

Urlish: A Code Switching/Code Mixing Pedagogical Approach in Teacher Education

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The study was conducted on the prospective teachers and teacher educators (having no formal ESL/TEFL/TESOL/ELT, etc., degree) of public sector university which prescribes English language as medium of instruction to impart knowledge and skills in teacher education programmes. This mixed approach study, conducted on 150 prospective teachers and 20 teacher educators, attempts to solicit their responses towards the use of English language or the mixture of English and Urdu in their classrooms. The findings reflect that both prospective teachers and teacher educators prefer mixture of English and Urdu languages in classroom proceedings to single language use because it enables them to teach/receive knowledge and skills in a participative way with proper understanding. Some identified Urlish examples support the use of 'Urlish' in the classroom irrespective of the prescription of the University. Hence, the study suggests that keeping in view the difficulties of teacher and taught English as medium of instruction for teacher educators and prospective teachers in teacher education programmes may not be made compulsory as the University announces and a more comfortable medium, Urlish, may be adopted for enhancing their academic achievements. The study also suggests that the use of Urlish could bridge the gap between policy and implementation plans of the institutions of higher education in general and the sample University in particular so far as teacher education programmes are concerned as the prospective teachers have to teach students who come from multi lingual back ground.

Keywords: Urlish, code switching, code mixing, pedagogy, multi lingual, teacher education, L2, mother tongue

Premise

Bokamba (1989) says: "Code-switching is the mixing of words, phrases and sentences from two distinct grammatical (sub) systems across sentence boundaries within the same speech event... code-mixing is the embedding of various linguistic units such as affixes (bound morphemes), words (unbound morphemes), phrases and clauses from a co-operative activity where the participants, in order to infer what is intended, must reconcile what they hear with what they understand".

Introduction

Language researchers and educators are increasingly embracing the fact that English is spoken by more people as an L2 than as a mother tongue, and, consequently, they are taking on board the notion that English is no longer exclusively owned by the native-speaking communities but that

its ownership is also shared by newly arrived members of the English-speaking community (i.e. non-native speakers), who therefore have a right to be heard in matters affecting the language (Widdowson, 1994). On the other hand, Gumperz (1982) was one of the first to express the idea that codeswitching could be seen as a real, specific discourse strategy for bilinguals, remembering that we can use the word "bilingual" to define someone who is able to communicate, to various extents, in a second language.

English is ruling in academia of Pakistan before and after its inception on the globe and plays important role at tertiary level which is primarily perceived to be the channel to impart knowledge and skill to graduates. At the same time it is also used as lingua franca in all over the world along with native language of the millions. For teachers teaching at tertiary level it becomes rather more important

because they are expected to teach by adopting it as medium of instruction. But it also hampers the teaching of those who are not well versed in English language and are to teach teacher education programs pertaining to content through English language.

In the present global village everything is on shift and experiencing alterations in the existing theories in every arena of knowledge. Teachers as agent of change are to face many challenges because they are the channels through which generations receive knowledge and skill. (Wallace, 1991) says in 'global' village the current era is shaped by a tremendous progress of knowledge, which leads to an explosion in teaching and learning and which requires the language teachers, at the level of renewed information, to maintain a continuous and sustained professional development. Because teachers (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992) cannot ignore professional growth as it raises the educational standards, which revolves around the issue of providing equal and sufficient opportunities for everybody so the teachers need to continually equip themselves with the knowledge and skills to improve efficient opportunities for their students.

The question arises about the teachers who don't have formal degree/s in ESL, TEFL, ELT, or TESOL, etc., but are supposed to teach content to prospective teachers in English language. The answer could be in both ways that either they teach teacher education related courses in English language or in Urdu language. But there is a third way that could be available to such teacher educators and that is Urduish: the mixture of Urdu and English languages. In light of this particular view the study was designed to know the responses of teacher educators and prospective teachers engaged in pre-service teacher education programs at a public sector University in Pakistan that prescribes English as medium of instruction in teacher education programmes.

Research Design

This qualitative-quantitative study was conducted on a particular speech community of, a public sector university in Pakistan, teacher educators and prospective teachers, engaged in pre-service teacher education who are expected to teach

and receive knowledge and skills related to teacher education programmes in English language as the university prescribes. Opinionnaire was used as tool for data collection regarding language use in teacher education programmes as well as informal discussion was conducted to know and determine the use of English in the classroom that whether one language or mixture of two languages is used for the transfer of knowledge and skills through classroom interaction between the teacher and taught.

Literature Review

Code-switching and code-mixing are well-known traits in the speech pattern of the average bilingual in any human society the world over (Ayeomoni, 2006). Myers-Scotton (2006) defines code switching as the use of two languages varieties in the same conversation. But it may be appropriate to mention some researchers' view on two terms, code switching and code mixing. Muysken (2000) says that code switching is used for cases in which the two codes maintain their monolingual features, while code-mixing is used for cases where there is some convergence between the two languages. On the other hand, Myers-Scotton (1993) differentiates between the two terms, stating that code switching occurs when bilinguals alternate between two languages during one interaction with another bilingual person while code mixing is the use of words, affixes, phrases and clauses from more than one language within the same sentences.

Similarly several scholars have attempted to define code-switching and code-mixing. Among them are Amuda (1989), Atoye (1994) and Belly (1976). For instance, Hymes (1974) defines only code-switching as "a common term for alternative use of two or more languages, varieties of a language or even speech styles"

An alteration in language use appears to be academic need in today's changing world though it may be cognitive or social need in the classroom in teacher education. The studies of language acquisition, second language acquisition, and language learning use the term code switching to describe either bilingual speakers' or language learners' cognitive linguistic abilities, or to describe classroom or learner practices involving the use of more than one language and seem prove that code is

synonym for language variety (Romaine 1989; Cenoz and Genesee 2001; Fotos 2001, inter alia).

Some researchers support bilingual education for effective impact on the learners. Zappert & Cruz (1977) surveyed twelve studies to look for evidence of the effectiveness of bilingual programs when compared to monolingual programs. They only reported on students' outcomes on measures similar to those included in Willig (1985). There was no mention of whether the studies described the programs themselves.

Zappert & Cruz (1977) found that performance of students in bilingual education programs, except for one in the Philippines, was equal or superior to those of students not attending bilingual programs. Medina & Escamilla (1992a) measured the effect maintenance bilingual programs had on English language proficiency of Spanish-speakers, while Medina (1991) also included Spanish language and math achievement. Medina and Escamilla (1992b) studied oral achievement in English and Spanish of students in maintenance programs. They compared the English results to those of Vietnamese speakers in transitional programs. Studies of two-way bilingual education reported student outcomes with respect performance in language, math, and other content areas in both languages (Lindholm, 1991), as well as attitudes toward bilingualism (Cazabon, Nicolaidis, & Lambert, 1998).

Concepts either translated or spoken in native language at tertiary level enable students assimilate

them easily as the teachers, having no specialization in ESL/TEFL/TESOL, also find it comfortable to use two languages for the transmission of content. Simon (2001) raises the question whether the methodology used for analyzing social code-switching is adequate in the classroom context. Code-switching can be exploited as part of actual teaching methodology. When the teacher knows the language of the students, the classroom itself is a setting that potentially elicits code-switching. Code-switching is inevitable in the classroom if the teacher and students share the same languages and should be regarded as a natural component of a bilingual's behaviour. Systematic investigations of learners' code-switching are undertaken by Arnfast and Jørgensen (2003), who show how code-switching may develop into a bilingual competence in learners within the first year of intensive training.

Empirical studies have demonstrated that it is quite difficult to find classroom discourse fully in a single language. Even in a CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) setting, other languages understood by the speakers may be used, thus, switching and mixing between the languages are common (Martin 2005; Arthur & Martin, 2006; Mahadhir & Then, 2007; Flowerdew & Miller, 1992; Mustafa & Al-Khatib, 1994).

During the study, through discussions, the researcher has identified many usages of the mixture of two languages in the classroom and some of them are reflected below:

Table 1: Some Urdu examples and their English version identified during the study

Sr. No	Urdu & English=Urlish	English
1	Mostly wo time waste karta hai	Mostly he wastes time.
2	Ap pay ye compulsory hai	It is compulsory for you.
3	Dono writers is ko correlate kartay hain	Both the writers correlate it.
4	Daily reading ap ko update karti hai	Daily reading updates you.
5	Discussion ap ki communication skills ko bahtar karti hai	Discussion enhances your communication skills.
6	Sometimes students ka dhiyan class mein messaging pay hota hai	Sometimes students are involved in messaging in the class.

7	Teachers ki liye na sirf content ayham hai bulkay training bhi	Not only content but training is also important for teachers.
8	Teaching ek noble profession hai	Teaching is a noble profession.
9	Computer technology aj kal students k liye bohut important hai	Computer technology is very important for students now a day.
10	Assignments bunanay ka kaam jald finish karain	Finish your assignment work early.

Findings

Below given tables provide a detailed description of the findings of the research.

B.Ed Elementary students' responses about the use of more than one language. Proceeding table shows the opinion of the students regarding use of more than one language in the class.

Table 2: B.Ed Elementary Students' Responses about the Use of more than one Languages

Sr. No	Statement	SA	A	Agree somewhat	DA	SDA	Mean
In teacher education programs:							
1	Content understanding of the course is well developed if taught in English language only.	6	10	4	30	50	1.92
2	English as a medium of instruction creates confusion to understand difficult concepts.	46	24	10	14	6	3.90
3	Attention is focused fully on subject matter when classroom proceedings are only in English language.	4	10	8	22	56	1.84
4	It is easier to understand concepts with a mixture of Urdu and English	52	20	8	12	8	3.96
5	Content is understood easily when taught in two languages, i.e., English and Urdu.	56	16	10	10	8	4.02
6	Lecture gets interesting when it is delivered in Urdu and English.	60	12	16	6	6	4.14
7	Explanation of difficult words, terms, and concepts in Urdu with the mixture of English is a way to achieve academic target.	56	20	12	8	4	4.16
8	A sense of comfort is felt when things are discussed in two languages like Urdu and English instead of one language, i.e., English.	58	24	4	12	2	4.24
9	Teaching through single language i.e., English, creates some sort of academic problems.	56	20	8	8	8	4.08
10	Lectures in two languages, i.e., Urdu and English, are easier and result oriented instead of single language focused lectures.	80	2	4	10	4	4.44

Data of the table 2 precisely reflect that students learn more if they are taught through a medium other than English language. As there are certain concepts which are, sometime, hard to understand in English

language only that may lead students to confusion initially if teacher is persistent in using only English language but the moment they are made to understand the concepts using Urdu language along

with English language, their understanding increases and provide students a possible opportunity to enhance their conceptual understanding after receiving bulk of information through a medium which appeals them appropriately.

B.Ed Secondary students' responses about the use of more than one language. Proceeding table shows the opinion of the students regarding use of more than one language in the class.

Table 3: B.Ed Secondary Students' Responses the Use of more than one Languages

Sr. No	Statement	SA	A	Agree somewhat In percentages	DA	SDA	Mean
In teacher education programs:							
1	Content understanding of the course is well developed if taught in English language only.	20	10	10	36	24	2.66
2	English as a medium of instruction creates confusion to understand difficult concepts.	40	20	10	20	10	3.60
3	Attention is focused fully on subject matter when classroom proceedings are only in English language.	12	16	12	30	30	2.50
4	It is easier to understand concepts with a mixture of Urdu and English	40	16	16	20	8	3.60
5	Content is understood easily when taught in two languages, i.e., English and Urdu.	48	12	14	16	10	3.72
6	Lecture gets interesting when it is delivered in Urdu and English.	46	14	12	20	8	3.70
7	Explanation of difficult words, terms, and concepts in Urdu with the mixture of English is a way to achieve academic target.	50	20	16	10	2	4.00
8	A sense of comfort is felt when things are discussed in two languages like Urdu and English instead of one language, i.e., English.	42	20	10	14	14	3.62
9	Teaching through single language i.e., English, creates some sort of academic problems.	50	24	4	12	10	3.92
10	Lectures in two languages, i.e., Urdu and English, are easier and result oriented instead of single language focused lectures.	52	8	6	20	14	3.64

Data of the table 3 manifest the same trend prevalent among B.Ed secondary students. Majority are of the opinion that they learn with easy if they are taught with a blend of a local language with English. A majority of subjects feels that students' understanding of subject matter and skills is not enhanced/developed if taught only in English language but are of the view that a blend of two

languages, such as Urdu and English, is rather easier pedagogical way to ensure academic understanding of the course/subjects taught.

M.Ed Secondary students' responses about the use of more than one language. Proceeding table shows the opinion of the students regarding use of more than one language in the class.

Table 4: M.Ed Students’ Responses the Use of more than one Language

Sr. No	Statement	SA	A	Agree somewhat	DA	SDA	Mean
In teacher education programs:		In percentages					
1	Content understanding of the course is well developed if taught in English language only.	10	10	14	20	46	2.18
2	English as a medium of instruction creates confusion to understand difficult concepts.	40	30	10	10	10	3.80
3	Attention is focused fully on subject matter when classroom proceedings are only in English language.	10	10	10	20	50	2.10
4	It is easier to understand concepts with a mixture of Urdu and English	48	16	12	12	12	3.76
5	Content is understood easily when taught in two languages, i.e., English and Urdu.	50	10	20	10	10	3.80
6	Lecture gets interesting when it is delivered in Urdu and English.	54	10	20	6	10	3.92
7	Explanation of difficult words, terms, and concepts in Urdu with the mixture of English is a way to achieve academic target.	52	16	8	16	8	3.88
8	A sense of comfort is felt when things are discussed in two languages like Urdu and English instead of one language, i.e., English.	52	20	10	10	8	3.98
9	Teaching through single language i.e., English, creates some sort of academic problems.	50	18	12	8	8	3.82
10	Lectures in two languages, i.e., Urdu and English, are easier and result oriented instead of single language focused lectures.	66	4	12	12	6	4.12

Data of the table 4 also show the same trend of the B.Ed (Elementary) and B.Ed (Secondary) students’ opinion. Majority of the students, here too, feel that learning is improved both in and outside the class provided they are taught with a blend of Urdu and English languages.

Teacher educators’ responses to language teaching courses. Proceeding table shows the opinion of the students regarding use of more than one language in the class.

Table 5: Teacher Educators’ Responses to Language Teaching Courses

Sr. No	Statement	SA	A	Agree somewhat	DA	SDA	Mean
In teacher education programs		In percentages					
1	Content understanding of the course is well developed if taught in English language only.	15	25	10	25	25	2.80
2	English as a medium of instruction creates confusion to understand difficult concepts.	30	20	20	1	20	3.12
3	Attention is focused fully on subject matter when classroom proceedings are only in English language.	10	10	10	40	30	2.30

4	It is easier to understand concepts with a mixture of Urdu and English	30	10	20	20	10	3.00
5	Content is understood easily when taught in two languages, i.e., English and Urdu.	35	15	15	25	10	3.40
6	Lecture gets interesting when it is delivered in Urdu and English.	25	25	20	15	15	3.30
7	Explanation of difficult words, terms, and concepts in Urdu with the mixture of English is a way to achieve academic target.	35	15	20	20	10	3.45
8	A sense of comfort is felt when things are discussed in two languages like Urdu and English instead of one language, i.e., English.	40	10	10	20	20	3.30
9	Teaching through single language i.e., English, creates some sort of academic problems.	25	25	25	15	10	3.40
10	Lectures in two languages, i.e., Urdu and English, are easier and result oriented instead of single language focused lectures.	30	25	20	15	10	3.50

Data of the table 5 show that teachers teaching either B.Ed, or M.Ed feel that contents in their classes are easily understood by the students if they use Urdu along with English. This reflects that they are of the opinion that a mixture of two languages, Urdu and English, is a better pedagogical technique to enhance knowledge and skills of the prospective teachers.

Discussion on findings

The study was designed to know the responses of teacher educators as well as the prospective teachers about the use of one or more than one languages in classroom proceedings in teacher education programmes. At the same time the researcher participated in ongoing class proceedings wherein both teacher educators and prospective teachers were supposed to remain stuck with the use of one language, i.e., English, as the University prescribes. But it is very important to consider that most of the teachers engaged in teacher education programmes don't possess any formal ELT/ESL/TEFL degree but are liable to teach in English language.

Different prospective teachers' groups, i.e., M.Ed, B.Ed (Secondary & Elementary) and teacher educators were given the same opinionnaire to know their responses towards the medium of instruction supposed to be adopted and also which is in vogue. The results of the study reflect that majority of prospective teachers feels comfortable when classroom proceedings are not specifically in

English language. For example, B.Ed (Sec., & Ele.) students think that content understanding of the course is not well developed if taught in English language in teacher education programs where senior students such as M.Ed disagree with them but the gap of difference is very small. The reason may be their already completed Bachelor Degree in education which has might have cleared their concepts regarding content knowledge. But irrespective of their degree level almost all the prospective teachers feel that lectures/classroom proceedings in two languages, i.e., Urdu and English, are easier and result oriented instead of single language focused lectures. Although 23% teacher educators don't agree to this notion but a majority favors the use of the mixture of two languages by considering the language problems of the students as they say that sense of comfort, on the part of the students, is felt when classroom proceedings are in a mixture of languages.

It further strengthens the opinion of the subjects when the responses reflect that it is rather hard to understand difficult lexical items or terminology when said and listened in English language but when uttered in either Urdu or mixture of Urdu and English they are better understood and time saving as they teacher educators don't possess formal ELT/TEFL/ESL degree and may face elaborating terminology in English language.

Implications

Keeping in view the findings the study the following could be considered as implications:

1. English language is undoubtedly one of the richest and living languages of today's global village but for the intellectual comfort of teacher educators and prospective teachers some regional language may also be focused during classroom proceedings.
2. The primary objective appears to be the transfer of knowledge and skills pertaining to teacher education instead of language competency. Hence, subject matter could be taught with the help of two language languages, i.e., English and Urdu, instead of focusing a foreign language like English in teacher education programs.
3. The identifies Urdu examples suggest that the most important aspect in teaching and learning process is academic convenience which could be easily generated if a flexible medium of instruction is adopted which may be called as Urdu method of teaching in teacher education programs.
4. A mixture of two languages, preferably English and Urdu or some other regional language could be appropriate way to enable prospective teachers understand concepts and terminologies of teacher education.
5. It is a general observation that our graduates are mostly engaged in writing skill but due to over emphasized use of spoken English in teacher education they become unable to manifest their potentials which could channelized if they are allowed to use a language or languages in and outside the classrooms.

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