

Social Aspects in Social Media: Code Switching and Code Mixing In Twitter

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Abstract

This study investigated if there was code mixing or code switching in one hundred tweets (from April 8th to May 15th) of eighty participants had an active accounts on twitter and if age ,gender , and education had any role in affecting the participants language. In this research the researcher divided the participants into three groups regarding to their age , gender and educational level . Then analyzed their tweets referring to the existence of code mixing or code switching. According to that the study revealed that age and education could firmly affect the participant language while gender couldn't .

Key words : code mixing , code switching, twitter, tweet.

1.Introduction

So many studies have studied how age , gender and education could affect language from different perspectives such as loan words , language acquisition, and bilingual students language , etc. This study will investigate if these three aspects (age, gender and education) could affect the use of code mixing and code switching in language used by the participants in twitter. The most important thing that this study built on sociolinguistics which defined according to fish man the study of language varieties characteristics , their speakers and their functions within a speech community. While Holmes argues that it is how people use language in different contexts and how to indicate their social identity by language and he says that it is a developed science from the cooperation between sociology and linguistics which investigates the language social meaning, Florian Coulmas (2008).

Code mixing and code switching are branches of sociolinguistics where code mixing according to Crdenas carlos (2009) happened when a person spoke two or more languages and it is impossible when the speaker is monolingual. While Code switching As Gal (1988, p. 247) says, 'is a conversational strategy used to establish, cross or destroy group boundaries; to create, evoke or change interpersonal relations with their rights and obligations .Code-switching occurs in conditions of change, where group boundaries are diffuse, norms and standards of evaluation vary, and where speakers' , Ronald Wardhaugh (2014).

This study aims to investigate if age, gender , and education could affect language code switching and code mixing used in twitter.

2. Questions

- 1- Does age affect the language used in twitter?
- 2- Does gender affect the language used in twitter?
- 3- Does education affect the language used in twitter?

3. Literature review

3.1 Previous studies

Age , gender and education affect language used in a certain society. Nowadays they also affect language used in social media which become a wide domain for using language. Many recent studies have studied these social factors and how they affect language by studying the linguistic features of the language used in a certain domain.

Cristan Mizil,Michal Gamon and Susan Dumais (2011) argued in their study the psycholinguistic theory of communication accommodation accounts in the context of twitter conversation. They developed a probabilistic frame work that can model accommodation and measure its effects then applying it to a large twitter conversational data set . the researchers discover a complexity of the phenomenon and they also

observed the potential relation between stylistic influence and net work features commonly associated with social status.

Azadeh Nemati and Jennifer Marie Bayer (2007) discussed whether men and women language were different with respect to the use of intensifiers, hedges and tag questions in English and Persian. The researchers depend on Robin Lakoff's study which results that gender differences in language usage reflect different and unequal roles and status. The results obtained in this study indicate that Lakoff's ideas concerning tag questions, hedges and intensifiers cannot be held, given the corpus under study and thus the three null hypotheses stated earlier can be upheld.

H. Andrew Schwartz and 10 other researchers (2013) shed light on psychosocial processes yielding results that are face valid , tie in with other research, suggest new hypotheses, and give detailed insights. The researchers analyzed 700 million words, phrases, and topic instances collected from the Facebook messages of 75,000 volunteers, who also took standard personality tests. This study found striking variations in language with personality, gender, and age.

Emad Al-Den Omar (2013) where he aimed in his study to identify the linguistic features of Arabic language in social media and to determine whether the language used there was standard or not . the researcher used a Descriptive analytical method where he analyzed the language used in messages within deferent social media. The study found that the language used in social media somehow related to the standard language in some vocabularies and these vocabularies differ from one person to another according to education and occasion.

Neny Isharyanti & Monica Stella Crdenas-Claros (2009) where they examined code mixing and code switching In a chat room conversations of 12 non-native speakers of English from Spanish and Indonesian backgrounds were collected during a two month period and analyzed. The study found that technology-related terms, along with introductory terms, triggered more instances of code switching and code mixing regardless of the linguistic background of the participants.

Ronald Wardhaugh (2014) a book intended to provide students with a sound, basic coverage of most of the topics dealt with in courses described as either 'Sociolinguistics' or 'The Sociology of Language.' It assumes very little previous knowledge of linguistics, anthropology, or sociology.

Florian Coulmas (2008) his book content is considering the fundamental topics of its two main sections; Part 1: Micro-choices (from Chapters 2-6) and Part: 2 Macro-choices (Chapters 7-13). As the title itself suggests the book predominantly focuses on the notion of choice and its effects on communicative speech.

3.2- Theoretical back ground

3.2.1 Sociolinguistics

Florian Coulmas (2008) mentioned in his book defining socio linguistics that it is the study of language varieties characteristics , their speakers and their functions within a speech community ,fish man . According to Holmes he argued that it is how people use language in different contexts and how to indicate their social identity by language. Also, he says that it is a developed science from the cooperation between sociology and linguistics which investigates the language social meaning.

3.2.2 Code mixing

Code mixing happens when a person speaks two or more languages and it is impossible when the speaker is monolingual. It also called intra sentential code switching according to Crdenas carlos (2009). There are three types of code mixing according to Muysken (2000) which are insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalization.

3.2.3 Code-switching

As Gal (1988, p. 247) says, 'code switching is a conversational strategy used to establish, cross or destroy group boundaries; to create, evoke or change interpersonal relations with their rights and obligations .Code-switching occurs in conditions of change, where group boundaries are diffuse, norms and standards of evaluation vary, and where speakers' regarding to Ronald Wardhaugh (2014).

Chad Nielp (2006) mentioned according to poplack (1980:605) he defines three types of code switching:

- 1- Tag switching which defined according to Romaine (1995): "subject to minimal syntax restriction" where tags reflect lower language proficiency in comparison with inter and intra switching.
- 2- Inter- sentential switching it is according to (Myers-Scotton 1993:3) the switching between sentences from one language to another which produced entirely in one language before switching to another.
- 3- Intra- sentential switching occurs within the same sentence or a part of it (Myers – scotton 1993:4). According to Gumperz (1982) he classified the code switching into:
 - 1-Situational: when the speaker uses two different codes for two different situations. That means the control factor here is situation.
 - 2-Metaphorical: when the speaker chooses the language according to the topic. That means the control factor here is topic.

On the other hand, this tweet had code switching between two dialects of one language (Arabic) which was Jordanian colloquial Arabic and Egyptian colloquial Arabic , where the participant started by Jordanian dialect and ended with Egyptian dialect.

كثير مرات منشوف تغريدات .. و منجاوب عليها شفويا و منكمل مسيرتنا بالتايم لاين :

As well as , this tweet had code switching between two languages (Arabic and English) which was Jordanian colloquial Arabic and English language , where the participant started by Jordanian dialect and ended with English term.

I don't think sara7a ma fe mosta7el

This tweet had the same function of the previous one but they differed in the languages which were switched from and switched to , where the participant started by English and switched to Jordanian Arabic.

الماتش لسه في الملعب

Comparing with the previous tweet , this tweet had the same function where the participant switched from English language to Arabic language.

كلما تحدث # السفاح زاد يقيني بحتمية انقلابه!
 وقرينا جدا!

The tweets of the participants hadn't any code switching or code mixing because the participant used one language which was standard Arabic language without any other dialects or languages .

أعتذر في التويته السابقة عن كلمة عر ليس لأن السيسى لا يستحقها بل تعداها بمراحل ..

On the other hand, the researcher found in this tweet code switching between two languages (English and Arabic), where the participant started standard Arabic then switched to English and returned to standard Arabic.

6.Results

After the researcher collected, analyzed and studied the data , findings were revealed and scheduled as followed to answer the research questions.

6.1 Does age affect the language used in twitter?

To answer this question the researcher took the age group and after analyzing the tweets of its categories , she compared the analyzed data with each other referring to data which had code switching and other data which had code mixing. Then, the researcher found that participants of the age period (15 – 25) had code mixing and code switching in their tweets largely but code mixing was used more than code switching. These findings didn't show that this group knew more than one language or had a high educational level. It may indicate that they mixed and switched for fashion or stylish purposes. Regarding to the age period (25-35), the researcher noticed that code mixing and code switching were few existed but code switching was used more than code mixing. Although most of them were high educated and knew more than one language, they almost use them in their tweets. These findings may indicate that they mixed or switched for argent things such as foreign names, places and scientific terms or to clarify things. Also, The researcher found that in age period (over 35) code mixing and code switching rarely existed and the participants didn't tend to use them. Schedule (1) elucidated the findings that mentioned above.

schedule(1)

| Age | Result | |
|-----------|---|--|
| (15-25) | code mixing and code switching were existed largely but code mixing was used more than code switching . | 28,57% switched 57,14%mixed 14,28% didn't mix or switch |
| (25-35) | Code mixing and code switching were few existed but code switching was used more than code mixing . | 40,62% switched 15,62%mixed 43,75% didn't mix or switch |
| (over 35) | code mixing and code switching were rarely existed and the participants didn't tend to use them . | 14,28 % switched 6,25 %mixed 78,12% didn't mix or switch |

6.2 Does gender affect the language used in twitter?

The researcher divided this group into two categories, males and females. In order to answer this question, categories data were analyzed then compared with each other referring to the existence of code switching and code mixing. Then, the researcher found that males tended to mix and switch in their speech because they had to do it according to their topics such as sports and cars. While females also tended to mix and switch in their tweets because they think that this is more prestigious and stylish. Then, gender didn't affect the use of code mixing and code switching as the researcher thought, because both males and females switched and mixed in their tweets but the aim was differed. Schedule (2) elucidated the findings that mentioned above.

schedule (2)

| Gender | Result | |
|--------|---|------------------------|
| Male | Males tended to mix and switch in their speech because they had to do it according to their topics such as sports and cars. | 60% switched and mixed |
| Female | Females also tended to mix and switch in their tweets because they think that this is more prestigious and stylish. | 40% switched and mixed |

6.3 Does education affect the language used in twitter?

Yes, it does. The researcher achieved to this answer after studying and analyzing the data regarding to classifying it under two categories, high educational level and low educational level. High educational level participants mix and switch rarely although most of them knew two languages or more. The researcher thought that maybe because they more aware about the fact of language regression. On the other hand, Although the low educational level participants group were low level educated and knew just one or two languages but the researcher found that they switched and mixed more than high educated people. This maybe because they less aware about the fact of language regression. Schedule (3) represented the results mentioned above.

Schedule (3)

| Education level | Result | |
|-----------------|--|--------------------------|
| High level | High level educated participants mixed and switched rarely although most of them knew two languages or more. | 11,2% switched and mixed |
| Low level | Although this group of participants was low level educated but they switched and mixed more than high educated people. | 88,3% switched and mixed |

7. Conclusion

After the researcher collected, analyzed and studied the data , the study revealed the following:

- 1-Age could firmly affect the participant language.
- 2-Gender didn't affect the participant language.
- 3-Education affected the participants language.

8. Recommendations

After studying language used in the social media website "twitter" the researcher recommended that:

- 1- Youth and low educated people must be aware of the bad impact of code switching and code mixing on language. Code switching and code mixing are not a measure of our education.

- 2- Universities must have a role in make youth students more aware of using the language in the right way and to be proud of their language in order to not reduce the language out come.
- 3- Social media and multimedia must had awareness role by presenting this issue and reducing it.
- 4- For future studies it may preferable to study the bad effect of code mixing and code switching on language especially language used by youth people who will carry the language for the next generation.

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