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## EMPIRICAL STUDY OF CODE-SWITCHING AMONG UZBEK UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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**Annotation:** This thesis presents an empirical investigation of code-switching practices among Uzbek university students within multilingual educational contexts. The study examines both the structural patterns and communicative functions of code-switching and evaluates its impact on students' language performance. The findings indicate that structured code-switching significantly enhances communicative competence, reduces cognitive load, and fosters active participation. The study contributes to the growing body of research advocating for the pedagogical integration of multilingual resources in higher education.

**Keywords:** code-switching, empirical study, multilingualism, higher education, Uzbek students, communicative competence.

### Introduction

In the contemporary globalized world, multilingualism has become an integral part of educational systems, particularly in countries with rich linguistic diversity such as Uzbekistan. University students are frequently exposed to multiple languages, including Uzbek, Russian, and English, which they use interchangeably in both academic and informal settings. Within this multilingual environment, code-switching has emerged as a natural and widespread phenomenon. Code-switching refers to the alternation between two or more languages within a single conversation or discourse, and it reflects not only linguistic competence but also social and cognitive processes. It is now understood as a resource that enables speakers to negotiate meaning, express identity, and facilitate communication. In educational contexts, particularly in second language learning, code-switching can serve as a valuable pedagogical tool that supports comprehension and enhances interaction.

### Literature Review

The phenomenon of code-switching has been extensively studied within the fields of sociolinguistics and applied linguistics, where it is recognized as a complex interaction of linguistic, cognitive, and social factors. Early studies by scholars such as Poplack (1980) focused on the structural aspects of code-switching, identifying different types such as intersentential and intrasentential switching.

In the context of Uzbekistan, multilingualism is deeply embedded in the educational system, yet research on code-switching remains relatively underdeveloped. Existing studies indicate that students frequently switch between Uzbek, Russian, and English, particularly in informal communication.



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### **Method and Results**

This study employed a quasi-experimental research design to investigate the impact of code-switching on students' language performance. The research was conducted at a university in Uzbekistan and involved sixty undergraduate students who were enrolled in an English language course. The participants were selected based on their intermediate level of English proficiency and were divided into two groups: a control group and an experimental group, each consisting of thirty students. This grouping allowed for a systematic comparison between traditional monolingual instruction and a structured code-switching approach.

The study was carried out over a period of eight weeks, during which both groups attended regular classes three times per week. In the control group, instruction was conducted exclusively in English, following an immersion-based approach that minimized the use of students' native languages. In contrast, the experimental group was exposed to a structured code-switching strategy in which the teacher intentionally incorporated Uzbek and, occasionally, Russian into the teaching process. Uzbek was primarily used to explain complex grammatical concepts and ensure understanding, while Russian was occasionally used for clarifying technical vocabulary. English remained the main language of communication during interactive tasks.

### **Discussion**

The findings of this empirical study provide strong support for the view that code-switching is a valuable resource in multilingual education. The improved performance of the experimental group suggests that structured code-switching can enhance both linguistic competence and communicative effectiveness. From a cognitive perspective, the use of the first language helps reduce processing difficulties and allows students to focus on meaning rather than form. This aligns with theories of second language acquisition that emphasize the importance of comprehensible input and scaffolding. The findings also suggest that students have positive attitudes toward code-switching, viewing it as a helpful tool that reduces anxiety and supports learning.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this thesis demonstrates that code-switching is a significant and beneficial phenomenon in the context of Uzbek higher education. The empirical evidence indicates that students who are exposed to structured code-switching perform better in terms of speaking proficiency, comprehension, and classroom participation. By leveraging their existing linguistic knowledge, students are able to overcome learning barriers and engage more effectively in the learning process.

Future research may explore the long-term effects of code-switching and its application in different academic disciplines. Additionally, further studies could examine the role of teacher training in implementing effective multilingual teaching strategies.

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