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A Matrix Language Frame Analysis of Code-Switching in *The Lord of the Rings* Trilogy

Abdussalam Jabaruddin Yamjirin
Master's Program in Linguistics
Universitas Sebelas Maret
Surakarta, Indonesia
Corresponding author: yamjirin.a.j@gmail.com

Abstract*— J.R.R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings is not merely a tale of high fantasy but a linguistic masterpiece, interwoven with Quenya, Sindarin, and Khuzdul. His unparalleled craftsmanship elevates Middle-earth beyond fiction into a realm of linguistic artistry. In Peter Jackson's adaptation, these languages shape character identities and interactions, transcending mere ornamentation. This study examines code-switching in The Lord of the Rings trilogy using the Matrix Language Frame (MLF) model. The data used in this research consist of dialogue selections from Peter Jackson's trilogy: *The Fellowship of the Ring* (2001), *The Two Towers* (2002), and *The Return of the King* (2003), containing samples of language alternation between English and Tolkien's constructed languages (Sindarin, Quenya, and Khuzdul). The data were collected through documentation, which involved transcribing relevant scenes, identifying occurrences of code-switching, and classifying them into inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and tag-switching types for further structural analysis. The findings indicate that English functions as the dominant Matrix Language (ML), while Sindarin, Quenya, and Khuzdul serve as Embedded Languages (EL). These code-switches reinforce cultural identity, emotional expression, and narrative depth, while also reflecting the complex dynamics of multilingualism within a fictional world. The implication of this study lies in its contribution to sociolinguistics, translation studies, and film linguistics. It demonstrates that fictional multilingualism can be effectively analysed using real-world linguistic frameworks, offering new perspectives on how constructed languages serve as instruments of identity, power, and symbolic meaning in cinematic storytelling.

***Keywords*— Tolkienverse; code-switching; matrix language frame; constructed language; multilingualism**

I. INTRODUCTION

J.R.R. Tolkien, renowned as both a philologist and a literary visionary, possessed a profound passion for languages, which found its finest expression in The Lord of the Rings. More than just an epic tale, the novel is a linguistic achievement, where Tolkien constructed entire languages with their own grammatical systems and lexicons, Quenya and Sindarin for the Elves, Khuzdul for the Dwarves, each reflecting the history and identity of its speakers. These languages do not merely add depth; they shape the cultures, relationships, and power dynamics of Middle-earth, making language itself a crucial element of world-building. In Peter Jackson's cinematic adaptation, this multilingualism is not just preserved but actively woven into the storytelling. Characters do not simply switch between tongues; their choice of language carries weight, marking alliances, heritage, and personal convictions. The interplay of languages enriches the narrative, reinforcing Middle-earth's authenticity and the depth of its civilizations. Through this lens, Tolkien's work is more than a fantasy epic, it is a testament to the power of language in shaping both fictional and real-world identities.

The multilingualism depicted in the trilogy is not merely an artistic embellishment but also a reflection of complex sociolinguistic realities, particularly the phenomenon of code-switching. Code-switching, defined as the alternation between languages within a single discourse, occurs either intra-sententially (within a sentence) or inter-sententially (between sentences). According to Poplack [8], code-switching is a systematic linguistic phenomenon observed among bilingual individuals who shift between languages within a discourse, he classified code-switching into three structural categories: Tag-switching, inter-sentential switching, and intra-sentential switching. Myers-Scotton [4] further posits that code-switching not only reflects bilingual competence but also serves as a marker of social identity, communicative function, and power dynamics within interactions. Thus, examining code-switching in The Lord of the Rings trilogy offers a unique opportunity to explore its linguistic and sociocultural dimensions.

To analyse the structural mechanisms of code-switching in the films, this study employs the Matrix Language Frame (MLF) model developed by Myers-Scotton [4]. This framework posits that in any code-switched discourse, one language dominates as the Matrix Language (ML), while the other functions as the Embedded Language (EL). The MLF model is grounded in two key principles: the Morpheme Order Principle, which states that morpheme

order in code-switched sentences adheres to the grammatical rules of the ML, and the System Morpheme Principle, which asserts that all grammatical morphemes are drawn from the ML. Additionally, Myers-Scotton [5] introduced the Embedded Language Island Hypothesis, which stipulates that EL elements must form complete syntactic constituents to be integrated into the ML structure.

The MLF model makes a meaningful contribution to both code-switching research and film linguistics in several ways. In code-switching studies, the model provides a systematic framework for identifying the grammatical hierarchy and dominance between languages in mixed utterances. It allows researchers to distinguish structural patterns from sociocultural motivations, offering a clearer understanding of how bilingual or multilingual speakers maintain grammatical integrity when alternating between languages. The model's concepts, particularly the distinction between Matrix and Embedded languages, help linguists explain syntactic constraints and morphological consistency across diverse linguistic contexts. In doing so, the MLF model bridges linguistic theory with actual discourse data, confirming that language alternation is not random but governed by structural rules even in spontaneous or artistic communication.

In the context of film linguistics, the MLF model contributes by extending its analytical precision to scripted multilingual narratives such as The Lord of the Rings. While originally developed for natural bilingual speech, the MLF framework enables scholars to examine how constructed or fictional languages function syntactically and symbolically within cinematic dialogue. By identifying the Matrix and Embedded Languages, the model helps reveal how filmmakers use linguistic structure to shape character identity, power relations, and narrative authenticity. Moreover, it provides an empirical tool for analysing how multilingualism operates as a cinematic semiotic resource, blending linguistic structure with visual and emotional storytelling.

Therefore, the MLF model serves as both a linguistic lens and narrative instrument, connecting structural linguistics with cinematic discourse. It allows researchers to interpret how code-switching in films not only follows grammatical principles but also performs ideological, emotional, and aesthetic functions, reinforcing the social and cultural realism of fictional worlds. Through this dual application, the MLF framework enriches both linguistic theory and film analysis, positioning code-switching as a vital bridge between language, identity, and narrative expression.

Research on code-switching has evolved to encompass not only its social functions but also its structural analysis through formal models. For instance, Ali et al. [1] evaluated the Matrix Language Frame (MLF) model against naturalistic Urdu-English code-switching, concluding that certain foundational principles of the MLF model, namely the System Morpheme Principle and the Morpheme Order Principle, do not fully account for the intra-clausal switching patterns evident in their data. Similarly, Nguyen's [6] investigation into Vietnamese-English code-switching challenges the notion of an absolute Matrix Language dominance, thereby advocating for greater flexibility within the MLF framework. Conversely, Sahni [9], in a comparative analysis of Poplack's Equivalence Constraint Model and the MLF model within a Hinglish context, demonstrates that the MLF provides a robust structural explanation for both intra- and inter-sentential switching patterns in South Asia.

Notwithstanding the relatively widespread application of the MLF model, the predominant focus of such research has been on natural bilingual interaction or social discourse. A notable lacuna remains in the application of the MLF to code-switching in the context of epic fictional discourse or cinematic dialogue, particularly involving reconstructed languages. It is this gap which the present study seeks to address, by applying the MLF framework to an analysis of the dialogue in The Lord of the Rings. This approach aims to elucidate the unique structural configurations and functions of code-switching within this distinctive linguistic environment.

II. METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to analyse the phenomenon of code-switching in The Lord of the Rings trilogy through the lens of Matrix Language Frame (MLF) Theory. According to Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña [11], qualitative research involves an in-depth understanding of data through three primary stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Consequently, this research not only identifies linguistic patterns in character dialogues but also systematically analyses them to uncover structural language patterns that emerge in code-switching phenomena.

A. Research Location

Santosa [12] explains that a research location is not limited to geographical and demographic aspects, but may also include media and literature such as podcasts, news, films, novels, and so on. The research location in this study refers to the digital sources where the linguistic data were obtained. The primary data were drawn from Peter Jackson's The Lord of the Rings trilogy in .mkv format, which served as the main corpus for extracting dialogue instances. To ensure linguistic accuracy in analysing Tolkien's constructed languages, the researcher also referred to the online linguistic database The Elvish Linguistic Fellowship (Gwaith-i-Phethdain), available at https://www.elvish.org/gwaith/movie_fotr.htm. This website provides verified transcriptions and translations of Sindarin, Quenya, and Khuzdul dialogue used in the films. Hence, the digital environment of the The Lord of the Rings films and the Gwaith-i-Phethdain corpus constitutes the virtual research site for this study.

B. Data and Sources

The data used in this research consist of dialogue excerpts from the three films that contain code-switching between English (as the Matrix Language) and Tolkien's constructed languages, Sindarin, Quenya, and Khuzdul (as Embedded Languages). The primary data sources include:

- The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (2001)
- The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers (2002)
- The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (2003)

Complementary linguistic references were taken from verified online transcriptions on the Gwaith-i-Phethdain website, which document Elvish and Dwarvish utterances used in the films.

C. Data Collection Techniques

Data collection was conducted using the documentation method, which refers to the process of gathering data from written and recorded sources [10]. This technique was supported by the analytical framework of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña [11], which emphasises systematic data management through reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The documentation method was chosen because the research relies on audiovisual and textual materials rather than live interactions. The procedures were as follows:

- Data Extraction: Identifying and timestamping dialogues from the .mkv film files that exhibit language alternation.
- Transcription Verification: Comparing the extracted dialogues with verified linguistic transcriptions on https://www.elvish.org/gwaith/movie_fotr.htm to ensure accuracy in syntax and translation.
- Classification: Categorising each code-switching instance according to its type, inter-sentential, intra-sentential, or tag-switching, based on structural features.
- Annotation: Determining the linguistic roles of Matrix Language (ML) and Embedded Language (EL) according to Myers-Scotton's MLF principles.

D. Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis follows the model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña [11], which comprises data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing:

1. Data Reduction: Selecting dialogue transcripts relevant to code-switching phenomena and eliminating data that do not align with the research focus.
2. Data Presentation: Organising the reduced data into tables or categories based on the Matrix Language Frame (MLF) Theory and analysing morphology and syntax using the Morpheme Order Principle and System Morpheme Principle (Myers-Scotton, 1993).
3. Conclusion Drawing: Determining the patterns of Matrix Language (ML) and Embedded Language (EL) that emerge in the dialogues and concluding how the MLF Theory explains the code-switching phenomena in the films.

E. Expected Contributions

By employing this approach, the study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of code-switching in The Lord of the Rings trilogy. It seeks to contribute to the fields of sociolinguistics and film linguistics by:

- Offering insights into the structural and functional aspects of code-switching in fictional multilingual contexts.
- Demonstrating the applicability of the MLF Theory in analysing code-switching in cinematic narratives.
- Enriching the understanding of how constructed languages, such as those created by Tolkien, interact with natural languages in fictional media.

This methodology ensures a rigorous and systematic examination of code-switching phenomena, bridging the gap between linguistic theory and its practical application in the analysis of cinematic discourse. Through this research, the study aspires to deepen the scholarly appreciation of Tolkien's linguistic artistry and its representation in Peter Jackson's cinematic adaptation.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study analyses the phenomenon of code-switching in The Lord of the Rings trilogy based on Myers-Scotton's Matrix Language Frame (MLF) Theory. The collected data reveals various patterns of code-switching in

character dialogues, particularly in the use of English as the Matrix Language (ML) and fictional languages such as Sindarin, Quenya, and Khuzdul as the Embedded Language (EL).

The classification of code-switching types in this study is based on Poplack's [8] typology, which distinguishes linguistic alternation according to syntactic boundaries. First, an instance is coded as inter-sentential switching when the speaker completes a sentence in one language and subsequently begins a new sentence in another language. This type is marked by clear boundary shifts and the presence of two independent clauses.

Second, intra-sentential switching is identified when lexical items, phrases, or clauses from the Embedded Language occur within the same syntactic unit of the Matrix Language. In such cases, the ML provides the morphosyntactic frame, while the EL material is inserted without creating a separate sentence. This type typically indicates a higher level of bilingual proficiency.

Third, tag-switching refers to the insertion of fixed expressions, such as greetings, emphatic particles, interjections, or vocatives, which are syntactically peripheral and detachable. An utterance qualifies as tag-switching if the removal of the EL element does not alter the grammaticality of the ML sentence. These criteria were systematically applied to all data excerpts to produce an accurate frequency distribution of the three switching types in the trilogy.

Based on the classification of code-switching, three main types were identified in the films: inter-sentential switching, intra-sentential switching, and tag-switching. The analysis shows that inter-sentential switching is the most dominant type, as it is frequently used in dialogues featuring direct translations between fictional languages and English. Meanwhile, intra-sentential switching occurs in situations where characters insert phrases or words from the EL into the ML sentence structure, often to assert cultural identity or enhance emotional meaning. Lastly, tag-switching is found in the use of short expressions or greetings in fictional languages while maintaining the primary structure in English.

TABLE 1. THE FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF EACH TYPE OF CODE-SWITCHING IDENTIFIED IN THE ANALYSIS OF *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* TRILOGY DIALOGUES:

No	***Type of Code-Switching***	***Number of Occurrences***	***Percentage (%)***	***Matrix Language (ML)***	***Embedded Language (EL)***
1	Inter-sentential switching	20	50%	English	Sindarin, Quenya, Khuzdul
2	Intra-sentential switching	12	30%	English	Sindarin, Quenya, Khuzdul
3	Tag-switching	8	20%	English	Sindarin, Quenya, Khuzdul
Total		40	100%		

From the table, it can be concluded that inter-sentential switching dominates the use of code-switching in the films, as it is frequently employed in scenes featuring explicit transitions between English and fictional languages. Meanwhile, intra-sentential switching occurs when words or phrases from fictional languages are inserted into English sentences, primarily to emphasise the characters' racial and cultural identities. Lastly, tag-switching appears in specific contexts, such as greetings or idiomatic expressions that reflect the characters' linguistic backgrounds.

These findings not only confirm the presence of code-switching as a linguistic phenomenon in the films but also reveal how the use of fictional languages is strategically regulated to enhance narrative and characterisation aspects. Below is a detailed discussion of these findings:



FIGURE 1. OPENING WORDS OF LADY GALADRIEL MONOLOGUE BEING A MOTTO OF THE FILM

Galadriel : ***I amar prestar aen, the world is changed. Han mathon ne nen, I can feel it in the water. Han mathon ne chae, I can feel it in the earth. A han noston ned 'wilith, I can smell it in the air.*** (The English is the translation of the Sindarin)

(The Lord of The Rings: The Fellowship of The Ring)

In the opening monologue, Galadriel employs two languages, Sindarin and English, with inter-sentential code-switching occurring between complete sentences. Each statement in Sindarin, such as *"I amar prestar aen,"* is immediately followed by its English translation, like *"The world is changed."* This alternation creates a consistent bilingual structure that builds a mystical and epic atmosphere, affirming Galadriel's identity as a wise Elf with an ancient heritage. The use of Sindarin lends a sacred quality and highlights the grandeur of the Elvish age, which is gradually fading, while English ensures the message remains accessible to a broader audience. This strategy also reinforces the theme of the old world transitioning toward the dominance of humankind, reflecting the decline of Elvish prominence within the film's narrative.

The Matrix Language (ML) is English, serving as the primary language of the film to convey the message to a wider audience, while the Embedded Language (EL) is Sindarin, used in the initial phrases to evoke an epic and mystical ambiance before being translated into English. In this instance, the Embedded Language Island Hypothesis is applicable, as each Sindarin phrase functions as an independent syntactic unit, free from English morphological interference. The MLF Model proves relevant in analysing the code-switching in Galadriel's monologue through this hypothesis, as the Sindarin phrases appear as complete clauses without syntactic blending with English; however, the Morpheme Order Principle does not apply, as there is no intermingling of morphological elements between the two languages. While the MLF Model effectively explains the technical structure of the language alternation, it falls short of addressing the symbolic and artistic dimensions, such as the mysticism, Elvish identity, and the theme of the ancient world's decline. The deliberate choice of Sindarin and its subsequent transition into English functions as a narrative strategy to amplify cultural and emotional resonance, necessitating an analytical approach that extends beyond the structural confines of the MLF Theory.



FIGURE 2. ARAGORN AND ARWEN ROMANTIC SCENE IN IMLADRIS

Arwen to Aragorn : ***Your time will come. You will face the same evil...and you will defeat it. A si i-Dhúath ú-orthor, Aragorn. Ú or le a ú or nin.*** (translation: The Shadow does not hold sway yet, Aragorn. Not over you and not over me)

(The Lord of The Rings: The Fellowship of The Ring)

In this dialogue excerpt, Arwen employs two languages: English and Sindarin, reflecting inter-sentential code-switching as it occurs between distinct sentences. She begins with a statement in English, *"Your time will come. You will face the same evil...and you will defeat it,"* before switching to Sindarin with *"A si i-Dhúath ú-orthor, Aragorn. Ú or le a ú or nin."* This language alternation carries profound pragmatic and sociocultural significance. The use of English allows Arwen to convey her ideas directly to Aragorn, while Sindarin adds an emotional and intimate layer, reflecting the grandeur of Elvish culture. Furthermore, the use of Sindarin affirms Arwen's racial identity and her close bond with Aragorn, who, despite being human, understands the Elvish language. Thus, Sindarin creates an exclusive zone between the two, reinforcing the personal closeness in their interaction.

The Matrix Language (ML) in this film dialogue is English, which dominates the syntactic and morphological structure of the conversation, while the Embedded Language (EL) is Sindarin, appearing as complete clauses without morphological blending with English. The Embedded Language Island Hypothesis applies here, as Sindarin stands as an independent syntactic unit. However, the Morpheme Order Principle is irrelevant, as the Sindarin portions do not mix with the ML. Although the MLF Model is effective for understanding the structure of this code-switching, it has limitations in explaining the narrative and symbolic motivations behind the language use. The model is more suited to analysing fluid bilingual interactions, whereas in the context of the film, language selection is driven by more complex narrative and aesthetic factors.



FIGURE 3. UNKIND ANSWER OF GIMLI TO HALDIR AFTER GIMLI CRITICISED HALDIR'S CONVERSATION WITH LEGOLAS AND ARAGORN

Haldir : *We have not had dealings with the Dwarves since the Dark Days*

Gimli : ***And you know what this Dwarf says to that? Ishkhaqwi ai durugnul.*** (translation: I spit upon your grave)

(The Lord of The Rings: The Fellowship of The Ring)

In this dialogue excerpt, two languages are employed: English and Khuzdul, reflecting intra-sentential code-switching as it occurs within a single conversational flow. Gimli begins in English, *" And you know what this Dwarf says to that? "* before switching to Khuzdul with the phrase *"Ishkhaqwi ai durugnul."* This language alternation carries significant sociocultural weight. The use of Khuzdul asserts Gimli's identity as a Dwarf, particularly since this language is rarely used in the presence of non-Dwarves, and demonstrates a provocative stance toward Haldir, an Elf. Within the context of the historical tension between Elves and Dwarves, Gimli's retort in Khuzdul reinforces his pride and refusal to demean himself. Furthermore, the use of a language incomprehensible to the interlocutor serves as a sharp insult, as seen in the translation *"I spit upon your grave"* which reflects his anger and reinforces the collective identity of the Dwarves in this conflict.

According to Myers-Scotton's Matrix Language Frame (MLF) Model, English functions as the Matrix Language (ML), dominating the syntactic structure of the conversation, while Khuzdul acts as the Embedded Language (EL), appearing as a complete clause without morphological blending with the ML, consistent with the Embedded Language Island Hypothesis. The Morpheme Order Principle is irrelevant here, as Khuzdul stands independently

without adhering to the morphological rules of the ML. While the MLF Model is effective in identifying the roles of the ML and EL in this code-switching, it falls short of explaining the pragmatic and sociocultural motivations behind the use of Khuzdul, such as the expression of cultural identity and its narrative function within the film.



FIGURE 4. LAST WORDS OF GALADRIEL TO ARAGORN DURING THE FAREWELL IN LÓRIEN.

Galadriel : ***I have nothing greater to give, than the gift you already bear. Am meleth dîn. I ant e guil Arwen Undómiel pígatha.*** (translation: For her love, I fear the grace of Arwen Evenstar… will diminish)

Aragorn : *Aníron i e broniatha, ad ae periatham athar i methid en-amar hen. Aníron i e círatha na Valannor.* (translation: I would have her leave these shores, and be with her people. I would have her take the ship to Valinor)

Galadriel : ***That choice is yet before her. You have your own choice to make, Aragorn… to rise above the height of all your fathers since the days of Elendil, or to fall into darkness… with all that is left of your kin. Namárië. Nadath nâ i moe cerich. Dan, ú-'eveditham, Elessar.*** (translation: Farewell. There is much you have yet to do. We shall not meet again, Elessar)

(The Lord of The Rings: The Fellowship of The Ring)

In this conversation, two types of code-switching between English and Sindarin/Quenya are evident. Inter-sentential code-switching occurs when Galadriel begins in English, *"I have nothing greater to give, than the gift you already bear,"* before transitioning to Sindarin/Quenya with the phrase *"Am meleth dîn. I ant e guil Arwen Undómiel pígatha."* Meanwhile, in the utterance *"That choice is yet before her. You have your own choice to make, Aragorn… to rise above the height of all your fathers since the days of Elendil, or to fall into darkness… with all that is left of your kin. Namárië. Nadath nâ i moe cerich. Dan, ú-'eveditham, Elessar,"* Galadriel employs two languages: English and Sindarin/Quenya, reflecting two types of code-switching. Inter-sentential code-switching occurs when Galadriel begins in English, *"That choice is yet before her. You have your own choice to make, Aragorn… to rise above the height of all your fathers since the days of Elendil, or to fall into darkness… with all that is left of your kin,"* before transitioning to Sindarin/Quenya with *"Namárië. Nadath nâ i moe cerich. Dan, ú-'eveditham, Elessar."* This shift demonstrates the use of complete sentences in both languages. Additionally, there is an instance of tag-switching with the word *"Namárië,"* a farewell expression in Quenya, which functions as a brief insertion within a longer sentence without altering the syntactic structure of the English.

The Matrix Language (ML) is English in this dialogue, which dominates the conversation, while the Embedded Language (EL) is Sindarin and Quenya, appearing as complete clauses and phrases. The Embedded Language Island Hypothesis is applicable here, as the Sindarin/Quenya phrases function as independent syntactic units without blending into the English structure. An evaluation of the MLF Model shows that while the Embedded Language Island Hypothesis holds, the Morpheme Order Principle is less relevant, as the Elvish phrases do not morphologically mix with English. Although the MLF Model is effective in identifying the roles of the ML and EL, it falls short of explaining the sociocultural and narrative motivations behind this language choice.



FIGURE 5. LEGOLAS ENCOUNTERS ARAGORN, WHOM HE HAD PRESUMED DEAD, ONLY TO FIND HIM ALIVE AND ARRIVING AT HELM'S DEEP.

Legolas to Aragorn : ***Le ab-dollen. You look terrible***. (translation: You're late)

Aragorn : (softly laugh)

(The Lord of The Rings: The Two Towers)

In this conversation, Legolas uses Sindarin and English, creating inter-sentential code-switching when he first says *"Le ab-dollen"* (You are late) in Sindarin, before switching to English with *"You look terrible."* This language alternation not only demonstrates linguistic variation but also carries significant sociocultural weight. By beginning the conversation in Sindarin, Legolas affirms the familiarity and strong bond between himself and Aragorn, who understands the Elvish language. Additionally, the use of Sindarin reinforces Legolas's cultural identity, while the transition to English creates an emotional contrast between a formal expression and a casual tone. This strategy also maintains authenticity without disrupting audience comprehension, as only the initial phrase is in Sindarin, while the subsequent sentence is delivered in English to ensure clarity of meaning.

According to Myers-Scotton's Matrix Language Frame (MLF) Theory, in this context, the Matrix Language (ML) is English, which serves as the primary language of the conversation, while the Embedded Language (EL) is Sindarin, used in a single short phrase. The Embedded Language Island Hypothesis applies here, as Sindarin appears as a complete clause without blending into the morphological structure of English. The Morpheme Order Principle is irrelevant, as there is no morphological mixing between the two languages. Although the MLF Model effectively explains the structure of the code-switching, it falls short of capturing the emotional nuances, character relationships, and narrative strategies underlying this language choice.



FIGURE 6. ELROND GIVES ANDURIL TO ARAGORN

Aragorn (as he takes the blade from him) : *Sauron will not have forgotten the Sword of Elendil.* (He draws it from the scabbard.) *The blade that was broken shall return to Minas Tirith.*

Elrond : *The man who can wield the power of this sword can summon to him an army more deadly than any that walks thi s earth. Put aside the Ranger.* ***Become who you were born to be. Take the Dimholt road. Ónen i-Estel Edain*** (translation: I gave hope to the Dunedain)

Aragorn : *I keep none for myself.* (He sheaths the sword)

(The Lord of The Rings: The Return of The King)

In this conversation, English and Sindarin are used, creating inter-sentential code-switching when Elrond says, *"Sauron will not have forgotten the Sword of Elendil,"* before switching to Sindarin with the phrase *"Ónen i-Estel Edain,"* which means *"I have given hope to the Dúnedain."* This language alternation is not merely a linguistic variation but carries profound symbolic significance. First, the dialogue marks a transformative moment for Aragorn as he receives Andúril, the legendary sword, with the use of Sindarin enhancing the sacred and historical undertones. Second, the Sindarin phrase connects Aragorn to the heritage of the Dúnedain and the Elves, affirming his status as more than just an ordinary man. Third, Elrond's use of Sindarin demonstrates nobility and wisdom, creating an exclusive communication between himself and Aragorn. Finally, the contrast between the instructive tone of English and the symbolic nature of Sindarin reflects the difference between practical guidance and spiritual counsel, adding emotional depth to the scene.

The Matrix Language (ML) in this context is English, which serves as the primary language of the conversation, while the Embedded Language (EL) is Sindarin, appearing in a single phrase at the end of Elrond's speech. The Embedded Language Island Hypothesis applies here, as Sindarin is used in a syntactically independent unit without blending into the English structure. In this dialogue, the English portions are more instructional and strategic, such as *"Put aside the Ranger. Become who you were born to be. Take the Dimholt road,"* while the Sindarin portion is more symbolic and emotional, such as *"Ónen i-Estel Edain."* This reflects the distinction between concrete instructions and spiritual advice, where English is used for practical guidance, and Sindarin conveys a deeper, historically rooted message.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study has shown that code-switching in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy is not merely an aesthetic addition but a linguistic and narrative mechanism that reflects the interplay between structure, identity, and culture within Tolkien's fictional world. By applying Myers-Scotton's Matrix Language Frame (MLF) Model, the research identified three main types of code-switching, inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and tag-switching, that occur within dialogues alternating between English and Tolkien's constructed languages, Sindarin, Quenya, and Khuzdul.

Through this analysis, the study reveals that English functions as the Matrix Language (ML), maintaining syntactic and morphological dominance, while the constructed languages serve as Embedded Languages (EL) that enrich narrative depth and cultural realism. The Embedded Language Island Hypothesis consistently applies, as EL elements appear as independent syntactic units. However, the Morpheme Order Principle and System Morpheme Principle are less evident because morphological blending is rare within the dialogues.

Syntactically, these findings affirm that Tolkien's multilingual design adheres to structural constraints predicted by the MLF Model. Yet, on a broader level, the phenomenon of code-switching also reveals three interrelated functions that give meaning to linguistic alternation in the trilogy:

1. Symbolic and Narrative Function: Language alternation enhances Middle-earth's mythology and racial distinctions, reinforcing themes of heritage, mysticism, and cultural continuity.
2. Identity and Emotional Function: Code-switching signifies intimacy, pride, and belonging; Sindarin expresses tenderness and nobility, while Khuzdul embodies secrecy and defiance.
3. Communicative and Aesthetic Function: The balance between constructed and natural languages ensures immersion while maintaining audience accessibility.

Taken together, these functions demonstrate that language alternation in Tolkien's universe operates on both linguistic and semiotic levels, uniting grammatical structure with symbolic meaning. While the MLF Model effectively clarifies the structural aspects of bilingual discourse, it remains limited in addressing the aesthetic, ideological, and affective motivations behind language choice in fictional media. Therefore, the study advocates an interdisciplinary synthesis, integrating sociolinguistics, narratology, and semiotics, to capture the full depth of code-switching as both linguistic behaviour and artistic expression.

In summary, this research underscores that fictional multilingualism mirrors real-world language dynamics, illustrating how code-switching constructs identity, conveys emotion, and sustains narrative authenticity. The findings reaffirm Tolkien's linguistic legacy as a bridge between philology and cinematic storytelling, offering a model for future analyses of multilingualism and constructed languages across other fantasy universes.

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