CODE-MIXING TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE

AS A MEANS OF COMMUNICATION IN JORDANIAN ARABIC

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Abstract

The present study aims to explore the code-mixing to English language as a means of communication in Jordanian Arabic. The data of the study were collected by personal observation of the researcher. The study findings show that Jordanians shift to English language is not restricted to a certain social class in Jordan. The study also reveals that the code-switching to English in Jordan has many reasons. The study covered a period from January 2019 to August 2019. The data were elicited by the researcher via his personal observation of programs broadcasted in Jordanian TV and radio station, through his speech and gatherings with his students, colleagues, friends and people around him in general. The study focuses on code-mixing to English language for communication in Jordanian Arabic in three domains: education, mass media and politeness, besides investigating the factors for code-mixing in Jordan.

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MEZCLA DE CÓDIGOS CON EL INGLÉS COMO MEDIO DE COMUNICACIÓN EN ÁRABE DE JORDANIA

Resumen

El presente estudio tiene como objetivo explorar la mezcla de códigos con el idioma inglés como medio de comunicación en árabe jordano. Los resultados muestran que el cambio de los jordanos al idioma inglés no afecta solo una determinada clase social. El estudio revela la múltiple causalidad del cambio de código al inglés en Jordania. El estudio abarcó un período comprendido entre enero de 2019 y agosto de 2019. Los datos fueron obtenidos por el investigador a través de la observación personal y del análisis de programas transmitidos en la estación de radio y televisión de Jordania, así como a través de reuniones con estudiantes, colegas, amigos y personas en general. El estudio se centra en la descripción de la mezcla de códigos con el idioma inglés en la comunicación en árabe jordano en tres ámbitos: la educación, los medios de comunicación y las fórmulas de cortesía, además de investigar los factores que propician la mezcla de códigos en Jordania.

Palabras clave

mezcla de códigos,; medios de comunicación, eufemismo, Jordania, lenguas en contacto

1. Introduction

Language contact knows no time and space restrictions as people commute and mix with each other directly and indirectly. English language and Jordanian Arabic have strong and deep ties as tens of thousands of Jordanians live, work or study in English speaking countries particularly the United States and The United Kingdom. Besides, English is the medium of teaching in the faculties of medicine, economy, and computer sciences besides being a compulsory academic subject from kindergarten to secondary education. Jordanian families encourage their children to learn English for different purposes such as prestige and work. Because language is a very important means of communication, people send and receive various norms, values, and traditions. The necessity of intercourse brings the speakers of one language into direct or indirect contact with those of neighboring or culturally dominating languages.

Words and expressions voyage from one language to another due to linguistic factors such as lexical gap filling and the need for new invented linguistic forms. Non-linguistic factors such as wars, intermarriage, immigration, trading, studying, media,

prestige and to avoid taboos in the received language. As for English language and Jordanian Arabic, it is not easy to determine the first contact between them precisely, but it could be pretended that the contact between them goes back to the time of the British mandate on Jordan. Since that time, English has constantly gained in importance as Jordan maintained strong military, political, economic and cultural relations with the English-speaking countries particularly the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Jordan had rapid development in curricula and facilities which strongly affect borrowing English in Jordan. English is taught from primary education onwards. English is also the language of teaching at scientific faculties. English is also used in hospitals, hotels, banks, media, and airlines companies. English is also used in the Jordanian armed forces as Jordan imports weapons and military equipment and vehicles from the United States and the United Kingdom. Such strong ties between English language and Jordanian Arabic make Jordanians shift to code-switching in their vernacular Arabic. The present study aims at investigating the use of English for code-mixing in Jordanian Arabic in a number of domains. Code-mixing by Jordanians to English is a common phenomenon practiced in all parts of the country which is accelerated by the modern inventions in computer technology and means of communication particularly the cell phones (Al-Khatib & Sabbah 2008, Rabab'ah & Al-Yasin 2017). The use of English loanwords in the daily speech of the Jordanians is not limited to a certain place or group of people as it is practiced by them in universities, cafes, restaurants, clubs, and even homes (Al-Khawaldeh et al. 2016; Abushihab 2016). The speakers of any language modify it to satisfy their individual needs which would make them code-mix to another language or another dialect for their native language. Jordanian university students code-mix to English in their conversations in order to interact and adapt to everyday college life (Jaran & Al-Abed Al-Haq 2015; Al-Btoush 2014).

2. Code-mixing to English language in the academic domain

English language is a compulsory academic subject in Jordanian private and public schools, colleges and universities. Jordanian code-mix to the English academic titles professor, doctor, and miss where the first two are used to address both male and female instructors of any specialization at college and university level besides using them to address medical doctors, whereas miss is used to address female teachers at schools. They code-mix to doctor because Arabic does not have a substitution to be used to address instructors at college and university level instructor. The English title doctor has the Arabic equivalent *tabeeb* which is only restricted to medical doctor which is widened in Jordanian Arabic to address all those who have PhD in any specialization. The English title professor is common because its Arabic equivalent; *u'stah dakoar*; is long although it is used which is also a mix of the Arabic word *u'stah* and the English title doctor. The English title miss, its Arabic substitution is *a'nisah*, is used by female students to address their female teachers in public schools, by male and female students in private schools which have coeducation and by male and female students at college and university level and where it is used to address female teachers who do not have PhD.

The people of Jordan code-mix to the English borrowed words diploma, baccalaureate, master, license and doctorate. Diploma is pronounced *dibloam* and is given to students at the two-year community colleges and as 'high diploma', *diblom a'li* for students at university after the bachelor's degree or if they could not complete the requirements of master's degree. The word baccalaureate is pronounced *bacaluryos*. It is also pronounced *bacalurya* to refer to both a Jordanian private school and an institution in the capital city of Amman which are known as *madrasat Albacalurya*, 'the school of baccalaureate' or *ma'ahad al- bacalurya*, 'the institution of baccalaureate'. Master is widely used as *majester* and a little bit as *master* where the second form *master* is mainly restricted to those who want to show more prestige. License is pronounced in Jordanian Arabic as *lisanse* which equals baccalaureate degree in Jordan. Jordanians use the word *lisanse* to refer to the first degree that they or one of their relatives or friends had got from a university or college from other Arabic universities in Syrian and Egyptian.

Doctorate is pronounced *ductora* or *dactora* in Jordanian Arabic. It is used for any person with PhD degree in any academic discipline. The title doctor is pronounced *doctoar* or *dactoar /doctora* or *dactora* for male and female respectively and as *dacatreh* and *dactorat* in the plural form for male and female respectively. It is also used as verb in Jordanian Arabic as *idactar*; he gets his PhD and as an adjective *meddactir*; he becomes a doctor i.e. having PhD. It is also used in a sarcastic way to criticize the one who has PhD but behave in a wrong way or says unaccepted things. People criticize him/her by saying Allah *yla'n ildactarah illy shayllah;* may God damn the PhD that you have, *sabi' ildactarah illy* maa'k; let the curse be upon your PhD or *sabi' ildacatreh illy inta minhum*; let the curse be upon the doctors that you are one of them.

Polytechnic which refers to a two-year academic institution is common in Jordanian Arabic as *bolitechnic*. This English loanword entered Jordanian Arabic in the eighties of the twentieth century when the government established two-tear institutions to educate and prepare technicians. College is pronounced *kullya* as singular form and *kullyat* as plural one. It is used to refer to any public or private community college or to any faculty at any private or public university. Academy is also used as a name of any educational institution as the Jordanian academy of aviation. Academic, paper, presentation, sabbatical, open book, makeup, first, second, midterm, final and course are also widely used for communication in Jordanian Arabic. The borrowed word academic is pronounced *akadimi* in Jordanian Arabic as addressing expression to any person works in a university or college. It is also used to refer to the academic branch of the Jordanian secondary education. The plural titles are *akademiuuon* and *akademiyat* to address male and female specialists respectively. The English loanwords first, second, final, mid-term, curve, paper, presentation, sabbatical, open book, and makeup are widely used by staff and students at university level. The word course is used in Jordanian Arabic to refer to any course at graduate and postgraduate level. It is also manipulated commercially to refer to a guideline book with answers that students use to help themselves answering their academic subjects. It is also used to refer to the schedule given by doctors to patients to follow to get recovered. Jordanians say *ildaktor hakali imshi aa'la hatha ilkoars*; the doctor tells me to follow this course.

3. Code-mixing to English language in the mass media domain

Code-mixing to English language in Jordanian mass media is prominent in the speeches, dialogues, advertising where there is a correlation between what is produced and choice of the language choice (Ustinova 2006). The researcher could collect scores of English loanwords of various types used in the programs broadcasted in the Jordanian TV and radio stations. Jordanian TV and radio presenters shift to English while presenting talk shows, opera shoes or specific interviews. English loanwords related to mass media and computer technology were the most prominent ones such as the names of the social media sites YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Skype, Imo. Other expressions include internet, radio, selfie, video, cinema, film, camera, like, share, link, and site.

4. Code-mixing to English Language for Politeness in Jordan

Code-mixing to English loanwords for politeness in Jordanian Arabic is common to show respect and to avoid taboos and harmful issues. The insertion of English loanwords in Jordanian the English word. To show that one cheats another, Jordanians borrow the English Arabic tend to perform different speech acts, such as apology, marking dispreference, rejecting an offer, and avoiding a taboo word (Salem 2015). The English loanword girlfriend is common among university students to refer to a male student's girlfriend. Instead of saying *a'sheqtuh*; his sweetheart girl, many students soften it in an etiquette way by borrowing word bluff with its Jordanian pronunciation *balaf* to soften the Arabic word *khadau'h*; cheat. Sorry is used by many Jordanians as an expression of etiquette and apology. In a limited circulation and in a very sarcastic way, Jordanian Arabic speakers use the English noun donkey to soften their description of a person who may behave foolishly. Film is used in Jordanian Arabic for etiquette as a noun and a verb to show a prank made by someone against another one. This word is used instead of the Arabic expression *dhihk a'leah*; make a prank against him. Jordanians say *sawwah feeh filim*; he made a film of him, *fallam a'leah*; he pranked him. To avoid the straightforward and harmful Arabic word *saratan*, the English word cancer is used. The English loanword

lingerie is used in Jordanian Arabic and at shops' signs as a politeness expression instead of the Arabic expression *malabes nisa'eh dakhilieh*; women undergarments. Toilet is used in Jordanian Arabic as a politeness expression to avoid the Arabic word *mirhad*.

5. The factors of code-mixing to English in Jordanian Arabic

Speakers would shift their method of daily speech from one language to another, from one dialect to another, or from one style to another for many different factors. Cross-linguistic influence has been related to several functions (Navés et al. 2005; Cenoz 2011) where various cause code-mixing or code-switching to another language (Sichyova 2005). The following is a clarification of certain factors for code-mixing to English in Jordanian Arabic that the researchers could find based on the data. Education because English language as a must educational course in private and public schools, colleges and universities besides using it as the medium of teaching in the faculties of medicine, engineering and commerce. Jordanian places of work have a role in code-mixing from English to Arabic because Jordanian doctors and nurses use many English medical words, terms and expressions in their speech impersonally between themselves and interpersonally in front of patients or visitors. This also applies to students at universities who use words such as (first, second, mid-term, presentation, and final) when talking about their exams.

Media plays a prominent role in code-mixing to English in Jordan. Jordanians watch different Arab and western satellite channels like the CNN and the BBC besides reading Arabic and English newspapers and magazines which result in many English words are used in their daily conversations. The direct and indirect contact with English countries particularly the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and the United States has also affected using code-mixing from English in Jordanian Arabic. Thousands of Jordanians lived and still live or have studied and still study in these countries and by no doubt they use different English words in their speech even when they come to Jordan. Forgetting is another factor for code-mixing from English in Jordanian Arabic because many people

would speak in Arabic then change into English because they forget the Arabic equivalent for the English one. In other cases, people do not know the Arab equivalent of the English word, so they find it very necessary to shift to the English one. Besides, the Arabic standard equivalents are not widely used or common in vernacular Arabic in Jordan which makes it necessary for Jordanians to code-switch to the English words. Besides, many Jordanian speakers code-mix English in their Jordanian Arabic spontaneously because they frequently use the English words. This phenomenon is very common between the instructors of English language in public or private schools and universities, doctors in hospitals and universities and between those who studied in a western university. Showing off and prestige are another factor for code-mixing to English in Jordan. Showing off affects code-mixing to English in Jordan between faculties members of staff whose language of teaching is not English because they studied in non-English speaking countries or because their language of studying in Jordan is not English. From personal observation those instructors like to show off themselves and to get rid of the feeling of inferiority complex by code-mixing to English in their speech with their students, colleagues, families and friends. English words maximum, minimum, average, curve, seminar and presentation are widely common between instructors. From a personal monitoring, sometimes those instructors feel jealous of their counterparts who can speak English, so they do their best to learn English and to code-mixing to it in their speeches. Mass media and modern technology and inventions such as cellular phones and internet have a prominent role in code-mixing to English in Jordanian Arabic.

Persuasion by code-mixing to English language is often used by Jordan where Jordanian businessmen and dealers use code-mixing to persuade customers to buy the goods they sell by using English trademarks. Code-mixing is also used in in Jordan to exclude other people of hearing if a comment is intended to be for only a limited audience despite such behaviour might be socially rude or impolite, but it is used. Code-mixing is also used as avoidance strategy. Jordanians use English expressions (toilet, shorts) to avoid using the Arabic embarrassed equivalents *mirhad* and *kalsoan*. Code-mixing is sometimes used in Jordan as a repair strategy, when the speakers realize that they have been using an inappropriate code. Shifting for repairing is necessary when speakers realize that they have begun an event, such as a telephone conversation at an

inappropriate stylistic level. Words such as sorry and excuse me are used here. Code-mixing is also used for humorous purpose, or to show that a comment should not be taken seriously. Words such as sorry, I am sorry, excuse me, or in very limited cases I am just kidding, or just kidding are used by those who know English well. These expressions are used to show that what is said should not be taken seriously or what is said is just a joke. Code-mixing is sometimes used in Jordanian Arabic to soften or strengthen request or command by using *please*, *OK* and *all right*. Based on personal notice, Jordanians would shift to code-mixing by saying something both in Arabic and English to strengthen what is said or to eliminate ambiguity. For example, many university instructors use expression the English loanwords maximum, and minimum with the Arabic equivalents *had a'la*, and *had adna* to strengthen what is said. Some Arabic equivalents for English words are not so clear or understood by the majority of Jordanians so when a speaker uses the Arabic standard word *mirnah*, people would not understand it; thus, he uses the English word television to eliminate ambiguity. Code-mixing is used as an economy of expression. In the spoken language, one-word expressions are often favored over attributive phrases. In few cases, the English linguistic loans are used because they can express in a single word or a phrase an Arabic notion that requires long paraphrasing for its meaning to be transmitted or understood. For instance, the English borrowed word sandwich is prominently instead of the Arabic notion *shater wa mashtoor*.

Code-mixing is also used because of the lack of the equivalence. In language contact, it might be frequent that speakers would not firstly be able to find an equivalent in their native language to refer to a new and unfamiliar concept coming from a different culture, thus, the feeling of the lack of lexical equivalence arises. By means of borrowing, the recipient language fills empty slots in its own lexicon. Therefore, the adoption of a new concept can be the suitable solution such as the English borrowed noun video which has no suitable Arabic counterpart. Code-mixing is also used for reasons of precision. One of the reasons that cause the speakers to employ foreign lexical items is the need to be precise, because of the lack of an exact equivalent word in the native language. For example, the English device data show is used because there is no precise Arabic equivalence. Code-mixing is also used as a medium of promoting the speaker's linguistic

ability. In a country where the acquisition of foreign languages especially English is promoted by the educational system at an early age and as a pre-requisite for many professions in several sectors; it is common for Jordanians to demonstrate their membership of the elite of the linguistically educated. Usually, in the occurrences belonging to this type of English use, the Jordanian speaker imitates a British or American accent to sound native. Code-mixing is also used due to loanword popularity. It is true that certain foreign linguistic items enjoy greater popularity because of their repetitive use by mass media. Television, radio, newspapers, magazines, as well as the online press have always favored the use of specific words related to certain subjects. For example, the Jordanian media that often revolves around football often uses English sport loanwords such as foul, penalty, goal, hat trick, and the Lega. Media that promotes the computer industry frequently resorts to the use of words such as software, hardware, Facebook, Twitter, Skype, Snapchat, and the list goes on. This takes place in every domain with the repetition of specific subject-related words which have become increasingly popular during the last decades. Because of the popularity of such terms, Jordanian speakers often assume knowledge in the part of their interlocutors and use them without providing a translation, although in certain cases speakers realize the need to switch to an unmarked code either on their own or with the suggestion of an interlocutor.

5. Conclusion

Code-mixing is a natural, cultural and social phenomenon. People shift to other dialect of their native language or to another language for different reasons. English is the main foreign language in Jordan is taught from kindergarten to university and used as a means of communication in different business sectors. The present study aims investigates the code-mixing to English as a means of communication in Jordan. The findings of the study shows that English is used in different domains mainly in education, media and for politeness in Jordan. The findings also reveal a number of factors for code-mixing to English in Jordan.

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