on Adendorff's (1996) theory, which views the phenomenon of code switching and code mixing as a "functionally motivated behavior." It is assumed that people can code-switch to conceal information for the sake of privacy or secrecy, which serves as an isolation function.

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Introduction

This paper focuses on “A Sociolinguistics Analysis of Code-Switching and Code-Mixing: A Case Study of Mambila/Hausa Bilinguals.” “Mambila' denotes the 'Land', one of the clusters of the 'People' and the 'Languages' found on the Mambila Plateau, in the Sardauna Local Government Area of Taraba State, Nigeria. The Mambila language is demarcated sharply by clusters of dialects spread in villages or settlements. The villages are politically delineated into wards and chiefdoms. Each village has its own dialect, which is mutually intelligible depending on its east or west location and its speakers' linguistic area. The work is narrowed down to only one dialect of Mambila, in which the Gembu dialect is preferred.

It is a known fact that the Mambila people have had long historical links or contacts with the Hausa people via trade or commercial activities since the pre-colonial era, which has progressed until post-independence. The early contacts came as a result of the slave trade, because at that time there were considerable movements of all nationals along either the Trans-Saharan trade route to North Africa or the Trans-Atlantic trade route to Europe (Paden, 1986).

By nature, the 'Hausa' were traders, establishing various business links with the people they encountered during their adventures through the buying and selling of goods and services such as cows, goats, sheep, hides, skins, and so on (for more details, see Adamu 1978). They also engaged in other occupations and crafts, such as blacksmithing, tanning, building, sculpture, rope-making, and mat weaving, among others, which appeared to be lucrative ventures with huge patronage on the Mambila Plateau. The 'Hausas' noticed that Mambila people also had similar crafts, which further influenced them to settle in order to explore better ties in promoting petty trading such as the sale of needles and thread, local cosmetics, knives, spears, hoes, cutlasses, potash, etc. Generally, the Hausa people are called by different names relating to their occupation or art, for example, 'Palke' (cow merchant), 'Dankoli' (petty-cosmetic trader), and 'Baduku' (tanner).

It is also clear that Hausa, which is one of Nigeria's lingua francas, has had a significant impact on Mambila, since virtually every village on the Mambila Plateau speaks Hausa. Because of administrative convenience, during colonialism, the traditional institutions that were administered centrally from Gembu adopted the creation of titles for village or ward heads in Hausa language. This which gave birth to what we have today as "Sarkin Hausawa," "Sarkin Samari," "Sarkin No, Sarkin Samari", Sarkin Noma, Yaƙi, "Mai Unguwa," "Kachalla", etc. Today, almost all villages on the Mambila Plateau have 'Sarkin Hausawa'. 'Sarkin Hausawa' represents the leader of the Hausa community residing in each of the villages and is recognized as a traditional leader in the respective areas by the approval of the Chief of Mambila, who co-opts them into the Sardauna Traditional Council to which they pay their allegiance.

It is a well-known fact that most Mambila native speakers use different dialects to communicate in their day-to-day conversational situations, during which they code-switch and code-mix with Hausa language to either include or exclude other speakers or other dialects. In this paper, the authors examine code-switching and code-mixing among Mambila/Hausa bilinguals in schools, markets, during political rallies, and worship centres, with a specific focus on the Gembu dialects. It also examines the various functions of code-switching and code-mixing, providing an analysis of their typologies with examples drawn from the Mambila-Gembu dialect. The Mambila language has over 20 dialects, but we decided to focus on Gembu. It shall look at code switching at either inter-sentential or intra-sentential levels, insertion of words, manifestation by interlocutors at either word or sentential levels, tag switches, alternations, and congruent lexicalization, among others, which occur in schools, market places, worship centres, and during festivities. This is done to reveal that the dialects of Mambila Gembu code-switch to either include or exclude speakers, and as a style or have deficiency in lexical items to fill the gaps in their conversation in Hausa language.

Who are the Mambila people?

The Mambila people are Mambila native speakers who live on the Mambila Plateau of Sarduana Local Government Area of Taraba State. They are the most populous tribe on the Plateau. They are categorised into two; those within the Nigerian territory and those in the Cameroun Republic who speak different dialects but speak the same language. They are linked to each other by a common identity, a unique culture, and a unique literature. According to Zeintlyn and Connell (2003), these people have lived on the Mambila plateau for well over four thousand years.

The Nigerian Mambila group is called '*Norr*' and occupies the whole of the Mambila Plateau with many villages and settlements. Those of the Gembu dialect, particularly, are called '*Bommi*' and speak more of a generally simple dialect that is mutually intelligible with the other dialects. Connell (2003) asserts that the Mambila Plateau is covered by rivers, waterfalls, a fascinating landscape, valleys, undulating mountains, lush green grasses, legendary caves, and arable land for farming and grazing. The Mambila Plateau is bounded to the east by Gashaka and Kurmi Local Government Areas and to the west by the Cameroun Republic.

The Mambila people have their major occupation as farming, which they engage in for their daily subsistence. Farm produce grown on the Mambila Plateau includes maize, guinea corn, kola nuts, coffee, tea, pineapple, avocado, banana, tomatoes, guava, apples, pepper, Irish potatoes, vegetables, and a host of others.

Connell (2003) opines that the Mambila people have beautiful crafts usually done by women, such as the weaving of baskets, usually mats, handbags, fishing bags, and shields used during warfare. Their male counterparts engage in blacksmithing (where implements like hoes, knives, cutlasses, and swords are manufactured), building, fishing, hunting, and a host of other activities.

It is pertinent to note that the Mambila people have a yearly cultural festival

where masquerades are paraded and are not to be seen by women whatsoever. These masquerades are called Sua, Suga, and Shua, depending on the dialect you use. After every bumper harvest, cultural dances such as Tirim, Bol, Kati, Litter, etc. come up, as does wrestling.

Foundational theories of code-switching and code-mixing

The theoretical framework for this paper stems from three different approaches. The phenomenon of code-switching and code-mixing is viewed from a functionally motivated behavior theory propounded by Adendorff (1996) and the Communication Accommodation Theory by Howard Giles (2015). Functionally motivational theory has been applied by many scholars to project code-switching as a sociolinguistic phenomenon that occurs to serve certain functions of either including or excluding speakers of other languages. For solidarity, identification with a particular group is further argued to occur at either the level of inter-sentential, intra-sentential (tag switches), or congruent lexicalization.

The Communication Accommodation Theory tends to view code-switching as serving certain functions, such as 'convergence' or 'divergence', depending on the speakers' psychological disposition. Linguists have argued that when a speaker implores the use of code-switch as an initiator of the switch in L_1 , it accommodates more lexical items in L_2 as switch drivers, which are influenced from outside. It also means that the speaker accommodates more of the outside than the inside use of the items. On the other hand, the divergence perspective, i.e., when the accommodation is allowing the use of L_1 as the dominant language of choice in the code switch,. This position has been argued by linguists as having greater influence in social settings and group identity, as mentioned by Howard Gilles (2015). This idea was further revisited by Hoffman (1991) and Romaine (2000), who also hinged on the variations among bilinguals.

Spencer and Franklin (2009), in Thomas (1995) and in Hudu (2022), opines that “people do not always or even usually say what they mean.” Therefore, in some utterances, the meaning of what they want to say is hidden, especially while code-switching in a conversational situation. Sometimes this is done intentionally or unconsciously, depending on the mood of the speakers. Therefore, code-switching serves various functions in so many ways, and depending on the situation and the topic at hand,

Romaine (2000), Gumpertz (1991), and Hoffman (1991) suggest that, in code-switching, the initiator freely switches codes comfortably, unlike the listener, who changes from the divergence point of view. Howard (2015) posits that the theory of communication and accommodation depicts the functionality of the sociolinguistic phenomenon of code-switching and code-mixing, which occur among peer groups, schoolchildren among their mates, and other groups for identification and utilization of the specific message at hand. Kisiol (2000) asserts that code-switching and code-mixing “serve various pragmatic functions, such as mitigating and aggravating messages.”

Also playing a distancing strategy, Davies (1990) asserts that “speakers can code-switch or code-mix when there is communication incompetence. It could be a sign of deficiency or ignorance of one language in contact. Therefore, it is argued further that code-switching seems to compensate for conceptual or linguistic deficiency in a bilingual speaker's linguistic repertoire.” Code-switching may occur when the speakers do not have the appropriate expression or tag to provide for continuity in the straight utterance from lexical or expression in the other language for lack of communication competence (Gysel 1992).

Although only three theories are put to use in this paper, there are several other theories to explicate code-switching as a functionally motivated behavior propounded. This work relies on Adendorff (1996) and Gilles & Matryx (1971) to analyze sociolinguistic phenomena occurring among Mambila-Hausa bilinguals.

There are already studies on code-switching and code-mixing.

This paper used some relevant literature that relates to code-switching and code-mixing, as well as published and unpublished materials on Mambila, which has left a gap of dialectal variation in the course of code-switching or code-mixing among Mambila Hausa bilinguals. Materials cited are published and unpublished works of some scholars, text books, journals, postgraduate and undergraduate projects, theses, dissertations, magazines, and internet sources aligned to code-switching and code-mixing, which also link to language use generally and specifically Mambila.

One of the notable literatures on code-switching and code-mixing is that by Halmari (1997), whose idea of code-switching among the American government and its administration in conversational situations posits that linguistic levels contribute to the constraint of bilingual speech. According to Halmari (ibid.), "bilingual does not only mean that an individual acquires discourse competence in more than one language; it also means that the speaker develops the competence to alternate between the two available languages to convey subtle pragmatic messages while in the company of other bilinguals." But all his work is done in English and Finnish, where the issue of dialectal variations has not been touched. Code switches by interlocutors never saw the light of day in that publication, hence the need to work on this research, which focuses on code switching and code mixing as it affects different dialects of Mambila in the process of the switches with Hausa.

Aboki (2017) conducted research on 'Linguistic Changes of the Hausa Language of the Abakwa Dialect and the Effects on Surrounding Languages in Buruku Local Government Area of Benue State,' where the work included code-switching and variations among the speakers of Hausa, which is key in this study. But the work consideration was on the surrounding 'languages' of Buruku Local Government Area of Benue State, while this research work hinges on only the Mambila language as a single tribe, which has so many dialects engaging in the switches, in an attempt to

look for the various functions it performs by interlocutors in different social contexts. One language with variations.

Ali (2008) wrote on 'Some linguistic features of the Hausa variety spoken in Taraba State', which is also relevant to this research work in that the variations examined were Hausa as spoken among various tribes of Taraba State. Mambila, on the other hand, is a single language with varieties that use any dialect to switch codes at any time. It is pertinent to note that this work differs completely from the one researched by Ali since he only dwelled on various languages that speak Hausa, where some linguistic features were extracted for discussion. Whereas, this very study hinges on code-switch/mix among two dialects of Mambila who have the ability to speak Hausa language. Hence the need for this research work, as it is intended to explicate the various roles it plays as a socio-linguistic phenomenon. Romaine (1974) wrote on sociolinguistic phenomena, which explore the relationship between society and language. Even at that, the writer could not bring up the issue of dialectal variation or the various functions that trigger off code-switching, particularly within one language setting, especially by interlocutors in conversational situations in either churches, mosques, markets, schools, or during festivities, which this work intends to address, seeing a huge gap that is left for research.

Daniel (2010) argues that code switching in the Luxembourg multilingual education system, which occurs in class room situations, also views the behaviour from a socio-psychological, political, and pragmatic point of view, which is well attended to by the researcher, but no mention was made throughout his work on the dialectal variation of the same languages that this research work intends to address.

Code-switching and code-mixing are fluid processes.

The distinction between code-switching and code-mixing is plagued with fluid and fuzzy terminology boundaries. Gardner-Chloros (1991) maintains that switches may occur not only within or between languages, but also between dialects of a given language. This may be consciously or sub-

consciously. Wardaugh (1998) observes that “people may not be aware that they have switched, or be able to report following a conversation, which code they used for a particular conversation or topic.

As much as the switches may be subconscious, sociolinguistic research has shown that they are not randomly switched but rather a conscious and deliberately purposeful activity meant to achieve certain communication functions in a communication situation (Gumpers & Hoffmann 1991). This situation, as described by the authors, rhymes with Mambila/Hausa bilinguals, especially when we examine a dialect of Mambila variations selected for this study. Each Mambila variety language can effectively code switch and code mix with the Hausa language, which is unique in this study, especially in its forms and content.

Functions of code-switching

Code-switching serves a number of useful functions in the course of communication. Prominent among such functions are the following:

1. The speaker may code-switch for group identification, affiliation, or solidarity with a specific linguistic group or listeners. This is the code in which the speaker switches from his code to the listener's code (Milroy 1987; Gal 1978).
2. Code-switching also plays various paralinguistic functions, such as mitigating and aggravating messages (for details, see Kosiol, 2000; Davies, 1990) and distancing strategies.

Speakers can also code-switch or code-mix when there is communicative incompetence. It could be a sign of deficiency or ignorance in one of the languages in contact—that is, to say that one of the roots of code-switching is to compensate for conceptual or linguistic deficiency in the bilingual speaker's linguistic repertoire. Code-switching may occur when the speaker(s) do not have the appropriate expression or tag to provide continuity in the stretch utterance. The available lexicon or expression in the other language or code is or is not

1. Inserted or switched to compensate for the lack of communicative competence (Gysel, 1992; Adendorff, 1996).
2. Speaker's code-switch for the purpose of emphasis. God (1979) observes that a speaker may code-switch to reiterate or point at something in another language for the purpose of emphasising or buttressing something or point.
3. Code-switching also serves the function of using a particular variety for certain reasons. It occurs in a situation where a variety is normally used for specific purposes or situations because of a change or choice of topic. One language could be complementary to the other. In other words, the language in use may be deficient in some quarters.
4. It could also be a conscious display of an elite and prestigious language. One may switch to another language in order to show off or pride himself on being a speaker of the prestigious language variety.
5. People may code-switch according to their mood or psychological disposition. It could be used to conceal certain information for the sake of privacy.

Data and discussion

This paper is anchored on Adendorff's (1996) idea of code-switching. Adendorff (ibid.) asserts that codeswitching is a functionally motivated "behaviors. This paper sets out to investigate if actually code-switching and code-mixing are functionally motivated behaviors, as well as to find out the varied functions that trigger off code-switching, putting into consideration the Mambila dialectal variations among Mambila/Hausa bilinguals where code-switching is fast embraced in all dialects of Mambila as seen in all formal settings.

The data were audio-recorded, and all their speeches and conversations

were recorded unconsciously or not with their knowledge. These recordings were done in class rooms, market places, or commercial centres, and discussions among students in schools at different levels were conducted without their knowledge. All their natural discourses involving the types of code switches were recorded with clarity through a modern recording device vis-à-vis a Sunny tape-recording device.

This also covered the lecturers as they interacted with themselves in school, either with their colleagues or students. The Mambila/Hausa bilingual's code-switch was evident, perhaps because Hausa was an official language of instruction in schools. The recorded speeches were transcribed, and the areas of interest were carefully selected, identified, and classified according to the situations that triggered off-code switching. This is to ascertain how speakers utilise their communicative intent.

Types of switching

There are four major types of code switching, according to Addendorf (1996), as follows:

(a) Inter-sentential switch; (b) intra-sentential switch; (c) tag switch; and (d) congruent lexicalization.

Congruent lexicalization

Muysken (2000) observes that the motion of congruent lexicalization underlies the study of style shifting and dialects/standard variation as captured in Labov (1972) and Trudgill (1986), which is rather bilingual language use proper. Congruent lexicalization is similar to language variations and styles that are prevalent in the Mambila language, as captured in this study. Switching is grammatically unconstrained and can be characterised in terms of alternative lexical insertions. Linguistic convergence is also compatible with congruent lexicalization, and the two processes complement each other.

Intra-sentential-mixing

This is a combination of Hausa and Mambila dialect varieties where words from two or more languages are mixed. For example:

- 1) Pivot speaker: Tuwa vun ndandali da sauri-sauri

Lit* Tell him come-come with quick.

Gloss: Ask him to come quickly.

Here, we have the code-switch/mix with the use of two words in Hausa/Mambila.

This explains that the code-switch from Gembu Mambila variety to Hausa signals a desire by the speaker to communicate with someone he perceives as not sharing his L1 (Mambila) initially, so he switched to Hausa for the listener to understand him, since if he chooses to speak other varieties of Mambila, the listener might be lost completely in the conversation. So, he chooses to code-switch to Hausa, which is commonly understood and spoken in the area. Code-switching in Mambila involves a speaker moving from one domain into another and changing their codes as a result of their perfect presentation and ability to code-switch in a bilingual situation. This is referred to as situation code-switching, for example.

- 2) Pivot speaker: Mi mar kuba mange, mu je kasuwa.

Lit* I have money vegetable, let go market.

Gloss: Let's go to the market and buy some vegetables, because I have some money with me.

- 3) Listener: To, ya ter, mu je mana

Lit* Ok. Stand up, we go.

Gloss: Ok, let's go.

Sometimes, the code-switch is between the indigenous language of the area and code-switching to other languages. But in this paper, only

Mambila/Hausa bilinguals are used as a mark of identity. Therefore, it serves the function of identity and solidarity as an emotional means of persuasion.

- 4) Pivot speaker: Asabe, useni, ya kuba men wo gwura mi mange, yau kasuwa ne

Lit* Please, Asabe, take money. This you buy me a vegetable. Today is a market day.

Gloss: Asabe, please take this money and buy vegetables for me today in the market.

- 5) Listener: Yami, kuba petrol ina da mota a waje.

Lit *Give me money and petrol; I have a car outside.

Gloss: Give me money to fuel my car outside.

- 6) Pivot Speaker: Mbuterbo kaa? Lafiya?

Lit*Children where is it?

Gloss: What about the children? I hope they are well.

- 7) Pivot speaker: Lafyansu Kallau, baa nda koo tán.

Lit* Well, they go to the market.

Gloss: They are quite well; they have gone to the market.

Inter-sentential-mixing

This is a combination of Hausa and Mambila dialect varieties where words from one language is switched to another within sentence boundaries. Example:

Inter-sentential switch (commercial centre).

This is a type of switch that occurs in the same utterance between Mambila and Hausa bilinguals when it comes to the sentence boundary. Example:

- 8) Pivot Speaker: Ina Jin nyunwa wo na deni yir a?

Lit* I'm feeling hungry. Do you cook food?

i. Gloss: I am hungry. Have you cooked some food?

- 9) Listener: Yanzu muka gama ci toh yuni wo bel nan?

Lit* Now we finish eating, ok, now you do how?

Gloss: We just finished eating; what do we do?

- 10) Pivot speaker: Ya kuba yinu ka sayo biredi.

Lit* take money this you buy bread.

Gloss: Please take this money and buy bread.

- 11) Pivot speaker: Kai! Musa yimi njidi a yau a kasuwa kamar ba shi ba.

Lit* Wow! Musa, give me something today. Market like he is not.

Gloss: Wow! Musa gave me a gift, as if he were not the one.

Switch at school.

This is the type of code switching that is commonly found on school premises. For instance:

- 12) Pivot speaker: Chik makaranta chi vuwa me ya faru?

Lit* clothes school, your spoil what happened?

Gloss: Your school uniform is terrible. What happened?

- 13) Listener: Tela ya vuandi chik min amma zai biya kuwa.

Lit* Tailor took spoil clothes, but he paid must.

Gloss: The tailor ruined my uniform, but he must pay.

During political rallies,

- 14) Pivot speaker: Tinubu ya mi Kuri'a rubu goma.

Lit* Tinubu eat with votes with thousand ten.

Gloss: Tinubu won with ten thousand.

15) Listener: Yuni yuni Vela mu tuwa me maganar kuwa.

Lit* Now, my wife, tell me first about.

Gloss: It was just now that my wife told me the gist.

16) Pivot speaker: Tuwa vun ndandali da sauri-sauri

Lit* Tell him come-come with quick.

Gloss: Ask him to come quickly.

Here, we have the code-switch/mix with the use of two words in Hausa/Mambila.

This explains that the code-switch from the Gembu Mambila variety to Hausa signals a desire by the speaker to communicate with someone he perceives as not sharing his L1 (Mambila) initially, so he switched to Hausa for the listener to understand him since if he chooses to speak other varieties of Mambila, the listener might be lost completely in the conversation. So, he chooses to code-switch to Hausa, which is commonly understood and spoken in the area. Code-switching in Mambila involves a speaker moving from one domain into another and changing their codes as a result of their perfect presentation and ability to code-switch in a bilingual situation. Example:

17) Pivot speaker: Mi mar kuba mange, mu je kasuwa.

Lit* I have money vegetable, let go market.

Gloss: Let's go to the market and buy some vegetables, because I have some money with me.

18) Listener: To, ya ter, mu je mana

Lit* Ok. Stand up, we go.

Gloss: Ok, let's go.

Sometimes, the code-switch is between indigenous dialects of the area and code-switching to other languages. But in this paper, only Mambila/Hausa bilinguals are used as a mark of identity. Therefore, it serves the function of identity and solidarity as an emotional means of persuasion. Consider the following examples:

- 19) Pivot speaker: Asabe, useni, ya kuba men wo gwura mi mange, yau kasuwa ne?

Lit* Please, Asabe, take money. This you buy me a vegetable. Today is a market day.

Gloss: Asabe, please, as you are going to the market today, take this money and buy vegetables for me.

- 20) Listener: Yami, kuba petrol ina da mota a waje.

Lit* Give me money and petrol; I have a car outside.

Gloss: Give me money to fuel my car outside.

- 21) Pivot Speaker: Mbuterbo kaa? Lafiya?

Lit* Children, where and how?

Gloss: What about the children? I hope they are well.

- 22) Pivot speaker: Lafyansu Kallau, baƙa ndá Koo tán.

Lit* They well, they go to market

Gloss: They are quite well; they have gone to the market.

From the above examples in (19), 'useni' and 'yau kasuwa ne' meaning *please* and *today is a market day*, respectively, are Fulfulde and Hausa lexemes code switched into the Gembu dialect. And in (20), 'ina da mota a waje' while in (22) 'lafiyansu kalau' are also Hausa lexemes referring to *I own a car* and *they are all doing well*.

Tag switch

In the same way, we have tag switch situations in Mambila/Hausa bilinguals. This is a situation where a stock element in one language variety (after the interlocutor) is bound to an utterance in another language (Stockwill, 2002). Consider some of the Gembu dialect examples below:

23) Pivot speaker: Deni on, ko ba haka ba?

Lit* What is this? Is it not true?

Gloss: It is, isn't it?

This is a combination of Mambila Gembu variation and Hausa language in tag-switch.

Recommendation

The use of L_1 as the language of instruction by the National Policy of Education in Nigeria has helped Hausa penetrate all languages, including Mambila. This work calls for further research to enable linguists to dig further into various aspects of linguistics within the Mambila language, ensure the language is codified, and enrich the linguistics library.

Conclusion

Code-switching is a common phenomenon in multi-lingual Nigeria and the Mambila Plateau in particular, where Hausa seems to play a dominant role in almost all languages on the Mambila Plateau, especially the Mambila language. Among the three regional languages of Nigeria, Hausa plays a dominant role in the northern part of Nigeria; this is even adopted as a language of instruction in schools and other government functions. Mambila/Hausa bilinguals tend to have a good flow of communication in all conversational situations, considering the variations that exist among the Mambila language, which makes it vulnerable to the use of Hausa in code-switch situations. A complete Mambila can be seen code-switching

based on the factors mentioned above as functions of switches. With all its forms, this to-and-from kind of switch in kwon is Mambila speakers, even amongst speakers in remote areas. The variations form another interest cover for code-switch.

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