

Research Article

Code Switching and its Impact on Pakistani Advertisements

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Abstract: The study aims to find the effect of “Code Switching” in advertisements (ads), its impact on psyche of a viewer and its effect on market. Speaking of advertisements specifically, code switching has created a great effect. It has become an essential part of “good” TV commercials. We are a part of an age that is relying on technology, on the daily basis, new products are introduced in market. As a matter of fact a single person cannot get to know about every product. Manufacturers take help of advertisements for the promotion of their daily use items. Ads are planned in a way that the viewer is psychologically forced to buy the product.

Keywords: Code switching, psychological significance, market significance, commercials (ad), technology, advertisements.

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INTRODUCTION

Language is a way of communication and a source of summing up your thoughts and it was basic reason due to which language was evolved. A need to share what lies in a mind of a person, actually created a vacuum for invention of language. As 21st century interaction with others has become necessary and use of it varies from situation to situation, people mould language according to their own requirements. *“To study actual linguistic performance we must consider the interaction of a variety of factors, of which the underlying competence of speaker-hearer is only one”* [1].

A generally held perception about sociolinguistics is that it deals with language of a certain society and the circumstances that rule over a certain language. What creates different dialects of a language and makes a dialect different from other dialects spoken in same locality of a same language. Sociolinguistics deals with many aspects of language depending on its practitioner, but one thing is common for all—they are interested in how people use a language and what purpose their certain language serve.

“The term “code switching” refers here to “the alternate use of two [or more] languages within the same conversation” [2, 3].

In multilingual communities, like Pakistan, it is a common practice that speakers switch from one language to another while talking—termed as “code switching”. A speaker, for example, might say a sentence like “On my way back to home I saw a *tonga walla*”. In this very example, *tonga walla* may be termed as code switching. “I tend to use both languages when I feel tired or lazy as an ‘easy way out’ when I cannot find a word in the language I am speaking” [4, 5].

People may use the technique of code switching when they are unable to find a proper or appropriate word within a language. Code switching is not more than a change in the form of a certain language, though the meanings will remain the same even after the code switching. *“Code switching might be comparable to choosing between synonyms within the same language”* [6].

Advertisements play an important role in the success of a specific brand. The better is a commercial, the more customers you get. You cannot spare brand with advertisements.

“In code switching single speaker uses different varieties at different times. This of course is the automatic consequence of the existence of ‘register’, since the same speaker necessarily uses different registers on different occasions” [7, 8].

Code-Switching and Advertisements

English has gained the status of an international language. For this very fact, advertisement makers have to consider the proper use of English in advertisements. It does not matter if the advertisements are made for Asian, Latin-American or European costumers. English has become a land mark for the success of commercials.

“Researchers and authors that are busy with the topic have exposed a number of explanations for the use of English in advertising, such as a marketing strategy of a campaign, the cultural connotations English carries, or English can be used for creative-linguistic reason” [9].

“English as a marketing strategy can bring some advantages by having a uniform campaign or slogan which will create a worldwide brand image but can also reduce costs [10].”

Using English as a creative-linguistics tool is often used to fill a lexical gap (when there is no proper correspondent for a word or expression in the host language or the word is considered taboo), or because English words are shorter than the equivalents in the host language, or because they (are believed to) attract [11].

A third reason for the use of English in advertising relates to the cultural connotations that English carries. English is used because the values or stereotypes linked with it are thought to reflect positively on the product or to appeal to the consumer. Being used for its symbolic value rather than for its communicational value, English is believed to be associated with values such as youth, prestige, modernity, globalization, cosmopolitanism, and internationalism [11].

The purpose of doing a research work on code switching and its significance in Pakistani advertisements is to find out the implications of it in the society. The influence of English language and the Western culture is increased in many folds and it has governed the psyche of individuals ever since the 21st century. The present study was designed to fulfill the objectives which are as follows:

- To find out the impact of code switching on language.
- To explore the relationship of code switching and advertisements.
- To unravel that code switching influence the psyche of a viewer or not

From above mentioned objectives, it was hypothesized that Code switching effects language as well as it influences the idea of a better ad

METHODOLOGY

The data was collected from participants who were from both groups of society (MALE/FEMALE). The data was collected through a questionnaire which is a primary source of collecting data. As the research is quantitative in nature, statistical tools were applied and its findings were employed in the paper to support the evidences.

The methodology implied indicates that great deal of male and female strata of society has been moved by the kind of catchy phrases used in the advertisements. The methodology which was used in this paper was based on the questionnaire conducted in University of Sargodha including both students as well as employers.

Variables of study

Following is the description of variables of the present study.

Code switching

“In the case of different languages, speakers may make symbolic choices in their language use or manage code switching to signal ethnic identity [12]”.

Sample

The sample of present study consisted on ($N=50$) which further divided in equal girls ($n=25$) and boys ($n=25$). The population was the student, teachers and employers of university of Sargodha. The age of sample ranged was divided in to two groups i.e. below 30 and above thirty.

ANALYSIS

Descriptive results were calculated using SPSS version 20.

RESULTS

The results revealed that 10% of them watch television from 8-12 hours, 4% of them watch television from 14-18 hours, 34% of them watch it very untimely and 32% of them watch it very often. It can be well judged from each of the collected data that television is watched with a mighty interest and, of course, in doing so they will watch the advertisements. 34% of them are agreed on the fact that they do observe

the ads keenly, 6% of them are oblivious, that they cannot decide, 38% watch it very often and 22% say that they do not observe them at all. This indicates that

34% people who, very keenly, observe ads and who does take influence out of them. 38% of them do not observe the ads, which mean that very seldom our

Table-1: Descriptive results of questionnaire used to explore the influence of code switching in advertisement on languages

Statement	Rarely	6-10 Hours	8-12 Hours	14-18 Hours	Very untimely
How many hours do you spend watching television in a week?	32%	20%	10%	4%	34%
	Yes	Do not know	Often	No	
Do you observe ads keenly?	34%	6%	38%	22%	
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Do you think that mixing languages (i.e. Urdu and English) has got its role to play in ads?	30%	48%	12%	8%	2%
Is the concept of “intermixing languages” damaging Urdu as a language?	26%	46%	6%	20%	2%
Does the notion of “intermixing languages” make advertisement enjoyable?	18%	60%	8%	8%	6%
Code Switching plays a significant role for goods in raising their market value?	20%	44%	28%	8%	0%
Code Switching has become as necessary as choosing good idea for a commercial?	20%	36%	28%	14%	2%
Code Switching affects the psyche of the viewer?	16%	54%	14%	16%	0%
The better the catchy words, the good the influence it has.	28%	50%	16%	4%	2%
Is code switching becoming popular trend among advertisement?	28%	60%	10%	2%	0%
Does Code Switching act as a more of a temptation for advertisements?	18%	50%	22%	6%	4%
Does code switching advertisements govern our psyche to purchase that very product?	30%	30%	24%	16%	0%
Commercials have a different effect on different age groups?	36%	48%	12%	2%	2%
Psychological and market significance goes side-by-side in code switching which is employed to make a better commercial?	14%	52%	24%	4%	6%
Without code switching commercials will be less effective?	12%	34%	30%	22%	2%

48% agree that mixing languages has got its role to play in the commercials, 30% *strongly* agree that it does have a role to play, 12% are neutral, 8% of them disagree with the notion, and 1% of them *strongly* disagree. The results indicate that our society appreciates mixing languages and has welcomed the results of an English Oriented culture.

46% of them have agreed on the fact that “YES” the concept of intermixing languages is damaging Urdu, 26% of them strongly agreed, 6% were neutral, 20% disagreed and 1% of the collected sample strongly disagrees.

The data shows that 60% of the respondents agreed that intermixing languages make commercials enjoyable, 18% of them strongly agreed on it, 8% were neutral on this thought, 8% disagreed and 6% strongly disagreed on the notion.

44% of the total sample agreed on the fact that “YES” code switching does have a market impact, 20% strongly agreed, 28% remain neutral, 8% of them

disagreed and there was no respondent who “*strongly*” disagreed.

The above table indicated that 36% of them agreed with the fact that Code Switching has become as necessary as choosing good idea for a commercial, 20% strongly agreed, 28% were neutral. Whereas 14 % disagreed that Code Switching has become as necessary as choosing good idea for a commercial and 1% of the total sample strongly disagreed.

54% agreed that code switching effects the psyche of the viewer, 16% strongly agreed, 14% remained neutral, 16% disagreed and there was no respondent who “*strongly*” disagreed.

48% of respondents agreed on the fact, 28% strongly agreed, 10% remained neutral, 1% disagreed and there was no respondent who “*strongly*” disagreed about the fact that the better the catchy words, the good the influence it has.

Above results showed that 60% agreed on the fact that code switching is a popular trend among

advertisements, 48% strongly agreed on it, 10% are indecisive about this say, 1% of the sample disagrees and there was no respondent who “strongly” disagreed.

Above results showed that 50% agreed on the fact that code switching acts as a temptation for advertisements, 18% strongly agreed on the fact, 22% remained neutral, 6% disagreed on this statement and 4% strongly disagreed.

30% agreed on this thought that code switching advertisement govern our psyche, 30% strongly agreed, 24% remained indecisive, and 16% remained disagreed.

48% agreed on the statement that Commercials have a different effect on different age groups, 36% strongly agreed on it, 12% remained indecisive, 1% disagreed on it and 1% strongly disagreed on it.

52% agree with the fact that psychological and market significance goes side-by-side in code switching which is employed to make a better commercial, 14% strongly agree, 24% neutral, 4% disagree and 6% strongly disagree.

24% agree on the statement that without code switching commercials will be less effective, 12% strongly agree. 30% responded as neutral, 22% disagree and 1% strongly disagree

DISCUSSION

The sample was to unravel the impact of code switching on language and whether men observe ads more keenly or women. Results proved that code switching has influenced language. And women are more interested in ads.

The above paper concludes that code switching has a great impact on advertisements. They play an important role in enhancing the temptation of the products. Code switching is inter mixing of two languages and in the advertisements one can observe that how beautifully they have used Urdu as well as English to enhance the overall charm of that very commercial. They tend to do so because according to them it will make their ads more catchy and glamorous. As Gal [13] points out that, ‘code switching is a conversational strategy used to establish, cross or destroy group boundaries; to create, evoke or change; interpersonal relations with their rights and obligations’. In order to make the finding more valid and reliable similar researches should be conducted on it, on the sample of different age groups and different educational level. Further study should be conducted on large sample size. It is important to learn about code switching and its use in advertisements, because society

needs to demarked difference between black and white. We need to identify “gray parts”.

LIMITATIONS

There are some limitations that might affect the result of the study:

- The sample was not much diverse. It was taken only from Sargodha district. So, the result may not be generalized.
- Participants were hesitant in expressing their views.

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