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Single Word Insertions as Code-Switching or Established Borrowing?

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Abstract

The present study aims to show whether or not English single word insertions in Persian can be considered as code-switching or established borrowing. A mixed method design is chosen for the study. Data for the present study were collected from 12 Persian-English bilingual speakers in different tape-recorded spontaneous conversations. The findings of the study revealed that English single word insertions cannot be considered as established borrowing for several reasons: a) They are not integrated phonologically into the Persian frame b) They behave similarly to phrasal insertions with different Persian markers c) They are not fixed in the mental lexicon of the bilingual Persian-English speakers and are used without any awareness and d) English verbs cannot integrate into the Persian frame- neither morphologically nor syntactically. Overall, the present study agrees with Myers-Scotton's (2002) that borrowing arises originally as code-switching, and borrowed forms and code-switched forms tend to fall across a continuum.

Keywords: Codeswitching, Established borrowing, Single word insertion, Matrix language, Embedded language

1. Introduction

Differentiating codeswitching (hereafter CS) from borrowing has been a great controversial subject among researchers of CS. On one hand, researchers who try to make a distinction between CS and established borrowing claim that any of these phenomena lead to different constraints and conditions (Eliasson, 1989; Sankoff, Poplack & Vanniarajan, 1990). On the other hand, other researchers (e.g. Myers-Scotton, 1993) claimed that there is not a reliable criterion for considering single word insertion as established borrowing not CS. She also pointed out that CS and borrowing fall across the same continuum and gradually they will appear as borrowings. This study follows Myers-Scotton's position and aims to show whether English single word insertions in the Persian structure appear in the first step as CS or established borrowing.

2. Related Literature

There are two main approaches in the literature of CS for the analysis of lexical approaches. The first approach makes a distinction between established borrowing and CS and considers single word insertions as established borrowing not CS. Poplack and Meechan (1995, p. 208) pointed out that "established borrowing involves the grammatical structure of one language only, that the other playing a solely etymological role". Therefore, they define established borrowing as "the adaptation of the lexical material to the morphological and syntactic (and usually, phonological) patterns of the recipient language". Poplack and Meechan (1995) concentrated their efforts by arguing that single word insertions are nonce borrowing not CS. They defined nonce borrowing as an insertion from another language that happens a single time, done by a single speaker in some reasonably representative corpus. Poplack and Meechan (1995) claimed that single embedded language forms show similar level of morphosyntactic integration to that of the matrix language forms when they occur in the same matrix language[1](hereafter ML) frame. The obvious motivation for Sankoff and Poplack (1981) to take 'nonce borrowing' out of the CS phenomenon was when counter-examples were found against the Equivalence Constraints and Free Morpheme Constraints. In the 'Equivalence Constraints' model Poplack (1981) claimed that where the surface structure of the two languages is similar to each other, CS is allowed. In addition, in 'Free Morpheme Constraints' she proposed that switching between the stem of one language and the bound morpheme from another language is prohibited.

Sankoff, D., Poplack, S., & Vanniarajan, S. (1990) conducted a study between Tamil-English bilingual speakers to defend the notion of nonce borrowing. They noted that since English single words are affixed with Tamil accusative marker, they are morphologically and syntactically integrated as borrowing. Sankoff et al. (1990) claimed that nonce borrowing, like established loan, is morphologically and syntactically integrated into the ML, but codeswitched elements are not. Mahootian (1993), however, argued that nonce borrowings must be shown to be loan words. She gave different evidence demonstrating that nonce borrowings are not loan words and they behave like code-switched elements. Nishimura

[1] Myers-Scotton (1993) labels the language which has a dominant role in CS process as matrix language.

(1986) also conducted a study between Japanese-English bilingual speakers and provided some data where the English noun phrases in the Japanese-English speech are marked with the Japanese accusative marker *o*.

Overall, this approach in their studies of CS does not consider single word insertions as CS. There were claims that the single word follows the principle of ML. These researchers considered the phrasal insertions as the example of CS rather than single word insertions. In contrast to Sankoff and Poplack's (1981) idea, in the second approach, other researchers like Myers-Scotton (1993) and Heller (1988) contented that borrowing and CS should not be considered as two distinct elements. In the point of fact, both of these phenomena are "part of the same developmental continuum" (Myers-Scotton, 1993, p. 163). Myers-Scotton (2006, p. 254) argued that "There is a continuum of embedded language[2] (hereafter EL) elements in bilingual clauses, with single words as one end point and full phrases as the other. Further, many singly occurring words that are codes-witches could (and do) become established borrowings if they are adopted by trend-setters."

Myers-Scotton (2006) pointed out that CS is the consequence of using two language varieties in a same conversation. Myers-Scotton (1993) asserted that both CS and established borrowing undergo the same morphosyntactic procedure and the most reliable criteria to make a distinction between CS and established borrowing rest in their absolute and relative frequency. She stated that "CS elements have little recurrence value, in contrast with borrowed elements" (p. 163). Myers-Scotton (1993) suggested that borrowing arises originally as codeswitching and borrowed forms and CS forms fall across a continuum. It is simply that the two forms differ in terms of their frequency. Myers-Scotton (2002) did not make any difference between CS single elements and phrasal constituents (islands in her term). She claimed that in both cases there is some interaction between ML and EL and both languages are active, although the degree of activation differs in different contexts. In her study on mixed French and Dutch compounds and nominal groups, Treffers-Daller (2005) also agreed with Myer-Scotton's (1993) approach that there is a continuum between CS and established borrowing. This view is also supported by Backus (1996) who found no distinction between CS and established borrowing. He made further claim that while speaker's motivation is taken into account, a single word insertion could be considered as CS.

In his analysis of CS between Korean/Swedish speakers, Park (2006) pointed out that even proper nouns, which is the most prevalent type of CS among bilinguals and considered as the most typical borrowings by many scholars, undergo the same morphosyntactic processes and they do not differ from CS.

3. Methodology

The procedure of data collection in this study was divided into 5 groups of Persian-English bilingual speakers who were studying in Malaysia. In a total of 8 hours of free flowing speech, the speech was recorded from conversations among 12 participants in informal

[2] Myers-Scotton (1993) labels the language that is less active and does not play a dominant role in CS as embedded language.

gatherings and each conversation lasted between 90 and 120 minutes in each conversation. All the 12 recorded participants were bilingual speakers and had no difficulty in speaking in both languages. The unit of analysis in the present study was based on the complementiser phrase (hereafter CP). According to the 4M model (Myers-Scotton & Jake, 2000), CP, the projection of the complement node is the unit of analysis for bilingual speech. In the current study, eight hours of spontaneous conversations were transcribed and were categorised in different tables. For the grammatical analysis and exemplification in this study, the Canonical Trilinear Representation (Lehmann, 2004) was employed as a base. In the Canonical Trilinear Representation, the L1 text line was matched by two L2 lines, the IMG (Interlinear Morphemic Gloss) and a free translation.

4. Findings

In the present study, the analysis of data shows that lexical insertion can happen in both single and phrasal levels among Persian-English bilingual speakers. The table below illustrates the single and phrasal insertions of English elements found in the data collected.

Table 1. Distribution of Persian-English bilingual CP

Type	N
Bilingual CPs	940
English elements	101
English single elements	924
English phrasal elements	93

Table 1. illustrates that the total number of bilingual CPs found in the current study is 940. Some of these CPs contain more than one English element. Thus, the number of English elements found is more than the number of bilingual CPs. It illustrates that the total number of insertions in the present study is 1017. Out of 1017 insertions, 924 (90%) occur at a single level and 93(10%) appear at the phrasal level.

Table 2. The Distribution of English Single Words in the Persian Frame

Type	Number	Percent
Noun	539	58%
Adjective	218	20%
Verb	130	14%
Adverb	33	4%
Conjunction	4	0.43%
Total	924	100%

Table 2. above illustrates that the English single words in the current study are generally nouns, adjectives and bare infinitive verbs. The single nouns alone account for 58% of the total single word insertions that occurred in this study. The second frequently switched element in the present study was adjective, that formed 20% of single insertions found in the data. After the adjective group, the most frequent English switched element is the verb group that formed 14% of insertions. Adverbs and conjunctions are the other types of single

insertions that formed 4% and 0.43% of the insertions respectively. Overall, according to the analysis, nouns, adjectives and verbs are the most frequent types of single insertions form English into Persian found in this study.

4.1 English Single Insertions in the Persian Frame

In this study, English single words are found to occur either with, or without, Persian markers. English single nouns in the present study appear with different Persian markers such as *Ezafe* Particle, pronominal clitics, Persian marker *hă,* object marker *ră*, Persian copula bound morphemes and Persian suffix *–i*. The following examples present these different cases. In Example (1), the English single noun *structure* is linked to the Persian single noun *badan* with Persian *ezafe* marker *–e*.[3]

(1) Bazi-hă	**structure**-e	badan-ešun	mošaxas-e
some-PL	-Ez	body-Clitic Pro 3Pl	specific-Copula 3Sg

'The structure of some people's body is specific'

Example (2) below shows the English single noun *rent* with the Persian pronominal clitic *eš*.

(2) Xarj-e	**rent-eš**	o	dar miăr-e?
cost-Ez	-Clitic Pro 3Sg	-ră	afford-3Sg

'Does he afford the cost of his rent?'

Example (3) shows how the English noun *episode* follows the Persian principle by receiving the Persian plural marker *hă*.

(3) **Episode-hă** -ye	film-hă -ye	television-i-e	
PL-Ez	film-PL -Ez	television- REL –Copula 3Sg	

'It's about TV shows episodes'

Example (4) illustrates how the English single noun *package* is attached to the Persian bound copula morpheme *–e*.

(4) Zabăn	be	onvăn-e		ye	**package-e**
language	to	like	-Ez	one	-Copula 3Sg

'Language is like a package'

In the present study, there are many cases in which the English single nouns receive the Persian object marker *ră.* Example (5) illustrates that the English single noun *coffee* is marked by the Persian object marker *ră.*

[3] The following abbreviations are used as the glosses of insertion examples: 1,2,3Sg =1,2,3 person singular, 1.2.3 PL= 1,2,3 person plural, CL= classifier (*-tâ*), CliticPro= pronominal clitics, COMPR=comparative (*tar*), DEF=definite marker (*-e*), DES=descriptive (*-i*), Ez= *ezăfe*particle, IMPF=imperfective prefix (*mi*), Indef= indefinite marker (*-i*), NEG= negation element, PL= plural marker, RFL= reflexive pronoun, SUPR= superlative (*tarin*), Subj= subjunctive prefix, PSPT= past participle suffix (*-e*).

(5) **Coffee** **ro** xarid-am
ră bought-1Sg
'(I) bought the coffee'

For a better explanation, *ră* as an object marker in Persian can be used as *ro* or *o* in the spoken form of the language.

As it has been mentioned earlier, the English single nouns also appear as bare form in the Persian structure. The following example shows this case.

(6) Ye **shower** lăzem dăr-e
one necessary have-3Sg
'(It) needs a shower'

Similar to the English nouns, findings include the English adjectives that occur either with or without Persian markers. Example (7) below presents the bare form of English adjectives in the Persian frame.

(7) Aslan **responsible** ni –st -an
at all NEG –is -3Pl
'(They) are not responsible at all'

Example (8) below presents the English adjective *easy going* that is suffixed with the Persian bound copula *–e*.

(8) Man xeili răftăr-am **easy going-e**
I very behaviour-Clitic pro 1Sg -Copula 3Sg
'My behaviour is so easy going'

In the example below, an English adjective receives the Persian comparative marker *–tar*.

(9) Xeili **fancy-tar** dorost kard-an
very -COMPR make do-3Pl
'(They) made it fancier'

Thus far, the findings indicate that English nouns and adjectives are integrated into the Persian structure both syntactically and morphologically. However, it is observed that there is not even a single case in the data that shows an English verb to be affixed with any of the Persian verbal morphemes. As revealed in the findings, there are examples that indicate that the English bare infinitive can occur in Persian-English compound verbs.

In Example (10), the English bare infinitive verb *manage* is mixed with the Persian auxiliary *kardan* (to do) and forms the bilingual compound verb. It should be noted that in Example (10), the infinitive form of auxiliary *kardan* (to do) is prefixed and suffixed by Persian verbal inflections and appears as *mikardam.*

(10) Yekšanbe dăšt-am **drive** **mi-kard- am**
Sunday was+ing IMPF-did-1Sg

‘(I) was driving on Sunday’

It is important to note that in Example (10) the left position of the Persian auxiliary *mikardam* is the English infinitive verb *drive* while in the Persian equivalence the left position element is the noun *rănandegi.*

Similarly, in Example (11) below the English single verb *discuss* appears at the left position of the Persian auxiliary *kardan.* However, in native Persian compound verbs, the left position is the noun *bahs.* For the sake of clarity, the Persian equivalence of Example (11) is shown in the parenthesis.

(11) Bă -hăš **discuss** **kon-am**
with-Clitic Pro 3Sg do-1Sg
‘(I) discuss with him/her’

[Bă -hăš **bahs** **kon-am**
with-Clitic Pro 3Sg discuss do-1Sg
‘(I) discuss with him/her’]

In the whole corpus of the study, there is no example involving English verbs with Persian verbal inflections such as different suffixes or prefixes for negation, tense or aspect.

4.2 English Phrasal Insertion in the Persian Frame

A general pattern from the findings of the current data suggests that there are a number of English phrases inserted into the Persian frame. Example (12) illustrates that the English adverbial phrase *out of my sight* is inserted into the Persian structure without any Persian marker, while Example (13) shows that the English noun phrase *table of content* is inserted into the Persian frame with Persian pronominal clitics *-eš*.

(12) Faqat **out of my sight** băš
Only be
‘Just be out of my sight’

(13) **Table of content**-eš ro negăh kon
-Clitic Pro 3Sg ră look do
‘Take a look at the table of content’

The English phrases in Examples (12) and (13) illustrate linear order equivalence with the monolingual Persian phrases. In other words, the Persian equivalences of the English phrases in the examples above are totally similar to each other in the word order.

English phrases inserted into the Persian structure do not always indicate the same structure with Persian. In this study, there are some examples in which the English adjectives are embedded into Persian with their modifying nouns in English order. It should be noted that the English ADJ-N order is not compatible with the Persian N-ADJ order. Myers-Scotton (2006) qualified these phrases as ‘Embedded Language Island’ because these phrases keep the EL word order. Although these English ADJ-N phrases are not compatible with the

Persian word order, they are allowed to be inserted into the Persian frame as they are totally satisfied with Persian rules and act as a single word insertion.

Examples (14) and (15) indicate two English adjective phrases in the Persian frame.

(14) Az in **open-ended** **question** –hă bood
from this -PL was
'They were open-ended questions'

(15) Băyad **unsolved issue** ro nevešt
should ră wrote
'The unsolved issues should be written'

In Examples (14) and (15) above, the English adjectives *open-ended* and *unsolved* occur before their modifying nouns *question* and *issue*. However, these two examples show no violation to the Persian frame. It is important to note that the English phrases *open-ended question* and *unsolved issue* are suffixed with Persian markers *hă* and *ro*.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This section of the study seeks to determine whether single word insertion can be considered either as CS or established borrowing. As mentioned earlier, there are two different approaches to lexical insertions in a CS situation. The first approach claims that CS and borrowing are two different phenomena and argues that the lexical insertions can integrate with the EL syntactically, morphosyntacticaly and sometimes phonologically. The second approach does not make any categorical distinction between CS and established borrowing. This approach suggests that borrowing arises originally as CS and borrowed forms and CS forms fall across a continuum.

According to the findings in the present study there are some criteria that show that English single word insertion can be considered as CS rather than established borrowing. First of all, the single insertions in the current study do not follow the Persian pronunciation and they are pronounced as they are pronounced in English. They do not conform to the pronunciation conventions of the ML (Persian in this study). In the present study, for example, there are 539 English noun forms that appear with or without Persian markers; still, these English elements are pronounced as they would be in English .For example, the Persian pronunciation of the word *connotation* should be / kanəteɪtɪon/ instead of /kanəteɪʃən/ or the English word *dishonesty* /dɪsanɪsti/ should be pronounced as /dɪs honesti/ according to the Persian phonology. According to Myer-Scotton (2006) established borrowing words should be pronounced based on the phonology of the ML and they show complete integration into it. Almost all English single words in the present study retain the pronunciation of the EL and according to Myers-Scotton (2006) it is hard to say that these insertions are a type of established borrowing. In the same vein, Haugen (1973) referred to single word insertions and defined CS as "the alternate use of two languages including everything from the introduction of a single, unassimilated word up to a complete sentence or more into the context of another language (p. 521)".

Secondly, a general pattern that has emerged from the findings of the current data suggests that English phrases (more than one word) inserted into the Persian frame have a similar process of morphosyntactic integration as the single words do and they also retain the pronunciation of the EL. Myers-Scotton (2006) qualified these phrases as 'Embedded Language Island' because these phrases keep the EL word order and they may or may not receive ML markers the same way as single word insertions. The following examples clarify these cases.

(16) Mă irani-ă **sense of humour** -e -moon bălă-st
We Iranian-PL -Ez -Clitic Pro 1 PL high-is
'Iranian's sense of humour is high'

(17) Măl-e man **ice peach tea**-e
Mine-Ez I -Copula3Sg
'Mine is ice peach tea'

Examples (16) and (17) above show how English phrasal insertions *sense of humour* and *ice peach tea* integrate with different Persian markers.

(18) Loqat băyad **free of context** baš-e
Word should be-3Sg
'Word should be free of context'

(19) Man hicckas ro **based on their action** judge ne-mi-kon-am
I nobody ră Neg-IMPF-do-1Sg
'I do not judge anybody based on their action'

English phrasal insertions may occur without any Persian marker if the Persian principle requires so. Examples (18) and (19) above show these cases. A comparison between single word insertion and phrasal insertion illustrates that English single words (e.g. nouns and adjectives) and English phrasal insertions behave similarly to each other and both types of insertions are syntactically and morphosyntacticaly integrated into the Persian frame. Moreover, Myers-Scotton (2006, p. 259) claimed that phrases almost never borrowed. Instead, languages borrow the "sense" of a phrase and translate it. She mentioned that these translations are called "calques". For example, English *skyscraper* becomes *ăsemăn-kharăš* 'sky-scratch' in Persian.

The appearance of English verbs in the bilingual Persian-English compound verbs provides the third reason that the single word insertions in the present study should be considered as CS rather than established borrowing. As the data revealed, the English verbs occur in a position where Persian verbs do not occur. The non-verbal element in native Persian compound verbs can be noun, adjective, adverb or preposition but not a verb. However, in the bilingual context, the non-verbal element is filled with English verbs (see examples 10 & 11). Such examples show that English verbs can integrate into the Persian frame neither syntactically nor morphologically. Mostly all English verbs in the current study are free from Persian verbal affixes and they appear as bare form. According to Myers-Scotton (2006) bare

forms are very rare as established borrowings. Instead, most established borrowings appear with the same markers as native words in any language.

The fourth reason that shows that the single word insertions in the study are not established borrowing is that the English words inserted in the Persian frame are neither culture-specific nor established borrowing in the mental lexicon of the Persian speakers. Persian speakers use the borrowed words unconsciously. In other words, they are not aware that these words are from another language. For example, all the monolingual Persian speakers in Iran use the word *television* in Persian without any awareness that this word is borrowed from another language. In addition, they use this word with a different pronunciation from that of the native. Therefore, it might be possible to consider established borrowing as a language contact phenomenon that is fixed in the mental lexicon of the speakers and is used without any awareness. Luke (1998) conducted a study in Hong Kong among Cantonese-English bilingual speakers and he mentioned that a single word from ML into EL should be considered as CS element because it would be much less likely to be used by a monolingual Chinese speaker.

Overall, the present study agrees with Myers-Scotton's (2002) idea that all types of insertions are instance undergo an ongoing process, whether they are single or phrasal. She believes that CS and established borrowing have the same production process, although the consequence of these two processes is different from each other.

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