

Code-switching or borrowing?: A much-discussed topic in the code-switching literature*

Hyeon-Sook Park*

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* Dept. of Scandinavian Languages at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies

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1. Introduction

In code-switching research attention has generally focused on issues of code-switching and borrowing rather than on other language contact phenomena. Since code-switching and borrowing can take similar forms, many researchers have felt the need to keep these separate in the studies of code-switching (e.g. Poplack, Wheeler & Westwood 1987, Bokamba 1988, Myers-Scotton 1993). In theory it has not been difficult to establish definitions of the two: code-switching involves alternating the use of two languages in the same conversation, and borrowing is defined as incorporating elements from one language into the lexicon and grammatical system of another language. In practice, however, it can be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to make the distinction. Several criteria have been proposed to date, but none of them has been found to be waterproof.

The aim of this study is to discuss criteria that have been proposed to differentiate between code-switching and borrowing in the code-switching literature.¹⁾ The study suggests that code-switching and borrowing are the result of related processes and that they are not different from each other.

2. Prototypical code-switching?

That there is such a thing as prototypical code-switching has implicitly or explicitly been assumed in the code-switching literature.

1) Since Poplack, one of the most influential researchers in the literature of code-switching, takes a great interest in the relationship between code-switching and borrowing, her views about code-switching and borrowing will be discussed in detail in this section.

Some researchers (e.g. Poplack, Wheeler & Westwood 1987, Andersson 1993) have argued that sequences longer than single words, such as phrases and clauses from another language, clearly constitute instances of code-switching and identified them either as "unambiguous", "typical" or "true" code-switches. Other researchers also view multi-word sequences as clear code-switches, though they have not expressed it overtly. According to most researchers, the English sequence *over dead bodies* in the example (1) is an instance of prototypical code-switching.

- (1) Il a dit que des fois là, quand il marchait là, il marchait *over dead bodies*.
'He said that sometimes when he walked, he was walking over dead bodies.' (French - English; Poplack, Sankoff & Miller 1988:53.)

The underlying justification for this assumption is that it is rather self-evident that most longer sequences lexically, morphologically and syntactically belong to the language they are rendered in. In other words, longer stretches of one language tend not to become integrated into the other language but to retain its own grammar.

3. Prototypical borrowing?

Naturally code-switching researchers also have notions of what prototypical borrowings look like. But their mental picture of a prototypical borrowing is much more diverse than that of a prototypical code-switching. Di Sciullo, Muysken & Singh (1986), for instance, see phonological integration as the most distinctive feature of "true" borrowing. As for Andersson (1993:250), "typical" borrowings are "phonologically and morphosyntactically integrated single-word incorporations". According to Clyne (1987), single words are borrowings (or transference, to use his terminology) irrespective of linguistic assimilation into the other language. Some other researchers such as Gardner-Chloros (1991) see borrowings as

single words from the other language which are commonly used in the speech community. For Myers-Scotton (1993), on the other hand, single lexical items of other languages which belong to the speaker's mental lexicon of the recipient language (or the matrix language (ML) in her own terminology) are borrowings.

As shown above, the definitions of borrowing are widely divergent but there is one important similarity among them: namely that they focus on single words, especially single nouns, from the other language. In other words, single nouns are regarded by many researchers as prototypical borrowings.

4. Code-switching versus borrowing

The general basis for differentiating borrowing from code-switching is that single words from the other language have proved to be the most frequent elements in bilingual discourses of many different language pairs (e.g. Pfaff 1979, Nortier 1990, Backus 1992, Myers-Scotton 1993). The exact status of single words from the other language has become the focus of discussions in code-switching research. Though many researchers (e.g. Bokamba 1988, Myers-Scotton 1993) have agreed on the need to identify and to distinguish between code-switching and borrowing, they are divided over how exactly the identification and distinction are to be made. There is no universally accepted criterion yet. A short survey of different approaches will be given below.

4.1 Linguistic approaches

Borrowing is traditionally viewed as integration of foreign lexical items into the recipient language. For this reason, the different degrees of linguistic integration, i.e. phonological, morphological and syntactic integration, have often been used to differentiate code-switching and

borrowing in different empirical data.

4.1.1 Phonological integration

It has been an established view that borrowing can be set apart from code-switching: borrowing normally involves phonological integration into the recipient language, while code-switching does not. This view has been strengthened by the fact that many established loanwords have been phonologically integrated into the recipient language. *Jazz* ['jas:] and *helikopter* [heli'kptər] in Swedish are some examples of this kind. Phonological integration is used as a main criterion in Di Sciullo, Muysken & Singh (1986). According to this criterion, the Swedish verb *stämpla* 'punch out' in (2) which is adapted to the Finnish phonology (i.e. *templaa*) is a loanword.

(2) minä oon jo kotona ku toiset templaa.

'I am already home when the others are punching out.' (Finnish - Swedish; Boyd, Andersson & Thornell 1991:469.)

The main problem with this criterion is, however, that not all loanwords show complete phonological integration into the recipient language. While some loanwords have not been integrated at all, other loanwords show differing degrees of phonological integration among different speakers and even in one and the same speaker. An example of the former type can be taken from Baetens Beardsmore (1986:57). The Brussels French designation for the game of darts, *vogelpik*, originating from Dutch, is sometimes integrated into French and pronounced [vogel'pik] but other times realized in its unintegrated form as ['vouʌlpik]. Baetens Beardsmore (1986:57) accounts for this phonological variation by pointing to "the individual speaker's social origins, linguistic background and general sensitivity to French phonological patterns". Myers-Scotton (1993:177) maintains, on the

other hand, that some individuals do not tend to integrate loanwords phonologically if they think that the loan giving language has higher prestige than the recipient language.

When the phonological systems of the languages in contact are similar, the distinction by means of phonological integration would be impossible, as Sankoff, Poplack & Vanniarajan (1991:184) have pointed out. For the reasons mentioned above, phonological integration has been stamped as an unreliable criterion (Sankoff, Poplack & Vanniarajan 1991:184, Myers-Scotton 1993:180).

4.1.2 Morphosyntactic integration

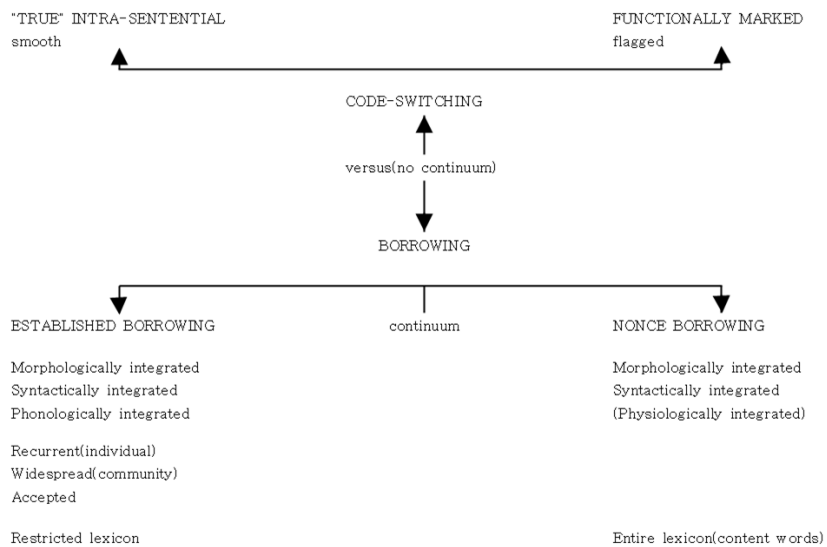
Poplack takes a great interest in the relationship between code-switching and borrowing, emphasizing that borrowing must be distinguished from code-switching in code-switching studies. Her motivation for distinguishing them is that code-switching and borrowing are completely different processes operating under different constraints.

Poplack divides borrowing into two types: *established borrowing* and *nonce borrowing*. Established borrowings are both linguistically and socially integrated into the language of the speech community; they show full linguistic assimilation into the recipient language as well as being both recurrent and widespread. As for nonce borrowings, on the other hand, social characteristics of recurrence and diffusion are not necessary. In contrast to established borrowings, nonce borrowings have "active access" to content words of the other language (Poplack 1990:38). Figure 1 illustrates how Poplack and her associates distinguish between code-switching and borrowing.

Poplack and her associates argue that both established borrowings and nonce borrowings are adapted to the morphological and syntactic rules of the recipient language and that a diachronic relationship exists between the two. There is, however, no such relationship between borrowing and code-switching, according to them. They argue further

that since borrowings, both established and nonce borrowings, behave morphologically and/or syntactically in the same way as native words do (but not as code-switches do), morphosyntactic integration can be used to differentiate borrowing from code-switching.

<Figure 1> Characterization of code-switching and borrowing
(Poplack, Wheeler & Westwood 1987:52).



In the studies of typologically different language pairs such as English - Finnish (Poplack, Wheeler & Westwood 1987) and English - Tamil (Sankoff, Poplack & Vanniarajan 1991), Poplack and her associates find a large number of singly occurring nouns from one language embedded in sentences of the other language. The authors assert that these single nouns are (nonce) borrowings (and not code-switches), by showing that they behave morphologically and/or syntactically differently from longer sequences such as phrases and clauses which are generally considered to be prototypical code-switches. See (3) and (4).

- (3) *anta car-ei drive paNNanum*
 that-ACC do must
 'We must drive that car.'
 (Tamil - English: Sankoff, Poplack & Vanniarajan 1991:190.)

- (4) It has got a *muuDi*.
 lid
 'It has got a lid.' (Tamil - English: Sankoff, Poplack & Vanniarajan
 1991:193.)

According to Poplack and her associates, both the English object noun *car* in (3) and the Tamil object noun *muuDi* 'lid' in (4) have characteristics of native words (i.e. Tamil in (3) and English in (4)). First and foremost, they are morphologically and/or syntactically integrated into the recipient language: while *car* in (3) takes the Tamil accusative case ending *-ei* and is also preverbal, *muuDi* in (4) comes after the English verb. Second, the nouns in question are accompanied by function words from the recipient language, namely the Tamil demonstrative *anta* 'that' in (3) and the English indefinite article *a* in (4). Third, they are content words, which belong to the most frequently borrowed category. It must be mentioned that they also regard the English infinitive *drive* in (3) as a borrowing because it is followed by the Tamil verb *paNNu* 'to do' which is used especially to integrate borrowed words.

Longer sequences from other languages retain the morphology and syntax from the original language, according to Poplack.

- (5) Ja yks hänen yliopisto kavereitä *unbeknownst to me was dating*
 and one his-GEN university chums-P
 yhtä mun tyttöystävää joka on skotlantilainen.
 one-P my girlfriend-P who is Scottish
 'And one of his university chums unbeknownst to me was dating
 one of my girlfriends who is Scottish.' (Finnish - English: Sankoff,

Poplack & Vanniarajan: 1991:182.)

In example (5) the multi-word sequence *unbeknownst to me was dating* is not integrated into Finnish but is both morphologically and syntactically English. In contrast to the single nouns in (3) - (4), the sequence also takes English function words such as pronouns and prepositions, which are usually not borrowed. In short, single nouns from the other language which behave morphosyntactically in the same way as native words — that is, they are borrowings — must be sorted out from analyses of code-switching, according to Poplack.

This morphosyntactic criterion for distinguishing borrowing from code-switching is not, however, without its problems. Morphological integration, as is the case with phonological integration, is not always complete. A number of English loanwords in Swedish, for instance, have varying degrees of morphological integration. A case in point is the English loan verb *mob* in Swedish which is sometimes nominalized with Swedish ending *-ning*, i.e. *mobbning*, and sometimes with English ending *-ing*, namely *mobbing*.

Another problem is that this criterion cannot be equally applied to all word classes, which is pointed out by Pfaff (1979:298). For example, verbs are more inclined to be morphologically integrated than other word classes such as adverbs and conjunctions as verbs are usually marked for tense and aspect, among other things.

The criterion also becomes problematic when foreign words appear without obligatory morphology in the recipient language. The Dutch noun *directeur* 'director' lacking the obligatory definite article in the Moroccan Arabic sentence in (6) illustrates this.

- (6) ...lli dert m9a *directeur*.
...that I-did with director
'(a talk) that I had with (the) director.' (Moroccan Arabic - Dutch:
Nortier 1990:199.)

A more serious problem with the criterion has been found in the Korean-Swedish discourse (Park 2008): a number of Swedish nouns in Korean sentences take Swedish function words as well as Korean ones at the same time. The Swedish noun *bank* 'bank' in (7) is marked for definiteness by means of the Swedish suffixed article *-en* 'the' and is directly followed by the Korean dative case ending, *-e*. According to the argumentation set forth by Poplack, the Swedish noun *bank* can be classified neither as a code-switch nor as a borrowing. It cannot be regarded as a code-switch because it is morphologically and syntactically integrated into Korean. Since the Swedish noun *bank* takes the Swedish definite article, which is a function morpheme, the noun cannot be attributed to borrowing.

- (7) ûm / *ettusentvåhundra bank-en-e* iss-ô?
 m one thousand two hundred bank-ART-DAT exist-SE
 'm Do you have one thousand two hundred [crowns] in the bank?'

The claim by Poplack that multi-word sequences from the other language behave morphosyntactically differently from single nouns does not seem to hold, either, at least not in the Korean-Swedish data. The following example illustrates this:

- (8) kûnyang kato kwaenchanha / *fjorton* /
 But go is OK fourteen
fjorton år och / åtta månad-er-i-nikka toe-canha
 fourteen year-PL(∅) and eight month-PL-COP-because is OK-TAG
 'But you can go [to the movie anyway]. Because you are fourteen
 years and eight months, it is OK, isn't it?'

In (8), the Swedish predicate complement NP *fjorton år och åtta månader* '14 years and eight months' is followed by the Korean copula (here in the conjugated form *-i-*), which is a bound morpheme. Note that while the complement comes before the predicate in Korean, the

reverse is true for Swedish. In contrast to Poplack's claim, both single words and multi-word sequences from the other language seem to undergo the same morphosyntactic processes when they are inserted into the other language in the Korean-Swedish material.

Another serious problem with this criterion has been found in the analysis of the proper nouns in the same material (Park 2006). According to the analysis, a number of proper nouns do not behave as borrowings but as code-switches: They do not show complete morphosyntactic integration into the language of the sentence, yet even so they sometimes include function morphemes such as definite articles. Occasionally the word order of the proper noun (or nouns phrase) corresponds to the original language.

- (9) *Norbyväg-en-hako Villaväg-en iss-canhayo*
Norbyväg-ART-and Villaväg-ART exist-TAG
'There are Norbyvägen and Villavägen, you know.'

Many Swedish geographical place names, street names in particular, take Swedish definite suffix articles like *Norbyväg-en* och *Villaväg-en* in (9). According to the morphosyntactic criterion, the Swedish proper nouns in the example would appear without the definite articles from Swedish. The word order of *syster Maria* in (10) comes from Swedish. In Korean, it would be *Maria syster* instead.

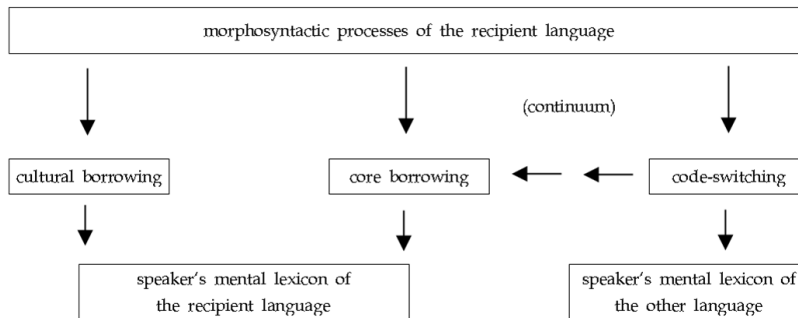
- (10) *tto Maria cô syster Maria-ka tto uli tto mwô*
and Maria DEM sister Maria-NOM and we again I mean
cônyô:k-to cunpi haeya toentae
dinner-also prepare must
'And Sister Maria said that she must also prepare dinner for us.'

The examples above show that even proper nouns, typically considered as borrowings, may show the same morphosyntactic characteristics as code-switches. More more examples, see Park (2006).

4.2 Psycholinguistic approaches

Linguistic integration as a successful distinguishing criterion has been challenged in the studies (e.g. Gardner-Chloros 1991). Another weakness of the linguistic integration criterion, according to Backus (1992:13), is that it does not take into account the varying degrees of bilingual competence. Non-fluent bilinguals tend to integrate foreign elements into the recipient language to a much greater extent than fluent bilinguals. He believes that these foreign elements integrated by non-fluent bilinguals are in danger of being categorized as borrowings. On the other hand, Myers-Scotton (1993:163) makes an objection to the linguistic integration criterion on the grounds that code-switching also undergoes the same morphosyntactic processes as borrowing. According to her, borrowing and code-switching are essentially similar phenomena with a diachronic relationship between them. She makes a distinction between them on the grounds that they have different relationships to the speaker's mental lexicon of the recipient language. Borrowing belongs to the speaker's mental lexicon of the recipient language, while code-switching belongs to the speaker's mental lexicon of the other language. Myers-Scotton's view of the relations between borrowing and code-switching is summarized in figure 2.

<Figure 2> Myers-Scotton's view of the relations between code-switching and borrowing.



In contrast to Poplack, Myers-Scotton (1993:168 - 170) divides borrowing into *cultural* and *core* borrowing. Cultural borrowing represents culture-specific words. The reason for these cultural borrowings is to fill lexical gaps in the borrowing language. Core borrowings, on the other hand, represent words for which the borrowing language has equivalents. According to Myers-Scotton (1993:172), certain contact situations encourage speakers to identify with the donor language's culture or with some aspects of it and this therefore can result in core borrowing. According to her, borrowing and code-switching can be distinguished by their frequencies, and not by linguistic integration. Cultural borrowings have very high relative frequency, since there are no native equivalents to compete with, and it is assumed that cultural borrowings enter the speaker's lexicon of the recipient language abruptly. Code-switches, on the other hand, have a relatively low frequency and they belong to the speaker's mental lexicon of the original language. Myers-Scotton's main argument is that core borrowings appear as code-switching when they make their *début* in the recipient language (1993:174 - 175). As the frequency of a specific code-switch increases, it is on its way to become a borrowing - to be exact, a core borrowing - which in turn enters the speaker's mental lexicon of the recipient language.

Myers-Scotton's distinction between code-switching and borrowing is

based on the assumption that code-switches and borrowings have different entries in the speaker's mental lexicon of the recipient language. The problem remains, however, that we do not have direct access to the speaker's mental representations, and for that reason it is difficult - if not impossible - to ascertain whether a certain foreign lexical item belongs to the speaker's mental lexicon of the recipient language. Recorded conversations are likely to be insufficient for revealing the extent of a speaker's mental lexicon. Myers-Scotton's approach for measuring the frequency of occurrence poses other problems. Single foreign words counted as code-switches on the basis of low frequency in the material may have been affected by particular topics in the different conversations.

4.3 Sociological approaches

Instead of linguistic integration, Gardner-Chloros (1991) emphasizes another aspect of borrowing processes, i.e. the social integration of borrowings, as a distinguishing criterion. While borrowings are recurrent among monolinguals and widespread in the speech community, this is not the case for code-switching.²⁾

Investigating whether foreign elements are sufficiently socially integrated into the language of the community is no simple task, either. The criterion used to determine the social integration of the words into the speech community seems to be arbitrary in that the classification of single words as borrowings or code-switches can be merely accidental. For instance, a word regarded as a borrowing by some

2) To decide whether some given foreign elements are common enough in the speech community or not, Gardner-Chloros (1991:162 - 163) selects three bilinguals and asks them to categorize the single words into three categories, i.e. borrowing, code-switching and in-between. If two out of three bilinguals classify words as code-switches, then she assigns the items to the category of code-switching. Remaining single words are assumed to be borrowings.

speakers may be regarded as a code-switch by others. In addition, it is often the case that monolingual speakers have stronger intuitions on specific items than bilinguals have.

4.4 Functional approaches

As mentioned above, the motivation for borrowing foreign lexical items is attributed to filling gaps in the recipient language (Weinreich 1968:56, Bokamba 1988:25 - 26), whereas code-switching is argued to be motivated by communicative needs rather than by lexical needs (Gumperz 1982:75 - 84).

In order to separate borrowing from code-switching, Pfaff (1979:297), for instance, poses the following questions:

- 1) Does an L1 equivalent exist?
- 2) If so, is it also in use in the community?
- 3) Is the equivalent L1 term known to the individual speaker?
- 4) Does the individual regard the word as belonging to L1 or to L2?

The functional approaches have also encountered some problems. Even if it is true that languages usually borrow words from other languages for new concepts or objects, it is also generally known that languages borrow words when their lexicon has equivalents. Haugen (1973:532 - 533) reported that Norwegian immigrants in the United States used some English words (termed *unnecessary loans*) such as *fence* or *river* for which Norwegian clearly had counterparts. Weinreich (1968:57 - 61) noted that foreign elements can also be borrowed due to internal linguistic factors such as the low frequency of native words, homonymy and need for synonyms. Myers-Scotton (1993:195 - 201) recognized that in addition to culture-specific items, core vocabulary can also be borrowed, e.g. English numbers in Shona. The functional approaches are therefore not considered as a sufficient criterion for distinguishing borrowing from code-switching.

5 Code-switching and borrowing on a continuum

As mentioned above, code-switching researchers have taken different positions with respect to the exact status of single words from one language in sentences of the other. Above all, Poplack has emphasized the importance of the distinction between borrowing and code-switching. She has argued that there is no diachronic relation between code-switching and borrowing. According to her, from a synchronic viewpoint, these two linguistic phenomena can easily be distinguished because they undergo different linguistic processes. On the other hand, however, it has been doubted if it is at all possible to differentiate code-switching from borrowing (Appel & Muysken 1987:173, Nortier 1990:183). Whether it is worth making a distinction between them, even if it were possible, has also been questioned (Eastman 1992).

The difficulty or the impossibility of distinguishing borrowing from code-switching would perhaps be an inevitable result in view of Haugen's statement (1972:100, 104) that processes of borrowing are historical and the identification of the results of these processes is not possible by synchronic criteria, but only with historical data. In accordance with this, Backus (1992:34) also states that "code-switching is most conveniently studied in a synchronic context; and borrowing in a diachronic one".

There seems to be growing consensus among code-switching researchers that code-switching and borrowing do not result from different processes but from related or even identical processes, and that they constitute end-points on a continuum (Appel & Muysken 1987, Nortier 1990, Boyd, Andersson & Thornell 1991, Romaine 1995).³⁾

3) The analysis of multi-word sequences, single words and proper nouns in the Korean-Swedish material shows that while only a small minority seem

Some of them (Gardner-Chloros 1991, Myers-Scotton 1993, Thomason 1997) also claim that there is a diachronic relationship between code-switching and borrowing: borrowing can start off as a code-switch.

6 Conclusion

The actual motivation for distinguishing borrowing from code-switching is based on the theory that the two concepts belong to different language contact phenomena, as Appel & Muysken (1987:173) have pointed out. Furthermore, since single words of foreign origin comprise the category which is the most frequent in different empirical studies of language contacts, most researchers have felt obliged to sort out borrowings from code-switching material. The need for the distinction between borrowing and code-switching also seems to have been emphasized because the status of single words as borrowings or code-switches has been heavily dependent on the grammatical models assumed to constrain the structures of intrasentential code-switching (e.g. Poplack's two-constraint model).

We have seen that all the proposals which aim to distinguish borrowing from code-switching - be they motivated by linguistic, psycholinguistic, sociological or functional explanations - have encountered serious criticism. We can reasonably conclude that borrowing and code-switching are not two discrete entities or two

to qualify as code-switches, a large number of cases seem to fit the category of borrowing (Park 2006). It is also shown that a number of cases show mixed morphology from both languages and are therefore impossible to categorize as borrowings or code-switches. Park (2006) suggests that many actual cases of sequences from one language inserted into sentences in the other language are not prototypes, but can only be categorized as lying on a continuum where prototypical code-switching and prototypical borrowing constitute two end-points.

different processes. For all intents and purposes, they seem to be the result of related processes and to be on the same continuum.

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〈국문 요약〉

언어전환과 외래어?

박 현 속

언어전환 (code-switching)과 외래어 (borrowing)의 구분이 이중언어 학자들 사이에 오랫동안 논쟁의 쟁점이 되어왔다. 논쟁의 근거는 여러 연구에서 이중언어 사용시 다른 언어에서 유래한 긴 구 (phrases)나 절 (clauses)보다 단일어 (single words)가 가장 많이 사용되고 있으며 일반적으로 자국어에 동화되는 단어와 비교할 때 구나 절은 형태, 통사적으로 보통 원어의 특징을 지니고 있기 때문이다. 또한 단일어는 외래어, 긴 구나 절은 언어전환이라는 설이 학자들 사이에 일반적으로 인식되어 왔다. 다른 언어에서 유래한 단일어들의 정확한 구분이 언어전환 연구에 중요한 논점이 되었다.

이 논문의 목적은 언어전환과 외래어의 구분을 위해 언어전환연구에서 현재까지 제안되어 사용되고 있는 방안을 분석 고찰하는 것이다. 논문 분석결과에 의하면 현재까지 제안된 구분 방법이 모두 문제점을 지니고 있음이 입증되었다. 본 논문은 언어전환과 외래어는 서로 다른 독립 개체가 아니라 동일하거나 혹은 비슷한 과정에서 비롯된 결과물이며 또한 같은 연속체에 존재하고 있다는 것을 제시하고 있다.

핵심어: 언어전환, 외래어, 단일어, 구, 절, 연속체

박현속 (Hyeon-Sook Park)

한국 외국어대학교 스칸디나비아어과

Department of Scandinavian Languages, Hankuk University of Foreign

Studies, Korea

전 화: 02-2173 3055 (office)

이동 전화: 010-7262 8212

email: hsp@hufs.ac.kr

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