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## BILINGUAL COMMUNICATION IN SOCIAL MEDIA: A GENDER ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE MIXING IN PAKISTAN

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### **Abstract**

*Bilingual communication is the practice of two or more languages in one situation and it is comprehensible to all chatterers who have knowledge of the same language. Holmes (1992) writes that "code switching occurs when the speakers shift from one language or code to another language or code." (Holmes,1992, pp.41-50). It is generally observed that Facebook has developed the social network site which is the largest virtual zone among university students. In the province of Punjab, after receiving laptops from the government, the internet is in easy access of a lot of university students. Their communication together with friends, family and acquaintances has just about increased through social network sites (SNS) like on Facebook and Twitter. "The dawn with the Internet and the actual speedy growth connected with electronic communication, have revolutionized the typical ways of connection" (Halim & Maros, Marlyna, 2014). The indication of gender changes in etymological turn out to be an interesting issue to be observed, therefore in current study, the researchers will look at the differences of code switching & code mixing among students of both genders on the Facebook wall. The findings of the research study will help to establish an insight as how and why code-switching & code mixing takes place on Facebook. Results of the study showed that female students in all three types used more code switching and mixing than male students. The code switching & code mixing on social media, its occurrence, trends, topics, types, reasons all can present a picture how Pakistani youngsters, the post graduate students, shape their identity.*

**Keywords:** Language, Mixing, Social Media, Gender, University Students.

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## **1. Introduction**

By means of Facebook, people interact and keep in touch with each other globally and locally. They share their own emotions, thoughts and approach in a fraction of time. Because of this interactive feature associated with Facebook, more than fifty seven percent (57%) of men and women interact online than they do in their factual lifetime (Online Schools, 2012). Facebook is preferred for current study, as this mode of social media is more widespread among the social media users. As per latest data, Facebook is the biggest social network in the world with 2.6 billion active monthly users in the first quarter of 2020 (Cited in active user of Facebook). In Pakistan the most frequently used social media sites by people include, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Google+ and Pinterest. The further most used interactive media site is Facebook, among the people of Pakistan as 92.06 % of internet users are using *Facebook actively (Cited on social media stats)*.

We saw the 100 million Facebook users in 2018, nearly doubled within six months (197 million in 2019). On Facebook people interact through sharing their thoughts on their Facebook walls, in comments, by sharing their status, photo etc. In this, one thing that is common is the use of one or more languages. In the current study, researchers tried to find out that the obvious switching of one language to another during their sharing on Facebook and what role their genders played.

In simpler form, it can be said; that one, while speaking one language, uses another language, which contains different set of grammatical system, and then returns to the earlier language and so on, this phenomena is called code switching & code mixing. The occurrence of the language shift from L1 to L2 (code switching) and mixing of two or more languages (code mixing) has been studied by socio linguists for decades. Holmes (1992) depicts that code switching takes place when the speaker changes from one code or language to some other code or language. In simpler way, code switching and code mixing could be taken as ‘utilizing of two or more languages in one speech and it is understandable to entire users who employ that code’.

It is not only speech where code mixing takes place, it is also used in written and in electronically mediated communications such as through Internet etc. (Sukiyani, Didi *et al*, 2012).

The main focus of this study is to observe code switching and code mixing on Facebook wall since Facebook has turned to be a phenomenal site in the online world. Facebook users’ message delivery on Facebook walls contains several variations,

according to its individuality regarding users' thought processes and their feelings. They utilize diversified language patterns, and then other users post their replies by exercising the same designs of language. Facebook users seem to be inclined towards exercising code switching and code mixing in their comments and wall posts.

Since this study focuses on the code switching and code mixing phenomenon on Facebook, specifically by Pakistani University students. In Pakistani context, although English is not used as native language, yet it can be said that, it is considered as a language of prestige in people's day-to-day lives. In Pakistani education system, it is a compulsory for the students to take English courses and attain a particular amount of know-how at almost all academic levels. This factor also causes a frequent use of code switching in between English and Urdu. In overall speech exchanges, the occurrence of Code-switching and mixing can be visibly observed. It seems it has become a linguistic sensation in Pakistan, especially in educational institutes.

Therefore, this state of affairs intrigued the researchers to review this novel mode of communication. Additionally, the widespread usage of Facebook as a method to communicate, has offered the language mixing data to be accessible in bulk. This study is conducted to observe written code switching on Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) on social media such as Facebook status updates.

In the current study, the Researchers are interested to learn not only the actual occurrence of code switching but also its types that are being practiced on Facebook walls. On top of that, this study aims to explore the issues that inspire Pakistani bilinguals to switch from one language (code) to a different one, on social media, even if they can edit the information before posting the item publicly. The researchers also intend to spot the topics which initiates code switching among both genders (male and female), Pakistani bilingual students who switch codes within their Facebook interactions. According to Holmes (1992) men and women possess dissimilar mode in dialogue in a community.

"English is the global language of the Internet" (Herring, 2001). Mostly Facebook status updates are used to express one's internal thoughts, moods and feelings, users may use the languages abundantly whatever they wish, and hence, here is an extraordinary possibility for the users of Facebook to be unconventional with regards to languages. In the current scenario, the multi-lingual Facebook users develop the tendency to use several languages in their status updates, although some users select to follow only one variety; while others choose to communicate in both languages. This

study tried to explore whether gender matters in this phenomena or not, with regards to university students on Facebook.

## **2. Concepts of Bilingualism**

It is the ability to use two languages. Definitions and concepts of bilingualism in a series start from a nominal ability in two languages, to an advanced smooth level of ability which permits the orator to function and present as a native-like narrator of both lingoes. An individual may label themselves as bilingual but may not mean only the ability to converse and communicate orally but also in writing in both languages. Others might be gifted in reading in two or more languages or bi-literate. One may be multi-lingual by advantage of having adult up learning two languages at the same time or simultaneous bilingualism. Or maybe he/she became fluent in two languages by learning a second language sometime later than their first language learning. This is known as sequential bilingualism. The use of the term 'bilingual' is thus dependent upon: context; linguistic proficiency and purpose. The term is used to describe a learner who uses two or more languages to communicate.

## **3. Forms of Code Switching**

Code Switching is often studied at two levels, first, *intra-sentential* CS, there is a swapping which arises within a sentence. Intra-sentential CS is sometimes referred to as *code-mixing* (Boztepe, 2005); though for the purposes of this review code-mixing is used interchangeably with CS. The second classification includes instances of change from one sentence to another, called *inter-sentential* CS (Azuma, 1997).

## **4. Gender Difference in Speech**

"Women speak more polite than men" Herring (2000), as quoted by Calvert (2005) discovers that females are more probable to acknowledge, appreciate, or say sorry and thanks. "Males are also more likely to convey their opinions than females" (Murachver and Hannah, 2007), and "they practice critical judgmental phrases, action verbs, grammatical errors, contradictions, and rhetorical questions" (Mulac *et al*, 1990). They assert that gender privileged language is established even in written speech exchanges. The indication of gender variances in communication and language use becomes an interesting issue to discern, therefore in current study, the researchers will observe the alterations and differences of code switching and Code Mixing among both genders on Facebook walls. Code switching and mixing occurs for some reasons. Many scholars worked on this area and found out certain reasons working behind code switching. In

the current study researchers tried to extract the same in the perspective of university students with relevance to their gender while they use social media.

### **5. The Study’s Objectives**

The main objectives of this study are determined in the following manner:

- i. To determine the dominant language used by Pakistani students on Facebook wall.
- ii. To determine the topics which motivate the Pakistani students, for code switching and mixing.
- iii. To determine the gender-wise trends of Pakistani Students regarding topics that trigger code switching.

### **6. Rationale**

The scientific progress of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has given a better opening for insight into the daily lives of common people. Internet technologies like weblogs or social network sites are offering the opportunity to research the lives of common people who post about their lives and identities on the boundary between the private and the public.

“Developing communicative competence in two or more languages gives individuals opportunities to express their feelings and thoughts and shape their identity”. (Holmes 2005). It also benefits them to gratify their distinct and communal desires in the different settings of the lingos that are used. Code switching is not a simple occurrence in multilingual societies; rather it presents one’s upbringing and individuality. The weblogs in the earlier era and now the social networking sites including Facebook serve as the personal diary of the users, even though the substance is publicly accessible. The researchers want to observe this multilingualism which has possibly become a common feature of the lives of many Pakistani Facebook users.

It is a matter of common observation that now a days; a discrepancy is seen between students’ real lives and their classroom environment. In universities, they write for their academic reasons where their audience is their teachers and friends. On the other hand, while using online communication they play the parts of computer-generated entrepreneurs, blog writers, gamers, vigorous members in online groups, intelligently contributing and swapping thoughts with fellow group members. Teachers often overlook to take account of the students’ rich existence outside the lecture theater. So, when they come across traditional learning settings and usual modes of teaching, they submerge their learning approach. In this scenario, the social

networking sites can perform as a catalytic agent to recognize the association among utensils and errands which persuade education for digital learners in social networks' learning environment. The researchers felt it imperious to study the lingoes used in these Social Networking Sites (SNSs) like Facebook, so that effective modes can be devised for Pakistani University students who are using Facebook.

### **7. Research Design**

This research was done to inspect the happening of language mixing (code mixing), types of code switching and code mixing, the certain reasons, and differences of topics initiating code switching among both genders, male and female university students on Facebook walls. The research design of this study is mixed method research. "It would be the study in which for one phase of the study, the researcher uses quantitative research paradigm and for next phase he/she employs the qualitative research paradigm. Mixed method research is a lot like conducting two mini-studies within just one over-all examine" (Nunan, 1998). In this particular study, research questions related to the occurrence, the types, the topics triggering code switching and mixing among males & females, were dealt within quantitative paradigm and the research question asking for the reasons of code switching was dealt in qualitative paradigm. That means the first phase of the analysis comprised of Quantitative methodology and the next phase was conducted within Qualitative methodology. This particular descriptive nonexperimental research is held to provide a snapshot of the status or characteristics of a situation or phenomenon" (Nunan 1998). In addition to it, this study can be called Nonexperimental using explanatory objectives: "Explanatory non experimental research is utilized to explain how and why some sort of phenomenon operates mainly when it does" (Mackey & Gass, 2005). The same way this study explained reasons why code switching and mixing has occurred (reasons in addition to triggering topics of code switching).

The data are longitudinal and the two tools; coding sheet, and questionnaire for schedule interview were utilized to collect both type of data i.e both quantitative and qualitative. Statistical Package for Social scientists (SPSS) was utilized to analyze the data and findings were presented in tables, numbers and graphs. In this particular study, the universe was the Facebook users who were studying at The Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB). Since the researcher was residing at Bahawalpur during research, therefore the students of IUB were selected as a study group. One hundred and eight (108) post graduate students of ages between nineteen and twenty-four, both male and female were included in this study. There were 60 Male

participants and 48 female participants included and five posts of each participant were observed. The overall data derived during the research was of 540 posts.

The study of a whole population could have strengthened the benefits, but due to the limitation of time period and resources, the researcher opted for sample study. The sample of this study is Non-Probability Sample and it is selected by employing convenience sampling technique because it was more feasible for the researcher to observe their posts on regular basis. The researcher planned to observe the wall posts of many Facebook users who were also university students, but usually there was a privacy check by the account holders. Therefore except friends within the list, others were certainly not allowed to observe their posts. For the very reason, the researcher picked only those users that had been added in the researcher's friends' list. Further keeping in view of the main topic of the study, the researcher picked those 50 friends both male and female who have been the students of IUB. Keeping those 8 reasons, which Holmes (2005) found in native context, the researcher wanted to uncover the reasons working behind language mixing by Pakistani people on social media. To find out exactly why Pakistani students go for code switching and mixing, a questionnaire was originated. This questionnaire was dependent on 8 reasons by Holmes (2005). The questionnaire integrated ten items. This questionnaire was not simply given away towards the respondents rather issues were asked telephonically as well as personally (where respondents were available in person) and for that an interview schedule (Nunan 1998) was conducted with 108 respondents whose posts had recently been observed through coding sheets. As a way to observe the posts of each and every respondent of Facebook under the study, a coding sheet originated as a data collection tool.

## **8. Theoretical Framework**

To strengthen the study's theoretical framework, the reasons of code switching presented by Holmes (2005s) were taken into consideration. According to her, "people sometimes switch code within a domain or social situation; they may switch as a signal of group membership and shared ethnicity with an addressee. Moreover switches, provoked by the personality and connection between participants, communicate a move along the solidarity/social distance". Further she says, "A switch may reflect a change in status, relation between people or the formality of their interaction." Another reason for Holmes is, "Switch acts like a set of quotation marks", and means to quote someone's speech as a switch code. Her next reason is "people sometimes switch code for amusement and dramatic effect". Next she says that people may switch code to

show anger or emotions. Further she gives a concept of ‘metaphorical’ switching where each code signifies or symbolizes a set of communal connotations, and the narrator draws on relationship of every connotation as per choice, same as people use similes to exemplify compound meanings. By switching between two or more codes the speakers convey affective meanings as well as information. Since eight reasons described by Holmes, her eight reasons were taken as theoretical framework. In the same manner as researcher tried to find out the reasons of code switching among post graduate students of Islamia University Bahawalpur.

For investigating the types of code switching Poplack’s (1980) theory had been used where he labeled three kinds of code switching; tag-switching, inter sentential code switching and intra sentential code switching (Poplack, 1980). A checklist of these types of code switching in data collection was made during this study i.e. coding sheet for observations.

### **9. Data Analysis and Interpretation**

The collected data needs to be sharpened and reduced. Data reduction is the translation of information from one form to another to simplify the problem of analysis, storage and dissemination to other scholars. After the completion of coding process, the next step was to apply statistical techniques in order to work out the findings. In order to meet this purpose, statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 15.0) software was used. The output was presented in accumulated tables on the basis of having similar response categories and issues under discussion. In order to present clearer picture, the data also were presented in figures.

**Table 1. Gender-wise Posts by Respondents (n= 524)**

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Frequency of Posts</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Males	60	296	56.5%
Females	48	228	43.5%
Total	108	524	100%

Table, Showed that in total sample size of respondents is n= 524 posts, 56.5% (296 posts) were posted by male Pakistani University students and 43.5% (228 posts) were by female Pakistani University students who use Facebook.

**Table 2. Posts with Single Language**

<i>Language</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
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English	158	61%
Urdu	98	38%
Punjabi	02	01%
Any other	0	0

Table above showed that 61% (158) posts contained English language only, 38% (98) posts contained Urdu and only 1% post contained Punjabi. While, there was no post (0%) with any other language. In these 129 posts, there was no code switching observe

**Table3. Types of Code Switching & Code mixing**

<i>Types</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Intra-sentential	178	48%
Inter-sentential	168	40%
Tagging	50	12%
Total. 396		

The table above showed that 48% (178) of the sample used intra sentential code switching and code mixing on their status updates and 40% (168) do inter sentential code switching and mixing. While tagging is among 12% (50) of the research sample.

**Table 4. Gender wise ratio of the types of code switching (n=462)**

<b>Types</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
Intra sentential	47% (104)	53% (116)	220
Inter sentential	49% (90)	51% (96)	186
Tagging	42% (24)	58% (32)	56

**Note:** since the number of female participants was lesser (48) as compared to the number of male participants (60) so to get equivalent ratio or equivalence of female users as per male users, mathematical formula was applied.

**Table 5. Topic-wise Code Switching among Male and Female Users**

<b>Sr.</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
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			<b>Frequency</b>	
1.	<b>Emotional</b>	32 (36%)	58 (64%)	90 (30%)
2.	<b>Politics</b>	48 (69%)	22 (31%)	70 (24%)
3.	<b>Friends &amp; Family</b>	16 (42%)	22 (58%)	19 (13%)
4.	<b>Entertainment &amp; jokes</b>	04 (20%)	16 (80%)	20 (7%)
5.	<b>Religion</b>	06 (33%)	12 (67%)	18 (6%)
6.	<b>Requests &amp; Greetings</b>	10 (56%)	08 (44%)	18 (6%)
7.	<b>Poetry</b>	0	08 (100%)	08 (3%)
8.	<b>Sports</b>	08 (100%)	0	08 (3%)
9.	<b>Academics</b>	04 (67%)	02 (33%)	06 (2%)
10.	<b>Technical</b>	08 (100%)	0	08 (3%)
11.	<b>Any other</b>	06 (50%)	06 (50%)	12 (4%)
	<b>Total</b>	142	154	296 (100%)

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## **10. Results and Discussion**

To avoid terminological chaos and to make the results more understandable, in this chapter the data are presented in words. It was found that in slightly less than half of the posts, there was no code switching observed. It means that in almost half of the posts, the users used single language while posting on their Facebook walls. The results show that majority of the posts contained English language only, while a reasonable number of the posts contained Urdu only and a very few posts contained Punjabi. (Table No 2)

The results show that Pakistani students use language mixing (switch code) on Facebook walls. Out of these three types; intra sentential, inter-sentential and tagging, the almost all time used type was intra-sentential among respondents. Whereas ‘inter sentential type of code switching was also used in a vast majority. On the other hand, Tagging was scarcely used by Pakistani students. Further, table no 3 shows that although the number of female participants was lesser yet the ratio of all three types of

language mixing (code switching & Mixing) is higher in female student users than Male student users.

The results reflect that both male and female users switch codes when they write about emotions. That means 'Emotions' is the topic where overall frequency of code switching is higher than all other categories. When it is observed in gender-wise usage, the findings reveal that female students used more code switching under this particular topic. Therefore, it can be plainly said that posts about feelings and emotions triggered highest range of code switching among both genders. Although female percentage is higher than male percentage, yet Male users also used switching code quite often when they posted about their emotions. Among all topics, 'Emotions' stands second where code switching & mixing occurred with second highest percentage.

The other topic which triggered over all code switching is 'Politics'. Under this topic the findings show that Male users' code switching is substantially higher than that of female users. In simple words, male users were more inclined to politics and switching code when writing about politics. This is the category where male users used switching code with third highest percentage. On the other hand, female users also switched code under this topic yet their code switching was quite lesser in comparison of their code switching for 'emotions'. Overall this topic stands at second position for the percentage of code switching under this category.

When writing about 'friends and family' a little percentage of code switching is seen in the overall code switching by Pakistani students. Among all nineteen topics, code switching for this topic is ranked third. Female participants used slightly more code switching in comparison to code switching by male participants under this category.

The findings show that for the topic of 'joke and entertainment' female participants showed more enthusiasm as compared to male participants. Although overall percentage of code switching under this category is least in percentage, yet this topic stood at fourth rank for triggering code switching. Here female users gave a fair lead to male users in employing CS & CM.

The topic of 'religion' triggered code switching among both male and female participants but on the least level. As a whole, this topic had little code switching percentage. It also stood on fifth rank among all other topics.

For 'requests and greetings' minor code switching was done. Here male user's participation is higher as compared to the female users' code switching.

The findings reflect that for the topic of poetry the male users did not switch code at all. Among all other topics this topic has negligible code switching overall. It means this topic did not trigger code switching for Pakistani students.

The result shows that Pakistani users did code switching at negligible rate for the topic of 'sports'. Here only male users employed code switching yet at an insignificant rate. On the other hand female users did not switch code at all under this category. But the comparative percentage shows that male users' CS is on maximum under this category.

The table and figure 4 reveal that 'technical' topics did not trigger code switching among female users at all while a very few male users utilized code switching here. The percentage of overall code switching for this topic is again negligible.

Further the table and figure 5 show that for the topic 'academics' code switching is again at negligible rate. Here male users gave a fair lead to female users who did not switch code under this topic at all. At the end the table and figure 6 reveal that for 'Any other' topic again participation from both genders was low but at equal percentage of CS, yet overall code switching rate is quite insignificant.

Hence it can be concluded that when female users write and talk about Emotions they are inclined to switch code at their maximum. For male users too this topic triggered code switching yet male users have more tendency to switch code when they write about politics.

The table and figure 5 show that the phenomenon of code switching was used more by male participants. The topics like 'Emotional', 'Political' and 'Friends & Family' triggered maximum of code switching in comparison to other topics. The topics, where negligible code switching was occurred, were Academics, Poetry, Sports, Technical and 'Any other'.

The findings show that among Holmes (2008) eight reasons, most important of the main reasons of code switching & mixing is the participants' lack of register ability in a language such as English which assists as a second language. This was noted that Facebook users change language from English to Urdu for certain expressions which are not commonly used in day-to-day speech exchange.

It is also found, after telephonic interview, that Facebook users switch code when they want to discuss about concepts or words that are not on hand in the language. It can take place when translating from one language to other that damages the meanings and makes the words semantically less accurate. Malik (1994) explained the same eight reasons in Indian context that code-switching and mixing is activated when bilinguals are incapable to search for a suitable expression in a language or when certain ideas are only existing in one language and do not have words that can convey same or equivalent senses in the other language. For instance the users used English for the terminology of 'downloading a video' English term for storing some video from online sources to one's computer. If there was a translation of this term in Urdu it would have damaged the original meaning of that expression.

In Pakistani context, findings reveal that the third most applicable reason for code switching is 'pragmatic reasons'. At times the interchange of two languages conveyed extremely meaningful in terms of the conversational context. It is also noticed that code mixing and switching may emphasize changeable degrees of speaker's contribution. Therefore, the findings reveal that participants consider the situation and to whom they are speaking and the level of formality before switching code.

A clear majority of the participants consider 'habitual expressions' one of their reasons of language mixing. Code-exchanging, additionally happens generally in altered expressions, for example, welcome, charges, demands, statements of regret and talk markers. The responses of interviewed participants reflected the reason and stated that in both oral and written language experience they chose Code switching, most of the times, when they greet or request others.

Again a clear majority of respondents supported the reason in light of the moods of the speaker. According to Holmes (2008) language-exchanging happens when bilinguals are in distinctive states of mind, for example, furious, restless or anxious. Despite the fact that the planned words are accessible in both dialects, bilinguals may code-switch when the words in the other dialect appear to take less exertion and time to be utilized at that specific minute. The table and Figure 5 shows that a good number of respondents consider this reason for their choice of code.

It is semantic significance whereas, in order to make the term understandable to the respondents, the researcher simplified it as 'amusement/entertainment'. In

simple words, a clear majority of the respondents were of opinion that they switch code when they need to create fun in a serious situation.

Another reason is, to emphasize or to open up a point. The bilinguals might change the language or mix it on certain portions of a discourse to verify that audience members comprehend what to focus and concentrate on in circumstances, for example, a contention. The findings reveal that more than half of the respondents take this reason as one of their motivations for code switching. It means they switch code when they need to amplify or to emphasize their point and make listeners aware of the importance of that certain point.

Slightly more than half of the research participants selected this as a reason of their code switching. They switch code in order to hide some piece of information from some specific person(s) in a group. Therefore for showing social distance (Holmes 2008) they switch code.

The Table and figure 5 shows that for the next reason i.e. to draw in attention, slightly more than half of the respondents agreed. It was stated that in their language choice, they consider this reason as well.

On table 6 the reason, which is picked by the least number of respondents is showing solidarity or identity with certain interlocutor(s). Half of the respondents picked this reason as well, for their code switching on Face book wall, they say that sometimes code-exchanging is utilized to involve common qualities which are encountered by individuals of a same gathering or society. Consequently, words and expressions are held in their unique dialects to speak to a feeling of having a place in the gathering.

### **11. Qualitative Data Analysis**

The purpose of this portion of study is to analyze and document the Facebook users' insight about their code switching and mixing when they are sharing and communicating on Facebook. To gather qualitative data, about six (6) face-to-face and forty-four (44) telephonic interviews were conducted with a well administered instrument having ten close ended questions. All the received information is presented as following: The qualitative data, based on the interviews of university students and supported by the observation of Facebook walls, suggests that almost all the respondents switch and mix code, not only in their spoken discourse but also when they write on social media through electronic communication. A good majority of

them admitted that most of the times they do not ponder upon the reason of their code switching. However, now when they are asked, almost all came up with the reasons.

The findings showed that nearly all respondents confirmed that they switch and mix languages mainly when they find themselves at a stage where they do not have an appropriate word in the language-in-use for the appropriate expression. It occurs generally when respondents communicate in English, which is L2 (second language) for Pakistani respondents. Code-switching and code mixing also frequently happens when multilingual chatterers' capability in the two languages are not equal. They may switch to the code (language) as they are more competent. Current study showed that whenever if, they could not find suitable words or phrases in the language due to the lack of vocabulary, they switch the code and pick the suitable word or phrase from other language, as it may not be their mother tongue. Malik's (1994) 'lack of registrational competence' is most affirmed reason among Pakistani students. It is remarkable that, though CS usually indicates towards language ability, sometimes it serves to cover a gap in vocabulary and is used to plug in for vocabulary that is strange to the chatterer, yet exists in the language spoken prior to the switch. The findings reflect a pattern that these students only take advantage of CS from their L1 (mother tongue) when using L2. When they speak L1 (Urdu or any other Pakistani native language) they switch code but 'lack of knowledge' works very rare in this case. While exchanging speech in Urdu they switch code for some other reasons.

Further analysis confirmed that the respondents, when speaking or writing Urdu, the vast majority switch code because of "lack of facility". It is further stated that code mixing is prompted when bilinguals are incapable to find a suitable communication in a language or when specific concepts are only available in one linguistic and do not have words that convey equal sense in the other language.

The answers of interviewee reveal that they take help from English vocabulary, in order to express themselves in more appropriate way. "Lack of facility" comprises the requirement to entrée a concept that cannot be carried to the same richness in one of the languages ie. L1 or L2 (Strässler *et al.*, 2009). The respondents reported, when they do not find exact or appropriate word for some expression, they switch code and use English words. The findings, through wall observations, also confirm this response.

For example:

1. Mummy ka *blood pressure* kafi zayada *high* ho Gaya tha kal
2. Tum ne *video upload* ker di?
3. Mein *assignment* ki *ring binding* kerwaoon ya *tape binding*?

As it is obvious from examples that respondents switched code when they do not find proper word in Urdu. The Facebook users, when typing Urdu with Roman alphabets, frequently use English terminology especially for issues related to technical subjects etc. Hence, it can be said that 'lack of facility' is the reason which is applicable to the vast majority of the respondents.

Commenting on 'pragmatic reason' a vast majority agreed that they switch code according to the situation. Although according to them, this reason comes into play when they exchange spoken discourse in real life. But even when they switch code in Facebook wall posts, they consider who is commenting and replying to their post. They said if their teachers or elders post something or comment on their walls, they try to keep a straight or pure language instead of switching code. Whereas, when their friends comment, they reply more frankly and less formally and code mixing makes it less formal. The observations of Facebook walls endorse this result too. The posts where they are in communication with their elders or some formal acquaintances, they avoid code switching and mixing. While in conversation with friends, they preferred switching, rather swinging from one language to another. Thus, it can be said that pragmatic reasons also provide grounds to Facebook users for switching code and mixing the codes.

The interview findings suggest that respondents also switch or mix codes because of customary expressions. Code mixing and code-switching take place in customary terminologies such as greetings, goodbyes, instructions and wishes to show a definite level of worth or strength.

This reason also seems valid for the respondents of this study. Their responses in interview as well as observation of their posts reveal that a clear majority switch code because of their habitual expressions.

For example:

Shukria shukria! Hooohooooohahaha! My laptop can survive temporarily...

The communicator used *shukria shukria* as an alternative of “thank you” possibly to express a deep thankfulness towards the receiver of the message. Usage of a language



that both the sender and receiver are additionally aware with, might reduce the conventionalism of the state of affairs. The respondents during their interviews also considered the fact that they habitually switch to English when they need to express the state of mind or moods at certain minute of the time. Such as:

Mera *mood* kharab ho raha hey logo... bohat *bore* ho rahi hoon  
Chal ab yun he *sent* Na ho *chill* ker

The participants used words like *mood*, *bore*, *sent* (sentimental), *chill*' to communicate their sentiments as these dictions and words are usually used between youngsters for expressing their feelings. Even during interview many times almost all participants frequently switched code with such words as their habitual expressions.

Chatters temperament might be the cause of code mixing & code-switching as it upsets the state of mind of the communicator and it creates one language extra reachable at that time. The findings show that for a clear majority of bilingual respondents, their mood also contributes to CS. The mood of the speaker may result in one language being more readily available than the other even though they may know the words or concepts in both languages at that time.

Like in the following wall post the communicator might use the English phrase or word even then according to his temper or humors mood he wrote:

I ve sold my Samsung galaxy 8 now feeling *veyla veyla!*

The word *veyla* (idle/jobless) was used in conveying the chatter's bareness or emptiness in above cited case. This might be due to the chatter's temperament or light mood that ended up in his mother tongue more readily available.

When asked, the possible reason of their code switching might be for amusement and fun, a clear majority agreed to this. This type of code mixing and code switching is subjective to condition alteration in a chat or dialogue such as the variation in of member, subject or situation. Words, witticisms and puns in one language are swapped to another linguistic for the reason of enjoyment or entertainment. Again a clear majority of the participants were of the opinion that at times, when they need to create fun they switch to either Punjabi or Urdu, from English. Especially when they write comments or reply to their friends' posts on their Facebook wall, in their frank discourse, they switch code for creating amusement.

Girls on FB: Fashion Selfie, attitude, etc.

Girls in real: *Ammi jharro laga loon phir pochha bhi laga doon gi!*

More than half respondents considered that one of the motives of their code mixing & switching is 'to emphasize their point'. Code-switching and code-mixing is utilized to express a change in attitude and highlight the chunks of a discussion that are of more significance. The bilinguals may mix the languages on certain portions of a dialog to ensure that viewers know what to focus and emphasis on in circumstances such as debates and arguments. This reason is also named as Reiteration. Findings show that participants repeat a word in his/her native language after it is spoken in English, in order to reinforce, emphasize, or clarify his point.

Wow you rock Noman Aslam ....*cha gaey o bhai!*

The data reflect that almost half of the participants believe when they want to establish a relationship such as ethnicity, out-group or social distance, they switch code. Their answer shows that they use language strategically. According to the half of the participants, this reason is not as applicable as earlier mentioned ones. Especially when they write on Facebook walls, they consider there is no need to switch code for hiding information or creating social difference. Rest of the half, who endorsed this reason, took it as rare happened cause of their code switching. They believe, sometimes in their spoken discourse this reason is employed yet on Facebook speech exchanges, it is not much applied. And the findings probing, code switching for showing solidarity, reflects almost the same phenomenon. Half of the participants did not entertain the reason; to show solidarity. According to them, when they switch code, the strategy of showing solidarity least comes into play. They switch code on Facebook wall neither for in-group nor for out-group. Another reason, for which half of the respondents showed no interest, is Code mixing and Code switching, is to get attention. Since this code switching strategy is mainly used in media, where sellers attract attention of a variety of buyers through using CS in advertisements, university students did not see it as their reason of code switching on Facebook wall. If we probe into the half of majority who took these reasons as their reasons of code switching, it is very obvious that they also give it last position among other reasons of their CS.

## **12. Conclusion**

In Pakistan uses of social media and internet is almost doubled during the current year of 2020 according the statistics. More than 25% of the entire population is now the user of internet, and Facebook is the most popular social media networking site. The 99% Students of GCUF are the user of Facebook. That's why interest in understanding

activities such as CS and CM on Facebook has increased. Research on the origins, motivations and ways in which CS & CM on Facebook is accomplished has been extensive and continues to grow. It is no surprise that research activities in written CS & CM on social media have gained momentum in research communities in recent years considering many ways that exist to communicate through writing on social media. The current research aimed to add to the limited data available about the online Facebook language practices of post graduate bilingual students from Urdu-speaking or L1-speaking backgrounds.

Though the outcomes of this study cannot be generalized about all Pakistani Facebook users' code (language) selection, numerous outcomes are reliable with, and thus support, past research on language mixing in Computer mediated communication (CMC) settings. This study is unique in the sense that there is no other Pakistani study in the field of Media has compared the gender based language mixing phenomena on Facebook wall which is altogether a synchronous as well as asynchronous medium of communication.

The current research study proves that the Facebook chatterers used language mixing as a tool to improve their communication on Facebook. It is also used as a plan to talk and communicate connotations and sense excellently in their social media discourse. Although the communicators' management of both languages, English and Urdu help them to achieve both their communication, socialization and aesthetic purposes, however most of the times, the students mix the language due to lack of language competency and lack of facility. This result, contradicts to the Blom and Gumperz (1972) findings that code-switching needs chatterer to be fully skilled in both languages. Therefore, it can be established that code-mixing and code-switching is a natural occurrence that not only happens in bilinguals' speech, but also in their social media communication. It should be observed as a practical sociolinguistic or communicative tool that enhances colors to both verbal and written communication in both genders and multilingual community rather than a lingo that leads to the corruption of the pure language. Both genders among university students are used to of CS & CM on Facebook due to incompetency of L1 and L2. Language proficiency of university students at IUB is a question mark on courses of English taught during 14 years of education on one hand and on other hand Urdu as national and Punjabi as native is also in question. Researches on bilingualism proved that the individuals who use to, to switch language or they are multi-lingual have brains very active and

flexible. So it can be concluded that social media especially Facebook not only become a mean of socialization but also a source of practicing the bi-legalism.

### **13. Limitations of the Study**

One of the main limitations of the current study lies in the small area of population. Sample was selected from one university of one city, Bahawalpur. And their selection was based on being acquaintances with the researchers own Facebook. Hence, the outcomes gained from the research may not be generalized to all Pakistani university students from all provinces and from different phonological back grounds.

The other limitation of this study is in its inability to control the extraneous factors like socio economic background of respondents, which could potentially influence issues of gender wise speech. Yet for all researches in CMC, controlling extraneous variable like age, socioeconomic background, and level of participation, linguistic background and even sometimes gender too has been very hard. Almost all researchers who conduct studies on SNS face the same kind of hindrances. (Paellilo, 2007; Herring, 2002)

The study did not attempt to evaluate the validity of their data collection or analysis strategies, which is not uncommon for studies in code switching in CMC. (Cárdenas & Isharyanti, 2009)

One limitation is the time, those posts were observed for. In order to observe five posts of each participant, the unity or sameness of the time was not observed which might have lasted influence on their language choice.

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**Notes:**

1. <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-d&q=active+user+of+facebook> retrieved on 15/2/2020
2. <https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/pakistan> retrieved on 15/2/2020