Language Mixing and the Dominant Language

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Abstract

Language mixing is a bilingual linguistic phenomenon. It is referred to as Code Mixing or Code Switching. Code mixing (CM) can be categorized as insertion, alternation and congruent lexicalization (CL) depending on the nature of the mixed cases. This paper investigates CM in 20 Sri Lankan Sinhala-English bilinguals and attempts to describe the dominant language in mixed data using Muysken's (2000) typology of CM and Myers-Scotton's (2002) Matrix Language Frame Model theory and Kachru's (1983) theory on nativization. The study treats insertion, alternation, and CL as manifestations of the same linguistic phenomenon. The study also treats nativizations as borrowings.

Using a case study approach, this study analyses the impact of the dominant language in mixed utterances. The mixing strategies in CM will be used to determine whether the dominant language can be identified in mixed data. In addition, the study will look at the impact of the dominant language on code mixes and borrowings. The experiment contains samples of spontaneous speech productions of informants who are also interviewed.

The findings of the study determine the importance of the dominant language on mixing strategies used. The findings reveal that speakers resort to insertion, alternation and CL patterns when mixing codes. In insertion, the foreign elements are identified as insertions and the matrix is provided by the dominant language. The foreign elements are analyzed as code mixes depending on the nature of integration. In alternation the participating languages share the structure of the bilingual utterance. Both languages may carry equal weight in the mixed utterance. In CL, which displays the convergence of two grammars, the dominant language will not be too visible. However, the way in which the elements are integrated may give a clue in certain instances.

1. Introduction

Bernie is an English teacher at a leading International school in Colombo. She is a Burgher[1] and her first language is English (self-assessment). She speaks both English and Sinhala fluently and uses English in her job. English is mainly used at work and with superiors. However, she has studied in Sinhala and is fluent in this language. She uses it with friends and also at home. When communicating with friends, she mixes both English and Sinhala. Bernie is a typical Sri Lankan Sinhala-English bilingual[2] who mixes languages. Though her first language is English, her utterances[3] reveal Sinhala as the dominant language. She is a Sinhala-English bilingual and a user of the Sinhala-English mixed code[4].

The term CM will be used in this study to refer to all types of mixing, based on Muysken's (2000) typology. A typical example of a mixed utterance is given below:

(1)   call   ekak   diila   aayet   kiyəmu apitaa late   venavaa
       nee.
       [Call **and tell him again if not we will get** late.]

Terms and definitions in language mixing

A review of the literature focuses on different dimensions to CM, even though it holds such a low status in post-colonial bilingual societies. Many theories focus on a dominant language in mixed utterances. Other theories analyze CM as a discourse strategy for contextualization and nativization, both processes regarded as extremely productive. Accounts have also been proposed to emphasize the functional aspects of CM that makes it an important tool in daily discourse. To obtain a general understanding of code mixing, certain technical terms need to be defined. Mixed data are analyzed

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[1] Burghers and Eurasians are ethnic groups in Sri Lanka. The first language of the Burghers is English.
[2] The term 'bilingual' refers to the language use of speakers who can speak two or more than two languages, in this study.
[3] The term 'utterances' will be used interchangeably with 'sentences' in this study to mean spontaneous speech productions of bilingual speakers.
[4] Gumperz (1982) reserves the term 'code' for genetically distinct languages.

as code mixes or code switches. CS is generally defined as the use of two languages by a speaker in the same conversation. Definitions of CS are often linked to syntactic or morpho-syntactic constraints (Poplack 1980, Joshi 1985, Belazi et al 1994). Generally, the term CS is applied when there is equal participation of two languages in the utterance. Going into more detailed definitions on the term, Gumperz (1982) studying Spanish-English, Hindi-English and Slovenian-German language pairs refers to CS as the 'juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or sub-systems'. Myers-Scotton (2002) refers to CS as the use of two languages in the same clause[3] which she calls intra-clausal switching. Inter-sentential switching, according to Myers-Scotton (2002), includes full sentences from both languages where each sentence will be a single clause. Poplack (1980) views CS as comprising intra-sentential, inter-sentential, extra-sentential and tag switching. Hence, the distinction is made between each catergory of switching based on the speaker's proficiency of the languages concerned. Poplack and Meechan (1995) define CS as the 'juxtaposition of sentences or sentence fragments each of which is internally consistent with the morphological and syntactic (and optionally phonological) rules of its lexifier language'.

As opposed to CS, CM has generated numerous definitions. In early studies, it has been dismissed as abnormal behavior. It was observed that except in 'abnormal cases, speakers have not been observed to draw freely from two languages at once' and that at any given moment they are actually speaking one language (Haugen 1953).

This study identifies the use of two languages in discourse as CM, and applies Muysken's (2000) framework to determine the structural properties of Sinhala-English CM. It acknowledges that insertions are either partially or completely integrated into the host language. Muysken (2000: 1) defines CM as when lexical items and grammatical features from two languages appear in one sentence. For Kachru (1978:28) mixing results in the 'transferring' of linguistic units from one language to another. This transfer results in a 'restricted or not so restricted code of linguistic repertoire' which includes the mixing of either lexical items, full sentences or the embedding of idioms.

Kachru (1983) defines CM as a marker of modernization, socio-economic position, and membership in an elite group. In stylistic terms, it marks deliberate style. The widest register range is associated with CM in English. CM continues to be used in contexts where one would like to demonstrate authority, power, and identity with the establishment. His observation that varieties of English spoken in former Anglo-American colonies are not a 'mistake' but a 'deviation'(1986: 29) from the standard variety of English is significant to the later development of world 'Englishes' as a whole (Kachru 1965: 396)

In CM , it is believed that one language always dominates the bilingual utterance. Structurally and sociolinguistically different to borrowing, its more celebrated counterpart , code mixes have significant linguistic features that set it off from borrowings. Where borrowings are completely integrated into the host language, code-mixes are not [5]. Structural features of both code mixes and borrowings are explained in Senaratne (2000: 247)

2. Objectives

This study proposes to identify the different mixing strategies used in informal discourse by bilingual speakers. The study will attempt to describe the mixing patterns based on Muysken's (2000) CM typology, Kachru's (1983) theory of nativization and Myers-Scotton's (2002) Matrix Language Frame work Model (MLF) where the impact of the dominant language will be analysed. While Muysken's theory will be applied to identify the different mixing patterns namely insertion, alternation and Congruent Lexicalization, Kachru's theory of nativization will be used to distinguish code mixes from borrowings. This distinction is significant to describe the matrix language in the utterance and to reveal the morphological, syntactical and phonological integration of lexical items into bases. In such utterances, only one grammar is at work. Myers-Scotton's (2002) Matrix Language Frame Model (MLF) theory will be the most significant description of bilingual utterances used in this study to identify the workings of the dominant language.

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[5] See Senaratne (2009)

3. Purpose

The purpose of this study is to reveal that all types of mixing patterns exist in the speech of Sinhala-English bilinguals. Using Muysken's (2000) theory of CM, this study reveals that Sinhala-English bilinguals resort to insertional, alternational and CL patterns of mixing which in turn result in mixed types. This study will also reveal that defining the dominant language in insertional CM is easier than in alternation and CL.

4. Literature Review

Kachru's theory on nativization

CS entails the ability to switch from one code to another, determined by the function, the situation and the participants (Kachru 1983: 197), an echo of Gumperz's theory. Analyzing CS in creative writing, Kachru (1983) observes that CS is employed as a marker of attitude, emotional intensity, or various types of identities. Kachru's definition of CS insists that when a speaker switches, it is indicative of 'change of context' (Kachru 1982b). Furthermore, CS is employed to reveal or conceal region, class and religion (Kachru 1983) and can lead to code-mixed varieties.

Observe that to Kachru, mixing means much more than switching and borrowing. He defines CM as 'the use of one or more languages for consistent transfer of linguistic units from one language to another' and observes that such a language mixture can be 'a new restricted or not so restricted code of linguistic interaction' (Kachru 1978: 28). This definition essentially means that elements from the donor language are integrated into the base language and the donor language acts as an additive source of linguistic material in the development of a specialized register. Analyzing CM in the Indian context, Kachru (1983) proposes that the formal exponents of mixing form a hierarchy. In this hierarchy, mixing of simple lexical items ranks lowest and mixing of sentences ranks highest. Observe the following taken from Kachru (1983: 202).

(2)   NP insertion
           VP insertion
           Unit hybridization
           Sentence insertion

Idiom and collocation insertion
Inflection attachment and reduplication

Studying CM in the multi-cultural and multilingual Indian context, Kachru (1983) identifies three mixing strategies employed by the Indian bilingual. These are labeled as Englishization, (where English is mixed), Sanskritization (where Sanskrit is mixed), and Persianization (where Persian is mixed) with any one of the local languages of India. Motivations for the adoption of these mixed codes by a speaker will be different. A highly Englishized code where alternation between English and Hindi takes place is used for political and administrative purposes which may signal aspirations of upward mobility of the speaker (Kachru 1978). Englishized Hindi is used with the family and non-Englishized Hindi with the domestics. Observing the very positive attributes of CM in the Indian context, Kachru (1983) refers to the mixing patterns as 'productive' and creative processes.

CM is also separated from borrowing, as the process is not merely used for the supplementation of lexical items for gaps in a language. The appearance of single or lone lexical items from English may be results of nativization (where the words undergo phonological and morpho-syntactical integration into the borrower language) or neutralization (where the words will be direct insertions and used to suppress cultural connotations).The appearance of single words is not just to fill lexical gaps in the language but a much more productive process, which is driven by sociolinguistic and pragmatic considerations of the bilingual. In addition, most of the lone items can be register-specific.

Muysken's typology of CM

Pieter Muysken (2000) suggests that theoretical constraints proposed in CM so far can be defined 'in terms of four primitives' namely:

(3) a.   the potential role of word order equivalence
     b.   the potential role of catergorial equivalence
     c.   peripherality in the clause: is CM favored in adjoined or
           peripheral positions?
     d.   restrictions on function word

One of the main strategies identified is insertional mixing. In this framework, borrowings, nonce borrowings and constituent insertions are governed by the same conditions and fall in the category of insertional CM. Structural characteristics of insertions proposed by Muysken (2000) are that they are usually single, content words (such as nouns and adjectives) which are morphologically integrated. The word order of the sentence displays a nested *a b a* structure. This means that the elements preceding and following the insertion are grammatically related.

According to him, insertion occurs when entire constituents or lexical items are inserted into a structure from another language.

Insertional CM occurs when single, content words (such as nouns and adjectives) are morphologically integrated in the bilingual utterance. The word order of the sentence displays a nested *a b a* structure. This means that the elements preceding and following the insertion are grammatically related. Hence, the characteristics of insertion according to Muysken (2000) are as follows: they are single, selected content words. Apart from these, there are also dummy word insertions and telegraphic insertions. In other words, the structure of one language dominates the utterance.

Muysken describes alternation as a strategy of mixing where the two languages remain separate in the bilingual utterance as *A...B* unlike in insertion. He reaffirms theoretical views by Poplack (1980) that when there is linear word order equivalence between the two languages, alternation takes place also suggesting that in alternation the symmetrical relations of the languages concerned play a key role. Discourse particles and adverbs are analyzed as alternations. In addition, alternation is observed to display a non-nested *A...B...A* structure, which means that the elements preceding and following the 'switched string' are not 'structurally' related. In other words, the participating languages play an equal role in the mixed utterance.

Alternation is observed as a strategy of mixing where the two languages remain separate in the bilingual utterance as A...B unlike in insertion. He re-affirms theoretical views by Poplack (1980) that when there is linear word order equivalence between the two languages, alternation takes place also suggesting that in alternation the symmetrical relations of the languages concerned play a key role. Defining structural features of alternation, Muysken observes that alternation occurs when several constituents are mixed in a sequence. Discourse particles and adverbs are analyzed as

alternations. In addition, alternation is observed to display a non-nested A...B...A structure, which means that the elements preceding and following the 'switched string' are not 'structurally' related. In other words, there is a true switch from one language to the other involving both grammar and lexicon. Muysken (2000) proposes the following pattern for alternation where A and B represent languages and argues that when the switched string is preceded and followed by elements, not structurally related, this instance can provide a case for alternation.

(4)

                A   B
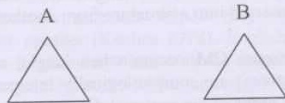
It is observed that alternation can be identified by the structural position of the switch from one language to another. Adverbial modifications and flagging are also observed as characteristics of alternation. Other instances where alternation occurs can be determined by the use of syntactically un-integrated discourse markers and by tag switching. The following can be observed in alternational mixing.

(5)   Adverbial modification
                        Interjections
                        Flagging
                        Co-ordination
                        Doubling
                        Repetitions
                        Self-corrections
                        Tags
                        Conjunctions

Where the presence of a single foreign constituent can be analyzed as insertional mixing, the mixing of several constituents in a sequence according to Muysken (2000) can lead to either alternation or Congruent Lexicalization (CL). Muysken (2000) views alternation as a strategy akin to Poplack's inter-sentential CS. The striking structural characteristic is that alternation displays the 'juxtaposition' of L1 and L2. It is observed that in alternation, a sentence begins with language A and ends in language B. However, structural features of alternation are not that simple to identify as

cited earlier in this section. The analysis of alternation has broadened to include, tags, exclamations, interjections, self-corrections, doubling, flagging, conjunctions and repetitions. In alternation, several constituents are mixed in an order that displays linear equivalence. The sentence reveals a non-nested a b a structure. Long constituents, peripheral switches and switches at major clause boundaries are characteristic of alternation according to Muysken (2000). The typical context in which alternation occurs requires the symmetrical involvement of languages.

The framework proposed by Muysken suggests that considerable contact between typologically not-so-distant language pairs may lead to CL. The theory of CL characterizes the convergence of two grammatical systems into one that can take place between either related dialects or a dialect and a standard language. It is based on the notion of style shifting and variation. In CL, the grammar of the sentence is shared either fully or in part by the two languages.

CL is characteristic of a convergence of two systems into one, which is lexically accessible by both systems. Observe the following for CL from Sinhala-English CM taken from Senaratne (2009: 175).

(6)   a.   *oyaata*   satis*də*?
                        [**Are you** satis**fied**?]
      b.   paartiya *niyamai*
                        [**The party** is great]
      c.   istation *ekata enava*
                        [**Coming to the** station]

Myers-Scotton's (2002) MLF theory

Carol Myers-Scotton (1993) proposes a matrix language frame model (MLF) in an attempt to explain intra-sentential CS patterns found in Swahili-English. The MLF theory is used to explain insertions, which exclude established loan words. The theory proposes that a set of abstract principles govern intra-sentential CS and forwards an abstract frame governed by a dominant language to interpret bilingual data. The MLF model makes distinctions between content morphemes and system morphemes, ML hierarchy and EL hierarchy and between the Morpheme Order Principle and the System Morpheme Principle. In a recent study, developing on the Morpheme Order Principle and the System Morpheme

Principle, Myers-Scotton also introduces the 4-M model. The theory deviates from other morpho-syntactic frameworks, developed to explain rules of switching languages.

The MLF theory proposes that the Matrix Language provides the morphosyntactic frame (all abstract grammatical requirements such as word order, morpheme order etc) or the base for the clause which contains code switching or mixing. The Matrix Language acts as a foundation where the insertion from the Embedded Language (or guest language) is placed in.

In the MLF model, the word order of the utterance is governed by the matrix language. Several structural features of the ML were outlined for it to be identified. These features include the structure of the discourse (morphosyntactic frame which is provided by the ML), in certain instances the branching of the sentence (which should indicate the ML) and the number of morphemes in an utterance where the assumption is that the matrix language provides more morphemes (Myers-Scotton 2001). The theory presupposes that in bilingual speech production, one language is always more activated (the ML) than the other (the EL). Note that the theory is based on the asymmetry between the languages where the asymmetry acts as an indicator to the matrix language of the utterance.

Hence, Myers-Scotton's MLF model recognizes that there is an unequal participation of languages (asymmetry) in Classic CS. Joshi (1985) was one of the first to refer to the frame-building language as the ML and to the other participating language as the Embedded Language (EL). Observe Myers-Scotton's (2006) example for CS intra-sentential CS where elements from two languages appear in the same clause.

(7)   *El le cambio los* **fans**
                 *He changed the /***fans**
                             (Myers- Scotton 2006)

According to Myers-Scotton (2006) empirical evidence shows that the grammatical structure of one language prevails in what has been coined as 'Classic CS'. In this case, Classic CS is akin to insertional CM. The MLF Model was specifically designed to explain' Classic CS' where elements

from two languages are included in the same clause, but only one of the languages is the source of the morphosyntactic frame for the clause. This means that both singly occurring words and full phrases from one language are included within a frame set by another language.

Another important consideration in Classic CS is that the speaker only needs to be proficient in the language structuring the clause so that they can follow the well-formed ness of that language. A high degree of proficiency in the other language, that is termed as 'Guest language' or Embedded language (EL)' is not so critical in Classic CS. Apart from this, the MLF model recognizes the unequal participation of languages in CS.

The notion of a presence of a Matrix Language has posed many problematic areas for researchers in Contact Linguistics. Myers-Scotton (2002) also holds the view that the Matrix Language could change during a sentence from one language to another language. But this limits, as Muysken (2000) suggests, to the empirical scope of the notion of 'matrix'. He argues that in many cases there is much evidence of a 'base', 'matrix' or a 'dominant' language and in many cases there may not be (as in the case of CL where mixing takes place haphazardly). Hence, identifying the ML in an utterance has proven to be problematic for researchers in Contact Linguistics. This will bring us to the question of how to identify the presence of a Matrix Language in a mixed corpus.

What are the determining linguistic factors that reveal a Matrix Language at work in bilingual utterances? Identifying the Matrix Language is most important in the MLF model though it is an extremely difficult task. Myers-Scotton (2006) proposes that the ML can be identified as the language which provides the source for the morphosyntactic structure for the clause as in Classic CS. But how can one assume that a particular language has provided the morphosyntactic structure for the clause? Here, Muysken (2000) suggests that in certain cases, the main verb can be taken to determine the base of the ML.

A second approach is in terms of left to right parsing, where the first word or set of words determines the ML. But according to Muysken (2000), this too proves to be problematic, as most bilingual utterances start off with interjections or exclamations as the first element. These elements do not in any way determine the structure of the rest of the sentence. A third possibility is morpheme-counting. In Myers-Scotton (1993) the ML is

defined as also the language that provides the most number of morphemes in the interaction. This definition too is vague as in some utterances there may be an equal number of morphemes from both languages.

Psycholinguistically, a base or an ML can be defined as the language that is most activated for the bilingual speaker. But how can one establish this as a fact? Given these difficulties it is most difficult to identify the base or the ML. But bilingual speakers have no difficulty in identifying the language that is most activated for them in their utterances especially with regard to insertion. Whenever we hear someone speak in two languages, we instinctively know if the utterance is guided by a dominant language or not. No doubt that in insertion the ML plays a significant role.

Contrary to the above hypotheses, Muysken (2000) observes that determining the matrix may be in part empirical and in part theoretical. According to him, a general valid criterion to determine the ML for a sentence or conversation is hard to find. Observe the following example. The speaker considers himself more proficient in English and uses English most of the time in informal discourse. However he considers that his L1 is Sinhala.

(8) You know, like using these polythene banners more than the
    me kola evaa   because they will never remove it.
    [You know, like using these polythene banners more than the
    these paper ones because they will never remove it.]

The language that has provided the grammar for the utterance in (8) is English. The elements preceding the switch and following the switch are structurally related and therefore, insertion is plausible. Important to remember is that the speaker says his L1 is Sinhala. Hence the dominant language of the utterance in this instance is not the speaker's L1.

The speaker in (9) considers himself a native speaker of Sinhala, but more proficient in English. According to the MLF theory, the morphosyntactic structure of the utterance can be analyzed as Sinhala. The collocation 'company vehicle' is an insertion from English. However, the speaker's self-assessment of language proficiency cannot be determined from the utterance.

(9)   a.   *mama ethanata giyee* **company vehicle** *ekeŋ*.
             [**I went there in the** company vehicle.]
       b.   eka **initial stage** *eka*
             that /**initial stage** / *one*
             [That is the initial stage]

Both (9a) and (9b) are examples for insertional CM. However, observe the difficulties in determining the dominant language using the MLF Model. In (9b) the speaker too chose Sinhala as the L1 but English is used 80% in informal discourse (self-assessment). What is the ML in (9b)? Is it a sentence where the collocation 'initial stage' is nested in a frame, set by Sinhala? Morpheme counting too will not assist to determine the ML as there is an equal number of morphemes provided by both languages. The conversation that was recorded was completely in English and this was the only instance where the speaker chose to mix.

Theories put forward by Myers-Scotton (2002) and Muysken (2000) recognize that in insertion there is a dominant grammar at play. Poplack (1980) in a Spanish-English study refers to insertion as intra-sentential CS. Poplack argues that when bilinguals employ the strategy of intra-sentential CS, proficiency in one language is prevalent. This theory too refers to a dominant language at play in the grammar of the bilingual.

There are many theories that define the alternational type of CM in Contact Linguistics. Poplack (1980) views alternation in terms of the compatibility or equivalence of the languages involved where mixing is akin to code switching between turns or utterances. Muysken (2000) makes a distinction between insertion and alternation that corresponds to Auer's view (1995). Where Myers-Scotton (2002) discusses that in 'Classic CS' the MLF model has largely explained the role of a dominant language at play in the speech of the bilingual, focusing that insertion takes place within a clause and alternation takes place between sentences, Muysken (2000) argues that alternation too can take place within a clause.

Much of the controversy in CM stems from the presence of 'other language' single words in bilingual data. The two structural approaches by Muysken (2000) and Myers-Scotton (2002) toward single lexical items in code-mixed data stem from the symmetrical and asymmetrical relationships between the languages concerned.

From the structural analyses proposed, the theory of CL (Muysken 2000) provides a satisfactory observation of random mixing patterns present in bilingual discourse as revealed in the data in this study. There are some indications that the bilingual makes use of both grammars when CM. In many instances, there are indications of a dominant base language effect especially regarding single word mixes (mainly in insertional CM). Note also the observation that the bilingual is rarely fluent in his/her languages (Grosjean 1982). This stems from the argument that the needs of the bilinguals' languages are different depending on the interlocutor, topic and domain. The fourth problem is undoubtedly the status of the mixed varieties that have originated as a result of language contact and language change.

5. Methodology

The main technique employed to analyze the bilingual data is Muysken's (2000) typology of CM. In addition, Myers Scotton's theory of the MLF is used to reveal the difficulties in determining the dominant language in mixed data.

The influence or non-influence of L1 of speakers was determined by self assessment questionnaires circulated amongst the 20 speakers. The speakers were chosen based on their language use in specific domains (a minimum of 6 questions out of ten ticked as using both Sinhala and English in conversation). The intention of the questionnaire was to determine the L1, gender, language of instruction, profession, ethnicity, language used in different domains and attitudes towards languages and language use in society. The self-assessment was used to show that the dominant language of utterances, in some cases, was not the L1 of the speaker. The speakers were also interviewed when they were filling in the questionnaires.

A case study approach was used to analyze the speech patterns of speakers with different L1s. Spontaneous speech productions of informal discussions on general topics were taped and transcribed.

While the MLF Model is used to explain the presence of a dominant language or grammar at work in the bilingual mental lexicon when they are engaged in intra-sentential CM, this study will reveal how the MLF proves problematic in defining certain bilingual utterances. However, the theory of MLF explains mixing concerning a dominant language. The data reveals that the ML is sometimes not the L1 or the mother tongue of the speaker. The ML in some cases was the most widely used language in that speech community as exemplified by data analyzed in this study.

6. Analysis

Based on the data, this study observes that there are full sentences (alternation), adverbs, particles, quotatives, interjections, and tags (alternation), nouns, verbs and modifiers (insertion) prevalent in the data. The following are a few examples for alternational CM.

(10)   a.   They are just wasting their money / *ethanata methanata*
              [They are just wasting money **here and there**]
       b.   What I took is an article, advertorial *ekak wage*
              [What I took is an article **like an** advertorial]

The example in (10a) can be analyzed as a case for alternational CM. The elements from Sinhala occur at sentence boundaries. The elements are non-nested forms and are not embedded in the ML. Hence, alternation is plausible. The example in (10b) is a case where alternation has led to insertion. The elements are not structurally related. There are many cases (such as (10b)), where one phenomenon leads to the other in the mixed data.

(11)   Polythene banners use *kara nan prashnayak nee*.
              [**It wouldn't have mattered if** polythene banners were used]

In (11) there is a collocation and the verb in English. The sentence follows Sinhala word order and not English, though it starts with

morphemes from English. The morphosyntactic frame for the utterance has been provided by Sinhala. Based on the MLF theory, the dominant language is Sinhala. Based on Muysken's (2000) typology, 'polythene banners' is a collocation and an insertion in the utterance that belongs to Sinhala. In the insertional type of mixing, the dominant language can be identified. If the collocation from English is identified as an insertion, the dominant language is Sinhala.

In (12), the utterance reveals alternational CM. The elements are not structurally related.

(12)   I never thought it was going to be so easy I mean *poddak hithanna*
        [I never thought it was going to be so easy I mean **just think**]

Although English provides the most number of morphemes and can be intuitively identified as the dominant language, the utterance reveals the strategy of alternation.

Based on the empirical data, it is evident that English-Sinhala CM represents all phenomena: insertion, alternation and CL patterns. It also reveals that bilingual Sri Lankans use all types of mixing in the course of conversation and that insertion may lead to alternation. Many examples were analyzed as cases for insertional CM justifying Muysken's observation that insertion occurs in colonial settings. However, a number of examples were also analyzed as alternational CM. Data also revealed a dominant or a base language at work in some instances, most often in insertional CM.

If the native language was any other than the participating languages in the mixed utterance, it had no influence on determining the ML of the utterance. In the English-Sinhala corpus, data revealed that the ML was always one of the participating languages. Interestingly, speakers who were more proficient in English chose Sinhala as their L1. Data also revealed that insertion occurs with single, content, nested forms. In alternational CM, utterances follow a pattern of non-nested forms. There is no syntactic relationship between the mixed elements.

The argument that in insertion there is a dominant language at work does not necessarily mean that the speaker is less proficient in the other participating language. The complexity arises as speakers switch from insertion to alternation during the course of conversation. Hence, it is possible that one phenomenon leads to another. All the informants selected for this study were code mixers who employed both insertional and alternational CM. They were bilingual speakers of Sinhala and English. Based on the data, it is most difficult to determine the language proficiency of speakers as speakers incorporated many mixing patterns in their utterances. Determining the dominant language in certain utterances also proved problematic as a result of the mixing patterns employed by the speakers and their complexities.

Kachru's nativization theory explains the following nouns found in the discourse of bilinguals whose dominant language is Sinhala. These borrowings are accompanied by Sinhala case marking suffixes. They occur frequently in the discourse of native Sinhala speakers. These nativizations belong to the dominant Sinhala speaker. In many ways, these examples are hybrid words, a combination of an English noun with a Sinhala suffix, and are compatible with Muysken's (2000) CL analysis. These borrowed elements no longer belong to English. The process of nativization describes the following nouns as borrowings or nativizations in mixed discourse. In utterances with such inclusions, the dominant language is easily identifiable.

(13)   *diutiya*   'duty'
            caaraya   'car'
            tayaraya   'tyre'

7. Conclusion

It is evident that theories put forward by Myers-Scotton can be used to identify the dominant language in mixed utterances. However, the insertional, alternational and CL patterns of mixing explain the structural features of the mixed utterances better. Utterances where insertional can be identified reveal the workings of a single grammar.

The insertions are code mixes. Many of the borrowings now in languages were initially code mixes. The distinction between borrowings and code mixes also sheds light on the influence of the dominant language. If the embedded forms are phonologically, morphologically and syntactically integrated to the borrower language, these elements are borrowings and not code mixes. The mixing patterns found in bilingual discourse are significant due to the influence of the dominant language. In insertion, the influence of the dominant language is more prominent. In alternation, both languages may have equal status in the utterance. In CL too, a dominant language can be identified.

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Symbols & Abbreviations

CS	Code Switching
CM	Code Mixing
Classis CS	Classic Code Switching
ML	Matrix Language
MLF	Matrix Language Frame Model
EL	Embedded Language
L1	First language