

## The Shona and isiXhosa Linguistic Matrimony Through Code-Switching in Cape Town

**Authors :** John Mambambo

**Abstract :** Debates on the link between Bantu languages are often epitomized by animated theoretical critiques, including the language zoning and groupings. This evaluative, qualitative inquiry hovers above theoretical critiques to offer the sparsely studied ChiShona and isiXhosa code-switching nexus, a yawning gap in scholarship. Using interviews, questionnaires and observations, data germane to the study were collected from a purposively selected group of Shona speakers who had resided in Xhosa-speaking communities for not less than a year. Deploying Myers-Scotton's Markedness theory, the paper gazes into the pragmatic linguistic affinity that is affirmed through the Shona-Xhosa code-switching in Cape Town. The assorted social variables motivating bilingual speakers to code-switch in Cape Town are also explored in this study. The study unveils that Shona speakers are motivated to code-switch by the linguistic affinity between ChiShona and isiXhosa. Other socio-political justifications also give an impetus to this phenomenon. The Matrix Language Frame Model affirms that ChiShona is the base while isiXhosa is the embedded language during code-switching. This paper is a momentous advancement of the extant literature on code-switching. It is a unique contribution to the nexus between ChiShona and isiXhosa languages, providing fresh insights into the discourse on African language comparison studies.

**Keywords :** code-switching, chishona, isiXhosa, bilingualism

**Conference Title :** ICASUA 2022 : International Conference on African Studies and Urban Africa

**Conference Location :** Los Angeles, United States

**Conference Dates :** October 27-28, 2022