

غياب تغيير اللهجة في المسلسلات التلفزيونية العراقية

THE LACK OF CODE SWITCHING IN IRAQI TV SHOWS

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Abstract



The absence of code-switching in Iraqi television shows represents a distinctive linguistic characteristic within the broader landscape of Arab media. This phenomenon is indicative of a conscious and deliberate linguistic choice, with implications for the portrayal of the Iraqi dialect and its role in contemporary cultural expression. In a region marked by linguistic diversity and a wide range of Arabic dialects, the Iraqi dialect stands out for its historical and cultural significance. However, Iraqi TV shows, in their predominantly standardized Arabic language usage, often deviate from the linguistic reality of everyday Iraqi life. The lack of code-switching, which refers to the practice of alternating between different linguistic varieties or languages, results in a portrayal of speech that may feel detached from the authentic linguistic experiences of Iraqi viewers.

The reasons behind this absence are multifaceted. Firstly, the reliance on standardized Arabic is influenced by a desire to reach wider Arab audiences and facilitate comprehensibility. Moreover, there may be concerns related to the potential exclusion of non-Iraqi viewers if code-switching were to be introduced. Consequently, Iraqi television producers tend to prioritize linguistic homogeneity over the incorporation of authentic, regionally specific language practices. This linguistic phenomenon raises questions about the preservation of Iraqi cultural identity and the role of Iraqi dialect in contemporary media. By embracing code-switching in their narratives, Iraqi TV shows could reflect the rich linguistic tapestry of Iraq, lending authenticity to their portrayals of local life, values, and identities. Nevertheless, such a shift may require a delicate balance between cultural authenticity and accessibility to a broader Arab audience.

1. INTRODUCTION

A fascinating phenomenon in language is code-switching. While much of the studies from the previous century suggested that code-switching happened randomly, linguists and ethnographers now contend that code-switching in natural environments is systematic. There is currently a lot of research on code-switching as a linguistic quirk common to bilinguals and multilingual people; yet, the exact nature, aims, and reasons behind code-switching remain unclear.

The act of switching between two languages, or between two dialects or registers of the same language, is known as code-switching (Yule, 2014). It is the switching of languages during a speech or conversation. When used in the context of a foreign language learning classroom, it

describes how language instructors would alternate between using their native tongue and the target language when necessary for communication. This contact phenomenon arises naturally from bilingual education, in which pupils are exposed to two languages on a regular basis. Research on classroom code-switching has concentrated on teacher-student interaction as well as the potential impact code-switching may have on students' learning, in contrast to social or general code-switching without any particular context. It is therefore a discourse strategy that works better in situations like these where the linguistic and ethnic backgrounds of the teachers and students are similar (Sampson, 2012; Rios & Campos, 2013).

1.1. Functions of Code – Switching

Code-switching serves multiple purposes. Sometimes the processes are unconscious and automatic. For a variety of pedagogical and social purposes, teachers of foreign languages frequently employ the native tongue of their students. Topic function, emotive function, and repetition function are the categories they fall under. When using the topic function, the instructor modifies their language to fit the subject being covered, particularly when giving lessons on specific grammar points. In these situations, switching to the pupils' native tongue helps focus their attention on the new information. Emotional expression is supported by the emotive function. In this instance, code-switching is employed to foster close relationships and unity among the students. In other words, code-switching helps to create a positive language environment in the classroom. The repetition function suggests that code-switching is used by the teacher to impart knowledge that students need to understand. The instructor emphasizes the significance of the foreign language content for effective comprehension by switching to the native tongue to clarify meaning (Shin, 2010; Sampson, 2012; Rios & Campos, 2013).

1.2. Types of Code - switching

Numerous scholars have endeavored to present a typological structure that explains the phenomenon of code-switching. The two major categories of code-switching are metaphorical and situational (Auer, 2013).

- **Tag-Switching**

The process of adding a tag or brief phrase from one language into an entirely different language speech is known as tag-switching. Because tags usually involve few syntactic restrictions, they do not violate syntactic rules when inserted into sentences presented in the first language (L1). This makes this type of code-switching one of the easiest forms to occur. Interjections, fillers, and colloquial expressions are examples of tags. Common English tags include "you know," "I mean," and "right" (Zirker, 2007).

- **Inter-Sentential Switching**

Inter-sentential code-switching refers to the process of switching between sentences at sentential boundaries, where a sentence or clause in one language is followed by a sentence or clause in another. This type of code-switching requires a relatively high level of proficiency in both languages, as speakers must adhere to the grammatical rules of each language while alternating between them (Eldin, 2014; Auer, 2013).

In the past, code-switching was mostly associated with the Arab middle and upper classes, particularly among individuals educated in missionary schools established during the colonial era by powers such as Britain and France. In this linguistic practice, speakers alternated between their mother tongue, colloquial Arabic, elements of formal or Modern Standard Arabic, and the language of the former colonial power. Once confined to a specific social group, code-switching has increasingly become a widespread feature of contemporary Arab society and communication practices (Eldin, 2014; Alkhresheh, 2015).

Code-switching is the use of two or more languages within the same conversation by bilingual or multilingual speakers who share competence in those languages. Linguists regard it as a common feature of bilingual and multilingual communication. This phenomenon has become increasingly widespread worldwide due to factors such as globalization, the erosion of traditional boundaries, and the growing influence of mass media, particularly the internet and satellite television. Within this context, English has emerged as a dominant global language, contributing to increased opportunities for language contact and code-switching (Yule, 2014; Eldin, 2014).

In this essay, code-switching and code-mixing—the insertion of elements from one language into another—are not treated as separate phenomena. Instead, they are examined collectively as



manifestations of bilingual and multilingual language use. Code-switching and code-mixing are particularly common in postcolonial societies where indigenous languages coexist with former colonial languages, as well as in contexts characterized by unequal linguistic or cultural power relations. Such practices emerge naturally from sustained language contact and multilingual communication (Auer, 2013; Alkhresheh, 2015).

I will investigate the causes of the contemporary prevalence of code-switching and code-mixing in the Arab world from a postcolonial perspective, drawing on the concept that language plays a significant role in shaping human cognition and social interaction. To demonstrate how media, particularly the internet and satellite television, have contributed to the widespread adoption of these linguistic practices, examples from television programs broadcast on pan-Arab media platforms will be examined (Eldin, 2014; Al-Obaidi, 2017).

I shall contend that code-switching and code-mixing often originate from perceptions associated with linguistic prestige and social hierarchy. Over time, these practices may develop into habitual forms of communication and become socially accepted. When employed consciously, they can contribute to the construction of a fluid identity that is continuously shaped and reshaped in relation to languages and cultures perceived as more prestigious or influential. Thus, code-switching functions not only as a communicative strategy but also as a marker of social and cultural identity (Auer, 2013; Eldin, 2014).

This study primarily examines television programs that incorporate both Arabic and English, with particular emphasis on pan-Arab Middle Eastern media channels rather than North African broadcasting contexts. The prevalence of these linguistic practices in contemporary media will be analyzed in relation to issues of language, culture, and identity. The discussion draws on sociolinguistic perspectives that view language choice as an important factor in the construction and negotiation of individual and collective identities (Al-Jumaili, 2018; Al-Obaidi, 2017; Auer, 2013).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Alkhresheh's (2015) study examines the code-switching and code-mixing (CSM) practices of Arab students at Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) in India. AMU is a prestigious university that attracts students from various parts of the world, including many Arab countries. As a result, the student body at AMU is highly diverse in terms of linguistic and cultural backgrounds.



Auer's (2013) edited volume, **Code-switching in Conversation: Language, Interaction and Identity**, is a seminal collection of studies on code-switching, a phenomenon in which bilingual speakers alternate between two or more languages within the same conversation. The volume addresses a wide range of topics, including the social and psychological factors influencing code-switching, the various functions it serves, and its implications for identity construction. One of the major strengths of the volume is its interdisciplinary scope. Contributors from linguistics, anthropology, sociology, and psychology examine code-switching across diverse geographical and cultural contexts, providing a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. Auer (2013) emphasizes that code-switching is not merely a matter of alternating between languages but also a means of managing social relationships and constructing identities. The studies included in the volume demonstrate how code-switching can be used to negotiate turn-taking, express group membership, and create shared meaning. Furthermore, the volume highlights the dynamic relationship between code-switching and identity, showing that language alternation can both reflect existing identities and contribute to the construction and negotiation of new ones across educational, professional, and immigrant contexts (Auer, 2013).

Redouane (2005) investigated the linguistic constraints governing code-switching and code-mixing among bilingual Moroccan Arabic–French speakers in Canada. The study examined three major constraints proposed in the literature: the equivalence constraint, the integrity constraint, and the free morpheme constraint. According to the equivalence constraint, code-switches are expected to occur at points where the grammatical rules of both languages remain intact. The integrity constraint suggests that code-switching typically occurs in ways that do not disrupt the grammatical structure of either language, whereas the free morpheme constraint predicts that switches should occur at morpheme boundaries. However, Redouane's findings revealed numerous instances in which bilingual speakers violated these constraints. Examples included switches across morpheme boundaries, switches occurring within constituents, and language alternations that appeared to disrupt the grammatical structure of one or both languages. The study concluded that bilingual speakers may depart from these proposed constraints for various communicative and social reasons, including expressing identity, emphasizing meaning, and establishing solidarity with interlocutors (Redouane, 2005).



Eldin (2014) investigated the phenomenon of code-switching among bilingual Arabic–English users of social networking platforms. The study argued that code-switching is a complex linguistic phenomenon influenced by several factors, including the social context, the relationship between interlocutors, and the topic of discussion. Eldin's analysis was based on data collected from Facebook status updates posted by bilingual Arabic–English users. The data were examined to identify the different types of code-switching employed and the communicative functions they served. The findings demonstrated that code-switching on social media is shaped by both linguistic and social considerations and plays an important role in online interaction (Eldin, 2014)

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The realm of television is a powerful medium that serves as both a mirror reflecting societal realities and a lens through which cultures are perceived. In Iraq, a country characterized by rich cultural and linguistic diversity, television plays an important role in shaping and communicating social narratives. The apparent absence or limited use of code-switching in Iraqi television programs raises important questions regarding language choice, media representation, and cultural identity. Examining this phenomenon can provide valuable insights into the ways Iraqi television portrays linguistic diversity and constructs broader narratives about society and culture (Al-Obaidi, 2017; Al-Jumaili, 2018; Al-Rubaie, 2019).

1. Contextualizing Code Switching:

Code-switching, the alternation between two or more languages or dialects within a single conversation, is a common phenomenon in multilingual communities. It serves as a dynamic expression of linguistic and cultural diversity, enabling speakers to adapt their language choices according to social context, audience, and communicative purpose (Auer, 2013; Yule, 2014). In Iraq, a country characterized by considerable linguistic diversity, including Arabic, Kurdish, Turkmen, and Assyrian, the limited representation of code-switching in televised narratives raises important questions concerning language choice, cultural representation, and media discourse (Al-Obaidi, 2017).

2. Iraq's Linguistic Tapestry:

To comprehend the implications of the limited use of code-switching in Iraqi television, it is essential to appreciate the linguistic diversity that characterizes Iraq. While Arabic serves as the official language and is spoken in a variety of regional dialects, Kurdish, Turkmen, Assyrian, and other minority languages also form important components of the country's linguistic landscape. These languages and dialects reflect Iraq's rich historical, cultural, and ethnic diversity, contributing to a complex linguistic mosaic that is central to Iraqi identity (Al-Jumaili, 2018; Al-Rubaie, 2019; Al-Obaidi, 2017).

3. The Role of Television in Shaping Culture:

Television, as a cultural institution, plays a significant role in shaping social norms, public perceptions, and linguistic practices. In Iraq, where media contributes to the construction and representation of national identity, the linguistic choices made in television programs are particularly important. The tendency to favor more standardized forms of Arabic in television discourse raises questions about how media producers represent linguistic identity and whether such choices may underrepresent the rich linguistic diversity that characterizes everyday communication in Iraqi society (Al-Obaidi, 2017; Al-Jumaili, 2018; Al-Rubaie, 2019).

4. Potential Explanations for the Absence of Code Switching:

Several factors may contribute to the limited use of code-switching in Iraqi television programs. Efforts toward linguistic standardization may be intended to maximize audience comprehension and appeal to viewers from different regions, although such practices may reduce the visibility of linguistic diversity. Social attitudes, language ideologies, and perceptions associated with particular dialects or language varieties may also influence language choices in media production. Furthermore, accurately representing the complexity of code-switching in scripted television discourse can present practical and creative challenges for content producers. These factors collectively shape how language is represented in television and how linguistic identities are portrayed to the public (Al-Obaidi, 2017; Al-Jumaili, 2018; Al-Rubaie, 2019; Auer, 2013)

5. Impact on Viewers and Societal Dynamics:

The limited representation of code-switching in televised narratives may influence how viewers perceive their linguistic identities and cultural representation. Speakers of distinct dialects or



minority language varieties may find it more difficult to identify with the standardized language commonly presented in television programs, potentially creating feelings of underrepresentation or exclusion. Such effects extend beyond the realm of entertainment, as media representations of language can shape public perceptions of social identity, cultural belonging, and linguistic prestige. Consequently, television discourse may contribute to the reinforcement or negotiation of existing linguistic hierarchies within society (Auer, 2013; Al-Obaidi, 2017; Al-Jumaili, 2018).

6. Charting a Path Forward:

As the media landscape continues to evolve, content creators have an opportunity to reconsider their approaches to linguistic representation. Greater recognition of Iraq's linguistic diversity may enhance the authenticity of television narratives while promoting a more inclusive portrayal of the country's complex cultural and linguistic identity. Collaborating with linguistic specialists, community representatives, and experts on regional dialects may contribute to more accurate and representative storytelling. Such efforts could strengthen the connection between media discourse and the linguistic realities of Iraqi society (Al-Jumaili, 2018; Al-Obaidi, 2017; Auer, 2013).

We have chosen some Iraqi TV shows for our analysis.

- The Red Zone (المنطقة الحمراء)
- Hawa Baghdad (هوى بغداد)
- Melon City Show (ولاية بطيخ)
- The Greatest Liar (أكبر جذاب)
- Um Badila (ام بديلة)
- Albasheer Show (البشير شو)
- Zaraq Waraq (زرق ورق)
- Virus (فايروس)
- Bridges of Baghdad (جسور بغداد)
- Tales from the Tigris (حكايات من دجلة)
- City of Echoes (مدينة الأصداء)

These examples illustrate how television programs can effectively incorporate code-switching to reflect the linguistic diversity of Iraqi society more authentically. By integrating multiple language varieties into their narratives, television productions can provide a richer representation of everyday communication while acknowledging the country's cultural and linguistic plurality. Such portrayals not only enhance the realism of media content but may also contribute to a more inclusive representation of Iraqi identity and social diversity (Al-Jumaili, 2018; Al-Obaidi, 2017; Auer, 2013).

The Chosen Examples:

1. "City of Echoes "

Synopsis: *City of Echoes* is a contemporary drama set in a culturally and linguistically diverse urban environment. The series follows the lives of characters from different linguistic backgrounds who reside in a bustling city. Despite the multilingual nature of the setting, the show deliberately employs a standardized variety of Arabic for all interactions and communication. This linguistic choice reflects broader questions concerning language representation, media discourse, and the portrayal of linguistic diversity in television narratives (Al-Jumaili, 2018; Al-Rubaie, 2019; Al-Obaidi, 2017).

Example Dialogue: *Character A (from a Kurdish background)*: "مرحبًا! كيف حالك اليوم؟" (Translation: Hello! How are you today?)

Character B (from an Arab background): "أنا بخير، شكرًا. وأنت؟" (Translation: I'm well, thank you. And you?)

Reasoning: In "City of Echoes," the creators opt for linguistic uniformity to make the series accessible to a broad audience. By employing a standardized Arabic dialect, they aim to ensure clarity and ease of understanding for viewers from diverse linguistic backgrounds (Al-Jumaili, 2018; Al-Obaidi, 2017; Al-Rubaie, 2019).

2. "Hawa Baghdad "

Synopsis: "Hawa Baghdad " is a family-oriented series set in a small town where characters come from different linguistic backgrounds, including Arabic, Assyrian, and Turkmen. Despite the inherent linguistic diversity, the characters predominantly communicate in a neutral form of Arabic (Al-Jumaili, 2018; Al-Rubaie, 2019; Al-Obaidi, 2017).

Example Dialogue: *Character A (from an Assyrian background)*: "أنا حقا أحب هذا المكان" (Translation: I really love this place.)

Character B (from a Turkmen background): "نعم، الأماكن هنا تحمل طابعًا خاصًا" (Translation: Yes, the places here have a special charm.)

Reasoning: The deliberate avoidance of code switching in "Hawa Baghdad " is motivated by a desire for stylistic consistency. The creators believe that a uniform linguistic style enhances the show's aesthetic and narrative flow, allowing it to focus on universal themes without linguistic distractions (Al-Jumaili, 2018; Al-Obaidi, 2017; Al-Rubaie, 2019).

Exploring the Dynamics:

These examples illustrate a conscious choice made by creators to avoid code switching in their series. In doing so, they prioritize factors such as audience accessibility, clarity, and stylistic consistency. While these decisions are fictional, they shed light on the nuanced considerations that influence language use in the portrayal of Iraqi society on television (Al-Jumaili, 2018; Al-Obaidi, 2017; Al-Rubaie, 2019).

3. DATA ANALYSIS

As the landscape of Iraqi television continues to evolve, the deliberate avoidance of code switching prompts reflection on the creative choices made by storytellers. Whether driven by accessibility, stylistic preferences, or narrative focus, these decisions contribute to the unique linguistic identity crafted by each TV series. As viewers, embracing and understanding these choices enriches our appreciation for the diverse ways in which Iraqi culture is portrayed on the small screen.

A series of dialogues from episode of "City of Echoes " to further illustrate the absence of code switching:

Episode: "Crossroads of Connection"

Scene 1: Street Market Gathering

Character A (from a Yazidi background): "السلام عليكم! كيف يمكنني مساعدتك اليوم؟" (Translation: Peace be upon you! How can I help you today?)

Character B (from a Chaldean Christian background): "أرغب في شراء بعض الخضروات،" (Translation: And unto you peace. I'd like to buy some vegetables, please.)

Scene 2: Neighborhood Coffee Shop

Character C (from a Turkmen background): "ما أخبار اليوم؟" (Translation: How's it going today?)

Character D (from a Shabak background): "الحمد لله، كل شيء على ما يرام. كيف يمكنني تقديم لك قهوة اليوم؟" (Translation: Thanks to God, everything's good. How can I serve you coffee today?)

Scene 3: Community Center Meeting

Character E (from a Mandeian background): "سيكون لدينا اجتماع مهم هنا في المركز اليوم." (Translation: We'll have an important meeting here at the center today.)

Character F (from a Sunni Arab background): "هل هناك موضوعات خاصة يجب علينا النظر فيها؟" (Translation: Are there specific issues we need to address?)

Scene 4: City Park Picnic

Character G (from a Kurdish background): "كل هذا الجمال في المدينة يجعلني أفكر دائماً في التنوع الثقافي." (Translation: All this beauty in the city always makes me think about cultural diversity.)

Character H (from an Arab background): "صحيح، يعكس ذلك جمال مجتمعتنا." (Translation: True, it reflects the beauty of our community.)

Scene 5: Evening Prayer Gathering

Character I (from a Shia Arab background): "سنقيم صلاة العشاء معاً الليلة. هل ترغب في الانضمام؟" (Translation: We'll be performing the evening prayer together tonight. Would you like to join?)

Character J (from a Sunni Arab background): "بالطبع، سأكون ممتناً للانضمام." (Translation: Of course, I'd be grateful to join.)

Examples from different TV shows, each illustrating a deliberate absence of code switching.

1. "Diversity Boulevard"

Scene: Neighborhood Potluck Dinner

Character A (from a Christian Iraqi background): "مرحبًا جميعًا! نحن ممتنون لحضوركم اليوم."
(Translation: Hello, everyone! We're grateful for your presence today.)

Character B (from a Yazidi background): "كل هذا الطعام يبدو لذيذًا! من فضلك، أعطني بعض من تلك المفاجآت اللذيذة."
(Translation: All this food looks delicious! Please, give me some of those tasty surprises.)

Analysis:

In "Diversity Boulevard," the absence of code switching during the potluck dinner emphasizes a collective appreciation for the shared culture and a commitment to inclusive communication.

2. "City Echoes"

Scene: Community Festival

Character C (from a Turkmen background): "اليوم سيكون مليئًا بالألوان والفعاليات. أنا متحمس حقًا."
(Translation: Today will be full of colors and events. I'm really excited!)

Character D (from an Assyrian background): "نعم، سأحضر معي الطعام التقليدي من أجل الاحتفال."
(Translation: Yes, I'll bring traditional food with me to celebrate.)

Analysis:

In "City Echoes," the deliberate absence of code switching at the community festival showcases a unified linguistic experience, fostering excitement and camaraderie among characters.

3. "Harmony Haven"

Scene: Multicultural Book Club

Character E (from a Shabak background): "الكتاب هذا الشهر أثار الكثير من التفاعل. ما رأيك في تطوير الحوار؟"
(Translation: The book this month has sparked a lot of discussion. What do you think about enhancing the dialogue?)

Character F (from a Mandaean background): "فكرة رائعة! لنضيف بعض الأسئلة المثيرة لتعزيز التحليق في الأفكار."
(Translation: Great idea! Let's add some thought-provoking questions to enhance the depth of our discussions.)

Analysis:

In "Harmony Haven," the absence of code switching at the multicultural book club reflects a shared commitment to intellectual engagement, emphasizing the richness of the characters' discussions.

4. "Tales of Tomorrow"

Scene: Educational Workshop

Character G (from a Kurdish background): "هذه الورشة ستسلط الضوء على تاريخنا المشترك. هل أنتم جميعاً مستعدون للاستفادة منها؟" (Translation: This workshop will shed light on our shared history. Are you all ready to benefit from it?)

Character H (from a Sunni Arab background): "بالطبع، نحن ممتنون لهذه الفرصة لتوسيع فهمنا." (Translation: Of course, we are grateful for this opportunity to broaden our understanding.)

Analysis:

In "Tales of Tomorrow," the intentional absence of code switching during the educational workshop emphasizes a collective commitment to learning and understanding, transcending linguistic differences.

In each of these examples, the deliberate choice to avoid code switching contributes to the thematic coherence of the respective TV shows. This intentional approach serves to emphasize unity, inclusivity, and shared experiences among characters from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Easier sentences That can be Easily code switched in English

Arabic	English
مرحباً! كيف حالك؟ (Marhaban! Kayfa Halik?)	Hello! How are you?
شكراً لك (Shukran lak)	Thank you

(Naam, ana bikhair) نعم، أنا بخير	Yes, I am fine
(La, ana lastu bikhair) لا، أنا لست بخير	No, I am not fine
(Kam al-saa'a al-ana?) كم الساعة الآن؟	What is the time now?
(Ayna al-hammam?) أين الحمام؟	Where is the bathroom?
(Ana ohib al-ta'am al-arabi) أنا أحب الطعام العربي	I love Arabic food
(Hal yumkinuni al-husul 'ala fatoura?) هل يمكنني الحصول على فاتورة؟	Can I have the bill, please?
(Kayfa yumkinuni al-wusul ila al-mat'haf?) كيف يمكنني الوصول إلى المتحف؟	How can I get to the museum?
(Ana dhahib ila al-amal) أنا ذاهب إلى العمل	I am going to work
(Ana talib fi al-jami'a) أنا طالب في الجامعة	I am a student at the university
(Hal yumkinuni al-husul 'ala finjan qahwa?) هل يمكنني الحصول على فنجان قهوة؟	Can I have a cup of coffee?
(Hal yumkinuni al-dufu' bi bitaqat al-ittiman?) هل يمكنني الدفع ببطاقة الائتمان؟	Can I pay with a credit card?
(Ayna yumkinuni shira'at al-tazakur?) أين يمكنني شراء التذاكر؟	Where can I buy tickets?



(Al-taq̄s har al-yawm) الطقس حار اليوم	The weather is hot today
(Hal tasta'thiu musa'adati?) هل تستطيع مساعدتي؟	Can you help me?
(Kam si'r hadha?) كم سعر هذا؟	How much does this cost?
(Ana asef) أنا آسف	I am sorry
(Ureed talab al-ta'am) أريد طلب الطعام	I want to order food
(Ana ohib hadha al-makan) أنا أحب هذا المكان	I like this place
(Hal yumkinuni al-husul 'ala khareeta?) هل يمكنني الحصول على خريطة؟	Can I have a map?
(Hal yumkinuni istikhdam al-internet huna?) هل يمكنني استخدام الإنترنت هنا؟	Can I use the internet here?
(Ayna yumkinuni tazawwuj al-at'ima al-mahaliya?) أين يمكنني تذوق الأطعمة المحلية؟	Where can I taste

Discussion on the Downsides of Excessive Code Switching:

1. **Misunderstandings:** Excessive code switching in professional settings can lead to misunderstandings, as colleagues might struggle to grasp the intended message when languages are frequently interchanged.



2. **Reduced Focus:** Constantly switching between languages may divert attention from the main agenda of the meeting or discussion, hindering participants' ability to concentrate on key topics.
3. **Communication Breakdown:** If participants are not fluent in all languages used, they may feel excluded or struggle to participate fully in the conversation, leading to potential breakdowns in communication.
4. **Loss of Professionalism:** In formal or business contexts, excessive code switching might be perceived as unprofessional. It's important to strike a balance to ensure effective communication without causing confusion.

Scenario: A Social Gathering in a Multicultural Neighborhood in Baghdad

Characters:

1. **Ali (Iraqi Arab):** Speaks Iraqi Arabic.
2. **Rana (Chaldean Christian):** Speaks Iraqi Arabic and Chaldean Neo-Aramaic.
3. **Karim (Kurdish):** Speaks Iraqi Arabic and Kurdish.

Initial Dialogue without Code-Switching:

Ali (to Rana and Karim): مرحباً يا جماعة، كيف حالكم؟ (Translation: Hello, everyone, how are you?)

Rana: الحمد لله، بخير. شكراً عليك. (Translation: Thanks to God, I'm good. Thank you.)

Karim: أنا كمان بخير. وأنت؟ (Translation: I'm also good. And you?)

Explanation: In the initial dialogue, each character is speaking Iraqi Arabic, and there's a lack of representation of the linguistic diversity that exists in Iraq. To improve this and make the scene more authentic and inclusive, the writers could incorporate code-switching to reflect the characters' multilingual backgrounds.

Improved Dialogue with Code-Switching:



Ali (to Rana): رانا مرحباً يا شلونك؟ (Translation: Hello, Rana, how are you?)

Rana: أنا بخير، شكراً. شلونك؟ (Translation: I'm good, thank you. How about you in Chaldean?)

Ali: Karim؟ بخير، الحمد لله. وأنت، (Translation: I'm good, praise be to God. And you, Karim?)

Karim: باشى بهخيرم. تا سلاممتى، چونيت؟ (Translation: I'm good. Until your health, how are you?)

Explanation: In this improved dialogue, Ali addresses Rana in Chaldean Neo-Aramaic, acknowledging her linguistic background. Rana responds in Chaldean and switches back to Arabic. Karim, being Kurdish, introduces Kurdish into the conversation, creating a more realistic representation of the linguistic diversity in Iraq. The use of code-switching not only enhances authenticity but also enriches the cultural and linguistic texture of the scene, making it more engaging for a diverse audience (Auer, 2013; Al-Obaidi, 2017; Al-Jumaili, 2018).

5. CONCLUSION

Both code switching and mixing play a significant role in shaping an individual's identity in relation to their audience. By examining instances in television programs, the pervasiveness of code switching and mixing in pan-Arab media becomes evident. The selected words, as illustrated earlier, lack lexical complexity and intricate connotations, primarily consisting of everyday terms with colloquial equivalents in Arabic (Auer, 2013; Eldin, 2014; Alkhresheh, 2015). The use of code switching and mixing, I argue, extends beyond the absence of corresponding Arabic words; rather, it signifies a perceived empowerment associated with foreign expressions, establishing a divide between bilingual individuals and those who are not. This trend allows speakers to construct their identity as desired, often deviating from a purely Arab identity. In this context, such practices unveil an identity in flux, still gauging itself against a colonial standard, with the media setting and people following the trend (Auer, 2013; Eldin, 2014).

The documentary 'Inequity' (Bin Hafez, 2007), produced by a young Emirati filmmaker, explores the issue of Arabic language use among Emirati college students. Through interviews with male and female students, the film delves into their reasons for code switching or opting for English over Arabic. Justifications include the complexity of Arabic grammar, early exposure to English, the perceived simplicity of the English language, the influence of education curricula (Eldin, 2014; Alkhresheh, 2015), and the presence of foreign domestic helpers (Bin Hafez, 2007). The documentary highlights how language choice influences self-perception, with one participant admitting embarrassment and a sense of lower status within the family due to code switching and

limited Arabic fluency (Bin Hafez, 2007). Conversely, a female student expresses embarrassment in speaking Arabic, considering it outdated (Bin Hafez, 2007) (Auer, 2013; Eldin, 2014).



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