Examining the Role of Code-Switching in Shaping Linguistic and Social Identity among Bilingual Youth in Pakistan

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Abstract
This study investigates the phenomena of code-switching in Pakistani cities. It also exposes how language is shaped by both individual and societal identities through discussions and interactions. Code-switching, or shifting between two or more languages, is a prevalent communication strategy in Pakistan, a linguistically varied nation. Languages from different cultures coexist in multicultural centers. In these settings, regional or mother languages are utilized to express emotions and preserve cultural links, whereas English is frequently used for official communication. NVivo software is used to do thematic analysis of recorded interviews and discussions as part of a qualitative research design. Mix research method is used to figures out the trends and for underlined code-switching forces. Information is collected from a wide range of participants in the chosen urban areas. The results expresses that code-switching is a linguistic strategy. In particular, young people use switch codes to express their emotional depth, sense of group connection, and contemporary identity. In postcolonial Pakistan, it is also essential for negotiating social spaces and forming cultural hybridity. In order to promote multilingual competency and inclusive language policies, educators and legislators are urged to accept code-switching as a valid and effective linguistic activity in social and academic settings.
Keywords: *Code-switching, Societal identities, Multicultural, Linguistic strategy, Pakistan, Cultural hybridity*

Introduction
A multiplicity of languages and many cultural traditions have produced Pakistan's linguistic ecology, which offers a rich and complex terrain. Pakistan seems to be a place of considerable multilingual activity, with more than 70 languages spoken in various parts of the country. Language use there reflects deeper ethnic, social, and political aspects in addition to

communication demands. As the national language, Urdu provides a common language for people of different mother languages to communicate. English, despite of the fact that it has colonial roots continue to hold more of a dominant status and is used in fields like education higher positions in governmental sector while mother or regional languages like Punjabi hold more of an emotional and cultural value and can also be used to identity someone and the place of their origin. There are new areas where linguistic borders are continually negotiated as a result of globalization's consequences and the growing significance of digital platforms.

The fact that Pakistan is multilingual has been the subject of many studies, but the manner in which bilingual adolescents deal with this linguistic complexity in urban environments have received comparatively less attention. In particular, little is known about the social purposes of code-switching that go beyond its grammatical or structural characteristics, particularly when it comes to how it facilitates identity building in day-to-day encounters. Understanding the more general dynamics of identity, belonging, and social stratification in a postcolonial, multilingual society may be greatly impacted by the subtle and sometimes unconscious ways that people transition between languages.

This research analyzes code-switching as a social activity that people use to place themselves in relation to others, rather than only as a linguistic tactic, drawing on sociolinguistic theories of identity and discourse (Auer, 2013). The relationship between language usage and social meaning can be interpreted using concepts like indexicality, language ideology, and performance of identity.

Purpose of the Study

This study aims to explore how code-switching shapes identity creation also negotiation within a variety of social circumstances among multilingual teenagers in urban Pakistan. It aims to investigate the social and linguistic aspects of this activity, emphasizing how linguistic choices reveal deeper emotional and cultural ties.

Research Question

What extent do urban Pakistani multilingual adolescents utilize code-switching to create and communicate their identities in diverse social settings?

How are the young people's code-switching behaviors influenced by sociolinguistic elements including social pressure, digital communication, educational background, and family dynamics?

Significance of the Study

Through an examination of code-switching from the perspective of an identity creation, this study seeks to advance our knowledge of how language functions in daily social interactions. It is intended that the results will provide insightful information about how young people in a postcolonial, multilingual setting use language to negotiate conflicting social, cultural, and educational demands, ultimately revealing the nuanced connections among language, identity, social transformation in present-day Pakistan.

Literature Review

Understanding Code-Switching

Changing among two or more languages or linguistic forms in a individual conversation or utterance is known as "code-switching," and it's a typical aspect among bilingual and multilingual communication (Baker, 2011). Bilinguals' social relationships and cognitive flexibility are both

reflected in this dynamic language phenomena. Usually, researchers divide code-switching into three main categories:

1. Language switching within the sentence borders, in which each sentence is written among a different dialect, is known as inter-sentential switching.
2. When a person uses more than one language in a single sentence it is called intra-sentimental and it shows that the person is really mastered the languages he is speaking.
3. When a person adds a word of a different language into the one, he is speaking in is called Tag-Switching.

When a person changes from one language to another while in a conversation is called Code-Switching. Despite the misconception of it being difficult, it can still be very effective if used correctly. As per the Markedness Model introduced by Myers-Scotton in 1993 people use Code-Switching so that they can get better result from their efforts. So, Code-Switching is an advanced way of achieving better results for the people who can communicate in different languages (Canagarajah, 2012).

Code-Switching and ID construction

In sociolinguistic the most basic problem lies in the relationship between language and identity of a person, people get a sense of belonging from the group of people they are connected with and language is the most important thing they use to express themselves with, one can identify other people origin and culture just by the language they speak (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005).

People who can speak in more than one language have a more versatile personality compared to those who can only use one language. According to Grosjean, the people who can speak many languages have only personality but it's composed of many connected language systems and if used well it can give them upper hand in most scenarios.

According to Bucholtz and Hall (2005), identity is also formed communication and interaction with other people. Code-Switching can be very beneficial for a person who lives in a transitional society because they can get by different situations in life and maintain their personality as well (Scotton, 1993).

Factors influencing Code-Switching

The way and how often people use Code-Switching is influenced by a number of reasons. These are some of the main reasons:

Social Factors

 People change their language form one to another mainly because of the company they are with or the kind of event they are in. This is most common densely populated areas and educational institutes where young people use different languages to communicate with others or to become part of a group (Crystal, 2003).

Cultural Factors

Culture is also a factor of Code-Switching. People who can use different languages switch from one to another for many reasons, it can be for the sake of showing respect to a culture, to express their ideas or simply because they want themselves to be identified from the place the belong to (Grosjean, 2010).

Educational Factors

Code-Switching can be allowed or banned in an educational institute by their language regulators and simply by their language teachers. When such kind of thing happens, students use language they are comfortable in their private discussions (Kim, 2006).

Psychological Factors

A person's identity, his expression of emotion are the psychological factors that causes Code-Switching. People use Code-Switching to identify themselves with a particular group of people or to the area they belong to or simply to express their emotions (Heller, 2007).

People sometimes switch code intentionally and sometimes they do it instinctively without realizing that they have switched. Code-Switching can be used for the purpose of identification or it can be used for any other reason (Grosjean, 2010).

Code-Switching in Pakistani Context

In countries like Pakistan, where many languages are spoken in different parts code-switching is very normal, it creates a very vast and complicated system (Poplack, 2000). Languages like English and Urdu are mainly used for in educational field but despite these other languages like Punjabi and many others coexist with these. So, it's really normal for a student or person to speak in many languages in schools and cities (Petter & Gumperz, 2020).

In Pakistan code-switching is normal in the field of media, in educational institutes and for daily communication. It shows the versatility of languages in a region or a person's ambitions to achieve something or it can simply be used to identify someone and it is also used to access modern knowledge.

In Pakistan Code-Switching is very common but very little information is known about how it effects on a person's identity. So, in order to compete with global powers and for Pakistan success it is mandatory to gain more knowledge on how it can affect a person's mindset.

Theoretical Framework

The framework that is used in our study is Social Identity Theory (Grosjean, 2010). According to it, people get a sense of belonging from the people the live with and communicating with them is a mean to prolong or keep it intact. Language is very important for the whole process, it can be used to identify someone and to differentiate between people (Norton, 2000).

According Theoretical framework code-switching is more of a personal or psychological decision rather than a linguistic one and is used by people to express their liking or culture. People use it show who they really are, where did they come from and what they want other people to know about them (Romaine, 2017).

There is this socio-culture theory of language by Vygotsky that focuses on mental and verbal development by social connection with people. The combination all of these concepts gets knowledge of how important code-switching is (Holmes, 2013).

Methodology

1. Research Design

The type of approaches were used in this paper is qualitative one because it focuses on the experience of young people who live in a multilinguistic culture present in Pakistan. What the young generation of Pakistan think about code-switching, is it good or bad or how the use it for their benefit. This research is on the personal experiences of people and how they see things.

2. Participant

30 People are selected who can speak in more than one language and are of different age from 15 to 25. These are the languages that they can speak Urdu, English, and Sindhi etc. Intentionally people were selected who occasionally use code-switching in their daily life.The participants will have relevant experiences to discuss thanks to this sampling technique. Participant Information: Students from Pakistani cities, such as Lahore, Karachi, Islamabad, and Quetta, attended secondary schools, colleges, and universities. The sample comprised people from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds, both male and female.

3. Classroom Observations

 Bilingual youth's usage of code-switching in educational contexts was observed in classrooms at universities and schools. Peer conversations, group activities, and interactions between students and teachers were the main subjects of the observations. For the purpose of document the communicative context of code-switching episode languages selection, and participant responses, notes were recorded.

Data Analysis

The study used six-phase thematic analysis framework developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) to investigate how code-switching serves as a tool for identity construction among participants who are bilingual or multilingual. In order to gain researchers insight a reflexive analysis was carried out intentionally because of the hard they put in.

Phase 1. Data Familiarization

Firstly, data is selected very carefully to familiarize ourselves with it. The data obtained after the interviews was carefully changed into text to make sure that content of the interviews remain the same and does not lose its credibility. There are recognized some key letters which were very helpful in the process of note making.

Phase 2. Code Generation

In this stage, the data is obtained and changed it into a code to find the key material that was relevant to the topic. The codes were created by collecting new and fresh data that rather than old data that was present. There is used classifications like" language choice for academic setting". The codes that is formed were applied all across the data to ensure its accuracy and new data was added well as btained it.

Phase 3. Theme Search

In this phase, all the codes that are created by using our data to find sort of patterns and established relations to form themes. Here different themes explained different thing. For example, theme "Contextual Language Use" was used to show different local languages that were at home and the language that was used in educational institutes.

Phase 4. Reviewing Theme

In order to make sure that the work/research was conducted for showing accurate result. It was done in two parts, in the first part is made sure that the theme. The second part has is checked if our themes give a perfect pitcher of the idea when collected altogether and for this reason. Some of the existing themes and new ones were add in place of them for the sake of accuracy.

Phase 5. Defining and Naming Theme

In this step, data is defined each of the given theme and made sure that they were relevant to the idea. According to the information they contained for example name like "Professionalism in Academy" shows the language that is used in educational institutes. Each theme is added and named was specific to the data that it represented.

Phase 6. Report Production

In this step all obtained themes and produced a final report that could answer all of the questions. This report was very meticulous and comprised of all the data which is analyzed. There are some lectures that were relevant to our topic and in the end. People use code-switching not just for the sake of changing language but also to gain an upper hand in event or to avoid some difficult situations.

Key Theme Identifies

Professionalism in Academy

In order for the report to be credible the participants changed their language to English quite a lot.

Family Intimacy

Local language is used for the expression of love, showing respect to their culture and in family communication.

Cultural Expression

When people need emotional support and wanted to gain an upper hand or shows respect to their culture of origin, they changed their language.

Persona Managing

The ability to switch form one language to another helps people in managing their persona, it also helps them to adjust in according to their environment.

Ethical Consideration

All of the participants were fully aware about the study and were given full autonomy in making their decision. For the sake of secrecy, all participants were given pseudonyms. The interview data and recorded chats were safely kept, and participants received guarantees that no personal information would be shared.

Social Identity and Group Membership

Code-switching is a strong indicator of social identity and group membership among bilingual youth, according to one of the study's most notable findings. By intentionally switching between languages according to the social groups they were dealing with, participants were able to reflect their affinities and hold onto their position within these groups.

When I'm with my college pals, I talk in English, but when I'm with my cousins, I invariably switch to Punjabi. It simply seems more... organic. It indicates the group I am a part of. — Ayesha, age 19

Study's larger theme—that language is a social indicator as well as a means of communication—is echoed in Ayesha's comment. English, a language linked to professional and educational fields, was mostly utilized in formal, academic settings. Conversely, regional languages like Pashto, Urdu, or Punjabi were used in more casual, familial, or intimate contexts. According to Tajfel and Tuner's (1979) social identity theory posits that people, people use language seeing that one

from the most powerful symbols to affirm their group identities after classifying themselves and others into social groups.

Observed Scenario

Students were seen using English when interacting with the teacher or debating academic material during a class period. But while working in groups or interacting with peers informally, they switched to Punjabi or Urdu with ease. Code-switching is used as a boundary marker to distinguish between formal and informal social identities, as evidenced by this constant shift depending on situation.

In such a setting, language turns into a dynamic social resource. According to Hall (1996), identities are created through representation; for bilingual youth, code-switching becomes a representational act that identifies them within a specific social context. Therefore, code-switching becomes a social strategy that helps young people to perform different social roles, retain solidarity with peers, and validate their belonging within particular groups.

Cultural Identity

The data also revealed a second important theme: the use of code-switching to express and maintain cultural identity. Participants showed a definite propensity to switch to their heritage or native languages while talking about culturally relevant subjects like food festivals, family, values, and traditions.

"I use Sindhi to discuss our traditional foods. It just seems natural. The same emotion cannot be conveyed in English."

Amar's analysis draws attention to the emotive aspect of language use, which states that some feelings, ideas, and cultural experiences are more strongly experienced or expressed more naturally in one's mother tongue. According to Grosjean (2010), this phenomenon supports the idea that bilinguals live in a blended linguistic and cultural reality where language is an integral part of their whole identity rather than in two monolingual worlds.

Observed Scenario

At a family gathering, when narrating family memories, talking about cultural ceremonies, or remembering ancestors' customs, participants were seen alternating between regional languages like Sindhi, Pashto, or Balochi and English or Urdu. The fact that these changes happened at specific times when the subject matter was culturally significant indicates a conscious and emotional attachment to the heritage language.

Such actions reinforce the notion that language serves a "carrier of culture," as proposed by Fishman (1991). In a society that is becoming more and more dominated by English, young people are affirming their roots and expressing their identities by returning to their ethnic languages. They are also halting the loss of their culture. Many people still hold the original tongue in high regard when talking about honor, family, customs, and emotional experiences—areas in which English frequently falls short in terms of emotional depth and richness. Utilizing legacy languages in these situations also serves as a means of linguistic resistance, a means of claiming indigenous identity against linguistic standardization. Thus, the code-switching emerges the celebration of diversity as well as a means of survival.

Educational Context: Strategic and Functional Code-switching

Using code-switching strategically in academic and educational settings was another important issue. In educational contexts, participants often reported using both Urdu and English to maintain peer engagement, assure mutual understanding, and clarify complex subjects. This quotation perfectly captures how code-switching can improve communication in a practical way. Not all pupils are equally proficient in English, even in classes where it is the primary language of teaching. Speaking Urdu or even regional languages is a pedagogical method for many bilingual youths, helping to reduce comprehension gaps and promote inclusive conversations.

Observed Scenario

When a student in a computer science class was explaining a difficult concept in English, they quickly switched to Urdu to help a struggling peer understand it. This transition was effective, as evidenced by the peer's appreciation and active participation after the explanation. These results are consistent with the idea of translanguaging (García, 2009), in which bilingual people use their entire language repertoire in dynamic and adaptable ways to maximize meaning-making capacities. Code-switching in these situations goes against the conventional monolingual educational norms, which frequently view such behavior as a sign of incompetence or dishonesty. On the contrary, it demonstrates that multilingual children are extremely cognizant of their context and audience and strategically employ language to promote learning and communication.

Furthermore, by highlighting the importance of language in cognitive development, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of learning is supported by this practice.

Negotiation of Multiple Identities

The most delicate and lightening aspect may be the way people change form one language to another depending on the situation they are in. For example, when people are emotional or angry they usually turn to their native language in which they are feel more comfortable.

Sana's story highlights how deeply code-switching affects people psychologically.

Identity is flexible idea rather than a stable one especially in teens who can communicate in more than one language. Although it is considered that English is a symbol of superiority but native languages are just as important because they represent culture and identity of a person and young people who are bilingual use it as an advantage to shape their identity.

Observed Scenario

This study observed a student who was presenting his assignment in English to his class and he was very fluent in it but when he was asked a personal question he swiftly change into his language and started talking in his native language, in which he was more comfortable, it shows how much smoother and faster a bilingual person can change its identity depending on the situation or how they want the people around him to see as. They often use their ability of transition form one language to another to their advantage.

Conclusion

The result of the study shows that code-switching is intentionally used by young people in Pakistan to express themselves. It should not be seen as a symbol of weakness but rather as an advanced tool of learning and communicating. There are four components that form the identity of a person and are as follow social identity, culture, education and the negotiation of various

identities, all of the four-component given above are connected with code-switching. For example, young people use English more often when they are in educational institutes or social gathering while they use their native language when they are with their family members. It shows that the change in language is not a random act but calculated one.

Old studies on code-switching shows the change in language in negative terms or as a sign of weakness while it's not like that in our research, according to our study it gives a person better opportunity to express himself. This study support viewpoint of researchers like Grosjean and Myers-Scotton who explained the value of code-switching. People use different language depending the type of situation they are in, for example, people use English to show their intelligence in educational institutes while they use their native language in within their family.

According to the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) people define themselves on the basis of their relation to a social group, so in language also becomes a part of one's identity. Young people not only use different languages just to solve a problem but it also shapes their identity. Young people use it as a coping mechanism in their daily life to meet the demand of modernity in daily life. The students who participated in our research revealed that the often their native language when their friends or classmate struggle to understand something. It helps them in simplifying a topic so that their classmate can learn the basic of a topic. As per translanguaging theory (2009) bilingual people use their ability to gain better insight or information on a top and increase their understanding and learning.

Teachers should create a classroom where students and more comfortable and feel equal to each other despite their lack of understanding of one language. Students should be allowed to communicate in native language to increase the understanding of a topic.

Recommendations

The following suggestions are put out for researchers, educators, and legislators in light of the study's findings.

1. Code-Switching should be seen as strength rather than a weakness in case of understanding a topic.
2. To enhance comprehension, promote translanguaging activities by letting students utilize their full language repertoire in written reflections, peer instruction, and debates.
3. Safe environment should be built where students can feel safe and express themselves freely. This is known as an inclusive language environment.
4. Encourage bilingual and multilingual education: National education policy ought to abandon strict monolingual philosophies and encourage the creation of multilingual curriculum.
5. Encourage teacher preparation programs to incorporate instruction on multilingual pedagogy and the advantages of code-switching for students' identity development and learning.
6. Recognize linguistic diversity: Language policy should validate regional other languages alongside English and Urdu at order upto reflect Pakistan's multilingual reality.
7. Geographically broaden the study's focus by carrying out comparable investigations in rural regions and other provinces to investigate how regional differences affect identity and code-switching.

8. Examine virtual environments: Analyze the ways that apps like Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp influence young people's identity performance and code-switching behavior.
9. Apply intersectional analysis. Examine how language use and identity formation are influenced by variables like gender, social status, and educational background.

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