LANGUAGE CONTACT AND CODE MIXING AND CODE SWITCHING

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Language and Society are so interrelated and intertwined that it is impossible to understand one without the other. In a society language is all inclusive. We cannot imagine an effective and comfortable social life without the language. There is no human society that does not depend upon language. There are several societies formed on the basis of language and it shapes the society and get shaped by societies. Language is a powerful tool in developing and maintaining relationships and expressing and exchanging the ideas, emotions, creativity and culture. Language helps the process of enculturation.

Betrand Russel rightly put it, "No matter how eloquently a dog may bark, he cannot tell you that his parents were poor but honest". He reminds us that language is something very unique to human beings and the language has made us greater and more powerful than all other creations. The ability to communicate, to pass information, to persuade and to motivate people and to entertain is what makes wonders.

It is very obvious that language is essentially a **social phenomenon** since it lives in the minds and tongues of its users. Philosophers and linguists have explained linguistic forms with reference to their functions in social settings. **Socio linguistics** is the study of language in relation to society. It studies the interactions between language as a net work of relations and society as a net work of relations. But at the same time there is another branch of study called **Sociology of Linguists** that deals with the study of society in relation to language. Hudson (1980) defines socio linguistics and sociology of linguistics as follows. The study with a focus on society is sociology of linguistics and one that focus on language in socio linguistics.

There is a growing feeling that socio linguistic insights can be used in finding solutions to some of the important problems in the fields of human activities. Bilingualism and multilingualism, biculturalism, national integration, etc. are some of these areas.

The present study is an attempt to know and analyse the phenomenon of language contact in the context of bilingualism and multilingualism and the by product of it is called code switching and code mixing. Generally language is a means of communication and self expression and a form of social behaviour that enables the individual to co-operate with other individuals in a group or community. Any human being acquires a system of communication which we call language that is used in the society in which it was born in when the people lived in secluded communities they acquired and used the language they developed. Those are the bygone days. Now we are living in greater and more complicated interlinked social network with more freedom of movement, interaction and international relationship flourished leading to

national integration and multiculturalism. At present we are living in the era of internationalism and globalisation. We live any where in the world; we learn languages of other communities for various purposes. People acquire/learn one or more languages other than the native language or the mother tongue and become proficient in those languages. As time and context demand he/she chooses the language. Sometimes when he/she communicates with people of same status the language gets mixed.

Bilingualism and Multilingualism

Bilingualism is the ability to speak two languages. The term has been variously defined by different linguists. The definition by Bloomfield, 'Native like control of two languages' refers to people with near perfect mastery of two systems. Such a bilingual is called a **co-ordinate bilingual** those who have varying degrees of proficiency in the second language are called **subordinate bilinguals**.   Those who are slightly better than the monolinguals are called **incipient bilinguals**. These are the distinctions made in the area of individual bilingualism. Monolinguals are those who know and use only one language, the native language. Bilinguals know and use two languages- one the native and the other second language. A bilingual is said to be a person who makes alternative use of two languages or their varieties. A multilingual is a person who has proficiency/knowledge in more than two languages especially in speaking. India is said to be a multilingual country with a good number of educated people who are either bilinguals or multilinguals.

In modern western society, the ability to speak two languages is often seen as something remarkable achievements, especially in the English speaking communities. Over 70% of the earth's populations are thought to be bilingual or multilingual. There is a good reason to believe that bilingualism or multilingualism has been the norm for most human beings at least for the last millennium. The studies say that the children raised bilingually tend to be more expressive, more original and better communicators than children raised with only one language; that is monolinguals.

In several places such as South East Asia, New Guinea, India Caucasus, Amazon rain forests people commonly and routinely learn two or three neighbouring languages in addition to their own native ore first language and same was true of Australia before the European settlement. A common feature observed in European countries is that millions of the people there are bilinguals or multilinguals speaking both their own mother tongue and the national language of the country they live in and many of them can additionally speak a global language or world language like English or French. In India an average educated person speaks Hindi, the national language, English, the second language and associate official language and the regional language. This very group is a quintessence for this interesting feature.

Bilingualism can be the property of an individual, but equally it can be the property of an entire speech community in which two or more languages are routinely used. The phenomena of code mixing and code switching are resultants of the practice of bilingualism and multilingualism.
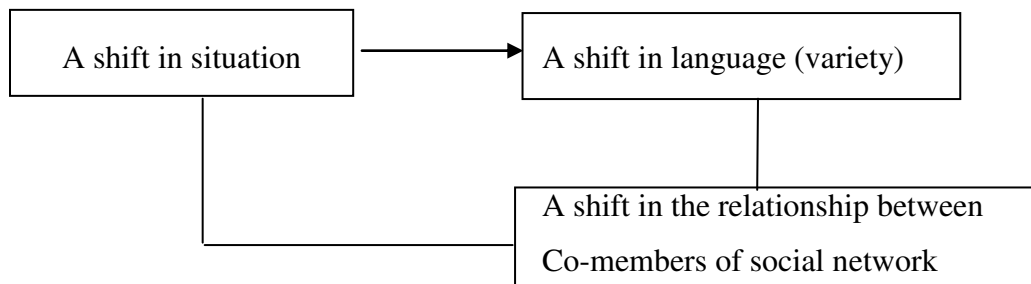
Language Contact

Every normal human has their own repertoire of linguistic choices from which they select for each situation and the networks of interlocking socio-cultural relations. The people who belong to different speech network and choose and use the language properly in a variety of

socially determined situations it is a central part of the linguistic competence of the persons. As these choices are situationally determined, shifts in situations require shifts in language varieties.

The components and the interrelations involved in this are:

(1)   Participants – their socio psychological behaviour; their mood and relative social positions.
(2)   Socio cultural settings – its distinguishing features.
(3)   Topic of discourse.

The shift in situations and the consequent shift in language may be represented diagrammatically as:

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┌──────────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────────────────┐
│  A shift in situation │──────▶│  A shift in language (variety)│
└──────────────────────┘        └──────────────────────────────┘
            │                                    │
            │        ┌───────────────────────────────────────┐
            └───────▶│  A shift in the relationship between   │
                     │  Co-members of social network          │
                     └───────────────────────────────────────┘
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Code Mixing

Code mixing is a multilingual phenomenon of mixing of two languages while speaking. The fluent bilingual talks to another fluent bilingual and the changes in language occur without any change in the situation. The purpose seems to symbolise a somewhat ambiguous situation for which neither of the language can be quite right. It is a kind of linguistic cock tail in which a few words of one language and a few from other, and again a few from the former, a few from the latter and so on mixed up. The changes take place more or less randomly. Redlinger and Park say that **language mixing refers to the combining of elements from two languages in a single utterance**. Switches occurring at the lexical level within a sentence are referred to as code mixing. Code mixing is a linguistic strategy. Maclaughin says that code mixes take place within sentences and usually involve single lexical item. Bokambo (1989) defines **code mixing as the embedding of various linguistic units such as affixes, words, phrases and clauses from two distinct grammatical system within the sentence and speech event**.

Through code mixing the languages may come to gain wide currency as well as a kind of respectability social acceptability. Since English is a second/associate official language in India, people mix English words with their utterances. It happens with the Indian languages invariably. The practice of code mixing presupposes that the speakers are bilinguals or multilinguals. This is largely used in informal speech writings. The speaker makes a deliberate choice of mixing the codes sometimes to be fashionable and other times to convey the wishes of the speaker better in one language than in the other. Therefore it is intentional to be more precise or to convey the message meaningfully and easily.

A lot of code mixing can be observed among the educated people and in the media especially in the visual media. For the compeers in media world it is a fad today. Even among uneducated adults and children, it is found common.

See the following instances:
* *'ente vayaru fullayi'*

- My stomach is full.
- *'nanage exercise madubekku'*
- I want to do exercise.
- *'mera presentation ka samay'*
- Time for my presentation.

Code mixing may affect the purity and stability of L_2 as well as the L_1. Code mixing affects the phonology, morphology and syntax of the languages. As a result of modernisation liberalization and globalisation the practice of code mixing is usual and acceptable. The use of borrowed words especially the names of the products invented in the Western world or the technical terms in Science, Commerce, Economics, etc. are used by us in their original form. People are greatly acquainted with those terms.

The practice of code mixing becomes harmful to both the languages. It brings dissonance in the speech of the people to a certain extent, though it sounds fashionable and appealing to young ears. There is a great threat in code mixing. A kind of distortion or destruction happens to the languages involved. People may forget or neglect the words which are very common and simple and more suitable in the speech.

Code Switching

Code switching is a feature of language contact in the context of bilingualism and multilingualism. It is a term used to describe the linguistic situation where a speaker will alternate between two varieties or codes in conversation with others who have similar linguistic repertoire. A speaker who knows more than one languages choose between them according to the circumstances. In community multilingualism, the different languages are used in varying circumstances and the choice is always controlled by social rules. In some cases, one language is reserved for use at home while another is used in the wider community (in shopping etc). The language is switched over several times in a day. We call it as **situational code switching** because the switching between languages always coincides with changes from one external situation to another.

Only the bilingual speakers can avail their choice of language in order to describe the surrounding situation, which always varies. One may have to deliver a lecture in a classroom, the next moment he may have to make loose conversation or breakfast table with his family, further he may have to communicate with the shopkeeper. We select the language according to the varying situation. The situation is not clear in some cases, it is either ambiguous or the speaker does not want to reveal the external situation, and tries to focus on less observable traits of the people concerned. In such cases situation is determined by the Choice of language. It is called **metaphorical code-switching** (Blom and Gumperz 1971). In this type of code switching is the speakers have scope to manipulate the norms governing the case of varieties. Code switching is the point at which the language change corresponds to a point where the situation changes either on its own or precisely because the language changes. This refers to the practice of alternating between two languages, that is, uttering some sentences in one language and then switching over to another. Only a bilingual can switch from one language to another and not a monolingual. Through code switching the language may come to gain wide currency as well as a kind of respectability and social acceptability.

Giesbers distinguishes three basic forms of code switching.
1.   Intended, situationally motivated switches.

2. Contextual switches which are connected with the topic of conversation.
3. Performance switches which include code switching as a speech style or a speaking mode.

Intended switches result from a choice at the conceptual level; through the choice of the language additional information is conveyed. **Contextual switches** originate in the grammatical encoding component and occur more particularly. Another possibility is that the discourse model conveys the information that the conventional setting allows for any switching to take place leading to random switching. Contextual switches has another problem. There must be a specific subset in the lexicon in which lexical elements within one language can be activated but another subset which contains lexical element from different languages also possible. This means that there must be separate subsystems which decrease or increase the extent of code switching depending on the conversational setting and topic. Cline (1987) advocated **'equivalence constraint'** which postulates that the syntax on either side of a switch must be grammatical for the language concerned. Clyne explained this by saying that in cases where a speaker can make a choice between two possible constructions in a language, that construction will be selected that is closest to the equivalent in the other language. Many examples of cross linguistic influences are related to code switching and cannot be simply separated from this on theoretical or empirical grounds. Cross linguistic influences can be indicative of a lack of knowledge. When the knowledge of the L2 is insufficient, the speaker may 'borrow' from the L1. Code switching is rather representing deviant behaviour, it actually a suggestive indicator of degree of bilingual competence.

See few examples for code switching:

- *ente abhiprayattil,* the Govt. should take a very strong action with regard to the price hike, karanam ....
- In my opinion, the Govt. should take a very strong action with regard to the price hike. Because ....
- *India oru mahathaya rajyamanu.* But Indians don't realize that.
- India is a great country. But Indians don't realize that.

Indian Scenario

In India English using bilinguals are very common as English has been the language of instruction, administration and technical education and higher education. English is also the language of conversation among the elite in clubs, officer's mess, central offices, etc. and it has co-existed with all major Indian languages within the same linguistic area for many years. It is quite common today for the speakers of regional languages to switch to English while talking.

Code switching switch from code A to code B cannot be simply be a matter of free individual choice. It is clearly a verbal strategy used by speakers in a way creative artists switch styles and levels and it is appropriate to the topical and situational features.

Some main features of code switching are:

1. Intralanguage and interlanguage switching are sociolinguistic universals. Bernstein's theory (1958) tells that elaborated code speakers would tend to be able to switch from one code to another according to the demands of the situation whereas the restricted code user would tend to be confined to one code.

2.   The switchers use English words and expression even when equivalents exist in their mother tongue.

3.   Certain formulaic expressions in English are naturally in informal conversations by urban bilingual societies.

4.   Due to the commonality and popularity of English it is used automatically and unconsciously by the Indian bilinguals.

5.   Code switching is context governed.

6.   Use of English depends on our emotional and intellectual attachment to this code.

7.   The code mixers yield new collocations in our languages like 'report karna', 'submit cheyyuka', 'adjust pannanam', 'compaint madiri' etc.

8.   The mixed languages are a natural by-product of language contact situations consequent to the development of bilingual and multilingual communities.

Code mixing implies the use of words or phrases of one language with the other. The phonology of the L_2 is also affected. See for example,

1.   phone *kaTTa: yippoyi*

2.   *enikku* Ticket *buku cheyya:n paÉiyilla*

3.   *ella:* rooms *um* full *a: nu*

This is largely confined to informed speech and sometimes to very writings like personal letters etc. The speaker makes a deliberate choice of mixing the codes sometimes to sound fashionable and vague and at other times the choice is dictated by the fact that what the speaker wishes to convey is expressed better in one language than in the other.

Code mixing affects the purity and stability of the L_2 as well as the L_1. The phonology, Morphology and syntax of the languages concerned are affected in several ways. In the context of Malayalam speaker learning and using, English as a second language/associate official language comes in the way of all Indian languages. The use of borrowed words especially the names of the products invented in the western world or the technical terms in the various disciplines of science, commerce and economics force to use those words in their original form. It is also a sign that Malayalam speakers are aware of and acquainted with those terms eg: **switch, mobile phone, bank, etc**.

In the levels of phonology several instances of fusion are noticed. For instance consider Malayalam **phonological features** got carried over to English.

4.   *avante* properties*sellam* take over*u cheyya:n ti:ruma:niccu*

        It has been   decided to take over all his properties.

5.   Phone *kaTTa:yippoyi*

        The phone is cut

6.   *enikku* TickeÉ*ukal* book*u cheyya:n paÉiyilla*

        I could not book the tickets.

Here, the sounds of English are affected by Malayalam sounds by way of replacement, addition etc. The usages, 'take over' > take overu, cut > kaTTa:iyi, tickets > TickeÉukal, book >buku.

The **morphological aspects** are also affected in several ways. Malayalam sound units or case markers which are in the morphological level are added to English words and mixed with Malayalam, For example with the word cut (past participle form) the Malayalam auxiliaries are used. In the place of tickets an English Malayalam combination 'ticket*ukal*' is used.

7.   *ella:* box*ukaLum* empti*ya:Nu*

        All the boxes are empty

8.   *ella*: packeÉ*ukaLum* vaLare neata: yi sealu cheytu.

All the packets are sealed very neatly.

In these sentences we see that the English plural marker 's' is replaced by Malayalam plural marker as 'kal' in boxukal and packettukal. The word 'a:nu' is added with 'empty'. The **analytical feature** of English is disturbed by the **agglutinative feature** of Malayalam and vice versa. 'Neatly' is replaced by neata:yi, 'sealed' became 'sealuceytu'.

Where these sentences can very well be uttered in Malayalam as

9.   *ella: peTTikaLum su:nyama:Nu*

ella pettikaLum vaLare vrutiya:yi mudra vaykapettu

Why should these Malayalam expressions be mixed with English. This tendency will remain and get intensified and the coming generation will be exposed to such kind of usages. The Malayalam words will be neglected or forgotten or be come obsolete and the English words will be distorted as well.

This also makes syntactic problem

10.   *ninte* number *onnu* message *ceyta:l mati*

please message your number.

There is a **problem of double marking** of English and Malayalam word. The word message which also means send a message and it becomes message *ceytu* or *ayaccu*.

11.   LighÉ*ukLellam* swi*cco:f ceyyu*.

Switch off all the lights.

Here 'all the lights' becomes 'light*ukalellam*' and the verb '*ceyye*' is joined with the English word. But without '*ceyye*' it will sound incomplete to the Malayalam speakers. Any number of samples can be presented from the situations of classrooms, dialogues of the public and television programmes, etc. where code mixing and switching are quite common.

Multilingualism is found in linguistically diverse environment. Language due to mutual influence or language contact may undergo structural changes at the level of sounds, syntax, vocabulary and semantics. It is a modern phenomenon we need to probe into to see how it will influence or affect the languages.

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