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ABSTRACT
The present study attempts to evaluate the empirical adequacy of the Null Theory of intra-sentential code-switching (CS) proposed by Mahootian and Santorin (1996) with evidence from Balti/English CS. The study exploits a naturalistic corpus of Balti/English CS. There are 40 ‘balanced’ Balti/English bilinguals who participated in the corpus. The participants were divided into 6 groups in order to organise the conversation. The recorded data have been transcribed in Roman Script. Mahootian (1993) and Mahootian and Santorini (1996) propose that there are no additional grammatical constraints on mixing of two independent grammatical systems and the lexical items being the head of their respective elementary trees determine the placement of their complements in ‘pure’ CS sentences in the same way. However, the analysis of the data reveals that N and V have no role in placement of respective complement projections. The data under examination indicates that the placement of complements does not follow the grammatical requirements of the language which happens to provide N and V. In spite of having an English V serving as the head of VP, object DPs in mixed Balti/English VPs. VPs are placed at pre-head position resulting on OV order. In the same way, the data under examination indicates that complement Post Ps are placed at pre-head position even though the tree is headed by English Ns which require post-head placement of complement PPs. The data provides multiple instances of projections in which the placement of complements violates the grammatical requirements of the language providing lexical head in violation of Mahootian’s proposal. Thus, the naturalistic corpus of Balti/English CS provides multiple instances which demonstrate the empirical inadequacy of the proposals offered by Mahootian (1993) and Mahootian and Santorini (1996).

Keywords: lexical categories, complements, head-parameter, code-switching, parameter-value