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Code-mixing in Chhattisgarhi Conversation of Undergraduate Students

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Abstract: This paper investigates code-mixing in Chhattisgarhi based on conversation collected from the undergraduate students in the district of Gourella-Pendra-Marvahi (GPM). In India, lexical items from other languages are often mixed in most of the Indian languages since it is a multilingual country. In fact, this happens in Chhattisgarhi conversation by mixing English words in various situations. English language is used in India as second and foreign language in different places. So, the possibilities of mixing English words in Chhattisgarhi are commonly found in the spoken data. Code-mixing is a phenomenon in the society in which speakers mix words for various reasons. This paper focuses on the nature of code-mixing, the significance of code-mixing, how Chhattisgarhi undergraduate students mix English words, phrases, idioms, baster forms and clauses and the reasons for code-mixing in their Chhattisgarhi conversation. In this study, data was collected from twenty Chhattisgarhi undergraduate students at Pandit Madhav Rao Sapre College in Pendra Road of GPM district. Descriptive qualitative method was used and the informal conversations were collected from undergraduate students in different situations. The data was collected from the students through the audio-recorder in the natural settings. The recorded audio has been transcribed in IPA script, analyzed and discussed in detail in this paper. The participant of one of the researchers also helped to draw on first-hand observation through her membership in the community. The findings reveal that undergraduate students mix considerably English words, phrases, baster forms and clauses in Chhattisgarhi conversation. It is also identified that certain Chhattisgarhi case markers were attached to the English words and the insertion of sounds were found within the words i.e., intra-lexical code-mixing which leads to change the actual pronunciation of the word. The findings disclose the attitudes and opinions of undergraduate students while mixing the English elements and the main reasons for code-mixing in Chhattisgarhi conversation.

Keywords: Code-Mixing, Chhattisgarhi, Conversation, Undergraduate, English

1. Introduction

The scope of mixing and switching the languages is highly found in the country like India where many languages exist. In fact, speakers can mix words from several languages for various purposes. Code-mixing is observed in Chhattisgarhi conversation used by undergraduate students of Chhattisgarh. In this paper, code-mixing is explored and analyzed based on the collected data from the undergraduate students of Gourella-Pendra-Marvahi (GPM). Chhattisgarhi language is used in the central India of Chhattisgarhi state and it is one of the varieties of Hindi. This language is closely related to the other languages of the Koshali group, like Bagheli and Avadhi. In this language, five main dialects are Kedri, Utti, Khaltahi, Bhandar, and Rakshahun based on the geographical area. It has SOV word order.

Kachru & Nusjam (1978) defined Code-Mixing as the term refers to the use of one or more languages for consistent transfer of linguistic unit from one language into another and by such a language mixture developing a new restricted or not so limited code of linguistics interaction. 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 must reconcile what they hear with what they understand. Bhatia and Ritchie



(2008) defined code-mixing refers to the mixing of various linguistic units (morphemes, words, modifiers, phrases, clauses and sentences) primarily from two participating grammatical systems within a sentence.

2. Theoretical framework

Hakimov (2021) discussed Russian-German code-mixing. The data was collected through informal daily interactions audio-recorded by research participants in their social networks in different situations and places. For most of the conversation, there were two participants and for some of them were multi party conversation. The language of the conversation, although being basically Russian, is permeated by German single words and multi-word sequences. Hakimov (2021) proposed and tested the usage-based explanations of variation in mixing patterns in three morphosyntactic contexts: the adjective-modified noun phrase, the prepositional phrase, and the plural marking of German noun insertions in bilingual sentences.

Sudarsi (2017) discussed code-mixing in daily conversation among students of English department at UKI Toraja. The students spoke Torajan language as their mother tongue and they also spoke Indonesia and English language. The Students tend to combine it with two or more another languages. Sudarsi further classified every utterance in relation to code-mixing based on insertion of word, phrase, idiom, baster forms and clauses. In this study, researcher found that insertion of idiom was not available in all utterances and word was extensively inserted in students' conversation. Muniati *et al.* (2022) explained, code mixing of students in the department of English Education in their daily communication, three types of mixing namely insertional, alternation and lexical congruent code mixing and the reasons for code mixing Indonesian and English. In fact, both Indonesian and English are spoken as main languages by students to communicate among themselves. They further explained the main reasons for mixing the languages to provide the information about a specific topic, interjections, repetition for clarity and lexical reasons. Sunari and Simatupang (2021) analyzed code-mixing in Indonesian conversation among students at SMA 99 Jakarta. To collect the data from online, they used Zoom software. The informal conversation from the students were recorded and stored as data for analysis. The collected data in the form of code-mixing of words, phrases and clauses were discussed. The results revealed that students at SMA 99 Jakarta used, in informal speech, English mixing in their conversation. They further discussed their ability in mixing English expressions in Indonesian conversation. English is considered as a foreign language and regarded as a high-valued language.

Hanafiah *et al.*, (2018) explained the levels of English-Arabic code-mixing in Islamic boarding school students' daily conversation. The data was collected, by recording the conversation from twenty situations in which ninety eight utterances used by the students in their daily conversation, in the form of word, phrase and clause of intra- and extra-sentential code-mixing. They further discussed the dominant level of English-Arabic code-mixing at word level.

Reema AL Hayek (2016) discussed Arabic-English code-mixing by Jordanian University students based on the qualitative data. As part of the research, she collected the qualitative data from the students through 17 focused group interviews and recorded them from different universities. The number of students and the name of universities were three at Al alBays University, nine at Yarmouk University and five at University of Jordan. For this study, fifteen interviews with Bachelor students and two with PhD students were conducted. The duration of each interview, the initial and post-questionnaire interviews, planned between five to ten minutes. Reema AL Hayek (2016) explained that young students used English more frequently than their older counterparts, acknowledging the fact that the field of study of the older interviewees, in their third and fourth year at university and PhD students was Arabic language. She further explained that all students mixed the languages for academic and linguistic purposes. Reema AL Hayek (2016) proved that study of science subject has a stronger effect on the decision to code-mix than the study of the humanities, education and Islamic studies.

This paper investigates the following research questions in relation to code-mixing in Chhattisgarhi informal conversation.

1. Do the undergraduate students of Gourella-Pendra-Marwahi district of Chhattisgarh mix English words in their day to day conversation?
2. What are the different levels of English lexical items which are mixed in Chhattisgarhi conversation?
3. Are the Chhattisgarhi case markers attached to the English lexical items?



4. What are the main reasons and opinions to mix English words in Chhattisgarhi conversation?

3. Methodology

This study was conducted at Government Pandit Madhav Rao Sapre College, Pendra Road, Gourella-Pendra-Marwahi (GPM) district of Chhattisgarh. In this study, the data was collected from the Chhattisgarhi undergraduate students through the conversation at different places and several situations. We collected the qualitative data from 20 undergraduate students. The methodology which we used in this study was the descriptive qualitative method. To collect the qualitative data for this study, students' conversation were recorded, transcribed and analyzed in detail.

4. Results and Discussion

In this study, the qualitative data was collected from different situations and places which were analyzed and interpreted in order to understand the nature of code-mixing in Chhattisgarhi undergraduate students' conversation. It is observed that English words are mixed in Chhattisgarhi conversation at different levels like word, phrase and clause. Here, the collected conversation were transcribed and analyzed how English words were inserted in Chhattisgarhi conversation by undergraduate students. Most of the conversation took place in informal contexts. In this section, we try to explain the nature of code-mixing in Chhattisgarhi conversation, the insertion of English words and the different levels of code-mixing.

4.1. Insertion of word

In Chhattisgarhi conversation, insertion of the word is extensively found from English language. Here, the data is presented which was collected from the undergraduate students' speech in informal context.

1. Situation: withdrawing money at ATM

Raj: Rima, mɔ:r **ATM card** ka:m-en nəɦɪ kərt hən.

Rima my ATM card work-PRS PROG not do is

Rima, my ATM card is not working.

Rima: ʃa:jəd tɛɦa gələt **button** dɑ:bə-en tʃukəo tɛɦa duba:ra ʃɛ

may be you wrong button press-PRS PERF-have you again ABL

səɦɪ: **button** dəba.

right button press

You might have pressed the wrong button you press the right button again.

Raj: məɦa soʃtʃə ʃɛ **ATM** kɛ **machine** kutʃɦu gəɖbəɟi həuɛ.

I think ABL ATM GEN machine some problem are

I think there may be some issue in the ATM machine.

Rima: ab, tɛɦa **money** ko kəɦa ʃɛ **withdraw** kər-boʃ

now you money GEN where ABL withdraw do-FUT-Q

Now, where will you withdraw the money?

Raj: **Bank** sɛ, **cheque** kɛ **through**.

Bank from cheque GEN through

From bank, through the Cheque.

This conversation took place between two undergraduate friends who went to ATM to withdraw money. They were Raj and Rima. In this conversation, English words *ATM card*, *button*, *ATM*, *machine*, *money*, *withdraw*, *bank*, *cheque* and *through* were inserted in Chhattisgarhi. The inserted words *ATM card*, *button*, *ATM*, *machine*,



money, bank and cheque come under the noun category *withdraw* and *through* come under verb and preposition respectively.

2. Situation: Purchasing gift at shop

Riya: mēha a:pən tʃhot **sister** aye bər **gift** kharid-en tʃa:hət hu.

I my elder sister a for gift buy-PRS want am

I want to buy a gift for my elder sister.

Megha: tēha kaunse **gift** kharid-bo?

you which gift buy-FUT- Q

Which gift will you buy?

Riya: mēha **watch** kharid-hu **stylish**-si.

I watch buy-FUT stylish- ABL

I will buy stylish watch.

These utterances occurred between two undergraduate friends who went to a gift shop to buy a stylish watch as a gift for one of the friends' elder sister. In these utterances, English words *sister*, *gift*, *watch* and *stylish* were inserted in Chhattisgarhi. The inserted words *sister*, *gift* and *watch* come under the noun category and the English word *stylish* come under the adjective category. The suffix *-si* is an ablative case marker in Chhattisgarhi which is attached to the English word *stylish* as shown in the above utterance.

Intra-lexical code-mixing is found in Chhattisgarhi spoken data as mentioned below. Girsang (2015) defined this kind of code mixing occurs within a word boundary. Luke (2015) discussed that intra-lexical category occurs within a word boundary, involving a change of pronunciation. It occurs in phonological level and the changes can be found in phonological structure.

3. Situation: Inquiry about train timings

Anjali: tēha dʒa:n-tʃəs aglɪ: **tarain** Raipur dʒa:yɛ-n bər kəbɛ hən?

you know-PRS next train Raipur go-PRS for when is-Q

Do you know when the next train goes to Raipur?

Poonam: **morning** a:ə bəɖʒɛ.

morning eight o'clock

Morning 8 o'clock.

Anjali: **tarain** kɛ name kya hən?

train GEN name what is Q

What is the name of the train?

Poonam: ʊ:h **tarain** kɛ name sampark kranti hən.

that train GEN name sampark kranti is

That train name is sampark kranti.

This conversation occurred between Anjali and Poonam at railway station. Anjali was trying to know the next train timings from her friend. Several English words train (**tarain**) and morning were inserted in their discourse. The inserted English word was **tarain** instead of train. In this word, *ə* vowel sound was inserted between the consonants.

There are other lexical items in which the vowel insertion occurs like brain as /bæræn/, friend as /fərend/, flower as /falower/ and blind as /bəlind/.



4. *Situation: Inquiry about bus and bolero timings*

Anju: **bus-en** kəbɛ a:-hi Bilaspur dʒa:ye ko?

bus-PL when come-FUT Bilaspur go GEN-Q

When will the buses come to go Bilaspur?

Mina: subh dəs bəɖʒɛ.

morning 10 o'clock

Morning 10 o'clock.

Anju: aɔr **bulero** kəbɛ dʒa:t hən?

and bulero when go-PRS is Q

when does bolero go?

Mina: **bulero** toa subhʌ [ɛ ratʃi tək tʃa:lət hən?

bulero INS morning ABL night till go-PRS is

The bolero runs from morning to night?

Anju and Mina had a conversation at bus stop on travels between Pendra road to Bilaspur. Anju was trying to find out the available buses and bolero in this route. Mina replied to Anju. In this discourse, *busen* for buses and *bulero* for bolero were pronounced. *-en* is one of the plural markers of Chhattisgarhi nouns which were attached as suffix to the bus as shown in the utterance. The English word bolero was pronounced as *bulero* (*u* vowel was inserted). In this way, intra-lexical code-mixing occurs in Chhattisgarhi.

4.2. Insertion of phrase

Rizal *et al* (2022 p, 1.) defined "a phrase is a group of words that serves as a unit of a sentence". Indriyani (2018 p, 20.) described "phrase is a grammatical analysis to refer to a single element of structure typically containing more than one words, and lacking the subject and predicate structure typical clauses". This type of code-mixing uttered by the students is intra-sentential in the phrase forms. In this study, the insertion of phrase occurs within the intra-sentential code-mixing. This type of insertion is extensively found in Chhattisgarhi speech by undergraduate students. Here, the insertion of phrase is presented in the collected data from Chhattisgarhi conversation in informal context.

5. *Situation: Buying book at stationary shop*

Suresh: **Excuse me!** Ravi

excuse me! ravi

Excuse me! Ravi

Ravi: hao! **Tell me,** Suresh

yes! tell me, suresh

Yes! Tell me, Suresh

Suresh: mɛha **English grammar** kɛ kitab **khərid** kər-en tʃahət hu.

I English grammar GEN book buy do-PRS want is

I want to buy English grammar book.

Ravi: tɛha mɔ:lə səŋɛ **stationary shop** dʒa:-bo?



you me with stationary shop go-FUT-Q

Will you go stationary shop with me?

Suresh: ha:, mɛha dʒa:rur tɔr sɛŋɛ a:-bo.

yes, I definitely you with come-FUT

Yes, I will definitely come with you.

This discussion happened between two friends who had a conversation on buying a grammar book at a stationary shop. This conversation shows how they mix phrases in their speech. The English phrases were *excuse me!*, *tell me*, *English grammar*, *book*, *buy* and *stationary shop* were inserted in Chhattisgarhi. The inserted phrases *English grammar*, *stationary shop* and *book* come under the noun phrase category whereas *excuse me* and *tell me* come under verb phrase category. It is observed from the above examples that the phrases are preferably used in front or central position of the utterances.

6. Situation: about new laptop

Ali: mɛha ek **new laptop** kʰɛrɪd-ɛn hu.

I one new laptop buy- PST am

I purchased a new laptop.

Veer: kɔʊnsi: **company** kɛ?

which company GEN-Q

Which company is it?

Ali: **HP Company**.

HP company

It is HP Company.

Veer: tɔr **laptop storage** kətko hən?

your laptop storage how much is

How much storage does your laptop have?

Ali: **my laptop** kɛ **RAM eight GB** hən.

my laptop GEN RAM eight GB is

My laptop RAM is eight GB.

Veer: tuman kɛ **laptop color** bhi aʃhən hən.

your GEN laptop color also good is

Your laptop color is also good.

This conversation took place between two undergraduate students who talked about a new laptop of HP Company. In the conversation, English words and phrases new *laptop*, *company*, *HP Company*, *laptop storage*, *my laptop* and *RAM sixteen GB* were inserted in Chhattisgarhi which come under noun phrases and *laptop color* come under adjective phrase. In this way, undergraduate students mix phrases from English language to Chhattisgarhi conversation.



4.3. Insertion of idiom

Sihite (2016 p, 17.) explained "an idiom can be definite as a group of words strung together to assume a specific meaning different from the meaning of each individual word. It means that the meaning of the idiom will be different from the component of the words. Idiom creates a different meaning from real meaning if the words are translated word by word". Indriyani (2018 p, 20.) defined "idiom is group of words with a meaning that is different from the meaning of the individual word".

7. Situation: Discussion on CG PSC exam

Rudhr: həməən [ə **CG PSC** pəri:tʃhə utʃi bər kəʃi: məhənt kər-bo.

we GEN CG PSC exam pass for hard work do-FUT

If we study well for CG PSC exam we will pass in the exam.

Sidharth: hao, təhə səhi kəhə-t həvə həmn pəri:tʃhə kə taiyari aʃhən

yes you right say-PRS PROG are we exam GEN prepare well

kər-ε tʃa:hi.

Do-PRS should

Yes! You are saying right, we should prepare well for the exam.

Rudhr: təbhə həməən i:h pəri:tʃhə utʃi kər-bo kyokɪn **nothing happens overnight.**

then we this exam pass do-FUT because nothing happens overnight

Then, we will get pass this exam because nothing happens overnight.

Sidharth: **By the way**, kəʃi: məhənt səphɪtʃa: kə tʃa:bʰi hən.

by the way hard work success GEN key is

By the way, hard work is the key to success.

This discussion occurred in the college ground where two students met to converse about the competitive exams. It is noticed that they inserted several English idioms like nothing happens ha overnight and by the way in Chhattisgarhi.

4.4. Insertion of baster forms

In some of the Chhattisgarhi utterances, baster forms were identified in code-mixing. Zulfira (2022) described that baster is the result of a combination of two different language elements that form one meaning.

8. Situation: at the college

Ajay: əj təhə **college** der [ε kabər a:y-ən?

today you college late ABL why come-PST-Q

Why did you come late to the college today?

Ramesh: mə:r **bike-n tyre** pʰət-gəy-ən rəhən.

my bike-SUF tyre puncture-PST-PASS was

My bike tire was punctured.

Ajay: əɪk, əlb hum **class** tʃəl-thəs.

okay now we class go-PRS

Okay, now we go to the class.



The English words *college*, *tire*, and *class* come under the noun category in the above utterances. The Chhattisgarhi suffix 'ken' was attached with the English word *bike*. This combination becomes *biken* and it is an instance of baster form. Sudarsi (2017) mentioned the shape baster in Indonesian utterances where the English word *instrument* was attached with the suffix *-ku*.

9. Situation: Discussion about handwriting

Numa: məha tumən kə hasələkh nəhi səmh-pəʊt hu.
I your GEN handwriting not understand-PRS PROG am
I am not able to understand your handwriting.

Neha: məɾ hasələkh aʃhi: nəhi hən.
my handwriting good not is
My handwriting is not good.

Numa: təha **clearlyin** lɪkh-ɛ |ə ʃa:hi.
you clearly-SUF write PRS GEN should
You should write clearly.

Neha: həo məha dʒəbɛ **slowlyin slowlyin** |lɪkh-əo.
Yes I when slowly-SUF slowly-SUF write PRS
təbɛ mə:ɾ hasələkh sughər dɪkha:t hən.
then my handwriting beautiful look is
Yes, when I write slowly- slowly then my hand writing looks beautiful.

This conversation took place between two undergraduate friends who talked about handwriting in the classroom. Numa and Neha both used the suffix-in after the adverbs. In Chhattisgarhi utterance, Numa inserted English word *clearly* with the Chhattisgarhi suffix *-in* to form *clearlyin*. In the same way, Neha inserted English word *slowly* with the Chhattisgarhi suffix *-in* to form *slowlyin*. It is also noticed that the word repetition happened in the utterance to emphasise the manner of the action. This type of shape baster can be also possible while mixing the English words in Chhattisgarhi conversation.

4.5. Insertion of clause

In fact, insertion of clause is found in several Chhattisgarhi utterances. Embedding in discourse 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).

10. Situation: At play ground

Rupvati: təha dʒən-thəs Rani kə ghər kənəɛ hən?
You know-PRS Rani GEN home where is
Do you know where is Rani's house?

Nelam: **I don't know** okhre ghər kənəɛ hən.
I don't know her house where is
I don't know where her house is.

From the above utterances, a clause is used from English language and another clause is from Chhattisgarhi. It is noticed that the utterance starts with the English clause *I don't know* and ended with Chhattisgarhi clause. This



type of code-mixing is possible in many Chhattisgarhi utterances where the speakers mix two languages frequently (see, Shabiya & Suman, 2023).

11. Situation: At medical store

Anil: u:h læka **who sits in the medical store** mɔr səŋgi hən.

that boy who sits in the medical store my friend is

That boy who sits in the medical store is my friend.

Ritu: u:h toa həmr Bilaspur **University-|ɛ pharmacy** pur-kəɾɛ-n hən.

he INS our bilaspur university-ABL pharmacy complete-do-PST is

He completed pharmacy from Bilaspur University.

Anil: hao:, i:h **medical-kɛ shop** ɔ:khrɛ hən.

yes, this medical-GEN shop him is

It is his medical shop.

This conversation happened near the medical shop between two friends. The friends were Anil and Ritu. In their conversation, a relative clause and several nouns were inserted from English like *who sits in the medical store* and *university, pharmacy, medical* and *shop* in Chhattisgarhi speech respectively. The above utterances also represent how the Chhattisgarhi speakers mix certain Chhattisgarhi case markers with the English words.

Speakers have several reasons to mix languages based on the context. In this study, we provide some of the main reasons for mixing English words, phrases, idioms, baster forms and clauses by Chhattisgarhi undergraduate students in their daily conversation in Chhattisgarhi. Chhattisgarhi undergraduate students prefer to mix English words while discussing a particular topic in which several terms associated with English. Students tend to mix English, to speak comfortably and to show their ability in mixing languages in their conversation. It is also identified that certain expressions or words which are related to emotion, surprise and attention are used for their flexibility. These words are unintentionally used in their speech. The possibility of mixing English words in conversation is highly found among bilingual or multilingual speakers. Students often mix English words when they don't have or find the equivalent word in their mother tongue. In fact, Chhattisgarhi students feel proud to use English words or English language in their conversation. This shows their psychological attitudes towards English. They also mix languages to emphasize certain things. In this way, Chhattisgarhi undergraduate students mix English words, phrases, idioms, baster forms and clauses in Chhattisgarhi conversation.

5. Conclusion

In Chhattisgarhi conversation, code-mixing happens among the undergraduate students of Gourella-Marvahi-Pendra (GPM) district in informal context. In fact, English words are commonly inserted in Chhattisgarhi. As part of our study, we discussed different levels of code-mixing like insertion of word, phrase, idiom, baster forms and clause in Chhattisgarhi conversation. Chhattisgarhi speakers specifically students have been more habituated in mixing English words in their everyday conversation. This study examined several utterances in relation to code-mixing. Interestingly enough, several suffixes were attached to the English words and some English words were pronounced by inserting a vowel in the conversation. This study reveals that English nouns are highly inserted in Chhattisgarhi conversation and the reasons for code-mixing in Chhattisgarhi conversation.

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Abbreviations

ABL: ablative, FUT: future, GEN: genitive, INS: instrumental, PASS: passive, PL: plural, PROG: progressive, PRS: present, PST: past, Q: question marker.

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Both the authors equally contributed to this work. Also, the authors read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Conflict of interest

The Authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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