

Sociolinguistic Variation in English Code-Switching Practices among Bilingual Speakers in Academic Contexts

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DOI : <https://doi.org/10.61796/jlhss.v3i8.1882>



Sections Info

Article history:

Submitted: June 15, 2026

Final Revised: July 05, 2026

Accepted: July 30, 2026

Published: August 23, 2026

Keywords:

Code-switching

Bilingualism

Sociolinguistics

Academic discourse

Multilingual education

ABSTRACT

Objective: This paper explores sociolinguistic variation in code switching behaviour among bilingual speakers in the academic subjects. Through the research, the most prevalent forms of code-switching will be identified, discuss social and contextual factors that affect language alternation, and investigate the ways bilingual speakers use language alternation as a communicative tool in the process of academic engagement.

Method: The research design used in the study is mixed method (quantitative and qualitative research design). The data were gathered on 60 bilingual subjects, comprised of students of undergraduate level and postgraduate level, as well as academic instructors of different academic fields. The data were collected using three primary tools, i.e., semi-structured interviews, recorded academic interaction, and questionnaires that addressed the language use and attitudes to code-switching.

Results: The results indicate that the process of code-switching is a common and regular characteristic of the academic communication in bilinguals. Out of the various types of switching established, intra-sentential switching was most common followed by inter-sentential switching and tag-switching was least common. Academic disciplines also showed some differences with the participants in humanities and social sciences showing more code-switching than the participants in applied sciences. **Novelty:** In general, the results of this research indicate that code-switching cannot be regarded as a lingual drawback but as an effective communicative tool that bilingual speakers apply to negotiate between academic speech and interpersonal communication.

INTRODUCTION

Globalization, migration, and the growth of the international system of education have made bilingualism a relatively widespread phenomenon in modern communities. Bilingual and multilingual people, in most cases, adopt a language practice in relation to their social circumstances, cultural identity, and communicative requirements. Code-switching that is the use of two or more languages in a conversation, in one sentence or discourse is one of the most important and extensively researched linguistic phenomena among bilingual speakers. Sociolinguistics has extensively studied this practice since it demonstrates the multifaceted nature of the interaction between language, identity, and social interaction.

Code-switching takes place in most of the environments, such as households, workplaces, social events and at school. Within the academic setting, bilingual speakers often alternate the languages to put their point across, stress a specific point or instances, or tailor their speech to particular audiences. Scholars have pointed out that code-switching is not a mere language habit, but an effective communicative practice which also reflects cognition, interpersonal relationships, and identification with a particular culture [1].

In sociolinguistic terms, code-switching exhibits the use of language as a social instrument. Bilingual speakers usually alternate codes in a bid to negotiate meaning, build identity, and interpersonal relationships. As an example, a speaker can give a discourse in one language using the academic concepts and speak a different language to discuss or explain the discourse. These practices underline the dynamic nature of language in influencing multilingual society communication [2].

Schools especially the universities and bilingual schools are good places where to study code switching behavior. Both students and instructors have different lingual backgrounds and may have more than one language in common. As a result, language switching is a part of the classroom talk, interactions among peers, and educational dialogues. Research has demonstrated that the code-switching in the learning environment can have pedagogical roles, including discussing complex ideas or keeping students engaged in the classroom or promoting understanding between students of different language proficiency [3].

Besides, code-switching is also used to control communicative effectiveness by bilingual speakers. Speakers might change language when expressing ideas in other languages that share similarities in the ease in which they can convey ideas. These switches may also represent cultural values or institutional cultures in the specific academic circles. As an example, the formal academic communication with the use of English could be used, and the local language could be involved in social communication or explanation of the ideas [4].

Recent sociolinguistic studies also highlight the fact that code-switching is affected by a number of factors, such as social identity, language competence, and situational requirements, as well as communicative purposes of speakers. Liu [5] argues that the behavior of code-switching has been known to be the interaction of the cognitive processes and contextual variables, and, therefore, the choice of the language used is not arbitrary; it is actually strategically oriented. On the same note, Prosper [6] states that sociocontextual influences like peer associations, institutional linguistic rules, and cultural beliefs have a major influence on language practices adopted by bilingual speakers.

In the multilingual societies, the process of code-switching has also been attributed to creating identity. The speakers can change language to indicate membership of the group, to depict their cultural identification, or to depict the social identity. This sociolinguistic aspect of the use of language emphasizes the necessity of studying code-switching not as a language structure per se. Rather, the authors of the research need to take into account the larger social contexts where language is applied [7].

Although a lot of literature is available on bilingual communication, there are still many areas of code switching in academia that are not well studied. Although many studies have been conducted on the curriculum interactions of code-switching in the classroom or during informal student discussions, relatively less attention has been given to the sociolinguistic difference in modes of code switching between the bilingual speakers in the institution of higher learning. Examining the mechanisms and rationale

of language switching in academic language by bilingual speakers would be rather informative on the field of language learning, educational communication, and sociolinguistic identity.

Thus, a closer look at the code-switching activities in an academic context is the key to the comprehension of how bilingual people can find a way to navigate through the linguistic resources to effectively communicate and socialize.

In spite of the fact that the phenomenon of code-switching has been studied thoroughly in the context of sociolinguistic studies, the process is still intricate and context-related. Bilingual speakers often switch languages in an academic setting, but the reasons and the patterns of this occurrence are not always clearly understood. Researchers have also indicated that language switching can be done due to many reasons such as pedagogical procedures, language convenience, social identity articulation, or situational adjustments [8].

English can be used as the main language of instruction in most education institutions particularly in subjects like science, technology and international studies. Nevertheless, there might be a common first language between students and instructors which they use in their informal communication or speaking about complex academic topics. The presence of two languages in the environment forms a special sociolinguistic environment where code-switching is a prevalent communicative process.

Past research has established the fact that code-switching may help understand and enhance interaction in bilingual classes. To illustrate, educators can alternate languages so that students can comprehend the complicated academic content in full or elucidate when the students have an issue with the English terms [3]. Equally, learners can alternate languages in communication with peers especially on discussing academic assignments where they need to give ideas more accurately or comfortably.

Nevertheless, such practical advantages notwithstanding, code-switching in academic life has not been spared of controversy. According to some instructors, code-switching can become too intensive and interfere with language acquisition because it limits the amount of time students spend in the target language. Some other people think that code-switching may be relevant to support learning as it offers a cognitive help and lessens the barriers to communication. The discussed debate emphasizes the necessity of additional studies of sociolinguistic functions and implications of code-switching in the academic settings.

Moreover, it is common that current studies can be limited to a particular scenario like in a bilingual classroom or when informally communicating with students. There is less focus on general sociolinguistic differences in code-switching behavior between bilingual speakers in various fields of works, educational systems and cultural contexts. Consequently, it means there is still a gap in the comprehension of how social, cultural, and contextual aspects relate to code-switching behavior in academic discourse [1].

The other weakness of the past research is that the relationship between code-switching and identity formation in the academic context is not thoroughly analyzed. The use of language is often a social identity and group belonging, but this factor has not been

addressed by numerous empirical studies clearly. Verma [2] recommends that, code-switching is often applied by bilingual speakers as a way of identity expression and social relationship building, especially when bilingual education is introduced.

Moreover, code-switching attitudes can be different amongst students, instructors and institutions. Code-switching can be a positive resource of communication in certain learning situations, and a negative evaluation of unsuitable or unprofessional communication in other situations. As Omar and Ilyas [4] stress, the attitude towards code-switching may also have a strong impact on the language practice in educational institutions.

Considering these gap areas in the literature, there is a definite necessity of additional study investigating the code switching behavior in the sociolinguistic approach, especially among the academic community where the use of both languages is prevalent. This kind of research may help to gain a better insight into how bilingual speakers learn to utilize language strategically within the context of educational settings and the correlation between such practices and social identity, communication, and learning outcomes.

Code-switching is considered to be one of the most remarkable linguistic phenomena which is noticed in bilingual and multilingual communities. It is a concept to refer to the use of two or more languages or languages varieties during a conversation, utterance or communicative situation. The linguists and sociolinguists view code-switching as a natural consequence of having the bilingual competence where speakers use their linguistic repertoire to effectively express themselves in various situations and contexts.

Users of two or more languages tend to switch languages to express meaning more precisely, keep the conversation going, or to conform to social norms. Ahmad et al. [1] state that code-switching indicates not only language proficiency but also social and cultural conditions of bilingual communities. It illustrates the adoption of various contextual strategies by speakers as they employ various languages as their communicative means.

Scholars also identify various forms of code-switching based on the point of the language change in the conversation. The most widespread of is called inter-sentential code-switching, when the speaker alternates languages within sentences or clauses. Here, a single sentence can be uttered fully with one language, the next one with another language. This form of switching is common among the bilingual speakers who are fluent in the two language.

There is also another one, intra-sentential code-switching, that takes place when the language change takes place within a sentence. In this form, a greater degree of linguistic competence is needed in the sense that the speaker should be grammatically coherent when conducting the language switching. As Liu [5] emphasizes, intra-sentential switching can be a manifestation of a complex cognitive process because, although it involves the syntactic structure of the sentence, it combines the elements of the various linguistic systems.

A third type is tag-switching, where a short phrase, tag or expression in one language is inserted into a statement in another language. They can include words like *you know*, *okay* or *right*, which can be included in a sentence that is spoken in a foreign language. Generally, tag-switching is the easiest form of code-switching since it does not involve any serious restructuring of syntax.

Such types of code-switching demonstrate the completeness and versatility of bilingual communication. Instead of reflecting the linguistic incompetence, code-switching proves the skill of bilingual speakers to use several linguistic systems at the same time. The experts underline that it should be perceived as a communicative strategy as influenced by social and contextual determinants instead of a nonconformity to linguistic conventions [8].

In education, code-switching is also significant in helping to achieve an understanding between the teachers and the students who are speaking more than one language. Bilingual interlocutors can alternate languages to make complex academic ideas more comprehensible, highlight important points or make everyone involved in the conversation aware of what is being discussed. This has led to the code-switching being a major issue of interest in bilingual education and sociolinguistic studies.

The sociolinguistic theories that analyze the connection between language and society are closely related to the study of code switching. Sociolinguists maintain that the choice to use language is not arbitrary but is determined by the social identities and cultural norms and situational factors. The interactional approach suggested by Gumperz is one of the school of thought underlying this area of study that focuses on the contribution of language to social interaction.

In the perspective of Gumperz, code-switching is used as a cue of contextualisation which assists speakers to indicate change in meaning and subject or social relationships in the process of communication. The transitions between languages can be a sign of the shifts in formality, emotional coloring or group affiliation in multilingual interactions. According to this view, it is crucial to analyze the code-switching phenomenon in its social and communicative context and not to consider it only as a linguistic structure.

The Markedness Model is another outstanding theoretical approach created by Myers-Scotton. This model argues that speakers select a specific language in accordance with social norms and expectation of a certain interaction. The model suggests that language choice is an indication of how the speaker is conscious of the social relations and power equality in the communication. When speakers abide by anticipated language patterns, they make the use of the unmarked language option, but a change to a different language can become a marked language option that carries a particular social meaning.

It is important to note that these sociolinguistic views underline that code-switching is highly intertwined with social interaction. The alternation of languages can be an indicator of solidarity, authority, identity or expression of emotions. As an example, language alternation can be considered when a speaker wants to identify with a specific social group or culture or wants to underline the cultural identity [7].

Sociolinguistic theories in the academic world have been used to justify why students and teachers alternate languages in classroom contacts. The educational settings usually incorporate individuals who may have different lingual orientations and the use of language could be dependent on the institution rules, peer relations, and communicative objectives. Consequently, code-switching turns out to be a significant process of dealing with the communication and preserving social relations among the academic community.

The other sociolinguistic approach is based on the language attitudes and perceptions. Studies show that the attitude that speakers have towards code-switching may determine the frequency at which they can use it, and how they perceive it in school. Omar and Ilyas [4] established that the perception towards code-switching in academic communities can differ greatly according to cultural practices and institutional policies. On the one hand, code-switching can be regarded as a very effective communication resource, and on the other hand, it can also be interpreted as a manifestation of linguistic insufficiency.

In general, the sociolinguistic theories point out that code-switching is not only the issue of linguistic phenomenon but also a mirror of social relationships and cultural dynamics. These theoretical approaches are fundamental in the analysis of the code-switching practices in relation to academics.

Functional theories of code switching are concerned with communicative functions of language switching in discourses. Instead of looking at the structural matters of language alternation, functional perspectives look at why speakers use language alternation in certain situations.

Emphasis is one of the most frequent functions of code-switching that have been identified. Orators can change languages to emphasize key points or attract attention to certain sections of a message. This can happen in the academic circles when students underline important aspects or have passionate arguments in the classroom or any other debating environment.

Clarification or explanation is also another significant role. Speakers can also revert to their mother-tongue when complex notions are being discussed in a foreign language so that they can be comprehended. This role is especially typical of the bilingual educational setting where students might also differ in their degree of language proficiency. According to Cahyani et al. [3], code-switching is a common practice in the work of the teacher when he or she wants to clarify challenging ideas and keep the students involved.

Code-switching may also be used as identity expression. The use of language is usually indicative of cultural heritage, social identity and group association. Verma [2] states that code-switching is a common practice amongst bilingual speakers as they attempt to indicate their membership of specific cultural or linguistic groups. In alternating between languages, speakers can articulate something about themselves which they otherwise cannot express in one language.

Interpersonal relationships management is another role played by code-switching. Speakers can alternate between languages to develop a feeling of togetherness with other people who also have the same linguistic background. This role is particularly pronounced in the informal academic communication like group discussion or peer work.

Moreover, code-switching can be brought on by linguistic convenience. Some things or terms can be easier to describe using one language, as compared to the other. When this happens, speakers alternate languages in the quest to be more communicative. Prosper [6] states that these functional uses of code-switching are usually informed by sociocontextual factors such as peer interaction and institutional language practices.

Functional approaches thus show that the code-switching is not casual but it is a form of communicative functions. Through the examination of these functions of language switching, the researcher will be able to understand the strategic use of language by bilingual speakers in their academic backgrounds better.

The topic of code-switching has been explored in many studies within the field of education, especially in classes conducted using two or more languages. These works shed light on the multifunctional nature of language alternation with its sociolinguistic consequences in academia.

Recent scholarship has also examined the impact of code-switching in multilingual classrooms, broader patterns in bilingual education, identity-related language alternation, and conversational code-switching in multilingual societies [9], [10], [11], [12].

Code-switching and code-mixing among bilingual speakers were the subject of a sociolinguistic study by Ahmad et al. [1], which highlights the importance of social and contextual aspects of language practices in code-switching. According to their results, bilingual speakers often alternate between languages to achieve better communication and identify with their culture.

On the same note, Mukhtar et al. [8] examined the code-switching behaviour of ESL students in non-classroom settings. The research established that students frequently alternate language with informal academic conversations, especially when talking about assignments or working together on academic assignments. This implies that code-switching is important in bilingual students in helping them communicate.

A study conducted by Hassan [13] examined code-switching in bilingual students of universities in Cairo in the context of discussing personal relationships. The results indicate that language switching is directly connected to the social self and cultural affiliation, which proves that bilingual communication is of sociolinguistic importance in the academic social environment.

Another research was done by Khan [14] on the issue of code-switching and code-mixing between university learners who study English. The study revealed that bilingual students often switch languages during academic discourses especially when attempting to explain complicated phenomena or communicating finer thoughts. This observation

validates the opinion that code-switching performs significant communicative and pedagogical roles in schools.

Besides that, Jusufi and Jusufi [15] examined the code-switching in primary school students who are bilingual. They emphasize the educational implications of language alternation in their study, thus, it is possible to consider that the concept of code-switching can assist in learning the language as it allows understanding and engaging with it.

Prosper [6] also did a descriptive study of the sociocontextual determinants of the code-switching behavior of university students. The researchers concluded that peer relationship, cultural identity and institutional language policy have a significant effect on language switching.

Although considerable amounts of literature have been conducted on code-switching, there are still gaps in the literature. Fewer studies address the larger sociolinguistic diversity in code-switching by various academics because most of them focus more on the interaction in a classroom or teaching of the language. Also, limited studies deal with the effects of such factors on the code-switching practices as academic discipline, educational level, and cultural background.

Moreover, despite the fact that there are studies that cover the association between code-switching and identity, further research is necessary to comprehend how language switching is utilized by bilingual speakers to negotiate identity in the academic societies. The gaps are critical to the formulation of a full picture of the sociolinguistic aspects of code-switching in higher education.

Consequently, the current research aims to make a contribution to the current body of work by analyzing sociolinguistic variation in code-switching behavior in bilingual speakers in an academic setting with specific references to the social, contextual, and communicative factors that determine the language switching.

RESEARCH METHOD

In this research the mixed-method research design is followed where both the quantitative and qualitative research methods will be combined to give a very detailed perspective of the code-switching tendencies of the bilingual learners in learning institutions. The mixed methods method is ideal especially in the field of sociolinguistics as it helps the researcher to analyze the frequency and patterns of language switching not just the social meaning and communicative role of the linguistic practices.

Quantitative methodology will also help the researcher to quantify the frequency of code-switching and the most prevalent types of switching applied by the bilingual speakers. This involves the study of inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and tag-switching tendencies with regard to the academic interactions. Quantitative analysis assists in the recognition of patterns in the participants and finding out whether academic discipline, level of education or language background are some of the factors that affect the frequency of code-switching.

Simultaneously, the qualitative methods allow us to have a more profound understanding of the social and communicative roles of code-switching. The research conducted interviews and discourse analysis to investigate the reason behind the switching and the connection of the linguistic preferences and selections to identity, understanding, and socialization. Sociolinguistic studies in the past do stress the impossibility of using numerical data only in the context of code-switching because language switching is usually linked to contextual and cultural connotations rooted in social interactions [8].

It is through the combination of the quantitative and qualitative data that the researcher can thus study code-switching as a linguistic behavior and a sociocultural practice. The design also improves the reliability of the findings by methodological triangulation in which alternative data sources and methods of data analysis are employed to confirm findings.

The respondents of this research are bilingual university students and academic staff members who use English and the other language in academics regularly. The sample was chosen through purposive sampling, which is widely applied in sociolinguistic studies to determine people with adequate linguistic features of the research.

The overall sample will consist of 60 participants belonging to various academic departments of a university setting. The choice of the participants was founded on the following criteria:

1. They should be speakers who use two languages, English and the other language frequently.
2. They should take an active role in such activities of academics as lectures, seminars, or group discussions.
3. They should agree to take part in the interviews and on-recorded interactions in order to be used in research.

They involve 45 postgraduate and undergraduate students as well as 15 academic instructors. The study incorporation of both students and instructors enables the study to obtain a wider aspect of code switching being done in the academic discourse.

When it comes to the language background, the participants have English as a second or foreign language but have a common background language. The level of their bilingual competence is different with regard to education and exposure to English and academic specialization. Past studies indicate that bilingual speakers that have undergone different linguistic experiences might exhibit different code-switching patterns [1].

These participants are a variety of academic fields, such as humanities, social sciences, and applied sciences. This diversity is of significance since disciplinary context can mediate the language practices. As an example, those areas that are largely dependent on English vocabulary, like science or technology, can prompt to more commonly use English in scholarly conversation, but other courses might permit more English.

The age of the participants is between 18 and 40 years which represents both undergraduate students and experienced instructors. This difference enables the study to test whether there are differences in the code-switching behaviors in various academic and professional levels.

The study uses three primary data collection instruments to get a detailed information about the code-switching practices:

1. Semi-structured interviews
2. Documented scholarly communications.
3. Linguistics behavior questionnaires.

The combination of different instruments will allow the researcher to address self-reported attitudes towards code-switching and real language use in academic settings.

A smaller sample of 20 participants of the main sample were interviewed semi-structured. The interviews were to examine how the participants think, feel and their mindset about code-switching in educational institutions.

The semi-structured interviews give the researcher the freedom to facilitate the discussion with the help of predetermined questions but also gives the interviewees room to expound on their experiences. The questions used on the interview were directed towards issues like:

Cases where the participants are likely to alternate languages.

1. Justifications of using code-switching in academic discussions.
2. Perceived advantages or difficulties of language switching.
3. The connection of language selection and identity expression.

Each interview took about 20 30 minutes and the interview was held in a relaxed and natural setting to facilitate free flow of conversation. The participants were interviewed and the interviews were recorded with their consent and transcribed to be analyzed qualitatively.

The technique offers a great idea of the social and psychological motivation behind the code-switching behavior that cannot be accounted for entirely using quantitative tools.

The recordings of the academic interactions have been kept as follows:

The other critical source of information in this research is audio documents of academic sessions, lectures, group discussions, informal discussions between students.

Ten academic sessions were video taped at the consent of the participants and teachers. They involved seminar discussions, classroom lectures and group work. Natural academic interaction can be recorded, thus enabling the researcher to note the real life examples of code-switching practices in the culmination of actual communications.

The data recorded were transcribed and analyzed to determine various forms of code-switching and it included:

1. Inter-sentential switching
2. Intra-sentential switching
3. Tag-switching

The approach presents genuine linguistic information, which gives the way, bilingual speakers use the language in a spontaneous way in the academic context. According to previous research, analyzing the actual discourse is essential when studying such sociolinguistic phenomena as code-switching [3].

All the 60 participants were also given a structured questionnaire to provide quantitative data on the patterns of language use and the attitude towards the concept of code switching.

The questionnaire was divided into three parts: Demographic Information. The participants were asked to answer through a five-point Likert scale, which was strongly disagree to strongly agree. The outcomes of the questionnaire will give quantitative data that will assist in determining tendencies of language utilization and attitudes of bilingual speakers.

The process of data collection was done in a series to assure systematic and ethical research work.

To begin with, the researcher sought the institutional approval of the university administration to carry out the research in academic institutions. The participants were made aware of the research intention, and the nature of data under collection. Participation was completely voluntary, and all the participants made informed consent before participating in the study.

Second, the questionnaires were sent electronically and in printed format to the respondents. The respondents had plenty of time to fill the survey and their responses were promised to be confidential.

Third, the selected participants were interviewed semi-structured. Only after the explicit permission by the participants, the interviews were recorded. The videos were kept safely and employed only in the course of the research.

Fourth, it was recorded during planned classroom sessions with the permission of the instructors and students. This was done to avoid the use of recording devices that would interfere with the normal classroom activities.

In order to uphold the standards of an ethical research, all personal data were anonymized when analyzing data. The members were given identification numbers rather than their actual names. The data obtained as well were not distributed to any third-party other than academic research.

These are ethical aspects which are critical in sociolinguistic research especially in the analysis of natural communication in a learning setting.

Quantitative and qualitative methods were employed to analyze the data collected to respond to the research objectives.

Quantitative analysis aimed at determining the frequency and distribution of the instances of code switching in the audio-taped academic interaction and questionnaire responses.

To understand the social meanings and communicative purposes of code-switching, qualitative analysis was performed. The thematic analysis was used to analyze the transcripts of the interviews and recorded interactions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

This area provides the research results of the study on code-switching among bilingual speakers in the academic sphere. The findings are divided into two major sections. First, the section will show the frequency and types of code-switching that were found in the transcribed academic interactions and the answers about the questionnaire. Second, it compares the trends of variation between the participants in terms of academic discipline, level of education, gender, and language background. The results are given using descriptive statistics with the help of tables and graphical explanations.

The initial phase of the analysis was aimed at determining how often the cases of code-switching instances would appear during the academic sessions recorded. Ten academic interactions were transcribed, and analyzed. These associations involved lectures, seminar discussions and group work of students.

It was found that there were 245 cases of code-switching in all the recorded sessions. These examples were classified in terms of three primary types of code-switching that are often discussed in the sociolinguistic literature, i.e., inter-sentential switching, intra-sentential switching, and tag-switching.

Table 1. Frequency of Code-Switching Types in Academic Interactions

Type of Code-Switching	Frequency	Percentage
Inter-sentential switching	92	37.6%
Intra-sentential switching	118	48.2%
Tag-switching	35	14.2%
Total	245	100%

The findings show that the most common form of switching was intra-sentential code-switching, which comprised 48.2 of the total number of switching cases. This indicates that bilingual speakers in the academic context frequently combine the aspect of two languages in one sentence. This kind of switching is an indication of a high degree of bilingual competence since the speaker should ensure grammatical consistency when switching languages.

The second was inter-sentential switching which occurred 37.6 percent of the total cases. In the given instance speakers switched languages between sentences, and frequently between English and the native language when discussing tough subjects or trying to elaborate on something that might be difficult.

Tag-switching was the least common type, with 14.2 percent of the overall instances. These switches were usually short phrases like discourse markers or fillers which were added in sentences at the other language.

In an attempt to see the variation that code-switching takes in the context of the interaction, the study investigated the distribution of switching in three academic activity types:

1. Lectures
2. Seminar discussions
3. Student group work

Table 2. Code-Switching Frequency by Academic Activity

Academic Activity	Frequency	Percentage
Lectures	68	27.8%
Seminar discussions	94	38.4%
Group work	83	33.8%
Total	245	100%

The results indicate that in seminar discussions, code-switching events were the most frequent (38.4%). This outcome can be explained by the fact that seminars are interactive and participants are involved in the spontaneous dialogue and building of knowledge.

Relative switching frequency (33.8) was also exhibited by group work. Students usually translated instructions or negotiated meaning or explained academic concepts in their mother tongue when working in groups.

Lectures on the other hand had the least frequency of code-switching (27.8%). This is probably due to the fact that lectures will be more inclined towards the standards of a more academic language especially in the case of English as the dominant language of instruction.

The other aim of the analysis was to establish whether the frequency of code-switching differs depending on academic levels. The sample consisted of postgraduate students, undergraduate students and academic instructors.

Table 3. Code-Switching Frequency by Academic Level

Academic Level	Frequency	Percentage
Undergraduate students	112	45.7%
Postgraduate students	76	31.0%
Academic instructors	57	23.3%
Total	245	100%

These findings show that the undergraduate students were more apt to code-switching than other groups of participants. This could be attributed to the fact that they have a lesser level of proficiency in the English language than postgraduate students and teachers.

The modular code-switching in postgraduate students is perhaps due to the fact that they were more advanced in the academic English, so they could preserve communication using English as the primary language.

The least frequency of switching was among academic instructors. But in instances where the instructors changed language, it was usually on pedagogical reasons like being

able to explain a complex topic or because the pupils were getting the main points of the lecture.

The research also focused on whether discipline of participants affected their code-switching. The participants were classified into the three disciplinary categories:

1. Humanities
2. Social sciences
3. Applied sciences

Table 4. Code-Switching Frequency by Academic Discipline

Academic Discipline	Frequency	Percentage
Humanities	101	41.2%
Social sciences	79	32.2%
Applied sciences	65	26.6%
Total	245	100%

The results show that the most frequent code-switching was observed among the students in humanities disciplines. This can be due to the fact that humanities subjects tend to discuss social, cultural, and philosophical issues and this can lead to more liberal use of language.

The relatively high relative frequency of switching was also shown by the participants of social sciences when discussing theoretical concepts or case studies.

Conversely, code-switching was less among members of applied sciences. It can be attributed to the fact that these fields are highly dependent on standardized English terminology and, in that way, language alternation opportunities may be limited.

The question that was also examined in the analysis was whether there was any difference in the code-switching behavior in male and female participants.

Table 5. Code-Switching Frequency by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male participants	124	50.6%
Female participants	121	49.4%
Total	245	100%

The findings show that there are not many variations between male and female participants regarding the frequency of code switching. The two groups shared common trends of the language alternation in academia.

Nonetheless, qualitative observations indicated that there are minor variations in functionalities of switching. The female participants would use code-switching more when in a collaborative situation or peer support, whereas the male participants would switch languages when explaining or clarifying a technical concept.

The paper also looked at the correlation between linguistic background and code-switching behavior of the participants. The respondents who expressed more proficiency in English also showed reduced general frequencies of switching.

Conversely, the intermediate English language users showed the increased rates of code-switching, especially in the process of speaking about complicated academic concepts. In such cases, they could change to their own language and explain the ideas better and prevent misunderstandings.

Moreover, bilingual speakers who enjoyed more exposure to the English language in their academic reading, media, and international communication were more likely to experience longer English discourse periods with less switching.

Discussion

This research has shown that code-switching is a common and regular behavior amongst bilingual participants in institutions of learning. Among the greatest findings is that intra-sentential code-switching turned out to be the most prevalent type of language switching in academia. This observation indicates that bilingual speakers are highly competent in terms of language, such that they are able to incorporate the aspects of two languages in a given sentence without interfering with the grammatical arrangement. This finding is aligned with the studies carried out by Liu [5] who believed that intra-speaker code-switching is a process that is complicated and noted that bilinguals are able to deal with two different languages at the same time.

It is also revealed that interactive academic situations including seminar discussions and group work include more code-switching than the formal lecture settings. This tendency is consistent with the past studies that stated that language alternation is more prominent in informative or collaborative language use during which the interlocutor negotiates meaning and builds knowledge jointly. Similar tendencies were identified by Mukhtar et al. [8] in the study of ESL students according to which bilingual speakers used to alternate the languages when communicating with peers to explain the ideas and make the communication process possible.

The other significant finding is related to the variation in the frequency of code switching according to academic levels. It was established that code switching was more common among undergraduate students than among postgraduate students and academic instructors. This observation can indicate the variation in language knowledge and education. The undergraduate students can be more likely to use their native language in talking about complex concepts and postgraduate students and instructors can exhibit their competence in academic English. It was also found that the bilingual speakers having lower level of the second language proficiency have more frequent switches between languages as a communication maintenance strategy [1].

The discussion further found that there is also a difference in switching between languages in different courses of study. There were greater language switching frequencies among the students of humanities and social sciences than among those of the applied sciences. This trend can be attributed to the character of the academic discourse of various fields. The humanities and social sciences tend to deal with abstract discourses on cultural, philosophical, and social matters that might promote the use of

flexible language. Comparatively, applied sciences often utilize standardized technical terminology which is mostly written in English.

Also, the findings suggest that the difference in frequency of code-switching between genders was not substantial, thus, the language switching relies more on the contextual and sociolinguistic factors than on gender. Although there were minor differences in communicative functions, there was a general similarity in the way both males and females used languages.

On the whole, all these results confirm the belief that code-switching is not a haphazard linguistic activity but a strategic communicative behavior that is determined by social interaction, linguistic competency, and situational needs.

The phenomenon of code-switching in school setting is predetermined by a broad variety of sociocultural factors that define the linguistic preferences of bilingual speakers. Identity construction is one of the most significant ones. Language can be seen as a cultural differentiator and a group membership indicator, and bilinguals can use more than one language to indicate that they are part of a certain social or linguistic group.

According to Savase and Ganmote [7], code-switching is important in identity negotiation of bilingual speakers. Academically, students can alternate languages to show some elements of their culture and in the same breath be in an academic setting dominated by English. This flexibility of language enables speakers to retain the connection to their own culture and accommodate the institution language standards.

Educational context is another factor of sociocultural significance. The use of English as the main instructional language in universities is often encouraged especially in subjects that have international focus as a means of academic communication. Nevertheless, a common language is often used by students as they belong to the same native language and this enables them to interact and learn together. Therefore, the bilingual speakers can alternate the language as per the communicative intent and the audience.

The given results of the current research imply that code switching can be observed in the context of the circumstances when the elucidation or clarification of complicated academic concepts is necessary. The students and teachers can also use a common native language to ensure that the students understand and also minimize the misunderstandings. This pedagogical role of code-switching has been pointed out in the past studies. Cahyani et al. [3] discovered that in bilingual classes, educators tend to code-switch at strategic points of understanding new materials and helping students learn.

Another factor in influencing code-switching behavior is the language attitudes. Omar and Ilyas [4] discovered that code-switching has different attitudes in the academic communities. In other situations, language switching can be considered as a positive factor as a means of communication, whereas in others it can be interpreted as a linguistic deficiency. Such images may affect the rate at which speakers use code-switching and the level of comfort they experience during the process.

Moreover, the peer relations and social interaction also have a great impact on code-switching behavior. In cooperative learning activities, there is also a tendency of

students swapping languages as a way of establishing the feeling of unity and ease of communication among themselves in a group. Prosper [6] highlighted that the sociocontextual aspects such as social networks and interpersonal relations are important determinants of language practices of bilingual speakers.

Linguistic convenience is another influence factor of code-switching. Some ideas can be more readily said in one language than the other, particularly when there are culturally specific ideas or technical terms to be talked about. Under these circumstances, bilingual speakers can alternate languages to have a more effective communicative effect.

Combined, these aspects of sociocultural background indicate how complicated a code-switching is as a sociolinguistic phenomenon. The process of language switching is not merely associated with language competence but it indicates the interplay between cultural identity, social relationships, and institutional contexts.

Although the results of the research are very insightful and demonstrate the code-switching behavior in relation to academic activities, the research has some limitations, and the findings could be extrapolated.

The first weakness of the research is associated with the sample size and the research environment. The research was performed in one academic setting and this might restrict its application to the other universities or in other learning settings. The language practices might differ between institutions because of the institutional language policies, student demographics, and cultural settings among others.

The other weakness is related to the number of academic interactions recorded and analyzed in the study. Despite the useful information gained through the recorded sessions on the usage of natural language, larger set of data could have resulted in another pattern of deviation of code-switching behavior.

Furthermore, the research mostly concentrated on English and a single common native language, and this implies that the results might not be exhaustive and representative of the complexity of the multilingual setups where a greater number of languages are actively employed. The next generation of studies may be conducted on the code-switching behavior of academic multilingual environments that use several language systems.

Irrespective of such constraints, the research has added to the knowledge on sociolinguistic variation in bilingual communication. The findings underline the necessity to investigate the topic of code-switching in actual academic setting, and show that the process of language switching is an influential element in the communication process and social interaction between bilingual speakers.

Thus, although the results cannot be simply applied to all bilingual academic settings, they give valuable information regarding the process of language use in multilingual educational settings.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding: The results showed that code-switching is a widespread and ordered characteristic on the communication of bilingual academics. Intra-sentential

switching was the most recurrent type of the code-switching, which implies that bilingual speakers have the linguistic competence to combine the elements of several languages in one utterance. It was also found in the results that the code-switching is more frequent in the interactive academic context, like seminars and group discussions than formal lectures. Also, the research established that undergraduate students have a higher tendency to change languages than postgraduate students and teachers. There was also a difference in the academic disciplines with students in the humanities and social sciences experiencing more prevalence of code switching than those in applied sciences. Nevertheless, the linguistic gender differences in language switching were insignificant and it is possible to conclude that sociolinguistic context is a more important factor in influencing the code-switching practices than gender. **Implication:** These findings lead to a point where language switching is not seen as a language weakness but rather a communicative strategy through which bilingual speakers use to enable dialogue, establish an identity and handle complex academic language. It is also evident in this study that code-switching holds a pedagogical importance in bilingual education. In acknowledging linguistic diversity of students, teachers can create more inclusive educational processes that allow them to encourage language alternation as a tool that facilitates the process of understanding and communication in students. Moreover, the study also adds to the sociolinguistic theory by showing how the choice of language in academic language helps to illustrate the greater social and cultural processes. **Limitation:** Although the current research is meaningful and informative in terms of the existing knowledge about the code-switching practice, additional studies are required to gain a better understanding of this complicated sociolinguistic process. **Future Research:** Further research might focus on how academic discipline affects the code-switching behavior more specifically, especially through the comparison of language practices in specific disciplines such as medicine, engineering and humanities. The other area to be considered in future research is the correlation between language proficiency and the frequency of code switching. Scholars can also consider the possibility of conducting research in multilingual academic settings where two or more languages are in active use. Lastly, longitudinal study may be able to analyse how the code-switching behaviour changes with time as the students advance in their academic journey.

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