

Alternation Code-mixing of Chhattisgarhi Conversations

Shabiya Noor Mansuri and Kothakonda Suman

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates alternation code-mixing between Chhattisgarhi and English. It is very common to mix English with the mother tongue in several places across the world. Code-mixing is widely found in multilingual countries like India, where many languages, dialects, and varieties are present. Code-mixing is a very useful strategy for bilingual speakers to communicate easily and effectively based on the context. Our focus is in this study of how alternation code mixing takes place between Chhattisgarhi and English by Chhattisgarhi speakers in their daily conversations. This paper examines conversational code-mixing in the repertoire of Chhattisgarhi speakers, and it also finds out the increasing interest of speakers in the English language. Adopting ideas from Muysken (2000), this paper explores different types of alternation code-mixing such as non-nested switching, peripherality, adverbial modification, coordination, left-dislocation, right-dislocation and emblematic or tag-switches between Chhattisgarhi and English. It examines how different patterns or structures are found in the mixing of these two languages. This study further explains the properties of code-mixing, such as embedding in discourse, doubling, flagging, and dummy insertion in relation to code-mixing of Chhattisgarhi conversations.

Keywords: Alternation, Chhattisgarhi-English, code-mixing, peripheral switches.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This paper focuses on code-mixing and code-switching between Chhattisgarhi and English in relation to alternation. Alternation is one of the types of code-mixing. Several Chhattisgarhi conversations represent how Chhattisgarhi speakers mix several elements from other languages. Code-mixing usually occurs in bilingual or multilingual communities or societies in which the function (meaning) of the language cannot be clearly separated (Siregar *et al.*, 2016). Wardhaugh (2014) defined that code-mixing occurs when conversations use both languages together to the extent that they change from one language to the other in the course of a single utterance. Lee (2016) states that code-mixing, also known as *intra-sentential*, is the changes in languages occurring in the middle of a sentence. Muysken (2000) claimed that “all cases where lexical items and grammatical features from two languages appear in one sentence” are instances of code-mixing (p. 1).

Chhattisgarhi is a language spoken in the Chhattisgarh state of Central India. This language is one of the varieties of Hindi, and it is most closely related to the other languages of the Koshali group, such as Bagheli and Avadhi. It has five main dialects, namely Kedri, Utti, Khaltahi, Bhandar, and Rakshahun, varying by geographical division. This language has the SOV word order. This paper is broadly classified into two sections. Section I deals with the introduction of the paper, the topic, the Chhattisgarhi language, and the methodology adopted for the present study. Section II explores different types of alternation, such as non-nested switching, peripheral switches, adverb modifier, coordination, left-dislocation, right-dislocation, and emblematic or tag-switches; investigates further properties of code-mixing, and discuss the findings of our study.

II. CODE-MIXING AND CODE-SWITCHING

Meisel (1989) defined code-mixing as the fusion of two grammatical systems and code-switching as the pragmatic skill of selecting the language according to the interlocutor, topic context, and so on. Hudson (1996) states that code-mixing as a case “where a fluent bilingual talking to another fluent bilingual changes language without any change at all in the situation” (p. 53). He furthermore says, “To get the right effect, the speakers balance the two languages against each other as a kind of linguistic cocktail a few words of

one language, then a few words of the other, then back to the first for a few more words and so on (p. 53). Muysken (2000) defined three types of code-mixing: insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalization. Halmari (2004) defined code-mixing as “the process of mixing two or more languages within the same conversational episode” (p. 115). According to Ayoemoni (2006), code-mixing is the embedding of various linguistic units such as affixes (bound morphemes), words (unbound morphemes), phrases, and clauses from a cooperative activity, where the interlocutors must reconcile what they hear with what they understand to infer what is intended. Mukenge and Chimbarange (2012) refer to *code* as a variety of the same language and a whole system of a language. Waris (2012) claimed that code-switching occurrence is not limited to the social community as it also takes place in classrooms. Several scholars and linguists have described the concepts of code-switching and code-mixing (see Bokamba, 1988, 1989; Lee, 2016; Maschler, 1998; Meeuwis & Blommaert, 1998; Meisel, 1989; Muysken, 2000; Myers-Scotton, 1997, and others).

A. Alternation

Hymes (1974) defined code-switching as a common term for the alternative use of two or more languages, varieties of a language, or even speech styles. Clyne (1987) defined the term code-switching in the sense of the “alternative use of two languages either within a sentence or between sentences” (p. 739). Myers-Scotton (1993) argued that code-switching may be defined as the inter-sentential alternation of languages within a single utterance or speech turn. Muysken (2000) states that alternation occurs between structures from languages. Alternation is a very commonly observed phenomenon of code-mixing in Chhattisgarhi conversations. Chhattisgarhi is a matrix language, and the native speakers of Chhattisgarhi mostly speak the Chhattisgarhi language. They mix English words in their conversations depending on the situation. The term of alternation under the two languages is parallel, with respect to functional elements or involving mixing prepositions or conjunctions. The pattern of alternation found some diversity mixed of content words like nouns, adjectives occur to be insertion, and discourse participles and adverbs may be alternation (see Muysken, 2000).

“In this situation, a constituent from language A (with words from the same language) is followed by a constituent from language B (with words from that language). The language of constituent dominating A and B is unspecified.” (Muysken, 2000)

III. METHOD

In this study, the samples have been collected from Chhattisgarhi speakers of the Gaurella-Pendra-Marwahi (GPM) district, Chhattisgarh state, India. Through the interview method, we collected data from Chhattisgarhi speakers. The procedures began with meetings, interviews, and observations of Chhattisgarhi conversations from several situations. Since one of the researchers is also a native speaker of Chhattisgarhi, we collected data easily from the speakers. Some data was also used by the researcher for this study.

IV. TYPES OF ALTERNATION

There are different types of alternation code-mixing across several languages. In this section, we explore non-nested switching, peripherality, adverbial modification, coordination, left-dislocation, right-dislocation, and emblematic or tag-switches between Chhattisgarhi and English by adopting ideas from Muysken (2000).

A. Non-nested Switching

Muysken (2000) explained that non-nested switching is ABA sequences (where A and B refer to languages). This type is found in Chhattisgarhi and English. A sentence starts with Chhattisgarhi (A), then English (B), and again, the speaker uses (A) Chhattisgarhi in the conversations in the examples (1a-b) below:

- (1) a. *me a:pən pədha I ma abəð vjəst həv and this reason me tɔ:ɾsa:ə baɖa:r nə I a: səkət hən.*
I my study in very busy am and this reason my your with market no come-PRS can is.
Lit. I am very busy in my study and this reason, I cannot come market with you.
Since I am busy with my studies, I can't come with you.
- b. *je səma I I am so busy because mɔ:r pərɪfə ɖəlð a:və-t hən.*
This time I am so busy because my exam soon come PRS-PROG is
This time, I am so busy because my exam is coming soon)

These examples represent the non-nested type in which ABA sequences are found in Chhattisgarhi and English. This conversation took place among undergraduate students. English utterances are “*and this reason, I am so busy because*” from English (B) language, as shown in the examples above. Other features concern length and complexity. The more words a switched fragment contains, the more likely it is that it is alternation. From a psycholinguistic perspective, it is plausible that activation of a matrix language decreases as the number of words in the intrusive language is larger. Similarly, the more complex the structure a switched fragment contains, the more likely it is that it is a case of alternation rather than insertion (see Muysken, 2000).

- (2) a. Ze gaan dat arrangeren van binnen voor appartementen te doen *parce que c'est comment dirais-je c'est pas antique c'est classé*.
'They are going to arrange that inside to make apartments,/because it is, how shall I say it, it is not antique it's classified.'
(Traffer-Daller, 1994)
- b. *æ* apartments *bənəj uha bʰɪtər ke: vəjvəsəə bər ʈə-ʋt hən.*
they apartments make that inside DAT arrange for go-PRS-PROG are
because it is, how shall I say it, it is not antique it's classified.
'They are going to arrange that inside to make apartments, /because it is, how shall I say it, it is not antique it's classified.'

The fragments are full sentences as shown in (2a) *parce que c'est comment dirais-je c'est pas antique 'est classé* and (2b) *because it is, how shall I say it, it is not antique it's classified* from French and English, respectively. In these cases, it would be difficult to treat them like insertions or a case of congruent lexicalization.

B. Peripherality

1) Adverbial Modification

Treffers-Daller's study (1994) makes it apparent that many cases of mixing involve adverbial modification via the use of an alien adverb (3a) or an adverbial phrase (3b):

- (3) a. *En automatiquement* klapte gij ook schoon Vlaams.
'And/automatically/you would switch to standard Flemish.'
- b. Je suis au balcon *op mijn gemakske* zo en train de regarder les étoiles.
'I am on the balcony/at my ease thus/watching the stars.'
(Traffers-Daller, 1994)
- (4) a. *me ʈəʈə pe at my ease thus sɪtaro ko ʈəkʰ-ət həv.*
I balcony on am/ at ease thus/ stars ACC watch-PRS-PROG am
'I am on the balcony/at my ease thus/watching the stars.'
(Chhattisgarhi/English)
- b. **Automatically** *mɔ:r ka:r ʈəlʋ həv.*
automatically my car start PRS is
Automatically my car is start.
- c. *mɔ:r ga:dɪ ʈəlʋ ho: ʒa:t haɪ automatically.*
(English/Chhattisgarhi)

The above examples represent adverbial modification. Examples (4a) and (4b) are from Chhattisgarhi, in which English adverbs are mixed in conversations. In these sentences, adverbs are preferably used in front or central positions, which are acceptable, as shown in (4a) and (4b), whereas (4c) is unacceptable. The reason would be Chhattisgarhi speakers don't use such constructions if an adverb occurs at the end of a sentence, as in (4c).

2) Coordination

The second type of peripheral alternation is coordination, which can be either phrasal or clausal.

- (5) a. Nous on parle français le flamand *en de hele boel*.
'We speak French, Flemish/and all the rest.'
- b. Nadine est née au mois d'avril *en dan in de maand oktober heb ik een winkel opengedaan in ...*
'Nadine was born in April/and then in October I opened a shop in ...'
(Traffers-Daller, 1994)
- (6) a. *həmən bɔ:l-əo French, Flemish and all the rest.*
We speak-PRS French, Flemish and all the rest
'We speak French, Flemish/and all the rest.'
- b. *Nadine ke ɸənm april ma hu ɪs and then in October I opened a shop in.*
Nadine GEN born april in was and then in October I opened a shop in
'Nadine was born in April/and then in October I opened a shop in...'
(Chhattisgarhi/English)

Muysken (2000) cited the examples (5a-b) while explaining coordination. Examples (6a-b) are from Chhattisgarhi conversations. This coordination peripheral alternation can be either phrasal (5a or 6a) or clausal (5b or 6b). Nortier (1990, as cited in Muysken, 2000) gave examples of Arabic conjunctions that occur in Dutch sentences (7a-d):

- (7) a. *Walakin* 'but'
b. *9la-heqq-as* 'because'
c. *Wella* 'or'
d. *Be-l-heqq* 'but'
(Nortier, 1990, as cited in Muysken, 2000)

Similarly, it is found in Chhattisgarhi conversations where English conjunctions occur in mixing the languages. Consider the examples from Chhattisgarhi/English mixing:

- (8) a. *me a:pən pə:ɽa ɪ ma: abəð vjəst həv but I have to go to market.*
I our study in very busy am **but I have to go to market.**
'I am very busy with my studies but I have to go to market.'
- b. *me pər ɪfɽa de bər Raipur ɸə-əo and ɔha se kufɽv kita:be kʰarið-hu.*
I exam give for Raipur go-PRS and there ABL some books buy-FUT
'I go to Raipur to give an exam and I will buy some books from there.'

In Chhattisgarhi conversations, conjunctions are found in English. Initially, the sentences start with Chhattisgarhi, an English conjunction used, and then end with Chhattisgarhi as in (8a-b).

3) Left-dislocation

In left-dislocation, the fronted switched elements are found, which can be referred to again in the rest of the clause.

- (9) a. *Les étrangers, ze hebben geen geld, hè?*
'The foreigners,/they have no money, huhm?'
(Traffers-Daller, 1994)
- b. **The foreigners**, ɒe logən ke pɑ:s paɪsa nəɪ həvə. (English/Chhattisgarhi)
the foreigners, they people GEN have money no is
'The foreigners have no money.'

This is possible in Chhattisgarhi and English code-mixing, where fronted elements are switched. The given sentences are good examples of these cases, as in *ze* 'they' in (9a) and *ɒe* 'they' in (9b).

4) Right-dislocation

In right-dislocation, the switched elements that are anticipated in the previous clauses refer back to the elements. Traffers-Daller (1994, as cited in Muysken, 2000) discussed the examples from Dutch and French. There are two switched right-dislocated elements, *Tino Rossi* and *moi* 'me', that are anticipated in

the main clause with *ik* ‘I’ and *daarvan* ‘of him’ as in example (10a). The postposed subject is anticipated by *d’r* ‘there’ as in (10b).

- (10) a. Ik moet daarvan niet hebben, *de Tino Rossi, moi*.
‘I don’t like him, /Tino Rossi, myself.’

- b. D’r zit me hier *une fem m e qui n ’est pas drôle*.
‘Here there is/a woman who is not funny.’
(Traffers-Daller, 1994)

- (11) a. *me ola pəsənð nɪ kər-əo, that girl*.
I her like not do-PRS that girl.
‘I don’t like her, that girl.’

(Chhattisgarhi/English)

- b. *uha həvə a woman who is not funny*.
there is a woman who is not funny
‘There is/a women who is not funny.’

(Chhattisgarhi/English)

In Chhattisgarhi conversations, speakers mix English words, phrases, clauses, or sentences depending on the situation. The examples (11a-b) can be interpreted as cases of right dislocation. There is a switched right-dislocated element in (11a), *that girl* that is anticipated in the main clause with *ola*. Similarly, *a woman who is not funny* is *uha*, as in (11b).

C. Emblematic or Tag-switches

This type of switching is called tag-switching or extra-sentential or emblematic switching (see Poplack, 1980). It is often found in code-mixing that certain tags are mixed in a conversation from another language. It is the same case with interjections also. Examples are from French-Dutch mixing.

- (12) a. Aller a l’hospital *toch niet?*
‘Going to the hospital,/ you don’t mean?’

(Treffers-Daller, 1994)

- b. *tɔːɾbʰaɪ paːɪse kəmæ bər Delhi ɖə-vət hən, don’t you?*
Your brother money earn for Delhi go-PRS-PROG is don’t you
‘Your brother is going Delhi earn for money don’t you?’

(Chhattisgarhi/English)

- c. **Don’t you, tɔːɾbʰaɪ paɪse kəmæ bər Delhi ɖəj vale həje.*
don’t you, Your brother money earn for delhi go-PRS-PROG is
‘Lit: Your brother is going to Delhi, earn for money, don’t you?’

These examples have tags that are switched to another language. The examples (12b-c) are from the Chhattisgarhi corpus, which consists of tags from English. Tag-switching is preferred more at the end of the sentence in Chhattisgarhi conversations, as in (12b). In case its occurrence is in the front position of the sentence, it is not acceptable by Chhattisgarhi speakers.

- (13) a. *Well done! te bəhʊt aʃʌn kam kər-ən.*
well done you very good work do-PST
‘Well done! you did work very good.’

- b. *Excellent! te suɖʰər ʃɪtr-kaːrɪ bəna-ən.*
excellent you beautiful drawing make-PST
‘Excellent, you made the beautiful drawing.’

- c. *Well done! te məhan həvə.*
well done you are super
‘Well done! You are super.’

(English/Chhattisgarhi)

We can also find interjections in Chhattisgarhi-English code-mixing, as shown in the examples above. Here, “*Well done!*” and “*Excellent!*” are the interjections from English and used in Chhattisgarhi conversations as in (13a-c).

V. FURTHER PROPERTIES OF ALTERNATION CODE-MIXING

A. Embedding in Discourse

This type of code-mixing is one of the properties of code-mixing. In this embedding discourse, a mixed clause starts in language A and ends in language B (see Muysken, 2000).

- (14) a. *həmre pa:s abəð contact.*
we have more contacts.
‘We have more contacts.’

(Chhattisgarhi/English)

- b. ***There is no point*** *həmər fərfa kər-en bər jen vɪfaɪ.*
there is no point we discussion do-PST for this topic
‘There is no point in discussing this topic.’

(English/Chhattisgarhi)

In this Chhattisgarhi utterance (14a), *contact* is inserted, and it doesn’t inflect for the plural marker as in English. In (14b), a clause is in English, and another clause is in Chhattisgarhi. This is possible in many Chhattisgarhi utterances where the speakers mix two languages frequently.

B. Doubling

Treffers-Daller (1994) states there is no case of true doubling between French and Dutch because of typological similarities. Nishimura (1986, as cited in Muysken, 2000) mentions a number of interesting cases of doubling in Japanese/English code-mixing data. Consider below examples:

- (15) a. about two pounds *gurai*
about
‘about two pounds’
b. for Sean *ni*
for
‘for Sean’

(Japanese/English; Nishimura, 1986)

In examples (15a-b), the construction starts out in English and turns into Japanese. The reverse order is not possible in these cases. Let us see the Chhattisgarhi utterances.

- (16) a. ***About two kg*** *bəre ma*
about
‘About two kilograms’
b. ***For him*** *ke lɪje*
for
‘for him’

(English/Chhattisgarhi)

- c. * *ke lɪje* ***for him***

- d. * *bəre ma* ***about two kg***

(Chhattisgarhi/ English)

English has an SVO word order, whereas Chhattisgarhi has an SOV word order. These Chhattisgarhi utterances show how speakers use doubling in their code-mixing process. They start with English and end with Chhattisgarhi in these examples (16a-b). It is not acceptable if the order is reversed as in (16c-d).

C. Flagging and Dummy Insertion

Flagging and dummy insertion are properties of code-mixing in which dummy elements are inserted in

the utterances. In French/English code-mixing, flagging was analysed as a major strategy by Poplack (1985, as cited in Muysken, 2000). Consider the examples from Finnish/English (Halmari, 1993) and Chhattisgarhi/English.

- (17) a. Siella oli semmonen river.
there was such river
'There was a river'.
(Finnish/English; Halmari, 1993)
- b. cha *ɕ* ɪsən river rəhen.
there such river was
'There was such river'.
(Chhattisgarhi/English)

In the examples (17a-b), empty Finnish and Chhattisgarhi nominal dummy determiners, such as *semmonen* 'such' and *ɕ ɪsən* 'such', were used, respectively.

In this study, we have seen how Chhattisgarhi speakers mix English words in their conversations. Alternation in code-mixing has been widely discussed in relation to Chhattisgarhi and English code-mixing. We have explored various aspects of the process of alternation by adopting ideas from Muysken (2000). Alternation is a form of mixing in which Chhattisgarhi and English remain relatively separate. Several types of alternation code-mixing have been investigated in relation to Chhattisgarhi and English. However, certain patterns are restricted to use while mixing these two languages, as mentioned earlier.

VI. CONCLUSION

Chhattisgarhi speakers switch languages or varieties altogether in their day-to-day conversations, especially among students. The alternation of code-mixing is a common strategy among Chhattisgarhi speakers for communication. Adopting ideas from Muysken (2000), we explored several types of alternation code-mixing in relation to Chhattisgarhi and English. The types of alternation have been examined in these two languages, such as non-nested switching, peripherality, adverbial modification, coordination, left-dislocation, right-dislocation, and emblematic or tag-switches. This study also further explored the properties of code-mixing, such as embedding in discourse, doubling, flagging, and dummy insertion. In Chhattisgarhi, some structures or patterns are not acceptable in conversations while mixing these two languages. However, this study examined certain constraints that are found in the mixing of Chhattisgarhi and English from the Chhattisgarhi corpus.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they do not have any conflict of interest.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABL: ablative
DAT: dative
FUT: future
GEN: genitive
PROG: progressive
PRS: present
PST: past.



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