CODE-MIXING IN URDU NEWS OF A PRIVATE PAKISTANI CHANNEL: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Code-mixing is a common phenomenon in the modern multilingual and bilingual world and it as much occurs in media as it does in other areas of society. This research aimed to explore the extent to which code-mixing is done in Urdu news of a private news channel, if any and to find out the equivalent words in Urdu language. It was a case study in which research technique of qualitative approach has been applied. Thirty on-aired news items were recorded. The tabulated data revealed that the phenomenon of code-mixing is frequently practiced. Although, most of the words have their equivalence in Urdu language but they are not a part of people's active vocabulary and are not usually used in everyday conversations. It reflected the general behaviour prevailing in the society and that those words are used which are easily available and can facilitate easy and fluent conversation, no matter if they are used by performing code-mixing. The research will help in bringing awareness to news writers and concerned persons about their own practice of code-mixing, so that they remain conscious of the fact that English words do have their equivalents in Urdu language and should be used instead. Moreover, there is a need of making a language policy for the news as they are formal and viewed all over the world.

Keywords: Case study, Code-mixing, Private Pakistani channel, Urdu news

INTRODUCTION

Pakistan's national language is Urdu, besides Urdu many regional languages are spoken; giving a multilingual status to the country. At the same time English being an official language enjoys a supreme status in the society. This supremacy of English Language, imperialism of western culture, negligence of the government in making a language policy, the attitude and response of the society towards English Language has originated the phenomenon of code-mixing in publics daily communication . Media (electronic and print media) no doubt has played an effective role in the development of communication but at the same time has increased the phenomenon of code-mixing as being noticed in various researches made in the field (Mushtaq & Zahra, 2012;Rasul, 2006). It is also giving rise to a hybrid language (Khalid). In a multilingual society, though, the process is unavoidable but alarming and has given rise to issues and questions. There is a need to check and take notice against it as it is rapidly changing Urdu language.

Origin of Code-Mixing in Urdu Language

Urdu language has its origin in Turkish, Arabic and Persian and Sanskrit (Grierson, as cited in Mushtaq & Zahra, 2012).When Sir Syed Ahmed Khan thought of educating people through literature, he insisted on simplifying Urdu Language. In his view simple language influences the masses to a larger extent. He not only emphasized on using Urdu Literature to educate and reform Muslims of the subcontinent but also paved the way for English Language. In the beginning there was some resistance expressed by the society but slowly and gradually not only "Urdu Assan Tehreek" was successful in changing traditional Urdu

but English Language was also accepted by the society so much so that it penetrated its deep roots into art, literature and music of the Subcontinent. The influence was so dominant that even after Independence one could not free from the clutches of English Language. Finally it was made the official language of Pakistan.

It can be concluded from the history that Urdu Language has undergone many changes since 1857.Urdu Language in its early stage was overloaded with Persian vocabulary. From 1857-1947 it became simpler and the Persian influence was of lesser degree. Later on, after independence, Urdu Language spoken in India was different from the form used in Pakistan. Since 1947, Urdu has been influenced by English Language.

Many words of English Language are known and used by people who have never studied the language. Words like plate, glass, television, dressing table, sorry, thank you, are frequently used in routine communication without any awareness of code-mixing.

Role of Urdu Electronic Media in Code-Mixing

Media besides being an entertainment and recreational platform has become an important activity and means of communication in the modern society. Especially, the news channels, these days, have grabbed the attention of people because of the political and economical situation of the country. To win the "rating scale" all channels are working in different areas to make the news more interesting and attractive. In short, all devices are being used by them to satisfy the viewers. On the basis of the ground reality that society, language and media are tied in a close relationship (Rasul, 2006). We can say that media is playing a two dimensional role i.e. on one hand it reflects the behaviour of the society and on the other hand influences and shapes the attitude of the society. As English Language is taken as a language of educated and elite class in Pakistan, so mixing of English code in Urdu has become a common social activity. This socio-cultural or technically spoken, socio-linguistic phenomenon is reflected on media in turn influencing the society.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study was based on finding answers to the following research questions.

1. Is code-mixing prevalent in Urdu News bulletin broadcasted on the Channel under study? If so, to what extent?
2. What type of code-mixing is used in the News and at what level?
3. Is Urdu language sufficient enough to give equivalent of the Inserted English language words

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study was limited to the recordings of 30 on aired news items on a single network. The research studied only the phenomenon of code-mixing being practiced in the news.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study of the phenomenon of code mixing in Urdu news is of immense importance in a country like Pakistan where many languages are spoken and phenomenon of code mixing is very common. It helped in understanding the sociolinguistic culture in the country. This research was also significant as it pointed out the fact that media has no fixed language policy. The reporters are using English language on their own convenience.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED RESEARCHES

The phenomenon of code-mixing is universal in a multilingual community. This phenomenon has been observed in various fields like food discourse, newspapers, television, magazines,

radio broadcasts, internet etc. An investigation of mixing English into Chinese internet language by Bi (2011) shows that code mixing has become a trend in "Chinese internet discourse." The mixing of words in Chinese code is not due to or cause of any cultural invasion, rather they are used only to perform linguistic functions. It has also been concluded that "English has become inescapable trend." Much attention is required to keep the balance of code-mixing to prohibit confusion and cultural interference.

According to Muysken (as cited in Lau et al., 2011), "Code-mixing is a process in which lexical items and grammatical features of two or more languages exists in the same sentence. The purpose of this research was to study code mixing of English lexical items in Chinese entertainment news. The researcher concluded that the abbreviation like 'CD', 'DVD', 'SMS', 'VIP' were used to make news simple and easy to understand. Furthermore, some adjectives like hot, cool, high etc. were used to produce stylish effect or to give a modern touch to the Chinese entertainment news. Whereas duplication of words like 'cute cute', 'high high' is a feature of Chinese language, it is not allowed in English grammar.

Besides those that have been already enlisted, reason and functions of code mixing have been further explored by Kanthimathi (1999) in India. This study was conducted on college students with a help of a questionnaire. It was found that level of code mixing depends on different factors such as (i) Amount of exposure to English (ii) Medium of instruction in school (iii) The frequency of language used in various domains, context and topic under discussion. The result of the study is reflected in the following statement: "The world is richer then it is possible to express in any single language" (Prigogone as cited in Kanthimati, 1999).

Likhitphongsathornand Sappapan (n.d.) conducted an investigation to know the kinds of English used in song writing. It was observed that even music could not escape code mixing and code switching. These phenomena are used to produce "rhetorical and aesthetic effect" as observed by Benthhila and Davies (as cited in Teeratorn & Pattama, n.d.). According to Li (2000), people generally express in English due to its 'preciseness' and that it requires less effort. Hawkins (2004), is of the view that by using English words, we can 'express the most with the least.' He suggested that, 'the (most) efficient one is the one that as the lowest overall complexity in online processing'. In another study on code-mixing by Kannaovakun and Gunther (2003), the language used in Thai entertainment programme was examined. Data was a recorded popular entertainment programme. The result showed that seven types of code mixing were used in the programme, they were" mixing the two codes that is Thai and English language, transliteration, clipping, abbreviation, hybridization, using English names and others."

Shen (2010) has studied Chinese-English code switching in Chinese sports news reports. The study was based on an "influential and comprehensive sports newspaper of China." It was found that the 'switched constituents' vary from single lexeme to phrases and sentences. Same results were concluded in a study on the comments of readers of Herald in Zimbabwe. The researcher selected seven days stories per edition for the analysis. It was observed that the phenomenon of code switching and code mixing were common in reader comments, it was also explored that the phenomenon was at all levels that is 'intraword, intersentencial and intrasentencial level.'

In the same way, Charak studied code-mixing in Thai daily newspapers. The purpose was to identify linguistic unit mixed in Thai language and to analyse the parts of speech code mixed in the daily newspapers the researcher classified the words resulted from code mixing. It was observed that highest frequency of code mixing occurred in sports news which was 41% and the low frequency of code mixing occurred in economic news which was 10%. It was also

found that code mixing at lexical level is more than at phrasal level. Quite similarly, Tsang (2006) conducted a research to study code mixing on internet forum. The purpose was to explore code mixing of Chinese and English on internet forum. Data was collected in a natural setting. It was noticed that five types of linguistic features exists in computer-mediated communications (CMCs). It gives an indication that on internet forum communication is a hybrid of writing and speech. He also concluded that these linguistic features are a result of speaker-writers desire to communicate effectively and efficiently.

Al-Mulhim (n.d.) also conducted a case-study research to investigate the influence of media on code-mixing among younger generation in Saudi Arabia. The sample consisted of young females who were made to watch a famous television programme "Scoop." The purpose was to observe how language used in the particular programme encouraged the ladies to use same words in their usual language. The outcome of this research supported the hypothesis that media had a great influence on the language of young generation of Saudi Arabia.

In another study, SittiKussuji Indrastuti (2009)observed that the frequency of code-switching and code-mixing on Yasika F M Radio is much high as compared to other radio stations in Yogyokarta. It has been observed that internal code–switching i.e. code-switching in the manner and style is common on the Yasika Radio station. The results showed that code-switching is either due to a shift from a non-serious to serious matter or to add humour to the broadcast.

Furthermore, Shogren, J. B. (2011), analysed code switching and code mixing among bilingual children. Purpose of the study was to study the pattern of code switching and code mixing of two 5 year old children. It was observed that the boy who had been a bilingual in natural setting was prone to code switching; whereas the girl who has acquired second language consecutively mixes the two codes in her conversational interaction. It exposes the connection or relation between linguistic behaviour and manner of exposure to a language.

This was a brief review on literature already produced and published on code-mixing between two languages. Now, let us have a look at the researchers conducted on Urdu-English code-mixing. In this vein, Mushtaq and Zahra (2012) have analysed code mixing in television commercials. The researchers aimed at analysing extent and impact of code mixing in advertisements shown on different channels in Pakistan. Data was recorded from 3 Pakistani channels that are Geo TV, ARY Digital Network and Hum TV. A questionnaire was distributed to know the views and impact of code mixing on the viewers of TV commercials. The research concluded code mixing exists to a greater extent in TV commercials and in leaving a strong impact on the viewers by serving the purpose of effective communication.

Similarly, Asghar (2012) conducted a research and he is of the view that code-mixing results in hybridization, when two or more languages are frequently mixed it results in a new hybrid variety of language. Although, this new variety shares to some extent qualities of both languages but it has its own unique and independent grammar and vocabulary which is matchless to any of the mixed languages. Asghar strengthens his conclusion by giving some examples such as "leaderan, machinain, classon, quomi assembly, hakomatimemberan…" He also noticed that some speakers are in a habit of repeating English equivalents of Urdu words either to show their knowledge and command on English Language or to express their status consciousness. Furthermore, Talaat (2002), in her study titled "The Form and Functions of English in Pakistan" collected data from English newspaper and magazines published in Pakistan. The selected text were analysed by comparing "standard British English" with Urdu sentence structure. It was observed that Urdu structure greatly influenced English Language

giving rise to Pakistani English. She also noticed structural divergence in language and concluded that it is due to code-mixing and literal translation.

RESEARCH STRATEGY

The research has followed qualitative approach. Due to limited time a Case study research was selected so that the phenomenon can be better understood and analysed within the boundaries of a single unit.

Population

The population consisted of Urdu news broadcasted on the private News channel.

Sampling

The sampling techniques used for this research were Convenient and Purposive sampling techniques.

The sample consisted of 30 audio-video recordings of news aired on the private News channel.

Data Collection Instruments

The data collection instrument was audio-video recordings of news aired on a private news channel. The recordings helped in finding out if code-mixing is prevalent in Urdu news of the channel. Moreover, these recordings also helped to interpret, find substitute and locate the word class of the English word inserted in the Urdu news.

ANALYSIS OF THE RECORDED NEWS

The analysis of 30 items of the recorded news has shown that code mixing is frequently adopted by news readers. The language of news has changed in the past decade. Words like "headlines, breaking news, up-date, break, welcome back……" have their equivalent in Urdu Language and were used in past but with the change in social attitude have been discarded.

After a thorough study of the recorded news it was analysed that code mixing is frequently practised in the news of the channel under study. Although, most of the words of English language used in the news have their equivalence but are not in everyday use. For example E-mail (Table 1), Security (Table 2), Bag (Table 5), Curfew (Table).Usually public is unaware of these equivalent words.

Furthermore, it was analysed that even those English words; whose equivalents are known to public, were also inserted in the News. For example words like Election (Table 2), International (Table 4).

The equivalent Urdu words were searched out and are listed below against the English words used in the news. Words repeated several times are mentioned only once.

Table 1. English words and their Urdu equivalents (Date of news: 30[th]April, 2013)

English words used in Urdu news	Equivalents in Urdu language
Break	Waqfa
Parties	Jamaati
Record	Mehfooz karna
Rangers	-----------
E-mail	Barqimarasla

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Table 2. English words and their Urdu equivalents (Date of news: 30thApril, 2013)

English words used in Urdu news	Equivalents in Urdu language	English words used in Urdu news	Equivalents in Urdu language
Functional	Faily	Police	-----------
Security	Hifazat	Defence phase 4	-----------
People's party	Awami Jammaat	Join	Dakhil
Conference	Mashawarat	Officer	Auhdadar
All parties conference	Kul Jamati Mushawarat	9 mm	-----------
Election	Intakhabaat	Dead bodies	Lashyain
Movement	Harkat	Team	Jamaat
DG Rangers	-----------	Body	Laash

Table 3. English words and their Urdu equivalents (Date of news: 02 May, 2013)

English words used in Urdu news	Equivalents in Urdu language	English words used in Urdu news	Equivalents in Urdu language
Post mortem	Muaina bad azmarg	Land	Zameen
Law & order	Aman- u –aman	Torture	Tashahdud
Europyunion	Europy Ittihaad	Scanning	Amal-e-taqti
Notice	Hukam nama	Joined	Shamoliat
Chief election commissioner	-----------	Dialogue	Mukalma/Baat-cheet
Doctor	Mualij	Delay	Takhiir
Polling station	Maqam-e-raidehandgi	Long run	Taveelmudat
Card	-----------	Negative	Manfi
Immigration	Tarkeen-e-watan	Jail	Qaidkhana
CCTV	-----------	Collective	Ijtimayi
Video	-----------	Chief election commissioner	-----------
Security check	-----------	Code	Khufiyaisharay
Clearance	Manzoori	SMS	-----------
Manager	Muntazim	Returning officer	-----------
Professional	Pesha-war	High court	Alaaadalat
Reaction	Rad-e-amal	Arrest	Giriftaar
International	Bainalaqwami	Rural	Dehii
Obviously	Zahir hay	Patrolling	Gasht
British airways	-----------	Individual	Infiradi
Royal Air force	Shahi hawai taqat	Registered	Indiraj
Country manager	-----------	Voters	Rai dehanda

Table 4. English words and their Urdu equivalents (Date of news: 2nd May 2013)

English words used in Urdu news	Equivalents in Urdu language	English words used in Urdu news	Equivalents in Urdu language
Control	Qaboo	Security plan	Salamti mansooba
Director General	-----------	Quick reaction	Fori rad-e-amal
ISPR	-----------	Mobile force	Gashtitaqqat (fauj)
Press	Chapa Khana	Media	Zara –i-iblaagh
Civil	Shehri	Destabilize	Ghair mustahakem
Briefing	Jam-e-itlaa	Secretary	-----------

Table 5. English words and their Urdu equivalents (Date of news: 1st May, 2013)

English words used in Urdu news	Equivalents in Urdu language
Support	Himayat
Mobile	-----------
Package	-----------
Stationary	-----------
Bags	Tehlay
Ballot Boxes	-----------
Ballot papers	-----------
Youth	Nojawaan

FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

The analysis of the collected data reflected that code mixing is an integral part of Urdu news. It was noted that only outer code mixing occurred in the recorded news item. Furthermore, it was noticed that code mixing was at word level mostly and at phrasal level rarely. It was also noticed that mostly the nouns were code-mixed.

The results of the study revealed that Urdu language is rich in vocabulary besides, having some shortage in the vocabulary related to science and technology and Government office register. The reason is that the research and progress in the field of science and technology has been made by the west hence, the terminology is in English language (see Table) English being an official language of Pakistan dominates all important departments and spheres of the country. It is the language of court, forces, government, trade & commerce and science & technology. It has become an integral part of the society so much so that even politics could not escape from its clutches. This resulted in mixing English code in all spheres of life in the country. Analysis of the data proved that words related to official departments were used in English, although Urdu language has substitute of these words. For example:

1. Words related to government

    Chairman, high court, Supreme Court, Chief Justice, meeting, assembly, notification and many more (see appendix

2. Words related to court

   Warrant, law and order, magistrate, jail, supreme court.

3. Words related to politics

   Abbreviations of all political party names such as PPP, MQM, JUI, PTI, BNP etc.

4. Words related to science and technology

   Email, website, mobile phone, telephone, drone, revolver, rifle, smg

5. Words related to forces

   Air force, army chief, army, rangers

6. Acronyms and abbreviations

   CNG, ICU, CCTV, ASF, ISBR

7. Words related to trade and commerce

   Sales tax, tax.

Moreover, words in common use like name of colours and some objects were also noted in English language. For example white, navy blue, red, coat, jacket, trousers etc. There were some words which have no alternate in Urdu, for example ballot paper, polling station, returning officer, presiding officer, mobile market, megawatt, and load shedding. The study also exposed that some words have their substitutes but have become part of Urdu language, example doctor, hospital, ICU (see Table). The dominancy of language was noticed in the names of the places also, for example Defence Phase 1V and Kurram Agency (Table)

CONCLUSION

The analysis of 30 items of the recorded news has shown that code mixing is frequently and most of the times unconsciously adopted in news writing as well as by news casters when reporting live and spontaneously (Tables no 1-30). The language of news from use of pure Urdu has changed to a great extent in the past decade. Words like "headlines, breaking news, up-date, break, welcome back, etc." are frequently used in Urdu news, in spite of the fact that they have their equivalents in Urdu language. However, these equivalents have been discarded in view of the changing attitude of the society towards Urdu and English language.

It would not be suffice to state that code-mixing is frequently and subconsciously done in delivering Urdu news and that a good amount of English words have now become an integral part of such code-mixed new. What needs to be evaluated is that there are certain categories or groups of words that more commonly occur than others. We can group these words in several ways: Firstly, there is what we know as 'loan and borrowed words' which have entered Urdu language from English. Some words like Traffic, Driver, Doctor, and Officer are very commonly used by all classes of people for everyday communication hence reflected in the news. Secondly, the abbreviations and acronym like CCTV, CNG, SMS, ASF, ISPR and CT scan were also widely used in Urdu news as their full-forms are technical and more difficult to pronounce and understand. Thirdly, names of places, such as police station, airport, hospital, hotel, assembly and jail were also frequently used in the news under observation.

Fourthly, names of professions and designations were also recorded in English such as doctor magistrate, chief justice, governor, security guard, election commissioner and director general (see Table). In addition, words pertaining to certain specific organizations and departments were also found, they were turbine, trip, feeder, grid station, power station, polling station, ballot paper, polling officer, vote, load shedding etc. Not only this, but the different forces

were also mentioned in English language such as army, air force, British air force, army chief.

Words for scientific technology, being developed by western countries, are justified to be a part of discourse in any language and therefore, words like e-mail, mobile phone, websites, SMS, were also noted. Similarly, names of weapons like rifle, revolver, SMG, grenade, bomb etc. also appeared. Again, words related to trade and commerce like tax and sales tax were also noticed.

Since, English is an official language in Pakistan, words like warrant and notification were also frequently used and some words have no possible equivalents at all like the name of an area in Karachi is Defence phase 4 and Kurram Agency. As it has been noticed so far, that most of the English words that were used in Urdu news, resulting in code-mixing, do not have their equivalents in Urdu for one reason or the other. However, the alternatives that are available in Urdu language were not used as they are a part of people absolute passive vocabulary and cannot be retrieved at the time of need. Still many are unknown to general public due to being out of use.

Hence it is concluded that news writers and casters, on the particular channel under discussion, mix English code in Urdu news very frequently and subconsciously, with the primary aim to convey their message to the audience in the best possible way. Secondarily, they have a few other reasons behind this code-mixing. The most important is the utilitarian approach of the society that is people hesitate in making an effort to find out the equivalent word in Urdu language. Moreover, some of the English words used in the news do not have their alternatives in Urdu language while others have but they are either in users passive vocabulary or completely unknown to them. As a result, they utilize any word at hand, be it a word from English language to fulfil their communicative purpose.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

First of all there is a need of a language policy to be made. Not only Government but media should also make a Language policy for News. The news reporters should be offered workshops and training to use words of Urdu Language in the news, if they exist. This would help people knowing equivalence Urdu Language words, subsequently their use also.

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