

LANGUAGE CONTACT IN INDIAN MEDIA -A SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY

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Abstract

Language is a major means of identifying a set of people, nation or country. In a multilingual country like India code-mixing and -switching has become a norm rather than a deviation. Hinglish, a portmanteau of "Hindi" and "English", is a hybrid of English and South Asian languages. It is a code-switching variety of these languages whereby they are freely interchanged within a sentence or between sentences. While the name is based on the Hindi language, it does not refer exclusively to Hindi, but is used in India, with English words blending with Punjabi, Urdu and Hindi. Hinglish has become the lingua franca for most upper-class Indians, especially the youth. Although this is more commonly seen in urban and semi-urban centers of the Hindi-speaking states of India, it is now slowly spreading into rural and remote areas of all the states via television, radio, mobile phones, internet (social networking sites) etc. Hinglish and code-mixing has crept its way into advertisements, TV shows, and Bollywood movies as well as the corridors of corporate and political power in India. This work is an empirical study of code mixed utterances in the form of songs, ad taglines and jingles in Indian media.

Key Words- Code-mixing/switching, Hinglish, Jingles, Taglines, Songs, Media

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Introduction

‘No matter how eloquently a dog may bark, he cannot tell you that his parents were poor but honest’ –Bertrand Russell (Farb 1975:259)

Language is a social phenomenon. It is through language that day-today interactions and interpersonal relations are possible. Language shapes the society and culture. Crystal (1985:262) observes that of all the means of communication, language is the most frequently used and developed. Languages have always been influencing each other in certain ways. Normally, this interaction is reflected in language convergence, borrowing and replacement. It may also lead to the emergence of hybrid languages, such as pidgins, creoles, and other mixed languages. In Sociolinguistics, this branch of study is called language contact. Language contact is considered to be an important phenomenon, especially in a multilingual society. Many scholars have discussed sociolinguistics and have come up with several definitions based on their individual perspectives. Hudson (2001:4) defines sociolinguistics as the study of language in relation to the society. It is the study of language as it affects and is being affected by social relations; it is also the study of language and linguistic behaviour as influenced by social and cultural factors. Fishman (1972:9) defines sociolinguistics as the study of the characteristics of language varieties, the characteristics of their functions, and the characteristics of their speakers as these three constantly interact, change and change one another within a speech community.

Multilingualism has always been common in the human history. In the today's world of globalization, most of the people are multilingual, and not by volition but by force. Therefore, studying the aspects of language contact and its influence is a significant matter. This paper is an attempt to assess the possible outcome of such influence in the Indian media.

Code-mixing and Code-switching

In bilingual communities code-mixing and code-switching are widespread phenomena where speakers use their native tongue (L1) and their second language (L2) in different domains. The term ‘code-switching’ refers to the alternate use of two or more languages in an extended stretch of discourse, where the switch takes place at sentence or clause boundaries. However, the term code-mixing refers to the mixing of two or more languages or language varieties in speech. A code may be a language or a variety or style of a language; the term code-

mixing emphasizes hybridization, and the term code-switching emphasizes movement from one language to another.

Several scholars have attempted to define code-switching and code-mixing. Poplack (1980:586) opines that code-switches will tend to occur at points in discourse where juxtaposition of L1 and L2 elements does not violate a syntactic rule of either language, i.e., at points around which the surface structures of the two languages map onto each other. According to this simple constraint, a switch is inhibited from occurring within a constituent generated by a rule from one language which is not shared by the other.

Code-mixing is also called intra-sentential code switching or intra-sentential code-alteration and this happens when speakers use two or more languages below clause level within one social situation. Patterns of code-switching are found to be different from one another because of several distinct processes such as 'insertion', 'alteration' and 'congruent lexicalization'. These three processes correspond to dominant models, and approaches (Muysken, 2000:3).

Maschler (1998: 125) defines code-mixing or a mixed code as "using two languages such that a third, new code emerges, in which elements from the two languages are incorporated into a structurally definable pattern." In other words, the code-mixing hypothesis states that when two code-switched languages constitute the appearance of a third code it has structural characteristics special to that new code.

In a multilingual country like India code-mixing and -switching has become a norm rather than a deviation. *Hinglish*, a portmanteau of "Hindi" and "English", is a hybrid of English and South Asian languages. It is a code-switching variety of these languages whereby they are freely interchanged within a sentence or between sentences. While the name is based on the Hindi language, it does not refer exclusively to Hindi, but is used in India, with English words blending with Punjabi, and Hindi. *Hinglish* has become the lingua franca for most upper-class Indians, especially the youth. Although this is more commonly seen in urban and semi-urban centers of the Hindi-speaking states of India, it is now slowly spreading into rural and remote areas of all the states via television, radio, mobile phones, internet (social networking sites) and word of mouth thereby achieving vernacular status gradually. Radio jockeys and TV anchors deliberately mix English words with stream of Hindi sentence to sound more chic and funky. There are certain words that cannot be replaced with any regional language. Certain words like train, TV, computer, mobile, and so on do not have similar words in any other Indian language. And even if they exist they are not used in day-to-day language.

Code mixing as seen in Advertisement taglines-

1. Product: Coca-Cola

Tagline: Thandamatlab Coca-Cola.

2. Product: Pepsi

Tagline: Yehi hain right choice baby.

3. Product: Vicco

Tagline: Vicco turmeric nahi cosmetic

Vicco turmeric ayurvedic cream.

4. Product: Bajaj Coolers

Tagline: Ek dum solid cooling.

5. Product: Himani Navratna Talc

Tagline: Thanda Thanda Cool Cool.

6. Product: Tata Docomo

Tagline: Abaapki duniya open.

7. Product: Sugarfree Natura

Tagline: Live Life kuch zyada.

8. Product: Ponds beauty magic

Tagline: Andar se de spotless aura sirf so din mein.

9. Product: Dove

Tagline: Naya Dove whitening deodorant.

10. Product: Maggi Noodles

Tagline: Taste bhi, Health bhi.

11. Product: Tata Sky

Tagline: Iskolagadala toh life zingalala.

12. Product: Sprite

Tagline: Bujhayepyaas, baki all bakwas!

13. Product: 7 up

Tagline: Mood ko do

Lemon ka lift.

14. Product: Virgin Mobile

Tagline: Think Hatke.

15. Product: Mirinda

Tagline: Holi hamper

Jeetnekafunda,

Gharperakho

Mirinda.

16. Product: Nimbooz

Tagline: Refreshing

Nimboopaani

With asli lemon juice.

17. Product: Sprite

Tagline: Clear hain!

& Seedhibaat. No bakwaas.

18. Product: Domino's Pizza

Tagline: Hungry kya?

19. Product: Lays

Tagline: Pal banaye magical.

20. Product: Hero Moto corp

Tagline: Hum meinhein hero.

21. Product: Close-Up

Tagline: Kyaaap Close-Up kartehain?

22. Product: Crest

Tagline: Look Ma, no cavities!

23. Product: Coke

Tagline: Life ho to aisi.

24. Product: Lacto Calamine

Tagline: Dilka confidence chehre par.

25. Product: Colgate active salt

Tagline: Massoreswastaur taste mein mast.

26. Product: Airtel Internet

Tagline: Ekrupiyemein full masti.

27. Product: Rasna (fruit plus)

Tagline: Kabhibhirasnakabhibhi energy.

28. Product: Cadbury's

Tagline: Ish T20 late working kashubharambh

Kuchmeetha ho jaye.

29. Product: Domino's pizza mania

Tagline: Yehhainrishtonka time.

30. Product: Pepsi

Tagline: Oh yes abhi.

31. Product: Tata Docomo

Tagline: Network

Harjagah, hamesha.

32. Product: Coca Cola

Tagline: Khusiyanlutaon crazy kehlaon.

33. Product: Dettol soap

Tagline: ab bane har morning

Goodmorning.

34. Product: Colgate sensitive tooth brush

Tagline: Dentist ka no.1 choice.

35. Product: Fogg deodorant

Tagline: Bina gas walafogg.

36. Product: Idea

Tagline: What an idea sirjee!

37. Product: Bisleri 500

Tagline: Pehleapnikharido

Phir kiss karo.

38. Product: Cadbury's gems

Tagline: Rahoumarless.

39. Product: Kurkure

Tagline: Chai time

Masti bole toh

Kurkure.

40. Product: Blue

Tagline: At your best,

Hamesha!

Other than these advertisement taglines there are also ad jingles that are perfect examples of code-switching/ mixing. One such jingle is by the telecom service provider Idea.

The catchy jingle shows various people, locations and situations from all across the country and depicts how Idea customers benefit from its pan-India network. The advertisement shows Indians from around the country, with varied cultural backgrounds, connecting as one big happy family humming one happy song – "Honey Bunny". Though, there appears to be no effort in espousing any deep message in the advertisement it is nevertheless happy, catchy and appears to influence and persuade the target audience by sheer use of endearing and funny code mixing patterns.

You're my pumpkin, pumpkin, hello honey bunny

I'm your dumpklin, dumpklin, hello honey bunny

Feeling something something, hello honey bunny, honey bunny

Toko ... toko ...

You're my pumpkin, pumpkin, hello honey bunny

I'm your dumpklin, dumpklin, hello honey bunny

Feeling something something, hello honey bunny, honey bunny

Toko ...toko ...

*How many times lady love had given me missed calls
What to tell you lazy luck no battery at all
Idharudhar heart pouchhing like a ping pong ball ballballballball
Tringtringtringtringtringtring . . . hello honey bunny
Feeling someting something, hello honey bunny
You're my pumpkin, pumpkin, hello honey bunny, honey bunny
Toko . . . toko . . .
La . . . La . . .*

*You've been such a stupid fellow that is what I thought
Making people fall in love no other work or what
Got to know him better when you enter the plot plotplotplotplotplot
Thanks to his idea, you're my honey bunny
I'm your pumpkin piya, you're my honey bunny
Bole – tringtringjiya, you're my honey bunny, honey bunny
Toko . . .toko . . .*

*I'm your pumpkin, pumpkin, hello honey bunny
I'm your dumplin, dumplin, hello honey bunny
Feeling something something, hello honey bunny. honey bunny
Toko . . . toko . . .*

*Tringtringtringtringtringtring hello honey bunny
Feeling something something, hello honey bunny, honey bunny
You're my pumpkin, pumpkin, hello honey bunny, honey bunny
Toko . . . toko . . .*

Another ad jingle, which is a perfect example of code-switching/ mixing is the Coca-Cola advertisement jingle. This jingle tries to make one believe that there are many reasons to believe in a better tomorrow. The overall aim of the advertisement appears to be to establish the idea that the drink 'Coke' is synonymous with happiness.

*UmmeedonWaaliDhoop
Sunshine WaaliAasha*

*Rone Ki WajahKammHai
HansneKeBahaneJyada
ZiddHaiMuskurayenge
KhushRehneKaHaiWaada*

*UmeedWaliDhoop
Sunshine WaaliAasha*

Again, in Bollywood, Gulal was this blend of macro politics with student politics, which forms the core of the drama, where an apolitical new student, is involuntarily sucked into the vortex of blood, hate and violence. Piyush Mishra, as the fan of John Lennon, voice-of-conscience Rajput gifted the viewers with powerful lyrics and music that carried the narrative forward, even as they render a forceful critique of the state of the nation. The lyrics of the song 'Ranaji' come across as a classic case of code-mixing.

haayraanajimhaaregussemeinaaye, aisobalkhaaye

Agiyabarsaaye, ghabraayemhaaro chain

jaisedur des ke tower meinghusjaaye re airoplane

Haayraanajimhaaregussemeinaaye, aisobalkhaaye

Agiyabarsaaye, ghabraayemhaaro chain

Jaisedur des ke tower meinghusjaaye re airoplane

Raanajimhaareaisogurraaye, aisotharraaye

Bharaayemhaaronain

Jaisesareaambhai

Jaisesareaamiraakmeinjaake jam gayeanclesam

Raanajimhaare.....

Sajaniko dear bole, tharreko beer bole

Maangehaienglisboli, maangehaienglischoli

Maangehaienglisjaipuri, englisbikaaner

Jaisebiselerikibotal pike ban gayeenglis man

Jaisebiselerikibotal pike ban gayeenglis man

Raanajimhaare.....

Raanajimhaaresautankoghar le aaye

Puchhetoh bole friend hamaarihaihaay

Raanaji ne thandachakkuyuunkhola

Bole kehaayethandamaanecoka cola
Raanaaji bole gorokibastimeinhaishorraani
Haayhaaymorokibastimeinchorraani
Hoy hoyhoyhoymorokibastimeinchorraani
Kyunkiyehdilmaange more
More rani, more rani, more rani, more rani
Mhaarithohbichbajariya, haaybadnaami ho gayi
Mhaarithohlaalchunariyasaram se dhaani ho gayi
Mhaarotohdhakhakhowejojo bite re
Jaiseharekbaatpe democracy meinlaganelagagaya band
Jaiseharekbaatpe democracy meinlaganelagagaya band
Jaisedur des ke tower meinghusjaaye re airoplane
Jaisesareaamiraakmeinjaake jam gayeanclesam
Jaisebinabaatafganistaankabajgayabhaiya band
Jaisebinabaatafganistaankabajgayabhaiya band
Jaisedur des ke tower meinghusjaaye re airoplane ..raanajimhaare...

With *English Vinglish*, female director GauriShinde brings her own lifetime of experience into the picture. The image of the newly confident Shashi striding down a Manhattan street, a takeout coffee in hand and a trench coat belted over her sari, makes one smile days after you have left the theater. *English Vinglish* springs up a sweet musical surprise, a lovable and adorable innocent feeling that not only enlightens up senses but amuses too with its simplicity and modesty. Tall skyscrapers, slick fashion-stores...that's Manhattan for the viewers! To get a kaleidoscope view of Manhattan for B-town listeners, there's a situational track titled "Manhattan", a number that sounds more like a "guide-map" to all luxuries and happenings of this urban city. Clinton Cerejo's boyish charms and Bianca Gomes's quirky vocals exemplify it in all vivacious and boisterous loud singing modes. The striking feature is Bianca's chirpy singing in listing out all worlds' top-most fashion brands in her "twittering" voice; overall a cool rendezvous of code-mixing which succeeded in influencing and persuading the viewers.

Aadmitopidoopkichhaap

Manhattan! manhattan!

Jannattakhaibaap re baap

Manhattan! manhattan!

Amber kochhootajahanhai

Chaltafirtasapnahai

Pal palchaltihainyehraahein

Ruktikabkahanhain...

Manhattan! manhattan!

[new york]

Manhattan! manhattan!

[new york, new york, new york]

Aadmitopidoopkichhaap

Manhattan! manhattan!

Jannattakhaibaap re baap

Khushiyonkenayepaimaane

Khwaabonkilagihaindukaane

Lamha-lamhasadkon par

Achraj se mulakatein

T.. t.. t.. to your left is prada

To your right is zara

Giorgio armani, thank god it's friday

Gucci and versace

Jimmy choo, givenchy

Diesel, dior, hokey pokey, gap and bloomingdale

Louis vuitton..vuitton.. vui.. vui.. vui..

Vuitton..vuitton.. vuitton.. vuitton..

Moschino..chino.. chino.. k.. k.. k.. k..

Chino..chino..chino..

Valentino... tino... tino... t..t.. t.. t..

Tino... tino... tino...

Dekho..

Khushiyonkikaanaphusi

...

Masti me nakanjoosi

Maze kar

Kudrathuihaimeharbaan... baan... baan... baan...

Saarashehar

Ajnabisikhamoshi

Saarashehar

Thandisigarmjoshi

Hareknazar

Dikhtihaitanhatanha

Haizuban par sab bezubaanhai

Saaresath to hai par judahai

Sheherkonazarkatika to laga do...

New york..new york.. new york.. new york..

5,6,7,8 avenues

Million billion legs and shoes

Lots of colors, dollars dollars

Sense of piddly poo

Breakfast is for all day

Straight and gay they all sway

And lexington, and madison, it's all so oooh!

Frappuccino..chino.. chino.. chino..

Mochaccino..chino.. chino.. chino..

Cappuccino..chino.. chino.. chino..

As evident from the above discussion Hinglish has crept its way into advertisements, TV shows, and Bollywood movies as well as the corridors of corporate and political power in India. A popular movie is titled "Jab We Met" ("When We Met"), while a shampoo commercial on TV features a popular Bollywood actress Priyanka Chopra calling out, "Come on girls, waqthai shine karneka!" ("It's time to shine") –this is an apt example of code-mixing. Over the years, Hinglish has been effectively used in Indian advertising in advertising taglines, like Pepsi's 1998 slogan *YehDilMaange More!* (This heart demands for more!). Even "English-language" newspapers in India pepper their text with words borrowed from Hindi.

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