
UNIT 3 CODE-SWITCHING AND CODE-MIXING

Objectives

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Pre-requisites to Code-Mixing and Code-Switching
 - 3.2.1 Language Contact
 - 3.2.2 A Linguistic Community
- 3.3 Mixing Codes
 - 3.3.1 What is a Code?
 - 3.3.2 Conditions for Code-Mixing and Code-Switching
- 3.4 The Language of Code Mixing
 - 3.4.1 What is Code Mixing?
 - 3.4.2 Study of the Language of Code Mixing in Written Language
 - 3.4.3 The Language Aspect of Conversational Code-Mixing
- 3.5 Constraints on Code-Mixing
- 3.6 Switching Codes
 - 3.6.1 Switching and Mixing
 - 3.6.2 Motivation for Code-Switching – Does the Speaker always have a reason for Switching Codes?
- 3.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.8 Things to Do – Points to Ponder
- 3.9 Key Words
- 3.10 References and Further Readings

3.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit, we shall consider the pre-requisites to code mixing and code-switching, the meaning of ‘code’ in the context of ‘mixing’ and ‘switching’ and also the requisites for them to occur in written and interpersonal communication. Linguists’ views on the language and the constraints on code-mixing, and the motivation for this will be presented with examples from their data. We shall then look at other samples of conversation to see whether speakers always have a considered reason for switching codes. We will also look at linguists views on the difference between code mixing and code switching.

After completing this Unit you should be able to:

- understand the background against which code mixing and code switching occur;
- recognize code mixing and code switching as natural phenomena in bi/multilingual settings with special reference to India;
- recognize the Indian multilingual setting as different from other bilingual/multilingual nations;
- analyze the use of a mixed code and code switching and its possible motivation in written and oral communication; and
- appreciate the fact that the use of more than one language can help students to make meaning in the language learning process.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

You have already learnt that in most countries there are at least two languages that are spoken and/or written. In other words, people of most countries in the world today use more than one language to communicate. You have also seen that in India people are by and large bilingual and a large number are multilingual. And this ability can be used to great advantage in the classroom.

In a bi/multilingual setting different languages co-exist and are used to perform different functions. These functions depend upon the role a language plays in a particular setting. For example, the official language of a state is generally used in all official (administrative) communication. In English speaking countries the official language is English, though in the private domain other languages may be used along with English. In India the situation is quite complex. Hindi is the official language and English the associate official language of the Central Government. While the language used by the States to communicate with the Centre is Hindi/English, the official language of each state is the first language of that State. Thus Tamil is used as the official language of Tamil Nadu. Telugu is the official language of Andhra Pradesh, Bengali is the official language of Bengal and so on. Other labels that indicate the status and functions of a language are **tribal language, minority language, regional language, link language**. Unlike the names of languages the labels are not naturally exclusive. A tribal language may be an official language, as Mizo is the official language of Mizoram. A scheduled language like Sindhi is a minority language. Sometimes the labels also change when socio-political changes take place. For example, Konkani, which was a minority language become a majority language when the new State of Goa was created and it also became its official language and a scheduled language listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. Such forces that bring about a change in the status of the language are due to the social and political forces.

The kind of structural and functional relation between languages in multilingual settings have a bearing on the choice of language for a given purpose. The choice is not entirely free. For example, the role of Hindi as the official language of Himachal Pradesh, precludes the use of a Pahadi language for official work. Thus if an official role is assigned to a language, it prevents another language

from being assigned the same role. However, the official status of a language need not necessarily affect an individual's use of language in the private domain.

The freedom that an individual has to choose the language they wish to communicate in is dependent on several factors such as knowledge of the language of people they interact with (if it is different from their first language), the context (formal/informal), the topic of conversation, etc. Sometimes when two individuals speak different languages and do not know each other's first language, communication is possible only when a third language known to both is chosen, depending on the attitude they have to the third language they choose. For example, when a Tamil or Malayalam speaker and a Hindi speaker communicate with each other they would most probably choose English, because it is a neutral language and therefore, more acceptable. Often the social relationship between interlocutors influences the choice of language for communication. Generally, in such cases the language of the person with higher social status is chosen. But all other things being equal, individuals in India tend to use two languages known to them – switching between them or mixing them, creating a code-mixed variety which has a form of its own. Educated speakers in India who know English and an Indian language, mix English with the Indian languages. Speakers who do not know English may mix Hindi with their mother tongue, for example, an Indian in Himachal Pradesh may mix Hindi with Pahadi/Himachali.

In this Unit, we shall study the phenomenon of code-mixing and code-switching as an aspect of the unique multilingual setting in India. We shall consider pre-requisites to code-mixing and code-switching, and look at some requisites for these. We shall also examine the language factor in code mixing, that is, constraints on code mixing, and possible motivation for code mixing.

In the next section, we look at the backdrop against which code mixing and code switching happens.

3.2 PRE-REQUISITES TO CODE-MIXING AND CODE-SWITCHING

3.2.1 Language Contact

When we consider a sociolinguistic phenomenon such as code mixing and code switching we pre-suppose the co-existence of two or more languages or varieties of a language in a state, and each of these languages or varieties of a language has its own place and function in various domains. When we say these languages co-exist we mean that these languages come into contact with each other because they form part of a speaker's competence, that is, the same individual may know more than one language / variety of a language and therefore have two or more co-existing competencies. They could draw on these competencies in different contexts. From the point of view of communication this would form an individual's repertoire. In addition to 'intra-personal' contact of languages, 'interpersonal' contact between people using more than one language in public and private domains naturally results in these languages coming into contact as well. This is evident in code-mixing and code-switching in bi/multilingual communities.

3.2.2 A Linguistic Community

A linguistic community is a group of people who share the same language. Members of this community, who are monolingual may have a high and a low variety. The high variety is formally learnt by instruction and used in “formal” social contexts such as public speech, classroom instruction and for identification of knowledge and its transmission in the written mode. A multilingual community is one in which speakers know and are able to use more than one language for communication. Competence in more than one language can be viewed from individual as well as social perspectives.

India is a multilingual country. There are speakers of 200 languages that historically belong to four different language families, viz., Indo European (54) Dravidian (20), Austro-Asiatic (20) and Sino-Tibetan (84). The rest (22) are unclassified and foreign languages. These languages are abstractions of our 11,600 mother tongues reported by the people in the 1961 census. This language diversity is not merely demographic, it is also functional. There are 22 official languages used as medium of administration, 43 educational languages used as medium of instruction at the primary level, nearly 100 languages used as medium of information dissemination through print and so on.

Though the country is divided into states on linguistic lines, each state is multilingual. Linguistic minorities vary from 4% in Kerala to almost 40% in Manipur. The States are multilingual to different degrees.

While there are two official languages (English and Hindi) of the Central Government, the official languages of the states are as many as there are states. At the level of the individual, we often come across people with competence in at least two languages, sometimes even three or four, owing to increased inter-state mobility. But at the socio-political level the choice of language tends to get restricted to two or at best three languages. Knowledge of a number of languages serves as a resource for individuals to communicate with others successfully. When they use two or more languages alternately at either the level of the word, or the level of the phrase or the sentence they code-mix or code-switch. Before we consider the aspects from which code mixing/code-switching have been examined by linguists we shall briefly look at what a ‘code’ means and what the requisites are for people to mix or switch codes.

3.3 MIXING CODES

3.3.1 What is a Code?

The first question that comes to mind when one refers to code mixing/switching is ‘what is a code?’ Strictly speaking a ‘code’ is defined in the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary as ‘a system of words, letters, numbers or symbols that represent a message or records information secretly or in a shorter form’. Looked at from the perspective of language as a system of communication it would mean an arrangement of words in a rule-governed system that convey meaning. Thus a mixed code would be one in which two codes with different systems are combined to make meaning. What are the requisites for code mixing?

3.3.2 Conditions for Code-Mixing and Code-Switching

Some conditions are necessary for code mixing/switching to happen. The first of these is a knowledge of or an awareness of at least two codes (languages or language varieties). Code mixing, in other words can only happen if participants in an interaction know at least two languages. Not only should they know two languages they should also share the same two languages. For example, code mixing or code switching cannot happen between two people one of whom knows Tamil and Malayalam and the other English and Marathi. The extent to which two individuals mix codes can vary according to their competence in the languages they use to communicate.

Look at some real-life conversations, for example:

- 1 A: Thambi, please give me Tayir (curd).
B: Yes, yes, bring bring. (serves A with curd)
A: Kunjam kunjam
B: Little, little.
A: thank you.
- 2 A: Please buy karapurvalli, I like them. (a variety of banana in Tamil Nadu)
B: Yes, yes get Tumaro.
A: NaLLairku (nice is)
B: Hahaha...
- 3 A: Aap ke pass printed material hai – suuti (cotton)
B: Ha hai memsaheb. Aaie dekhye.
A: Bahot dark colours nahii chaahiye.
B: Jo chahiye vohii dikhaaunga. Ye dekhiye... Ye le test hai, ekdam new. Rung fast hai, garenTiiD.

In the first and second conversations it is clear that A and B do not speak a common Indian language. A knows English well and B's first language is Tamil. A also has a smattering of Tamil and B a smattering of English. A uses mainly English and switches to Tamil only at the word level. Hence the Tamil words tayir, kunjam – KarpurvaLLi and a short utterance – naLLa irku.

In spite of the use of single words in the switched code, communication happens. Code mixing is thus used as an effective communicative device.

In dialogue 3, A knows both English and Hindi well. B responds to A's query in Hindi at first, then switches to English words to describe the material he is selling 'latest', 'new', 'fast hai', 'garantiid.'

Look at another conversation in which all the speakers know English well and but for one speaker have Tamil as their first language.

- A: Have you seen the invitation card?
- B: What invitation?
- A: To an evening of two plays by Becket.
- B: No.
- A: (Shows the card)
- B: Ah. (Reads the card)
Lights... Narsingh Rao
Oh the same Narsingh Rao
- A: Yes. Have you seen Daasi.
- B: No.
- C: I haven't either.
- A: I'm told they're going to show all these films on TV.
- D: When?
- A: I don't know. They're going to show ViiDu next Sunday.
- C: Archana acts in that, doesn't she?
- B: Yes.
- D: In what?
- C: ViiDule modal modelle aekTpaNNi naale.

Notice that the entire conversation is in English until the very end when C unpredictably switches to Tamil and utters the entire sentence in Tamil. The entire conversation is in English because one of the participants doesn't know Tamil, and has a mother tongue other than Tamil. It is clear from these examples that in terms of functional value and prestige, English is important in the Indian multilingual setting.

3.4 THE LANGUAGE OF CODE MIXING

3.4.1 What is Code Mixing?

Before we consider the 'language factor' in code mixing we would like to point out that code mixing/switching is not a simple case of borrowing used to fill in gaps that may occur in the lexicon of a given language. The phenomenon can be noticed even when equivalents in the two languages exist. Moreover, unlike borrowings, code mixed elements do not necessarily get assimilated into the recipient language by regular linguistic change.

3.4.2 Study of the Language of Code Mixing in Written Language

The study of code mixing/switching by linguists presupposes the acceptance of these as a natural phenomenon of bi-/multilingualism governed by rules like any other natural language. Thus Kachru (1975) discusses the formal aspects of code mixing and says that it involves 'functioning at least, in a disystem, and

as a consequence, developing another linguistic code comprising formal features of two or more codes. Kachru examines the various linguistic units and processes which are involved in code mixing (Hindi-English) with examples primarily from Hindi magazines/newspapers. In other words, the examples are those of the written variety of code mixing.

(a) **Unit Insertion:** This according to Kachru refers to the introduction of a grammatical unit above a word in a sentence (e.g., a noun phrase or a verb phrase) from another language. for example,

i. **NP Insertion**

1 tenk va redar prapt karne ki bhi yojna (Navbharat Times NBT 8.3.75)
tank and radar procure do of also scheme

ii. **VP Insertion**

2 Vipaksh द्वारा वाक आउ (NBT-7.3.75)
Opposition by walkout

(b) **Unit Hybridization:** This refers to the use of code mixing within a unit, say for example a NP, a VP or a compound verb.

3 isliye chانس लेने के सिवा हमारे पास कोई उपाय नहीं था
Therefore chance take – except our near any alternative not was
(Dharmayug (D) 17.6.73)

4 Sarkas aur numayis yaha phel hai
Circus and exhibition here fail are

Kachru says that this process has developed into an extremely productive process for ‘mixing’ Indian languages such as Hindi, Urdu with non-Indian languages, English and Persian. This process is most productive in producing what are termed ‘compound verbs’ and ‘conjunct verbs’. For example, (1st type) expect karna ‘to expect’; satisfy karna ‘to satisfy’; examples of the 2nd type are ‘holiday lena’ ‘to take a holiday’; ‘permission dena’ ‘to grant permission’.

(c) **Sentence insertion:** It means inserting a sentence of one language into another language for example:

5 parhne me Sima ki bahut ruchi hai vah kahti hai
Education is necessary for life (D, 29, 4.73)

(d) **Idiom and Collocation Insertion:** The idioms and collocations of English have generally a higher frequency of occurrences in code mixed Indian languages, than, say, proverbs. Some of the examples given are:

6 aur mai parivartan ghar se suru karuga kyuki
and I change home from begin will do because
Charity begins at home. (D, 29.4.73)

- 7 tum ko ho kya gaya why do you cry over spilt milk
to you happen what
sab thik ho jayega
all fine will become

(e) **Inflection attachment and re-duplication**

There are a number of English and Persian borrowings in South Asian languages in such code mixing, e.g. sakuti digri vala (a person who possesses a school degree; D, 12.8.73)

The process of re-duplication, which is very common in South Asian languages, is applied to English items, e.g.

- 8 ...acting (acting) ...veking mai ka janu re
(Saptahik Hindustan 29. 7.7.3)

3.4.3 The Language Aspect of Conversational Code-Mixing

Some studies have analysed Hindi English code mixing in conversation. Ira Pandit (1986) has made an attempt to describe some aspects of the syntax of Hindi English code mixing. We give below some of the examples from her analyses of the data she recorded.

Simple sentences

A Head noun in subject noun phrase in English + copula in Hindi

- 1 Society hii aisii hai
subject copula

Society is like that.

- 2 Itti opportunities haiin
subject copula

There are so many opportunities.

B Head noun in subject noun phrase in English + intransitive verb in Hindi

- 3 atmosphere itanaa informal ho jaata hai
subject verb intrans

The atmosphere becomes so informal.

- 4 pataa nahiin kabse yeh trend chal rahaa hai
subject verb intrans

No one knows since when this trend has been going on.

C Genitive noun phrase in the subject position

- i Modifying noun phrase and genitive morpheme in Hindi + head noun phrase in English + verb in Hindi

- 5 Bachchon kaa expenditure kuch kam nahiin hotaa hai
Mod Gen Head

The amount that has to be spent on children is by no means small.

ii Modifying noun phrase and head noun phrase in English, genitive morpheme in Hindi + verb in Hindi

6 Joint family ke advantage bahot saare hain
Mod NP Gen Head

iii Modifying nounphrase and genitive morpheme in Hindi + head noun phrase in English + verb in English

7 hamaara opinion carries no weight
Mod Gen Head V

My opinion carries no weight.

VERB PHRASE CONSTRUCTIONS

D Predicate adjective in English + copula in Hindi

8 vo thoraa backward hai
Pred Adj cop

E Predicate adjective in English + intransitive verb in Hindi

9 abnormal thoraa saa ho jaate hain
Pred Adj int

They become a little abnormal.

F Object in English + Verb in Hindi

10 aise narrow escapes roz nazar aate hain
Object V

Such narrow escapes are seen everyday.

G Adverbials in English + verb in Hindi

11 Usko definitely pataa chal jaataa hai
Adv V

He gets to know about it definitely.

H Adverbials in Hindi + verb in English

12 yahaan par they are not from poor families.
Adv V

Here they are not from poor families.

CONJUNCT VERB/NOUN + VERB CONSTRUCTIONS

I Noun in English + Verb in Hindi

13 hamane usako baraa suggest kiyaa ki tum science le lo.
N V

COMPOUND SENTENCES

J Conjoined sentences

i First conjunct in Hindi + conjunction in Hindi + second conjunct in English

- 14 adults kii nahiin hai lekin it should be for adults.
conj
It's not for adults but it should be for them.
- ii First conjunct in English + conjunction in English + second conjunct in Hindi
- 15 I don't say anything because larakiyaan mujhse chirati hain
I don't say anything because the girls are jealous of me.
- iii First conjunct in English + conjunction in Hindi + second conjunct in English
- 16 It is the psychology which is important aur the psychological aspect you know differs from person to person. Conj

COMPLEX SENTENCES

K Conditionals

- i "If" clause in Hindi "then" clause in English beginning with the Hindi "tab"/ "to"
- 17 *agar tum baat karo unakii personal life ke bare men*
If you talk about their personal life.
to they take more interest in their studies.
then
- ii "If" clause in English "then" clause in Hindi.
- 18 If you can get a good servant *to think hai*.
It is all right if you can get a good servant.

L Complement Sentence

- i Matrix sentence in Hindi, complementizer in English, embedded sentence in English
- 19 ye log impression aisaa dete hain that they are very busy.
comp
These people give the impression that they are very busy.
- 20 She said *kii do spirits aayiin room men* and said *kii ye bachcha hai*
isko le chalate hain
comp comp
She said that two spirits came into the room and said that this is the child they should take away.
- ii Matrix sentence in Hindi, complementizer in Hindi, embedded sentence in English.
- 21 to ye bolata hai kii you be ready and we will run away.
comp
Then he says that you be ready and we will run away.

M Relative clauses

- i main clause in Hindi, relative clause in English

22 *Hamaari class men kii girls hain who have got good marks.*
Rel cl

There are many girls in my class who have got good marks.

- ii Main clause in English, relative clause in Hindi

23 *PCS men jo larakiyaan hain they are much better.*

The girls who are in PCS are much better.

From the numerous examples of structures in the data on code mixing it is clear that it is a complex phenomenon; and though the nature and extent of code mixing is highly unpredictable in face-to-face oral interaction, it seems to be systematic.

3.5 CONSTRAINTS ON CODE-MIXING

Though the number of languages studied in code mixing is rather limited, linguists have proposed some universal constraints on code mixing. The existence of universal constraints is based on the assumption that the mixed code has the properties of a natural language. The assumed linguistic properties of the mixed code according to Annamalai (IJSL 75, 1989) are (a) mixing is governed by levels of units such as word level, clause level, sentence level and so on (b) it is sensitive to syntactic constituents like Noun Phrase, Verb Phrase, etc. and (c) it is a variable with reference to word classes such as nouns verbs etc. Here we shall look at the constraints / restrictions on code mixing in South Asian languages as proposed by Kachru (1975). According to him, there seems to be a cline of acceptability in code-mixing. It is not an open-ended process either grammatically or lexically. He illustrates this with the following constraints.

A Rank shift constraint

The rank-shifted constructions are not from English. For example the following sentences are an odd mix.

*1 *voh kitab which is on the table meri hai*

That bookmine is.

*2 *mera voh amriki dost who lives in Chicago aj hamare ghar ayega*

My that American friendtoday our house will come

B Conjunction constraint

- i In code mixing of South Asian languages and English conjunctions (and, or, etc.) are not used to conjoin two NPs. The following sentences sound odd, for example

*3 NP and NP aye the.

*4 mai usko akhbar deta but diya nahi

I to him newspaper give gave not

Kachru says that conjoining two sentences from two languages is, however, common.

bhai, khana khao and let us go.

brother meal eat

ii The conjoining item is from the same language in which the conjoined sentence is introduced. Therefore, the following sentence is not the preferred construction.

*6 John abhi aya nahi lekin I must wait for him.

John yet come not but

C Determiner constraint

There are several constraints on the items which can be code mixed in a noun phrase in pre-head position.

*7 vaha five sundar larkiya parh rahi thi (numeral)

*8 tum this sundar larki ki bat kar rahe the?

These sentences according to Kachru sounded odd.

D Complementizer Constraint

i If the two sentences are from the same source languages, a complementizer from another source is not inserted.

*9 mujhe lagta hai that ram kal aayega
to me seems aux... Ram tomorrow will come

ii Given two sentences from two sources (say, Hindi and English) the preference is given to a complementizer from the language used in the first sentence, e.g.

10 muje lagta hai ki ram will come tomorrow

To me seems aux that Ram...

This is especially true with verbs of perception (e.g. sunna 'to hear', sochna 'to think') or verbs of saying (e.g., kehna 'to say'; batana 'to tell')

But Pandit has counter examples to some of the above constraints in her data.

For example, conjunction constraint B (i) and (ii)

(i) Uske bhai and bahan aane waale hote hain
conj

Raja rao and baadal sarcar hii nahiin hain library men

(ii) Sentences 14, 15 and 16 above of Pandit's data.

There are counter examples to Kachru's complementizer constraint [D (i) and (ii)]

Examples:

- (i) You get an idea kii this is the sort of novel you are reading.
comp
- (ii) She said kii do spirits aayiin room men and said kii ye baccha hai isko
Comp Comp
le chalte hain

She said that two spirits came into the room and said that this is the child they should take away.

- She thinks kii she is in the way.
Comp
- You know they feel kii baraa kuchh garbar maamlaa hai.
Comp

There is something seriously wrong.

Pandit also has counter examples to Kachru's Rank shift/Restrictive relative clause constraint in which an English relative clause cannot be embedded into a Hindi sentence.

Consider the following:

- hamaari class men kii girls hain who have got good marks.
Rel clause
- College main kuchh larakiyaan hain who have boy friends.
Ref Clause

The fact that in the data a Hindi restrictive relative clause is embedded in an English main clause also challenges this constraint. Look at the following sentence, for example.

- PCS men jo larakiyaan hain they are much better.
Ref Clause

The difference in the data on code mixing and the counter examples indicate that there is not enough research and data on code mixing/code switching that can make it predictable. Only a huge data base could help us formulate a 'system' in terms of the language of code-mixing/code switching.

3.6 SWITCHING CODES

3.6.1 Switching and Mixing

What is the difference between code mixing and code switching? You might ask.

When we switch codes we use a different language or variety of language midway through a stretch of speech. Switching codes could either be partial and involve only a part of a sentence or clause or phrase, and result in a code mixed variety as we have seen above, or it could be a switch to another languages so that

it forms a large chunk of speech in an interaction. This is longer stretch of speech in a different language and is a characteristic of code switching. In other words, the stretches of the languages involved are generally longer in switching than in mixing, and we can speak of mixing as concerning a *unit of grammar* and switching as concerning a *unit of discourse*.

3.6.2 Motivation for Code-Switching – Does the Speaker Always have a Reason for Switching Mixing Codes?

Linguists have made attempts (Grumperg 1971, Kumar 1987, Pandit 1986) to study the factors that trigger a switch. Change in the context, in role relationships may trigger a switch from English to the mother tongue and vice versa. A change in the topic of discourse may elicit code switching. The value attached to a language or a dialect, and sometimes the intention of the speaker may be expressed by a switch.

In India, the use of English could occur in formal situations in the spoken as well as the written forms, because English is associated with official and formal contexts in the public domain. However, a switch to a common mother tongue cannot be ruled out when the topic of conversation shifts from the domain of office to the personal domain or when the boss in an organization switches to a common mother tongue to accommodate those who are not fluent in English. In a study conducted on the use of English in industries in Andhra Pradesh (Sadanand 1983), it was found that executives at the highest levels in urban industrial organizations switched from English to Hindi/Urdu/Telugu and vice versa depending on the language the employees were comfortable with. Therefore, it is not always the case that interaction in the public domain (workplace) is restricted to English. The senior executives were flexible in their use of language, in this case it was not the topic of conversation (which was most often technical) nor was it the role relationship (relative rank in an organization) that triggered a switch. It was in fact the senior executive's desire to communicate effectively in order to 'get the job done' which was the primary aim. The motivation for switching codes was sociostrategic in the public domain.

Another reason for switching codes in socio-political contexts (public domain) could be to make a point more forcefully, impress the listener and convince them. Recently, there was a newspaper article (Deccan Chronicle, 5th October, 2014 p.10) on the Prime Minister's use of English alliteration in his speeches in Hindi as one of his devices to turn a simple concept into something appealing. Modi spoke of the "5Ts" (talent, traditional, tourism, trade and technology) to build brand India. On a TV channel Mr. Modi said the country needed the 3S's (skill, scale, and speed) to match China.

It is evident from the examples above that codes switches in the public domain are motivated primarily by the desire to get their message across effectively.

In the personal domain the motivation for code switching/mixing could either be socio-cultural or socio-psychological.

Look at the following telephone conversation.

A: Hi, how are you?

B: Hi. I'm quite well, thanks. I've been very busy.....long hours of teaching A huge portion to cover.

A: I just hope you don't feel stressed. Have you to teach today?

B: No. mujhe chaothe pe jana hai at 9.30.

A: Oh, then you must be getting ready to go, main phir bat karungi. Bye!

B: Bye!

B's switch to Hindi is owing to the occasion 'chaotha', a prayer meeting on the fourth day after someone's death, which is a part of Indian culture. But A's switch to Hindi is not easy to explain.

Look at another real-life conversation

A: I waited for you yesterday evening.

B: I'm so sorry. I should've called you. But I lost your number.

A: That's OK. I'll give you my number now.

B: You know I had to go to my cousin's house. Uska pehla Karva Chauth tha.

Here B switches to Hindi because 'Karva Chauth' is culture specific. In North India it is celebrated nine days after Dussehra. On this day women fast and pray for the long life of their husbands. The first fast after marriage is a special occasion.

In both these conversations, the trigger seems to have been a socio-cultural event which is typically Indian.

These examples, however, should not lead us to believe that all such instances invariably trigger a switch. Individuals may vary among themselves and a speaker may vary from one context to another in what s/he mixes and how much s/he mixes to express herself/himself. There is thus a certain degree of indeterminacy.

Again in the personal domain individuals may sometimes mix codes, switching to the language of the person spoken to in order to identify with them. The switch may signal a friendly attitude and thus establish a good rapport with him/her. For instance, in dialogues 1 and 2 in section 3.3.2 speaker A and B have different mother tongues, so A uses English to communicate with B but switches to Tamil words to identify with B who in turn uses the little English he knows and thus a friendly atmosphere is created.

In dialogue 3, A uses Hindi, which she knows well mixed with English to ask for what she wants. B in turn uses Hindi mixed with English to indicate that he has understood A. While the choice of English words by B in the mixed code is intended to attract the customers attention to the quality of the material and promote his business, it is not clear why A has switched to 'printed materials' and 'dark colours'. It is possible that A did not have an appropriate Hindi equivalent for the word 'printed'. But there is a common Hindi word for 'dark colours' (gehre rang). So the motivation for a switch in the latter case is not easy to explain.

In 'Some Observations on Motivation' for code switching, Ashok Kumar (1987) attempts a neat classification of the 'considerations' that dictate the alteration from 'Hindi to English'. This is based on a study of Hindi-based bilinguals.

- a) Switching under emotional stress;
- b) Switching for imposing authority;
- c) Switching for fashion;
- d) Inevitable, technical code-switching;
- e) Switching for business;
- f) Switching in creative writing;
- g) Euphemistic code-switching; and
- h) Switching for reinforcement

While it may be possible that a switch from Hindi to English is triggered by these considerations, the switching of codes in the following narration (Pandit 1986, p. 66) cannot be attributed to any motivation or change in the topic of discourse.

- 1 I had gone to Kamala Nagar Mr. Puri ke saath.
- 2 We wanted to go kyonki kuch khareedanaa tha.
- 3 You know that place Birla Mills ke pass?
- 4 When you go to Amba raaste men naheen hai?
- 5 As it is my husband is very nervous jahaan tak merii driving kaa savaal hai.
- 6 Vo mujhe drive naheen karene dete aur main bhii.
- 7 I don't' tell him in the morning kii main car le jaa rahii huun.
- 8 Us din to I had a very narrow escape.
- 9 Vahaan se murane lage vo jo roundabout naheen hai?
- 10 I was just turning.
- 11 Vahaan se ek private bus aa rahi thii.
- 12 Vo itanii speed se aayee.
- 13 I had just turned.
- 14 Vo itnii jyada speed se aayee aur usane moraa aur front mein, right side pe badly touch huyii gaarii.
- 15 Itanii zor se aawaaz huyii kii I can't tell you.
- 16 I was so scared.
- 17 Maine car rok dii.
- 18 I put a stop otherwise to sub kuch khatam ho gayaa hotaa.

Thus A's narration of how she narrowly escaped a terrible accident illustrates the difficulty of describing all instances of code mixing in terms of motivation. Switching to a code mixed variety is common in the unique Indian multilingual setting. This is probably owing to two or more co-existing competencies in the individual which he/she may draw upon for communicating meaning.

3.7 LET US SUM UP

We have seen that language contact is a pre-requisite to code mixing and code switching. It is essential for two or more languages to co-exist in the individual and between people for them to code switch. Each of the languages that co-exist is a resource for various communicative and social functions. A community in which its members know and speak more than one language is a bi/multilingual community. India is a multilingual country with speakers of about 200 languages, which are used for various functions such as mediums of administration, mediums of instruction at the primary level and mediums of information dissemination through print media.

When we speak of a sociolinguistics phenomenon such as code-switching and code-mixing we mean that a 'code' is an arrangement of words that convey meaning within a rule-governed system. Mixing codes would then mean that two different systems are combined to make meaning. In order to mix codes the speakers must share at least two codes (languages or language varieties).

Code mixing must not be mistaken for a simple case of borrowing used to fill in gaps that may occur in the lexicon of a given language. Unlike borrowings the elements do not necessarily get assimilated into the recipient language.

Linguists discuss the formal aspect of code mixing and code switching on the basis of the assumption that they have the properties of a natural language. The existence of universal constraints also follows from the same assumptions.

We have looked at the constraints proposed by Kachru (on Hindi/Urdu-English code mixing) based on data of written and spoken language and an analysis (Pandit 1986) of the structure of code mixed Hindi-English in conversation followed by counter examples of Kachru's constraints. The latter demonstrate the indeterminate nature of code switching and the need to have a very large data base for the properties of code mixing and code switching to be more predictive.

We have considered possible reasons/motivations for code switching in the public and personal domains and have listed a number of reasons (Ashok Kumar 1987) given for switching from Hindi to English. By giving an example of data from Pandit, however, we have drawn your attention to the difficulty of describing all instances of code switching in terms of motivation.

3.8 THINGS TO DO – POINTS TO PONDER

- 1 What is your mother tongue? Why do you think it is your mother tongue?
- 2 How many languages (other than your mother tongue) do you know? Tick the right column:

Language	Well	Not so well	Not well at all

- 3 How many languages do you use to communicate with others?
- 4a Make notes of your own use of language in different contexts. Do you mix codes?
- 4b Which languages do you use at work, in class, at home with family, with friends and neighbours?
- 5 Record three conversations of educated bilinguals who know English. Did any of the participants use a code-mixed variety? Did mixing happen at the level of the word (as in dialogues 1 and 2 in 3.3.2...? or/and at the level of the phrase or/and at the level of the whole sentence? You could refer to Pandit's analysis of code-mixed language.
- 6 Look at the possible reasons/motivations for code-switching listed by Ashok Kumar. Can you apply any of these or any others to the code-switching in the conversations you recorded?

3.9 KEY WORDS

Bilingual	A bilingual is one who uses more than one language.
Linguistic community	A group of people who share a language and norms of its use as well as values assigned to it.
Multilingual community	A linguistic community sharing more than one language and their functional allocation.
Language repertoire	The set of languages a speaker possess and uses.
Mother tongue	One of the languages in the language repertoire of a speaker which is used to identify him or her socially.
Borrowing	Borrowing is the use of words and grammatical features from another language, which are assimilated into the system of the recipient language.
Mixing	The alternative use of words and grammatical structure of another language by a bilingual to convey social meanings.
Constraints	Systematic restrictions on mixing; violation of a constraint will give an odd/ill-formed mixed sentence.
Switching	The alternate use of another language for the length of a discourse unit when there is a change in participants or topic or a combination of factors.

3.10 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READINGS

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**The Multilingual World
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