

An Investigation To Linguistic Features Of Code Switching

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Title: Investigation into Linguistic Features of Code Switching: A Case Study of English Language Teacher

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ABSTRACT

The aim behind this study is to investigate the Linguistic Features of Code Switching, done in classroom while delivering lectures among the multilingual group of people. According to a Sociolinguist Ronald Wardhaugh (1986) definition, "that the term code can be used to refer to any kind of system that two or more people employ for communication", Espinosa (1917) named as "speech mixture, in the speech of New Mexicans (cited by Ana Huerta- Macias and Elizabeth Quintero, 2001). Code-Switching is composed by the coining of two words 'code and switch'. As we Pakistanis are Multilingual people we are habitual of using more than one language at a time in our formal and informal conversations, that is the main reason that when we are teaching in a classroom we often code switch, be that in different levels (Inter-sentential/Intra-sentential code switching occur. The main purpose of this study is to contribute to a better understanding of the code-switching phenomenon to have positive impacts upon teaching and learning process. The study investigates the linguistic features of code- switching, that include intra-sentential code-switching, inter-sentential code-switching and code-switching at word, phrase and clause level, which are examined in both male and female university teachers' lectures. Several findings from Urdu/English code-switching corpus, collected from Mehran University will be presented and analyzed. It is investigated that while making use of code-switching, there is a frequent use of different linguistic features of code-switching between Urdu and English by university teachers. It will be investigated that if the intra-sentential code- switching is the leading code-switched area, and code-switching at word, clause, and phrase level, being a part of inter-sentential code-switching, which are the successive areas On the other hand, the inter-sentential code-switching will make how much of the percentage value of it. The research method for this is qualitative, as the tool for data collection the naturalistic observation will be used. The results will be acquired by using Antconc. Corpus software.

Keywords: Code-switching, classroom interaction, bilingual, multilingual, intra-sentential code-switching, inter-sentential code-switching

1. INTRODUCTION

Most of the times, when we look around in our classrooms what we see that bilinguals and multilinguals who are able to speak more than one or two languages, those people usually do code switching or code mixing. And this fact is common all over in the South Asian countries, as in Pakistan and India. It can be claimed that code switching is common phenomena in all of the world's countries, but the only difference is in the degrees and levels of the sum total of code switching no matter what class, which society and what age one belongs to. (Grosjean, 1982). In Pakistan the population is a composition of multilingual society, where people know more than two language at a time, and the code mixing and code switching are the phenomena commonly found in Pakistan such as the national language used in Pakistan is Urdu, then it can be observed that use of lexical items in Urdu from English language are often used by a an educated class who know English and Urdu, the case of other indigenous languages of Pakistan, mostly it is observed that the words from English are sometime coined, borrowed from English when we don't have the equivalent word to be used for the words like computer, telescope, technology, and etc. this is even possible when someone doesn't possess the ability to speak and write English, such people are able to employ the lexical items, phrases which give the discourse meaning from English Language.(kaleem Raza khan, 2004). When proficient users of more than one language communicate, the factor of code switching is commonly seen in many levels for example, in the lexical, sentential (intra-sentential, inter-sentential), phrases and clauses from different discourses and different languages. The code switching is a phenomenon which is a substitute use by polyglots who are capable to use more than two languages of in the same situation where the communication is taking place is then known to be the Code-Switching or Code Mixing. (Milroy and Muysken, 1995). The issue of code switching first appeared in the early 19th century the first discoverer Espinosa (1917) named as "speech mixture, in the speech of New Mexicans (cited by Ana Huerta-

Macias and Elizabeth Quintero, 2001). Code-Switching is composed by the coining of two words 'code and switch'.

According to a Sociolinguist Ronald Wardhaugh (1986) definition, "that the term code can be used to refer to any kind of system that two or more people employ for communication", whether, the research tells that in the any dialect, any variety of language, may it be a pidgin or creole are all known as codes. Still, when we turn it into written form then we name this phenomenon as "Codification". On the other side, if we look at "switching" it seems to be just like a "movement"; altering or substitution from one to another. We can say that you move, switch, shift, alter, and substitute from one code to another in conversation from one language to another. This shift, switch, and movement of bilingual speakers from one code (language) to another code, is called code switching. Coming to the classroom context, "the pedagogical and communicative functions of classroom code-switching justify its use in teaching and learning contexts" (Romylyn A. Metila, 2009, P. 44).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The code switching plays an essential role in our classroom, it facilitates teachers to teach effectively. The clarity is obligatory while teaching, and teachers in Pakistani context usually switch the code for providing their students an extended learning by using L1 in classroom. The Investigation of Linguistic Features of Code-Switching: A Case Study of English Language used by Teachers in University level. The code switching in Pakistan is perceived negatively, while research proves that code switching can enhance learning. This study will provide an understanding about the role of Code Switching in new perspective.

1.3 Justification of Study

The Code-switching is a common phenomenon found everywhere in Pakistan, as it is a multilingual country and the population consists of polyglots, who can speak more than one language, they may be bilinguals, or multilinguals. So, the language used by them is mixture of two or more than two languages be that formal or informal setting. A lot of research is done on this topic

to investigate the impact of code-switching in education or in classrooms in contexts. But in Pakistan still there are few areas which need to be considered, as the Linguistic features of code-switching are not been of the attention in Pakistan, if we see very less amount of research is seen in this area.

1.4 Aims of the Study

The study aims to investigate the linguistic features of code switching in university. The objectives of the study are:

1. To know the frequent use of linguistic features of code switching and identify the linguistic items.

1.5 Research Question

The research question is as under:

1. How much frequency/percentage value can be obtained if we investigate the code switching in terms of Inter-sentential/ intra-sentential levels?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The issue of code switching first appeared in the early 19th century the first discoverer Espinosa (1917) named as “speech mixture in the speech of New Mexicans (cited by Ana Huerta- Macias and Elizabeth Quintero, 2001). Code-Switching is composed by the coining of two words ‘code and switch”.

In Pakistani classrooms, code-switching is a common thing which is seen in our academic fields and it is an extended phenomenon. If we talk about university and the use of a Language for medium of instruction in academic setting, no matter what the subject be, and to whom it is taught, i.e science class, medical or engineering, or a mathematic class, or even any language class or an EFL or ESL English Language is supplemented with some indigenous language in Pakistani context. So, it can be claimed that code-switching in English Language is used with proportion to other languages like, Urdu the national language of Pakistan, and other provincial and regional languages. So, we can say that the teacher and students use the blend of two or more languages

Urdu and English, we name this phenomenon as Code-switching. “It means that learning and teaching in classrooms is supported by this blend of Urdu and English. Commenting on this aspect of code switching” Mamokgethi Setati and Jill Adler (2001, pp. 243-244) say:

“Code-switching in a school classroom usually refers to bilingual or multilingual setting, and at its most general, entails switching by the teacher and/or learners between the language of learning and teaching (LOLT) and the learners’ main language. Code-switching is a practice that enables learners to harness their main language as a learning resource”.

The code switching in ELT scenario it serves as a support in teaching as well as learning found at different levels, as we look at this then on one side the code switching is found at grammatical level and on the other side it occurs in the jargons, registers for specific fields and the technical use of language for different purposes. The researcher by keeping in view this facet of code switching, Lalita Malik (1994, p. 10) says:

“The Phenomenon of Code switching is based on the context, if the teachers have received the degree in English and the language used for the instruction in classroom, office or any working place was English, where they are supposed to converse in English, in this situation the people use the Language items of English and linkers of Urdu more likely as we can see that items used in teaching process are registers/jargons which are taken from English and the grammatical items are taken from Urdu often”

The teachers in Universities are aware of the use of code-switching in their classrooms, as they teach multilinguals they come across this phenomenon time and again in daily basis, even then the use of code switching is not appreciated by most of the teachers. In English language classrooms or in general classrooms the students are not encourage to switch from ne language to another, because in class the language other than English is not privileged. Code-switching is considered as bias, and people give it derogatory names such as Pinglish or Urdish for Pakistani variety of English. Some people argue that the code switching is only done when there is lack of

competence of language, some call it inactive behavior of people, and such type of negative opinions are received by the people for the use of code switching and official works is prohibited. Then how the multilingual learners can be facilitated to learn with ease support by the use of code-switching is resourceful for them. The orthodox against the use of code switching tend to be transformed, as the phenomenon really puts a strong impact on learner's success and failures in the process of learning, and the thought and beliefs of a teacher that governs the effective guidance. (Borg, 2001).

The belief of a teacher is very important while considering classroom conversations, the resources and materials used for teaching, the talks between teacher and students, or vice versa. The instructors' beliefs governed regarding the interactions in the classroom, the language used in the interaction, for this they have to analyze and alter their thinking and behavior which is unfavorable in the part of code switching, and should not forget or ignore the role of L1 in higher thinking process (Glenn S. Levine, 2003 and Tikunoff & Vazquez- Faria, 1982) and the role of L2 in student's learning. The L2 and L1 are separated and sometimes L1 is ignored and blamed to be the barrier in the learning and they neglect the role of L1 and restrict/ prohibit the use of code switching in classrooms. For the better and comprehensible knowledge about the phenomenon of code switching in the academic scenario needs to be analyzed and this study adds and support this idea.

The use of code switching in a same instance is said to be unsystematic phenomenon but it is also regarded as highly effective one especially in classroom. The role of code switching vary situation to situation and serves main functions such as solidarity marker (Hannah Bradby, 2002), identity marker (Shin, 2010; Carmen Fought, 2003; Sridher, 1996; Nishimura, 1995; Kroskrity, 1993; Woolard, 1989; Gumperz, 1982), dominance and prestige (Karen Wong, 2000; Waseem, 2000), strategy of neutrality (Myers Scotton, 1993), preciseness (Hussein, 1999; Bonvillain, 1993), reiteration, personalization, address specification, interjection, quotation (Gumperz, 1982) and style shifting (Hannah Bradby, 2002). The functions of code switching related to the context of learning

are unidentified words, Elucidating Grammar rules, handling the Class (Mingfa Yao, 2011), clarification (Ajmal Gulzar, 2010), highlighting main points, articulating the unity and fellow feeling towards learners, and providing students to better comprehend by quoting things from their surrounding that may be words of some person (Liu Jingxia, 2010; Eda Üstünel & Paul Seedhouse, 2005).

“Teachers’ code-switching is an effective teaching strategy when dealing with low English proficient learners”. (Badrul Hisham Ahmad, 2009, p. 49)

Various research has been done (Shin & Milroy, 2000; Li & Milroy, 1995; Myers-Scotton, 1993), who have favored the phenomenon of code switching and consider it as a beneficial in classroom interaction. And there is relevant and valid literature, which can reject and support the claim of code switching. Even researchers have pointed out its benefits and they say that bilinguals or multilinguals are prestigious of manipulating their linguistic competence that they can express their thoughts more effectively (Karen Wong, 2000). The use of code switching is effective in the process of teaching. The concepts are difficult to comprehend and clarify to students, and this is a complex phenomenon for a teacher to know whether his students understood or they need more explanations, for this a teacher make them participate and in this way the students give their contribution by participating in the discussions, and during these discussions they shift, or switch from L2 to L1. This not only make them better understand but it plays an important role in making strong affinity of student and teacher and students feel confidence to converse. On the other hand, a researcher encouraged the code switching, Ernesto Macaro (2001), quoting Atkinson (1993), said that prohibiting the use of code switching is an illogical act, not only this but also grudging the learners from one of the effective resources which increase learning.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study is based on qualitative approach firstly, as the study intends to check the social interactions in a classroom, the tool for data collection is Observation and recording. As the study is

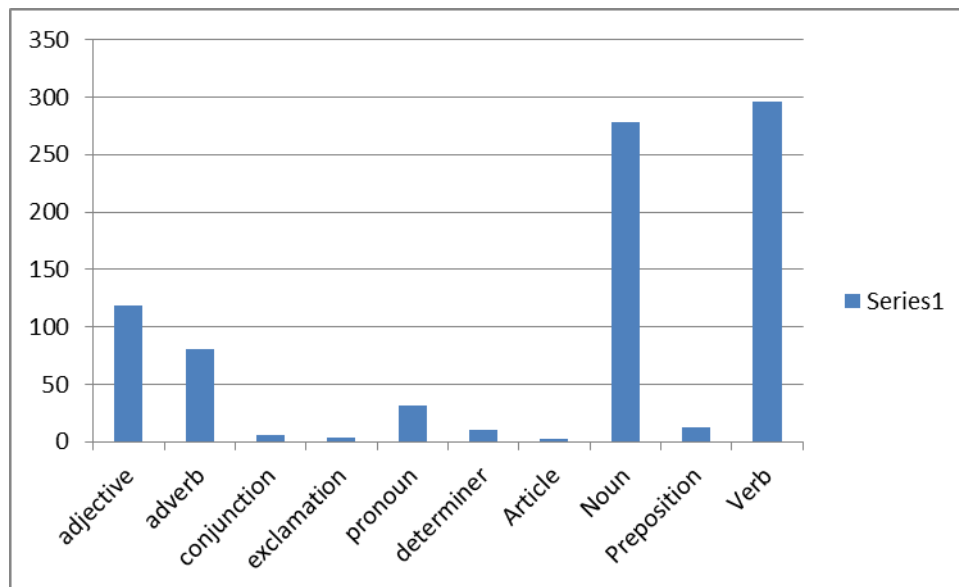
qualitative so the participants for this study are selected. And the study is based on small- scale population.

The study is quantitative also as this study will analyse the results quantitatively. The results of this is checked in numeric numbers, and the percentage value has been taken, as the data was inserted in Ant conc, this is the software by Laurance Anthony which helps in analysing the text and that text can be used as corpora. This software can analyse the different words, word lists, frequency list can be formed using this software.

The purpose of this research aims to investigate the structural and linguistic features of Code switching in the process of teaching and learning by teachers and students in the classroom. The HEC recognized university was selected as the population for investigation. However, the data was collected from the lectures of teachers teaching in undergraduate level. Their lectures delivered in the classroom were observed recorded to investigate the use of code switching in order to check linguistic features and structures. Purposive was used to select the participants by categorizing them where there are variety of subjects are taught were selected as the participants for this study. The Information taken for this study is a kind of corpora of four hours roughly collected from different classrooms. The research study focuses on finding out the different kinds of code switching done in different levels, the linguistic features are of the focus. And this is recognized by transcribing the audio recorded during the lectures delivered by university teachers. The data is collected by observing the English classrooms, and the observation is recorded using the digital recorders, these audios are transcribed and coded and the themes are selected and then these will be put into Ant Conc software for corpus texts analysis and then these are converted into numerical values and frequencies. (Grosjean, 1982).

4. DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis of this study take into account the frequencies and percentage tenets of the elements of language i.e the nouns, pronouns, adjective, advert, articles, conjunctions, preposition, exclamation, determiner and verbs.



The table above shows the numeric values the linguistic features used during delivery of lectures by different teachers. This tells that out of 831 words code switched that number of verbs code switch is found in the high number that is 296 words. Second most frequent code switching is of the nouns i.e 278 nouns were code switched. And 3rd most frequently code switch linguistic item is adjective about 119 repetitions of adjective.

5. CONCLUSION

The study is proposed to examine the case of ELT and the code switching at classroom at university level. This study will conclude about the type of registers and linguistic features of language i.e. registers, jargons, phrases, clauses and parts of speech. The study will reveal numerical results, as the tool for data collection will be observation, in order to get a better understanding and the first-hand knowledge this tool is intended to be used.

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