

# Complementizer asymmetries in Hindi-English code switching

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There is solid consensus that code switching is subject to principled constraints, but there is no agreement on the nature of these constraints. We contribute to the ongoing research by extending the empirical basis, and providing a theoretical interpretation that ties these data with the cross-linguistic picture.

We present an analysis of code switching in complement clauses by Hindi-English bilingual speakers, based on an original bilingual corpus of approximately 140,000 words, comprising TV interviews of Hindi movie (Bollywood) personalities. Investigating a ‘constraint’ on switching in complement clauses, we find an intriguing asymmetry: the Hindi complementizer *ki* after an English matrix verb occurs very often (307 tokens), whereas the reverse, i.e. the English complementizer *that* after a Hindi matrix verb, is virtually non-attested (6 tokens). Our analysis relates this to asymmetries in syntactic feature composition, and thus connects it to cross-linguistic findings from mixed NPs. These results jointly support an analysis where the structure is built before the insertion of lexical items.