Code Mixing & Code Switching—A Panorama

—With Respect to Pondicherry UT & Cauvery Delta

K. Balamurugan[1*]

[1] Department of Science & Humanities, Bharathiyar College of Engg & Tech, Karaikal, UT of Puducherry, India

[*] K. Balamurugan, E-mail: englishbala@gmail.com

Abstract

The paper aims at presenting the rudiments involved of code mixing and switching along with the definition. It also seeks its uses, effects and affects with throwing a light on how it helps language growth and at the same time the possibility of marring the originality of the language. The paper would conclude with a clear tone, to the readers, of a general idea of code switching and mixing, and its different dimension, function and dimensional function with respect to India on the whole and Tamil Nadu on particular.

Keywords

Code-Mixing, Code-Switching, Linguistic-advantage, Lack of proficiency, culture-impact, words endangerment

1. Introduction

Predominant or very common mode to communicate our thoughts, emotions, and opinions to others is language. Our use of language is identity to our self-concept and culture in the deeper sense, even religion, creed, caste etc. Our language also influences not only how we conceptualize who we are and also where we come from. For this purpose, the code switching and mixing is coming. "**Code switching / mixing** can be defined as the use of more than one language, variety, or style by a speaker within an utterance or discourse, or between different interlocutors or situations" Romaine, (1992). Code mixing is a use of two languages in one clause. By language a matched pair of grammar and lexicon and code mixing is different from lexical borrowing. Code-mixing' is one of the major kinds of language choice which is subtler than code-switching. In code-mixed sentences, pieces of one language are used while a speaker is basically using another language. These 'pieces' of the other language are often words, but they can also be phrases or larger units. The terms code-mixing is used to describe more stable situations in which multiple languages are used without such pragmatic effects

2. Code Switching

Code switching occurs mostly in bilingual communities. Speakers of more than one language are known for their ability to code switch or mix their language during their communication. As Aranoff

and Miller J. (2003) indicate, many linguists have stressed the point that switching between languages is a communicative option available to a bilingual member of a speech community, on much the same basis as switching between styles or dialects is an option for the monolingual speaker.

Types of Code Switching

Inter-Sentential	Intra-Sentential	Extra-Sentential

2.1 Inter-Sentential

Most probably, this is used by a bilingual habitual speaker, i.e occurrence of code switching between or among sentences. Here the switching code will last a bit long.

For example, the speaker doing code switching to reiterate the point that he focuses or to make the listeners understand his view better. Here more or less a translation.

Ex: What I am coming to say is, அதாவது நான் என்ன சொல்ல வருகிறேன் என்றால்……………

(athavathu naan enna solla varugiren endraal) here English is mixed with Tamil.

2.2 Intra-Sentential

It is more or less same as above but the switching will be very limited and within a sentence or clause even. After a short switch, the speaker comes back to the target language again and continues it. This switch is done for the speaker's convenient and for a pause or relief from the pain of searching vocabulary in the target language. At one point, the switching done for reaching the audience without worrying about linguistic competence could be understood. Somebody calls it code mixing even.

Ex: the speaker addresses in a function like this.. 'Dear Cadets, Friends, Philosophers and Guides, Ladies and Gentlemen!..(pause) உங்களை எல்லாம் பார்ப்பது எனக்கு மகிழ்ச்சி, because….

(Ungalai ellam paarppathu enakku magilchi.)

Again mixing of Tamil language, by jumping into Tamil from English, is quoted.

2.3 Extra-Sentential

Extra-sentential code switching, the shift is done in the middle of a sentence, with no interruptions, hesitations or pauses indicating a shift. The speaker is usually unaware of the shift. Different types of switch occur within the clause level including within the word level.

3. Code Mixing / Fusedlect

Code-mixing refers to the mixing of two or more languages or language varieties in speech. Though some scholars use the terms "code-mixing" and "code-switching" interchangeably, Others assume more specific definitions of code-mixing, but these specific definitions may be different in different subfields of linguistics, education theory, communications etc.

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Code-mixing is similar to the use or creation of pidgins; but while a pidgin is created across groups that do not share a common language, code-mixing may occur within a multilingual setting where speakers share more than one language. For example while speaking Tamil, mixing of Sanskrit or Hindi and English.

Interview happened for *nom ke vas*; ஏன் கலந்து கிட்டோம்னு

ஒரே லட்ஜை ஆயிடுத்து (*en kalanthukittom minu ore ladjai aayiduthu)*

4. Phenomenon Involved in Code Switching / Code Mixing

There are a number of possible reasons for switching from one language to another, and these will now be considered, as presented by Crystal (Crystal, D. (1987). The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge).

i. <u>LACK OF PROFICINCY</u>: a speaker who may not be able to express him in one language switches to the other to compensate for the deficiency. As a result, the speaker may be triggered into speaking in the other language for a while. This type of code switching tends to occur when the speaker is upset, tired or distracted in some manner.

ii. <u>LINGUISTIC ADVANTAGE</u>: As Skiba, (Skiba, R.1997, Code Switching as a Countenance of Language Interference in The Internet TESL Journal. Vol. III. No: 10) comments, code switching is not a language interference, on the basis that it supplements speech. Where it is used due to an inability of expression, code switching provides continuity in speech rather than presenting interference in language. The socio-linguistic benefits have also been identified as a means of communicating solidarity, or affiliation to a particular social group.

iii. <u>TO MAINTAIN SOCIAL CLASS OR STATUS</u> Etc.

Example using French words in the middle of Tamil, in the regions of Puducherry union territory, like *Madame, Monsieur Fete, Compagnie, Le Roi*

iv. <u>TO BRIDGE THE GAP IN THE CODE THE SPEAKER USES</u>

v.<u>TO EXPOSE THE CROSS-CULTURE ISSUES</u>

Ex: the English words like Dating, Bermuda, Three-Fourth etc and *Ashirvadh Atta (Hindi)*

5. Conclusion

Predominantly the mixing of codes in the common arena happens to show the social class, status, style and trend or to set a trend. (Example, using Hindi and English with Tamil—*eh* minute please, *itho vnthuderen*) Though code mixing or switching is viewed as a handy in a formal context, in the normal chore (i.e. everyday conversation and dialogue) it has to be viewed as an inept as the switching is used unwarrantedly. It may lead to lose the identity of the nativity and the native language vocabulary.

For example words like Gate, Bag, Bottle, Pipe, Hall, Room, Bathroom, Toilet, Rangoli, colour-கோலம் as replaced the Tamil words.

5.1 Remedy

Works like Manavai Mustafa's (father of scientific Tamil and editor of UNESCO for sometime) may be given weightage and prescribed to the school text so that new vocabulary will be introduced and pupil start using it into actuality. This remedy here the reader should take it for Tamil but the paper also sounds that be it any language when the code mixing is allowed frequently that would tend to replace not only the original words and but also the originality of that language.

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