

## A Linguistic Study on the Role of Code-Switching and Code-Mixing in Multilingual Communication

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### Summary:

This research examines the terms “code-switching” and “code-mixing” in the context of multilingual speech and dialogue. Code-switching is a linguistic phenomenon that occurs when a speaker switches between two or more languages at the border of conversation, while code-mixing is the merging of linguistic aspects into a single sentence. This mixing is very common in multilingual societies. These two phenomena have many benefits and clear functions: they affirm social identity, improve communication, and clarify meaning in the context of speech and emotional expression. These two phenomena shed light on the availability of words and linguistic activity from a psycholinguistic and emotional perspective and how the mind coordinates cognitive processes when expressing a particular idea using multiple languages. English is the most widely used language in these linguistic practices, particularly following colonial expansion, globalization, and the dominance of the technological industry, which is programmed in English. This principle also applies to academic, professional, and other fields. The entire world has been affected by these factors, and students, teachers, and the general public now use code-switching and code-mixing on a daily basis; perhaps they are even unconsciously using this phenomenon, confirming the dominance of language and the potential extinction of native languages.

This study aims to understand the concepts of code-switching and code-mixing and their fundamental differences, and their impact on speakers from a socio-cultural

linguistic perspective. It also focuses on interpreting the methods of language switching and mixing that have emerged in everyday conversations and online interactions on social media .The study is based on the central premise that bilingualism is not a random occurrence or a linguistic deficiency, but rather a conscious communicative strategy used to enhance semantic precision and emotional expression.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. The Problem

Switching between two or more languages, or between dialects, in a conversation or short sentence is a complex process known as “code-mixing” and “code-mixing”. Code-switching is one of the factors influencing the increased use of these two phenomena in society when the speaker is multilingual, whether due to education, parents of different nationalities, psychological factors, or other factors. This process has attracted the attention of scientists and psychoanalysts who are studying its causes and effects. It has received significant attention in the fields of psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, and applied linguistics because it provides a fundamental and essential insight into how the use of multiple languages simultaneously helps build an individual's identity and interact with society. Since English is often one of the languages involved in these activities, especially in postcolonial global contexts, its role has become pivotal in exploring these issues. While code-mixing involves combining two languages within a single sentence, code-switching typically involves changing between two languages at the end of a sentence or discourse.

However, there are very few qualitative studies that examine this issue using data from actual user interactions. This draws attention to a study gap: the absence of a methodical examination of the social and cognitive patterns and reasons underpinning users' blending of Arabic and English inside or between phrases. In

order to close this gap, this study uses a qualitative analysis of a sample of phrases from comments made by social media users in order to identify patterns of language blending and alternation as well as their linguistic and social consequences.

### 1.2. The Aims

1. Understanding the two terms of “code-switching” and “code-mixing” in contexts.
2. Investigating the environment or elements that make up both of code-switching and code-mixing active.
3. To explain the code-switching and code-mixing techniques applied in dialogue, actions, and correspondence.

### 1.3. The Hypothesis

According to this study, bilingualism is an intentional communication technique used to improve semantic accuracy and expressive power. It claims that social, cognitive, and cultural elements, as well as the speaker’s capacity to employ and activate many systems at once, are all responsible for this language behavior. According to the study, this simultaneous activation creates a hybrid linguistic identity that allows the speaker to switch between languages in a way that reflects their social affiliation and cultural background while also serving meaning and context.

### 1.4. Value

The value of studying code-switching and code-mixing is to understand the importance of this phenomenon. When a person uses multiple languages, it reflects their identity and culture and improves communication.

### 1.5. Limits

The data analyzed consists of sentences taken from the internet (social media). These sentences, collected from comments on posts, represent a mix of Arabic and English and were randomly selected from user content. Ten sentences contain clear

examples of the code-switching and code-mixing phenomena. The analytical method used in this study is qualitative, aiming to analyze the phenomenon rather than measure it numerically.

A comprehensive and in-depth study of this phenomenon is limited by the differences in cultural diversity, the differences in language, and the different expressive meanings it carries within it in each society. This makes it difficult to fully understand the external influences of other languages on individuals in their society or whether they will affect them for a short period or in the long term.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Definitions and Differences

#### 2.1.1 Code-Switching

Using two or more codes alternately within a single verbal episode. Here, “codes” reflect different dialects or variants of the language. In most bilingual communities, code switching is discredited by dominant ideas of linguistic purity, despite the fact that it is a common linguistic consequence in settings of language contact. Other research linguists view it as a chaotic practice that indicates a lack of proficiency in one or both languages. (Mabule, 2015, p.340).

An expert in bilingualism asserts that the ideal bilingual is someone who can switch between languages when circumstances demand it, but not when speech conditions remain the same and most definitely not inside a single sentence. In contrast, code-switching experts see code-switching as a useful tactic and an indication of bilingual proficiency. (Weinreich, 1986, page 72,73)

Language switching can occur within a sentence, between sentences, or across sentences. There are three types of language switching: external, internal, and inter-sentential, as stated by Poplack (1980, p. 582). External language switching is the incorporation of elements of a particular language during a conversation in only one language. Inter-sentential language switching is characterized by a change in

linguistic variety on a broader level of words, phrases, or even sentences. Inter-sentential language switching refers to the way language is switched between two different sentences, or in other words, it is the change of linguistic variety within a single sentence, phrase, or word (Koban, 2013, p. 1175).

### 2.1.2 Code-Mixing

Another phenomenon closely related to code-switching is code-mixing. As (Muysken, 2000, p.34) states, the term “code-mixing” refers to the merging of linguistic elements from two languages, which can sometimes occur within a single sentence. The merging of vocabulary, grammar, and grammatical structures between the two languages is more fluid than in code-switching. It often occurs when people who know both languages speak simultaneously and switch between them, even switching within a single verbal unit. Code-mixing occurs without any change in subject matter and may involve linguistic levels related to sound, syntax, grammar, or lexicon (Waris, 2012, p. 127).

According to (Baker, 2006, p.71), language blending occurs when a bilingual person uses their language skills in innovative ways to convey ideas, making communication more effective. This involves using words or sentence structures from one language that may not be present in the other or that are more appropriate for expressing meaning in certain situations. Due to the significant influence of the first language on the second language, it has been difficult to separate the two languages. Languages develop as a result of linguistic interaction and interference. Although many people may be influenced by their native language, most members of a culture blend their native language with other languages by borrowing elements or using linguistic fractures from different languages. (Waris, 2012, p. 127).

Based on the definitions mentioned above, language merging or blending has a practical benefit, as speakers use multiple languages to fill a vocabulary gap or to convey certain ideas in one language.

### 2.1.3 Factors activating code-switching and code-mixing

1. **Social and situational factors:** Participants in a conversation or dialogue may make different language choices based on the mood and identity of the listeners. A person may speak one language with their parents, but the same person may switch to another language when interacting with people they are comfortable with, like friends, or with those who share a similar language level. This indicates that social comfort plays a significant role in the use of code-switching or code-mixing. Switching between languages is not a random shift in this case, but rather a strategy to adapt to individuals and society. (Gumperz, 1982, 65)
2. **Cognitive factors:** According to (Grosjean, 2001, p.12), a speaker's high mental capacity and ability to process linguistic information are closely linked to code-switching and code-mixing. A bilingual speaker is able to activate two linguistic systems simultaneously and select the most appropriate one. High proficiency in both languages provides the speaker high-level flexibility and control without hindering understanding or communication. Some speakers use this strategy to reduce mental effort. It's worth noting that each individual's ability to control their cognitive reserve varies from person to person.
3. **Message intrinsic factors:** Language switching is not only related to the environment or cognitive abilities but is also influenced by the structure of what is being said and the message being conveyed through dialogue. A speaker may choose to switch to another language in order to quote, paraphrase, or rephrase a particular idea more clearly. (Myers-Scotten, 1993, p.48) asserts that switching and blending have become an indispensable means of conveying a powerful and meaningful message in a complete and effective manner, especially when it is difficult to express such meaning in a single language.
4. **Cultural and environmental factors:** Code-switching and code-mixing occur frequently in multilingual environments, particularly in large cities and border

communities, where this mechanism has become a natural part of individuals' social identity. Growing up in a multilingual environment makes switching and blending a familiar and socially acceptable practice for speakers. (Gardner-Chloros, 2009, p. 101)

#### **2.1.4 The difference between code-switching and code-mixing**

Code-switching occurs when language is deliberately changed for specific reasons, such as the presence of another person speaking a different language or a change in topic or context. Code-mixing, on the other hand, involves using a word or expression that is not from the speaker's primary language without a specific or clear reason or purpose (Harya, 2018, p. 96).

### **3. Research methodology**

#### **3.1 Design of research**

This research adopts the descriptive qualitative approach because it represents the most appropriate method for making linguistic phenomena more understandable. The phenomenon of code-switching and code-mixing cannot be reduced to a mere syntactic aspect; rather, it overlaps with sociocultural factors and community identity, all of which make it an integral part of speakers' daily practices. Therefore, the descriptive qualitative approach was chosen with the aim of analyzing the actual use of one language alongside other languages simultaneously. Code-switching and code-mixing not only represent a shift from one language to another but are also communication mechanisms that reveal the dimensions of human understanding and its ability to employ different vocabulary within a single topic to convey an implicit message in multiple ways. In short, the approach allows us to explore what lies behind words, not merely to count them.

#### **3.2 Data selection**

Data selection is an important step in any linguistic study, as it significantly impacts the quality of the final results. The present study investigated code-switching and

code-mixing between Lebanese and Egyptian dialects and English. The sentences were chosen at randomly from social media on internet like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, which are among the most prominent environments for language mixing, with some illustrating code-switching, and others illustrating code-mixing. Each sentence was documented according to its type and source to facilitate linguistic analysis. The following sentences are presented, which will serve as the primary data for the subsequent analysis.

\*The translation below for each sentence was done by the researcher for clarification and is not from an original source.

1. **“El foundation dah perfect, it gives full coverage”**

Translation: The foundation is perfect, it gives full coverage.

2. **“Ana really loving the texture betaa el cream”**

Translation: I’m really loving the texture of cream.

3. **“Ana tired now, I think I will sleep early tonight”**

Translation: I’m tired now, I think I will sleep early tonight.

4. **“The packaging is amazing w kaman easy to use”**

Translation: The packaging is amazing and also easy to use.

5. **“Ana shoft el colors w they look so bright on skin”**

Translation: I saw the colors and they look so bright on skin.

6. **“El movie kan kteer interesting, but the ending was confudsing”**

Translation: The movie was very interesting, but the ending was confusing.

7. **“Ana kter ji3an, I want to eat cheeseburger”.**

Translation: I’m very hungry I want to eat cheeseburger.

8. **“Yeslamo, for the lovely gift”.**

Translation: Thank you, for the lovely gift.

9. **“I can begin a sentence in English we benheyha bel 3arabi”.**

Translation: I can begin a sentence in English and finish it in Arabic.

**10. "Here I come. Ya sadiqi, let's eat the ice cream".**

Translation: Here I come. My friend, let's eat the ice cream.

The sentences were selected from scattered social media comments because they reflect the genuine and unpretentious use of language switching, making them unpretentious and undirected, reflecting natural linguistic behavior as a reaction to a specific event. They are Arabic words mixed with English, sentences that shift from one language to another, and linguistic overlap at various levels, including phrases and sentences. They reflect the environments in which they were found, such as social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, which are among the most prominent environments for language mixing and are characterized by their flexibility, informality, and youthful nature.

**3.3 Model of Code-Switching and Code-Mixing**

One of the most important models used to analyze code-switching and code-mixing is Muysken's (2000) model. In this model, describes how speaking multiple languages involves complex linguistic interference . Some other models offer general explanations for language interference, while this model clearly distinguishes the types and divides them into three categories .The model is based on real examples and relies on real, everyday speech, as it does not only focus on the theoretical aspect, meaning it does not rely on theoretical assumptions. It can be applied to multiple languages, whereas other models are limited to specific languages or are applied to specific environments.

There are three main components to this phenomenon, but we will focus on only two of them due to their importance:

- 1- Alteration: Switching between two separate or completely different languages, i.e., a complete change between two phrases or sentences.

- 2- Insertion: The process of incorporating or inserting certain words or relatively short phrases into the original language, i.e., using a second language in a sentence.
- 3- Matrix language frame: Sentence switching is the use of a complete language in one sentence and then switching to a different language in the following sentence without mixing or inserting words from other languages. The third element was not used because it does not conform to the nature of the sentences or data adopted in the research, since most of the sentences contain insertions or linguistic mixing in a single sentence but not a complete exchange between sentences.

Type	Description	Associated phenomenon
Alternation	Switching completely between two sentences or clauses in different languages.	Code-Switching
Insertion	Inserting a word or phrase from one language into a sentence in another language.	Code-Mixing

Table (1): Muysken's Model (2000): A typology of Code-Mixing

#### 4. Theoretical framework

##### 4.1 Data analysis procedure

#	Sentence	Type	Switching/Mixing Pattern	Analytical note
1	El foundation dah perfect, it gives full coverage	Code-switching	Alternation	Arabic sentence followed by a complete English sentence.
2	Ana really loving the texture betaa el cream	Code-mixing	Insertion	Arabic words inserted within an English sentence.
3	Ana tired now, I think I will sleep early tonight	Code-switching	Alternation	Romanized Arabic sentence followed by a complete English sentence.

4	The packaging is amazing w kaman easy to use	Code-mixing	Insertion	Short Arabic words inserted within the English sentence.
5	Ana shoft el colors w they look so bright on skin	Code-mixing	Insertion	Arabic and English words mixed within a signal sentence.
6	El movie kan kteer interesting, but the ending was confudsing	Code-switching	Alternation	Romanized Arabic sentence followed by a complete English sentence.
7	Ana kter ji3an, I want to eat cheeseburger.	Code-switching	Alternation	Arabic sentence with switching to English sentence.
8	Yeslamo, for the lovely gift.	Code-mixing	Insertion	An English sentence with one word from Arabic inserted.
9	I can begin a sentence in English we benheyha bel 3arabi.	Code-mixing	Insertion	English and Arabic words mixed within a single sentence.
10	Here I come. Ya sadiqi, let's eat the ice cream.	Code-switching	alternation	There is a full separation between sentences.

**Table (2): Analysis of sentences according to type, pattern, and features.**

The table illustrate the sentences are selected for study. Each sentence was is classified according to its type: code-switching or code-mixing. Based on Muysken's model, these sentences are analyzed, along with analytical notes regarding the placement of foreign words and the nature of the blending within the sentence. This organization facilitates a deeper understanding of the nature of the interaction between Arabic and English in the study samples.

1. The reasons for the emergence of language switching include the transition from a complete Arabic sentence to a complete English sentence, or vice versa. This pattern appears in several sentences, such as

- a. El foundation dah perfect, it gives full coverage
- b. Ana kter ji3an, I want to eat cheeseburger.
- c. Here I come. Ya sadiqi, let's eat the ice cream.

**Transition between two ideas:** The speaker often switches from one idea to another, finding this transition suitable for the new idea, such as talking about a specific product.

**Expressing more precise meaning:** The English sentence often attracts more attention and conveys the idea more smoothly. In some cases, English sentences are shorter than Arabic sentences and reach the speaker's mind more quickly.

**The speaker is influenced by digital communication and bilingual environments:** In the digital age, English is dominant in social media such as Reels, videos, and memes. Therefore, English words acquired from social media have become integrated into everyday Arabic speech.

2. Reasons for the emergence of linguistic blending include inserting a word or short phrase from English into an Arabic sentence. such as
  - a. Ana really loving the texture betaa el cream
  - b. The packaging is amazing w kaman easy to use
  - c. Ana shoft el colors w they look so bright on skin

**Filling lexical gaps:** Some words have become more commonly used than their Arabic counterparts, such as (cream, foundation, texture, colors). These words are often used unconsciously by native speakers because they convey their meaning more easily than in standard Arabic.

**The influence of the dominant language in the field:** terms such as beauty, makeup, technology and marketing often come from the English language, and the user incorporates them into Arabic speech.

**Brevity, speed, and linguistic habituation:** English words can be shorter and more commonly used; some words become firmly established in the mind over time and with frequent use, even if the speaker has an Arabic alternative.

#### 4.2 Results of the analysis

Through sentence analysis, patterns of code-switching and code-mixing between Arabic in both Lebanese and Egyptian dialects and English are clearly revealed. The analysis shows that the switching in sentences is from an Arabic sentence to a complete English sentence. This indicates that speakers tend to use two separate languages in conversation without having to combine them into the same grammatical structure. The pattern that appears in the sentence is Arabic words or short phrases inserted into an English sentence structure, and vice versa in another example that shows an Arabic sentence with a foreign word added. The findings indicate that code-switching is frequently employed in conversation to go from one idea to another. In casual communication, code-mixing frequently occurs, particularly when a sharper message needs to be sent.

#### 5. Conclusion and recommendations:

##### 5.1 Conclusion:

According to this study, code-switching and code-mixing between Arabic and English is a common and significant aspect of daily speech in a variety of settings, including social media interactions and the presentation of foreign product in mixed languages. Additionally, the analysis demonstrates that code-mixing, whether in Arabic or English, indicates that people frequently combine words or short phrases within sentences, but code-switching is frequently employed to transition between whole sentences and ideas. The speaker's linguistic-cultural identity is reflected in this switching or mixing, which also highlights how easily bilingual and even multilingual languages can interact.

## 5.2 Recommendation

It is recommended to expand the sample studied to include all dialects and languages and to collect more data to ensure better results. It is also preferable to combine qualitative and quantitative analysis to generate new patterns and multiple new models for a deeper understanding of this phenomenon.

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## دراسة لغوية حول دور التحويل اللغوي والمزج اللغوي في التواصل متعدد اللغات

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الكلمات المفتاحية: التحويل اللغوي، المزج اللغوي، الظواهر اللغوية

## المخلص:

يتناول هذا البحث مصطلحات "التبديل اللغوي" و"الخلط اللغوي" في سياق الكلام والحوار متعدد اللغات. يُعدّ التبديل اللغوي ظاهرة لغوية تحدث عندما ينتقل المتحدث بين لغتين أو أكثر عند حدود المحادثة بين الأشخاص، بينما يُعدّ الخلط اللغوي دمج الجوانب اللغوية في جملة واحدة. يُعدّ هذا الخلط شائعاً جداً في المجتمعات متعددة اللغات. لهاتين الظاهرتين فوائد عديدة ووظائف واضحة: إذ تؤكدان الهوية الاجتماعية، وتحسنان التواصل، وتوضّحان المعنى في سياق الكلام والتعبير العاطفي. وتلقي هاتان الظاهرتان الضوء على ضرورة توافر الكلمات والنشاط اللغوي من منظور نفسي لغوي وعاطفي، وكيف يُندسّق العقل العمليات المعرفية عند التعبير عن فكرة معينة باستخدام لغات متعددة بدل من لغة الأصل. تُعدّ اللغة الإنجليزية اللغة الأكثر استخداماً في هذه الممارسات اللغوية، لا سيما بعد التوسع الاستعماري والعولمة وهيمنة الصناعة التكنولوجية المُبرمجة باللغة الإنجليزية. وينطبق هذا المبدأ أيضاً على المجالات الأكاديمية والمهنية وغيرها. لقد تأثر العالم أجمع بهذه العوامل، وأصبح الطلاب والمعلمون وعامة الناس يستخدمون هذا التبديل بين اللغات وخلطها بشكل يومي؛ وربما يستخدمون هذه الظاهرة دون وعي منهم، مما يؤكد هيمنة اللغة البديلة واحتمال انقراض اللغات الأصلية.

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى فهم مفهومي التبديل اللغوي والخلط اللغوي واختلافاتهما الجوهرية، وتأثيرهما على المتحدثين من منظور لغوي اجتماعي وثقافي. كما تُركز على تفسير أساليب التبديل

اللغوي والخلط اللغوي التي تظهر في المحادثات اليومية والتفاعلات على منصات التواصل الاجتماعي.

تستند الدراسة إلى فرضية أساسية مفادها أن ثنائية اللغة ليست ظاهرة عشوائية أو نقصاً لغوياً، بل هي استراتيجية تواصل واعية تُستخدم لتعزيز الدقة الدلالية والتعبير العاطفي.