The Grammatical Rules of Arabic-English Code – Switching by Children at the Age of 3-5 Years in Saudi Arabia: A Case Study

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Abstract

Code-switching is a linguistic phenomenon that has been investigated by scholars for over decades. It involves a number of different aspects of a language. And it takes place in the speech of both adults and children. When children are exposed to a second language, they tend to code-switch between their native language and the other. There are different aspects of language that could be switched from one language to the other according to the linguistic constraints. Grammatical structures are one of these aspects that could be code-switched from Arabic into English by children (Male and female) between the ages of three to Five years old. There are certain grammatical rules that are code-switched from Arabic into English that are recognized more than others. These rules take place on morpheme, word, phrase or sentence levels.

Since code-switching mostly deals with different languages, researchers are still working on the linguistic constraints on code-switching hoping to reach rules that can comply to, almost, all languages. Data collected in this study investigates the linguistic constraints between English and Arabic that support and violate the existence of constraints of this phenomenon. This study finds out that participants violate the linguistic constraints of the investigated theories of linguistic constraints of code-switching.
الملخص:
إن التحويل اللغوي بعد ظاهرة لغوية صدر كثير من الباحثين إلى دراستها خلال العقود الماضية وتشمل هذه الظاهرة جوانب متعددة من اللغة وتتجلى في حديث الكبار والصغار على حد السواء. يميل الأطفال عند تعرضهم إلى لغة ثانية إلى التحويل من لغتهم الأصلية إلى اللغة الأخرى. هناك العديد من الجوانب التي يمكن تحويلها من لغة إلى أخرى على مستوى لغوية متعدد تمثل القواعد اللغوية أخذ هذه الجوانب التي يمكن تحويلها من اللغة العربية إلى الإنجليزية من قبل الأطفال الذين تتراوح أعمارهم ما بين الثالثة والخامسة من العمر. هناك قواعد لغوية محددة يمكن تحويلها من العربية إلى الإنجليزية منذ أن تدرك وتلاحظ أكثر من غيرها. هذه القواعد ليست بالقليلة ويمكن أن تقع على مستوى الكلمة أو شبه الجملة كما يمكن أن تقع على مستوى الجملة المتكاملة.
يرتبط التحويل اللغوي بأكثر من لغة مما حدا بالباحثين إلى محاولة إيجاد قيود لغوية من شأنها أن تحكم عملية التحويل اللغوية ويمكن تطبيقها على لغات عديدة. تقدم البيانات التي تم جمعها في هذه الدراسة بعضًا من القيود النحوية بين اللغة العربية والإنجليزية الأمر الذي يثبت أو ينفي وجود قيود لهذه الظاهرة اللغوية. وهذه الورقة وجدت بأن الأطفال خالفوا القيود اللغوية التي وضعتها النظريات محل الدراسة المتعلقة بالقيود اللغوية لظاهرة التحويل اللغوي.
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