# Retrospect and Prospect of Private Higher Education Provision in Africa

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# A preliminary study of Code Switching and its impact on quality of tertiary education: St. Mary's University in focus

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***Abstract***:
*The paper attempts to investigate the reasons for teachers' Code Switching (henceforth CS) and its effect on quality of higher education at St. Mary's University in Ethiopia. According to Ullah et al (2005), quality of higher education could be defined based on the way it fulfills the national goals and objectives which could be grouped into Social, National and Academic excellence. The study focuses on Academic excellence, which refers to the academic literacy of the students; these are their ability to read and write academic texts and their competitiveness in the international market. Observations, interviews and classroom recordings were used to gather data. The study concludes that teachers in Accounting and Marketing classes at St. Mary's University code switch due to Interjections, Personalization or Objectivization, Situational code-switching, Addressee specifications and Reiteration. Also, students at St. Mary's university believe that CS affects their reading and writing academic texts in English, though the teachers do not think it affects students' academic skills.*

**Keywords:** Code switching, academic literacy, quality, education, L1

## 1. Introduction

In the 1970s/1980s Code Switching (CS) was not an issue as learners were rarely allowed to switch codes freely in a classroom situation and during those years CS was perceived as a random combination of two languages (Legenhausen 1991 cited in Zabrodskaja, 2007). However, since the 1990s, the issue of CS has gained a huge attention by applied linguists (Martin-Jones, 1993), though it looks as though the practice of

CS is accepted by both teachers and learners with some doubt in the classroom situation.

CS could be defined as "going from one language to the other in mid-speech when both speakers know the same two languages" (Cook, 2008 P. 174). Also, Gumperz (1982) defines CS as the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems. Myers- Scotton (1988) illustrates CS as the alternate use of two languages within the same conversation.

Grosjean's (1982) definition of CS relates to the alternate use of two or more languages in the same utterance. Based on the definitions given above by different scholars, the author has modified the definition of CS, which is used in the current study. It refers to the situation in which two or more languages are interchanged within the same discourse whether it is spoken or written, in which the switching takes place at a word or beyond level.

## 2. Position of English Language in Ethiopia

The English language, which has been expanded across the world successfully, is used in different sectors in Africa (Mokgwathi, 2011). In Ethiopia it plays a pivotal role in business, administration and education (Berhanu, 2009). Private and public organizations as well as government institutions employ English in Ethiopia alongside Amharic, which is the official language of the country. This could be due to the fact that the use of English in economy could make the country competent globally. Moreover, the society perceives one as educated and civilized, if he/she speaks English. In fact, the possibility of getting a well-paid post is likely higher for those who speak English.

In Ethiopia, students learn English starting from grade one. Moreover, it is not only the medium of instruction starting from grade nine but a working language in both private and public colleges and universities in the country, though various regions follow different ways in using English in lower schools. There are regions that use English as a medium of instruction starting from grade seven (Heugh et al., 2006).

However, Amlaku (2010) encapsulates that Ethiopian students who continue their studies at different colleges and universities have got poor resume and cover letters for a job. On top of that, teachers in primary, secondary, college and university levels are not proficient enough in the English language, and hence fail to be role models for their students.

In order to help students improve their English language skills at the university level, English course entitled Communicative English is given to all freshman students in Ethiopia. In this course, learners learn general English with a special emphasis on Communicative skills. Also, sophomore English is given to freshman students. It should be questioned if these courses help Ethiopian students improve their English language skills.

## 3. Literature Review

### 3.1. Academic Literacy

Literacy refers to one's capacity to read and write, conventionally speaking. According to Berhanu (2008), literacy has had a wider meaning recently; it is applied in other fields as well. These days people talk about computer literacy, as an example. In the present study, academic literacy refers to students' enhancement of reading and writing capacities in a formal educational context. The study argues that academic literacy of students at higher education is an essential component of academic skills, which could pave a way to the students' academic success at higher education level. Nevertheless, there is a belief that the practice of CS affects the students' academic literacy at higher education level.

### 3.2. Quality of Education

The issue of quality in an educational setting seems to be an essential aspect, though it is difficult to come up with the exact definition of quality. In fact Glasser (1990) states that quality comes to our attention when we see it. Thus, the study attempts to define quality as applied in higher education.

Quality is defined differently by different disciplines. According to Green (1994), there is no definite definition of quality of higher education, and it is neither an absolute nor a unitary concept. However, this does not stop us from maintaining it.

Wondwosen (2012), Green (1994), and Chalkley (I994) give a relevant definition of quality of higher education; an institution that meets its stated aims can be described as giving quality education. Thus, the effectiveness of an institution in meeting its goals is a very important aspect. In this case, there is 'fitness for purpose' concept.

To sum up, According to Ullah et al (2005), quality of higher education could be defined based on the way it fulfills the national goals and objectives which could be grouped into Social, National and Academic excellence. The study focuses on Academic excellence, which refers to the academic literacy of the students; these are their ability to read and write academic texts and their competitiveness in the international market.

### 3.3. Argument for and against CS practices

The issue of CS in a classroom situation has always been controversial. There are arguments for and against the use of first language (henceforth L1) in classrooms. A discussion of these arguments is given below.

### 3.3.1. Support for the use of L1 in a classroom

Studies conducted recently show that using L1 in classes has a positive impact in bringing an intellectual and linguistic development. For instance, Schinke-Llano (1991) conducted a study which suggests that there are dissimilar views with regard to using and not using the students L1. This longitudinal study reported that using students' L1 in a classroom can be effective in enhancing linguistic skills of the students. Moreover, Lucas and Katz (1994) suggest that L1 use in English classes can maintain up second language (henceforth L2) acquisition process. On top of that, the study describes that one needs to be proficient in mother tongue if he⁄she is to be proficient in L2; Schneider (1979) claims that to

some extent, the use of students' L1 cannot be averted, and is advantageous, and an attempt of L2 acquisition should be based on the strong foundation of the L1. Schneider (1979) propounds two major advantages of using L1 in content/EFL classes.

## A. L1 enhances the acquisition of L2

Students' proficiency in L1 plays a great role in enhancing their L2 acquisition, though some say that there could be L1 interference in developing L2. Strong L1 literacy can bring about both SLA and educational success (Cummins, 1999). In a similar vein, Walqui (2000) emphasizes that learning is influenced by various factors such as the proficiency of students in the L1, which comprises of verbal language, literacy, met-linguistic advancement, knowing language use in formal and academic environment, and learning the different rhetorical patterns and ranges in genre and style. Students need to know the academic L1 in order to acquire a second language easily. Garrett et al. (1994) argue against the concept of maximum exposure saying that second language learning is based on the already existing knowledge i.e. the first language, Schemata and set of cognition, learned through mother tongue, are brought to school by the children. Swain (1983) underpins the above point and claims that learning second language becomes successful when the child has bedrock in his/her L1. Furthermore, in Schinke-Llanos (1991) study, it was reported that Spanish ESL learners whose English proficiency was poor reported that using their L1 did not hinder them from learning English. Instead it helped them to acquire L2 easily and in a relaxed manner.

## B. L1 serves pedagogical functions

Different studies show that the use of L1 in a classroom situation has got a number of pedagogical functions (Atkinson, 1987; SchinkeLlano, 1991; Auerbach, 1993; Schweers, 1999). These functions are many but the most relevant ones are L1 paves a way to academic success and to greater use of L2, and L1 provides a conducive atmosphere to content area development.

L1 paves a way to academic success and to greater use of L2. Gracia (1991 cited by Auerbach, 1993) conducted a study on effective instructional practices for linguistically and culturally diverse learners: Gracia concluded that learners become successful when they are permitted to use their L1 to communicate with other learners and their teacher. Applying both L1 and L2 enables learners to learn the target language easily and is significant in bringing academic success to the learners. Auerbach (1993) strengthens Gracia's argument in her study in which teachers at Centro Presente assert that natural use of L1 paves a way to a greater use of English in English classes. These teachers further report that learners think in their L1, and hence giving them permission to generate ideas in their L1 leads to a gradual, developmental process where L1 is avoided completely later, since it is not the target language.

Furthermore, L1 provides a conducive atmosphere to content area development. The other function of using L1 in a classroom situation is developing content area. Lucas and Katz (1994) provide evidence of how L1 enables learners to get access to content area development. They assert that learners become victims of an education set-back of about four years since English-only approach is followed at school. They go on to explain that this happens because 2 to 3 years are required to get ability in basic communication skills and about 4 to 10 years to be proficient at academic skills. Thus, the English-only policy would stop learners from getting access to content area development and education skills. According to Peires (1994), there is high probability for learners to lag behind in their academic achievement while they attempt to learn a foreign language. Nevertheless, by having access to content in their L1, learners can get an opportunity to access to their own experiences and knowledge and hence they can be active participants in social and academic areas (Moll, 1992). Moreover, Bolitho (1983) stipulates that CS enables learners to express all their feelings, and say what they intend to say. Once the teacher gets the point of what he/she wants to say, he/she

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may push the learners to say it in English. Therefore, allowing learners to use their L1 can have access to content area knowledge.

### 3.3.2. Against the use of L1 in classroom situation (Monolingual approach)

In the history of English Language Teaching, the advancement of monolingual approach (the exclusion of L1) was launched at the beginning of 20th century, which happened mainly due to political rather than pedagogical reasons (Auerbach, 1993). Supporters of the monolingual approach argue that English should be the sole medium of instruction due to these reasons: L1 hampers foreign language learning, and L1 brings cognitive confusion and emotional conflict among the children (Phillipson, 1992; Cummins, 1989).

According to Auerbach (1993), Monolingual approach is supported on the basis that students' exposure to English enables learners to study the language/ grasp content in a short period of time, and it is only with the push from the teacher that students are compelled to use the language in a classroom situation. Also, a similar view was expressed by the teacher participants who took part in the study of CS conducted by Schweers (1999). According to the study, learners need to have maximum exposure of the L2 input in a limited class time, and no other language except English should be allowed in a classroom situation, as this could be an opportunity for the learners to generate comprehensible output and negotiate meaning. In a similar vein, Ellis (1984) suggests that organizing and managing a classroom situation with clear pedagogic objectives could make it more effective, and believes that allowing learners to use L1 could hinder them from using their input in the L2, though he does not clarify how.

Thus, there are opponents and proponents of the use of L1 in a classroom situation, and the two sides propound their own reasons why CS should or should not be practiced. The focus of the present study is on reasons for teachers' switching in content classes, and its impact on quality of higher education at St. Mary's university in Ethiopia.

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### 3.4. Code switching in a classroom context

There are a number of studies that focus on pedagogical functions of CS. The most relevant and significant ones are given below.

### 3.4.1. Code switching as a communicative resource

CS serves as communicative resources in a classroom situation. Adendorff (1993) and Ndayipfukamiye (1998) proved this function in their studies. Adendorff (1993), in the study he conducted in three high schools, shows that CS is used as a communicative resource in which both teachers and students use it to meet academic and social needs. He went on to say that the switching from Zulu to English assisted teachers and students to understand educational objectives, intentions and social interactions. Also meaning was quite explicit through CS to the interlocutors.

Furthermore, Ndayipfukamiye (1998) conducted a study of 5$^{th}$ graders doing their French class in Burundi, and found that CS serves as a communicative resource like elucidating lexis, commenting on students behavior, checking understanding and eliciting a response.

### 3.4.2. Code switching as a referential function

CS can be used as a referential function in a classroom situation since there could be knowledge gap in a certain language (Appel & Muysken, 1987; Elridge, 1996). In a similar vein, Weimeich (1953) notices that language shift usually takes place when a certain language lacks vocabulary to describe words, people and personal experiences. It seems that some subjects are better explained in one language, and hence another language may not describe the subject better which may trigger the practice of CS. Moreover, the same author asserts that affective words may not express things properly, as a result the conversant may be forced to make his/her point by shifting to another language.

Appel and Muysken (1987) on their part stipulate that conversants who shift to this sort of switching are believed to be aware of their shift. Their

respondents reasoned out that they code switched in order to find an equivalent word of the target language.

### 3.4.3. Code switching for managing classroom and impacting student behavior

Various studies show that teachers are engaged in CS to impact students' behavior (e.g. Merritt et al., 1992; Adendorff, 1993; Ndayipfukamiye, 1998). According to Merrit et al. (1992), teachers use a mechanism called 'modality splitting' to manage the classroom properly. According to Canagarajah (1995), 'modality splitting' is providing particular codes or means of communication for different purposes. After some time, the students sense this splitting and can read the proper cues of the teacher to adjust their classroom behavior.

According to Merritt et al. (1992), when teachers switch to Swahili while talking to their students in private, they anticipate a particular wanted behavior from the students. In this case, CS works analogously, in which certain functions are served better by one code, but the other functions by the other code; A code which is appropriate for instructing may not be appropriate for other functions of CS like affective expressions, greeting etc. Canagarajah (1995) who conducted a study of Tamil-English CS in India reports that teachers employ CS to deliver instructions to the students at the beginning of the class, and thereby managing the class when the students talk to each other and disturb the session. Moreover, Adendorff (1993) shows that teachers code switch to ask the most motivating questions so that the behavior of the students is changed. This means that low achievers and passive students may be indulged in the activity, as the questions are provocative.

To sum up, the literature shows that CS is practiced in multilingual classrooms everywhere. This is true in Ethiopia too, as it is a multilingual country. The local study on the issue of CS is conducted by Kenenisa (2003) who worked on the use of L1 in an EFL classroom in Ethiopia. Nevertheless, there is no any study that has focused on teachers' reasons for CS in content classes, and its impact on quality of tertiary education

with reference to St. Mary's University; this is the gap the current study attempts to fill.

## 4. Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study is to assess the impact of CS on students' academic literacy at the university level.

More specifically the research targets:

i. To distinguish reasons for teachers' switching in classrooms at St. Mary's University;
ii. To explore if CS influences the students' ability to read and write academic texts.

## 5. Research Questions

The paper attempts to address the following research questions:

1. What are the reasons for teachers' switching in Marketing and Accounting classes?
2. Does CS affect the students' capacity to read and write academic texts in Marketing and Accounting classes?

## 6. Methodology

### 6.1. Data

Data were audio-recorded from content classes at St. Mary's university, where the medium of instruction is English. According to Dornyei (2007), audio-recording spoken instances from a classroom situation provides a room for evidences to be discussed. The side effect, however, seems to be that audio-recording cannot capture the sound of a situation and the non-verbal language.

In the present study, teachers of Marketing and Accounting classes were audio-recorded. A recorded has been placed on the teacher's table to shoot the teaching-learning process in the content classes. Using the transcription conventions, given in the appendix, data were transcribed,

and have been put in a dialogue form, where there is turn-taking, which is conventional in a number of studies (Swann, 1994). Moreover, both teachers and students were interviewed, and classes were observed.

## 6.2. Participants

Two sections of freshman students, from St. Mary's university, have been selected using simple random sampling technique. Every fifth of the sections has been part of the study. The first section is Accounting class, and the second is Marketing class. The former contained 60 students, but the latter only 50 students. So a total of 110 students and two teachers took part in the study. While the Accounting teacher is MA holder in Accounting and Finance with three years teaching experience, the Marketing teacher is BA holder, and has five years of teaching experience.

## 7. Analysis and Discussion

In order to identify the teachers' reasons for CS, the theoretical framework of Gumperz's (1982) Semantic Model is adopted. Gumperz propounds the following reasons for teachers' switching.

| Reasons For Code Switching | Descriptions |
|---|---|
| Interjections | Means marking an interjection or sentence filler. |
| Personalization or objectivization | Means that a speaker involves himself/herself in the message or keeps distance from it; and whether a statement reflects personal opinion or not. |
| Situational code-switching | Means that switching takes place due to change in topic or setting. |
| Metaphorical code-switching | Means that switching takes place due to change in participants and strategies. |
| Quotation | Refers to direct quotations or reported speech |
| Addressee specifications | Means directing a message to one of the addressees. |
| Reiteration | Means repeating a message from one code to another either literally or in a modified form. |

Because the study focuses on reasons for teachers' switching in Marketing and Accounting classes, Gumperz's Model has been modified to account for a number of other reasons relevant to the situation. Also, it is the objective of the study to give a qualitative account of the analysis by exemplifying the possible reasons of teacher CS in content classes with several instances sourced from the transcript of the recording. Thus, the discussion of each reason follows next.

## 7.1. Reasons for teachers' switching to Amharic in Marketing and Accounting classes at St. Mary's University

### 7.1.1. Interjections

*Extract 1*

T: 1.Basically, user customer የምንላቸው these are kind of investor buyers. They buy the product 2. not for the sake of reselling it or processing it. They use it to make it for their operational 3. purposes. So ለ operational purposes purchase ልናደርግ እንችላለን። Consume ነው የምንደርገው 4. ማለት ነው። :

*Extract 2*

T:1. Mobile ምን እንደሆነ የኢትዮጵያ ህዝብ አያወቅም ነበር እኮ። 90 ስንት ነው 90.. 93/94 ነው

2. mobile የተጀመረው። :

3.L1: 94 ነው mobile የተጀመረው። :

4.T: አሁን mobile አልያዝኩም ካላቹ ሰውይደነግጣል። እንዴት? አይደለም? So ምን ሆነ ማለት ነው 5.influence ተደረገ ማለት ነው። :

In Extracts 1 and 2, there are examples of interjections. In the first extract, the teacher switches to Amharic to fill in a sentence in line 1. In line 3, however, the teacher switches to English to fill in the sentence. In the second extract, line 4, only the word **So** is used for interjection purpose, which seems to show that teachers switch codes in order to use

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them as sentence fillers. Teik and Lian (2013) came up with a similar finding in content classes.

### 7.1.2. Personalization or objectivization

*Extract 3*

1T:………………Industrial marketing ብን መጣ የ marketing department ወረቀት መግዛት ሲፈልግ 2.ተነስቶ ሄዶ መግዛት አይችልም ፡ ምን ትላላችሁ........./ እንደ industrial buyer//////////.

*Extract 4*

1.T.  Can you listen to me?
2.L1.  No.
3.T.   What is the problem? Is there any problem with my voice?
………አሁንስ እዚህ ጋር ሆኜ ይስማኛ፣ አይስማም^

4.L2.  ይስማኛ (In chorus)፡ ፡

There is an element of personalization in Extracts 3 and 4, where the teacher involves himself in the discussion. In Extract 3, line 2, the teacher switches to Amharic to give an example which includes himself and his department. At the time, the teacher was Department Head. Thus there appears to be personalization, where the teacher does not distance himself from the subject.

### 7.1.3. Situational code-switching

*Extract 5*

1.T**:………………../** The second is material. For whatever that you put out in the market, you 2.have to have what resources. ግባት ያስፈልጋል፡ ፡ አሁን ትናንትና ስለ coca cola ስናወራ ቆርኪ 3.ባለማግኘቱ ምክንያት ምን ሆነ አልን? Production ቀነሰ አይደለም? ገበያ ላይ Production ቀነሰ፡ ፡ 4.ቆርኪውን import ስለማያደርገ ው ነው፡ ፡ Raw materialሉ እኛ ሀገር ኖሮ የሚስራ ቢሆን ምን መሆን 5.ይችል ነበር? Foreign currency አይጠይቅም ነበር፡ ፡

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*Extract 6*

1.T:**………………**/Whatever business you think, if you do not have the right human resource, 2.would the company exist? Companyውን affect ያደርጋል፡፡ አይደለም? You need what labor 3.market, manpower. ለምትፈልጓቸው businessዎች ያንን business affect ማድረግ የ ሚቾል ሰው 4.ያስፈልገናል ማለት ነው፡፡ The fourth is Time. Whatever product you have, if your product arrives 5. to the market before the demand is there or after the demand is met, your product is useless, 6.አይደለም?

Extracts 5 and 6 show that the teacher alternates to Amharic due to a change in topic. In Extract 5, he gives an example of coca cola, where he uses entirely Amharic to explain the concept to the students. This change in language takes place because of change in topic i.e. talking about coca cola. In Extract 6, line 4, the teacher uses only English due to two possible reasons. Firstly, there is topic change i.e. talking about time. Secondly, it seems that the teacher thinks the issue of time as such is not a difficult topic, and hence may explain it in the target language. Thus, Situational CS becomes a reason for the teachers to switch codes in content classes.

## 7.1.4. Addressee specifications

*Extract 7*

1.T: Who are original equipment manufacturers?
2.LL: N/R

3.T: እረ ተዉ ትናንትና እኮ አይተነዋል፡፡ እሺ L1

4.L1. Original equipment manufacturers are//////////////////

5.T: እሺ በአማርኛ ቀጥዪ፡፡

6.L1: . Original equipment manufacturers ሲባል **……………/**

*Extract 8*

1.T:**……………..**/ But basically marketing environment የ ማያ ስኻው ምንድን ነ ወ? Activityዎችን 2.influence የ ማ ያ ደ ር ጉ ሲሆኑ፡፡ So እነ ኚህ environment,

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we see them are what we call them Macro 3.marketing environment, and the other is micro environment. አሁን ትዝ እያላችሁ ነው ማለት 4.ነው ፥ አይደለም?. ………… very good. ለምሳሌ አሁን restaurant አለኝ፥ ፥ Restaurantቱን affect 5.የሚያደርጉት macro environment ምንድን ናቸው? እሺ L1 ምንድን ናቸው ፥ ትነግሪኛለሽ?

6.L1: Government

7.T: Ok, thank you**………………**/

Address specification, the other reason for teacher CS, is exemplified in extracts 7 and 8. In order to address the students to answer questions, as part of the teaching-learning process, the teacher switches to Amharic in the two extracts given above; Line 3 in Extract 7 and line 5 in Extract 8 can be referred. The Amharic term እሺ which means 'Ok, you!' is used by the teachers to address the students. Though, in a language class, Cook (2001) comes up with a similar finding.

### 7.1.5. Reiteration

*Extract 9*

1.T: **………………**/So the best option that you have is to adopt them, or to shift out of them. 2.Either adopt ታደርጋላችሁ በ **operate** የምታደርጉት system አለበለዛ you go out of that business 3.industry ማለት ነው ፥

**Extract 10**

1.T**:…………….**./These are kind of marketing environments you can't change. ለምሳሌ Natural 2.environment ስንል//////// ሲሆን ይቻላል፥ ፥ እንደዚህ አይነት የከረምት በጋ exchange ለመጦች ሲሆኑ 3.ይቻላል፥ ፥ ልትቀይሩት ትችላላችሁ? ዛሬ አሁን ጠዋት በጣም ዘነበ፥ ፥ ወጥታችሁ አትዘነብ ትላላችሁ? 4.You cannot change it, አይደል? So that is macro level. ወደ micro level ስንሄድ these are kind of 5.marketing environments you have power to influence, but they would still have impact on you 6.directly.

Reiteration was found to be a reason for teachers' switching. In Extracts 9 and 10, the teacher repeats the concept in Amharic, which may happen

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to explain ideas and emphasize the important points. In Extract 9, line 2, an idea expressed in English is repeated in a modified form in Amharic. In the same vein, in Extract 10, line 4, the teacher switches to English to repeat what he had said in Amharic in lines 2 and 3. Teik and Lian (2013) agree with this reason for teachers' switching.

## 7.2. The Effect of code switching in students' Academic Literacy

Here is the discussion on an effect of CS in students' academic literacy from teachers and students responses to interview at St. Mary's University. CS is a common practice in multilingual contexts; it is a contentious issue, which has proponents and opponents.

The results of the interview with teachers and students on the impact of CS in students' academic literacy follow. The two interviewed teachers believe that CS should be practiced in a classroom situation, but there has to be a careful use of it. They claim that CS can be used as a communicative resource in content classes particularly, and it is a means of helping students to understand points, in case they are totally lost. A similar finding was obtained by (Atkinson, 1987; SchinkeLlano, 1991; Auerbach, 1993; Schweers, 1999). With regards to the effect of CS in students' academic literacy, the two teachers assert that the students' failure to read and write academic texts is not mainly attributed to the practice of CS in a classroom situation. Instead their poor English background, and partly the curriculum should be blamed. If a student is proficient in English language and takes Sophomore English class properly, he/ she is expected to read and understand academic work; our practice of CS may not affect their ability of reading and writing academic texts.

The students, on their part, stipulate that teachers code switch in content classes. They believe the teachers' CS impacts their ability to read and write academic texts. Furthermore, they explain that teachers' switching has made them dependent that they cannot handle any reading or writing academic work on their own; that is why the graduating students pay a lot of money to get their senior paper done. This seems to show that since there is an excessive use of Amharic in a classroom situation, the

students' exposure to the target language, English is reduced tremendously. Furthermore, the students lack confidence to use English language outside the classroom to do an independent academic work. This tends to have a negative impact on the quality of tertiary education delivered to the students, as their academic literacy is seriously crippled. Ullah et al (2005) claim that one part of quality of education is an academic excellence. Thus the study appears to demonstrate that the students' academic excellence is affected negatively due to the excessive use of CS in content classes at St. Mary's university in Ethiopia.

## 8. Conclusions

In the study, attempts have been made to distinguish the reasons for teachers' code switching in Marketing and Accounting classes at St. Mary's university, and to explore the effect of CS in students' academic literacy in the same university. The study showed that there are five reasons for teachers' switching in Marketing and Accounting classes at St. Mary's university in Ethiopia. These are Interjections, Personalization or objectivization, Situational, Addressee specifications and Reiteration. These reasons have been identified based on Gumperz's (1982) semantic model. Two of the reasons such as Metaphorical switching and Quotation, present in the model, were not found in the study. It appears that they are common reasons for teachers' switching in language classes rather than in content classes.

Furthermore, students believe that teachers' switching in a classroom situation affects their academic reading and writing skills since they cannot do academic reading and writing in English independently. It seems to show that CS has made them quite dependent, and hence the academic excellence, which is part of quality of education, seems to have been negatively impacted. This may not enable them to be competent in the international market as well, as their academic literacy seems to be poor. Nevertheless, teachers do not agree with the students' belief, and see CS as a communicative resource. This finding matches with the finding of Swann (1994). Finally, since this is a preliminary study involving observation, interview and recording of two classes at St.

Mary's university, future research should be replicated to include other universities in Ethiopia to determine the extent to which the findings of this study are generalizable in other universities as well. Also, it would be advisable to include a number of content classes and record them for longer periods of time and conduct surveys and self-reports with teachers and students to detect points of convergence and divergence in terms of perspectives.

## 9. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made.

1. Higher education institutions in general, St. Mary's university in particular should create a mechanism, like workshop on the use of L1, to help content teachers to make judicious use of CS in a classroom situation, so that students can build up their own confidence and independence in handling academic work on their own.

2. The Ministry of Education should take responsibility in following and implementing the language policy of the country, which does not allow the practice of CS at the university level. It should know and bridge the gaps between the actual practice and the language policy in terms of the use of L1 in a classroom situation.

# Appendix

**TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS**

| | |
|---|---|
| T | Teacher |
| L | Learner |
| LL | Learners |
| / | Interruption in talk |
| } | Overlapping in talk |
| ...... | Short pauses |
| --------- | Long pauses |
| …………../ | Part of the transcription has been omitted |
| N/R | No response from learner |
| **<u>UNDERLINE</u>** | Emphasis on a word |
| ^ | Raising pitch |
| ///////// | Not clear |
| ( ) | Comment |

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