

## CODE – SWITCHING IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: A SIGN OF WEAKNESS OR LINGUISTIC STRENGTHS?

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**Abstract:** As the 21st century considered the period of developing digital technology, all school graduaeters are preferring to learn languages to investigate new methods, approaches and techniques in each field of study. These students instead of stopping their learning at school, more of them are choosing to continue their studies in bachelor's and master's degrees . It is fact that, school pupils are entering the Universities by knowing at least 3 languages. These language speakers are becoming a multilingual society in university, where students often communicate using their first, second, and third languages equally in their daily communication. This phenomenon is known as code switching, which means fixing languages in speech, has become a common feature of student interaction in both inside and outside the classroom. While some teachers or parents are considering code switching a sign of insufficient language proficiency, others view it like a strong point of language learner along with an indicator of linguistic flexibility and cognitive strengths. The nature of code-switching among college students is examined in this article, along with its causes, purposes, and significance for learning second and third languages. The article makes the case that code-switching should not always be viewed as a weakness but rather as a sophisticated communicative technique that demonstrates multilingual competency by looking at linguistic research and classroom observations. Teachers can foster good attitudes toward multilingualism and improve language learning environments by having a better understanding of this phenomena.

**Keywords:** code-switching; bilingualism; multilingualism; university students; second language acquisition; multilingual communication; sociolinguistics; classroom interaction; linguistic competence; language learning strategies.

**Annotatsiya:** XXI asr raqamli texnologiyalar rivojlanish davri hisoblanganligi sababli, maktab bitiruvchilarining barchasi har bir sohada yangi metodlar, yondashuvlar va texnikalarni o'rganish uchun tillarni o'rganishni afzal ko'rmoqda. Bu talabalar maktabda o'qishni tugatish bilan ta'limni to'xtatib qo'yish o'rniga, ularning ko'pchiligi bakalavr va magistratura bosqichlarida o'qishni davom ettirishni tanlamoqda. Haqiqat shundaki, maktab o'quvchilari universitetlarga kamida 3 ta tilni bilgan holda kirib kelmoqdalar. Bu til egalaridan iborat talabalar universitetda ko'p tilli jamiyatni shakllantirmoqda, bu yerda talabalar kundalik muloqotda birinchi, ikkinchi va uchinchi tillardan teng ravishda foydalanadilar. Ushbu hodisa kod almashtirish (code-switching) deb ataladi, ya'ni nutqda tillarni aralashtirib ishlatish bo'lib, u talabalar o'rtasidagi muloqotning sinf ichida ham, sinfdan tashqarida ham keng tarqalgan xususiyatiga aylangan. Ba'zi o'qituvchilar yoki ota-onalar kod almashtirishni til bilish darajasining yetarli emasligi belgisi deb hisoblasalar, boshqalar esa uni til o'rganuvchilarning kuchli tomoni, shuningdek lingvistik moslashuvchanlik va kognitiv qobiliyatlar ko'rsatkichi sifatida baholaydilar. Ushbu maqolada kollej talabalari orasida kod almashtirishning

tabiati, uning sabablari, maqsadlari va ikkinchi hamda uchinchi tillarni o'rganishdagi ahamiyati o'rganiladi. Lingvistik tadqiqotlar va sinf kuzatuvlari asosida maqola kod almashtirish har doim ham zaiflik sifatida qaralmasligi, balki ko'p tilli kompetensiyani namoyon etuvchi murakkab kommunikativ strategiya ekanligini asoslab beradi. Ushbu hodisani yaxshiroq tushunish orqali o'qituvchilar ko'p tillilikka nisbatan ijobiy munosabatni rivojlantirishlari va til o'rganish muhitini yaxshilashlari mumkin.

**Kalit so'zlar:** kod-almashish; ikki tillilik; ko'p tillilik; universitet talabalari; ikkinchi tilni o'zlashtirish; ko'p tilli muloqot; sotsiolingvistika; sinfdagi muloqot; lingvistik kompetensiya; til o'rganish strategiyalari.

**Аннотация:** Поскольку XXI век считается периодом развития цифровых технологий, все выпускники школ предпочитают изучать языки, чтобы исследовать новые методы, подходы и техники в каждой области обучения. Эти студенты вместо того, чтобы заканчивать обучение в школе, многие из них выбирают продолжить образование на уровне бакалавриата и магистратуры. Фактом является то, что школьники поступают в университеты, зная как минимум три языка. Носители этих языков формируют в университете многоязычное общество, где студенты часто используют первый, второй и третий языки одинаково в повседневном общении. Это явление известно как код-свитчинг (code-switching), то есть смешение языков в речи, и оно стало обычной особенностью взаимодействия студентов как в аудитории, так и вне её. В то время как некоторые преподаватели или родители считают код-свитчинг признаком недостаточного владения языком, другие рассматривают его как сильную сторону изучающего язык, а также показатель лингвистической гибкости и когнитивных способностей. В данной статье рассматривается природа код-свитчинга среди студентов колледжей, а также его причины, цели и значение для изучения второго и третьего языков. Основываясь на лингвистических исследованиях и наблюдениях в аудитории, статья утверждает, что код-свитчинг не всегда следует рассматривать как слабость, а скорее как сложную коммуникативную стратегию, демонстрирующую многоязычную компетентность. Лучшее понимание этого явления поможет преподавателям формировать положительное отношение к многоязычию и улучшать условия изучения языков.

**Ключевые слова:** код-переключение; билингвизм; многоязычие; студенты университета; усвоение второго языка; многоязычная коммуникация; социолингвистика; взаимодействие в классе; лингвистическая компетенция; стратегии изучения языка.

### **Introduction**

Multilingualism is growing more widespread in today's worldwide society, particularly among college students who frequently study and converse in multiple languages. Students in many nations are raised speaking one language at home, another in the community, and a third in classrooms. Consequently, it has become commonplace to flip between languages throughout a conversation.

The alternating use of two or more languages within a sentence, discussion, or even a single phrase is referred to as code-switching. Classrooms, academic discussions, online communication, and casual peer exchanges are all places where code-switching can happen.

Even though code-switching is common, it is frequently misinterpreted. Some educators think that language switching is a sign of inadequate proficiency or lack of

fluency in a target language. But according to new linguistic studies, code-switching can also show sophisticated communication abilities and a thorough comprehension of several linguistic systems.

The question of whether code-switching among college students is an indication of linguistic strength or weakness is examined in this article. It talks about code-switching's primary causes, communication purposes, and possible role in language acquisition.

### **Understanding code switching**

A well-known idea in bilingual studies and sociolinguistics is code-switching. The employment of two or more languages or language variants in a single encounter is what linguists call it. It may manifest in several ways.

Inter-sentential code-switching, in which a speaker switches language between phrases, is one of the most prevalent kinds. A student might say one line in English and then move on to the next in a different language, for instance.

Intra-sentential code-switching, which takes place inside the same sentence, is another kind. A student would say something like, "I need to finish my assignment before tomorrow, chunki deadline juda yaqin." In this instance, the same statement has elements from two different languages. Additionally, there is tag-switching, which is the practice of introducing brief phrases from another language—like "you know," "okay," or "right"—into a sentence that is spoken in that language.

These types of code-switching show how multilingual speakers frequently switch between languages effectively and spontaneously.

### **Reasons Why University Students Code-Switch**

University students frequently flip between languages when speaking for a variety of reasons. First, students may be encouraged to transfer languages if they have a small vocabulary in the target language. Learners may switch to a language they are more familiar with if they are unable to find the right term or phrase in the language they are using. They are able to keep the conversation flowing thanks to this tactic. Second, social identification and group membership are crucial. To show solidarity with friends who have similar linguistic backgrounds or to exhibit cultural identity, students may flip between languages. Code-switching can make students feel more at ease and connected in multicultural colleges. Third, another crucial element is the effectiveness of communication. Certain ideas can occasionally be expressed more easily in one language than another. Academic vocabulary, for instance, might be simpler to convey in English, while emotional sentiments might seem more natural in one's own tongue. Habitual multilingual conversation is another factor. Students who are raised in multilingual environments frequently acquire the capacity to switch between languages without giving it any thought.

### **Code-Switching in the University Classroom**

In educational contexts, code-switching is common, particularly in schools where pupils are learning a second or third language. Because they think it lessens exposure to the target language, teachers may oppose this practice.

Nonetheless, observations made in the classroom indicate that code-switching can have a number of beneficial effects on learning. For instance, when debating academic subjects with peers, students may use their native tongue to explain complex ideas. This makes it easier for students to comprehend difficult concepts before putting them into the target language. During group projects, code-switching can also facilitate student

collaboration. Students frequently debate meaning, clarify vocabulary, and bolster one another's comprehension when discussing assignments in several languages. Additionally, teachers themselves occasionally purposefully employ code-switching to manage classroom activities, provide instructions, or explain grammar rules.

During lessons, this tactic can cut down on confusion and save time.

Code-switching can improve comprehension and foster a more diverse learning environment when applied properly.

### **Code-Switching as Linguistic Strength**

According to recent linguistic research, code-switching calls for a high degree of language and cognitive proficiency. The mental management of several language systems is a continuing challenge for multilingual speakers. Choosing the proper vocabulary, syntax, and pronunciation for each language is part of this process.

Multilingual people frequently exhibit higher levels of cognitive flexibility, problem-solving abilities, and mental agility, according to research. Strong executive control in the brain is demonstrated by the capacity to transition between languages.

Code-switching can also show pragmatic competence, which is the ability to utilize language appropriately in various social circumstances. Proficient multilingual speakers understand when switching between languages is appropriate and when staying in one language is preferable. According to recent linguistic research, code-switching calls for a high degree of language and cognitive proficiency. The mental management of several language systems is a continuing challenge for multilingual speakers. Choosing the proper vocabulary, syntax, and pronunciation for each language is part of this process. In casual chats with friends, for instance, students might flip between languages, but in official presentations or tests, they might exclusively use the target language. This skill demonstrates understanding of communication objectives and social norms. As a result, code-switching shouldn't always be seen as a weakness. Alternatively, it might demonstrate the speaker's proficiency using a variety of linguistic tools.

### **Potential Challenges of Code-Switching**

While code-switching has its advantages, excessive usage of it can make learning a language difficult. Over-reliance on the native tongue is one potential issue. Students may have fewer opportunities to learn the target language if they regularly revert to their native tongue. The development of speaking fluency may be slowed down as a result. Constant code-switching may also affect the target language's grammatical precision. Errors may result from students combining grammatical structures from many languages. Furthermore, some educators are concerned that if not every student speaks the same first language, code-switching could lead to an unfair learning environment. Some students could feel left out of discussions in such circumstances. These factors make it crucial to keep a balanced approach. Although code-switching should be acknowledged as a natural communication technique, it shouldn't entirely take the place of using the target language.

### **Implications for Language Teaching**

Teachers can create more successful teaching methods in multilingual classrooms by having a better understanding of code-switching.

Teachers might encourage pupils to use language purposefully rather than outright forbidding code-switching. For instance, they might encourage students to finish assignments in the target language while permitting brief explanations in the original language. Teachers can also create exercises like debates, presentations, and role-

playing that progressively enhance the use of the target language. Through these exercises, students are encouraged to hone their communication abilities without largely depending on their mother tongue.

Increasing pupils' knowledge of code-switching is another crucial strategy. Students can have more conscious control over their language choices by talking about the reasons behind and instances of code-switching. Positive views on multilingualism can also inspire students to value their language skills and keep improving.

### **Conclusion**

When university students live and study in multilingual settings, code-switching is a common and natural occurrence. Modern linguistic research indicates that it frequently indicates linguistic power and cognitive flexibility, despite the fact that it is occasionally seen as an indication of language inferiority.

For a variety of reasons, including vocabulary constraints, social identity, communication effectiveness, and frequent multilingual engagement, university students switch between languages. When utilized properly, code-switching in the classroom can enhance understanding, teamwork, and learning. On the other hand, over-reliance on code-switching may limit possibilities for target language practice. As a result, educators should strive to maintain a balanced approach that encourages frequent use of the language being acquired while acknowledging the importance of multilingual communication. In the end, code-switching is a reflection of contemporary societies' complex linguistic reality. Teachers and students should regard it as a chance to better comprehend the dynamic nature of language learning and multilingual communication rather than as a problem.

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