

A Systematic Review of the Literature on Code-Switching and a Discussion on Future Directions

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Abstract

The study of code-switching holds immense importance in understanding the intricate dynamics of language use and communication in diverse communities, thereby it illuminates how individuals navigate between languages to express identity, convey meaning, and negotiate social relationships. This study investigates code-switching's impact on personality traits among foreigners in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, with a focus on Saudi Arabia. Despite a growing body of literature, we applied a systematic literature review approach utilizing the Scopus database, this study analyzed 15 papers to provide a detailed examination of the current landscape of code-switching research across disciplines such as social sciences, linguistics, and cross-cultural communication. We examined and found that the code-switching is a multifaceted phenomenon influenced by social, cultural, and contextual factors. and it serves pragmatic functions and reflects linguistic adaptability. However, its impact on language development and social dynamics varies. The current study emphasizes the need for further research to clarify theoretical foundations, define code-switching, and explore its role in multicultural environments. The implications of this study suggest a critical need for continued research to enhance our understanding of code-switching's impact on personality traits, especially among foreigners in GCC countries.

Keywords: Code-Switching, Personality Traits, Linguistics, GCC Countries, Culture, Systematic Review

Introduction

The history of code-switching is deeply embedded in the rich tapestry of human language use (Dechapratumwan, 2016), evolving across diverse cultures and linguistic landscapes (Anderson and Toribio, 2007). In comparison, the practice of code-switching among humans predates scholarly attention previously, where modern academic exploration began in the mid-20th century (Alshatti and Jamali, 2023). Early research studies often focused on sociolinguistic aspects, investigating how individuals effortlessly navigated

multiple languages in multilingual communities (Aslanov, 2000). Therefore, prior studies have recently shown interest in code-switching's cultural and identity aspects, with scholars delving into how language choices reflect and shape individual and group identities (Hamam, 2011). Today, code-switching research extends into digital communication, offering a contemporary lens on language behavior in the face-to-face and virtual platforms of communication (García-Sánchez, 2010).

Recently, Alhazmi (2016) defined codeswitching as alternating between two or more languages or language varieties within a single conversation, sentence, or discourse, reflecting the speaker's linguistic versatility. Code-switching is sometimes used interchangeably with the term "code-mixing" (de Ruiter and Ziamari, 2019), while it more specifically refers to the incorporation of elements from one language into another, often within the same sentence or phrase (Woolard, 2004). Thereby, Auer (2020) defined code-switching as encompassing both intra-sentential (within a sentence) and inter-sentential (between sentences) usage, providing a versatile means of expression and communication in diverse linguistic environments. However, research studies have shown that code-switching can be valuable for building strong communication across different individuals from different countries. In this regard, the history of code-switching showcases its dynamic evolution from a linguistic curiosity to a multidisciplinary exploration of language (Lee, 2010), culture (Simon, 2002), and cognition (Bosma and Blom, 2019), continually unveiling new layers of complexity in how individuals navigate and negotiate linguistic diversity (Zunnorain, 2015).

Therefore, due to the novelty of this concept, literature and reviewed papers have failed to systematically focus on the role and occurrence of code-switching on the personality traits among foreigners in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, mainly in Saudi Arabia (Mozaic 2009, Begum and Haque, 2013). Consequently, Begum and Haque (2013) outlined that code-switching among foreigners in Saudi Arabia is a common linguistic phenomenon influenced by the country's multicultural environment. As Saudi Arabia hosts a significant expatriate population, individuals from diverse linguistic backgrounds interact daily, incorporating multiple languages into their communication. Furthermore, code-switching contributes to the creation of a unique linguistic blend reflective of the multicultural tapestry of Saudi Arabia (Alosaimi, 2019); it facilitates effective communication and helps bridge cultural gaps, fostering a sense of unity among the diverse foreign community residing in the country.

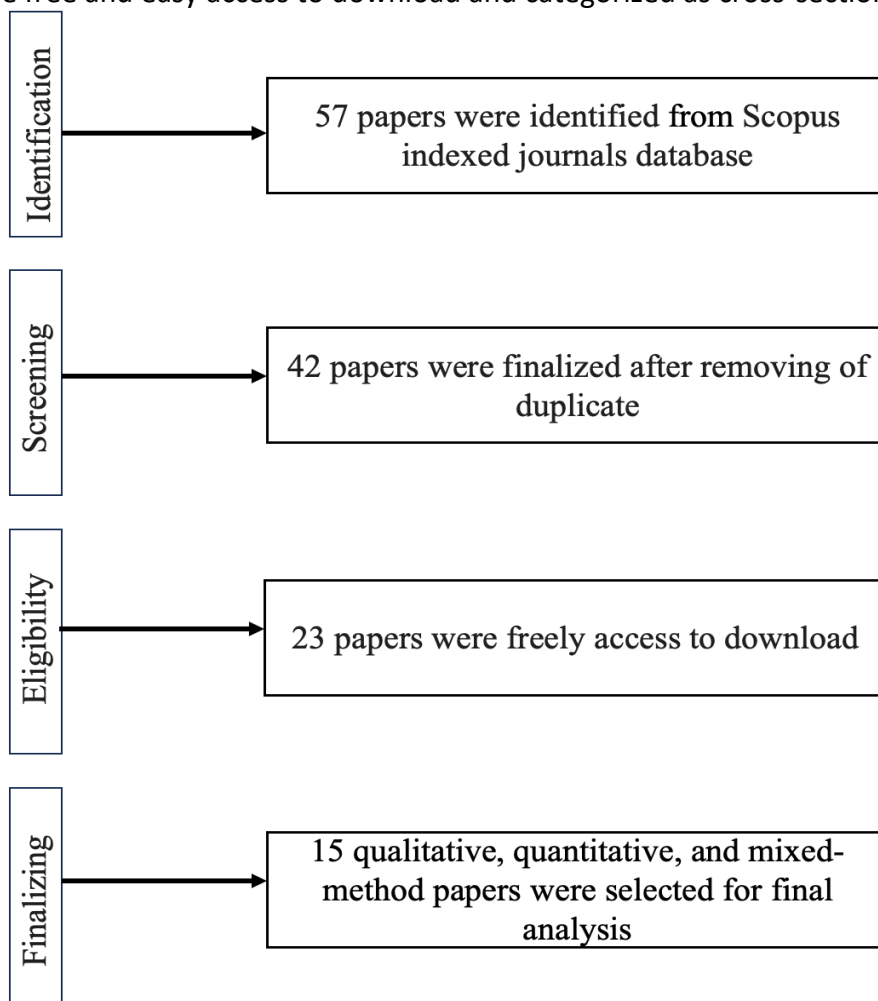
Empirically, several studies suggested that the influence and occurrence of code-switching are expanding widely across various journals, focusing on the differences in their theoretical foundations and arguing for distinct theoretical frameworks. Thereby, there is still a lack of consensus and clarity in the definition of code-switching among individuals as the area is still not mature in the social sciences studies. Conversely, the present study seeks to enhance knowledge on code-switching by systematically reviewing the literature, utilizing a methodology employed in the social sciences called Scopus database. Unlike focusing on a specific social, cultural, and cross-border issue related to code-switching, the present research aims to delineate the discipline's current state. To the aim of the present study, we employ a Systematic Literature Review method to conclude an overview of opportunities and use within the realm of the code-switching phenomenon.

We summarized the present study as: first, the literature review methodology is outlined; second, the systematic literature review process mentioned; three, constructs the overall

findings obtained from the systematic literature review process. Finally, the paper concludes with discussions of the findings, identified limitations, and suggestions for future research.

Methods

The study of code-switching is a relatively new field of research that has emerged from the broader area of social science and Linguistics communication studies. A systematic literature review was conducted to analyze and identify the key categories of code-switching. Several prior studies suggested that systematic literature reviews are valuable tools for synthesizing existing knowledge and identifying potential directions for future research (Lee, 2010; Auer, 2020). The review process involved four main stages (i.e., Identification, screening, eligibility, and finalizing), as illustrated in Figure 1. To ensure the selection of high-quality publications, the search was limited to Scopus-indexed journals and research papers discussing code-switching published in English. The search terms "Code-switching" OR "Code-switching" AND "Arabic" were used in the title/abstract/keyword fields of the selected databases. The scope of the study was restricted to papers published only in the business management accounting and social sciences journals. Due to concerns about the variability of peer-review processes and limited availability, we excluded books, book chapters, conferences, review papers, and proceedings. As a result, 57 papers were identified, and we analyzed 15 research papers based on the free and easy access to download and categorized as cross-sectional.



Results and Discussion

Throughout the above-described process, numerous studies investigated and concluded the occurrence and influence of code-switching, and a theoretical and model compilation was recognized (refer to Table 1). During the systematic literature analysis process, we demonstrated that past studies offer insights into the foundational principles and the historical trajectory of research in this domain. Concurrently, various methodological concerns related to deception testing and challenges associated with analytical techniques were also identified. The systematic literature analysis of this research not only highlights areas where additional investigation would be advantageous and proposes methodologies for such exploration. This comprehensive approach sheds light on the multifaceted nature of deception research, underscoring the need for a holistic understanding encompassing theoretical frameworks, code-switching, methodological considerations, and analytical challenges.

Synthesizing the Results

Rousan and Merghmi (2019) suggest that code-switching is a complex phenomenon influenced by various factors, including age, education, and social context. Furthermore, the study pointed out that code-switching is an important part of the linguistic landscape of Algeria and that it plays a significant role in the expression of identity. Overall, the study by Rousan and Merghmi (2019) is a valuable contribution to our understanding of the use of code-switching in Algerian Arabic. Another study by Hussein et al (2020) highlighted that code-switching is a complex phenomenon influenced by various factors, including the purpose of the interaction, the context of the interaction, and the proficiency of the speaker. Code-switching can be valuable for education, social, and professional activities. Thereby, prior studies advocated that code-switching may also be used for negative purposes, such as avoiding difficult topics or giving students the impression that English is not an important subject (Hussein, 2020).

However, Al Alaslaa and Alhawary (2020) illustrated the complex interplay between language, identity, and social context in online communication. In addition, code-switching is a common and natural part of communication, filling lexical gaps and accommodating the other party. Importantly, AlAfnan (2021) explored that the formality of the context does not simply determine code-switching but is also influenced by factors such as age, education, and prestige. Another study by Al-Deaibes (2021) highlights the importance of code-switching as a communicative tool and the complex factors influencing its use. The importance of code-switching as a way of expressing identity, maintaining social relationships, and navigating the online environment. Thus, dubbing has a complex interplay between language, culture, and meaning (Yahiaoui et al., 2021).

Finally, Rabab'ah and Al-Yasin (2017) highlight the complex motivations for code-switching and the potential benefits and drawbacks of this practice. Additionally, the authors begin by discussing the traditional view of Arabic, which is based on the concept of diglossia. Diglossia is a situation in which two distinct varieties of the same language coexist, each with its function. In the case of Arabic, the high variety, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), is the language of formal education, government, and the media. The low variety varies from region to region and is the language of everyday communication.

In conclusion, academic research, including linguistic analyses and sociolinguistic studies, can better understand code-switching's patterns, motivations, and implications.

These insights can help address concerns and develop strategies for promoting linguistic diversity and intercultural communication.

Table 1

Systematic Literature Review

Author (s) and years	Country	Research Objectives	Underpinning Theory/Model	Method	Sample and Data Collection	Findings
Roussin and Merghmi (2019)	Algeria	Sheds light on the complex relationship between language and identity Arabic-French code-switching in Algerian TV talk shows.	Theory of conversational code-switching	Qualitative	Four TV talk shows	The researcher found that code-switching was used for various purposes, including to express solidarity, mark group identity, and signal humor on TV talk shows. They also found that code-switching was more common among younger Algerians and those with a higher education level.
Hussein et al. (2020)	Jordan	Investigated the functions and roles of code-switching among EFL high school teachers	Not applicable	Quantitative	330 male and female students and teachers from two secondary schools	First, the study found that the teachers code-switched to build rapport with students, create a

Author (s) and years	Country	Research Objectives	Underpinning Theory/Model	Method	Sample and Data Collection	Findings
		and students.				more relaxed classroom atmosphere, and express empathy. Second, the study found that the students code-switched to connect with their teachers personally and build relationships with their classmates.
Al Alaslaha and Alhawary (2020)	Saudi Arabia	The study aims to investigate code choice between Standard Arabic (SA) and the Saudi dialect (SD) by Saudi Twitter users.	Not applicable	Quantitative	Seven thousand eight hundred fifty tweets from 200 Twitter users.	The study found that code-switching was common among Saudi Twitter users, using both SA and SD extensively. In addition, the study identified several factors that influenced the choice between SA and SD.

Author (s) and years	Country	Research Objectives	Underpinning Theory/Model	Method	Sample and Data Collection	Findings
Alkhlifat et al. (2020)	Jordan	They examined code-switching between Arabic and English in Jordanian general practitioner (GP) consultations.	Communication accommodation theory	Qualitative	Thematic analysis of doctors (n=9) and patients (n=18)	The authors revealed that doctors and patients used code-switching during the medical consultation for two main reasons: 1) filling lexical gaps and 2) accommodating the other party. Thereby, code-switching positively affects the way to communicate in medical settings.
Albani, (2020)	Algeria	introduces DZDC12, a new multipurpose parallel Algerian Arabizi–French code-switched corpus.	Phonotactic models	Quantitative	The corpus consists of 12,000 parallel sentences of Algerian Arabizi–French code-switching, collected from Facebook comments written by Algerians.	The sentences are annotated for language identification, word segmentation, and part-of-speech tagging. DZDC12 is designed to be a valuable resource for researchers working on a variety of

Author (s) and years	Country	Research Objectives	Underpinning Theory/Model	Method	Sample and Data Collection	Findings
						natural language processing (NLP) and information retrieval (IR) tasks, including machine translation, sentiment analysis, emotion detection, abusive message detection, gender identification, Algerian sub-dialect identification, Romanized Arabic–French identification and segmentation, and Algerian dialect identification.
Alafnan (2021)	Australia	The authors investigated the diglossia features of the Arabic-speaking	Not applicable	Qualitative	10 doctors and patients	The study found that age, education, and prestige all have a significant impact on the use of

Author (s) and years	Country	Research Objectives	Underpinning Theory/Model	Method	Sample and Data Collection	Findings
		community in Australia, focusing on the influences of age, education, and prestige.				MSA and RADs among Australian Arabs. The use of MSA and RADs among Australian Arabs is influenced by age, education, and prestige.
Al-Deaibes (2021)	Jordan	This paper examines the use of code-switching by Jordanian bilinguals on Facebook, where the author investigates the factors that influence code-switching, such as topic, context, and social relationships. The	Theory of intertextuality and deconstruction	Qualitative	Three female and four male students	The author found that code-switching is common among Jordanian bilinguals on Facebook. The author also found that code-switching expresses happiness, sadness, and anger.

Author (s) and years	Country	Research Objectives	Underpinning Theory/Model	Method	Sample and Data Collection	Findings
		author also examines the functions of code-switching, such as expressing solidarity, humor, and emotion.				
Kniaż and zawrotna, (2021)	Egypt	Explore embedded English verbs in Arabic-English code-switching.	Matrix Language Frame (MLF) model and the 4-M model.	Qualitative	The authors analyzed a corpus of 14,414 clauses from interviews with students at the American University in Cairo.	The study found that 80.17% of inserted verbs were inflected with Arabic tense, gender, and number prefixes, showing morphological integration into Arabic. They also identified four recurrent patterns in verb insertion: 1) Complete morphological integration in the present

Author (s) and years	Country	Research Objectives	Underpinning Theory/Model	Method	Sample and Data Collection	Findings
						tense. 20 Incomplete assimilation of forms requiring the use of the plural suffix-u. 3) Lack of morphological integration in the past tense. 4) Lack of suffixation of Arabic clitics to English verbs
Yahiaoui et al. (2021)	Qatar	The authors examine the functional and sociocultural factors that influence code-switching decisions and the impact of code-switching on the meaning-making process.	Muysken, Appel, and Gumperz model	Qualitative	The analysis encompasses 48 episodes	The authors found that code-switching is used in the dubbing of Kim Possible for a variety of purposes. The authors also found that various sociocultural factors influence code-switching decisions.

Author (s) and years	Country	Research Objectives	Underpinning Theory/Model	Method	Sample and Data Collection	Findings
Rabab 'ah and Al-Yasin, (2017)	Jordan	This paper investigates the use of code-switching by Jordanian EFL teachers in their classrooms.	Accommodation theory	Quantitative	106 EFL female teachers	The authors found that code-switching is a common practice among Jordanian EFL teachers. They identified three main types of code-switching: sentential, intersentential, and intrasentential.
Alenzi and Kebble (2018)	Saudi Arabia	The authors aim to delve into medical students' perspectives regarding using "English-Arabic code-switching" during classroom instruction.	Not applicable	Mixed method	quantitative questionnaire (n=291) distributed and semi-structured interviews conducted with 8 medical students.	The results indicate that the attitudes of Saudi medical students toward code-switching (CS) are varied. Although they generally perceive CS as a beneficial and effective teaching method, they also voice apprehensio

Author (s) and years	Country	Research Objectives	Underpinning Theory/Model	Method	Sample and Data Collection	Data Findings
						ns regarding its possible adverse effects on their proficiency in the English language.
Ahmed (2018)	Ireland	This study investigates the translation of CS in literary texts, focusing on the translation strategies used for CS in a non-European source text (ST) into European and non-European target texts (TTs).	Not applicable	Quantitative	280 letters and documents in Judeo-Arabic (Arabic written in Hebrew script)	The study found that the translation strategies used for CS vary depending on the target language and culture. Translators generally tend to maintain the original structure of CS instances as much as possible.
Bahous et al. (2014)	Lebanon	This study explores the attitudes and practices	Not applicable	Mixed method	20 faculty members and 14 students participated in the qualitative study, and 300 male and female students participated in the qualitative study	Findings revealed that faculty members and students are oblivious to their

Author (s) and years	Country	Research Objectives	Underpinning Theory/Model	Method	Sample and Data Collection	Findings
		of faculty and students towards CS in higher education classrooms in Lebanon.				engagement in code-switching, in contrast to the observations from non-participant perspectives.
Belaskri and Drew (2023)	Algeria	This paper examined the relationship between Arabic and French languages during medical consultations.	Markedness model	Qualitative	Conversational analytic technique was conducted from 20 doctors and patients from 2 hospitals	Overall results illustrated that) French is less favored when interacting with patients, code-switching serves as a tool to organize and distinguish activities within turns and sequences, and doctors' use of French may be a strategic response to counter patient resistance and distance themselves from

Author (s) and years	Country	Research Objectives	Underpinning Theory/Model	Method	Sample and Data Collection	Findings
						patients' perspectives .
Blair, M., & Morini, G. (2023) .	USA	The authors explore how code-switching impacts the acquisition of new vocabulary in adult second language (L2) learners of Spanish.	Not applicable	Qualitative	Adult second language (L2) learners of Spanish language	That study elaborated that the initial session, training exclusively in English, resulted in superior initial learning compared to the alternative conditions. In the subsequent session, while the English-only condition continued to exhibit the highest accuracy, the performance in both code-switching (CS) conditions was notably superior to that in the Spanish-only condition.

Discussion**Code Switching**

Code-switching refers to alternating between two or more languages or varieties of language within a single discourse and/or conversation (Holes, 2011). This linguistic phenomenon can occur at various levels, including the sentence, phrase, or even within a single utterance (Fanani and Ma'u, 2018). People code-switch for various reasons, often influenced by social, cultural, and contextual factors. For example, Bosma and Blom (2019) discussed that code-switching commonly occurs in multilingual or bilingual communities where individuals are fluent in multiple languages. It is a natural way for speakers to navigate and adapt to different linguistic contexts. Accordingly, social factors play a significant role in code-switching. Individual speakers may switch languages based on the formality of the participants' situation or to express solidarity or distinction within a social group (Williams et al., 2020). Noticeably studies concluded that the significance of code-switching serves various pragmatic functions, such as clarifying meaning, emphasizing a point (Ahmed, 2018), expressing emotions Lee and Wang (2015), or conveying a concept more precisely (Sayahi, 2011). For instance, individuals switch languages to connect with their cultural heritage (Zunnorain, 2015) or negotiate their identity in diverse social contexts (Bassiouney, 2013). Overall, code-switching is a complex and natural behavior that reflects the intricate ways in which individuals use language to communicate and navigate diverse social and cultural environments.

Therefore, past studies suggested that code-switching practices serve a variety of significances and purposes. For example, Bassiouney (2013) mentioned that switching to a language that is more familiar to the listener can help to clarify a concept or idea. Thereby, code-switching can express a range of emotions and ideas that may not be easily expressed in a single language (Alafnan, 2021). Code-switching can signal one's identity, social group, or level of education (Bahous et al., 2014); it also minimizes communication gaps among different social class individuals.

Nevertheless, Code-switching is a complex and dynamic phenomenon shaped by various factors, including individual proficiency in the two languages, the context of the conversation, and the speaker's social and cultural background (Zunnorain, 2015). While some may view code-switching as a threat to the purity of a language, others see it as a valuable tool for communication and identity expression (Mirzoyeva et al., 2020). For example, teachers must know how to use code-switching patterns to support their students' learning. By understanding the potential issues and developing strategies to address code-switching, we can harness the benefits of code-switching while promoting effective communication, linguistic proficiency, and cultural understanding in multilingual contexts.

Code Switching (Arabic – English)

According to Begum and Haque (2013), code-switching, the practice of seamlessly transitioning between two or more languages within the same conversation, is a prevalent phenomenon in Saudi Arabia, reflecting the country's multilingual landscape. Hence, English has gained prominence in education, business, and media (Alshalan, 2020). For instance, locals and foreigners in Saudi Arabia have increasingly incorporated English into their daily interactions, leading to a unique blend of Arabic and English in their spoken language (Alosaimi, 2009). The motivations for code-switching in Saudi Arabia are diverse. English is often used to clarify concepts, express nuanced ideas, or add emphasis (Alosaimi, 2019).

Additionally, code-switching can serve as a social marker, indicating one's linguistic competence and cultural adaptability (Alshalan, 2020).

However, the impact of code-switching on language acquisition and proficiency is a subject of ongoing debate. For example, Alshalan (2020) argues that code-switching can hinder the development of fluency in either language, while others maintain that it can promote language learning and creativity. One of the most common examples of code-switching is using English words and phrases in Arabic conversations. This is particularly common among young people in Saudi Arabia, who have been exposed to English through education, media, and technology (Alshalan, 2020). A study by Alenezi and Keble (2018) found that Saudi university students have generally positive attitudes towards code-switching, as they perceive it to improve communication and learning.

Code-switching can also occur in the opposite direction, with Arabic words and phrases used in English conversations. This is particularly common among immigrants and their descendants, who may use Arabic to express concepts or ideas that are not easily expressed in English (Alosaimi, 2019). For example, Susanto (2006) stated that an Arabic speaker might use the word "InshAllah" (God willing) in an English conversation, as there is no direct equivalent in English.

In sum, code-switching in Saudi Arabia is a dynamic reflection of the country's linguistic landscape, evolving in response to its educational, technological, and cultural advancements. It highlights language adaptability in a society that embraces its heritage while engaging with the world.

Future Studies

Future studies on code-switching can explore several promising avenues to deepen our understanding of this linguistic phenomenon. Firstly, researchers can investigate the long-term effects of code-switching on language development and proficiency, especially in bilingual or multilingual individuals, mainly in GCC countries. Examining how code-switching influences linguistic competence over time can contribute valuable insights into language acquisition processes. Additionally, future studies could focus on the sociolinguistic aspects of code-switching, exploring how social factors, such as cultural identity, social context, and community norms, impact the frequency and patterns of code-switching. Foster cultural sensitivity and understanding among individuals from diverse linguistic backgrounds (Zunnorain, 2015; Yahiaoui et al., 2021); this can help reduce the negative social implications of code-switching and promote acceptance of linguistic diversity. Encourage and support the development of proficiency in both languages. This can be achieved through language courses, immersion experiences, and exposure to authentic materials in both languages.

However, prior scholarly work discussed that considering the technological advancements and the increasing use of digital communication, future studies may explore code-switching in online and digital contexts (Mirzoyeva et al., 2020). Investigating how code-switching manifests in digital communication platforms, social media, and virtual environments can provide a contemporary perspective on the evolving nature of language practices. Moreover, researchers could delve into the pedagogical implications of code-switching in educational settings. Understanding how code-switching is utilized in teaching and learning contexts and its impact on students' comprehension and language acquisition can inform language educators and curriculum developers (Torous et al., 2021). Develop language policies and educational approaches that recognize and value code-switching as a natural and authentic form of communication in multilingual societies.

In conclusion, future studies on code-switching should consider multidisciplinary approaches, incorporating linguistics, sociolinguistics, cognitive science, and technology studies. By exploring various dimensions of code-switching, researchers can contribute to a comprehensive understanding of this linguistic phenomenon and its implications for language use, development, and communication in diverse contexts.

Conclusion

Code-switching, a complex linguistic phenomenon occurring at various levels, plays a crucial role in communication and identity expression. Shaped by social, cultural, and contextual factors, it serves pragmatic functions, facilitating nuanced expression, clarifying concepts, and signaling emotions. Despite its multifaceted significance, debates persist about its impact on language acquisition. In Saudi Arabia, code-switching between Arabic and English is prevalent, reflecting a multilingual landscape influenced by education, media, and technology. While it can enhance communication, concerns about its effects on language proficiency persist. Future studies should explore its long-term impact, sociolinguistic aspects, and implications in online communication and education, fostering a holistic understanding of code-switching's role in linguistic diversity and cultural adaptation. Encouraging proficiency in both languages and recognizing code-switching as a valuable communication tool can contribute to effective language policies and educational approaches in multilingual societies.

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