

Investigating Code-Switching in Television Advertisements in Iraqi Kurdistan

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Abstract

This study sheds light on the use of code-switching in television advertisements in Iraqi Kurdistan. Code-switching is the process of exchanging between languages in conversation. Also, it divides into three primary types: inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and extra-sentential (tag switching). The objective of this study is indicating functions of code-switching and its impacts on viewers. A quantitative method used through designing a questionnaire to investigate general attitudes toward the use of code-switching, and data collected from 300 participants having different educational backgrounds. The findings assert that code-switching has several significant functions in television advertisements and it impacts on audiences' behaviors in various ways. Indicating functions of code-switching is significant as it exhibits its influence in conversation, audiences' insights and behaviors toward television advertisements.

Keywords: Code-Switching, Television Advertisements, Iraqi Kurdistan

INTRODUCTION

Code-switching is identified as a kind of bilingualism study and is indicated as one of the oldest branches which have been grown inside the sociolinguistics field. (Keller, 2020)

Code-switching abbreviated as (CS) denotes the simultaneous employment of more than one language in a discussion, and it is usually noticed in bilingual or multilingual utterances. Bilingual interlocutors might exchange or switch from one language (usually from their mother tongue) into another language (second language or a foreign language) whilst the speakers talk with other dual interlocutors. (Shim, 2021)

This research aims to investigate the functions and impacts of code-switching utilization in Kurdish television advertisements. The functions of code-switching could be bridging cultural gaps, improving conversation, revealing solidarity, showing modern style, and appealing authenticity. Code-switching leads engagement, enhance comprehension, memorability, and capture more consumers. Hence, the current study addresses two research questions to achieve the study goals:

- 1) What are the functions of code-switching in television advertisements in Iraqi Kurdistan?
- 2) How can code-switching in television advertisements impact viewers' behavior and insights toward purchasing the products?

The above questions have been designed based on the various functions of code-switching and these functions impacts purchasers' desires toward advertised products. Thus, they granted an inclusive insight concerning the purpose behind the usage of code-switching and reveals its impact on consumers. Addressing these questions not only states the phenomenon but also identifies its practical consequence and real-life influence on customers' behavior.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The term "Code-switch" was a linguistic phenomenon. Gumperz is a sociologist who was keen on the situations that made bilingual speakers switch back and forth between their mother tongue and the foreign language spoken by most speakers. (Cooks-Campbell, 2022)

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Code-switching is divided into 3 main kinds including, inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and extra-sentential (also known as “tag switching”). (Mesthrie, 2011)

Inter-sentential

Inter-sentential is the most common type that takes place between two separate distinct utterances or two interconnected clauses which are related to the same utterance. For instance, ئایا ئه‌وان چوون بۆ Jule’s place for dinner? (Mesthrie, 2011)

Intra-sentential

Intra-sentential code-switching occurs in the middle part of the sentence, or more obviously occurs inside the utterances or sentences. Such as, بابچین بۆ resort بهیه‌کوره (Mesthrie, 2011).

Extra-sentential

Extra-sentential known as tag or emblematic switching, refers to the situation in which the speaker inserts a word or tag phrase from one language into another. For instance, ئه‌وان بلیه‌متن ، aren’t they? (Mesthrie, 2011)

The Reasons Behind Code-Switching

Interlocutors switch codes because they might not explore suitable words, phrases, or utterances, in a language. Also, code-switching is performed whilst somebody intends to quote somebody else, several books, idioms, or proverbs from other languages. In addition, talented bilinguals switch codes when they see individuals who are relaxed in speaking just a specific language, not another foreign language. Thus, code-switching attracts participants’ attention. Nonetheless, individuals switch codes because they seek to reveal solidarity towards several other people. (Abubakr, Hassan & Muhedeen, 2019)

The following are five conditions of code-switching occurrence:

1. Inadequate lexical item in either language.
2. Several tasks are experienced merely in one of the languages.
3. Miscomprehending has been illustrated for the addressees.
4. Interlocutors seek to create effective communication.
5. Interlocutors seek to indicate an important tip. (Al-Oraibi & Himood, 2022)

Functions of Code-Switching

Many different linguistics identified the functions of code-switching differently in order to reveal its significant role in a conversation. In times gone by, this process was looked just like a symbol of inadequately regarding bilingual interlocutors’ expertise. For example, Arabic residents usually code-switch to English to preserve embarrassing circumstances. Such as the interlocutor mostly expresses English word ‘sorry’ for apologizing instead of ‘آسف’. Also, they say ‘thanks’ instead of uttering their native phrase شکرآ لک. (Abubakr, Hassan & Muhedeen, 2019)

Holmes and Wilson, (2017) stated seven functions of code-switching including, participant, solidarity, status, topic of the conversation, code-switching for gaining affective communication, code-switching and rhetorical, and effects lexical borrowing. (Holmes & Wilson, 2017)

Interlocutors who perform code-switching, particularly when they alternate or switch codes from dominant languages or dialects to non-standard languages or everyday interlocutors’ dialects could reveal marginalized or community biases interlocutors. It happens while amount of certain dialects which are minority. (Hill, 2008)

Impacts of Code-Switching

Code-switching could effectively impact target viewers. It impacts viewers' perceptions of products as genuine, expands engagement, buying decisions by increasing reliability of products. Conversely, if code-switching is used abnormally, it will cause insecurity and dependability of advertised products. (Luna & Peracchio, 2005)

The memorability of products, engaging more viewers emotionally, and changing their perception toward products can enhanced by the utilization of code-switching while coordinating with viewers' identity. (Bishop & Peterson, 2010)

Additionally, code-switching can have various impacts on multinational products compared to international ones. When bilingual viewers face more code-switching, they tend to see language shifts echo their ethnic experiences. (Krishna & Ahluwalia, 2008)

METHODOLOGY

This study is conducted in the Raparin area of Kurdistan region in the year 2025 in both public and academic areas. Firstly, academic institutions include University of Raparin (College of Education and College of Basic Education), and Basic and High Schools. Public places include markets, shopping malls, cafes, libraries, and gyms. The main aim of the study is to ensure the accuracy and dependability of both the data collection and the study outcomes.

A questionnaire is designed comprised of 20 items. The questionnaire is a self-made tool 3 expertise doctors at University of Raparin reviewed it and it approved by the supervisor. The questionnaire evaluated the functions of code-switching in television advertisements and its influences on audiences. Using Likert scale where participants indicate their level of agreement by ticking 5 scale points including strongly agree, agree, neutral, strongly disagree, and disagree. The papers were distributed among the participants. It takes 10 minutes to answer the questionnaire.

The participants of this research are people from different educational backgrounds including high educational and low educational backgrounds and both genders. The age of participants ranges from 12 to 50. A total of exactly 300 individuals from different places participated. The participants were randomly asked to answer the questionnaire.

After the questionnaire was answered by various participants from different educational backgrounds, the analysis of the collected data was started. The researcher checked and counted the level of agreement for each item manually.

A pilot study for the designed questionnaire about code-switching in television advertisements has been directed to 10 students from high school. The 20 items are translated into Kurdish language.

Moreover, this research cohered to an explicit and systematic research methodology, containing an accurate literature review to repose on existing knowledge in the current field. The literature review works like a concrete base for the study design and data analysis.

In summary, the paper was conducted with attention to detail, ethical considerations, and a solid research methodology for obtaining validity and reliability of both data collection and consequences.

RESULTS/ FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The predominant focus of this study is on investigating the use of code-switching in television advertisements in Iraqi Kurdistan. The following charts reveal the questionnaire results from individuals in the community.

Figure (1) illustrates the results of items (1 and 2). Firstly, item (1) examines the frequency of the partakers interacting with television advertisements that use code-switching. As a result, a majority of the members (60.33%) agree. Meanwhile, a smaller group of participants (15.3%) are neutral and do not indicate strong opinions on the matter. A significant proportion of the joiners (24.32%) disagree. On the other hand, item (2) shows the lowest proportion in agreement is (34.33 %) who find television advertisements to be visually appealing. However, a higher percentage of partakers (19.33%) do not have an opinion. Simultaneously, the most notable rate of the joiners (49.66%) disagree.



Figure (1): Shows the results of items (1 and 2)

Figure (2) clarifies responses regarding the use of code-switching in television advertisements. For item (3), the majority of partakers (57.66%) state that television advertisements incorporating code-switching bridge cultural gaps effectively, while the smallest group of respondents (13.66%) are neutral. Also, the bigger rate includes (28.66%) members disagree. Correspondingly, for item (4), which supposes that television advertisements with code-switching demonstrate community diversity, (32.33%) of the joiners agree, but the lower group of members (18.33%) is unbiased. In addition, the largest group of joiners (49.33%) disagree.

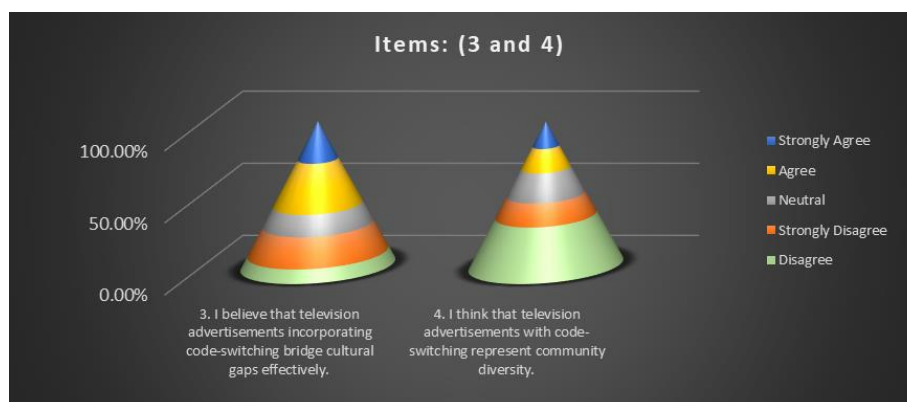


Figure (2): Demonstrates the results of items (3 and 4)

Figure (3) presents questionnaire results on the enjoyment of television advertisements that involve code-switching. Most respondents (62.66%) think that television advertisements with code-switching are enjoyable, whereas (16.66%) are neutral. Also, around (20.66%) do not think so. Meanwhile, (36.66%) of the contributors prefer to use code-switching in television advertisements. However, (18.33%) of the shareholders are neutral, and the highest proportion of the candidates (45%) disagree.

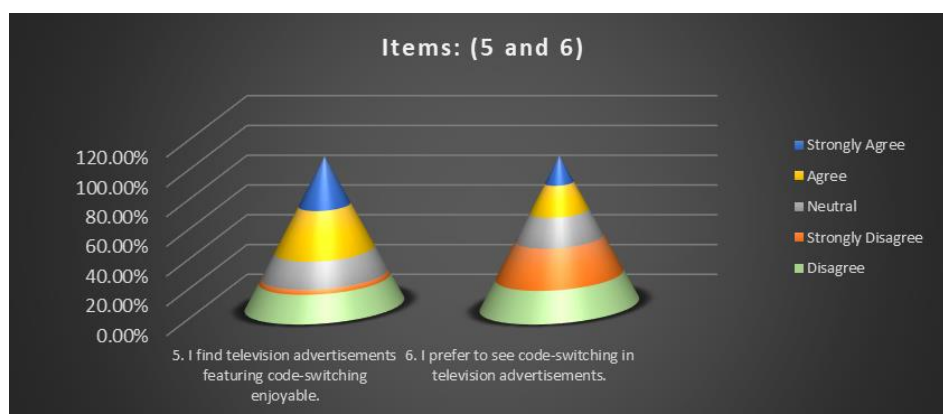


Figure (3): Explains the results of items (5 and 6)

Figure (4) reveals the results of the participants' agreement for both items (7 and 8). Considering item (7), the majority of candidates, including (38.66%) of them, accept that using the Kurdish language in television advertisements captures their attention. However, the smaller range of shareholders (23%) are neutral, and nearly (38.33%) do not admit that using the Kurdish language in television advertisements captures their attention. For item (8), (45.66 %) of the participants which is the highest proportion, assume that code-switching in television advertisements shows modern style, whereas (19%) of the individuals do not indicate their belief. Lastly, (34.33%) of the contributors disagree with this assertion.



Figure (4): Reveals the results of items (7 and 8)

Figure (5) demonstrates that (47%) of the joiners think that code-switching in television advertisements enhances comprehension levels. But (14.33%) of the partakers are unbiased. In spite of that, (40%) of the candidates disagree. In contrast, (33%) of the contributors emphasize that code-switching makes the products more valuable. Meanwhile, (16%) of the candidates are undecided, and (47.66%) of the partakers disagree.

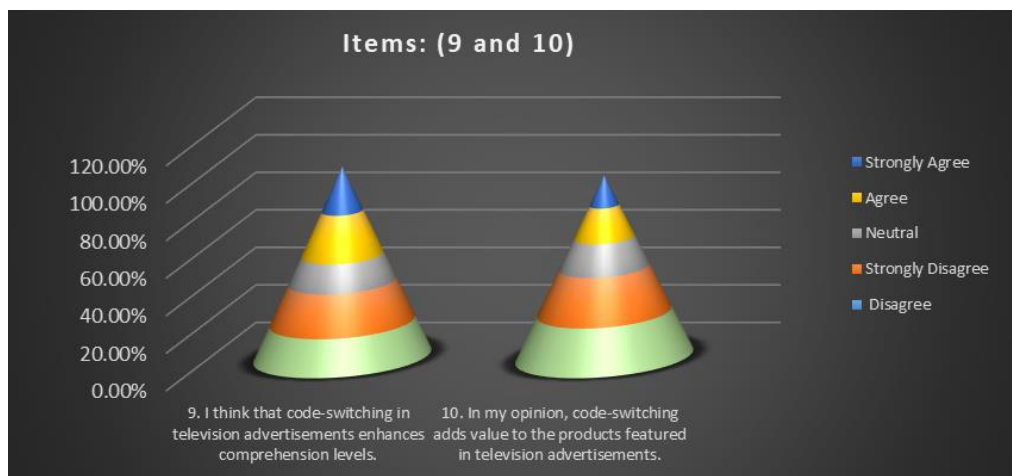


Figure (5): Presents the results of items (9 and 10)

Figure (6) exhibits that (33%) of the shareholders believe that code-switching affects their decision to choose, but (18.66%) of them remain neutral. Additionally, the greatest number of individuals, including approximately (48.33%) of the joiners disagree. Nonetheless, (70%) of the members think that television advertisements that use so much code-switching catch more purchasers, while (18%) of the participants are uncertain, and (12%) of the other shareholders disagree.

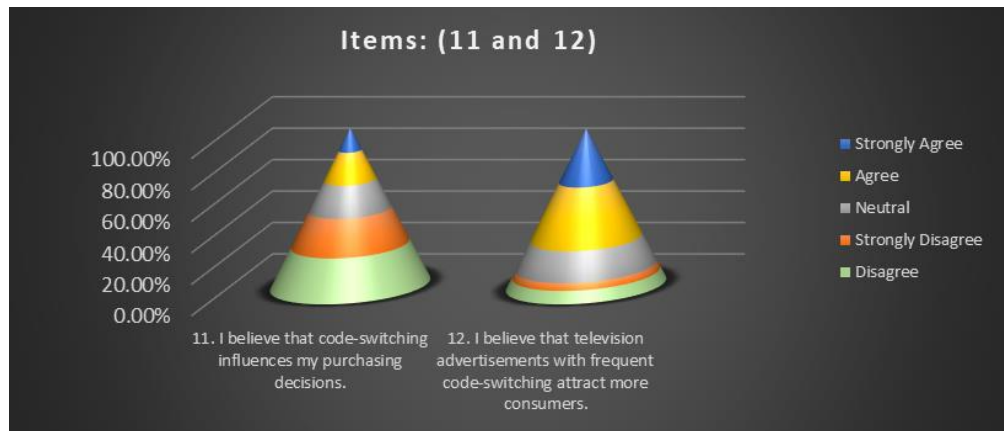


Figure (6): Illustrates the results of items (11 and 12)

Figure (7) confirms (31.33%) of the sharers guess that television advertisements that use code-switching involve authenticity. (26.33%) of the participants are unsure. Furthermore, (42.33%) of them disagree. Similarly, (31.66 %) of the contenders claim that television advertisements use frequent code-switching. Moreover, (24.66%) of the contenders stay neutral, and (45.66%) of the shareholders disagree.

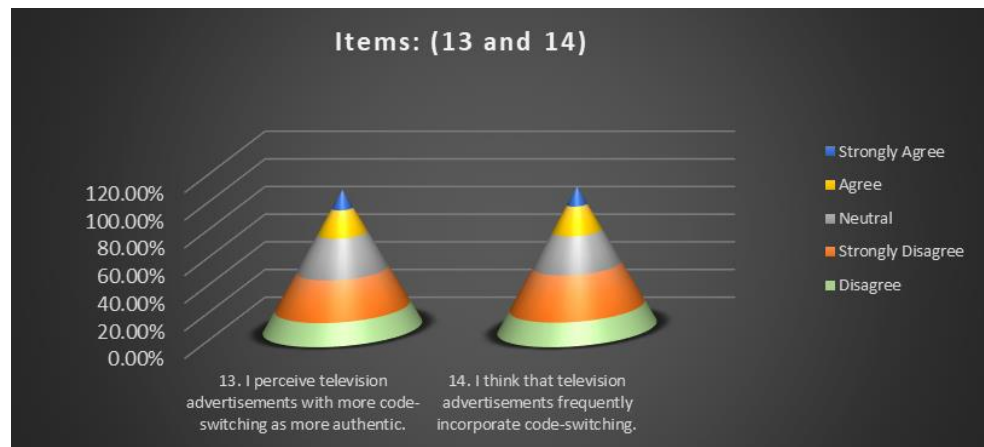


Figure (7): Confirms the results of items (13 and 14)

Figure (8) concedes the outcomes of items (15 and 16). A total of (32%) of members believe that code-switching in television advertisements is necessary to connect with diverse audiences. Despite that, (21.33%) are unbiased, and (42.66%) do not suppose that. On the other hand, (42%) of the individuals prefer television advertisements that use only one language. Meanwhile, (18%) of the shareholders have not opinion, and (55.33%) of the contributors dislike television advertisements that use only one language.

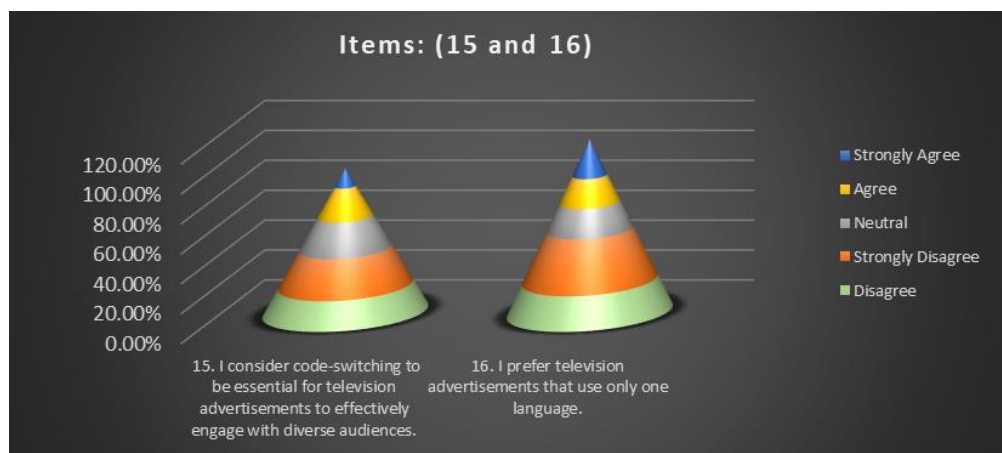


Figure (8): Clarifies the results of items (15 and 16)

Figure (9) explains items (17 and 18) focus on the negative points of using code-switching in television advertisements. Regarding item (17), (41.66%) of the contributors trust that code-switching in television advertisements is difficult for monolinguals, while (16.66%) of the joiners are neutral. Although the proportion in disagreement is equal to the proportion in agreement because (41.66%) of the sharers disagree. Nevertheless, concerning item (18), which admits that code-switching in television advertisements may leads to misunderstandings, (40%) of the shareholders have the same idea, while (23%) of them do not think so. Eventually, (37%) of the members reject the idea.

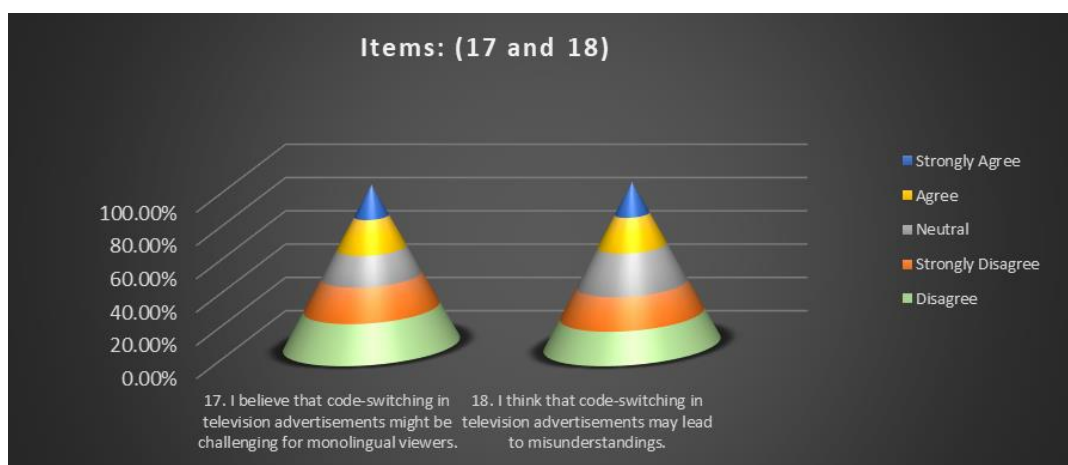


Figure (9): Concedes the results of (17 and 18)

Figure (10) illustrates the citizens' level of agreement with both items (19 and 20). For item (19), (43.66%) of the participants suppose that code-switching in television advertisements leads the young generation to language shift, whilst (18.33%) are unbiased. In addition, (38%) of the members disagree. On the other hand, (47.33 %) of people believe that television advertisements with code-switching are more engaging compare to those without. But, the lower group of joiners including (25.66%) of joiners remain neutral. Conversely, (23.66%) of the respondents disagree.

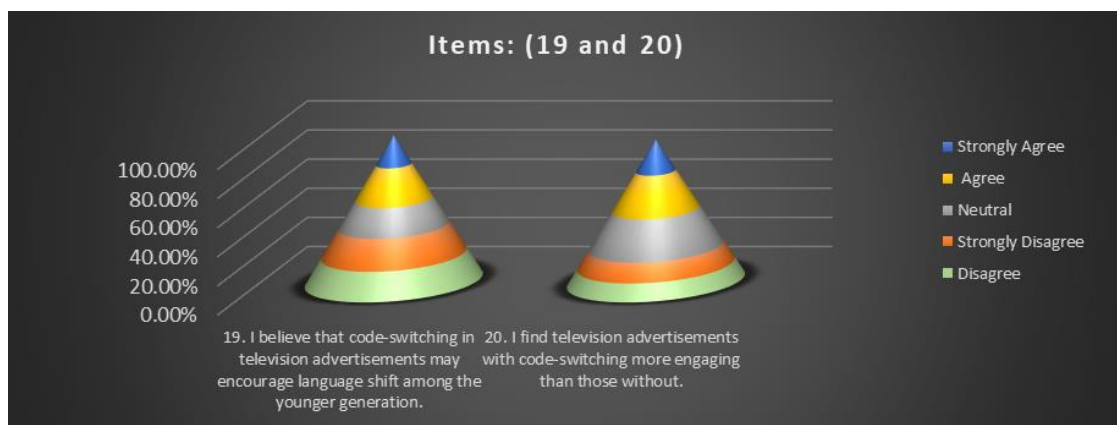


Figure (10): Informs (19 and 20) statements results

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to investigate the functions and effects of code-switching in television advertisements on various audiences in Iraqi Kurdistan. Hence, the research questions were formulated in order to achieve these aims, and the answers to the questions are provided below.

1. What are the functions of code-switching in television advertisements in Iraqi Kurdistan?

Participant, solidarity, status, topic of the conversation, code-switching for gaining affective communication, code-switching and rhetorical, effects lexical borrowing, bridge cultural gaps, shows community diversity, and supplies modern style are all functions of code-switching.

The results presented in figure (1) prove that more than half of the participants see frequent television advertisements that involve code-switching and they are appealing for them. These results match with the words of Al-Oraibi and Himood, (2022) who stated that interlocutors seek to create effective communication and indicate an important tip through applying code-switching.

Concerning code-switching as a means working for bridge cultural gaps and show community diversity, the results in figure (2) inform that the majority of partakers feel that television advertisements that involve code-switching bridge cultural gaps. In contrast, the largest group of members do not believe that television advertisements with code-switching show community diversity. These results suits with the words of Holmes and Wilson (2017), who highlighted that code-switching bridge cultural gaps and interlocutors who switch codes perform solidarity so they belong to the same ethnicity there is no different among interlocutors.

Regarding the responses to preferring the use of code-switching in television advertisements, the consequences in figure (3) asserts that the great group of joiners enjoy code-switching but all of the joiners do not prefer the frequent use of code-switching. These results correspond with Holmes and Wilson (2017), who claimed that code-switching increases the level of enjoyment but also it affects monolinguals preference.

Figure (4) reveals that a huge number of participants prefer television advertisements that use their mother tongue and code-switching shows modernity. These outcomes reflect the idea of Abubakr, Hassan, and Muhedden (2019), who stated that the interlocutors often express English words for apologizing instead of using their native language in order to show modernity.

The consequences in figure (5) illustrates that the most contributors do not think that code-switching enhances the level of comprehension but it increases value of the advertised products to customers because when the code-switching used in television advertisements it describes qualities of a product or brand. Thus, these results parallel with Abubakr, Hassan and Muhedeen, (2019) argument who states that code-switching is performed whilst somebody intends to quote somebody else, several books, idioms, or proverbs from other languages.

2. How can code-switching in television advertisements impact viewers' behavior and insights toward purchasing the products?

Code-switching can impact purchasing decisions, the memorability of the products, engagement, authenticity, challenge for monolinguals, and language shift.

The results of figure (6) verify most of the members do not believe that code-switching affects their purchasing decision and it could not attract more purchasers. These outcomes correspond with Luna & Peracchio, (2005) declaration who indicate that unnatural use of code-switching leads to insecurity and decreases the reliability of products.

Figure (7) reveals that the highest number of the joiners do not perceive those television advertisements involving code-switching are more authentic and they do not use continual code-switching. These results contradict the words of Bishop & Peterson, (2010) who stated that viewers' insights toward products can enhanced by the utilization of code-switching.

Concerning the results in Figure (8) a good proportion of members believe that code-switching in television advertisements is not necessary to connect with diverse audiences and the majority of them dislike television advertisements that use only one language. These results contradict Abubakr, Hassan & Muhdeen, (2019) statement who claimed that talented bilinguals switch codes while they see individuals who are relaxed in speaking just a specific language, not another foreign language.

With reference to the negative impacts of code-switching on audiences, the results in figure (9) explicit that most contributors trust that code-switching in television advertisements is a challenge for monolinguals and code-switching in television advertisements may lead to misunderstandings. As opposed to Al-Oraibi and Himood, (2022), assertion who proposed that through applying code-switching miscomprehending has been illustrated for the addresses.

In addition, the results expressed in figure (10) confirm that the majority of the participants suppose that code-switching in television advertisements leads the younger generation to language shift and that television advertisements with code-switching are more engaging compared to those without. This supposition also aligns with Hill (2008), who proclaims that code-switching leads to everyday interlocutors' dialects or languages being marginalized, and as a result language shift will occur. Also, it corresponds with Krishna & Ahluwalia, (2008) statement who argued that when bilingual viewers face more code-switching, their chance to language shift increases.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to investigate code-switching in television advertisements in Iraqi Kurdistan. It examines the functions behind the use of code-switching in television advertisements and their impacts on audiences in the Kurdistan region. In conclusion, the study shows that individuals in a particular community often deal with different languages and use them based on cultural, temporal, and contextual necessities. Hence, there are several significant functions behind the use of code-switching in television advertisements. One of the code-switching functions in television advertisements is that it bridges cultural gaps. Another function of code-switching is solidarity between different interlocutors. After that, code-switching in television advertisements takes a significant role in showing modern style. Especially, through using code-switching from interlocutors' native language to English language as a second language or a universe language. In addition, code-switching leads to revealing the authenticity of the advertised products or brands. Concurrently, television advertisements use code-switching in the advertisements it makes the products memorable and grants new English vocabulary to the community members. On the other hand, the usage of code-switching in television advertisements is notable by a lot of audiences. Code-switching in television advertisements could evolve the advertisement concerns but its influences on the viewers' buying decisions and comprehension are restricted. Another impact of the code-switching operation in television advertisements is that engages the audience effectively. In contrast, most of the audience prefers television advertisements that use one language. Because the continual use of code-switching in television leads monolinguals to misunderstanding and language shift. Overall, the research highlights the intricacy of code-switching in television advertisements and its multifarious role in viewers'

engagement. Simultaneously, it emphasizes cautious utilization in order to preserve taking away audiences especially, monolinguals.

Recommendations

Advertisement managers need to accurately consider the circumstances and the viewers before using code-switching in television advertisements. Also, they ought to keep the balance between the code-switching positive and negative impacts, like linguistic isolation, could increase the television advertisements efficiency. In addition, television advertisements that involve code-switching have to suit different audiences, including monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual, with their cultural backgrounds. For those television advertisements that use frequent code-switching, it is better to provide subtitles and clarification in order to make the message more understandable for everyone.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Some studies need to be carried out on the use of code-switching in television advertisements, evaluating different aspects not only audiences' language but also considering how the use of code-switching affects audiences' status and cultural identity.

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