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## **An Empirical Study on Code Mixing in Print Advertisements in Hong Kong**

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**Abstract:** Hong Kong is an international city where Eastern and Western cultures meet. Both English and Chinese are official languages in this city where about 95% of the population is Chinese. Although, the native language is Cantonese (i.e., a Chinese dialect), people in Hong Kong like mixing English terms in their formal and informal communication. This language phenomenon is referred to as code mixing in which linguistic units of two languages are mixed within a sentence. Code mixing is common in print advertisements in Hong Kong. It is worth studying the effect of code mixing on these advertisements. A survey on attitudes to code mixing in print advertisements was conducted and it collected data from 278 valid questionnaires sent to the local Chinese residents in Hong Kong. The results showed that (1) most code-mixed advertisements could be understood, (2) convenience products and shopping products were perceived to be suitable to be advertised with code mixing and (3) young people and educated people more preferred code mixing in advertising. It is suggested that advertisers should be aware of the social status of the targeted consumers and find out whether code mixing matches with the products' images and consumers' social identities properly.

**Key words:** Code mixing, print advertisements, consumer attitudes, cultural, social influence

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Submerged in a Western culture, Hong Kong people are greatly tolerant of English and Latin-letter words (Wu, 2001). After the handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997, English is still used as one of the official languages. Hong Kong is a diglossic language community with English, standard Chinese and Cantonese used for communication (Hong Kong Yearbook, 2008; Snow, 2005). Many of the world's bilingual communities produce discourses that involve the alternation of two (or more) of the languages. The term code mixing refers to mixing of words from various languages within the same sentence while the term code switching refers to mixing of words from various languages at the clause level or above in a fully grammatical way (Poplack, 1980). Bhatia and Ritchie (2004) defined code mixing as the mixing of various linguistic units (morphemes, words, modifiers, phrases, clauses and sentences) primarily from two participating grammatical systems within a sentence. But such terms have been used interchangeably in many relevant literatures (Bhatt, 1997; Myers-Scotton, 2002; Poplack, 2001). Although, studies of code mixing have generally focused on oral language, crosslingual mixing can also be seen in written languages.

The aim of advertising is to evoke affective or cognitive responses of the consumers to motivate and predispose them to purchase the products. Advertising is to communicate

information, ideas and feelings that constitute its value-expressive appeals. It externalizes the intangible components of a product into words, sound, images for the communication purpose. It is worth studying the effect of code mixing on advertising and whether it is able to help to achieve these aims of advertising. Previously, there were similar studies on other language combinations such as Arabic and French (Bentahila and Davies, 1983), Dutch and English (Clyne, 2000), Finnish and English (Halmari, 1993), two Bantu languages (Bokamba, 1998) and Cantonese and English (Gibbons, 1987).

There are different Chinese dialects. Cantonese is the most popular in Hong Kong because Hong Kong is geographically close to Guandong Province where the native dialect is Cantonese. However, traditionally English is used by educated people and also commonly used in the business sector and the government. In Hong Kong, Cantonese and English are used in formal and informal daily communication. These two languages are with different social values and roles. Cantonese as the native language binds the local people in Hong Kong together and English is related with high social position and identification of elite group and modernization. Thus, Cantonese is the language of solidarity and English is the language of power. Since, these two languages are used closely together for a long time in Hong Kong, English terms are often mixed with Cantonese.

In a Chinese society like Hong Kong, Chinese is the mother tongue for most of the people whereas English can be considered as their second language. The main stream code mixing pattern is restricted to insertion of English into Cantonese, the dominant language. Gibbons (1983, 1987) studied language attitudes and code mixing in Hong Kong between Cantonese and English and observed that people in Hong Kong switch between Cantonese and English in their speech ranging from tutorial discussion in tertiary institutions, formal and informal conversational, television and radio broadcasting. The most common pattern is a single English word surrounded by other Cantonese constituents. Hong Kong people may be better called non-fluent bilinguals or semibilinguals (Fu, 1987). Similar observation was made by Pennington (1998), who reckoned that the English knowledge of Hong Kong Chinese is a number of words and phrases instead of fluency as a second language. Typical Cantonese-speaking Hong Kong people exhibit merely a degree of lexical bilingualism with respect to English.

According to Takashi (1990), there are five reasons why there is a code mixing phenomenon in society. First, mixed foreign words fill lexical gap because there is no native equivalent. Second, they are technical terms that are used in similar circumstances but they are more technical and special than the native equivalents. Third, because of euphemism the mixed foreign words avoid direct expressions in some topics such as sex. Fourth, mixed foreign words provide special effects that convey a modernity and sophistication about the subject under discussion. Fifth, they are trade names that are used directly without translation.

Li (1997) studied code mixing in Hong Kong and used the Principle of Economy to explain Cantonese speakers' lexical choice between Cantonese and English. Li (1997) observed that speakers prefer inserting English words into Cantonese utterances if the English words are shorter than the Cantonese equivalents. In addition to the concept of principal of economy, Li (2000) provided three more motivational reasons to explain code mixing practices in Hong Kong. The first reason is euphemism. English alludes to the same referent and does not explicitly describe potential embarrassing notions. The second reason is specificity. An English expression is preferred because it is more general or specific compared with its near-synonymous Chinese words. Another reason is bilingual punning. It is a deliberate attempt to create double meaning utilizing the similarity in pronunciation between the English and Cantonese elements.



Fig. 1: An example of a Cantonese print advertisement mixed with English terms (Source: <http://www.mcdonalds.com.hk/chinese/campaign/McCrispy/index.htm>)



Fig. 2: English translation of the print advertisement in Fig. 1 (Source: <http://www.mcdonalds.com.hk/english/campaign/McCrispy/index.htm>)

Figure 1 is an example of a typical Cantonese print advertisement with code mixing in Hong Kong. The mixed English terms are highlighted. Figure 2 shows the corresponding English translation for comparison.

The example in Fig. 1 and 2 shows some common features of code mixing found in print advertisements in Hong Kong. First, the mixed English terms are mainly single words such as perfect, size, juicy and jumbo in Fig. 1. Second, they are usually simple English words. In Fig. 1, the mixed word jumbo is supposed to be giant as shown in Fig. 2. But jumbo is simpler and it will be understood and accepted by the general public of Hong Kong. Third, the syntactic role of the mixed English term may be modified to adapt to the Chinese grammar.

For example, in Fig. 1, the mixed word juicy is supposed to be juiciness as shown in Fig. 2. But the word juiciness is a noun that cannot be inserted into the Chinese sentence in Fig. 1 directly.

Advertising language is perceived to be creative, complex and attention grabbing. Advertisements are usually packed with various distinguished elements like repetition, strategic word order, neologisms, superlatives, hyperbole and other creative non-standard use of language such as code mixing. With such limitations in mind, advertising language has to be carefully crafted with the intention to manipulate and persuade consumers on lexical level. Writing in general is more thoroughly thought out than verbal communication. This is especially true to the case of advertising because it usually involves a huge sum of resources to create and produce an advertisement. A good advertisement should increase consumers' appetite for a particular product. As resources, space and time are limited, advertising has become a very creative and innovative medium in terms of both the usage of language and images. When advertisers design code-mixed statements in advertisements, they should consider whether such a statement can actually convey the messages to the audience effectively. It is worth studying influences of code mixing in advertising in Hong Kong where people are used to mixing English words in their native language. Does this language phenomenon in advertising enhance communication? Or does it cause misinterpretation and misevaluation because of its informal lexical structure?

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

A survey was performed in this research for data collection. There were 278 valid questionnaires collected from 1,150 questionnaires sent to the local Chinese residents in Hong Kong and they were selected randomly from the Hong Kong white pages during the period between April and May 2009. It is assumed that print advertisements can be read by all walks of life and, thus, respondents were selected from white pages. The questionnaire was divided into the following three parts.

In part 1, there were 24 advertisement samples of four types of products with code mixing captured from popular newspapers and magazines published just before the survey. The details of advertisement samples are shown in Table 1. For each advertisement sample, the mixed English terms were highlighted as those shown in Fig. 1. A respondent was asked (1) whether he/she understood the code-mixed statement and (2) whether he/she felt comfortable with it. Likert scale was used and respondents might select from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Part 2 contained six questions to collect respondents' attitudes to code mixing in print advertisements. Likert scale was used in the following four questions and respondents might select from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

- **Q. 1:** You often understand print advertisements with code mixing (i.e., Chinese advertisements mixed with English terms)
- **Q. 2:** You often feel comfortable when you read print advertisements with code mixing
- **Q. 3:** In general, you prefer code mixing in print advertisements
- **Q. 4:** Print advertisements with code mixing often draw your attention

Table 1: Types of products in advertisement samples of the survey

No. of advertisement samples	Product types	Examples
6	Convenience product	Battery, soft drink, fast food
6	Shopping product	Television, computer, washing machine
6	Specialty product	Jewelry, automobile, real estate
6	Unsought product	Life insurance, new banking services

The last two questions in this part were open questions. In one question, the respondent was asked to provide the name of a product to show his/her preference for code mixing used in the product advertisement.

- **Q 5:** Please suggest the name of a product that is suitable to be advertised with code mixing

In another question, the respondent was asked to provide reasons why code mixing was suitable for the product advertisement mentioned in the previous question.

- **Q. 6:** Please list the reason(s) for your suggestion in Q. 5

Part 3 collected the basic demographical data such as gender, age, educational level and income of respondents. It found out whether the demographical factors affect preference for code mixing in advertisements.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

There were 278 valid questionnaires collected from 1,150 questionnaires sent to the local Chinese residents in Hong Kong.

### **Part 1 of the Questionnaire**

In general, almost all respondents could understand code mixing. Regarding their feeling with code mixing, more respondents felt comfortable with advertisements of convenience products and shopping products. Table 2 shows the proportion of the respondents who understood the code-mixed advertisements (i.e., those who selected 4 or 5) and that of the respondents who felt comfortable with these advertisements (i.e., those who selected 4 or 5).

Table 2: Summary of respondents' understanding and feeling regarding code mixing

Sample No.	Product types	Understanding code mixing (%)	Feeling comfortable with code mixing (%)
1	Convenience product	97.84	96.40
2		95.68	77.70
3		96.04	88.13
4		97.84	77.70
5		97.84	72.30
6		97.84	90.29
7	Shopping product	97.12	98.20
8		99.28	91.73
9		98.56	85.25
10		97.84	89.57
11		95.32	88.85
12		97.84	73.02
13	Specialty product	97.12	67.99
14		98.56	67.63
15		96.40	61.15
16		98.56	64.39
17		96.76	48.92
18		98.92	42.09
19	Unsought product	98.56	68.71
20		98.56	67.27
21		99.28	61.15
22		99.64	57.19
23		95.68	46.76
24		96.76	48.56

Convenience products (e.g., goods that can be found in supermarkets) are relatively inexpensive items that require little shopping effort and planning. They are purchased and used regularly. Shopping products (e.g., televisions and computers) require comparison shopping. Their prices are often higher than those of convenience products. Consumers often compare these products across stores and brands. Convenience and shopping products are widely distributed to the general consumers and people are supposed to be familiar with them. Code mixing is already a language habit common in Hong Kong and its presence in advertisements of these two types of products can match with lifestyles, cultures and identities of consumers and, thus, code mixing is more preferred for these two types of products.

Specialty products (such as expensive automobiles and watches) are often with exclusive distribution and targeted promotions managed by producers and retailers cautiously. Code mixing may not match with a luxurious and high-quality image of these products because it is considered a kind of informal lexical structure. Unsought products are mainly innovative items with little awareness and items that consumers do not want to think about (i.e., no initial desire to purchase). Life insurance is a typical example of unsought products. In fact, unsought products usually need highly persuasive advertising and aggressive personal selling. Promotional messages of these products are expected to be serious and professional but code mixing is informal sentential structure inconsistent with this purpose. Therefore, fewer respondents felt comfortable with code mixing in advertisements of these two types of products.

### Part 2 of the Questionnaire

In this part there were four Likert-scale questions. Respondents might select from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Their means of the responses are presented in Table 3.

First of all, most respondents could understand code mixing in advertisements (Q. 1). This result is consistent with that of Part 1 of the survey. It reveals that code mixing in advertisements does not cause difficulty to audiences and this language phenomenon is quite common in Hong Kong. It is also likely that advertisers carefully select mixed English terms that are simple and understandable to the general public.

Generally speaking, respondents felt comfortable with code mixing. However, the mean of feeling comfortable with code mixing (Q. 2) is lower than that of understanding code mixing (Q. 1). It implies that most people can understand this informal linguistic structure but some may not feel comfortable with it. Consistent with this finding, the mean of preferring code mixing (Q. 3) is 3.73 that represents slightly agree. On the whole, respondents did not have very strong views of using code mixing or not. However, it is interesting to find out that code mixing can draw attention of audiences. The mean of drawing attention (Q. 4) is 4.35 that is higher than 4.0 (i.e., agree). It is suggested a statement mixed with two languages may create a visual or linguistic effect that is interesting and eye catching. Thus, an advertisement with code mixing is able to call the attention to the product and this is the first step of AIDA model.

Table 3: Means of responses to questions on attitudes to code mixing

Question No.	Response	Mean
1	You often understand print advertisements with code mixing (i.e., Chinese advertisements mixed with English terms)	4.87
2	You often feel comfortable when you read print advertisements with code mixing	3.68
3	In general, you prefer code mixing in print advertisements	3.73
4	Print advertisements with code mixing often draw your attention	4.35

Table 4: Summary of the reasons for products to be advertised with code mixing

Product types	Major reasons
Convenience product (23.7%)	1. More suitable than native words 2. Produce funny or humorous effects 3. Respond to cultural influences from other countries
Shopping product (56.4%)	1. More suitable than native words 2. Respond to cultural influences from other countries 3. Replace rarely used native words 4. Create semantic distinctions
Specialty product (9.3%)	1. Show social prestige or status 2. More suitable than native words 3. Respond to cultural influences from other countries 4. Create semantic distinctions
Unsought product (10.6%)	1. Show social prestige or status 2. More suitable than native words 3. Replace rarely used native words

To answer Q. 5 and 6, respondents were required to suggest a product suitable to be advertised with code mixing and provide reasons for their suggestions. Table 4 shows the summary of their responses.

Most respondents (about 80%) suggested code mixing in advertisements of convenience products and shopping products. This finding is consistent with the result of Part 1. For these two types of products, the common major reasons are that 1) mixed elements are more suitable than native words and 2) it can respond to cultural influences from other countries. It implies that the code mixing phenomenon is well accepted by the market of these two types of products, especially foreign goods whose cultural influences can be reflected by it. Tse (1992) found that there are two reasons why mixed English terms are more suitable than native words. Field-specific English vocabularies are used to fill lexical gaps in the native language. For example, Hong Kong people prefer mixing English technical terms like those used in medical and legal fields with Cantonese. They think these mixed elements are more able to convey the specific meanings in a particular field. For English inserted into the body of advertisement, it is used for practical purpose instead of attracting the readers' attention. Advertisements selling high-tech services and health products tend to mix significantly more English technical terms (e.g., e-Banking, high definition digital TV, connecting people) than other advertisements. Thus, code mixing in advertisements of convenience and shopping products is perceived to be more informative to consumers and can attract possible buyers.

One adopts a word from another language to fill in a lexical gap of a native language because it is not possible to find the native language equivalent. This happens when one has a superior standard of a foreign language and can use it at their will. If the syntactic structures of two languages are comparable, people will select the less marked and less complete one. If English, for example, is able to mix with the Chinese syntax, people take less linguistic effort to express a shorter or simpler sentence. It can assist in conveying meanings unambiguously and efficiently (Li, 2003). It is more economical and convenient for people to express their messages.

Another major reason for code mixing in convenience and shopping product advertisements is to serve as emotional buffer to replace the unwanted Cantonese words with emotive meaning. People will feel more comfortable with these English terms when they avoid using their native language to express something embarrassing or undesirable. Because of euphemism, people like code mixing to soften the unpleasant and embarrassed effects in the native language (Thomason, 2001). For example, in one of Hong Kong governmental television announcements on preventing HIV infection, the utterance *dom dom*



(that means condom) is used (source: [http://www.isd.gov.hk/eng/tvapi/05\\_ad56.html](http://www.isd.gov.hk/eng/tvapi/05_ad56.html)). The Chinese equivalent of condom is never mentioned in this announcement. Similarly, in underwear advertisements, English terms will be used and mixed in Chinese messages. Thus, advertisers have to understand such a unique culture when determining what should be used with code mixing.

According to the survey result, code mixing can create funny or humorous effects to convenience products. Piller (2003) suggested that foreign language impedes automatic processing and thereby arrests the attention of recipients for a longer time span. In other words, English serves as an attention-getting device in the advertisement. Stanlaw (1987) pointed out that one important reason for the use of English loanwords (i.e., mixed English words) is that they provide linguistic tools that individuals can use in personal and highly creative ways. Takashi (1997) explained that English as mixed terms can catch audiences' attention by using language innovatively and motivating the mix of loanwords.

For shopping products, code mixing can also replace rarely used native words and create semantic distinction. Traditional native terms might not be considered appropriate in certain situations. For example, people prefer English terms when they are talking about innovative products like computers. They like the term Internet instead of its Chinese translation although there is a standard Chinese translation popular in other Chinese societies like Mainland China and Taiwan. Hong Kong has its unique mixed culture of East and West. This special culture can be expressed in the mixture of these two languages in which Cantonese provides the main structure and the English words are incorporated.

The survey result showed that relatively respondents did not think code mixing was suitable to specialty products and unsought products. Only about 20% of respondents selected these two types of products to be advertised with code mixing. However, it is interesting to find out that social prestige and status are the most important reason for code mixing used in advertising of these two types of products. People like mixed foreign words because they represent the prestige or status of a dominant language or culture (Gibbons, 1983). English is an international language used in trade and commerce globally and use of English creates an image of credibility, authority and authenticity (Yau, 1993). With code mixing in their communication with others, an individual can impress others for a superior status, higher education and urbanity. This encourages people to mix English elements in their native words (Yau, 1993). In some situations, as pointed out by Luke (1997), when there is no formal Chinese to replace a mixed element, people may prefer mixed English to informal variety of Chinese. According to Maslow's motivation theory, people progressively go up a hierarchy of needs. Code mixing used for specialty product advertisements can associate the advertised products with esteem needs (i.e., the fourth level of the hierarchy) for others' recognition of one's personal capacities and functions.

It is also interesting to find out that most respondents who preferred specialty products to be advertised with code mixing suggested that the name of a specialty product should be in English or even French. It is quite common in Hong Kong that the mixed elements in advertisements are proper nouns such as personal and place names and names of various products in English. For example, in Fig. 3, there is a real estate advertisement in which only the English name The Mayfair is found. The Chinese name (if any) is not mentioned at all.

### **Part 3 of the Questionnaire**

Pennington *et al.* (1992) found that ethnicity, education level, age and social situation affect the code choice. ANOVA tests (standard alpha = 0.05) were performed to find out if demographical factors affect the attitudes towards code mixing in advertisements. The



Fig. 3: An example of a print advertisement of real estate with an English name only (Source: <http://www.centanet.com/icms/ICMServlet/download/329-14758-11724/080804.jpg>)

demographical data collected in this survey include gender, age, educational level, monthly income and occupation. The survey result showed that only age and educational level were related to code mixing while other demographical factors did not cause any effect on code mixing statistically.

The respondents were divided into two groups based on their age (older than 40 or not). Younger respondents ( $age \leq 40$ ) more preferred to code mixing. In Q. 3 (i.e., preferring code mixing), the mean of younger respondents was 4.21 while that of older respondents ( $age > 40$ ) was 3.45. It was also found that advertisements with code mixing were more likely to draw attention of younger respondents. In Q. 4 (i.e., drawing attention), the mean of younger respondents was 4.52 while that of older respondents was 3.86. It is suggested that code mixing is a phenomenon fairly common in young population in Hong Kong. On the whole, younger people tend to prefer code mixing and it can draw their attention.

Young people in Hong Kong have acquired their own culture that is neither completely Chinese nor completely English. There seems to be a movement towards uniformity in code mixing. They use mixed codes to communicate with their friends and classmates for identification of membership. Code mixing used by young people is representation of membership. It reflects familiarity with English words (Luke and Richards, 1982). Cantonese mixed with English has flourished to a situation that it is almost the sub-cultural linguistic norm of different social groups. Hong Kong people may need to belong to a clique and the habit of using mixed codes is the majority in the population. It is a result of a change of social pattern, urbanization, modernization and education. Young people may like to maintain communication within a social group. When one does not follow the tradition of speaking code-mixed languages in a community, he/she may be expelled. For older people in Hong Kong, they were educated through the Chinese medium mainly. They may speak Cantonese or some Chinese dialects only and have little knowledge of English (Luke, 1997). Thus, they do not prefer code mixing in their daily communication including advertising.

Regarding the educational levels, the respondents were divided into two groups: (1) low level: secondary school or below and (2) high level: university or above. It was found that

respondents with high educational level were more comfortable with and preferred code mixing. In Q. 2 (i.e., feeling comfortable with code mixing) the mean of respondents of high educational level was 4.11 while that of respondents of low educational level was 3.56. In Q. 3 (i.e., preferring code mixing) the mean of respondents of high educational level was 3.85 while that of respondents of low educational level was 3.17. This reflects that people with higher educational level like code mixing advertisements that can draw their attention.

Supposedly, mixing two languages is considered ill-mannered, show-off, ignorant and aggressive. Though code mixing is a natural consequence of languages in contact by Li (1997), a mix of two languages is not negatively perceived in Hong Kong. Gibbons (1983) has shown that when Cantonese speakers speak only English with others, they can project an image of Westernization and status. When Cantonese speakers use only Cantonese, they show Chinese solidarity and humility. In Hong Kong code mixing is able to identify and maintain group solidarity (Gibbons, 1987). The usage of mixed English terms in Cantonese enables people to avoid total commitment to the traditional Chinese culture and simultaneously avoiding sounding too Western.

Traditionally, English has been promoted as the educational medium in Hong Kong since the early years of its colonial status. Although after 1997, use of Chinese in the secondary and primary schools has been encouraged significantly, English is still the only teaching medium in most universities. Use of English is encouraged throughout the education system with the aim at retaining Hong Kong's place as a world trade center and an international city. For example, Fig. 4 shows a homepage of a post-secondary institute in Hong Kong in which there is a Cantonese slogan with two mixed English words say and way. Literally, the whole slogan means to continue studying or get a job, you have your say and your way. Most educated people in Hong Kong prefer code mixing in their lives. They have grown so accustomed to code mixing. Parents prefer sending their children to schools with a high reputation for teaching English. The higher the education level of a student, the more he/she is exposed to English.



Fig. 4: An example of an educational advertisement with code mixing (Source: <http://www.vtc.edu.hk/hd/>)

English has important practical value in connecting business and high technology with the world. Proficiency of English is one of the entry requirements of universities in Hong Kong although, local people do not use English noticeably within the Chinese community in daily life. People select the English mixed terms to achieve sociolinguistic effects such as identification with better education and a Western outlook. In Hong Kong, people use both English and Cantonese for identification in an expected way. People use Cantonese to affirm their ethnic identities and use English to affirm their acquired status as educated persons (Scotton, 1982).

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Despite the end of British rule and the reunification of Hong Kong with China in 1997, English continues to function as an elite and high language in Hong Kong. Cantonese is used for communicative purposes in general. However, English as the minority language is widely used in government, business and higher education. Code mixing is often socially motivated consciously or subconsciously. It denotes the language of the in-group and identifies certain classes of people. Probably the major reason for the significance of English in Hong Kong is economic. The development of Hong Kong's economy is dependent on English as an international language. Cantonese is basically the low language in which Hong Kong people are used for oral communication. Cantonese in written Chinese is traditionally viewed as deviant and inferior because written Cantonese employs a lot of colloquial words that cannot be found in Mandarin (standard Chinese). Yet it is gradually finding its way into written form and becoming quite common among popular press.

In Hong Kong, code mixing is common in almost every aspect of life including advertisements. This research found that most people are able to understand this informal lexical structure when it appears in print advertisement and it can catch eyes of audiences. People think that convenience products and shopping products are most suitable to be advertised with code mixing. Mixed English terms are perceived to be better than their native language because mixed elements may fill lexical gaps especially when advertisements are about field-specific products and they also serve as emotional buffer for euphemism. Code mixing, in general, is not suitable for specialty product and unsought product advertisements. But customers prefer English brand names for these kinds of products because this shows social prestige or status.

It is also found that young and educated people prefer code mixing in advertisements. It reflects mixing English terms in their communication is well accepted. Code mixing should be considered when they are target market segments of products. There is a high co-relationship between capability of using English and social and economic status. Better English means better job opportunities because at the high level of the economy, employees need to contact with foreign counterparts who might only use English for communication.

On the whole, English is used here to connect with future orientation, internationalism, sophistication, elitism, success and fun (Alm, 2003; Kelly-Homes, 2005; Piller, 2003). English is associated with a certain social stereotype, i.e., advancement and modernity. Myers-Scotton (1993) argued that most code mixing is to negotiate a social situation and it is viewed as a socially functional phenomenon that occurs with the consumer's intention. There are socio-psychological motivations behind code mixing that can maintain or negotiate particular type of social identity. Therefore, code mixing helps people to simultaneously access to right and obligations connected with various social identities. Advertisers should be aware of the social status of targeted consumers and determine whether code mixing matches with products' images and consumers' social identities properly.

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