

FEATURES OF ENGLISH CODE-SWITCHING IN THE SPEECH OF UZBEK STUDENTS

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Abstract

The phenomenon of code-switching has become increasingly widespread in multilingual societies due to globalization, international communication, and the growing influence of foreign languages. In Uzbekistan, English has gained significant importance in education, business, technology, and social media, leading to its active integration into the speech of young people, particularly students. This article examines the characteristics of English code-switching in the speech of Uzbek students. The study analyzes the linguistic, social, and communicative factors that contribute to the alternation between Uzbek and English in everyday conversations. The paper discusses the most common types of code-switching, including inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and tag-switching, and explores their functions in academic, digital, and informal communication. The findings indicate that English code-switching serves not only as a means of effective communication but also as a marker of social identity, educational background, and professional aspirations. The study highlights the role of globalization, language prestige, and digital technologies in shaping contemporary linguistic practices among Uzbek students.

Keywords

code-switching, multilingualism, Uzbek students, English language, language contact, bilingualism, sociolinguistics, youth speech, language identity, digital communication.

Introduction. Language contact is a natural consequence of cultural interaction and globalization. In multilingual communities, speakers often alternate between two or more languages during communication. This phenomenon, commonly known as code-switching, has attracted considerable attention from linguists, sociolinguists, and language educators. In recent years, the increasing popularity of English in Uzbekistan has led to frequent instances of code-switching among students, especially in educational institutions and online environments.

The rapid development of information technologies, social media platforms, and international educational opportunities has significantly increased students' exposure to English. As a result, many Uzbek students incorporate English words, phrases, and expressions into their everyday speech. Understanding the characteristics and functions of such linguistic behavior is essential for studying language change and communication patterns in contemporary Uzbek society.

Theoretical background. Code-switching refers to the alternation between two or more languages within a conversation, sentence, or discourse. According to linguists such as John Gumperz and Shana Poplack, code-switching is a systematic linguistic phenomenon rather than a random mixture of languages. It reflects speakers' communicative intentions, social relationships, and linguistic competence.

Researchers generally distinguish three main types of code-switching:

1. Inter-sentential code-switching – switching languages between sentences.

Example: *Men bugun universitetga bordim. The lecture was very interesting.*

2. Intra-sentential code-switching – switching languages within a single sentence.

Example: *Bugun assignmentni tugatishim kerak.*

3. Tag-switching – inserting words or phrases from another language.

Example: *Bu loyiha juda qiziqarli, you know.*

These forms frequently occur in the speech of bilingual and multilingual speakers.

Factors influencing English code-switching among Uzbek students. Several factors contribute to the increasing use of English elements in Uzbek students' speech.

Educational environment. English is widely taught in schools, universities, and language centers across Uzbekistan. Students often use English terminology related to their academic subjects, especially in fields such as information technology, business, economics, and international relations.

Examples include:

- presentation
- deadline
- project
- research
- feedback

Many of these terms are used even when Uzbek equivalents exist.

Influence of digital communication. Social media platforms, online courses, and international websites expose students to English vocabulary on a daily basis. As a result, English expressions become integrated into everyday communication.

Examples:

- *post qilmoq*
- *download qilmoq*
- *share qilmoq*
- *online meeting*
- *update*

Digital communication encourages the adoption of English terms due to their convenience and widespread usage.

Social prestige and identity. English is often associated with higher education, professionalism, and international opportunities. Therefore, students may use English expressions to demonstrate linguistic competence, modernity, or membership in particular social groups.

Code-switching can function as a marker of identity, helping students position themselves within academic and professional communities.

Lexical gaps. Sometimes speakers switch codes because a particular concept is easier to express in English than in Uzbek. Technical and scientific terminology often enters student speech through English-language textbooks and online resources.

For example:

- *startup*
- *networking*
- *software*
- *marketing*
- *artificial intelligence*

In such cases, code-switching facilitates efficient communication.

Functions of English code-switching. English code-switching serves various communicative functions in student discourse.

Emphasis. Students may switch to English to emphasize important information.

Example: *Bu masala juda muhim. We must solve it today.*

Clarification. English terminology is often used to clarify academic concepts.

Example: *Bugungi mavzu machine learning haqida edi.*

Group solidarity. Code-switching can create a sense of belonging among peers who share similar educational experiences.

Expressing modernity. The use of English words may symbolize innovation, global awareness, and technological competence.

Linguistic characteristics. The speech of Uzbek students demonstrates several notable features:

- Frequent borrowing of English nouns.
- Hybrid constructions combining Uzbek grammar with English lexical items.
- Adaptation of English words to Uzbek phonological and grammatical patterns.

- Increased use of English abbreviations and internet-related vocabulary.

Examples include:

- *like bosmoq*
- *comment yozmoq*
- *upload qilmoq*
- *meetingga borish*
- *presentation tayyorlash*

Such constructions illustrate the dynamic interaction between Uzbek and English.

Challenges and implications. Although code-switching enriches communication, excessive reliance on English elements may raise concerns regarding language purity and the preservation of native vocabulary. Some educators argue that frequent code-switching can reduce students' active use of Uzbek equivalents.

At the same time, many scholars view code-switching as a natural outcome of multilingualism and globalization. Rather than threatening the Uzbek language, it reflects linguistic creativity and adaptability in a changing world.

Educational institutions should therefore promote balanced bilingualism, encouraging students to develop proficiency in both Uzbek and English while maintaining awareness of appropriate language use in different communicative contexts.

Conclusion. English code-switching has become a prominent feature of the speech of Uzbek students. Influenced by education, digital communication, globalization, and social identity, students frequently alternate between Uzbek and English in both spoken and written discourse. The most common forms include inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and tag-switching. English code-switching fulfills various communicative functions, including emphasis, clarification, identity construction, and efficient expression of modern concepts. As multilingualism continues to develop in Uzbekistan, the study of code-switching remains an

important area of sociolinguistic research, providing valuable insights into language change and youth communication practices.

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