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CODE-MIXING AND CODE-SWITCHING IN TELUGU T.V. CHANNELS

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ABSTRACT

Among the mass media, television is more ubiquitous and more influential than the others. TV channels produce and telecast programmes of various kinds to cater to the needs and tastes of various groups of audience. Since the anchors and programme presenters are mostly English-educated, it is unavoidable that a lot of English words make their way into the language of these anchors. Sometimes, it may be a case of simply mixing words from two different languages or sometimes speakers may alternately use sentences from two different languages in the same stretch of speech, called Code-mixing and Code-switching respectively. Penelope, Muysken and many others studied these phenomena. Why and in what context this happens and what motivates this has produced a lot of theoretical conjectures and a vast amount of research. An attempt is made in this paper to study this phenomenon and see how it happens and where it happens.

Key Words: mass media, television, code-mixing, code-switching

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INTRODUCTION

Historically, the Telugu language has always been more a borrowing language than a building language, unlike Tamil, another Dravidian language spoken in India. Whenever the need arises to have a new word corresponding to a new concept or object that entered a native culture, the general tendency has always been to borrow the new words from the source language rather than building a new word out of native resources. In the earliest times, Telugu borrowed from Sanskrit quite extensively and now it takes words from English. Just as Sanskrit lent thousands of words to all Indian languages, English today has influenced every Indian language not just in vocabulary but also in various types of communication patterns. This naturally leads to a lot of code-mixing, that is, intra-sentential code-switching. The everyday spoken Telugu shows rather a high incidence of English words, e.g. time, rice, water. Certain common Telugu words have gone out of use even in the speech of uneducated people, as for instance *baDi* 'school', *sanci* 'bag'. For many educated people, it is very difficult not to mix even a single English word in their conversation. Even the illiterate people use words like *thank you*, *sorry*, *please*, *bye*, *excuse me* and so on, not to speak of common English words like *water*, *time*,

brother, cousin, etc. In addition to English, the variety of Telugu spoken in Hyderabad shows a number of Urdu words. Consequently, Telugu TV channels show code-mixing not only with English, but also with Urdu.

Code-mixing may take place either at the word level or at the sentence level. If it happens at the word level, it is called Code-Mixing and if it happens at the sentence level, it is called Code-Switching. These two phenomena are quite extensively seen in T.V. channels and an attempt is made in this paper to study these phenomena in various programmes in T.V. channels.

Some twenty-five years ago, there was just Doordarshan for the people to watch, without much variety in the programmes. The 1990s saw the emergence of satellite channels which started telecasting programmes of various genres, serials, movies and so on. This naturally resulted in more number of jobs which require young and dynamic people for presenting and conducting the programmes. Understandably, all these anchors are educated through English medium and hence they constantly code-mix and code-switch between English and Telugu. Cookery shows, film programmes, and youth programmes show a great deal of code-mixing and code-switching. Surprisingly, even though Telugu equivalent words are available for most ingredients, the anchors and the other participants in cookery shows keep using either the English words or Hindi words for the ingredients.

We collected the data in Structured Observational Method from various programmes in various TV channels.

The following are the examples from cookery shows.

1. **Names of vegetables:** Telugu language has ample vocabulary for the words related to vegetables. But the anchors prefer to use English words or Hindi words for vegetables. This may be mostly out of prestige motive. Not only the anchors but also the participants borrow the words from English or Hindi.

Telugu words	Words used
1. ullipa:yalu	1. Onions
2. banga:La: dumpa	2. a:lu:
3. miriya:lu	3. Pepper
4. pa:la ku:ra	4. pa:lak/ Spinach
5. allam vellulli	5. Ginger Garlic

The following are some examples from the speech of the participants in cookery programmes.

- Onions ni ba:ga: deep fry ceyya:li- color change ayye: varaku*
'Deep fry the onions until the color is changed'.
 - Two varieties and two traditional vanTalalu and cinema:llo: ca:la: busy ga: unna:ru*
'Two varieties and two traditional dishes and you are very busy in movies'
2. **Cooking-related verbs:** Normally in languages, nouns are more frequently borrowed or code-mixed rather than verbs. But, in Telugu many English verbs are very freely used in educated speech. kalupu, ku:ru, ve:yincu, rubbu are some verbs in Telugu, which are used to explain the process of cooking. These words are almost avoided in the cookery shows. Instead, the corresponding English words are used.

Words that denote the process of Cooking	
Telugu Words	Code-Mixed English words
1. kalupu	1. mix
2. ku:ru	2. stuff
3. ve:yincu	3. fry
4. rubbu	4. grind

Some more examples from the speech of anchors of cookery shows are given below.

- i. *ginger ni grind ce:sukunda:m. salt add ceyya:li*
'Let us grind ginger. Salt must be added'.
 - ii. *a: paina kottimi:ra, tomato to: garnish ce:sukuni serve ce:sukunTe: tomato phool makhani curry ready*
'later if you garnish with coriander and tomato and serve it, tomato phool makhani curry will be ready'
- 3. Programme Titles:** For every programme telecast by a television channel, there is a title or heading under which the programme runs for about half an hour or so. The trend in TV channels is to write the titles in English.

e.g. *Wide Angle*
The Fourth Estate
Prime Time
Inside
Red Alert

4. **Expressives:** Normally, when words are borrowed, words indicating new devices or new concepts are borrowed. It is not common to borrow expressive words which indicate emotions. But in Telugu the expressives like aaha! , oho! etc., are completely lost. Instead, English expressives are used out of prestige motive.

e.g.
a) Hmmm... Nice..!
b) Ya! Ya!
c) Wow !
d) Nice!Nice!
e) Super!
f) Yummy

In some cases Telugu expressives are code-mixed with English.

e.g. i. *ela:, ela:, How?* 'how, how, how'
ii. *ya a: beak koncem curve aiyinaTluga: unTundi*
'Yes, that beak seems to be curved a bit'

5. **Reduplication:** Reduplication means repeating either part of a word or the whole word to indicate either the intensity or the desirability of something. Reduplication is the most common feature observed in cookery shows. Actually reduplication is not common in English. But in TV channels this feature is very prevalent.

e.g. a) *crispy, crispy*
b) *variety, variety*
c) *different, different*
i. *koncem fry ce:ste: crispy crispy do:sa ready*
'If you fry a little, crispy crispy masala dosa will be ready'
ii. *variety variety items ippuDu mi:ko:sam*
'Variety variety items now for your sake'

6. **News Programmes:** While reading the news also, a number of Urdu words and English words are used along with Telugu. Use of Urdu words is quite common in the variety of Telugu spoken in Hyderabad. Many of these words are not used in the other regions of the Telugu speaking states.

e.g.
i. *operation success, doctor suspend*
'operation is successful, doctor is suspended'
ii. *surgery to: cancer khalla:s*
'cancer will be gone with surgery'

Here are some samples of the speech patterns of the anchors and the participants from various programmes.
e.g.

- i. *mana next segment " sweet and snacks". mari i:roju sweet and snacks lo: tasty and healthy recipe cu:Dabo:tunna:mandi:, ade:nTanTe: –Veg Sandwich.*
'Our next segment is 'sweet and snacks'. Then today in sweet and snacks we are going to see tasty and healthy recipe, that is –Veg Sandwich'
- ii. *career actual ga: TV nunci start iyyindi*
'Actually, my career started from TV'
- iii. *solo travel so better*
'Solo travel is so better'
- iv. *acce: din a:ge: hein ani narendra modi munduku sa:gutunna:ru*
'Narendra Modi is moving forward with the slogan 'good days are ahead'
There are some anchors from the same shows- one who avoids code-mixing and another one who not only code-mixes and borrows but also code-switches to a high extent. The following examples explain these features.

e.g.

- 1.a) *ku:ralo: ka:ra:niki baduluga: miriya:la poDi ve:skunTe:ne: a:rogya:niki mancidi*
'It is healthier to add pepper powder instead of chilli powder in curries'
- b) *apple gujju, grapes gujju, inka: banga:La: dumpala gujju i: mu:DiTini samapa:LLalo: ti:sukuni pa:lalo: kalipi mukha:niki ra:sukunTe: mukham ba:gunTundi.*
'If you mix equal quantities of apple, grapes and potato pastes and apply it to your face, your face will look bright'
2. a) *Welcome to ma: u:ri vanTa and it is wonderful to have you every day.*
'Welcome to Maa Uri Vanta, and it is wonderful to have you every day'
- b) *So i:roju e:m ce:yabo:tuna:manDi: ? What is the recipe? It is called the detoxing (sic) juice.*
'So what are we going to do today? What is the recipe? It is called the detoxing (sic) juice'

To conclude, it is, of course, not possible to avoid code-mixing and borrowing completely, because the use of English has become spontaneous for many educated people. But this habit of resorting to English even where Telugu words are available in every day speech not only hampers communication but may even cause eventual loss of the Telugu words.

Data drawn from: Data taken from various channels like E TV, Maa TV, Gemini TV, ABN News, Sakshi News etc.

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