
Code Switching and Code Mixing in Pakistani Primetime Television Shows

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Abstract

This study investigates code-switching (CS) and code-mixing (CM) in the Pakistani prime-time television (TV) shows. The research seeks to uncover the circumstances and motivations behind these linguistic phenomena, as well as to examine their social, cultural, and communicative functions. The design of this study was qualitative in nature. A purposive sampling technique was used to collect data from YouTube. Three shows selected for the study were: ARY News' *Hoshyarian Eid Special* by Haroon Rafiq, Geo News' *Hasna Mana Hai* by Tabish Hashmi, and SAMAA News' *Gup Shab* with Vasay Chaudhry. The study identified patterns and sociolinguistic impact of code switching and code mixing in Pakistani prime-time TV shows. It identifies that code alternation serves purposes like humor, audience engagement, and identity signaling, with English symbolizing modernity and socioeconomic status, while Urdu remains the dominant language.

Keywords: Sociolinguistics, Code Switching, Code Mixing, Prime-Time TV Shows

Introduction

Language is not merely a tool of communication but a sign of identity, culture, and social relationships. In multilingual communities, speakers tend to switch between several languages or dialects during one communicative episode, which is normally called 'code-switching' and 'code-mixing'. Such linguistic practices become more and more common in mass media, especially on TV shows, that reflect and enhance the sociolinguistic practice of a particular community. Code-switching is the switching between two or more languages or varieties of language within one utterance or conversation (Gumperz, 1982). Code-mixing generally entails the combination of linguistic items like phrases, clauses, or even isolated lexical items from multiple languages within a sentence (Muysken, 2000). Although the two terms are usually indistinguishable, the words highlight somewhat differing features of language contact and use.

As a global language, English functions as a lingua franca in countries where it is not the primary language (Shooshtari & Allahbakhsh, 2013) while also expanding the vocabulary of various languages spoken across the globe. English, regarded as a "donor language" (Riaz & Khan, 2013, p. 46), and scientific language and technology, being an "essential component of advertising communication" (Zhiganova, 2016, 226), have affected the vocabulary of different languages. Individuals use English phrases not just out of necessity but also because of the eagerness and aspiration to connect with the upper and learned classes. This effect has resulted in a global linguistic variation on a massive scale. This change can clearly be seen in the shape of language blending and language alternation. Regarding the Urdu language, Ehsan and Aziz (2014) observed that "numerous English words are recognized and utilized by individuals who have never formally learnt the

language.

Television, being a strong mass communication and cultural expression medium, is a fertile ground for studying these phenomena. It reflects the linguistic behaviour of multicultural groups and tends to exaggerate it for the purpose of drama or humour (Gardner-Chloros, 2009). For instance, television drama series from bilingual or multilingual societies, like Indian, Malaysian, or American Latino comedies, will often include characters that easily code-switch between languages as they portray their sociocultural background and identity (Bhatt, 2008).

Scholars have long recognized the value of code-switching and code-mixing in the media as ways of building social meaning, controlling interpersonal relationships, and marking group affiliation (Auer, 1998; Myers-Scotton, 1993). In television discourse, these techniques can also be used for narrative purposes—adding humour, marking emotional strength, or distinguishing characters. For example, in American television series such as *Jane the Virgin* or *One Day at a Time*, the English-Spanish interaction is not only a reflection of the characters' background but also a narrative tool that calls attention to bicultural tensions and unity (Lo, 2009). From a sociolinguistic perspective, the existence of code-switching and code-mixing in television series can also counter language ideologies by making multilingual speech the norm. Researchers believe that the representation helps create the audience's notion of linguistic diversity and can affect attitudes toward minority languages as well as those who speak them (Croteau & Hoynes, 2019).

There are different ways in which individuals perceive and engage with television. Some perceive it as the physical box from which they play and enjoy games, watch DVDs, or stream broadcasts. Others think of television in terms of programmes they follow or the environment created when the TV is on. More than merely a technology or content source, however, television is influenced by the schedule of the programmes. Across over 60 years, established viewing habits have evolved, including morning shows for home-based audiences and prime-time programmes for families and adults. Evening "prime time" provides programmes to an extended family audience in early hours and gradually builds up a more mature emphasis through the night. Specific characteristics of television, like the rhythms of the daily routine and the phenomenon of anticipation of something's being "on", also uniquely describe our experience with the medium. (Lotz, 2022) This study intends to investigate how code-switching and code-mixing are employed in television programmes, especially their linguistic, cultural, and narrative purposes. Through the examination of specific examples from chosen TV programmes, this study hopes to add to the existing literature that acknowledges television as an important site for sociolinguistic research.

Statement of Problem

Code switching and code mixing are linguistic phenomena observed in multilingual settings. These phenomena are extensively studied in media, especially TV commercials and advertisements (Imran and Hussain, 2024; Gohar et al., 2020; Hayat, 2019; Khan, 2014; Mushtaq and Zahra, 2012). Research on billboard advertisements has also been conducted (Habib, Khokhar, and Mustafa, 2025). However, no study has been done on code-switching and code-mixing in Pakistani prime-time TV shows to check their sociolinguistic impact. Therefore, this study focuses on identifying code-switching and code-mixing in prime-time TV shows in Pakistan.

Research Objectives

- To identify patterns of code-switching and code-mixing in Pakistani primetime TV shows.
- To explore the sociolinguistic impact of using code mixing and code switching.

Research Questions

1. What are the patterns of code-switching and code-mixing in Pakistani primetime TV shows?
2. What is the sociolinguistic impact of code-switching and code-mixing?

Literature Review

English, as a global language, has influenced all the languages spoken worldwide. This effect has resulted in a significant global variation in languages. This difference can be clearly seen in the shape of code-switching and code-mixing. The research examines and assesses the occurrence of code-mixing in television advertisements aired in Pakistan to assess the extent of changes that occurred in Urdu because of English. Seventy advertisements aired between 2011 and 2015 have been randomly chosen, and the occurrence of English words has been verified. The findings indicate that regarding the language used in advertisements, Urdu has evidently been affected by English for various reasons, including style, simplicity, technology improvements, etc. (Riaz, M. 2019)

'Code switching' means the change from one language to the other or the use of two or more languages in conversations or writings. The current research addresses intra-sentential (within a sentence) code switching in the television advertisements' language. For the purpose of socio-linguistic analysis, 12 beauty and health care product advertisements have been taped and transcribed from four television channels. Linguistic analysis centers on the social dimension (gender, geographical origin, socioeconomic class, and education) of code-switched language in these ads. Based on the analysis and findings, it is concluded that the language of ads for beauty and health care products shows a shift in language practice and preference among Pakistani consumers. (Khan, A. M. 2014).

Mushtaq, H., & Zahra, T. (2012) examined the frequency and significance of code-mixing in different advertisements that are broadcast on widely viewed channels of Pakistan. Quantitative data for this research was collected from three Pakistani channels: Geo TV, ARY Digital and Hum TV. The data was recorded over a period of three days. The information was initially captured from the channels and subsequently analyzed in order to ascertain the degree of code-mixing in the commercials; subsequently, a questionnaire was formulated and then administered to a sample of thirty students, and the information thus was analyzed in order to ascertain the effect of code-mixing on the audience of television commercials. The population chosen for this study was one hundred and thirteen students from the undergraduate programmes of the English and Mass Communication departments of Foundation University, whereas the sample comprised thirty students. The sample was chosen by convenience sampling. After comparing the questionnaire and audience's response, it was determined that code-mixing is common in advertisements to a large degree, and it makes a very strong impression on the audience and has the function of effective communication. The findings indicate that code-mixing is being embraced by the young people as a significant element in linguistic communication. This research has a very crucial function in a society like ours, which is populated with people from different regions, who usually speak a number of languages, and where code hybridization is a widespread phenomenon.

English is among the most widely spoken languages globally, not solely because of its native speakers, but also because numerous others study it as a foreign language. Consequently, it has influenced a majority of the languages used globally. Code-mixing is widely employed in the contemporary multilingual and bilingual landscape, and its effects are evident in the media sector as well. The media sector employs this occurrence to seize audience participation. Hayat, S. (2019) explored the degree to which code-mixing is utilized in advertisements from private channels. In this case study, a qualitative research technique has been utilized. Twenty broadcast advertisements have been chosen from three popular Pakistani channels: Geo TV, ARY Digital, and Hum TV from March 2019 up to August 2019, and the utilization of English terms in place of Urdu has been examined. A group of 50 participants gathered to assess the impact of code-mixing through a survey questionnaire. The gathered information indicated that code-mixing is widespread in all the advertisements even though many of the terms used have corresponding ones. The study aims to raise awareness among content writers regarding their use of code-mixing and assists policymakers in creating a language strategy regulation for television commercials since they are seen globally.

Imran, A., & Hussain, M. S. (2024) examined and dissected the degree of code-mixing and code-switching

applications in different Pakistani TV commercials. The frame of sampling was defined from the TV commercials aired on commonly viewed channels like PTV, ARY Digital, HUM TV, and GEO TV. It seeks to track the implications of this intriguing and rapidly growing phenomenon for English as a second language (ESL) learners. This scrutiny has employed a two-tiered descriptive, chronological quantitative research design. Thirty-two commercials, broadcast between 2000 and 2023, were chosen in the first; the data were transcribed and analyzed to ascertain the frequency of code-mixing and code-switching in commercial uses. In the second tier, a questionnaire was administered to 120 students and analyzed to determine the effect of codemixing/code-switching on ESL learners. The sample population was chosen from Punjab University, GC Women University Sialkot, and Government Murray College. The findings of the study show different kinds of code-mixing and code-switching occur frequently in commercials. English has impacted Urdu due to a number of reasons, which are fashion, convenience, and technological advancement. Commercials are created artistically and strategically for a planned and unusual effect on the audience. Apart from captivating them, it also influences their language behaviors, preferences and variation styles.

Habib, H., Khokhar, S. F., & Mustafa, A. (2025) examined the sociolinguistic phenomenon of code-switching in billboard advertisements in Pakistan. The written messages in billboard advertisements are typically crafted with great care; however, there are instances where messages are employed without regard for the character of the ad. The aim of the research is to determine the primary language used in billboards and the linguistic categories that are most frequently utilized for code-switching. Forty-one billboards are analyzed, of which 20 are noted for code-switching and are subsequently examined for linguistic evaluation. The qualitative approach is utilized, and a descriptive method is employed for analyzing the text of billboard advertisements. The study's results show the superiority and widespread use of the English language compared to the Urdu language in billboard ads. Nearly 50% of the billboards employed code-switching, incorporating English within the Urdu language to create engaging and attractive slogans. It is advised that researchers examine how code-switching in advertising affects young people and their everyday language use.

Gohar, S., Ashraf, S., Sarfraz, S., Nazir, S., & Javaid, H. (2020) discovered the impact of code-switching in advertisements, its impact on the psyche of a viewer and its impact on the market. Talking of advertisements in particular, code switching has made an immense impact. It has become a necessary part of good TV commercials. We are part of an era that is banking on technology; on a daily basis, new items are launched in the market. As a matter of fact, it is not possible for one individual to know about each item. Manufacturers use the services of advertisements for the promotion of their day-to-day use items. Ads are designed in such a way that the audience gets psychologically compelled to purchase the items.

To sum up, existing research has mostly focused on code mixing and switching in specific media genres, such as TV or billboard advertising. Despite the increasing importance of media in determining language use and cultural representation, there is a need for research on code mixing and switching in talk shows that are more rapid and kind of neutral as compared to fully scripted advertisements to identify the sociolinguistic impact of code mixing and switching. Therefore, more nuanced and context-dependent research is required to investigate the intricacies of code mixing and switching in prime-time TV shows. This study will address this gap, aiming to analyze the use of code switching and code mixing in Pakistanis' prime-time TV shows.

Theoretical Framework

This research is based on the theoretical viewpoints of sociolinguistics and discourse analysis, specifically emphasizing the frameworks established by Gumperz (1982), Myers-Scotton (1993), and Muysken (2000) to elucidate the occurrences of code-switching and code-mixing. These theories establish the basis for comprehending how language selection operates as a social and communicative instrument in multilingual settings. Gumperz's (1982) interactional sociolinguistics highlights the importance of contextualization cues in code-switching, indicating that language switching is not random but closely linked to the speaker's purpose and the social significance expressed in interaction. His theory aids in understanding how multilingual

characters in TV shows employ various languages to indicate changes in topic, emotion, or power dynamics.

Methodology

This research employs a qualitative descriptive design based on sociolinguistic theory and discourse analysis. Because of the emphasis on language use in narrative settings, a qualitative method is appropriate to investigate the subtle and socially embedded code-switching and code-mixing practices of TV shows. The purpose is not only to examine the structural characteristics of these linguistic behaviours but also their pragmatic roles and sociocultural consequences as represented in scripted dialogue. The sample data for this research was taken from a purposive sample of modern television programmes that have been noted for the use of multilingual content. Three shows were selected for the study. One show is selected from Ary News named *Hoshyarian Eid Special* by Haroon Rafiq, retrieved from YouTube on 9th June 2025. The second show was selected from Geo News and named *Hasna Mana Hai* by Tabish Hashmi. In addition, the third show was selected from SAMAA TV and named *Gup Shab with Vasay Chaudhry*. It aims to identify patterns and sociolinguistic impact of code switching and code mixing in Pakistani prime-time TV shows. The criteria for selection are the regular incidence of code-switching and/or code-mixing, ethnically diverse characters, and pertinence to bilingual or multilingual populations. The process of data collection involved transcribing some of the episodes, with attention given particularly to where two or more languages appear within or between utterances. Episodes watched critically to look for patterns of code-switching and code-mixing. Voice tones were taken into account since they usually give significant contextual information for the interpretation of the function of code-switching and code-mixing.

Analysis and Discussion

The present study investigated code-switching and code-mixing in three of the most watched Pakistani TV shows and the identification of regular patterns of language blending and their implications for a sociolinguistic context. The results indicate that bilingual alternation in television language is not haphazard but the product of a sociocultural alignment, identity negotiation, and pragmatic function, as hypothesized by theoretical models developed by Auer (2013) and Gumperz (1982).

Table 1: *Ary News' Hoshyarian Eid special by Haroon Rafiq*

Sr. No.	Examples	Translations
1.	Mukhtalif culture dikhain	Show different cultures.
2.	Hum unkay fans mein say hain	We are from their fans.
3.	Hoshyarian family house mein apka welcome	You are welcome in Hoshyarian family house.
4.	Pakistan mein ye Unique show hai	This is unique show in Pakistan.
5.	Best of bakwas lag reiya ayy!	You are looking very cheap.
6.	Tusi aida e advaance book kara liya ayy	You have made such an advanced booking.
7.	Ab aik dhol performance hojay	Let's have a dhol performance.
8.	Aap kis liyay late hogay	Why are you late?
9.	Thank you for the compliment, shukriya	Thank you for the compliment , Thank you.

Table 1 reflects the typical language practice in Pakistani media mixing Urdu, Punjabi, and English for humour, relatability, and dramatic license. In code-mixing, we can observe sentences such as *Pakistan mein ye unique show hai* or *Tusi aida e advance book kara liya ayy*, where English words such as "unique" or "advance book" are inserted within otherwise Urdu or Punjabi sentences. Code-switching, however, happens when the speaker switches from one language to another in the middle of a sentence or from sentence to sentence, such as, *thank you for the compliment, shukriya*, which starts in English and concludes in Urdu. The language is more popular in urban comedy shows of Pakistan designed for young or middle-aged audiences, as they are the ones who speak such a form. The content combines issues like social and cultural commentaries and functions like demystifying social satire through funny family gatherings; thus, one is likely to think along the lines of shows like *Khabarnaak*, *Hasb-e-Haal* (both) or YouTube-style sketch comedy channels. Phrases such as *Best of bakwas lag reiya ayy!* or *Mein recording kar reiyen aan!* which are informal and quite humorous further support that this is a comic programme possibly incorporating parody and prank segments. In its entirety, the mixing of languages does not only reflect the linguistic currents of contemporary Pakistan but also serves to enrich comedy timings as well as draw audiences into multimedia narrative structures.

Table 2: *Geo News' Hasna Mana Hai by Tabish Hashmi*

Sr. No.	Examples	Translations
1.	Industry k boht hi famous adaqar	Most famous actor from industry.
2.	Apnay unconventional role ki wajah say	For his unconventional role.
3.	Aap ki acting skills boht achi hai ma sha Allah	Your acting skills are so good Ma Sha Allah.
4.	Aap canal mein nahaty to nahi hai?	Do you take bath in canal?
5.	Thank you! Apka boht interesting profession hai	Thank you! Your profession is so interesting.
6.	Hamary pass mostly bachy slum areas say hai	Mostly, we have children from slum areas.
7.	Mein kahani khud create karlaita hu	I create story by myself
8.	Recently mein nay apka play daikha hai	Recently I have watched your play.
9.	Apko repeat karna hai mery peechy	You have to repeat after me
10.	Mein nay aaty hi search ki thi deep shairi	I searched deep poetry as soon as I entered.

Table 2 reflects some utterances from *Hasna Mana Hai* a satirical talk show presented by Tabish Hashmi on Geo News. The show has become extremely popular because of its thought-provoking but humorous format, informal tone, and the presenter's smooth command over language. One of the most evident and defining features of the show is the repeated use of code-mixing and code-switching, where Urdu, English, and occasionally Punjabi, are mixed and matched effortlessly in conversations. This type of language not only portrays the manner in which contemporary, urban Pakistanis tend to speak naturally but also adds to the humor, realness, and appeal to a broad audience of the show. For example, in phrases such as *Aap ki acting skills boht achi hai, ma sha Allah* or *Ye skills important hoti hai acting k liyay*, we notice English words like *skills* and *acting* blended well with Urdu grammar and structure. This type of sentence structure approximates actual Pakistani speech, particularly among the educated or urban population who deal with both languages on a daily basis in office and social environments.

Hashmi does this magically with a bilingual approach, making a studio or the set very chatty and friendly to

work on. He moves in between languages in a way that it is clear which topic or tone at the moment you are addressing, translating your admiration into Urdu if necessary and English back if he has to be humorous, for example, *Recently mein nay apka play daikha hai* caught my eye, while as *Aap canal mein nahaty to nahi hai?* took me by surprise, as it was an amusing question, only funnier still for the manner in which it got delivered, but also managed to keep his guest engaged and the audience entertained. These strands draw humour not just from what they say but how they are said – through an artful interweaving of languages that heightens their comedic timing.

The segments of the show usually include improvisation and light playfulness, as cues such as *Apko repeat karna hai mery peechy* or *Mein kahani khud create karlaita hu* are used for audience games, acting tasks, or fabricated narratives. The instances reflect the way the mixed language makes the conversation flow rhythmically and engagingly. The structure comes across as informal and unstructured but retains good organization by repeatedly coming back to the guest's professional or personal life. Even when the matter under discussion is grave, such as *Hamary pass mostly bachy slum areas say hai* or *Unka character kabi replicate nahi hua*, the code-mixing persists, attenuating the tone without diluting the emotional impact of the communication. This loose-with-language ability enables the show to shift between humour and seriousness with equal ease.

The show culturally targets a wide range of audiences by not using formal language or slang in an exaggerated manner. In between pure sophistication and a completely casual attitude, one finds its essence, as it features both common and classy elements to enable celebrities from various cultural heritages to represent themselves well. Conversely, English phrases are often used to convey professionalism or modernity; on the other hand, Urdu and Punjabi preserve the colloquial nature of the exchange. Also, informal religious expressions like *'ma sha Allah* or cultural references in Urdu will keep a diverse Pakistani audience engaged, hence transmitting the message that the programme does not dilute authenticity when the producer is trying out a multilingual approach. Besides being an effective tool for breaking stereotypes, smartly written lines can also be used for parodying celebrity culture and encouraging participants and their hosts/shows' fans to feel kinship during the performance of those manufactured situations that are marked with amusing rather than harmful content.

Table 3: SAMAA News' GupShab with Vasay Chaudhry

Sr. No.	Examples	Translations
1.	I love you sir Eid mubarak	I love you sir Eid Mubarak.
2.	Eidi dain ye Eid ka tradition hai	Give Eidi its Eid tradition .
3.	Travelling boht karni parhti hai	There is a lot of travelling.
4.	Mein bari hokay movie star banoo gi	I will be movie star when I grow up.
5.	Asli reason kya hai	What is the original reason ?
6.	Kya aap real life mein b itny inocent hai	Are you innocent in real life too?
7.	Kya app unhain apna lucky charm samajhty hai	Do you considered him your lucky charm?
8.	Oyy menu laggi tasveer lagi ayy	Oh!I thought it's a picture.
9.	Thank you sir, Eid Mubarak	Thank you sir, Eid Mubarak.
10.	Thank you sir, Happy Eid	Thank you sir , Happy Eid.

Table 3 presents data from *Gup Shup* with Vasay Chaudhry aired on SAMAA channel. The exchanges of the

show are combinations of Urdu, Punjabi, and English. They capture the casual, tongue-in-cheek tone of the programme. For instance, such lines as '*Eidi dain ye Eid ka tradition hai* followed instantaneously by their English counterpart Give Eidi! Eid tradition demonstrates not only bilingual proficiency but also a comic redundancy to drive the point home. It is not translation; it is a play with words for rhythm and response. In the same vein, *Na menu koi eidi dainda ay na film* combines Punjabi and English to present a punchline that is personal, universal, and infused with self-deprecating humour.

One of the show's strengths is the host's skill at making the guests feel comfortable while playfully nudging them. Phrases such as *I love you sir, Eid Mubarak* employ fake sincerity for the sake of humor, creating hyperbole in one's affection to make the guest and audience laugh. *Travelling boht karni parhti hai* is spoken in such a manner that it comes across as mere grumbling. These aspects point out how the series accommodates linguistic playfulness as a comedy device.

The show culturally targets a wide range of audiences by not using formal language or slang in an exaggerated manner. In between pure sophistication and a completely casual attitude, you find its essence, as it features both common and classy elements to enable celebrities from various cultural heritages to represent themselves well. Conversely, English phrases are often used to convey professionalism or modernity; on the other hand, Urdu and Punjabi preserve the colloquial nature of the exchange. Also, informal religious expressions like *ma sha Allah* or cultural references in Urdu will keep a diverse Pakistani audience engaged, hence transmitting the message that the programme does not dilute authenticity when the producer is trying out a multilingual approach. Besides being an effective tool for breaking stereotypes, smartly written lines can also be used for parodying celebrity culture and encouraging participants and their hosts/shows' fans feel kinship during the performance of those manufactured situations that are marked with amusing rather than harmful content.

Kya aap real life mein bhi itne innocent hain? And other commonplace relationship and business questions are also played with in the show. Furthermore, expressions like "lucky charm" and "positive vibes" are clearly copied from English, indicating how frequently they are used in conversational Urdu, particularly when discussing ethereal ideas or feelings. *Eid mubarak, Thank you sir, Eid mubarak, and Happy Eid* are examples of how the hosts and guests alternate between Urdu and English depending on the situation, level of formality, or emphasis. In addition to giving the interaction warmth and genuineness, this bilingual approach captures the essence of urban Pakistani speakers who easily switch between languages to express respect, humor, or tone. This linguistic interaction further enhances the conversation's casual and welcoming register, giving the Eid greetings a sincere and culturally authentic vibe. All things considered, the conversation serves as an example of how code-switching and code-mixing function as instruments of social interaction and expression. On the whole, the conversation demonstrates how code-switching and code-mixing serve as mechanisms of social bonding and expression in Pakistani talk shows, acting as a bridge between the old values and contemporary modes of communication.

The results reported concurrent patterns of intra-sentential CM and inter-sentential CS. For instance, *Pakistan mein ye unique hai, Welcome back nazreen, industry k boht hi famous adaqar, app ki acting skills boht achi hai na sha Allah, hamary pass mostly bachy slum areas say hai, I love you sir, Eid mubarak* etc. This intra-sentential code-mixing example is a case of Muysken's (2000) insertion model, in which an English noun phrase ("important meeting") is inserted into an Urdu syntactic structure. Insertions of this type were routinely present in middle-class urban speakers' talk on modernity, education, and prestige scenes, a trend also reported by Riaz (2019) and Khan (2014) in advertisement talk.

In the TV shows, alternational code-switching was more natural. One of the characters remarked: *Thank you sir, eid Mubarak. Thank you sir, Happy Eid.*

The shift here is a shift in tone, in emotion. In the view of Gumperz (1982), this code-switching in discourse is a contextualization.

We also witnessed the use of tag-switching across the shows (e.g., *I see, exactly!*), which confirms what Gardner-Chloros (2009) states in the article: bilinguals frequently use minor, functional L2 expressions to

keep the conversation flowing as well as add some emphasis. Such patterns confirm the interactional model applied by Auer (2013); code-switching is a resource in the area of meaning created in the process of spoken interaction.

Language alternation is not only stylistically driven but also has a purpose at the discourse level, such as in trying to emphasize, be humorous, be ironic or include / exclude interacting parties. Moreover, these shows have a great sociolinguistic implication of code switching/mixing. The first direct effect is on the popularization of English-Urdu bilinguals. Then on English-Punjabi. The ease at which the TV characters use lexical items of the English language in the Urdu and Punjabi predominant discourse is an indication of a larger social phenomenon in which bilingual competency is a known and promising mobility, urbanity, and internationality of life in the modern world. Imran and Hussain (2024) state that constant exposure to code-mixed tongues on the screen develops a close linguistic nature in the observers, specifically in ESL students. Similarly, English language use as an elite language also shapes media discourse. Habib et al. (2025), in their results, should be interpreted by the means that English code-switching in the billboard advertising builds on the dominance of English as an elite language at the expense of the regional languages, thus expanding linguistic stratification.

Also, this type of code-switching under the influence of the media can subconsciously give linguistic insecurity to the speakers who do not possess English competency (Hayat, 2019). There were certain favourable sociolinguistic results. When using English in Urdu, TV shows were one genre where insertion of English into Urdu and somewhat into Punjabi was difficult to avoid in order to aid comprehension by generations or code-blending as a common cultural resource. For instance:

Hamari pass mostly bachy slum areas say hai. Mostly, we have children from slum areas.

Thank you, apka boht interesting profession hai. Thank you! Your profession is so interesting.

Best of bakwas lag reiyen ayy. You are looking very cheap.

This indicates how the multilingual expression can increase expressive resonance and offer speakers more communicative versatility, as it has been suggested by Gardner-Chloros (2009), who observed that code switching commonly reflects linguistic creativity and social responsiveness.

Conclusion

This research examines code-switching and code-mixing in Pakistani prime-time TV shows, examining how language usage is a reflection of social, cultural, and communicative dynamics. The examination finds that code alternation is used strategically to perform a range of functions, discursive practices, creating humour and laughter, engaging the audience and identity functions. English is utilized to signal modernity, education, and socioeconomic status, with Urdu being the prominent language. The research discovers that code-switching functions as a strong communicative device, enabling the speakers to shift registers between formal and informal, convey emotions, and generate humour. The extensive use of code-mixed language on TV is a factor in the normalization of bilingualism, especially among youth audiences, and is an agent in identity construction. It is identified to be a challenge as well, with the monolingual speakers being marginalized and the eventual loss of Urdu words on the horizon. It calls for multilingual awareness, preservation of linguistic heritage, and inclusive language use. The research illustrates that media not only reflects changing linguistic practice but also constructs language ideologies, highlighting the need to balance the advantages and disadvantages of media-facilitated bilingualism in Pakistan. By encouraging linguistic awareness and accommodation, stakeholders can realize the potential of bilingualism while maintaining cultural heritage. Furthermore, this study may open the door for future researchers to explore the patterns of code mixing and code switching in other TV shows.

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