

Dialectal Arabic and English Code-switching: The case of the Department of Foreign Languages at Tahri Mohamed University, Béchar

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Abstract:

The current research paper was proposed to investigate the linguistic phenomenon of code-switching in multilingual speech community by the students at Tahri Mohammed University of Béchar. The main objective of this study is to look at some of the underlying factors that lead University students who belong to the English department to switch between English and Arabic in their daily interactions. Further, the study sought to investigate their attitudes towards the use of code-switching. This research identifies the contexts in which Arabic-English code-switching occurs, including the communicative events. Following mixed approach research, qualitative and quantitative research methods; data were collected from the employment of three tools of enquiry, namely the recording of oral conversations, screenshots of spontaneous chats on Facebook and the questionnaire. The results show that students tend to switch codes in their speech for both linguistic reasons and social reasons, i.e., to bridge the lexical gap, to further explain a point, to reflect a psychological state, to create a sense of humour, and to impress the interlocutor. In addition, findings revealed that there are two patterns of code-switching that students of English employed in their daily interactions whether orally or in written chats namely intra-sentential and inter-sentential switching. However, intra-sentential code-switching is used more frequently than inter-sentential code-switching. Furthermore, students hold positive attitudes towards code-switching and they consider its use as high proficiency.

Keywords: Code Switching, Students of English, situational factors, Attitudes, Dialectal Arabic.

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1. Introduction

Language, being an exclusively human property, is a means of communication and a tool through which one expresses thoughts, beliefs, feelings and desires. Despite its universality, language varies from one society to another, from one social group to another. It is, therefore, one of the concerns of sociolinguistics, as a scientific study of language in relation to its social context, to study these language differences and variations. Contact linguistics, in this case, whose aim is the study of the linguistic consequences of language contact between speakers of different languages due to historical, economic or social exchange, accounts for such language shift and mixture. The fact that people, speak different languages and who get into contact, may have undoubtedly such consequences of language contact phenomena as Code-switching, Code-mixing, Bilingualism, Diglossia and Borrowing.

Algeria is considered a heterogeneous society. It is known for its sociolinguistic diversity, as a result of the coexistence of Arabic, French, Berber, and recently, in some domains, English. Code-switching, largely defined as the use of more than one language, variety, or style by a speaker within an utterance or discourse, or between different interlocutors or situations, is a linguistic phenomenon, which has become widespread within the Algerian society, particularly among the category under investigation- students of English.

There is a controversy concerning the evaluation of the occurrence of code-switching whether it is positive or negative. According to various linguistics studies, the majority of bilinguals hold a negative view as regards the use of code-mixing and switching as a sign of laziness, an inadvertent speech act, an impurity, an instance of linguistic decadence and potential danger to their linguistic performance. Code-switching has been studied from different linguistic, sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic perspectives. The current study is carried out to examine the use of Arabic- English code-switching in different communicative events such as interviews, group discussion, and online communication among students of the English department at Tahri Mohammed University of Béchar and the other universities of Algeria. This work is conducted to investigate the different sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic factors that lead them to switch between Arabic and English during their daily conversations, inside classrooms as well as in their writing while using the different social media, i.e., the use of code-switching in formal and informal settings. It also aims to discover the attitudes of students towards code-switching. To reach the objective of this present research work, we need to provide reasonable answers to our inquiry. This study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. Do students use code-switching in a formal setting as they do in an informal setting?
2. Do the communicative events and patterns of code-switching influence each other?
3. What are the attitudes of students towards code-switching?

To answer the above questions, the present research hypothesized the following:

1. Most of the students switch from English to Arabic for intelligibility, identity marker, precision, or prestige reasons.
2. Students switch from English to Arabic for conversation exclusion.
3. Students switch from English to Arabic due to a lack of vocabulary.

1.1. Methodology

1.2. Choice of the Method

The current study is based on the reasons behind the students 'code-switching and their attitudes towards this phenomenon. Hence, following the goal of this research work, both qualitative and quantitative research approaches are combined in an attempt to analyse the collected data and to obtain accurate results and sufficient information from the respondents.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Code-Switching

Code-switching is broadly defined as the use of two or more languages or varieties in the same language contact or interaction. This notion attracted many linguists' interests. It is an inevitable consequence of bilingualism and diglossia as when more than one linguistic variety, two or more languages exist in a community; speakers frequently switch from one language to another. That means they change the codes or linguistic items from one language to another. Code-switching, as a term, is composed of two words. So before defining it, it is quite clear to provide a clear explanation of the concept 'Code'. Entirely, code refers to any system of signals such as numbers, words and gesture that carry concrete meaning (Wardough, 1998). In other words, it is a meaningful shared system that allows individuals to convey or understand the messages they exchange. In linguistics, the term refers to any linguistic variety used among participants in a speech community as a means of communication including language, dialects, registers...etc, so 'a linguistic code' is used rather than 'a language' (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1993). Furthermore, the continuous verb form of 'switch' denotes alternating or exchanging position, which means that the speaker alternates between the different varieties of languages within a communicative event.

Code-switching can be traced back to the 1950s. According to (Alvarez-Caccamo, 1998, p. 32), and attempting to review the historical development of code-switching research, the term is initially mentioned by (Vogt, 1954) who defined it as a psychological phenomenon that is related to some linguistic causes. Moreover, it was first described by (Labov, 1971, p. 457) as "An irregular mixture of two distinct systems." This implies that CS is a mixture of different linguistic codes that can be balanced in use.

In similar vein, (Gumperz J., 1982, p. 59) defined code-switching as "the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages belonging to different grammatical systems or subsystems". Gumperz considered code-switching as a phenomenon where the interlocutor passes from one language to another or from one variety of the same language to another. Moreover, Gumperz emphasized the

fact that code-switching occurs not only between languages but also between dialects of the same language (p. 61).

(Myers-Scotton, 1993) agreed with Gumperz on explaining switching the codes. She refers to the term as “alternations of linguistic varieties within the same conversations” (p.11). Additionally, Myers-Scotton stated that CS refers to that part of the Communicative competence the speaker acquires to get effective communication. This implies that CS is one competence the speaker acquires as a parallel process to his/her acquisition of languages in order to make the communication more effective. Besides, according to (Milroy L. &, 1995, p. 7), code-switching is “the alternative use by bilinguals of two or more languages in the same conversation”. The authors, here, see code-switching as a cover term that includes different forms of bilingual behaviours.

In the words of (Trask, 2007), CS refers to the speakers’ communicative competence of alternating between two or more linguistic codes due to certain circumstances such as: the participants’ needs and the setting of the conversation, in order to fill linguistic gaps, express ethnic identity or to attain any other aim, and to make the communication more effectual.

Other than that, (Haugen, Bilingualism, language contact and immigrant language in the United States: A research report 1956-1970. Currents Trends in Linguistics: Linguistics in North America, 1973) defined code-switching as “the use of two languages in which an unassimilated or isolated word is introduced as a phrase or more in the context of the other language.” (p.505). Haugen here refers to the alternation of two languages where bilingual speakers use unassimilated words from a different language and introduce them as single words in their language. Although many studies have been conducted about the topic of code-switching, various linguists and sociolinguists could not provide an exact and sufficient definition of this term. (Jacobson, 1990) states:

“The notion of alternation between varieties is not conceived of in a homogeneous way, but, rather, that different investigators examine the phenomenon in ways that elude the possibility of providing a definition of code-switching that all will subscribe to”. (p.1)

What is more, there have been some possibilities to consider code-switching as a strategy of communication used by bilinguals or multilingual in their uses of the language. In this regard, CS as a concept was defined as "a natural linguistic phenomenon in bilingual communities where two or more languages come into contact and alternate at the level of clauses and sentences." (Montes-Alcala, 2000, p. 218). However, various definitions are suggested to explain code-switching, and the definition proposed by (Bentahila, 1983) can be seen as more relevant for this study. We shall henceforth use the term code-switching to refer to the use of two languages within a single conversation, exchange or utterance. The result is an utterance or interaction, of which some parts are clearly in one of the bilingual's languages and other parts in the other language (p. 303).

2.2. Psycholinguistic Approach to Code Switching

Code-switching compels us to consider an important question about what a language is, this question is one interest of psycholinguistics. In fact, the study of code-switching should be conducted from different multidisciplinary perspectives. Psycholinguistics is a branch of knowledge as it is the stem of both linguistics and psychology, which studies the mental aspects of language, especially its acquisition, storage, comprehension, and production; with this respect of those aspects, bilinguals functioning of language are different from that of monolinguals. Hence, Psycholinguists have accordingly been fascinated by this opportunity to gain a better understanding of how languages are stored in the brain, as well as production mechanisms, and there is a substantial tradition of psycholinguistic research involving bilinguals.

Psycholinguistic entirely includes the study of speech perception, the role of memory, concepts and other processes in language use, and how social and psychological factors affect the use of language. For the most part, code-switching is a spontaneous phenomenon; however, studying it in its naturally occurring state is largely incompatible with standard psycholinguistic methodological approaches.

2.3. Sociolinguistic Vision of Code Switching

It is argued that the most preferable perspective to employ when analysing code-switching should be from the sociolinguistic one, where the speakers' use of language correlates to the speakers' social identity and different aspects of their social and cultural life.

Code-switching is an inevitable outcome of either bilingualism or multilingualism. Any person who speaks two or more languages chooses between them according to the situation he/she is in. Initially, the language chosen should be comprehensible to the addressee— the speaker chooses a language that the participant can understand (Hudson, 1996). In multilingual communities, different languages are used in different circumstances, in which the choice of either language is controlled by social rules. That is, one language can be in different speech events, sometimes it can be just used at home, and the other is used in other places and for other purposes.

This kind of code-switching is called Situational code-switching that is the choice of using language when switching depending on the situation, such as the situation when talking to a close friend then switching to talk to a teacher. The choice of language is controlled by conventions that are learned by the members of the community experiences, and which are in turn part of linguistic knowledge.

Bilingual individuals choose the appropriate language in order to define the situation and not the opposite. For instance, when having breakfast with the family, classifying the situation is easy because the situation is the one, which decides the language as language choice varies with it. In other cases, the situation seems less clear. When the choice of language determines the situation, this is called Metaphorical code-switching.

The bilingual person often switches between the two languages in the middle of the conversation. The code-switched words can take place either between or within

sentences. These switches too involve words, phrases, and/or even parts of words (Spolsky, 1998). According to (Gumperz J., 1982, p. 59), code-switching is “the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems of sub-systems”. Gumperz simplifies his definition by saying that code-switching is alternating between two or more languages within the same interaction.

According to (Haugen, *Bilingualism in the Americas: A bibliography and research guide.*, 1956) "Switching refers to alternating between two or more languages, interference to overlapping between two languages, integration to constant use of words from another language by a bilingual speaker and code-switching to introducing a single word". Di Pietro in (Grosjean, 1982, p. 145) defines code-switching as follows: "the use of more than one language by communicants in the execution of speech act". Valdes Fallis (Grosjean, 1982, p. 145) refers to it as "the alternation of two languages", and Scotton and Ury propose that "code-switching is the use of two or more linguistic varieties in the same conversation or interaction".

According to (Milroy L. &, 1995, p. 07); (Boztepe, 2010), code-switching is "the alternative use by bilinguals of two or more languages in the same conversation". However, (Weinreich, 1953) refers to code-switching as bilingual people as individuals who switch "from one language to the other according to appropriate changes in the speech situation.

By looking at the above-mentioned definitions, it is observed that no clear and exact definition defines the term code-switching. Some writers agree that this term is ambiguous, that is why there is a disagreement between linguists and sociolinguists about the definition of code-switching.

2.4. Types of code-switching

There is a plethora of classification concerning code-switching; the most prominent classification is that of Romaine, where she had made the distinction between three main types: the intra-sentential CS, the inter-sentential CS and the tag switching (Romaine S., 1995). However, (Milroy L. &, 1995) classified code-switching into two different types: inter-sentential when the speaker code switches between sentences, in contrast, the intra-sentential CS is when the speaker switches within the same sentences. These types can occur within the same discourse.

2.4.1. Inter-sentential CS

It appears at the sentence or the clause boundaries, this type occurs when the speakers alternate between the sentences, the first clause is being in one language, it could be the L1. While the second one is in a different language, it could be the L2. According to (Romaine S., 1989), this type of code-switching involves a greater fluency in both codes, since major parts of the utterances must conform to the syntactic rules of both languages. (p.15). For instance, “Je ne sais pas, try to ask someone else”.

2.4.2. Intra-sentential CS

This type refers to the alternation between two different languages within the sentence or clause level; it is considered the most complex type since it needs a

higher level of proficiency, fluency, and mastery of both languages. (Jingxia, 2010, p. 11), also, as the most difficult type in terms of interpretation. It can be considered as a kind of mixing two languages without alternation in a topic, interlocutor or setting. To illustrate this idea, an incontrovertible example of CS is to be found in the English– Spanish bilingual title of (Poplack, 1980) seminal article:

“Sometimes I’ll start a sentence in English y terminal en español” “... and I finish in Spanish” (p. 489).

In this illustration, it is quite observable that the interlocutor alternated between English and Spanish within the same sentence boundary, but without violating the combination of either language’s grammar.

2.4.3. Tag-switching

It is known as extra-sentential CS. It is the utility of an interjection or phrase of the mother tongue in another language. According to (Abdel Jalil, 2009, pp. 3-4) tag-switching is "related to the inclusion of a tag". For example, the chunks 'you know', 'I mean, 'right' or greeting phrases, or as in our case, dialectal Arabic, the chunks /goal/, /them/. (Toribio, 2009, p. 4) had given an illustration about this type (French –English): “Les autres pourraient parler Français commelui, you know” “The others could speak French like him...”.

In this example, the speaker integrated the expression ‘you know’ to denote the matrix or the dominant language used in his speech is French whereas the embedded one is English.

Similarly, (Muysken, 2000, p. 118) defined this type to the use of a tag, a discourse marker, or a conversation marker in a language that is generally heterogeneous from the code of the sentence into which it is inserted.

2.5. Reasons for Code Switching

Gender, age, ethnic origin, social status and social class, added to educational level, sequencing of utterances, along with language planning and language attitudes are considered as social factors which in turns have a direct relation with the study of language, hence language cannot be studied in isolation. Indeed, there are several factors leading people to code-switch from one language to another.

In the view of (Trudgill, 2000, p. 81) concerning this idea, “The same speaker uses different linguistic varieties in different situations and for different purposes”. Entirely, among these purposes, there are linguistic, social and psychological reasons that make the speakers shift between two different codes. The speaker code switches to fulfil the interpersonal functions of communication, and he does that consistent with the context and the purpose that lead him/ her to say some utterances in one language and not in others, or sometimes the speakers lack the knowledge of words in the base language.

In a similar vein, (Spolsky, 1998, p. 49) had also summarized some factors of the bilingual speakers’ switching that is either for expediency related to topics, which means selecting an easy vocabulary for a better understanding and effective communication, or the presentation of the effect of domain ‘differences, this denotes those speakers will develop distinct topics using different jargons in the

two languages. In addition to the lack of the linguistic competence of lexis, speakers who have received advanced education in a professional field in a second language will typically not be deficient in using the terms in their native language. Further explanation of the sociolinguistic reasons for switching between languages was made by (Crystal, 1987), for instance, the incapacity of the speaker to express their self in one language because of emotional state, their desires to show integrity within a certain group, as to establish goodwill and support with the listener.

Besides, (Holmes, 2001) has stated that a speaker may switch to another language as a signal of group membership and shared ethnicity within an addressee. Accordingly, code-switching can be used as a marker to show solidarity between people from different or the same ethnic groups. Additionally, (Auer, 2002) has mentioned that "Code-switching carries a hidden prestige which is made explicit by attitudes" (p.57). Speakers do switch just for either the inclusion or the exclusion of certain social groups from the conversation. Other than those reasons, to express approval or disapproval, for persuasion of other people, also the relationship of speakers and their social networks, plus their self-perception and one of the others.

3. Results and Findings

The conversation was between master two English students where we can observe the switching between dialectal Arabic and English language, it has occurred interchangeably and spontaneously. It is highly remarkable the application of the three types of this phenomenon, the inter-sentential, intra-sentential and tag switching. We divide the conversation into examples for better analysis.

Example 1

A. Alo.

/əlo/

B-Alo ..Hello !

/əlo 'he'ləʊ/

-How are you ?

/haʊərjʊ/

A.fine, what about you?

/faɪnwɒtə'baʊtjʊ/

B.Umm...Ça Va, HamdolilAllah (umm... I'm fine, thanks to God)

/əmsa va hæmdölilallah/

A.HamdolilAllahyarabi.

/hæmdölilallahjərabɪ/

In this example where the initial of the conversation is just a greeting though we can notice the occurrence of switching between Arabic and English within the sentence boundary that means the intra-sentential switching. The implication of tag switching is also found but with the insertion of a word in the French language (ÇaVa).

Example 2

B. Umm... what are you doing ?

/əmwɒtə:rjʊ 'du:ɪŋ/

- A. I'm trying to write, you know.
/aim 'traɪtɪŋtə'raɪtju:nəʊ/
- B. good for you, ana rani stuck.
/gʊdfəjʊ 'ɑ:nə 'rɑ:nɪstʌk/
- A. 3lah?
/3ləh/
- B. Eh! 3labalak...Ehh ,lyoum when i was writing,
/əh 3ləbælk əhlju:m wen aɪwəz 'raɪtɪŋ /
- O rohtrgadt, and everything i have written, rah.
/ɔ: rohtrgədtənd 'evriθɪŋaɪhæv 'rɪtrɑ:h/
- 3labalk walitnendab...
/3ləbælk wəlɪtnəndæb/
- A. Take it easy, take it easy, everything will be alright.
/teɪkɪt 'i:zɪteɪkɪt 'i:zɪ'evriθɪŋwɪlbɪɔ:lraɪt/

In this example, it is quite observable that the alternation of the topic of the conversation permits the interlocutor to change the language. Intra-sentential, in this case, is occurred, where the recorded participants switch within utterances so as to show a kind of solidarity with the speaker.

Example 3

- B. ah! rah hakemni depression, ah mazeltmakhalastch and i'm too late.
/ɑ:hhækəmnɪdɪ 'prefənɑ:hmazəltmaxələstʃəndɑ:mtu: leɪt/
- A. Ah we are in the same path,
/əhwɪɑ:rɪndəseɪmpɑ:θ/
- a bentimatkalkirohak ma walou.
/ə bəntɪmɛtkalkɪrɔhəkɑ: wələʊ /
- B. Ah, no - rani retard bezzaf.
/ɑ:hnəʊ 'rɑ:nɪre 'tɑ:dbəzɑf/
- A. ay teslak, it is quite normal.
/aɪtəslakɪtɪzkwɑɪt 'nɔ:məl/
- B. inchaAllah, i hope so.
/ɪnʃə'allahɑ:həʊpsəʊ/
- A. inchaAllahya rabi.
/ɪnʃə'allahyɑ:rɑ:bɪ/

In this instance both inter-sentential and intra-sentential code-switching occurred spontaneously and unconsciously so as to reflect the psychological state of the speaker who is anxious about the completion of the research paper, hence the participant alternates to dialectal Arabic to express herself freely. Furthermore, the implication of this phenomenon by the interlocutor is to show intimacy, it is often said that the first language marks intimacy and that the use of a second or foreign language, in this case, English may be used for certain less intimate topics.

The analysis of the recorded conversation revealed that intra-sentential switching has an extreme use in discourse. Code-switching occurs as a result of interaction and it happens to express a point of view, to support the other interlocutors and to emphasize an idea. It also occurs in speech situations as a strategy to be more understood and to convince the interlocutor. From this standpoint, it can be said that code-switching cannot be considered as a lack of competence in one of the languages, but rather as a sign of various functions.

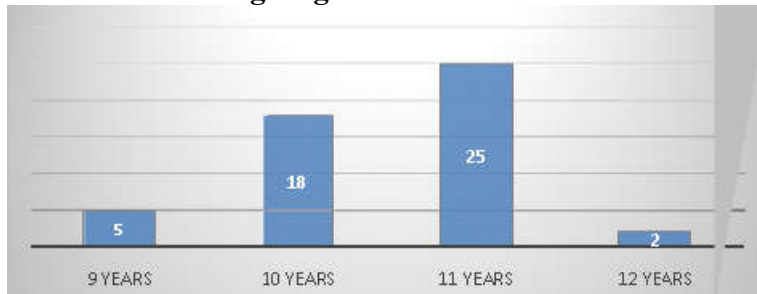
4. General Statistics

The table below shows major information about the gender and level of informants in this investigation. It seems that two-thirds are female, as almost half is Master 1 students.

Participants' Genders		Participants' Levels		
Male	Female	License3	Master1	Master2
18(36%)	32(64%)	10(20%)	22(44%)	18(36%)
Total:50 (100%)		Total:50 (100%)		

Table 1. General Statistics of the Participants

Period of Learning English



Graph1. Participants' Periods of Learning English

As shown in the table above, half of the participants have been for an average of 11 years, learning English. We can link this period distribution to the age and level of each participant. The least percentage appears for those who have been learning English for twelve years. It is obvious from the periods that participants have been learning English that it is to a good extent a period that leads them to be aware of using the language, and leads to the existence of code-switching in their daily conversation.

Participants' Code-switching

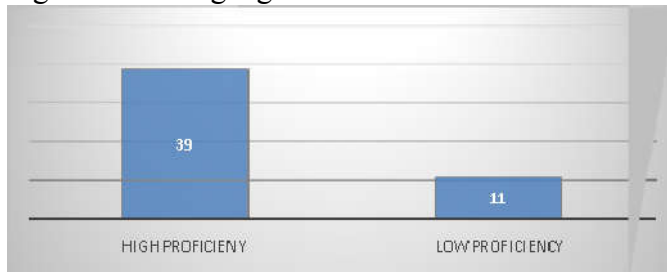
When they were asked whether they code-switch between their mother tongue and English, the majority confirmed that they do. Only three said they do not.

Answers	Yes	No	--
Percentage	47(94%)	3 (6%)	50 (100%)

Table 2. The occurrence of code-switching

Participants' Attitudes towards Alternating between Languages

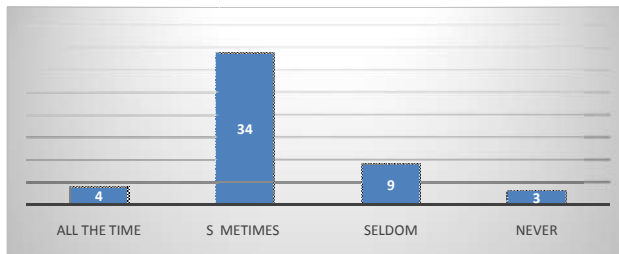
The table below shows that almost four-fifths (exactly 88%) of the participants relate the alternating between two languages to the high proficiency speakers have of both or either of the languages. However, other participants confirmed that they use one language to compensate for a low proficiency of using another language and /or low proficiency can be the underlying motive of alternating between languages.



Graph2. Participants' Attitudes towards Alternating between Languages

Moving from One Language to another

Participants were asked about the level or frequency of times they recognize themselves moving from one language to another (switching codes), their answers were as follows:

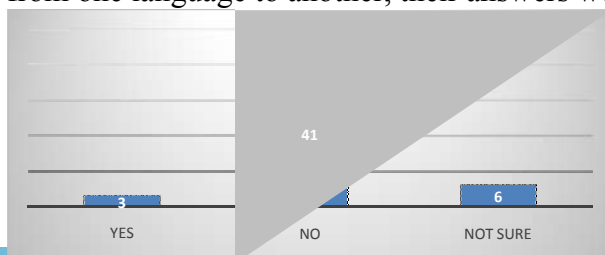


Graph 3. Frequency of Moving from one Language to another

The table above shows that more than two-thirds (68%) of the informants sometimes recognize their cases of code-switching when speaking and altering between languages. Four others confirm they recognize that all the time. The least percentage went to those who denied their recognition of moving from one language to another.

Conformity to Grammar when Switching Codes

Participants were asked whether they stick to rules of grammar when alternating from one language to another, their answers were as follows:



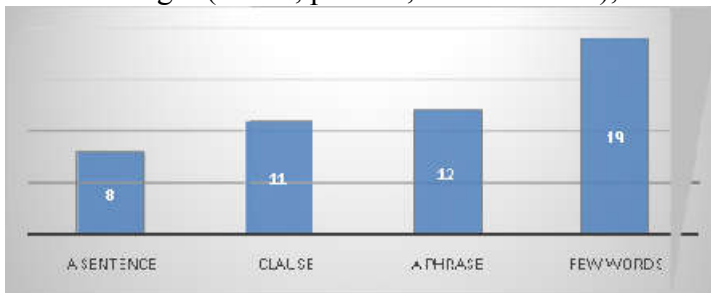
Graph 4. Conformity to Grammar when Switching Codes

The table above shows that four-fifths (82% exactly) of the informants do not conform to grammatical rules when code-switching.

The cases of code-switching to the majority of them seem to be not governed by rules because only three informants answered with a 'yes. However, six participants were not sure whether they follow grammar norms or not.

The Usual Length of Code-switching

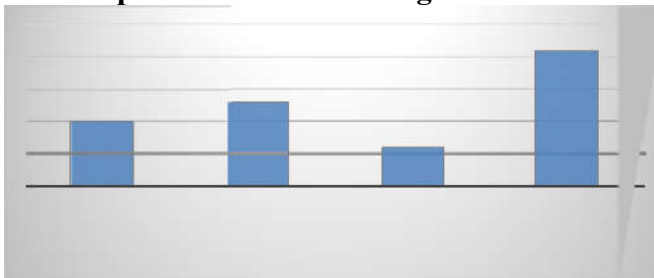
Participants were asked about their common and usual form of code-switching in terms of length (words, phrases, and sentences), their answers were as follows:



Graph 5. The Usual Length of Code-switching

The table shows different lengths by variant numbers of informants. Almost two-fifths (38%) use few-word code-switching forms; while almost one-fourth (24%) switch the codes in a form of phrases. The least of them opted for stating that their switching of codes occurs in full sentences, while 22% of them confirmed their use of clause-long code-switching forms.

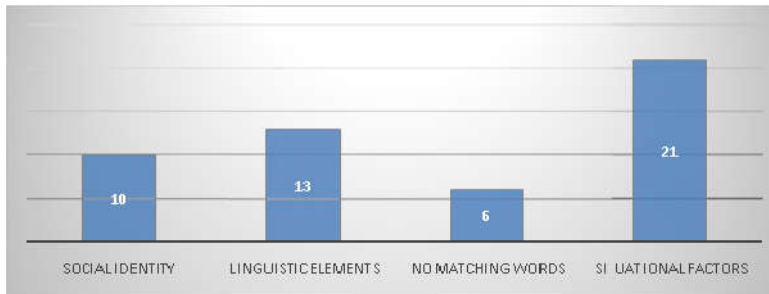
The Purpose of Code-switching



Graph 6. The Purpose of Code-switching

The table above shows informants' different purposes when they code-switch. 42% of them said that they code switch for being informative as no words could match when producing language. 13% of them do code-switch in order to compensate for their linguistic lack and limits. Whereas other informants opted for social belonging (12%) which reflects their role in the community, and the fifth of informants do code switch for the sake of emphasizing and highlighting an idea or a message in a certain language(s).

Factors Leading to Code-switching



Graph 7. The Purpose of Code-switching

The table above shows the various underlying factors that lead informants to alternate between languages. The major option is the situational factor including people, topics, and settings since 36% opted for that factor. However, a considerable number of informants (24%) confirmed that finding no words pushes to selecting words from other codes. More generally, the linguistic factor is apparent with a percentage of 14%. As it is linked to the community social norms, showing the social identity was the factor that leads to code-switching for 26% of informants.

The results of the data analysis show that most English students switch-code either in the middle or at the end of the sentence. The way they switch between languages differs from one person to another according to their purposes, needs and their psychological state, in relation to situational factors as the topic of the interaction, participants, and setting.

5. Conclusion

The sociolinguistic situation of the Algerian speech community is considered to be one of the most complex issues in sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and several other different disciplines; this fact is due to the co-existence of different varieties. The current research shed light on code-switching among English students at Tahri Mohammed University of Béchar. The main aim of this study is to investigate the attitudes that make students switch between the codes; most English students have in their speech repertoire entirely more than one code, hence they alternate between languages in their daily interaction whether in oral or written conversations. In this regard, it seems to be a crucial phase to understand the reasons that lead the students to switch between dialectal Arabic and English.

To answer the research questions posed in the Introduction and to test the hypothesis; a mixed approach was used to collect data from a variety of sources such as the recording, screenshots, and the questionnaire. Hence, this study employed a qualitative method that is used to describe and interpret the findings along with a quantitative method for statistical analysis.

The Results obtained from this sociolinguistic investigation, reveal that the English students switch between Arabic and English when they are interacting with each other to express different functions; sometimes they switch codes in order to emphasise an idea or point of view and to convince the interlocutors, as to reflect a psychological state and to show solidarity with the speaker, to create a sense of

humour or to grab attention. Besides, the speakers frequently switched code in explanations and elaborations, and when they intended to attract or impress a specific social group (the other gender). Additionally, intra-sentential switching was used most frequently than the other types, inter-sentential and tag switching both in oral and written conversations.

Although it was hypothesized and it is an entirely common concept that most of the students switch between the codes due to the lack of linguistic elements, the current study showed the exact opposite, that is, students switch codes due to situational factors such as the interlocutor, the topic of the conversation and the setting. Also, it was hypothesized that whether the communicative events and patterns of code-switching influence each other, the occasion where any conversation is raised and the relationship between the speaker and the interlocutor has an impact on the occurrence of code-switching whether we insert only one word or we switch the whole sentence in another language.

Findings from the current study showed that English students tend to switch codes in their speech; hence their attitudes towards this phenomenon are not as it was expected, as a low proficiency. Students believe that switching between the codes is a high proficiency and it reflects the level of the speaker; it is a kind of prestige to impress the interlocutor.

Lastly, the results of the current research indicate that the phenomenon of code-switching is a strategy that allows continuity in speech and a sign of the level and the style of speaker, rather than an obstruction to communication or a sign of a deficiency in vocabulary. Furthermore, code-switching is a rule-governed process that is guided by several linguistic constraints and various non-linguistic factors.

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