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# Code-switching online

A case study of Swedish-English code-switching in the blog  
*Charlotta Flinkenberg*

**Ingrid Falk**

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Supervisor:  
Monika Mondor  
Examiner: Joseph Trotta

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*Charlotta Flinkenberg*

*Author:* Ingrid Falk

*Supervisor:* Monika Mondor

*Examiner:* Joseph Trotta

*Course:* EN1C03, fall of 2013, Department of languages and literatures

University of Gothenburg

## **Abstract**

This study investigates the form and function of Swedish-English code-switching within Swedish pop culture online through a case study of the fashion blog *Charlotta Flinkenberg*.

Code-switching can be found in a multitude of written data; however, research has primarily focused on code-switching in spoken language. This study seeks to explore written code-switching, and to answer the questions of when, how and why the writer utilizes code-switching in her blog posts. To facilitate this, a total of 310 blog post published between February 1, 2013 and September 30, 2013 were examined. The data was analyzed to see if any patterns of code-switching occurred as well as to examine what types of words were code-switched. The results show that the writer code-switches most frequently when she is writing about fashion and when answering questions from readers about fashion. The results further show that the most frequent type of code-switching was intra-sentential code-switching, with a high frequency of code-switched nouns, reflecting the fashion community's focus on clothes and accessories. The theories applied show that the writer's code-switching may be a way for her to establish an identity as an integral part of the fashion community and to connect with her readers.

**Keywords:** Code-switching, fashion, blog, sociolinguistics, Swedish popular culture, CMD

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## 1. Introduction

The phenomenon of *bilingualism*, i.e. when where a person is fluent in two languages, is a common occurrence in most countries, including Sweden. Bilingualism makes it possible for speakers to “pick and choose” from two or more languages, and use *code-switching*, a phenomenon which allows speakers to mix languages within an utterance when speaking to each other (Montes-Alcalá, 2005:6). Romaine (1995) states that code-switching occurs amongst children as young as 2 years old, but that children tend to code-switch on sentence-level, whereas adults fluent in both languages are more likely to code-switch phrases or individual words (Romaine, 1995: 227-232).

Code-switching can be found in all area of our lives, from high-culture to popular culture, as well as both in real life and in fiction. Given this, code-switching within popular culture has been chosen as the object of the present study. Popular culture reflects the way people today live and think as well as their interests and what they find important. It enables us to understand what people dream about and what they want to achieve in life (Bennich-Björkman, 1999:305). This is especially evident within the fashion industry. According to Hancock (2013), fashion within popular culture is a phenomenon which exemplifies diversity, where clothes are given values, expressing individuality and people’s places in society. Through fashion we can express who and what we are, as well as showing others what we are not. Fashion is a non-verbal form of communication, and its importance within popular culture is constantly growing as a result of people’s increasing opportunities and interest in using fashion to express individuality, gender, religion and ethnicity (Hancock, Johnson-Woods and Karaminas, 2013:xi-xii).

While a vast amount of research has been done on the subject of spoken code-switching, this study focuses on the form and function of written code-switching within Swedish popular culture online, concentrating on code-switching between Swedish and English in the posts of a specific blogger. The usage of discussion forums and blogs as a way of voicing personal opinions is constantly growing and with this, online-language is changing (Laroussi, 2011:10).

Code-switching in written form outside of literature was once, and still might be, a somewhat rare phenomenon. However, investigating code-switching in internet language is especially interesting since the way people communicate has expanded enormously through the use of the internet, and the speed of publishing texts has changed, becoming much faster. Discussion-boards, social media, instant messaging and blogs are common tools for

communication today, and studying internet language when researching code-switching within bilingual communities can therefore be very useful (Laroussi, 2011:77).

Furthermore, code-switching can be a way for writers to express identity through their language use. A writer has the choice to use words and phrases from another language to express their religion, ethnicity and political views, as well as their interests, proficiency and knowledge in certain areas of life to their readers (Sebba, Mahootian and Jonsson, 2012:193). In addition to this, writers can use code-switching to strengthen group identity, using language to enhance the connection to the readers and involving the readers by using certain phrases and words in another language (Gardner-Chloros in Bullock and Toribio, 2009:106).

### **1.1 Aim and research questions**

The aim of this essay is to investigate the form and function of code-switching between Swedish and English within Swedish popular culture online, in order to see if any patterns of use occur. The essay focuses on a sample of posts from the fashion blog *Charlotta Flinkenberg*. In order to fulfill this aim the following research questions are addressed:

1. In what type of blog posts does Swedish-English code-switching occur in section *Charlotta Flinkenberg*?
2. What types of code-switching are used online by the writer of *Charlotta Flinkenberg*?
3. What types of words are being code-switched in the blog posts from *Charlotta Flinkenberg*?

In connection to these three research questions, the author's possible reasons for using code-switching will be examined and discussed.

### **1.2 Scope**

This study is limited to the analysis of 310 blog posts from the blog *Charlotta Flinkenberg*. These blog posts were all posted on *Charlotta Flinkenberg* between February 1, 2013 and September 30, 2013.

### **1.3 Overview of study**

In section 1, the study is introduced and the aim and research questions are presented. Section 2 gives an overview of bilingualism and code-switching, explaining different aspects of code-switching as well as code-switching in computer mediated discourse (CMD). Section 3 discusses previous studies made on written code-switching in the recent years, particularly in the field of online writing. Section 4 explains the material and method used in the study, as

well as problems and limitations. The results are presented in section 5. In section 6 the results are summarized and discussed and suggestions for further research are presented.

## 2. Bilingualism and Code-switching

This section gives an overview of bilingualism and code-switching, both in spoken conversations and in written texts. In this section the different aspects of code-switching are discussed, focusing particularly on Swedish-English code-switching in Sweden. In section 2.1, Bilingualism is discussed as well as the influence of English in Sweden. Section 2.2 examines the basics of code-switching as well as different types of code-switching. Section 2.3 looks at the sociolinguistic aspects of code-switching and section 2.4 discusses code-switching online in computer-mediated discourse (CMD).

### 2.1 Bilingualism

The influence of the English language on Swedish started in the 17<sup>th</sup> century with the first influx of loanwords such as *tobak* ‘tobacco’ and *kväkare* ‘Quaker’ (Ljung, 2004:101). The introduction of these types of English words into Swedish are known as *convenience borrowings*, caused by the lack of Swedish words for the increasing number of new goods and concepts introduced into Swedish society. As a result, the English words were brought into the Swedish language (Stålhammar, 2004:85). Among the subject areas and concepts introduced were sports, trade and fashion. Words such as *mollskin* and *smoking* are directly derived from the English words ‘moleskin’ and ‘smoking jacket’ (Stålhammar, 2004:90). However, these loan words can sometimes change meaning over time, or be given additional meanings not found in the original language (Baker, 2013:22).

In the last 30 years the use of the English language in Sweden has expanded, turning English into a second language in Sweden rather than a foreign language. English has become *intranational* as opposed to *international*, and has become indispensable for many Swedes who speak English on a daily basis, even when communicating with other Swedes. It is now common to hear two or more Swedes speaking in English to each other, or using English words in their Swedish speech, regardless of the fact that they could communicate just as well by simply speaking Swedish (Sharp, 2007:224).

The contact between the two languages will ultimately lead to *linguistic interference*, where grammar, pronunciation and concepts are transferred from the native language to the foreign language (Galvao, 2009:1). Amongst the natural consequences of the daily contact between these languages is English-Swedish interference on a *phonological level*. These

interactions are often known as *foreign accents* and are shown in intonation, stress and pronunciation (Montes-Alcalá, 2005:11). Another interference occurs on a *syntactic level*. This type of interference alters word order in meaning, giving Swedish words English word order and English words Swedish word order. *Interactions on a morphological level* affect gender and number markers. *Interactions on a lexical level* include *semantic extensions*, *borrowing*, *calques* and code-switching. *Semantic extension* occurs where a lexical item that already exists in L1 changes and expands its meaning from the original item to an item with similar meaning in L2. *Borrowing* however occurs when there is a gap in a language's lexicon and a loan word is brought in to fill the gap. These loan words can be assimilated into the language such as the word *e-maila*, to send an e-mail, but can also be unassimilated, such as the word *styling*. *Calques* are literal translations of a word or a phrase from one language to another, such as *brevvän*, pen pal, and *skyskrapa*, skyscraper. Code-switching differs from these previously mentioned interferences between languages in that code-switching occurs when a speaker or writer alternates between the two languages intra-sententially or inter-sententially, or by using tag-switching (Montes-Alcalá, 2005: 11-12).

## 2.2 The basics of code-switching

One important aspect of bilingual communication is code-switching. Romaine (1995), discusses different types of code-switching; *tag-switching*, where one inserts a tag from one language into a sentence in another language. E.g. *När kommer du dit sen, you know?* 'When will you get there later, you know?'. Romaine further identifies two other types of code-switching, *inter-sentential* and *intra-sentential*. Inter-sentential code-switching concerns switching languages at a clause or sentence boundary, using one element in one language and another element in another language. E.g. *Jag skall göra min läxa nu because I want to go to the movies later.* 'I will do my homework now because I want to go to the movies later.' In the final type of code-switching, intra-sentential switching, the switch between languages occurs within the clause. E.g. *I gave her den röda lampan* 'I gave her the red lamp'. This may also include mixing within the boundaries of a word so that a word may have a stem in one language and inflections in another, for example the English stem *attach* and Swedish inflection *-a* in *attacha*, to attach something. The same pattern can be seen in words such as *e-maila*, to e-mail something. These types of code-switching can be used individually, but it is possible to find more than one, and on occasion all three of them in the same discourse (Romaine, 1995: 122-123).

### 2.3 Sociolinguistic aspects of code-switching

According to Gardner-Chloros (in Bullock and Toribio, 2009:97) it is argued that the perspective to use when looking at code-switching should first and foremost be sociolinguistic, that is from a perspective where the speakers' use of language correlates to the speakers' social identity and to different aspects of their social and cultural life. Gardner-Chloros mentions Gumpertz' theory (in Bullock and Toribio, 2009:104) of *we-codes* and *they-codes*, where the minority language serves as a *we-code*, associated with activities within the group and informal conversations, while the majority language serves as the *they-code*, associated with formal speech and out-group relations. The relationship between these codes and their non-linguistic context is considered to be indirect and it is very uncommon that only one of these codes is considered to be appropriate in a situation. The two are often used side by side in a conversation, using code-switching. Furthermore, code-switching can be used to create a common identity within a group of people of different origin. An example of this might be when a person with Swedish as their first language, but with some knowledge of English, interacts with people who have English as their first language and Swedish as their second language. A conversation between these people would most likely be full of code-switching, even though none of the participants need to use code-switching as a tool to make themselves understood by all. Code-switching can therefore be used, not out of necessity, but by choice in order to strengthen one's identity within a group (Gardner-Chloros in Bullock and Toribio, 2009:106).

### 2.4 Code-switching in computer-mediated discourse

Communication between people via the internet is termed *Computer-mediated discourse* (CMD) and is described by Susan C. Herring as "the communication produced when human beings interact with one another by transmitting messages via networked computers" (in Schifffrin, Tannen and Hamilton, 2001:612). Even though code-switching in the past has mostly been found in real life conversations, and has been considered by scholars to only exist in spontaneous speech (Dorleijn and Nortier in Bullock and Toribio, 2009:126), it is becoming more common in the virtual world. This may be caused by the fact that CMD can be considered to be if not an extension of speech, a way for the writer to infuse colloquial forms as well as features of spoken language. Furthermore, it is often composed instantly, without a pause to edit oneself and to consider being consistent in the choice of one language over another (Dorleijn and Nortier in Bullock and Toribio, 2009:126).

This being said, it is clear that code-switching is not always used in the same way in spoken language and in CMD. In CMD editing of texts is possible, and code-switching is



therefore always to a higher degree a conscious choice, whether it is used as a means to identifying oneself with the reader or to emphasize the writer's heritage, status or interests. According to Dorleijn and Nortier (in Bullock and Toribio, 2009), CMD data show similarities to written data when it comes to lexical density, but similarities to spoken data regarding the use of pronouns, with first and second person pronouns occurring even more often in CMD data than in spoken data (Dorleijn and Nortier in Bullock and Toribio, 2009: 129).

### **3. Previous studies on written code-switching**

This section discusses previous studies made by scholars concerning code-switching in written form and code-switching online. While this is a new area of research, as the practice of publishing texts through blogs online is relatively new, some studies have been carried out in recent years.

A common consensus among researchers has long been that real patterns of code-switching can only be found in spontaneous speech. Therefore, research of code-switching in written form has long been neglected. Sebba (in Sebba, Mahootian and Jonsson, 2012) states that the answer to why this has come to be lies within the concept of code-switching itself. The monolingual bias of researchers identifying with one language in particular can cause problems when researching texts containing a language differing from their specialty, and they therefore tend to avoid it (Sebba, Mahootian and Jonsson, 2012:2). Sebba also states that while research on code-switching in written texts does exist, some of the problems have been that the area has no independent theoretical framework, but has drawn on framework developed for spoken code-switching research or frameworks from other theoretical disciplines (Sebba, Mahootian and Jonsson, 2012:1).

With the expansion of the internet however, the interest for written code-switching as a tool to mark identity has grown, and the *Markedness Model* by Myers-Scotton (in Sebba, Mahootian and Jonsson, 2012:5) where code-switching is seen as rational choices, and the use of a particular word to display a certain meaning can be, at least partially, applied to interactive written genres such as blogs, forums and online chat (Sebba, Mahootian and Jonsson, 2012:5). Since a blog can be compared to a personal diary, where one writes to oneself or to others within the same community online, it is likely that code-switching as a rational choice can occur there to a greater extent than in other online texts (Romaine. 1995:121). Furthermore, texts in blogs are produced at a fast pace with the author's main

focus on the content and not the language used, leading to language rules sometimes being overlooked or disregarded (Laroussi, 2011:77).

As mentioned above, some of the focus on code-switching research has recently shifted towards the use of code-switching as a tool in identity construction, where code-switching is a conscious choice (Dorleijn and Nortier in Bullock and Toribio, 2009:127). In the study 'Language contacts and Code-switching in electronic writing: the case of the blog' (Laroussi, 2011) Lienard and Penloup investigate code-switching in French personal blogs. They found that although blogs written by bilingual persons were little affected by intra-sentential code-switching, monolingual writers used code-switching to a larger extent. In addition to this, they describe written code-switching in these blogs as a way to show closeness to the readers, as a strong identity claim and to show cultural familiarity rather than just to show that they are proficient in another language (Lienard and Penloup in Laroussi, 2011:86).

In 'Blogging in two Languages: Code-Switching in Bilingual Blogs' (2007) Montes-Alcalá analyzed 15 Spanish-English bilingual blogs, to see if the writers would switch freely between the two languages within the texts, and also attempted to explain why they did so and when these switches occurred (Montes-Alcalá, 2007:162). Montes-Alcalá found that the most common type of code-switching occurrence were that of lexical items, specifically nouns of noun phrases, and holds the lack of an exact linguistic equivalent in one language as a possible reason why. However, she stresses that it is more likely the case of the biculturalism of the subjects that causes the code-switching, as the code-switched words all seemed to be linked culturally either to English or Spanish (Montes-Alcalá, 2007:167).

Montes-Alcalá speculates that the social stigma of spoken code-switching is absent in this particular written form, as the internet creates a democratic forum for the writers and allows them to sway away from conventional rules of writing (Montes-Alcalá, 2007:169). The writing in these blogs are shown to expose stylistic and social function close to those found in spoken conversations, and the reason the writers code-switch is clear to Montes-Alcalá; the writers do it because they can (Montes-Alcalá, 2007:169). Code-switching represents a way for the writers to express their dual culture, their familiarity with both the English- and the Spanish-speaking world, as well as a way for them to express and make use of both their languages (Montes-Alcalá 2007:169).

In "Repertoires and Resources: Accounting for Code-mixing in the Media" (in Sebba, Mahootian and Jonsson, 2012) Mahootian analyzes the function of written code-switching in data taken from mainstream publications in the United States. Mahootian states that language can be a stronger link to identity than ancestry or religion, and that the language, style and

register we choose all contribute to who we are and how we chose to represent ourselves (Sebba, Mahootian and Jonsson, 2012:193). Mahootian also states that in order to understand intentional code-switching in writing, it is vital to acknowledge the relationships that exists between socio-political power, identity and language (in Sebba, Mahootian and Jonsson, 2012: 195). While examining why code-switching in written media occurs, Mahootian arrives at the same conclusion as Montes-Alcalá (Montes-Alcalá, 2007:169); people code-switch because they can. However, he also states that while it is a way for writers to show their bilingual identity, it is also a small act of rebellion, to stray away from monolingual conventions and to express their views of both language and the world as being more diverse than normally portrayed through mainstream media (in Sebba, Mahootian and Jonsson, 2012:195).

#### **4. Material and method**

In this section, the material and method used for this study is explained. Section 4.1 discusses the material used and section 4.2 deals with problems found and the study's limitations. Section 4.3 explains the method used in order to produce the study, and explains the steps taken to complete it.

##### **4.1 Material**

The primary data source of this study is the blog *Charlotta Flinkenberg*, a public blog where it is possible for anyone to read the blog posts and make comments about the content. The blog is written by a Swedish journalist and editor-in-chief of a Swedish fashion magazine and was started on May 21, 2008. The blog was chosen on the basis of it being a fashion and lifestyle blog written by a journalist working in the fashion industry. It is described as fashion blog by the author; however it also contains personal and lifestyle entries. This choice facilitates the essay's aim to investigate code-switching occurrences within Swedish popular culture online.

As of September 30, 2013 the blog contains 4684 blog posts, with the first entry posted May 21, 2008. Given the large number of blog posts available for research, this essay will focus solely on the 310 blog posts made between February 1, 2013 and September 30, 2013. The blog allows comments, and it can therefore be used in a similar fashion as a forum, containing the possibility for readers to start discussions and expand upon the original blog posts. This type of online environment provides possibilities for the author to be more open

and spontaneous as a result of the removed constraints of other texts published in for instance online newspapers or magazines.

## 4.2 Problems and Limitations

Since this study is limited to examining 310 blog posts from the blog *Charlotta Flinkenberg* for occurrences of Swedish-English code-switching, the findings are not applicable to all occurrences of Swedish-English code-switching online. The results can however serve as a case study of online code-switching, and are reliable as a representation of code-switching in this particular blog and valid for the text type as a whole.

A possible problem when studying these 310 blog posts might be the familiarity with some of the English words within the monolingual Swedish community in Sweden, where some words are understood and used by monolinguals in Sweden, and might therefore not be seen by the author or the readers as code-switched. In order to distinguish between the use of loan words and the use of code-switching, the Swedish Academy Glossary (SAOL) have been used and only words not present there have been regarded as code-switching.

## 4.3 Method

This study uses a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods when examining the data found in the blog *Charlotta Flinkenberg*. In order to discover if code-switching between Swedish and English occurred, the blog posts were read manually and examined for occurrences of Swedish-English code-switching. In order to examine the authors own language, and only hers, instances of code-switching occurring within quotes were discarded, as well as instances where professional titles and names of organizations were used. Since the author answered readers' questions in a number of blog posts, all portions of text not originally written by the author herself were also discarded.

The blog posts where code-switching occurrences were found were analyzed further to examine what types of code-switching occurred in accordance with the qualitative method, where a more detailed study was carried out. The code-switching occurrences were separated into two groups: those where only a single English word was used, and those where a whole phrase or parts of a phrase were used. The group of single-word code-switches was examined further, with the words separated into word classes in order to see what type of words were code-switched, in accordance with the research questions. In addition to this, all words, both those found in single-word code-switches and in code-switched phrases were analyzed in order to examine what words were code-switched most frequently.

Furthermore, the overall word-count of the blog posts where code-switching was found

was examined, and compared to the number of code-switched words found, in order to see what percentage of words used by the author were code-switched. The overall content of each blog post was also examined, to see if any patterns of code-switching occurred in specific subject areas, and if the frequency of code-switching occurrences varied depending on what the writer wrote about. While the writer employs so called ‘tags’ to categorize her blog posts, most were tagged *allmänt*, meaning *general*. The blog posts were therefore manually separated into four categories based on general content; answers to readers’ questions, fashion and beauty, work, and personal life, and then analyzed according to those categories.

Lastly, the possible reasons for using code-switching in *Charlotta Flinkenberg* were examined, using the sociolinguistic theory of language as a way to create or enhance one’s identity and to connect and create a sense of community within a particular group, in this case the readers of the blog.

Since this case study can be seen as a valid and reliable representation of one aspect of language use in the blog as a whole, it can be used as an example of online written code-switching within popular culture in Sweden. The study can be included with previous studies of code-switching online, and correlates with the studies made on written code-switching as a sociolinguistic tool used consciously by a writer to create and enforce identity.

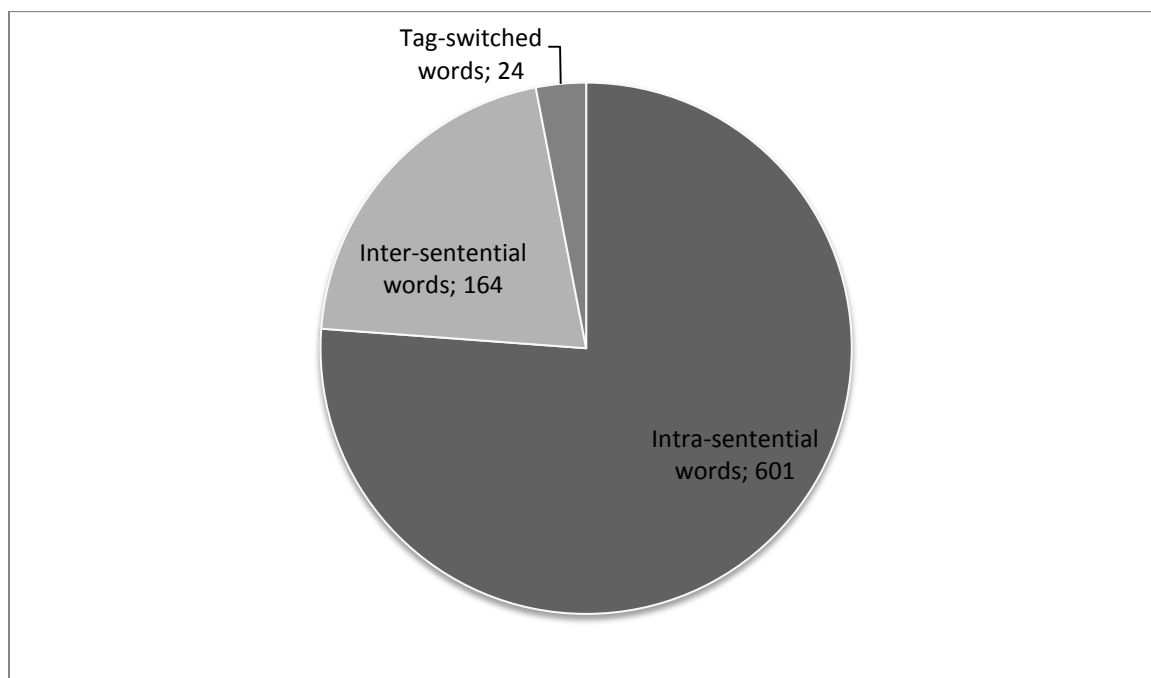
## 5. Results

The first section, section 5.1, gives an account of the overall frequencies of code-switched words and gives an account of the type/token ratio of the code-switching occurrences found. Section 5.2 discusses in what types of blog posts code-switching can be found and section 5.3 examines the most frequently code-switched words in *Charlotta Flinkenberg*. Section 5.4 deals with the use of different types of code-switching within the blog posts. Furthermore, section 5.5 examines what kind of single word code-switches are used by the author, the frequency of single word code-switching within the blog posts as well as the meaning of these words.

### 5.1 Overall frequencies of code-switched words

The 310 blog posts examined contained a total of 64 587 words excluding quotes and questions by readers. Out of these, 789 words were code-switched, accounting for 1.22 % of the total word count. While 1.22% might sound like a small number, this does in fact show that on average, the author of *Charlotta Flinkenberg* code-switches one word out of 100 in

these blog posts. Figure 1 below shows the number of code-switched words found within the blog posts, divided into the three types of code-switching occurring in *Charlotta Flinkenberg*



**Figure 1. Types of code-switched words in *Charlotta Flinkenberg*.**

Out of the 789 code-switched words found in *Charlotta Flinkenberg*, 601 of them were intra-sentential, 164 were inter-sentential words and 24 were tag-switched words. For examples of these words, see section 5.4.

While the writer uses a total of 789 code-switched words, she only uses 285 different English words. This shows that while the writer code-switches often, the variety of English words she uses is now wide. Instead she chooses to repeat many of the words in different code-switching occurrences.

## **5.2 Code-switching in different types of blog posts**

In *Charlotta Flinkenberg*, the writer blogs about her work as an editor-in-chief of a fashion magazine, fashion, beauty and to some extent her personal life. Furthermore, she answers readers' questions regarding fashion related subjects. All in all, she code-switches 597 times in the different types of blog post.

Table 1 below shows the word count for each type of blog post and the number of code-switching occurrences found in each of the four types. It also shows the frequency of code-switching occurrences in the different categories.

**Table 1. Code-switching frequency in different types of blog posts.**

<b>Subject areas</b>	<b>Number of words</b>	<b>Code-switching occurrences</b>	<b>Code-switching frequency</b>
<b>Answers to questions</b>	30 585	280	1/109 words
<b>Fashion/ Beauty</b>	10 019	195	1/51 words
<b>Personal life</b>	9 047	62	1/146 words
<b>Work</b>	5 577	60	1/93 words

The areas where most code-switching occurrences can be found are within the writers answers to questions (280 occurrences) and fashion and beauty (195 occurrences). When writing about her personal life, 62 occurrences of code-switching are found, and in the blog posts concerning her work the writer code-switches 60 times.

However, as seen in table 1 above, the different types of blog posts do not take up equal proportions of the text. In all, the 204 blog posts where code-switching occurrences were found contained 55 228 words. 30 585 of these words were found within the blog posts concerning readers' questions, 10 019 in fashion and beauty related blog posts, 9 047 in blog posts about her personal life and 5 577 in the blog posts where the writer discusses her work. The frequency of code-switching occurrences in these different types of blog posts are therefore roughly 1 out of every 146 words in blog posts concerning the writer's personal life, 1 out of every 109 words in blog posts concerning readers' questions, 1 out of every 93 words in blog posts regarding her work and 1 out of every 51 words in blog posts about fashion and beauty.

### **5.3 Most frequently code-switched words in Charlotta Flinkenberg**

In *Charlotta Flinkenberg*, the most commonly code-switched words are those concerning fashion.

Table 2 below shows the 10 most frequently used words within all code-switching occurrences found in the blog, not only the previously mentioned single-word code-switches. It should be noted that some of the words are used both as a word in itself and as stems or in a compound, attached by the author to different Swedish words in the text, such as *statementhalsband*, *outfitbilder* and *speedquizztorsdag*.

**Table 2. The ten most frequently code-switched words in Charlotta Flinkenberg.**

Most code-switched words	Occurrences
<b>Outfit-</b>	71
<b>Speedquiz-</b>	40
<b>Sneakers</b>	26
<b>Statement-</b>	14
<b>Skinny</b>	13
<b>Bootcamp</b>	13
<b>Clutch</b>	12
<b>Bling</b>	10
<b>Heels</b>	10
<b>Edgy</b>	9

9 out of 10 of the most frequently code-switched words have a connection to fashion. While words such as *speedquiz*, *statement-*, *bling* and *edgy* require an more in-depth reading of the blog to see the connection, words such as *heels*, *clutch* and *outfit* can be identified as fashion terms immediately. The most frequent code-switched word of all was found to be *outfit*, used 71 times by the writer when describing the clothes she is wearing, but also in connections to other people, as in example (1) below. The code-switching occurrences in the examples presented in this section are all underlined, to facilitate easier identification

(1) ‘Hans outfit kommer från Patouf, hatten har Malinda Damgaard gjort (som även gör hattar till Lady Gaga), clutchen var från BCBG Max Azria.’ (Posted August 26, 2013)

‘His outfit comes from Patouf, the hat is made by Malinda Damgaard (who also makes hats for Lady Gaga), the clutch was from BCBG Max Azria.’



In the blog posts, the author often code-switches using English words that have common known Swedish equivalents showing how she uses English as a substitute rather than a supplement. The word *clutch* can also be found in example (1) above, and is used in 12 different code-switches by the author. *Clutch* has a Swedish equivalent in *kuvertväska*, but the author still chooses to use the English word.

(2) 'Medan jag byter om från UGG:s till Burberry-ankelboots kan ni passa på att ställa en fråga som kommentar. Som vanligt svarar jag inom 24 timmar. Klara, färdiga...speedquiz![sic]' (Posted February 7, 2013)

'While I change from UGGs to Burberry ankle boots you can take the opportunity to ask a question as a comment. As usual I will reply within 24 hours. Ready, set...Speedquiz![sic]'

Here, the writer tells the readers to ask questions she then answers within 24 hours in a separate blog post called *speedquiz*. While it is not stated in the example, these questions mostly concern fashion and her work as an editor-in-chief, and the word therefore has a direct connection to fashion through the writer's use of it. In addition to this, this example shows how the writer sometimes employs Swedish grammar rules to English words, creating one word out of *speed* and *quiz*, in concordance with Swedish grammar.

(3) 'Dämpade överdelar som stickade tröjor i modesta och jordnära färger blir fina ihop med dominanta statementsmycken som stora halsband.' (Posted March 22, 2013)

'Muted color tops like knitted sweaters in modest and earthy colors are nice with dominant statement jewelry like large necklaces.'

In example (3) the writer uses the stem *statement-* to describe a certain type of large necklace. *Statement* is further used in the blog posts to describe powerful and unique pieces of clothing and jewelry.

(4) 'Bling på sneakers generellt är galet hett just nu och ett säkert kort eftersom det faktiskt är en trend som hållit i sig ett tag, jag tror inte den går över till hösten om vi säger så.' (Posted March 8, 2013)

‘Bling on sneakers in general is very hot right now and a safe card as it is a trend that has kept going a while, I don’t think it will pass in time for fall if we say so.’

Here, the writer uses the word *bling* when describing a certain look for shoes. *Bling* is further used in the blog posts to describe fashion items that shine, contains stones and sequins. It can be found as in example (4) above, but is also sometimes repeated twice, as in *bling bling*.

(5) ‘Vinrött är så pass edgy man kan våga vara, eller klassiskt rött. Men lila...? Nope. Sorry!’ (Posted February 25, 2013)

‘Wine-red is as edgy as you can dare to be, or classic red. But purple...? Nope. Sorry!’

In example (5) *Edgy* is used to describe a color as daring and something on the verge of what one might wear. It is used by the writer when describing fashion that stands out and something one might not normally wear.

As seen in section 5.2 a large portion of the code-switching occurrences in *Charlotta Flinkenberg* can be found in blog posts concerning fashion and beauty, the writer’s work or when she is answering readers’ questions about fashion. In blog posts concerning the writer’s personal life, the code-switching occurrences found are considerably less frequent. However, the 10<sup>th</sup> most frequently code-switched word, *bootcamp*[sic], can be found in these particular blog posts.

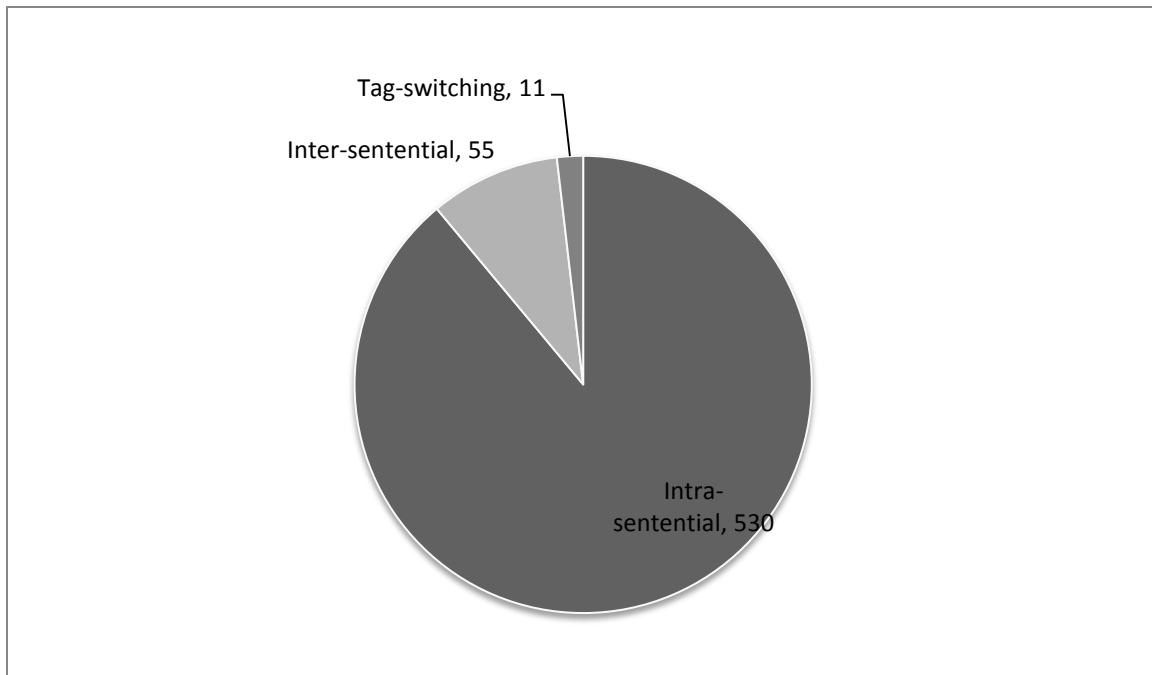
(6) ‘VECKAN SOM GICK - TRÄNING: Bootcamp[sic] tre dagar denna vecka, en mil på löpbandet vid ett tillfälle och en halv mil i kraftig lutning.’ (Posted April 15, 2013)

‘THE PAST WEEK – EXCERCISE: Boot camp three days this week, 10 kilometers on the treadmill on one occasion and 5 kilometers on steep incline.’

Here, she writes about her personal life, in particular her exercise regime performing a type of outdoor work-out she sometimes refers to as *bootcamp*. As seen in example (2), the writer once again uses Swedish grammar rules when code-switching, creating one word out of *boot* and *camp*.

## 5.4 The different types of code-switching in Charlotta Flinkenberg

Figure 3 below shows the number of code-switching occurrences found within the blog, divided into three types of code-switching; intra-sentential, inter-sentential and tag-switching.



**Figure 2. Code-switching occurrences in Charlotta Flinkenberg.**

When using the types of code-switching described in section 2.2 the study clearly shows how the author of *Charlotta Flinkenberg* uses different types of code-switching in different blog posts as well as a combination of code-switching types within the same blog post. The code-switching occurrences in the examples presented further down in these sections are all underlined, to facilitate easier identification.

### 5.4.1 Intra-sentential code-switching

As seen in figure 2. above, the most common type of code-switching in the blog posts of *Charlotta Flinkenberg* is intra-sentential code-switching. Out of the 597 code-switching occurrences found, 531 of them were intra-sentential code-switching, representing 88.94 % of the total number of code-switching occurrences. Here the code-switching can be found within a sentence and is not regulated by clauses or shifts within the sentence.

- (7) 'Bär den med platta sandaler eller sneakers på dagtid och med kilklackar eller heels på kvällstid med en cardigan eller skinnjacka över axlarna.' (Posted May 29, 2013)

'Wear it with flat sandals or sneakers during the day and with wedges or heels during the night with a cardigan or leather jacket over the shoulders.'

In example (7) the code-switched words are found within the sentence. The author changes between languages within the same category of words, alternating between Swedish and English when naming different types of shoes. Here, the meaning of “*heels*” is clearly the same as the Swedish “*högklackat*”, but the author still chooses to use the English word, even though the majority of the text is in Swedish.

- (8) ‘Att allt flöt på så bra med sponsorerna, deras fina stationer, goodiebagsen och baren där det serverades fria drinkar.’ (Posted September 20, 2013)

‘That everything worked out so good with the sponsors, their nice stations, the goodie bags and the bar where free drinks were served.’

In example (8) a different type of intra-sentential code-switching is used, where the author has added the Swedish inflection *-en* to the English stem *goodie bag*. In this case, the author adds the Swedish inflection to the already present English inflection *-s*, creating a code-switched word with two inflections that both indicate the plural but in different languages. In addition to this, the author also creates a compound, attaching the two English words to each other.

- (9) ‘Alla typer av animal prints på skor håller säsong efter säsong. Zebra, leopard, snakeprint[sic]. Jag hade en hangup[sic] på zebramönster för några år sedan (...)’  
(Posted May 18, 2013)

‘All types of animal prints on shoes are modern season after season. Zebra, leopard, snake print. I had a hang up on zebra patterns a few years ago (...)’

In example (9) the writer uses English words, but on two occasions she uses the Swedish norm of putting two words together instead of the English norm of writing them separately, creating compounds, as seen in *snakeprint* and *hangup*. The writer therefore applies Swedish grammar rules to the English words as well. However, as evident by the separation between *animal* and *prints*, she is not consistent in doing this.

- (10) ‘Det var niotusenågonting[sic]. She lost me at niotusen to start with.’  
(posted July 8, 2013)

‘It was nine thousand something. She lost me at nine thousand to start with.’

In example (10), another intra-sentential code-switch is found, however in this particular sentence, everything but *niotusen* is in English, meaning that all but one word is code-switched. This indicates that while the writer mostly code-switches English words into Swedish sentences, she does not limit herself to doing so on every code-switching occasion.

#### 5.4.2 Inter-sentential code-switching

Another type of code-switching used in *Charlotta Flinkenberg* is inter-sentential code-switching, where the switch between Swedish and English occurs at a sentence boundary or at a clause. As seen in figure 2, this was the second most common type of code-switching with 55 occurrences found, representing 9.21 % of the total occurrences.

(11) ‘Men har jag sett mindre celluliter efter den än så länge? Nope, I wish. Jag är dock hoppfull, eftersom jag inte har väntat mina tio veckor än.’ (Posted July 20, 2013)

‘But have I seen less cellulite after it so far? Nope, I wish. I am however hopeful, since I have not waited my ten weeks yet.’

In example (11), the author changes the language she writes in between sentences, starting out by asking a question in Swedish, answering it in English and then expanding on her answer further in Swedish, switching freely between the two languages.

(12) ‘Nu är magasinet ute i butik. Köp det! The bitch is back...’  
(Posted September 17, 2013)

‘Now the magazine is out in stores. Buy it! The bitch is back...’

Example (12) is yet another example of the writer switching freely between the two languages, as she finishes her blog post in Swedish with an English expression. On this occasion, the reason for writing ‘*The bitch is back*’ in English instead of in Swedish might be to tone down the explicitness of the statement. The word *bitch* has a quite powerful Swedish translation in *Satmara*, and the usage of English here might be to lower the level of severity in the word.

(13) ‘Hade jag fått välja hade jag kört på guld. Classy. Lycka till!’  
(Posted March 22, 2013)

‘If I had been given the choice I would have gone for gold. Classy. Good luck!’

In example (13), a one-worded code-switch can be found in between two Swedish sentences. Here the writer switches languages twice in the same discourse. She starts with one sentence in Swedish, adds a one-worded sentence in English in the middle and finishes in Swedish again. As examples (7) and (8) have previously shown, the writer frequently uses English when describing items, and that can therefore be seen as a possible explanation for the language switching in this example as well.

### 5.4.3 Tag-switching

When examining the blog posts, a third type of code-switching was also found, *tag-switching*. When using tag-switching the author uses a tag from English, and inserts it into a Swedish sentence without violating syntactic rules. This was the least common type of code-switching found within the examined blog posts, with only 11 occurrences or 1.84 % of the findings (see table 2.).

(14) ‘Jag ska även göra en shoppingguide härifrån, såg att några av er bloggläsare skulle hit snart och ville ha tips, you betcha!’ (posted February 13, 2013)

‘I will also make a shopping guide from here, I saw that some of you blog readers were going here soon and wanted tips, you betcha!’

In example (14) the author starts the sentence in Swedish, and then at the very end adds an English tag. The tag does not always finish a sentence in the tag-switched word occurrences in *Charlotta Flinkenberg*, but the tag-switches often seem to occur either at the beginning or the end of a sentence.

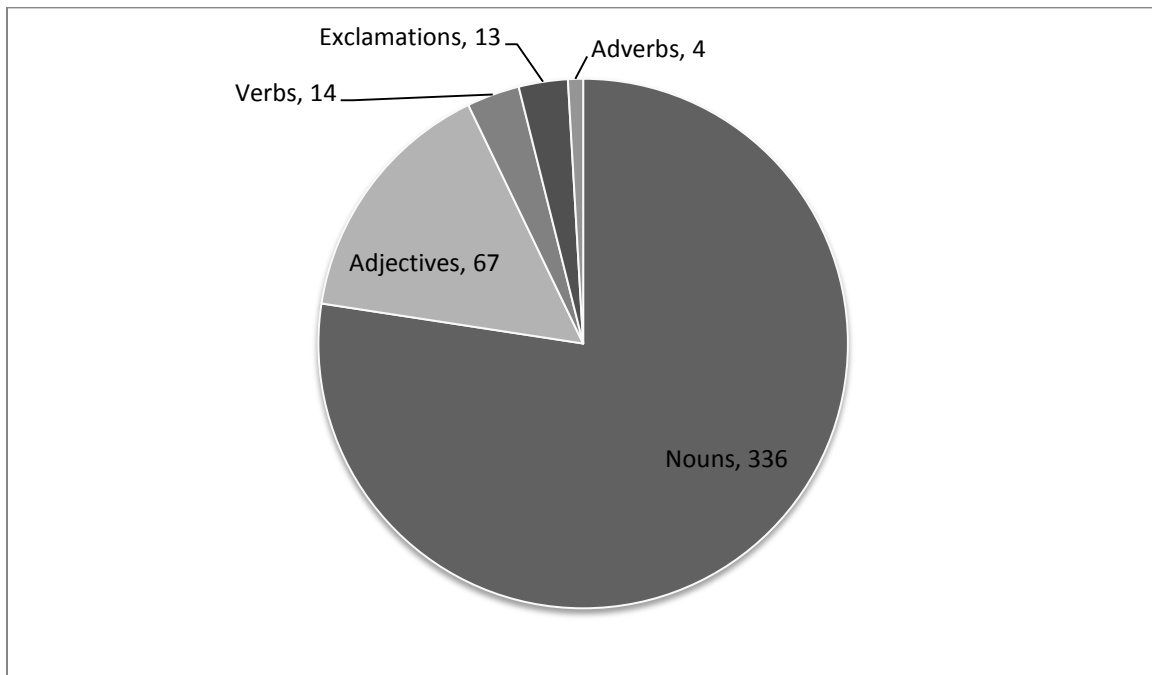
(15) ‘Ni gillar ju när jag tipsar om vårmode, don’t you?’ (Posted February 22 2013)

‘You do like it when I give suggestions on spring fashion, don’t you?’

In example (15) one can see an example of the writer inserting a question tag at the end of a sentence. As in example (14), the tag is placed in the end of the discourse, used to emphasize the statement on what she thinks the readers like to read.

### 5.5 Words-classes found in single word code-switching occurrences

In order to see what types of words were code-switched, all single worded code-switching occurrences were further examined. Figure 2 below shows the different word classes found within the one-worded code-switches in *Charlotta Flinkenberg*, as well as the number of words found within each word class.



**Figure 3. code-switched words divided into word classes.**

The most frequent word classes found within these code-switched words are nouns, followed by adjectives. The most common one-word code-switches used by the author are *Speedquiz*, (38 instances) *Outfit/s* (34 instances) and *sneakers* (17 instances). This correlates with the previously discussed findings in section 5.2 where the most common code-switched words were found within blog posts concerning fashion and beauty, and how although *Speedquiz* is not a fashion term per se, the re-occurring blog posts called *Speedquiz* where the writer answers readers' question about fashion explains the high occurrences of this particular word. Furthermore, words such as *skinny* (11 instances), *metallic* (5 instances) and *animal print* (5 instances), and the stems *statement-* (10 instances) and *boyfriend-* (5 instances) are commonly used in single worded code-switches when describing trends, different cuts and pieces of clothes and jewelry.

## 6. Discussion and further research

In this section section 6.1 summarizes and discusses the results of the study in connection to the previously mentioned studies on written code-switching. Ideas for further research within the subject of written code-switching in popular culture online are found in section 6.2.

### 6.1 Discussion

Since most previous studies on code-switching have focused on spoken language, the study of code-switching in writing is relatively new. However, the increased use of the internet as a means of communication through blogs and discussion forums creates a new interesting field of study.

The aim of this study was to investigate the form and function of Swedish-English code-switching in Swedish popular culture, through a case study of the Swedish fashion blog *Charlotta Flinkenberg*. By closely examining 310 blog posts made between February 1<sup>st</sup> 2013 and September 30<sup>th</sup> 2013, 204 blog posts were found to contain code-switching, and a total of 597 code-switching occurrences were found within them, totaling 789 English words. In all, 64 587 words were examined, and 1.22% of them were found to be code-switched. While the writer uses code-switched words 789 times, she only uses a total of 285 different English words, showing that while she code-switches often, a large number of words are repeated several times in the blog posts.

When reviewing the 310 blog posts, it was found that the writer code-switched most frequently when writing about fashion and beauty, where one code-switching occurrence could be found on average every 51 words. In the blog posts concerning her day-to-day work within the fashion community, a code-switching occurrence could be found once every 93 words and when answering readers' questions once every 109 words. In blog posts regarding her personal life however, the writer code-switched once every 146 words, making code-switching occurrences almost three times as common in the blog posts concerning fashion than in those concerning her personal life.

According to Lienard and Penloup (in Laroussi, 2011) code-switching online most often function as a display of cultural familiarity, in this case within the fashion community (Laroussi 2011:77). Code-switching can be used as a sociolinguistic tool to create group identity using *we-codes* and *they-codes*. In *Charlotta Flinkenberg*, English words and phrases, particularly in regards to fashion, are used as a *we-code* to strengthen the identities of both writer and readers, showing that they belong to the same group, sharing similar interests (Gardner-Chloros in Bullock and Toribio, 2009:106). This is evident from the fact that the



writer code-switches almost three times as often in blog posts concerning fashion than in the blog posts regarding her personal life.

Furthermore, the results showed that 9 out of 10 of the most frequently code-switched words were related to fashion, with only one word being connected to the writer's personal life. The findings further showed that while the writer used three types of code-switching, intra-sentential, inter-sentential and tag-switching, intra-sentential code-switching was by far the most used, representing 88.94 % of the total amount of code-switching occurrences found. The findings also reveal that 434 of the code-switching occurrences were of a single word, showing that 72.69 % of all code-switches were only one word.

When these one-worded code-switches were examined, it was found that the most frequent word classes used by the writer were nouns (336 instances) followed by adjectives (67 instances) verbs (14 instances), exclamations (13 instances) and lastly adverbs (4 instances) were also found. Since the frequency of code-switched nouns is so high, and given that nine out of ten of the most frequently code-switched words were related to fashion, it is possible that the author of *Charlotta Flinkenberg* uses English terms rather than Swedish when referring to fashion related items, to show the readers her expertise within the fashion world. By using the terms “*sneakers*” and “*heels*”, she shows authority within the subject, and the readers can trust her advice on how to dress. These words could be considered as parts of her *register*, i.e. the variety of words used in a particular situation or for a particular purpose (Biber, 1995:1). Here, the writer's position as a fashion expert might cause her to use English words connected to the international fashion world without seeing them as English, since they are words that she encounters and uses frequently in other aspects of her life and work.

Montes Alcalá (2007) also holds the lack of exact linguistic equivalents in one language as a possible reason for code-switching (Montes-Alcalá, 2007:167). The fashion community is constantly exposed to new things and trends, and the high number of code-switched nouns found in the results section reflects the community's focus on clothes, accessories and shoes, some of which may not have exact Swedish equivalents.

However, the main possible reason for code-switching these items remains the previously mentioned sociolinguistic perspective of using code-switching as a way to create and enforce the connection between writer and readers within one cultural group (Montes-Alcalá, 2007:167), in this case within the Swedish fashion community online.

Furthermore, Mahootian (in Sebba, Mahootian and Johnsson, 2012) states that in order to fully understand code-switching in writing, the most important aspect to focus on is the connection with language and identity. Code-switching is a way for the author of *Charlotta*

*Flinkenberg* to show her identity as a fashion expert, and to stray away from conventional writing (Sebba, Mahootian and Johnsson, 2012:195). As an editor-in-chief with approximately 20 years of experience of working as a journalist (as stated in the blog), the writer should know all grammatical and lexical rules very well, but still chooses to stray away from them by intentionally using code-switching in her blog posts.

While this study concludes that the author of *Charlotta Flinkenberg* uses code-switching as a tool to create a bond between her and her readers as well as to strengthen her identity as an expert in the fashion industry, it is possible that the writer is not always aware of the fact that she employs Swedish-English code-switching in her blog. Words such as *outfit* and *sneakers* are commonly used in Sweden, and might not be seen as English by her as she encounters them on a daily basis both in her work and in her private life. Instead, they might be wrongly considered by both writer and readers as loan words already fully established in the Swedish language.

This case study can be seen as a representation of one aspect of language use in the blog, and illustrates a sample of online written code-switching patterns within Swedish popular culture. It correlates with the previous studies mentioned, and can be seen as an addition to studies viewing written code-switching as a sociolinguistic tool to create and enforce the identity of primarily the writer but also the readers of a blog within a particular subject.

## **6.2 Further research**

Since the number of texts published online is constantly increasing and blogs continue to be vastly popular, the opportunities to research online language use and written code-switching are expanding. While this study is valid in examining the use of Swedish-English code-switching within popular culture in one blog, an expanded study could be made comparing this fashion blog to a fashion blog written by someone not working within the fashion industry. If that were done, it would give an opportunity for researchers to see if the usage of English words within the Swedish fashion community is as high amongst “followers” of fashion, and not just an occurrence found in professionals’ fashion language. Furthermore, other study could be made examining code-switching within other aspects of popular culture to see if any patterns of code-switching usage occur despite the authors different areas of interest.

Since this study examines the usage of code-switching in blog posts written by a woman, it could also be interesting to see if there are any differences regarding gender when

using code-switching, by examining and comparing blog posts written by men and women. A study of bloggers' direct communication with their readers through comments could also be carried out, to investigate code-switching in written conversation within the fashion community online.

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## Appendix - All code-switched words and their frequency

This list contains all English word from the blog, as well as the frequency of each word.

All	4	But	1	Far	3	Hurry	2
Action	2	Camp	1	meal	1	I	4
Adda	2	Cargo	1	Fashion	5	Idea	2
Afroamerican	1	Cargopants	1	Fashionista	8	In	8
After	9	Caring	1	Fast	1	Infinity	1
Alive	1	Casual	3	Featuring	1	Is	1
Ambition	1	Caviar	2	Fillers	10	Issues	1
An	1	Celebrity	1	Fire	1	It	7
And	2	Change	1	Fitness	9	Items	1
Animal	1	Chippad	1	Flare	2	Jumpsuit	7
Animalprint	1	Classy	2	For	3	Kids	2
As	1	Cliffhanger	1	Forget	2	Kind	1
At	2	Closet	1	Foundation	1	Kitten	2
Attention	1	Clutch	12	Friends	1	Ladies	1
Back	4	Cocoon	4	Front	1	Lady	1
Bad	5	Coffeetable	1	Function	2	Last	2
Bag	2	Comes	1	Functional	1	Later	1
Baggy	1	Crap	3	Gain	1	Leisure	1
Ballroom	1	Crazy	2	Girl	3	Lift	3
Bananas	1	Crossover	1	Glossy	2	Lipbalm	2
Basic	1	Cufflink	2	Go	1	Lipgloss	1
Beach	8	Custommade	1	God	1	Live	1
Beauty	4	Cut	1	Good	4	Locals	1
Betcha	1	Cutout	1	Goodiebag	6	Look	1
Bling	9	Dancing	1	Guilty	1	Loose	1
Blingade	1	Days	1	Gypsy	1	Looser	1
Blonde	1	Designeritems	1	Hair	2	Lost	1
Boarda	1	Desktop	2	Hangup	1	Love	2
Bootcamp	13	Detox	4	Happy	5	Luck	1
Bootcut	2	Do's	1	Skinnleggings	5	Multitaskar	1
Boxig	2	Don't	2	Skinny	11	My	1
Boy	1	Donut	3	Smile	4	Name	1
Boyfriend	4	Doubt	1	Snakeskin	2	Nanny	1
Brainstorming	1	Dressa	2	Snapshot	2	Nay	1
Bring	1	Dresskod	1	Sneakers	26	Night	1
Bullshit	1	Dustbag	1	Socketjunkie	2	No	6
Business	1	Duty	1	Soft	3	Nope	4
Mall	2	Eat	1	Have	2	Nude	4
Me	3	Edge	2	Headpiece	2	Nudefärgad	3
Metallic	5	Edgy	9	Heels	10	Of	2
Mid	1	Everyone	1	Hello	1	Oh	4
Miss	1	Extensions	5	Here	1	On	4
Missmatcha	1	Fabulousness	1	Herself	1	One	2
More	3	Facials	1	Hint	2	Or	1
Much	2	Fanpage	1	Home	1	Outfit	71

Oversize	2	Row	1	Streetstyle	8	Upcomers	1
Pain	1	Running	1	Stripes	1	Very	2
Peeptoes	1	Safe	2	Strong	1	Vintage	2
Person	1	Say	1	Sure	1	Walk	1
Pieces	1	Scratch	1	Surprise	1	Want	1
Pimpa	2	Seamless	2	Tacky	1	Way	1
Plain	1	Season	2	Tell	1	We're	1
Plans	1	Seating	1	That's	3	Wear	2
Platforms	1	See	2	The	6	Wedge	5
Playsuit	3	Seekers	1	Through	1	Week	1
Pleasure	1	Sexy	2	Throwback	6	Welcome	1
Powerwalk	2	Sharing	1	Thursday	7	Well	2
Premiumbrand	1	She	1	Time	3	Whale	2
Pride	1	Shit	2	To	6	What	1
Prints	1	Shopper	1	Too	2	White	1
Private	1	Shopping	4	Touch	1	When	1
Public	2	Sixpack	2	Track	1	Why	1
Queen	1	Skin	2	Trademark	1	Willing	1
Recyclat	1	Some	2	Trainers	1	Win	3
Re-	4	Sorry	7	Trashigaste	1	Wish	1
Red	1	Speedquiz	40	Tributeband	1	With	1
Remover	1	Spokesperson	1	Tuned	1	Work	3
Reps	1	Spot	1	Tutorials	1	Yay	2
Roadtrip	1	Start	1	Undercuts	1	Yeah	1
Roomservice	1	Statement	14	Underdogs	2	You	9
Round	7	Stay	1	Undergarments	1	Your	1
Rowing	1	Street	1	Underwear	3		