An Impact on Code-Switching in the Lyrics of Popular Indian Film Songs

C. Chamundeshwari & Sajid Iqbal

Abstract

This study focuses on the impact of code-switching on the lyrics of popular Indian film songs on the listener. Why code-switched songs are popular among tertiary-level students and young adults? The study analyzed the effects of code-switching in Indian film songs. A survey was conducted with 130 tertiary-level students using a Likert scale. 10 Students were interviewed with six questions apart from the questionnaire to know the reality of the youth's perception of Code-switching songs. The findings of the study reveal that code-switching in the lyrics of popular Indian songs impacts the listener, as it makes the songs catchy and rebellious with an infusion of lyrics from different languages. The code-switched songs, from popular Indian films, reflect modernity among users and create a sense of emotional relief to understand the sociolinguistic phenomenon.

Keywords: Bilingualism; Code Switching; Indian Film Songs; Language; Lyrics.

Introduction

Code-switching refers to the switching of one language to another by a person during a conversation, which may occur either consciously or unconsciously. Code and language are two terms that are used interchangeably (Muysken, 2000; Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015). The code-switching phenomenon occurs in different aspects in a bilingual or multilingual community. Code-Switching is also a common method used by singers as they intend to bring their music to the community and to be accepted by the global community (Bentahila and Davies, 2002). However, Code-Switching of songs has an impact on listeners as words from two languages are used interchangeably in the lyrics to express certain emotions. With the encouragement of the English language in Indian society,

lyricist and producers are targeting listeners with code-switched lyrics in songs that influences and remains in trend for a longer period. English Language facilitates in propagating of ideas and offers people about different cultures (Chamundeshwari and Jami, 2022).

1.2   Statement of the Problem

The impact of code-switching in the lyrics of Indian songs is an important study because Indian music and songs have a greater influence on the young adult's mind, and significantly less research has been conducted so far. The researcher was instigated to study the impact of code-switched songs that are produced by Indian singers or producers. The researcher further focuses on the impression of the English language in Indian songs, which affects young adult listeners and creates behavioral change among students. Kachru Yamuna expressed that in India people identify their tastes by listening to popular music, which sometimes opposes and sometimes complements the traditional genres of music. (227).

1.3   Research Questions

•   Why do many popular Indian songs have Code switched in the lyrics?

•   In what way does Code-Switching in songs impacts students' behavior and creative ability?

1.4   Objectives of the Study

•   To find out the impacts of Code-Switching in lyrics of popular Indian songs and why it is used extensively.

•   To determine how Code-Switching impact on the student's mind.

•   To examine how Code-Switching influences the creative ideas of young adults.

1.5   Review of Literature

Chetia Barnali (2017) conducted a study where she studied the code-switched and code-mixed utterances present in songs, advertisements, and jingles in Indian mass media. She expresses that the code-switching phenomena was a by-product of the advancement of technology which revolutionized Indian media. She further explains the use of Hinglish as lingua franca, by urban as well as semi-urban and rural society of Indi-

an states that speaks the Hindi language. The paper opines the view that modern technology has brought changes in the language spoken in Indian society.

Safitri Laila and Hamka Hamka studied Facebook status upload or comment of the students. English Education Program at TBI-1 Sixth Semester was taken for the study. The findings of the study revealed the three types of code mixing suggested by Muysken which is present in Facebook. Code mixing done by users for this study was 71 times for insertion, 3 for congruent lexicalization, and 9 times for alternation. In total 83 times code mixing had been done. The study may differ in the Indian context and when a heterogeneous group of students will be chosen.

Syafaat et.al. conducted a study on the types of code mixing appearing in Twitter status from 8 to 24 August 2018. The method used in this study is the observation method and writing technique. The data collection method is used to collect data for the research, and Musyken's theory and human theory are used as instruments. The findings of the study reveal that English words and phrases are inserted by Indonesian users while uploading Twitter status into a single sentence of Indonesian origin.

2 Code-Switching

According to Heller (2007, p.1) "Language practices are socially and politically embedded" and thus many times language creates uniqueness and diversity when they are combined. According to him, sociolinguistics studies code-switching to identify the causes of its development. Myers-Scotton (2006) on the other hand defines Code-switching as the inclusion of elements from two or more language varieties in the same clause. However, only one of these variabilities is the foundation of the morpho-syntactic frame for the clause (p. 241). Similarly, according to Wardhaugh (2006, p.101), it is rare among speakers to use and command only one system of code switches. He emphasized that most orators could speak in different varieties of language. eHe further added that bilingualism and multilingualism prevail among speakers throughout the globe rather than "monolingualism".

3 Research Design

The study covers the selected songs from Indian movies that used code-switching. The selected songs were collected from Bollywood movies. There are also regional and vernacular language songs in different

regional movies. The influence of the English language in Hindi songs of Indian movies has been present for a long time, whereas it can also be seen that in recent times, another foreign language is used in a few of the lyrics of Hindi songs. The researcher also framed a questionnaire comprising 15 questions and distributed it to 130 students from the tertiary level. It was observed that many songs from Bollywood or the Indian film industry have used code-switching in them. 10 Students were interviewed with six questions apart from the questionnaire to know the reality of the youth's perception of Code-switching songs.

3.1 Lyrics of the Selected Songs

1. Give Me Some Sunshine by Sharman Joshi and Suraj Jagan from the movie "3 Idiots, 2009"

2. Rey Chori by A.R Rahman from the Movie "Lagaan 2001"

3. Mera Naam Chin Chin Chu by Geeta Dutt, from the movie "Howrah Bridge 1950"

4. All is well by Shaan, Sonu Nigam and Swanand Kirkire, from the movie "3 idiots, 2009"

5. Senorita by Shankar Ehsaan Loy, from the movie "ZNMD, 2011"

6. Why this Kolaveri Di By Anirudh Ravichander and Dhanush

7. Jai Ho, by A.R. Rahman from the movie "Slumdog Millionaire, 2008"

8. Move your body by Shankar Ehsaan Loy, from the movie "Johnny Gaddaar, 2007"

4.1 Demographic Details

Among the 130 tertiary-level students, 35% were female students and 65% were male students. 25% Post Graduate students and 75% of Undergraduate student participants.

4.2 Code-switching helps in the clear expression of songs.

Out of 130 students, 71.5% agreed18.5% strongly agreed that code-switching helps in the clear expression of songs as many Indian songs include code-switched lyrics in them. However, 10% of students disagreed as they don't think that the code-switching phenomenon is necessary for the clear expression of song lyrics.

4.3   Code-switching in Hindi songs creates a good rhyme scheme.

Out of 130 students, 65 % agreed to the reason, and 19 % strongly agreed because according to them the code-switching of Hindi lyrics with English words is good for creating catchy rhyme schemes. However, 14% disagreed as code-switching in Hindi songs don't create good rhyme schemes.

4.4   Listeners prefer more code-switched songs because of the energetic music.

Out of 130 students, 47 % students agreed and 2% strongly agreed because of the energetic music associated with it. These types of code-switched songs with energetic music in Indian movies are sometimes called dance numbers and remixed songs. However, 26% of students disagree and 2% strongly disagreed as they don't prefer code-switched songs.

4.5   Code-switched songs are preferred by young adult audiences.

Out of 130 students, 65 % agreed 16 % students strongly agreed as it indicates the popularity of code-switched Indian songs that has English sentences, words, and phrases from another language which is quite interesting for the young adult audience. However, another 16 % student disagreed 2 % strongly disagreed as they opined that not every young adult audience prefer to listen to code-switched songs.

4.6   Code-switched songs last longer in memory.

Out of 130 students, 11 % students strongly agreed and 50 % students agreed on the point that code switched songs last longer in memory because they are unique and create a sense of emotional relief. However, 25 % have disagreed and 14 % respondents has strongly disagreed.

4.7   Code-switched songs get in trend faster than monolingual song.

Out of 130 students, 19 % strongly agreed and 56% agreed that songs in which lyrics include code-switched phenomenon gains more popularity and goes in trend faster than that of monolingual song. Whereas 22 % disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed, and they observe that code switched songs do not get in trend faster than monolingual songs.

4.8   Code-switched songs are ear pleasing.

Out of 130 students, 65 % students agreed and 5% strongly agreed that the songs that have code-switched lyrics are ear-pleasing in comparison to songs that are made without the code-switching method. Many popular Indian songs which are code-switched have a strong emotional connotation, which connects while listening. However, 25 % of students disagreed, and 5 % of students strongly disagreed with this reason.

4.9   Code-switched songs reflect modernity.

Out of 130 respondents, 5.4 % strongly agreed and 60 % agreed that code-switched songs can create a sense of modernity as listening to those upbeat songs having pop elements in it induces the modernism associated within, rather than monolingual songs that are unadventurous and dull otherwise. 22.3 % disagreed and 12.3 % strongly disagreed to this reason as they opined those code-switched songs do not reflect modernism.

4.10   Code-switched hip-hop Hindi songs make you feel younger.

 Out of 130 respondents, 10.8 % strongly agreed and 45.4 % agreed because the songs that are code-switched make the listener feel younger as the lyrics in these songs are mixed with hip-hop music and energetic tune. However, 38.5 % disagreed and 5.3 % strongly disagreed as it does not make them feel younger.

4.11   Code-switched songs are made for a certain age group.

Out of 130 students, 5.4 % strongly agreed and 32.3 % agreed as certain Indian songs with code-switched lyrics are made for certain age groups, particularly for a young adult audience. However, 56.9 % disagreed and 5.4% strongly disagreed as they opined those code-switched songs are not made for a particular age group but can be enjoyed by anyone, who has an interest in such music.

4.12   Code-switched songs inspire young adult listeners.

Out of 130 respondents, 8 % strongly agreed and 69 % agreed that the songs that code-switched lyrics has an element of motivation for young adult listener. These songs with code-switched lyrics are created to target young adult audiences who prefer these songs because they can relate to the emotional and cultural consciousness through the words present in them. However, 21 % disagreed and 8 % strongly disagreed as code-switched songs are universally accepted and inspire all age group listeners.

4.13   Code-switched songs are revolutionary and rebellious.

Out of 130 students, 5.3 % students strongly agreed and 52.3 % agreed that song that has code-switched lyrics has a strong revolutionary meaning that creates a sense of rebelliousness among the listeners. Lyrics can ignite a revolutionary idea among the audience as it delivers strong opinion in the form of music. The listener feels and connects to certain thoughts and ideas, after listening to such songs. However, 36.2 % of students and 6.2% strongly disagreed thinks that code-switched songs are not revolutionary and rebellious.

4.14   Code-switched songs are easy to write and produce by young artists.

Out of 130 students, 5 % students strongly agreed and 52 % agreed as code-switched has a rhyme scheme and includes English phrases and sentences that are easily available and understandable. These songs often have repetition in the lyrics and vocabulary that complement the young artist and singers, making it easier to produce music suitable for young adult audiences. However, 38 % disagreed and 5 % strongly disagreed as they opined that anyone could create a code-switched song.

4.15   Code-switched songs impact the mental health of young adults.

Out of 130 students, 7 % strongly agreed and 57 % agreed that the songs' code-switched lyrics in them impact the mental health of young adults, because songs have deep meanings that can be interpreted in different ways and affect the mental health of the person, who has vulnerable state of mind. However, 3% strongly disagreed and 33% disagreed as they think that such songs don't affect young adults.

4.16   Listening to code switched of any Language songs changes the behavior of a young adult.

Out of 130 respondents, 47 % of students agreed and 5 % strongly agreed as code-switch songs change the behavior of young adults and affect the way they perceive music which delivers a strong message. However, 44 % of students disagreed and 4 % strongly disagreed as it doesn't change the behavior of young adults.

5.   Findings and Discussion

In the study, 90% of respondents agreed that code-switched songs are easier to remember. Songs like "Give Me Sunshine" from the movie "3 Idiots" are so relatable to student's life that it makes them feel chills, goose-

bumps rising on their skin, or even lumps in their throat, as the release of dopamine in the brain causes them. We tend to remember songs that give us this unique sensation or emotional relief and reward ourselves with dopamine release. As Skinner's Operant Conditioning theory suggests that positive reinforcement is strengthened with rewards, listeners prefer to listen and remember songs that tend to release more dopamine or simply give them more pleasure. 64 % agreed that code-switched songs impact the mental health of young adults. Sigmund Freud in his psychoanalytical theory of personality development explained that human personality is developed through conflict and interaction between id, ego, and superego. The song "All is Well" from the movie "3 Idiots" translates into English as "the heart is an idiot, console it with love, round your lips and whistle, and say brother: all is well". Sigmund Freud's theory about the id, ego, and superego, is that when there is a balance between 'the id' and 'the superego', we attain 'the ego' or a stage where we're able to resolve the conflict. The lyrics imply how our mind ignores the problem or conflict, and instead, attempts to enjoy the moment. Another powerful song titled "Scars to Your Beautiful" by Alessia Cara, is a representation of the concept of moral consciousness and balanced personality by Freud, as it talks about body images and self-acceptance that challenge the beauty standard set by society. There are several code-switched songs with such calls to action that can affect the psyche of a person, either positively or negatively.

84 % of respondents agreed that code-switched songs have a good rhyme scheme which further implies why young adults prefer them. Jean Piaget's theory of learning suggests on creating an engaging learning environment during the "pre-operational stage" when a child begins to learn the language. The inclusion of rhyme schemes makes it easier to acquire and create the mental library of sound, in the early developing stage.

57.6% of respondents agreed that song that has code-switched lyrics are revolutionary and rebellious. There are numerous songs like "Jai ho" from the movie *Slumdog Millionaire*, which deliver a strong message causing rebelliousness among the listeners. John Broadus Watson's theory of Behaviourism explains that difference in behavior is acquired through conditioning and a person's experience. Code-switched songs in this regard create stimuli, and listeners respond to them, by inducing a pattern of changes in their actions, over a period.

Interview questions:

• Why do you believe incorporating code-switching in songs con-

tributes to a clearer expression of the lyrical content?

Respondents opined that Code–switching permits the artists to represent cultural authenticity and linguistic diversity. Including code-switching songs makes the lyrics relatable and genuine. Artists draw emotional nuance from multiple languages, and it covers complex feelings. It connects with the roots of cultural Identity and resonates with the audience. It gives the artists freedom to break away from conventional linguistic boundaries. For instance, in Hindi romantic songs, the inclusion of English words can enhance expression and emotion. Sometimes exact words may not be available in regional language to convey an emotion, so code-switching in songs can be helpful.

- How does the incorporation of code-switching influence your enjoyment of a song's musical composition and contribute to its energetic feel?

  Respondents felt that Code-switching can influence the musical composition. It reflects on cultural diversity and fusion. When it is integrated it creates a great and diverse sonic experience offering a unique listening feeling. Sometimes the transition is used strategically to surprise the listener. This kind of innovation can make a standout in the musical landscape. For instance, when they go to parties and concerts, they tend to enjoy more when remixed songs are played. Often such songs have code-switched lyrics. They enjoy Punjabi songs even with English words in them, that go hand in hand. In songs like Senorita, even though they don't understand the complete lyrics, they wait for the English part, to sing along, and it aligns with their interest in music.

- Why do you think young adults are more inclined to prefer songs that incorporate code-switching compared to other age groups?

  They feel that youngsters grew up in different environments exposing to various cultures and languages. They are in digital age and global connectivity. They could access music from all over the world. Therefore, code-switching may be to bridge the linguistic gaps in globalised society. Due to influence of popular culture, artist using code-switching to gain popularity and create a trend. The student's perception is that musical preferences will be highly personal that could be influential by the combination of cultural, social, and individual factors.

- Why do you think listeners are still able to remember code-switched songs despite encountering words or phrases in languages they may not comprehend?

  Melody and rhythm convey emotion and captivate listeners. Even they don't understand the lyrics the musical composition will leave a lasting impression. Combining the tune and the beat makes the song memorable. The fusion of songs creates a rich and dynamic listening experience. Code -Switch songs attribute the power of music to surpass language barriers, evoke emotions and create unique listening experience. A notable example is the song "Waka Waka" from the football World Cup, which gained prolonged popularity due to its energetic music that resonated with our moods.

- How do you feel listening to a trending song with code-switched lyrics versus listening to a trending song with monolingual lyrics, when you are in solitude?

  Individual preferences for code-switched or monolingual lyrics rely on personal taste, cultural background, and listeners connectivity to the languages used in the song when they are alone. Only few opined that it adds a layer of complexity and cultural richness to the song.

- Can you justify that the code-switching songs imply a sense of modernity?

  Most of them felt that artists draw inspiration from various cross-cultural influences incorporate different languages creating a fusion that reflects the eclectic nature of contemporary music that contributes to a sense of innovation and modernity.

5.6   Conclusion

Code-switched songs from popular Indian films have impacted young adult audiences and tertiary-level students. In everyday life, we choose to be selective in listening which plays a vital role in listening to phones, Television, the Internet, lectures, etc.(Chamundeshwari C & Pricilla Konyak) Listening takes place in our daily lives for instance listening through tv, phone, internet, classroom, etc but as a learner, we choose to become a selective listener, we choose to listen to what we want to listen. Individuals who listen to code-switched songs undergo behavioural changes that

influence them mentally. With the demand of the entertainment industry, creators produce more code-switched songs that have adventurous and relatable lyrics for young adults, creating a sense of euphoria among listeners who find them interesting. Code-switched songs can be created with rhyme schemes in two languages and in different music genres, which can create long-lasting effects and therefore such songs remain in trend for a longer period. Therefore, code-switched songs should be perceived with due prudence that fosters positive impact and results in the improvement of quality production of musical genres and songs that are suitable for all audiences.

Works Cited:

Barnali, Chetia. "Code-Switching and Mixing in Communication− A Study on Language Contact in Indian Media." *The Future of Ethics, Education and Research*. Scientia Moralitas Research Institute, 2017. 110-123.

Bentahila, A., & Davies, E. E. (2002). Language mixing in rai music: Localisation or globalisation? Language & Communication, 22(2), 187–207. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0271-5309(01)00026-X

Chamundeshwari C & Jami Janthunglo (2022) The Impact of Code-Switching and Code-Mixing Among Youngsters in Lotha Naga Community: A Case Study, Towards Excellence: An Indexed, Refereed & Peer Reviewed Journal of Higher Education, Dec 2022. VOL.14. ISSUE NO.4, pp.967.

Chamundeshwari C & Konyak Priscilla (2022), ' Students' Insight In Improving Listening Skills Through Technology Enhanced Language Learning (TELL)', Journal of Pharmaceutical Negative Results, Volume 13, Special Issue 9, pp. 3673.

Heller M. (2007) Bilingualism as ideology and practice.In M. Heller. (Ed.) (2007)

Kachru, Yamuna. Mixers Lyricing in Hinglish: Blending and Fusion in Indian Pop Culture. World Englishes, vol. 25, no.2, 2006, pp. 223-233.

Muysken, P. (2000). Bilingual speech: A typology of code-mixing. Cam-

bridge University Press.

Myers-Scotton, C. (1993). Social motivations for codeswitching: Evidence from Africa. Clarendon Press.

Safitri, Laila, Eka Sustri Harida, and Hamka Hamka. "The Analysis Of Code Mixing On Students'facebook: A Study On Facebook Status And Comments Of The Sixth Semester Students Tbi Iain Padangsidimpuan." *English Language Teaching and Research* 1.1 (2017)

Syafaat, Pangeran Muhammad Faqih, and Teguh Setiawan. "An Analysis of Code Mixing in Twitter." *International Conference on Interdisciplinary Language, Literature and Education (ICILLE 2018)*. Atlantis Press, 2019

Wardhaugh, R. (2010). Introduction to Sociolinguistics. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.

Wardhaugh, R., & Fuller, J.M. (2015). An Introduction to sociolinguistics. Wiley-Blackwell.