THE EXTENT AND IMPACT OF CODE-MIXING IN ADVERTISEMENTS: A CASE OF PAKISTANI PRINT MEDIA

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Abstract

An increasing use of code-mixing in print ads has been serving as one of the appealing factors for the effective communication. The current study is based on the analysis of the extent as well as the impact of code-mixing in a number of print ads of Pakistan. 32 Pakistani print ads are taken as data for both, quantitative research as well as qualitative research. The time specification for data collection is three days. After collection, data is being analyzed so as to find out the quantity of code-mixing in print ads. Afterwards, a questionnaire is designed as a medium to explore the impact of code-mixing, in Pakistani print ads, on viewers. One hundred and twenty five viewers belonging to MS programs of Lahore Leads University has been selected as a population for this research, whereas, the sample is comprised of twenty five students. The sample is being chosen through convenience sampling. The findings of the study illustrate that code-mixing in print ads of Pakistan is prevalent to a great extent, which serves as a key factor in attaining the viewers' attention as well as brings novelty in advertisement. Furthermore, youngsters take code-mixing as a vital aspect of effective linguistic communication. In Pakistani society, where people of different regions reside and among whom code-mixing is practiced as a common factor, the current study plays a crucial role.

Key Words: code-mixing, print ads, Pakistan, extent and impact of code-mixing, convenience sampling, effective linguistic communication

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Introduction

Because of the British rule in the subcontinent, English language has gradually attained a highly esteemed position in the region. In the linguistic image of Pakistan, media especially print media has brought a remarkable and striking conversion. Urdu, the national language of Pakistan, is losing its stature and strength slowly but surely. In various fields, English has been emerged as a replacement for Urdu. The ratio of amalgamation of English and Urdu words is rising day by day. This hybridization or mingling of languages can be illustrated as a socio-cultural phenomenon instead of being labeled as a mere linguistic modification.

This study focuses mainly on the impact of code-mixing especially in Pakistani print ads. The purpose of this amalgamation of quantitative research and qualitative research is to measure the scale of code-mixing done in the print ads of Pakistani commercials. It also determines the effect of the usage of code-mixing in Pakistani print ads on the viewers. Following research questions are the crux of the current study:

1. What is the magnitude of code-mixing in Pakistani print ads?
2. What is the impact of code-mixing in commercials?
3. What are the viewers' opinions regarding the effectiveness of code-mixing in print ads?

Research Objective

To detect the magnitude of code-mixing in Pakistani print ads is the main purpose of this research work. Along with the determination of the extent of code-mixing in these ads, to find out its impact on the viewers of these ads also holds the equal importance in the current study that makes the work qualitative as well as quantitative.

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Significance of the Study

Like all the bilingual and multilingual countries, code-mixing is a widespread phenomenon of country. In our society, where people belonging to different areas, regions, speaking a number of languages, the current study plays a vital role, as code-mixing is a familiar factor in bilingual or multilingual society. Moreover, this research also throws light on the fact that the electronic media in Pakistan does not have any hard and fast rules regarding the use of language. Product organizations and their publicity agencies have their own policies for the advertisement of their products. It reflects that there is no check and balance on the language used in these ads for the sake of publicity. Thus this study determines the magnitude of the code-mixing in Pakistani print ads and also makes clear the effect of code-mixing on the viewers of these ads. The study gives answers to the various questions that are hard to resolve just through interviews and observations.

Literature Review

In oral or written discourse moving from one language to another language within the same utterance or statement may be termed as code-mixing. Sometimes the mixing is done between more than two languages as code-mixing serves as a common aspect of language usage. The term code switching is very often used interchangeably with code-mixing in linguistics that causes confusion. In views of Milroy, 1987; Wei, 1998; Swigart, 1992; Goyvaerts and Zembele 1992 it would be appropriate to make a distinction between these two terms. They all are agreed on the fact that code switching refers to the shift of one language to the other which involves longer stretches of language as the clause or sentence boundary while code-mixing can be regarded as the shift of smaller units of one language to the other such as words or phrases.

A broad research has been done on swapping or language and culture communication in the previous three decades. Literature has been influenced by the great scholars like Poplack, Stacks, Auer, Gumperz and Myers-Scotton. On the topic of mixing

languages an extensive amount of literature can be found, however, no fixed definitions of these concepts exist so as to make clear these conditions. According to Crystal, 47 and Skiba, 1997 back and forth shifting between two languages may be labeled as code-mixing. In a language and its variation, code-mixing plays a very worth mentioning role as well as in a socio-cultural phenomena happening in that area or region, it offers a deep insight by the linguistic choices of populace. Code-mixing occurs in most of the languages of the world.

Kachru illustrates that at intersentential and intrasentential levels transferring of units of code A into code B stands for code-mixing and consequently developing a new code of linguistic interaction. All over the world, the arising usage of code-mixing of English with the local languages is the result of the advent of English as lingua franca in the modern years. However, as a linguistic process, the phenomena of code-mixing of Urdu is concerned, it is not new. It is entrenched to the period of the partition of subcontinent. New language comes out of the old one through this process. Grierson 1991, in his report on the mother tongues spoken in India, throws light on several situations where native speakers mix together the words and the phrases of English language into their own language. However, he sees Urdu language as a amalgamation or concoction of a variety of languages with comparatively dominant role of Arabic, Persian and Hindi.

In the contour of disapproval and endorsement, the reactions and resistance towards code-mixing also exists. According to the Wardhaugh 1992 the very critics of code-mixing are monolinguals. To depict the imaginary results, they even exercise peculiar expressions like Spanglish (Spanish and English), Tex-Mex (Mexican Spanish in Texas and English) and Franglais (French and English).

In fact, numerous linguists take code-mixing as an inescapable by-product of language interaction and fruition. They all are of the view that code-mixing between languages is a natural outcome of language contact. Chan (1998), a linguist by same school of thought,

claims that there is always a little or no conscious learning as far as code-mixing is concerned. To support his point of view, alluding to other linguists (Myers-Scotton 1993 and Romaine 1995) he writes that code-mixing is uncertain whether bilingual consciously makes a choice while mixing codes. He considers code-mixing as a kind of impulsive behavior of bilinguals as well as one of the predictable consequences of language communication. In Pakistan, one of the most dominant features of the current sociolinguistic scenario is the mixing of English words into the Urdu Language.

McChesney (1997) holds that in modern-day societies, the scope of communication has expanded to a great extent by the help of media. Drastically, the influx of new technologies has facilitated the life of man. Kasturirangan and Rangarajan state that an instantaneous connectivity with anybody, anywhere and at any time, is one of the basic communicative requirements of modern societies. Advertisements specially the print ones are a part of media. According to the American Marketing Association, Chicago, Advertising is any salaried form of non-personal demonstration of ideas, goods and services by a recognized sponsor. Currie (1995) explains the process in his words like television advertisement sponsors create advertisements, the ones that can interrupt the anarchy of television programs so as to get attention and to communicate the exclusive marketing plan of a product as well. These commercials and their print ads are very important as they are comprised of various codes and code-mixing can be found very easily in these ads.

Sampling

Through the convenience sampling, twenty five students were selected as the sample among the population of one hundred and twenty five viewers belonging to MS programs of Lahore Leads University. Feedback was attained by distributing questionnaire among them and then collected it back. Convenience sampling engages the sample being drawn by that part of the population which is in unproblematic access and the people are easy to reach.

Procedure

In three days, the data collection procedure was completed. Data, in the shape of print ads, was taken from the Google for analysis. Code-mixing was quiet visible in these Pakistani print ads. In two phases, required data was collected. At phase first, it was obtained by Google and then analyzed, while in phase second, questionnaire was formulated and then distributed among the sample of twenty five viewers from the population of MS program students of Lahore Leads University.

In this systematic way, data was engendered and finally analyzed. Questionnaire was designed on the basis of five-point rating scale. The students filled that questionnaire and gave their opinion regarding the use of code-mixing in Pakistani print ads. They were ensured that their names would be kept in secret and their responses and feedback would be made use of only for the sake of research. After the collection of relevant data, its compilation and analysis, results were generated.

First Phase

Google was used to collect the required data and then, in order to find out the extent of code-mixing in Pakistani Print ads, it was analyzed. Following table shows the calculations regarding the use of code-mixing in print ads.

Number of Print ads	Number of code mixed print ads	Total no. of words in all the print ads	No of Urdu words	No of English words	Percentage of Code-mixing
35	32	307	163	144	47%

Second Phase

Among the sample of twenty five students belonging to the population of MS program students from Lahore Leads University, a questionnaire comprised of five-point rating scale was distributed in the second phase. The main purpose of designing this

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questionnaire was to judge the impact of code-mixing used in Pakistani print ads to attract the viewers.

The questionnaire was comprised on three sections. Section A contained the necessary details of the viewers. Section B was consisted of fourteen close-ended questions and was designed specially to make clear the impact of code-mixing on the viewers. However, the third section was designed to welcome the suggestions made by the viewers regarding code-mixing in Pakistani print ads. It was consisted of two open ended questions which were intended for the determination of the extensive ideas of the viewers. All the questionnaires were valid as they all were filled and collected back according to the planned procedure.

Statistical Analysis

Following findings are based on the rating which has been derived from the given scale.
SA: Strongly Agree   A: Agree   N: Neutral   D: Disagree   SD: Strongly Disagree

Section A

Section A is based on viewers' profile.

Section B

Sr.#	Specifications	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	In Pakistani print ads, code-mixing is used.	74%	22%	3%	1%	-
2	Code-mixing causes ambiguity and confusion.	-	3%	21%	76%	-
3	Code-mixing plays a role of a vital communicative tool in print ads.	54%	30%	13%	3%	-
4	Code-mixing does not attract viewers as it does not make ads interesting.	-	-	2%	18%	80%
5	Viewers easily memorize the ads in which code-mixing is used.	23%	37%	13%	14%	13%

6	Code-mixing gives an appealing look to print ads.	17%	65%	11%	5%	2%
7	Code-mixing makes language influential.	27%	47%	16%	4%	6%
8	Code-mixing used in print ads cannot be taken as an inter-cultural harmony.	-	-	-	13%	87%
9	In Pakistani print ads, code-mixing causes novelty.	35%	32%	18%	10%	5%
10	People are avoiding using mother tongue during their conversation because of code-mixing used in print media.	-	46%	51%	3%	-
11	Code-mixing is a tool that can be used for enhancing one's vocabulary.	49%	38%	13%	-	-
12	Code-mixing is adverse for languages.	-	-	-	2%	98%
13	Code-mixing must be abandoned in multilingual country like Pakistan.	-	-	-	4%	96%
14	Code-mixing is commonly practiced by a common man of Pakistan due to its use in print ads.	67%	22%	11%	-	-

Section C

Section C is comprised of two open ended questions which determines the extensive ideas of the viewers.

Findings

The present study analyzed the instances of code-mixing in languages used in Pakistani print ads. In the first phase, it became quite evident that code-mixing do happen quiet frequently in Pakistani print ads. Here in these ads, English code words are mixed with the frame language, in spite of the fact that these English code words have their alternatives in Urdu language. However, matrix language in these ads is Urdu. Analysis in the first phase formulates pretty obvious results regarding the intensive use of code-mixing to a great extent.

The responses of the questionnaire, in the second phase of analysis, are as follows:

1. 74% of the students strongly agreed that in Pakistani print ads, code-mixing is used.

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2. 76% of the students disagreed that Code-mixing causes any sort of ambiguity or confusion.

3. 54% of the students strongly agreed that Code-mixing plays a role of a vital communicative tool in print ads.

4. 80% of the students strongly disagreed that Code-mixing does not attract viewers as it does not make ads interesting.

5. 37% of the students agreed that Viewers easily memorize the ads in which code-mixing is used.

6. 65% of the students agreed that Code-mixing gives an appealing look to print ads.

7. 47% of the students agreed that Code-mixing makes language influential.

8. 87% of the students strongly disagreed that Code-mixing used in print ads cannot be taken as an inter-cultural harmony.

9. 35% of the students strongly agreed that In Pakistani print ads, code-mixing causes novelty.

10. 46% of the students agreed that People are avoiding using mother tongue during their conversation because of code-mixing used in print media.

11. 49% of the students strongly agreed that Code-mixing is a tool that can be used for enhancing one's vocabulary.

12. 98% of the students strongly disagreed that Code-mixing is adverse for languages.

13. 96% of the students strongly disagreed that Code-mixing must be abandoned in multilingual country like Pakistan.

14. 67%% of the students strongly agreed that Code-mixing is commonly practiced by a common man of Pakistan due to its use in print ads.

Conclusion

Carrying out the findings of the current study, we can conclude that in Pakistani print ads, code-mixing is prevalent to a great extent. Similarly, the calculations of the

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questionnaire based survey makes it quiet obvious that code-mixing is a commonly practiced phenomenon in Pakistan as it makes ads attractive and appealing. Code-mixing in print ads enhances the product sale as majority of the students takes it as an effective convincing communicative tool.

During the research it has been noted that that Viewers easily memorize the ads in which code-mixing is used as code-mixing is a tool that can be used for enhancing one's vocabulary. Moreover, code-mixing makes ads interesting and gives appealing look to print ads. It has been noted that Code-mixing makes language influential as well as it can be taken as an inter-cultural harmony.

Discussion

In the light of the current findings it can be stated that code-mixing do happen quiet frequently in Pakistani print ads. Here in these ads, English code words are mixed with the frame language, in spite of the fact that these English code words have their alternatives in Urdu language. However, matrix language in these ads is Urdu.

The presented study analyzed the role of Code-mixing in Pakistani print ads as well as impact of code-mixing in Pakistan. We can conclude from the findings of the study that in Pakistani print ads, code-mixing causes novelty. Majority of the students believed that People are avoiding using mother tongue during their conversation because of code-mixing used in print media. They are of the view that there is no harm in mixing codes of two languages rather it gives more sophisticated or educated outlook.

However, it is plain that in Pakistan, the influence of English language is increasing day by day so the general public is taking Code-mixing as a normal aspect of linguistic communication. It is commonly practiced in print ads and has become a part of routine discourse.

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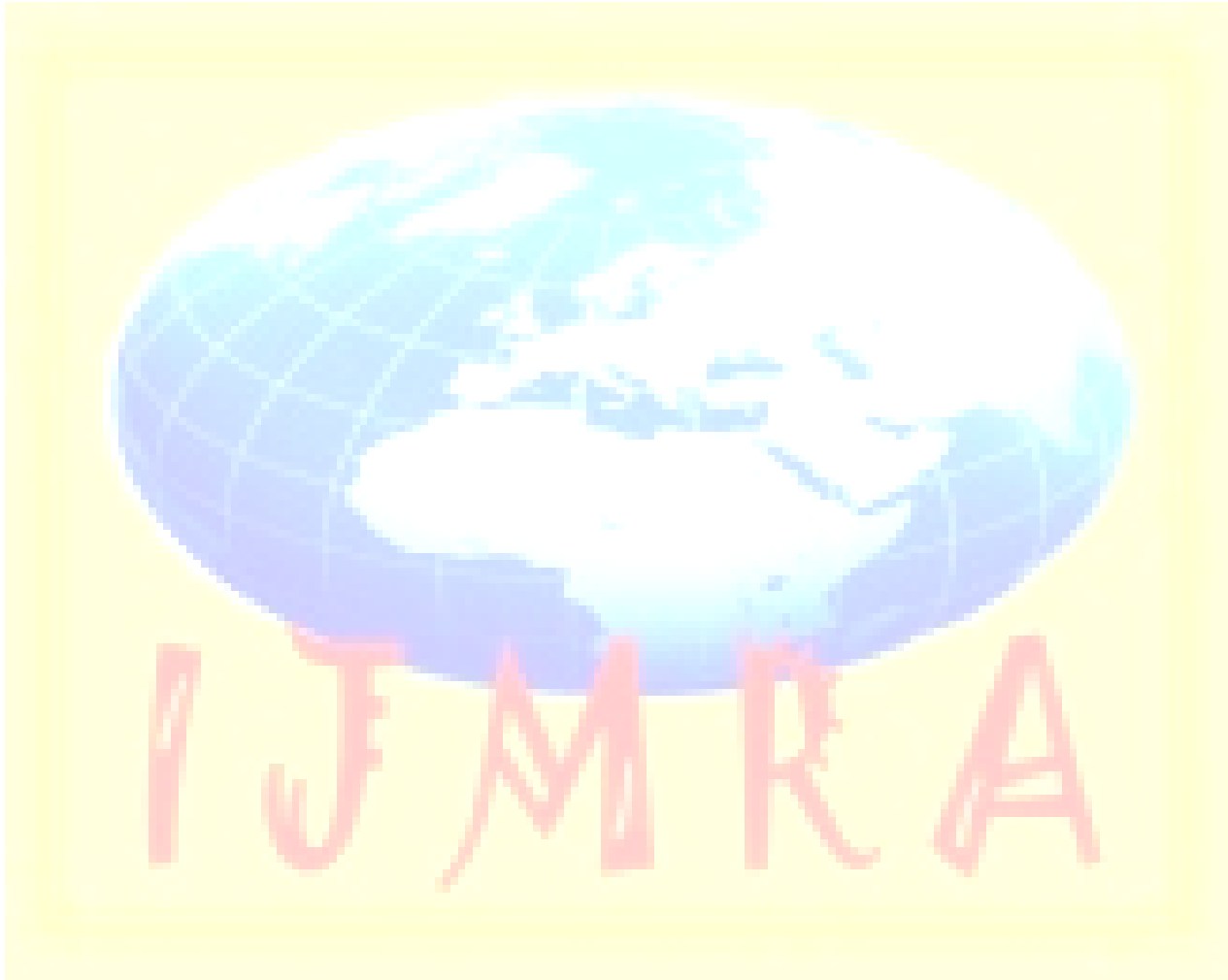
Questionnaire

Section A:

Name: _____   Viewer's ID/Serial no: _____

Viewer's Status: _____   Name of University: _____

Department: _____   Program: _____

Area of population: _____

Note: Kindly read the following statements carefully and rate them on the given scale:
A: Agree   N: Neutral   D: Disagree   SD: Strongly Disagree

Section B

Sr.#	Specifications	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	In Pakistani print ads, code-mixing is used.					
2	Code-mixing causes ambiguity and confusion.					
3	Code-mixing plays a role of a vital communicative tool in print ads.					
4	Code-mixing does not attract viewers as it does not make ads interesting.					
5	Viewers easily memorize the ads in which code-mixing is used.					
6	Code-mixing gives an appealing look to print ads.					
7	Code-mixing makes language influential.					
8	Code-mixing used in print ads cannot be taken as an inter-cultural harmony.					
9	In Pakistani print ads, code-mixing causes novelty.					
10	People are avoiding using mother tongue during their conversation because of code-mixing used in print media.					
11	Code-mixing is a tool that can be used for enhancing one's vocabulary.					
12	Code-mixing is injurious for languages.					

13	Code-mixing must be abandoned in multilingual country like Pakistan.					
14	Code-mixing is commonly practiced by a common man of Pakistan due to its use in print ads.					

Section C

    a. **Code-mixing used in Pakistani prints ads is influential in what sense (positive or negative) what do you think?**

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

    b. **Do you recommend code-mixing of languages in Pakistani print ads?**

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____