

CODE-MIXING IN INDIAN FILMS: THE CASE OF TELUGU AND ENGLISH

Dr. Prasad Naik

Assistant Professor, Dept. Of Linguistics
Dravidian University

ABSTRACT

Code-mixing, the practice of alternating between two or more languages within a single conversation or text, is a prevalent linguistic phenomenon in multilingual societies. This paper examines the code-mixing of Telugu and English in Indian films, focusing on the linguistic, sociocultural, and cinematic implications of this practice. Telugu cinema, one of the largest film industries in India, offers a fertile ground for studying code-mixing due to its diverse audience base and the increasing influence of globalization and urbanization. The study analyzes dialogues from selected Telugu films to identify patterns and functions of code-mixing. It explores how English is used alongside Telugu to convey various narrative and stylistic effects, including characterization, humor, and modernity. Furthermore, the paper delves into the audience's reception and interpretation of code-mixing, considering factors such as age, education, and urban-rural divides.

KEYWORDS: Code-Mixing, Telugu Cinema, Indian Films, Sociocultural Implications, Multilingualism, Linguistic Innovation, Language Hybridization.

INTRODUCTION

Although the English language is a fairly recent addition to the multilingual selection of its users on the Indian subcontinent, it has nevertheless succeeded in occupying a highly influential and prestigious position in the Indian urban settings. The definition includes both the ways in which humans use different linguistic forms to determine their social position, and also the way in which speakers customize their linguistic behaviours to the social context in which they are speaking.

In such a complex language situation, English has several advantages. In pragmatic terms it provides an expansion of roles, a hierarchy of roles, and the mobility to perform the roles at the state level as well as the national level. In attitudinal terms, it has a prestige function and it provides in group membership, as indeed does the caste dialect or a religious dialect. Context, the use of Indian English has resulted in linguistic selectiveness and a super - linguistic caste.

Of interest to the present study is a particular linguistic consequence of the diffusion of English in urban India, namely, the establishment of a new language variety through a process of code - mixing of English with various Indian languages.

In this regard, the present study is aimed at exploring the features of Telugu-English CM (Code Mixing) during the routine conversations of the peoples in Andhra Pradesh by observing the way in which they combine English and Telugu.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Different types of researches have been carried out in the area of code-mixing. In the area of code-mixing, mixed language used in spoken mixed communication plays a vital role in the study of recorded mixed discourse analysis. Some of reviews focused on Telugu-English, Telugu-Urdu-Telugu, Tamil-English mixed which constitute words, blend words or sentences, identified there alternative use of two languages in same sentence.

Code - mixing and bilingualism: Although the phenomenon of code - mixing is probably as old as bilingualism, its significance has tended to be undermined in traditional research on bilingualism (e.g., Lambert, 1969) which has focused on the ability of bilinguals to keep their languages separate in the encoding or decoding process. However, the recent raise of interest in code - mixed language varieties. Rather than examining the ability of bilinguals to keep their two languages distinct, recent studies have sought to investigate the social and linguistic conditions under which code - mixing occurs among bilinguals. The present study seeks to extend research on code - mixing by examining its formal and functional manifestations in a variety of naturalistic settings.

Terminological issues: Code-mixing (CM) as defined by Kachru (1978b: 28), refers to the use of one or more languages for consistent transfer of linguistic units from one language into another, and by such a language mixture developing a restricted or not so restricted - code of linguistic interaction.

Aim and method of the present study: In the present study, an attempt is made to explore the phenomenon of Telugu - English CM through an analysis of its occurrence in some recent Telugu motion pictures. Since there has previously been little, if any, empirical work on CM in the Indian context using data obtained from 'spoken media', a brief discussion of the advantages of this source is in order.

Most data on CM in the Indian context have primarily been obtained from written sources, e.g., newspapers and literary texts. Although it is possible to gain insights into the phenomenon of CM from such sources, there are definite limits on the generalizability of the insights so obtained, in view of the register-bound nature of newspaper writing, and the often idiosyncratic stylistic usages of novelists. Both of these sources, moreover, have a restricted readership. However, material on CM obtained from popular films greatly extends the scope of one's generalizations, in light of the greater range of topics, roles and settings available, and the increased size and diversity of the audience.

Formal aspects of Telugu - English CM: This section will describe formal manifestations of the process of CM adapting the format employed by Kachru (1978b). The examples cited were listened from some recent Telugu films and are meant to be illustrative means constitute the total corpus of CM utterances obtained from the films.

Unit Insertion: Code - mixing typically occurs over a fairly wide range of grammatical units, as the examples below indicate.

List of mixed Telugu and English words

<u>Mixed word</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Word class</u>
Mind <i>lo</i> :	In mind	N+ locative case/postposition
Physic <i>lo</i> :	In physics	N+ locative case/postposition
Holidays <i>lo</i> :	In holidays	N+ locative case/postposition
University <i>lo</i> :	In university	N+ locative case/postposition

In Telugu '*lo*' is a suffix which roughly (usually) means 'in' in English. Telugu has Postpositions instead of prepositions .

A. Noun or NP *insertion*

1. mind *lo*: *idea rāleda* - 'the idea does not come in the mind'
2. *nēnu zoolo black zebra nu chūsā* - 'I saw black zebra at the zoo'
3. *ē katha middle class ki varthistundi* - 'this story applies to the middle class'

B. Verb or VP *insertion*

3. *nāku chapātti tini tini bore kotṭindi* - 'I was bored after eating chapati'
4. *Suri kidnap ayyaḍu* - 'Suri was kidnapped'

C. Sentence *insertion*

<u>Mixed word</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Word class</u>
Rain <i>ni</i>	Rain	N + Accusative case
Life <i>ni</i>	Life	N + Accusative case
TV Channel <i>ni</i>	TV Channel	N + Accusative case
Youth <i>ni</i>	Youth	N + Accusative case
News <i>ni</i>	News	N + Accusative case

English does not have case system, but '*ni*' in Telugu is equivalent to the accusative case.

5. *nēnu heavy rain ni taṭṭukunānu kānī ippudu adi cālā ekkuvagā undi* - 'I have withstood the heavy rain but now it is too much'

6. *Rama ni mīru misunderstand cēsukōrani anūkunṭa* - 'I hope you don't miss understand rama'

7. How's life ?

As usual, life routine ga undi

<u>Mixed word</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Word class</u>
Pure <i>ga</i> :	Purely	Adverb
Careful <i>ga</i> :	Carefully	Adverb
Heavy <i>ga</i> :	Heavily	Adverb

The Telugu suffix '*ga*' to English The adjectives; usually '*ga*' is equivalent to the English adverbial suffix '*ly*' eg: pure (adve) + ga (ly) = purely.

Unit Hybridization: CM also be produced by a process of unit hybridization, that is, by the insertion within a grammatical unit of items from another language. Compound and conjunct verb formation in Telugu lend themselves quite readily to this form of CM, as can be seen in the examples below.

* Adj . + N :

8. akhiri: *stop* - 'last stop'
9. mīru *young* lāga unnaru - 'you're look like young'

* Noun + Noun

10. ā *person* okaḍē ā ūrilō doctor - 'that man only doctor in that village'
12. mā brother school lo panī cēstunaḍu – ' my brother works in a school'

* Compound verb formation:

11. kṣmiṅchali nenu *introduce* cēyaḍam maricipoya - 'sorry I forgot to make the introduce'

12. tellavārujāmuna *airplane* bayaludēriṅdi – 'the airplane took off early in the monrning'

13. nāku *bore* anipinca lēdu - 'I didn't feel bored '
14. mī *voice* chala *sweet* ga undi- 'your voice is so sweet'
15. mīru *practice* cēyaṅḍi - ' you can practice'
16. nanu enduku tappincalani *try* cestunavu? - 'Why are you trying to avoid me'?

* Conjunct verb formation

17. *rain* paḍutōṅdi kābaṭṭi mēmu swim ku veḷḷalēdu – 'it was rainig therefore we didn't go swimming'
18. *drink* cēsava ? – 'did you have a drink'?'
19. *Ice* vēyaḍam marachipoyā - 'forgot to put in the Ice'
20. mīku *award* rākapōtē *reward* labhistundi – 'If you don't get the award, then you'll get reward'

Idiom and Collocation Insertion: A number of code-mixed utterances involve the insertion of idiomatic or colloquial expressions from either of the languages, as the following examples demonstrate.

21. *duty first*, tiṅḍi *last* idi na *motto* – 'duty first food last this is my motto'
22. waṅṭēna kindā *water* - 'water under the bridge'
23. Photolu jīvitāniki nijaminaviga unḍali - 'Photos should be true to life'

Certain English expressions were used consistently in almost all of the films under study. These included good morning / good night hi/bye, thank you, sorry, please, and O. K. etc.,

Inflection Attachment and Reduplication: In the process of CM, certain constructions undergo morphological changes, the most common of which is the attachment of Telugu plural markers to English nouns. Quite often, English words also undergo reduplication, a fairly common phenomenon in South Asian languages which conveys the semantic function of indefinitization (cf. Kachru, 1978b: 35). The examples below are illustrative.

<u>Mixed word</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Word class</u>
Ranks <i>u</i>	Ranks	N+ Nominative
Certificates <i>u</i>	Certificates	N+ Nominative.
Politics <i>u</i>	Politics	N+ Nominative.
Elections <i>u</i>	Elections	N+ Nominative.

'*u*' is a typical Telugu inflection attached to English words.

24. anni *Photo* lu *paperku* vaccayi - 'all photos got to the paper'
25. *incometax paper*lu - 'incometax papers'
26. kamala *banana* ĩppuḍe tinnadi – 'kamal has just eaten a banana'
27. nēnu ilanti *dance* lu *cēyanu* - 'I don't dance like this'
28. atanu evarō *lecture* kōsam Delhi vellāḍu - 'He went to Delhi for someone lecture'

Functional aspects of Telugu-English CM: Insofar as the formal and functional characteristics of a CM variety are integrally related to one another, observations on CM should be discussed within a theoretical frame work that acknowledges the existence of such an interdependency. Speech may be contextualized on a variety of levels, ranging from relatively fixed factors relating to the individual's social status, religious affiliation, educational level, occupation, etc,

An inquiry into the "why" of code - mixing must thus be prefaced by a discussion of the users of code-mixed utterances and the contexts in which the latter typically occur distinction between role-dependent and function-dependent elements underlying code-mixing.

The Users and Contexts of Usage of CM: An examination of the film data suggests that English is "mixed" with Telugu most commonly by the young, the Westernized, the powerful and the educated, the prototypical users of Telugu-English on a continuum of modernization.

Typical contexts in which Telugu-English CM occurs across the films are summarized below, with appropriate examples.

A. Greetings and leave-taking:

29. Bye, bye -
30. How are you? –

B. Office settings: e.g., interactions between colleagues and employers or among employees associate.

31. *interview* kosam - 'for the interview'
32. mi *report* tayār aindi - 'your report is ready'

C. Educational settings: e.g., interactions between students and professors, or among students.

33. mēmu *physics* lo cāla *weak* - 'we are very weak in physics'

D. Social gatherings e.g., cocktail or dinner parties, or outings, among friends.

34. thank you nēnu taganu - 'thank you I don't drink'

Motivations underlying CM: the question of the motivations underlying the decision to code-mix has yet to be satisfactorily answered. One approach to this question has focused on essentially linguistic motivations for code-mixing, namely, role identification, register identification, and desire for elucidation and interpretation. Instances of three possible motivations of this type, namely, CM as a distancing device and device to convey emphasis, are discussed below.

A. **CM as a distancing device:**

Instances of the use of code - mixing to convey distance or formality were present in nearly all the films during interactions between strangers, or between close acquaintances who were at odds with one another. Utterances employed for this purpose are marked by a preponderance of English terms of address (e.g., Mr., Dr., Miss, Sir, etc.) and by English politeness for (e.g, thank you, excuse me, sorry, etc.).

B. **CM as a device to convey emphasis:**

This use of code-mixing was especially prevalent. Emphasis was conveyed by the use of English utterances which restated, translated or completed Telugu utterances, as is evident in the following examples.

35. *proof* cāla important - 'proof is very important'
36. ā *bus* lo *gold* undi vellāḍi - 'go on that bus has gold'
37. cālu, cālu *please* - 'enough, enough, no more please'

the example is a particularly good illustration of the neutralizing effect of CM . The context in which the statement was made has briefly, as follows. The 'villain', in modren dress and manner, pretends to be a photographer in order to attract the heroine's attention. The latter is young, rich and modernized, but in traditional

garb (sari). The villain succeeds in getting the heroine to have her picture taken by promising that it will appear in a popular film star magazine, news papers. He utters the remark cited above while the heroine poses for the picture.

CONCLUSIONS

The data presented in this paper of Telugu-English code-mixing culled from popular films serve to validate the following claims: first, that CM may occur at a variety of grammatical levels, ranging from single lexical items to entire sentences; second, that CM appears to obey a number of syntactic constraints, for none of the constraints proposed in the literature appear to have been violated; third, that CM also appears to be constrained by social factors, and fourth, that a CM variety appears to have certain pragmatic advantages over both of the pure varieties from which it is derived .

It would also be of interest to examine the dynamics of code-mixing in dyadic or small group interactions, and to assess the extent to which one is conscious of one's CM behaviour.

REFERENCES

- 1) Annamalai, E.1971. Lexical insertion in a mixed language. In Papers from the Seventh Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society. Chicago: Chicago Linguistic Society.
- 2) Annamalai, E. (1978). The anglicized Indian languages: A case of code-mixing.
- 3) Bhushanam, V.V. N. (2010). Code-Mixing and Lexical Barrowing by the Hyderabad Youth. M.Phil. Thesis, EFLU University, Hyderabad.
- 4) Blom, J-P.; Gumperz, J.1972. Social meaning of linguistic structure: Code - switching in Norwegian. In Gumperz, J.; Hymes, D. (ed.). Directions in Sociolinguistics. New York: Halt Rinehart and Winston, 407-34.
- 5) Fernando, Chitra. 1977. English and Sinhala Bilingualism in Sri Lanka, Language in Society 6. 314-60.
- 6) Jyotsna vaid.1980. The form and functions of code mixing in Indian Films: Indian Linguistics.
- 7) Sridhar, S.N. 1978. On the functions of code mixing in Kannada. International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 6, 109-117.
- 8) Swathi .B. (2014). Code-mixing and code- switching by college students in Guntur .M.Phil.Thesis, ANU,Guntur, Andhra Pradesh.
- 9) Swathi. B. & Ratna Shiela Mani. K, 2020. Code- mixing in Telugu – English by college students in Andhra Pradesh, Research Journal Of English (RJOE) Copyright Oray's Publication.