CODESWITCH *KORA:* how does it work?
The Syntax of Codeswitching in the Bangla Verbal Domain

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1. Introduction

"Banglish" is the colloquial name given to Bangla-English codeswitching (mixing; CS) in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The structure of a Bangla sentence:

(1) Sadif | codeswitch kore | Verbal Domain
subject | coverb   light verb |
"Sadif codeswitches."

Chatterjee (2014) analysed CS in the verbal domain in Kolkata Bangla-English. We update this, and Sultana's (2013) sociolinguistic study of young Banglish speakers in Dhaka.

2. Framework: Matrix Language Framework

The Matrix Language Framework (MLF, Myers-Scotton 1993 et seq.) assumes that CS utilizes the grammatical structure of one of the languages - the matrix language.

3. Research Questions:

i) How is English integrated into the Bangla Verbal Domain?
ii) (How) Does the MLF capture this?
iii) What are young people's attitudes and perceptions towards Banglish in Dhaka?

4. Hypotheses

i) English insertion into the Bangla verbal domain is productive and follows systematic rules, about which bilingual Banglish speakers have consistent intuitions
ii) MLF prediction: English CS in the Bangla verbal domain is restricted to insertion of uninflected coverbs accompanied by one Bangla light or vector verb
iii) Chatterjee (2014) found three-verb clusters incompatible with the MLF (don't fit Bangla grammar); we expect to find these

(2) Renovate | kore | diyeche
coverb | light verb | vector verb
"He/she has renovated it."

iv) CS is (still) negatively viewed by young *Dhakaiyya*s

5. Mixed methods

- Semi-structured sociolinguistic interview
  - 8 participants (ages 18-21, 6M, 2F)
  - English-Bangla bilinguals from Dhaka
  - Have not lived abroad for extended period
  - Received English medium education.
- Informal acceptability judgement task
  - 7 participants (as above, 1 excluded for behaviour on controls)

Output: 4 hours of naturalistic speech, 67 examples of CS in the Bangla Verbal Domain

6. Qualitative Results and Discussion

- The word cloud (left) shows the English coverbs in the corpus
- Like Chatterjee (2014), we found three-verb clusters
- We also found an example of a four-verb cluster:

(3) ...release | kore | felte | parto
coverb | light verb | vector verb | light verb
"He could have released [six or seven songs]."

- Youth attitudes towards CS are self-aware and mostly positive (*"Banglish? I think it's okay"*) but more complex when considering the setting and accent.
- Young people perceive changes in social attitudes since Sultana (2013) as none of the participants' parents shame them for speaking Banglish

7. Quantitative Results and Discussion

Variables: Coverb (Ban/Eng) + Light Verb (Common/Uncommon/∅) + Inflection
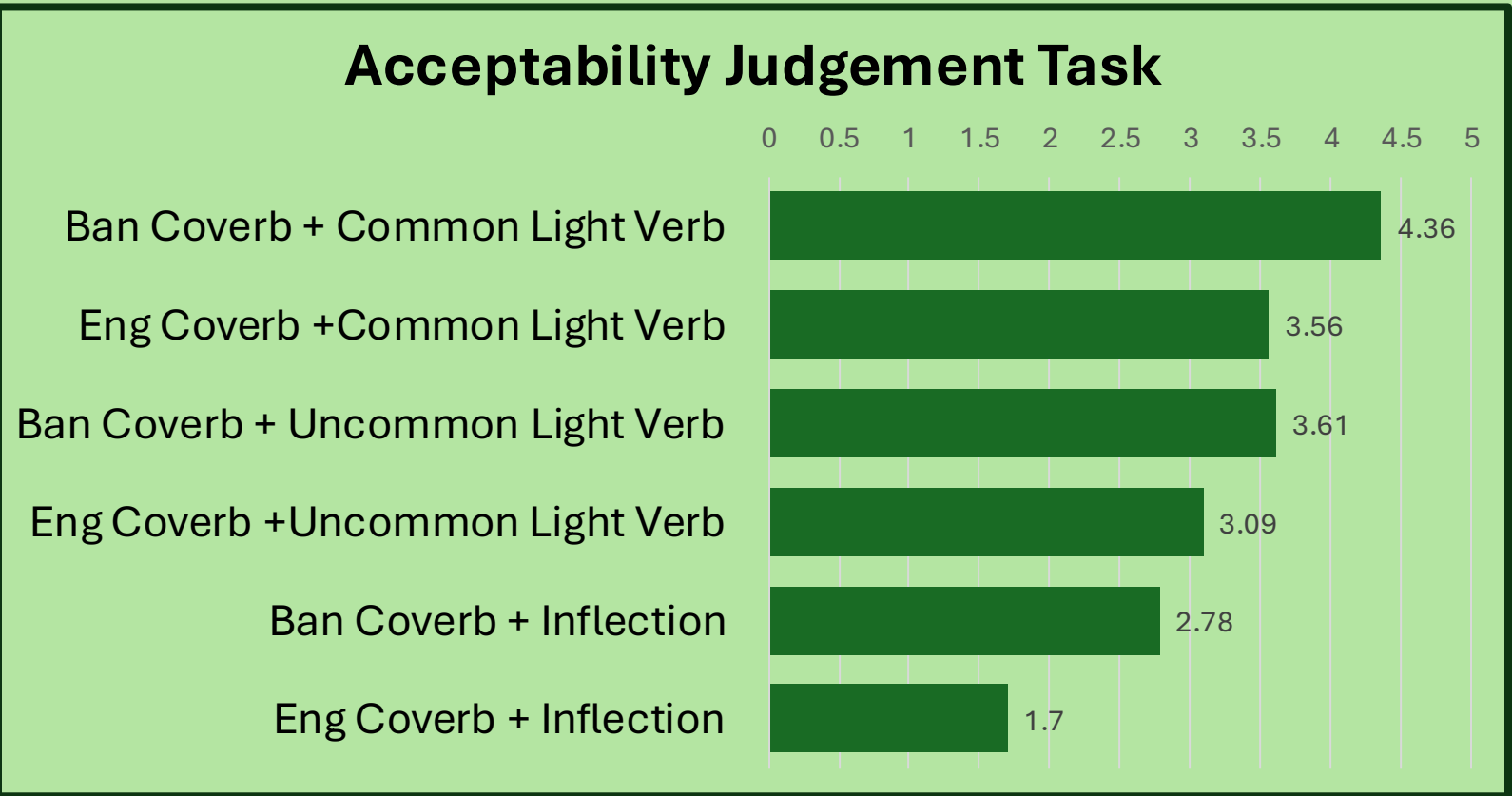
Upload koreche
Eng Coverb + Common light verb

Prem koreche
Ban Coverb + Common light verb

Upload uthiyeche
Eng Coverb + Uncommon light verb

Prem khujeche
Ban Coverb + Uncommon light verb

Upload-iyeche
Eng Coverb + ∅

Prem-iyeche
Ban Coverb + ∅

Acceptability Judgement Task

	Score
Ban Coverb + Common Light Verb	4.36
Eng Coverb + Common Light Verb	3.56
Ban Coverb + Uncommon Light Verb	3.61
Eng Coverb + Uncommon Light Verb	3.09
Ban Coverb + Inflection	2.78
Eng Coverb + Inflection	1.7

(scale: 0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3 3.5 4 4.5 5)

- Consistent judgements across and within participants
- Bangla coverbs preferred over English, but English coverbs still accepted
- Common light verbs (*kora, dewa, newa*) most acceptable
- Inflected coverbs, esp. English rated very poorly

8. Summary

- Codeswitching, or Banglish, is very common and the general attitude towards it is increasingly more accepting and positive
- Banglish has its own set of grammatical rules
  - The MLF captures *how* English can be inserted...
  - But doesn't predict three- or four-verb complexes

9. References

Chatterjee, T. (2014). Bilingual Complex Verbs: So What's New About Them? In: *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society* 38, 47-62.
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