



The socio-pragmatics of code-switching in a public setting: The case of the University of Maroua

Dr Rigobert HINMASSIA*

(Sociolinguistics), University of Maroua, Cameroon.

*Corresponding Author
Dr Rigobert HINMASSIA

(Sociolinguistics),
University of Maroua,
Cameroon.

Article History

Received: 09.09.2025
Accepted: 16.10.2025
Published: 14.11.2025

Abstract: This study entitled ‘The socio-pragmatics of Code-switching in a public setting: The case of The University of Maroua’ investigates into the language practices at the said training school with particular emphasis on 71 civil servants and support staff. Their sociolinguistic profiles and languages used alongside French and English in the fulfilment of their everyday duties at workplace are the epicentre of the study. The study was conducted in a multilingual setting which is the said training school. It made use of participant-observation, recording and assisted questionnaire (interpersonal communication) in order to collect data. The methods used are qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analyses. For data to be analysed scientifically, two complementary theories were used. They are notably Gumperz’s (1982 & 1992) and Myers-Scotton (1993). Findings from the study revealed that civil servants and support staff at the HTTC Maroua chiefly use French (42.07%), English (20.92 %) Fulfulde (17.62%), respectively for fulfilment of their daily duties and conversations. In terms of target languages of code-switching, English, with (38.09 %), is the major language and followed by Fulfulde (34.52 %). The French language is the major source language in terms of source languages, i.e, languages switched from with (78.12 %) and English with (17.39%) comes second while Fulfulde is third with only (2.89 %). Fulfulde appeared in four over five instances of purposes for code-switching making it the language which mostly used alongside English and French. This showed that Fulfulde is almost versatile. Also, a French-Fulfulde blending in a single word was noted as a major finding when code-switching occurs.

Keywords: Higher Teachers’ Training College, socio-pragmatics, code-switching, civil servants, support staff, University of Maroua.

Cite this article:

HINMASSIA, R., (2025). The socio-pragmatics of code-switching in a public setting: The case of the University of Maroua. *ISAR Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Studies*, 3(11), 9-19.

Introduction

Given that language is human and thinking that it behaves the way human beings do, it becomes sharper to call for analyses. Since human beings have a certain endowment to speak, to have conscious and unconscious situations of communication, what underlies these situation gives the researcher tricky situations of sociolinguistic understanding of language depending on what is intended by any performative speech act. It is basically known that a speaker hardly utters a word for granted if the requirements of communication are met.

In public services, there are people from different sociolinguistic backgrounds with different philosophies about their own oneness and ties. This can be perceived through their attires,

some cues displaying their regions (even though not always) such as accent, their (socio) linguistic repertoires etc...

While the Chomskyan approach to language regards language as something ‘set off’ and ‘cut off’ from its core communication ends, sociolinguists take a totally different perspective about language as they view it as something which cannot be void of use, far beyond generativist and structuralist descriptions. In effect, language should not be limited to its structural or generative descriptions because there is a connection between language and society. For instance, Chomsky’s emphasis in the 1960’s on abstracting language away from everyday contexts ironically to the distillation of a core area of sociolinguistics, opposed to his conception of language. In one of his frequently cited passages, that is, Chomsky (1965, p. 3) characterised the



focus of the linguist's attention on an idealised competence. It goes as follows:

Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with and an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogenous speech community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance.

Literature and framework

Code Switching and Code Mixing

Many scholars have attempted to define code switching and code mixing. Among them are Amuda (1989), Atoye (1994) and Belly (1976). Hymes (1971) defines code switching as "a common term for alternative use of two or more languages, varieties of a language or even speech styles", while Bokamba (1989, p. 278) defines both concepts as follows:

"Code switching is the mixing of words, phrases and sentences from distinct grammatical (sub)systems across sentence boundaries within the same speech event...code mixing is the embedding of various linguistic units such as affixes (bound morphemes), words (unbound morphemes), phrases and clauses from cooperative activity where the participants, in order to infer what is intended, must reconcile what they hear with what they understand."

Auer (1998, p. 1) defines code-switching as the "alternating use of two or more codes within one conversational episode". In this case, "codes" refer to distinct language varieties or dialect. Although code switching is a common linguistic outcome in situations of language contact, prevailing ideologies of linguistic purity discredit the practice in most bilingual communities. It is considered a chaotic practice and it is seen by other research linguists as a sign of lack of mastery of either or both languages.

Weinreich (1953, p. 73) a leading researcher on bilingualism has claimed that "the ideal bilingual is someone who is able to switch between languages when required to do so by changes in the situation but does not switch when the speech situation is unchanged and 'certainly not within a single sentence.'" Specialists in code switching, however, recognize code switching as a functional practice and as a sign of bilingual competence. Competence in this paper has a twofold meaning: it can mean the ability to speak two or more languages fluently and the ability to understand two or more languages fully but not necessarily being able to speak them fluently. It is clear that code switching is a verbal skill requiring a large degree of competence in more than one language, rather than a defect arising from insufficient knowledge of one or the other language" (Poplack, 2000).

Wardhaugh (2000, p. 100) holds that : "People are usually required to select a particular set of codes whenever they choose to speak. They also decide to switch from one code to another or mix codes even within sometimes every utterance and thereby create a new code."

According to Myers-Scotton (1993, p. 47) as said in chapter one, code switching refers to the "use of two or more languages in the same conversation, usually within the same conversational turn,

or even within the same sentence of that turn." **Code switching** is the shifting by a speaker from language A to language B.

1.2 Myers-Scotton's model on language alternation

Code-switching is a socially motivated strategy that is employed for producing a sequence of unmarked choices, to establish itself as the marked choice. Speakers sometimes switch when they started a conversation in an unmarked choice. In Myers-Scotton's (1998, p. 4) markedness model, markedness relates to the choice of one linguistic variety over other possible varieties. Myers-Scotton (1993) classified code switching into four different types: marked, unmarked, sequential, and exploratory code switching. The markedness model will now be dealt with in more detail.

1.2.1. Code switching as a marked choice

Marked code switching directs speakers to make a marked code choice which is not in the unmarked index of the unmarked rights and obligations (RO) set in an interaction. RO is a theoretical construction upon which speakers can base expectations in a given interactional setting in their community (Myers-Scotton, 1998, p. 23). RO accounts for codes of behaviour and norms that are established and then maintained in social communities. Such a choice is made when a speaker wishes to establish a new RO set as unmarked for the current exchange.

In code switching as a marked choice, a speaker wants to distance himself or herself from the expected RO set (Myers-Scotton, 1993, p. 131). Marked choice normally takes place in a formal conversation for which an unmarked language choice of each participant is expected. The choices that are made clearly indicate the appropriate RO set in that social context. Marked choices can be said to be the negotiation against the unmarked RO set. Myers-Scotton (1993, p. 132) emphasises that there is one general motive for making marked choices. The one motive is that the speakers engage in a marked code switching to indicate a range of emotions from anger to affection, as well as negotiating outcomes ranging from demonstrations of authority to assertion of ethnic identity.

1.2.2. Code switching as an unmarked choice

The unmarked code switching choice directs the speaker to speak in a certain way depending on the situation. This is generally done by switching from one language to another. In many multilingual communities, the unmarked choice of code switching occurs when two languages are spoken within one conversation. The conditions that promote unmarked code switching differ from one multilingual country to another (Myers-Scotton, 1993, p. 20). In African countries, code switching is done between colonial languages and indigenous languages. Africans speak their own common first language with their ethnic peers and English or Afrikaans with other Africans. This is even done in South Africa especially in the case of people who come from rural areas and know their mother tongue only, and English or Afrikaans. Political and economic factors contribute towards code switching. The matrix or base language of the local conversations is normally not English or Afrikaans but their mother tongue.

1.2.3. Code switching as an exploratory choice

A speaker can use the/an exploratory choice when an unmarked code choice is not clear. This type of code switching

occurs when the speakers themselves are unsure of the expected or optimal communicative intent or RO set.

Exploratory code switching is uncommon and is not often used as the unmarked choice is usually clear (Myers-Scotton, 1993, p. 142).

1.2.4. Examples of code mixing and code switching

“Code mixing” is an expressions in which a mixture of the grammar of one language and another language is used without altering the grammar of the first language used. According to Wardhaugh (1992, pp. 107-108), “conversational code-mixing involves the deliberate mixing of two languages without an associated topic change”. He indicates that *code-mixing* is usually used as a solidarity marker in multilingual communities and in this paper it seems to be true when one considers the following examples: 1:E-mail(a conversation between colleagues).

Ek voel nie lekker nie en het vir Boss gevra of ek maar kan huis toe gaan. Ek gaan 10 o'clock loop, so sal jy sorg vir die allocations asseblief. Thanks!!

The term **code switching** is used to indicate intersentential and intrasentential code **mixing** as well as code **switches** between longer stretches of text, but not borrowing of the kind where a foreign word has been integrated into the lexical system of another language. Harmers and Blanc (2000, p. 59) suggest the following position: Borrowing and code- switching are phenomena at either end of a continuum: an established loan-word is a historically transmitted word that has been integrated with the recipient language, while code switching is [a] more or less spontaneous, bounded switch from sentences of one language to sentences of another, affecting all levels of linguistic structure simultaneously. Borrowings may look like code- switches in that they retain the foreign status (especially phonology), while code- switches often resemble borrowings in brevity and in being fitted into the syntax of another language.

1.2.5. Types of code switching as distinguished by Poplack

According to Poplack (2000), there are three types of code switching: extrasentential, intersentential, and intrasentential. Extrasentential switching is the insertion of tag elements from one language into a monolingual discourse in another language. Tag elements are words or phrases from another language which are inserted at the end of a sentence or utterance boundary. The switch occurs outside the sentences or phrase as explained prior. In most cases they are not in the same base language as the entire sentence. Examples of extrasentential code switching include the addition of “okay”, “well” or “you know” to a normal monolingual Northern Sotho discourse. Intersentential switching refers to switching at the sentence or utterance boundary, whereas intrasentential switching is characterized by a switch from one language to another language within a single utterance.

1.2.5.1. Extrasentential code switching

Extrasentential code-switching is the insertion of tag elements from one language into a monolingual discourse in another language. The examples below indicate the use of English language tags in a monolingual Northern Sotho discourse as put by Poplack (2000).

1.2.5.2 Intersentential code switching

The intersentential code switching refers to where switching occurs at the sentence boundary. The base language is Northern Sotho and it is followed by English. Still Poplack’s (2000) excerpts in Northern Sotho. Let us glance at the examples he provided us with.

1.2.5.3 Intrasentential code switching

The intrasentential code switching is characterized by a switch from one language to another language within a single utterance. The examples below put forth by Poplack (2000) show the speakers switching or mixing languages from English to Northern Sotho and vice-versa.

1.2.6. Code switching and Language Alternation

The distinction between language alternation and code switching is owed to linguists such as Gumperz (1982, 1992), Auer (Auer & Di Luzo 1992, Auer 1998) Alvarez (1998, 2000), Nilep (2006, 2010) and many others. One can regard language alternation and code switching as two different ways of thinking as language alternation may relate to grammatical form while code switching is related to communicative function. There are utterances that contain features of language alternation.

Methodology

Description of Maroua town and the University of Maroua

The setting or the area under focus is the physical location and condition in which data collection takes place.

The far-north Region is one of the ten Regions that count the Republic of Cameroon. It is located between latitude 10° and 13° north of the equator, and longitude 13° and 15° east of the prime meridian with a population over 3.5 million inhabitants and a surface area of about 34,260Km². This Region counts six divisions, namely Logone and Chari, Mayo-Kani, Mayo-Tsanaga, Mayo-Danay, Mayo-Sava and the Diamaré. This research work is carried out the Diamaré Division, more precisely in the heart of the far north Region. Economically and, due to the special location and rapid growing population of this area, high income generating activities and flourishing especially with the advent of the University of Maroua. The creation of the University of Maroua in 2008 thus boosted the educational at the tertiary level and the socioeconomic status of the Region all the same. The diamaré henceforth hosts the HTTC Maroua which is the area of study for this research.

The sample population and methods

As such, the target for this study is found at the Higher Teachers’ Training College Maroua (HTTC) which is of course one of the training schools under the university of Maroua. The Higher Teachers training college is chosen because it one of the outstanding institutions of the university of Maroua. The HTTC Maroua has a certain prestige as it trains civil servants. Thus, under normal circumstances, this is the intention one may have when far away from what obtains there. So, it clearly means that the idea one has about the HTTC Maroua is one that is being discussed; a prestigious training school within a Cameroonian context, a school of mannerism and all the like. This is what could globally said about the very training school. With reference to the population

making up the Higher Teachers' Training College Maroua, it is made up of two categories of individuals: students and all the stakeholders involved in the training process of teachers-to-be.

With respect to methods of data analyses, the eclectic is used here to better gauge the factors motivating the choice of some particular languages on the basis of specific cues and clues.. so, both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to analyse data.

They are 100 informants in total. These two groups of individuals, made up of males and females, are quite relevant because, they are the ones who are on seat from time to time. They are relatively educated citizens having some basics about language practices in Cameroon from administrative or instructional perspectives. These are two categories of persons earning a particular status at the University though their duties might not be the same when it comes to accomplishing particular duties or functions within the framework of administrative affairs. With particular attention to the category of civil servants, it is worthy of note that these informants rank from lecturers, Heads of services, Heads of Departments, Heads of Divisions, Secretary General, the Deputy-Director and the Director.

HTTC Maroua	Civil servants	Support staff	Total
	50	50	100

Table 1: Distribution of informants

Number of questionnaire	Given out	Returned
100	100	71

That said, this research made use of an eclectic approach which consisted in using two methods. These are quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis.

Instrument/ technique

For this study more specifically, there is a technique and an instrument used to gather relevant data which will subsequently call for study. They are namely: participant-observation (technique) and a questionnaire (instrument).

Results and discussions

Below are the outcomes and discussions of the present study.

2.4.1. Native languages and complementary native languages

During data collection sessions, various sociolinguistic profiles were constituted as one is dealing with multilingual setting.

Table 1: Participants' native languages

Participants' native languages
Nguemba
Podoko
Kanuri
Bassa
Fulfulde
Kotoko
Mundang
Hide
Tupuri
Massa
Wandala (Mandara)
Mokpe
Akoose
Ewondo
Bayangi
Nwaswa
Musgum
Ejagham
Guiziga
Yambassa
Mafa
Msir (Kotoko dialect)
Eton
N'dada
Yemba
Kera
Bulu
Duala
Arabic
Choa-Arabic
Mejumba
Mufu
Guemjek
Haussa
33 Native languages

The above table gives an account of the various native languages displayed by respondents as to answer the question about their native and additive native languages. The 33 languages are from the 10 regions of Cameroon. Which means it is a composite workplace. Again, these languages are used for diverse purposes as their functionalities differ depending on the communication situation that participants are subject to.

The above table gives an account of the various native languages displayed by respondents as to answer the question about their native and additive native languages. The 33 languages are from the 10 regions of Cameroon. Which means it is a composite workplace. Again, these languages are used for diverse purposes as their functionalities differ depending on the communication situation that participants are subject to.

2.4.2. Participants’ official sociolinguistic profiles

The third question was stated to determine the participants’ first and second official languages. The table below gives insights about the respondents’ capacity of speaking English and French. Here, there are participants who can speak both English and French while others cannot. This question is a combination of knowing the participants’ main official languages as well as establishing monolingual participants (speaking either English or French). The table gives a total number of ‘formal’ bilinguals and monolinguals.

Table 2 : Official bilingual and monolingual participants

Participants speaking both Eng. & Fre.	Number of participants speaking french or Eng. only	Total
43	28	71

From this table, it can be pointed out that though there 71 participants in total, only 48 respondents could speak either English or French depending on who is involved the communication situation with a particular accent paid to his/ her sociolinguistic profile. In other words, 28 respondents were official monolinguals within the Cameroonian context while 43 respondents could code-switch from English to French or vice versa. The percentage of this situation yields the following:

Table 3: Percentage of official monolinguals and bilinguals at the HTTC Maroua

Total number of respondents	Number official bilinguals (Both English and French)	Number of official monolinguals (English or French only)
71	43	28
100 %	60.56 %	39.43 %

Through this analysis, it was deemed relevant and more insightful to further the analyses by particularising the frequency of use of English and French at the Higher Teachers’ Training College Maroua.

2.4.3. Degree of frequency of use of English or French at the HTTC Maroua

The following question which is number 5 on the questionnaire sheet deals with the frequency of use of English and French at the Higher Teachers’ Training College Maroua. For the sake of memory refreshment, the question is “Do you speak your second official language?”. There were four options as to know what could be the frequencies of use of English and French in a public institution. These frequencies will be presented and analysed according to the respondents’ answers. Knowing that there are only 43 bilingual participants, the analysis of frequency of English and French considered the 43 participants only.

Table 4: frequencies of use of English and French

Total number of respondents	Frequencies		% of frequencies
43	Every day	16 occurrences	37.20 %
	Twice a day	03 Occurrences	6.97 %
	Thrice a day	06 occurrences	13.95 %
	Others	18 occurrences	41.86 %

Basing the analysis on this table, there are only 43 official bilingual participants showing diverse frequencies of use of both English and French at workplace. If a participant answered by ticking the option *every day*, then S/he is more likely using both English and French on a daily basis not resorting always to other local languages. On the contrast, the respondents ticking the option *others is likely* to use English or French at a low rate because, S/he cannot even remember of using English or French from time. It could be after one, two weeks or after one month. The two other options found in the middle being *twice a day* or *thrice a day* have at least the tendency of using either English or French to achieve their communication needs at workplace. Just by looking at percentages of frequencies, one sees it all.

2.4.4. Frequency of language use at the HTTC Maroua

Participants as members of a sociolinguistic sphere, belonging to a particular environment (workplace), share many realities. As such, they might use various languages depending on the interlocutor. This goes straight with Myers-Scotton’s markedness and unmarkedness models of code-switching. As hinted above earlier, Unmarked code switching choice directs the speaker to speak certain languages in the same conversation) depending on the situation using on the one hand. On the other hand, marked code switching directs speakers to make a marked code choice which is not in the unmarked index of the unmarked rights and obligations (RO) set in an interaction. This is generally done by switching from one language to another. Let us consider the languages used at workplaces by the respondents of this study. This leads to questions 3 and 6 questions on the table. Various answers were given and they had to be reported in a tabular manner below.

Table 5 : Distribution languages per purposes

The number of languages used with colleagues	The number of languages used with visitors (not belonging to the working sphere)	The number of languages used with support staff	The number of languages used with students
French	French	Fulfulde	French
English	English	French	English
Fulfulde	Fulfulde	English	German
Pidgin English	Pidgin English	Pidgin English	Spanish
Mundang	Spanish		Italian
Tupuri	Tupuri		Arabic
Arabic	Massa		Chinese
Spanish	Nwaswa		
German	Mandara		
Chinese	Arabic		
Italian			
Massa			
Nwaswa			
13	10	04	07

The above table indicates that there 13 languages that civil servants and support of the HTTC use once dialoguing with their colleagues, 10 languages used when conversing with their visitors, 04 languages when dialoguing some support staff and 07 languages used for lectures at the HTTC Maroua. These purposes are of different orders. To have a close look at these situations of communication together with their related purposes or finalities, the table presents the purposes for which language users at the HTTC Maroua are out for. This classification is done following the grouping of some languages with particular purposes.

2.4.5. Frequency of languages used for specific purposes at the HTTC Maroua

The languages used at the HTTC Maroua are listed above. But, this listing does not provide the frequency of use of a specific language for a specific purpose at workplace. As such, these tables give additional analyses to the previously discussed aspect of the questionnaire. To calculate these frequencies, the formula below was used.

$$\text{Number of frequencies/language} * 100$$

Total number of frequencies of all the languages

To analyse these frequencies, each of the purposes are discussed distinctively so as to have a clearer appraisal of situations per levels of analysis.

Table 6: Frequency of languages used for mutual intelligibility

Expression of mutual intelligibility and languages used	
Frequencies of language use/Language	Percentages of frequency/language
French (51)	51 %
English (25)	25 %
Fulfulde (10)	10
Haussa (1)	1 %
Pidgin English (1)	1%
Spanish (2)	2%
Tupuri (2)	2 %
Massa (2)	2 %
Nwaswa (1)	1%
Mandara (2)	2 %
Arabic (Shoa-Arabic) (2)	2 %
Kanuri (1)	1 %

The table above clearly shows that French tops the ranking of the degree of frequency per purpose with 51 %. The French language is thus mostly used for mutual intelligibility at workplace especially when it is a francophone-based area. English follows with 25 % , Fulfulde 10 % and the other languages such as Spanish, Tupuri, Massa, Mandara and Sho-Arabic come third with only 2 % . Kanuri, Pidgin English, Nwaswa and Haussa close the bottom position with 1%. It can be said that the combination of French and English actually show that most of the conversations among colleagues take place in the two official languages as the sum total of their frequency of use give 76%. The local languages or native languages are meaninglessly represented in this effect. Only the Fulfulde language appears with 10 % and, this can be explained by the fact that it is a lingua franca. Tying English and French frequency of use to Gumperz’ Contextualisation cues, one can notice the participants could have spoken more local languages but being oriented by the 1996 constitution over the two official languages of the Republic of Cameroon, they contextualise and materialise this reality through these two languages. Also, Spolsky’s 2004 trilogy of communication influences civil servants and support staff at HTTC. Because, the setting (location) being formal, so do the participants and the topic as well. This can also be debatable knowing that not all the topics discussed amongst colleagues are formal ones.

Table 7: Frequency of language used for the expression of family ties & friendship

Expression of family ties, friendship mutual acceptance (integrative)	
Frequencies of language use/language	Percentages of frequency/language
French (55)	50 %
English (25)	23.14 %
Fulfulde (10)	9.25 %
Spanish (2)	1.85 %
Pidgin English (2)	1.85 %
Arabic (1)	0.92 %
Italian (1)	0.92 %
Nwaswa (1)	0.92 %
Mundang (1)	0.92 %
Guiziga (1)	0.92 %
Tupuri (1)	0.92 %
Massa (2)	1.85 %
Mandara (2)	1.85 %
Musgum (1)	0.92 %
Mafa (1)	0.92 %
Mufu (1)	0.92 %
Kotoko (1)	0.92 %

This table gives a clear interpretation of the situation where a particular purpose should be discussed in a particular language. This is what actually obtains here.

Meanwhile, French and English (50% & 23.14% respectively) topping the ranking in terms of frequency is somewhat a given, that is, they are the main official languages Fulfulde occupies the third position meaning that alongside English and French, Fulfulde has a say over the remaining local or national languages with 9.25 %. Some the languages used for the expression of family ties are French, English and Fulfulde with a total score of frequency of 82.39 %. The remaining 14 languages share the 17.61 %.

Table 8: Frequency of languages used for specific for professional purposes (lectures)

Professional purposes (Lectures)	
Frequencies of language use /language	Percentages of frequency/language
French (32)	52.45 %
English (20)	32.78 %
Italian (3)	4.91 %
Spanish (2)	3.27 %
Arabic (2)	3.27 %
German (1)	1.63 %
Chinese (1)	1.63 %

From the above table analysing the frequency of languages used for professional purposes (lectures), it is again an obvious phenomenon that English and French appear at the first position knowing teaching and most of the professional duties are delivered in Molière (52.45 %) and Shakespeare (32.78%) languages. They are followed by Italian (4.91%), Spanish and Arabic (3.27 % each). German and Chinese (1.63 % each) end the ranking.

To express secrecy and linguistic shortage civil servants and support staff of the HTTC Maroua use about six (05) languages as indicated in the table below.

Table 9: Frequency of use of languages for secrecy or language shortage

Frequencies of language use/language	Percentages of frequency/language
Fulfulde (11) occurrences	61 %
Mundang (02) occurrences	11.11 %
Massa (02) occurrences	11.11%
Pidgin English (02) Occurrences	11.11 %
Tupuri (01) occurrence	5.55 %
05 languages with 18 Occurrences	

From table above, it can be inferred that is the most used language when it comes to secrecy and language shortage. This situation is generally observed with respondents having Fulfulde in common as a second native language. In effect, they switch to that language because they have difficulty of mastering French or English as a whole. English does not appear on that list though

almost everywhere. Mundang, Massa and Pidgin English have 11.11% simple because they are not chiefly used as the data presentation reveal. Tupuri takes the bottom position with only one (1) occurrence represented by 5.55 %.

Table 10: frequency of use of languages for administrative purposes

Frequencies of language use/language	Percentages of frequency/language
French (43)	56.57 %
English (18)	23.68 %
Fulfulde (6)	7.89 %
Pidgin English (2)	2.63 %
Mundang (1)	1.31 %
Tupuri (1)	1.31 %
Arabic (1)	1.31 %
Spanish (1)	1.31 %
German (1)	1.31 %
Chinese (1)	1.31 %
Italian (1)	1.31 %

Here again, French tops the study with 56.57% and English 2.68 % as far the fulfilment of administrative purposes are concerned. Fulfulde has 7.89 % which permits the language to occupy the third position while the remaining languages have less than 3%.

2.4.6. The language switched from in daily conversations at the HTTC Maroua

There is no established way of controlling language users’ rights (using language independently) at the Higher teachers’ Training college Maroua. This reality is justified by the fact that both civil servants and support have minimum level to use either English or French so as to fulfil their daily duties in a working sphere. The table below states what languages participants use depending on their counterpart in a communication situation. Many languages were gotten from the survey in this effect.

The table is based on the switching from a specific language in relation to the type of language user who is involved (Colleagues, visitors (exterior visitors), support staff and students).

Table 11 : languages switched from

	With colleagues	With visitors	With Support staff	With students
Languages switched from	Mundang	French		Spanish
	English	Fulfulde	French	German
	French	Massa	English	Italian
		Mundang	Fulfulde	English
		Guiziga		Arabic
		Spanish		Chinese
Total	03	06	03	06

Language practices at the HTTC Maroua are vast language ecology where many languages are spoken by many language users from the national triangle. They speak both official languages and other native languages known as local or national languages. It is important to produce the number of frequencies together with the corresponding percentages. Below is the chart recapitulating these data on that particular aspect of the questionnaire. These are done following the type of participants involved, namely switches with colleagues, visitors, support staff and students.

Figure 1: number of occurrences code-switching with colleagues

As regards the number of occurrences there are three main languages used for code-switching amongst colleagues of the Higher Teachers’ Training college depending on the four main purposes for which they code-switch using particular languages as mentioned above. French, English and Arabic were noted as the languages used by colleagues so as to converse following four major domains, notably mutual intelligibility, expressing friendship and family ties, and professional purposes (lectures). French has a total score of 50 occurrences representing 78.12 %; English has 13 occurrences and Arabic with one (01) occurrence. Therefore, this proves that French and English are the languages which are mostly switched from when it comes to code-switching amongst civil servants and support staff (who have colleagues).

Figure 2: Number of occurrences of code-switching with visitors

Here, if one takes a close look at graph table above, it clearly appears that French tops the occurrences of code-switching with a total score of 51 occurrences followed by English which is having 13 occurrences on its part while Arabic, Spanish and Italian are the languages closing the ranking in terms of occurrences of code-switching with visitors at workplace (HTTC). From these figures, it is worth noting that there is an observance of the 1996 constitution regulating the formal languages of the Republic referred to as official languages.

Figure 3: Number of occurrences of code-switching with support staff.

Analysing the figures produced by occurrences of code-switching with support staff, they reveal that English and French still occupy the first position with French language scoring 51 (78.46%) occurrences of code-switching and English comes second

with 12 occurrences representing 18.46%. This means that most of the code-switching situations obtaining from the support staff take place in formal languages being English and French. This correlates with the diagramme above.

Figure 4: Number of occurrences of code-switching with students

With regard to this diagramme (4), most of the code-switching situations take place in English and French. This is once more proven through the figures shown on the graph. It goes that French has 52 occurrences and English, 12.

So, the four graphs related to the analysis of occurrences of some languages used by civil servants and support staff when code-switching with colleagues, visitors, support staff and students demonstrate that most of the conversations if not all take place in French and English though French a large number of occurrences.

2.4.7. Frequency of language switched to at the HTTC Maroua

The following aspect of the analysis tackles the languages switched to. There are thirteen main languages. The analysis consists in getting the percentages of occurrence yielded by each language at workplace. To calculate this, this formula was used:

Number of occurrences of (01)language * the total of occurrences of the thirteen languages divided by 100.

$$\text{Occurrences of Language X} * 100$$

The total occurrences (84)

Table 12 : Languages switched to

Languages switched to	Frequencies	Percentages
	Fulfulde (29)	34.52 %
	French (06)	7.14 %
	English (32)	38.09 %
	Spanish (03)	3.57 %
	German (01)	1.19 %
	Chinese (01)	1.19 %
	Arabic (01)	1.19 %
	Hausa (01)	1.19 %
	Massa (02)	2.38 %
	Musgum (01)	1.19 %
	Mundang (02)	2.38 %
	Mandara (02)	2.38 %
Pidgin English (03)	3.57 %	
No possible switching (02)	2.38 %	
Total number of frequencies	84	

From this table, it can be said that the English language tops the analysis. It is followed by Fulfulde, a local lingua franca. The French language comes at the third position. Pidgin English and Spanish come at the fourth position while German, Arabic, Chinese and Hausa are fourth on the ranking sheet. Mandara, Massa and Mundang languages are fifth. There was also a situation where two respondents reported that they could not code-switching; which means, these are purely monolinguals though some scholars working on bilingualism view this situation arguably as to them it is difficult to have a monolingual language user.

With reference to Gumperz’s (1982) and Myers-scotton (1993), it is thus seen that there are various functions of code-switching as performed by civil servants and support of the HTTC of the University of Maroua. they code-switch for different purposes too. This is by implication they contextualise for specific reasons. Also, the analyses show that there are various matrix languages and two main embedded languages which are English and Fulfulde since most the switches take place in French.

2.4.8. Data from recording

Some excerpts will be presented knowing that they are many. Just a selective and random presentation is done.

Excerpts 1:

- A) *Mi saani ko moy fu!*
- B) *Na'am. Do facture toy do?*
- A) *Ndum goddo ferè ni waddi facture may.*
- B) *Okay. D'accord!*
- C) *Weh Usmane! Tu n'as même pas fini ce qui est dans le sac. Je n'aime pas le désordre. Je n'aime pas le désordre. Finis d'abord ce qu'il y a ici...*

Excerpts 2:

- Toc toc toc !*
- Oui ! (A moment of silence). Il y a eu réunion aujourd'hui ou hier ? Réunion de coordination, on dili na'a ?*
- Kay kay.... !*
- Noy, l'Homme. (Another service buyer entering the office...)*
- Ça va...*

Excerpt 3:

- Ah oho Ousmanu hokki na'a ? Okay, do kam Usmanu. Do kam a sigga kadi. Sey to mootta wurti garage kadi. Mi waatan tomi wartirata.*
- Ah, (Surprise), dum directeur hokki na'a? (one support staff handing in a document). Dès que tu auras fait la fiche peut-être il faudra la remettre au département de mathématiques pour qu'il étudie déjà le dossier...*
- Le Directeur dit qu'il a envoyé la version électronique. Je sais pas si... c'est la version électronique*
- Ah ! La version électronique était venue apparemment avant. (The conversation continued for a while).*
- Another person (Colleague) interfering the discussion).*

J'ai jamais eu à traiter un pareil dossier hein... (A colleague in the same office discussing with two other colleagues).

(B leaving the office and A is calling him back)

A) Ah, waar ! **(Calling on a member of support staff to come back)**; ce que je suggère c'est qu'il faut remettre le dossier au département de mathématiques.....l'administration est trop compliquée. **(shouting)**.

B) ça veut dire que je dois reprendre mon rapport ? **(A is asking D)**.

C) Oui oui...**(D interfering once more)**

Excerpt 4: (A conversation taking place in an office)

Bon, plus les vingt-trois heures do hokan noy ? plus quatre heures...

Hokan trente-et-six. Ça fait trente-et-six (repeating it in French) ; Laaru quelque part do'o na'....

Excerpt 5:

Décision d'admission en première année de Master... deux mille hunde do, (stopping for a while) ohho dje cette année. S'il te plaît...

Elle n'est pas au bureau noh ?

Excerpt 6: A conversation taking place in an office

Aaah na banni do kam. On neldi na'a S.G?

Ça va. Mi wala hebbugo mo, mi rappelan mo.

Mi yahha ha wagote do'o be faux maako do....C'est comme ça que vous êtes.

a) Qui ? Nous les qui ?

c) Bonjour mon général!

b) Oui bonjour! Mon chef est arrivé?(b phoning). **(The conversation continues between A and C as b is phoning)**.

Excerpt 7:

Bonjour!

Bonjour! Wayo Allah am! Allah am don (talking with another person in from of him).

Quand il fait comme ça là, il va demander à sortir pour chier. (C talking about her child with her in the office)

B):kay accu mo. O do kam na o don jiiba yumbe lawan tan na'a.

D) bonjour!

B): Noy way? Jodu. Jodu, Jodu. **(Asking D to sit have a sit)**. Noy Délégué? A don? A taway chef Magloire na'a ?

D): Kay, o waray tawon.

(The conversation continues)

Excerpt 8:

A): Noy ton délégué?

B) : Wala way, Docta ! **(Sighing)**.

A) : A yahay réunion na'a?

: Noh, c'est déjà vers la fin...(Another colleague entered the office and interfered)

Déjà hein.... La fois dernière je t'ai appelé fatigué **(Talking to B)**

Tu as du papier hygiénique chez toi là ? Regarde un peu là-bas en haut là...

Excerpt 9:

C'est quelle filière ? (talking to a student). An kam jodu lé. Remplissanam lé. (B who is a known student, just entered and A is talking to him.)

Aaaah (B is sighing while sitting down).

Les quitus. Vous signez là où j'ai mis les points là. (talking to student who came to submit his receipt).

(The conversation continues for a while B and another student just came)

Pourquoi vous venez maintenant? Vous étiez où depuis le matin ? vous c'est quoi le DIPESS II ?

Je suis venu on m'a dit que vous étiez en réunion ? oui.

Excerpt 10:

Bonjour! Il y'a personne prof. Nous sommes seulement là pour que vous nous voyez ici. (she continues her conversation with her colleagues in Fulfulde language) na a yidi senduggo na'a...(laughing)

Oho, na yahata. Nous sommes seulement là du cinq au cinq...(one of the colleague interfered)

It is worth pointing out that these are real-life communication situations at the Higher Teachers' Training College. These main places are the documentation centre, the admissions office and the Directorate.

In order to get more substance from these stretches of conversations amongst civil servants and support of the HTTC Maroua when using languages for their daily duties, it was deemed necessary to use a table to be show the frequency of use of a given language. From this recording it was noticed that, French, English, Fulfulde and Arabic were used in the course of code-switching. In this move, the frequencies of use a particular language will be stated by counting each word in each excerpt. The ten excerpts were enough to data for analysis. Some words borrowed from Latin are attributed or English due to the philology of these languages diachronically.

Table 13: occurrences of code-switched languages using recording

Occurrences of words of language X used in conversations	of	(%) of frequencies of use of words of language X in conversations
French occurrences	311	70.36 %
English occurrences	10	2.26 %

Fulfulde occurrences	119	26.92 %
Arabic	02 occurrences	0.45 %
Total of occurrences: 442		100%

Conclusion

It can be observed that Fulfulde (26.92%) is the language used alongside French (70.36 %) and English (2.26 %) when it comes to daily communication at the HTTC Maroua though it outpaces English in terms of frequency of use. Also, it should be said that the multilingual nature of the campus gives the communication situations certain volume of multichoices in terms of language use. It has been all the same noticed that, the Gumperzian contextualisation cue is there to unveil the community-based choices of languages with particular regard to the trilogy of communication as put by Spolsky (2009) whereby people are influenced by the participants involved in the communication, the topic(s) of discussion as well as the location or where the communication takes place.

References

- Amuda, A. (1989). *Attitudes to Code-switching: The Case of Yoruba and English*. Odu, New Series, No. 35.
- Auer, P. (1998). *Code-Switching in Conversation: Language, Interaction, and Identity*. London: Routledge.
- Auer P. & di Luzo A. (Eds.) (1992). *The Contextualization of Language*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Atoye, R.O. (1994). Code-mixing, code-switching, Borrowing and Linguistic Competence: Some Conceptual Fallacies. In B. Adediran (ed.), *Cultural Studies in Ife*. Ile-Ife: The Institute of Cultural Studies.
- Belly, RT. (1976). *Sociolinguistics: Goals, Approaches and Problems*. London: B.T. Bartsford Ltd.
- Bokamba, E. (1989). *Are there Syntactic Constraints on Code-mixing?* World Englishes 8(3).
- Chomsky, N. (1965). *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. Cambridge, MA : MIT Press.
- Hamers, JF.& Blanc, MHA. (2nd ed). (2000). *Bilinguality and Bilingualism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hymes, D. (1971). *On Communicative Competence*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Gumperz J.J. (1992). "Contextualization Revisited." In Auer, P. and di Luzo, A. (eds.) *The Contextualization of Language*, 39-53. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Gumperz, J. (1982). *Discourse Strategies*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Myers-Scotton C. (1998). A theoretical instruction to the markedness model. In C Myers- Scotton (ed.) *Codes and consequences. Choosing linguistic varieties*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (1993). *Duelling Languages: Grammatical Structures in Code- switching*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Nilep, C. (2006). *Code Switching in Sociocultural Linguistics*. Colorado Research in Linguistics. June 2006. Vol.19. Boulder: University of Colorado.
- Nilep, C. (2010). *Code switching and language alternation*. SLA Blog. Official blog of the Society for Linguistic Anthropology.
- Poplack S. (ed.) (2000). *The English History of African American English*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Spolsky, B. (2004). *Language policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wardhaugh, R. (2000). *Introduction to sociolinguistics*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- Weinreich, U. (1953). *Language in Contact*. The Hague. Mouton. Retrieved from <http://www.tfq.ulaval.ca/axl/afrique/Cameroun-prov.html>