



CODE-MIXING AS A NEED OF POST-MODERN INDIAN SOCIETY

DR. DHANAJI NAGANE
Head, Department of English
Sharadchandraji Pawar College,
Jejuri (MH) INDIA

ABSTRACT

The present article endeavors to examine the various features and reasons of code-mixing in Indian sub-continent. These features highlight the special modes and patterns of code-mixing in the selected day-day conversational chunks in the Indian context. India, being a multilingual country, has Hindi as a largest language spoken especially all over northern India, however, in southern and north-east of Indian, we have lots of regional languages such as Marathi, Kannad, Oriya, Bengali, Tamil, Telgu, Gujrathi, etc. When an Indian speaker tries to communicate across the India, he/she shows immediate impact of Hindi with English words followed by the regional languages. Thus, the attempt has been made in this article to observe such differences and major reasons of code-mixing.

Keywords: Language, Communication, Code-Mixing, Multilingualism, Bilingualism

Introduction

The famous linguist, Pfaff (1979:295) says, “Code-mixing is necessarily a product of bilingual competence.” Naturally, while communicating feelings or message effectively, the speaker makes use of code-mixing. It is, therefore, not the weakness of the speaker who makes use of code-mixing; on the other hand it is the strength of the speaker who uses such a code-mixed word, which conveys his meaning in a more effective way. According to Bokamba (1989:286)

“A careful examination of the sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic literature suggests that CS and CM are consistently viewed as communicative strategies of bi-and multilingual speakers; their occurrences in natural conversations are reflective of a code /language choice.”

This code language has some culture specific words which have certain meaning which cannot be translated as it is in other languages. Therefore, use of the particular culture specific word in a particular language plays very effective role in communication. A bilingual

person, many times uses code-mixed words so easily because there are no equivalent words in other languages.

Code-mixing is not only a common occurrence but also communicational requirement. We can communicate in any language. But for the exact and effective communication, code-mixing is necessary. Code-mixing has become so common because it helps us for effective communication. Code-mixing is not only done by common bilingual people but it is sometimes deliberately used by educated people. Therefore Bokamba says (1989:287)

“code-mixing is predominantly a communicative behavior of educated speakers.”

It shows that code-mixing has become a common tendency among the bilingual and multilingual.

There are various reasons of code-mixing. When code-mixing is used for the purpose of maximizing communication of effective expression and to strengthen the content and essence of message, it should be considered as an asset, not a deficiency. In Indian context, people make use of code-mixed utterances for maximizing the effect of their communication. Code-mixing is one of the commonly observed linguistic behaviors in the speech of bilingual or multilingual speakers.

Code-mixing may cause language change, code-mixing may result in the creation of new styles and registers of language use, code-mixing is characteristic feature of the elite group, code-mixing is generally perceived by some as an ‘impure’ linguistic behavior, to list just a few.

Code-mixing refers to *“all cases where lexical items and grammatical features from two languages appear in one sentence.”* (Donald 2000:1). The present study also highlights different lexical items taking into consideration their lateral, general and contextual meaning. The code-mixing makes us think about the native language of the speaker and the code-mixed words give an idea about the second language of the user. If the speaker is speaking his mother tongue in that case also he can use code-mixing words to emphasize a particular point. It is also possible that the person is using second language and using code-mixed words from his mother tongue. In this case code-mixing is used for effective communication.

Code-mixing occurs on certain contexts. It shows that our different moods make us use different code-mixed word. Sometime we praise, abuse, criticize, shower love, express certain attitudes and likes and dislikes for others. Sometimes our special mood i.e. romantic, sorrowful etc. makes us use code-mixed words because they perform a special role as it is the



demand of the particular situation. Code –mixing takes place at lexical level. Therefore words or phrases are used in the code-mixing and longer elements than phrases are considered as code switching.

Reasons of Code-Mixing

There are different reasons of code-mixing. It depends on who is speaking with whom and what is the intention of the speaker. In Indian multilingual scenario, code-mixing takes place very naturally and effectively. Hindi-English code mixing is very common. In the present research, most of the code-mixed words uttered by the characters are taken from Hindi language which is mixed with English.

Following are some of the reasons of code-mixing selected in the Indian day-to-day communication. These reasons are representative in that they show how code-mixing is an inherent part of language use in a multilingual setup and how it helps people communicate one another effectively and intimately. They are representative for the reason that they express different contexts & psychological states and moods of speakers. The speakers use code-mixing to serve their communicative purpose and express their moods also. In accordance with these ideas, the researcher has sorted out following reasons:

1. Restricted Vocabulary

Code-mixing takes place when the speaker has restricted vocabulary. When the speaker uses a particular language, he finds himself in such a position that he does not use an appropriate word to express in that language. Therefore he uses code-mixing. It shows his restricted vocabulary.

2. Habitual Expression

Many people very often mix some words or expressions from another language out of habit. It happens so naturally and easily because of the habit of using such kind of expressions.

3. To Convey Special Attitude

We use code-mixed variety to convey some special attitude or emotions. On many occasions, we have a special role to perform. To convey happiness, sorrow, love, anger, regret, we become emotional and have a particular emotion which results into code mixed variety.

4. Mood of the Speaker



The speaker is sometimes tired, angry, lazy, happy etc. We can understand the mood of a speaker through his use of language. This change in the mood causes code-mixing. The bilingual speaker knows both the languages, but his mood decides his choice of language.

5. Identity Marker

Code -mixing may be used as a device to mark an identity. It may be used to reveal or conceal region, class, religion, profession etc. We give identity marker to a person to show the traits of his personality. The identity marker is a kind of identity of a person.

6. Profession

The code-mixing takes place when an attempt is made to highlight the profession of a particular person in relation to the society or class in which he works.

7. To Show Respect and Relation

The code-mixed utterances are used to show respect to a person. The person can be a respected man or ordinary man in the society. The suffixes like '*ji*' are used in Hindi to show respect.

8. To Criticise

The code-mixed words are very often used to criticize a human being or the society.

Conclusion

These features and reasons of code-mixing are very useful for the readers to understand the exact role of code-mixing in the Indian context. The features and reasons highlighted in this article are useful in understanding the code-mixing in relation to the practical use of language under study. The features and reasons of code-mixing can change language to language. There might be some changes but at general level these characteristic features and reasons can be studied while studying code-mixing. They play a crucial role in understanding the strategy of code-mixing as they focus on the various aspects and factions of code-mixing.

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