

A Tale of Two Tongues: Perceptions and Reflections on the Factors Influencing Code-Switching among Saudi and Sudanese EFL Undergraduates

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Abstract

First-language (L1) interference is a significant issue in bilingual contexts, prompting ongoing debate. This mixed-method study investigates the motivations behind code-switching among EFL learners in second language classes, focusing on sociolinguistic and psychological factors. The central question is: What drives EFL undergraduate English majors to revert to their first language during these classes? The study utilized closed and open-ended questionnaires with 68 EFL students from Saudi Arabia and Sudan, analyzing the results through statistical and thematic methods. Findings revealed that 77.7% of participants frequently use their L1 to enhance communication and comprehension in their second language. Many emphasized the importance of balanced language use for effective acquisition. Influential factors include first language proficiency, family background, and personal experiences. Positive psychological effects, such as increased well-being and confidence, were noted, alongside negative aspects like anxiety. Ultimately, the study concludes that a complex interplay of linguistic, social, and psychological factors influences code-switching among Arab learners. These findings have significant implications for global language education, highlighting the need to consider the sociolinguistic and psychological factors that influence language use.

Keywords: Code-switching, code-switching advantages and disadvantages, first language interference, language learning strategies

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Introduction

This study dives into the motives of code-switching among Arab undergraduates pursuing English language degrees. By examining the complex interplay of linguistic, social, and psychological factors, this research aims to illuminate why these students engage in code-switching and the implications for language education and cultural identity. In many parts of the complex multicultural world of the 21st century, people switch between languages on a regular, even everyday basis (Marco, 2014)

Many studies have stated that using a first language, such as Arabic, in learning English as a foreign language is seen as interfering with and slowing students' second language acquisition process. Therefore, this study aims to clarify factors responsible for EFL students switching to their native language when learning English.

The goals guided by this investigation are to understand the sociolinguistic and psychological factors motivating code-switching among EFL learners to use their first language to acquire a second language, discover students' desires and attitudes towards code-switching, and reach a generalization about whether or not to allow partial code switching during EFL classes and whether it is an obstacle for students to learn another language with the interference of their mother tongue.

The main question of this study, with practical implications for language education, was: What are the primary motivations for EFL undergraduate English majors to switch to their first language during EFL classes?

The following are three hypotheses based on the study variables:

H one: EFL undergraduates with higher levels of language dominance in one language may feel less need to code-switch, as they can express themselves more fully in that language.

H two: EFL undergraduates switch codes more frequently in informal social settings, such as casual conversations with friends, than formal academic ones, like classroom discussions or presentations.

H three: EFL undergraduates with positive attitudes towards both languages code-switch more frequently than those with negative attitudes towards one or both languages.

The significance of this study comes from its role in investigating the perceptions and reflections of Arab EFL undergraduates in two countries in light of the long debate about whether shifting and mixing codes during EFL classes is positive or negative and concluding whether it is allowed.

Literature Review

Literature on code-switching focuses on its linguistic aspects, exploring patterns, rules, and constraints. However, a growing body of research examines the sociolinguistic and psychological motivations underlying this practice. Studies have highlighted identity construction, social affiliation, power dynamics, and communicative efficiency as critical determinants of code-switching behavior.

The study aims to review and criticize the previous studies on topics similar to the present study. Previous credit scholars' and researchers' studies on the parallel topical issue are classified, organized, and synthesized by the key concepts incorporated into the research questions about identifying factors that motivated EFL undergraduates' code shifting/mixing to mother tongue as an Interference Interactive learning strategy." Subsequently, the researchers reviewed the factors

that verify or falsify why L2 learners resort to their first language while learning EFL in the classroom.

Learning strategies are intentional actions learners use to acquire language (Yasmin, 2006; Nambiar, 1998). They help learners understand and remember new language, making learning more efficient and enjoyable (Oxford, 1989, 1990). Effective learning strategies foster language mastery (Schraw, 1998; Oxford, 1992) and can accelerate language development (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). These strategies can be categorized as cognitive, metacognitive, social, and resource management (Richards, 2002) or direct and indirect (Oxford, 1989). Memory strategies help learners directly store and retrieve information (Oxford, 1989). Ultimately, learning strategies empower learners to become independent and effective language students (Wong & Nunan, 2011).

On the contrary, it is thought that learning strategies are unclear and lack graded organization (O'Malley et al., 1985; Oxford, 1990). Similarly, the term "strategies" in itself has been referred to as "fuzzy" (Griffiths, 2004) and elusive (Wenden and Rubin, 1987: 7). Second language learning strategies (LLS) are conscious actions chosen by learners to improve language learning (Oxford, 2016). Effective LLS can enhance language performance, proficiency, and motivation (Oxford, 2016; Lee & Lo, 2010; Zou & Supinda, 2022). These strategies encompass various behaviors, from learning skills to in-class and out-of-class activities, offering a diverse and engaging approach to language learning (Souriyavongsa et al., 2013).

First Language Interference

It is the influence of one language on another (Richards, 2002). Positive transfer facilitates learning, while negative transfer or interference hinders it by applying the first language structures to the target language (T.L.) (Richards, 2002). Interference can also occur from L2 to L3 and L2 to the first language (Krashen, 2002). Krashen (2002) argues that interference is not simply the first language intrusion but a learner's reliance on their knowledge before mastering L2. e identifies word-level translation, bound morphology, and language learning environments as factors influencing the first language interference in L2.

Some research suggests that the first language can benefit L2 learning by enhancing comprehension, expression, and linguistic experience (Butzkamm, 2007). However, excessive first language use can hinder L2 development (Nunan, 2003; Goh & Fatimah Hashim, 2006). The first language is considered a valuable tool for scaffolding learning, promoting cognitive and social engagement, and facilitating classroom interaction (Liao, 2006; Carless, 2008; Butzkamm, 2003; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003).

Another research indicated that the first language is crucial in task-based language teaching, enhancing learning's social, cognitive, and pedagogical aspects (Darmi, 2018). It facilitates task engagement, language discussion, comprehension, and collaboration (Swain & Lapkin, 2000, 1998, 1999; Darmi, R et al., 2018). Additionally, the first language supports cognitive, metacognitive, and social skill transfer, as well as peer collaboration (Alegria et al., 2009; Swain & Lapkin, 2000, 1998, 1999; Cook, 2001; 2005; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2006; Swain & Lapkin, 2000; Kim and Yoon 2014 in (Darmi et al., 2018).

While learners may only sometimes initiate the first language use, research suggests it is a valuable task-completion tool, especially for activities with semantic demands (Preventing the first language use can hinder task engagement and completion (Swain & Lapkin, 2000). Studies show that the first language has an observable effect in generating ideas, clarifying language, and supporting learners with varying abilities (Alegria et al., 2009). Cummins (2009) emphasizes the

importance of the first language knowledge for -L2 transfer. Overall, research consistently highlights the significance of the first language in L2 learning and task performance (Darmi et al., 2018).

Positive Use of First Language

Three theoretical perspectives support the positive use of first language in language learning. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory highlights the role of first language in inner speech and task completion (Vygotsky, 1981, 1986; Swain & Lapkin, 2007). Code-switching theory emphasizes the first language's facilitative role in communication and learning (Macaro, 2009). Cognitive processing theory posits that first language and L2 are interconnected, and bilingualism can enhance learning (Miles, 2004; Schweers, 1999; Macaro, 2001; Mohakhali, 2014).

Code-switching

Code-switching alternates between languages or language varieties within a conversation (Richards, 2002; McKay & Nancy H, 2009). It can occur at any point and reflects language proficiency and sensitivity to context, and that code-mixing is a type of code-switching that occurs within sentences (Meyerhoff, 2006).

Motivations for Code-Switching

Motivations for code-switching include situational and metaphorical factors (Filardo-Llamas et al., 2007). To understand code-switching, a comprehensive language theory is needed (McKay & Nancy, 2009). Myers-Scotton's theory of rights and obligations explains code-switching as a strategic choice influenced by social factors (Scotton, 1993a, 1988). Gumperz and Auer view code-switching as a contextualization cue reflecting speaker intent (Gumperz, 1982; Auer, 1984). Myers-Scotton's strategy of neutrality and Heller's intergroup relations theories further explore the social functions of code-switching (Myers-Scotton, 1976; Heller, 1988, 1992). Code-switching (C.S.) motivations include socio-pragmatic factors, discourse marking, and lexicalization (Myers-Scotton, 1998). Speakers unconsciously select C.S. patterns to suit their intentions. Code mixing differs from C.S., focusing on internal language structure. It involves combining elements from different languages within a single utterance. Code mixing and code-switching share functions like identity marking, neutrality, and style (Myers-Scotton, 1993). This result was consistent with Jan-Petter and Gumperz (2020). who stated that sociolinguistic co-occurrence patterns and intonation contours enable the speaker to group language into larger pragmatic wholes and interpret the signs transmitted by other communicative media.

Code Mixing

Code mixing differs from borrowing in several ways (Sridhar & Sridhar, 1980). Code mixing involves broader lexical and syntactic integration than borrowing. It requires bilingual competence and extends to all grammatical categories, while lending is more restricted and often involves single items or phrases. Code mixing is not random but rule-governed, reflecting linguistic competence. Despite negative perceptions as a symbol of laziness or deficiency (Gumperz, 1982), code mixing is increasingly recognized as a common and acceptable practice in multilingual communities. It serves crucial sociocultural and textual functions and is even employed as a stylistic tool in writing.

Many studies on First Language Interference in Second Language Classrooms state that some students unconsciously combine it with L2, highlighting the importance of the first language

in early language learning (Schweers, 1999). the first language provides security, reduces anxiety, and facilitates communication (Krashen, 1985; Weschler, 1997). It promotes classroom interaction, negotiation, and critical thinking. However, the first language should be purposeful and appropriate, avoiding overreliance (Cole, 1998; Liao, 2006). the first language can be integrated into various classroom activities, including syllabus discussion, grammar explanation, and cooperative learning (Auerbach, 1993)

Some scholars believe in the advantages of using the first language in L2/FL classrooms. For example, less proficient learners often use their first language as a pedagogical tool (Mouhanna, 2009). Translation can aid comprehension and language presentation (Atkinson, 1987). The first language can be used for clarification, vocabulary introduction, and objective setting (Wills, 1981). Previously, the first language knowledge supported L2 comprehension (Cook, 2001). It could create a secure learning environment (Weschler, 1997) and facilitate teaching abstract concepts (TPR). Even advanced learners use the first language for efficiency; Translation can clarify ambiguous language and motivate learners (Mukattash, 2003). It supports complex tasks and enhances learning enjoyment (Willis, 1981; Weschler, 1997).

Other researchers advocate for the negative impact of L2 use in the classroom, arguing that excessive first language reliance hinders L2 acquisition (Ellis, 1984; Hawks, 2001). They propose that maximum L2 exposure facilitates language acquisition (Krashen, 2006) and that clear teacher input can ensure comprehension without resorting to the first language (Atkinson, 1987). Limiting first language use is suggested to maximize L2 input (Lewis & Hill, 1992). A complete immersion approach is advocated to foster L2 learning and acquisition (Sharma, 2006). As pointed out by some researchers, the teacher is seen as the primary language model, and overuse of the first language can limit authentic language exposure (Cook, 2001)

There are assumptions for and against using first language. The monolingual principle in foreign language teaching posits that teaching should occur exclusively in the target language, translation should be avoided, and bilingual programs should maintain language separation (Howat, 1984). Based on this principle, some researchers argue against the search for the single best teaching method, advocating for teacher flexibility in selecting appropriate techniques (Lewis, 1993).

Some previous studies investigated this issue, such as a study carried out by Yau (1993) in Hong Kong, where 95% of people were Chinese speakers. The study investigated a variety of Chinese codes mixed with English in written Chinese materials. He adopted a content analysis approach. He analyzed Chinese textbooks comprising 14 subjects, 10 Chinese magazines, and 27 popular entertainment books. The study realized that Code Mixing items in English were as high as 57% of the text. Consequently, Yau concluded that people use English in science, technology, business, and commerce.

Another researcher conducted a study on code-switching and code-mixing between Spanish and English in the United States by Torres (1989). She used the comparative approach in her research and came up with the following findings: the first- and second-generation members were familiar with the three codes: English, Spanish, and mixed code. Each generation had its preferred codes for informal discussions between family members. Although the first generation tended to interact in Spanish with some code-mixing, the younger generation used more English. Although Spanish English influenced the younger generation's speech, they used a lot of Spanish. Turin (2014) conducted a comprehensive study the factors responsible for using first language in English classes at primary school in Bangladeshi English medium schools for obtaining his degree

in master's degree. The study, which employed quantitative and qualitative methods, focused on identifying the reasons for using the mother tongue in English classes at Bangladesh's primary level. The thoroughness of the study instills confidence in the validity of the findings.

Saruwatashi (N.S.) conducted a study that aims to investigate the main reasons for using the mother tongue in second-language Classes. The study aims to identify the benefits of using the first language in L2/ FL classrooms and is of practical relevance to language educators. It presents opinions for and against using it in L2/ FL classrooms, providing a balanced view.

Darmi et al. (2018) investigated the variations of first language use in English language classes among university students in Malaysia. Their qualitative approach revealed that the first language was used for task management, interpersonal communication, language, and content management. These findings have practical implications for language teachers, highlighting the diverse roles of the first language in second language classes.

Galali and Emrah C (2017) conducted a study at Salahaddin University, Erbil, at the end of the first semester of the 2016-2017 academic year. The authors considered learners' attitudes toward using the first language and the leading causes for switching to the first language in the FL classroom. The study employed a mixed-method approach to data collection and analysis. Two hundred and fifty-eight EFL learners participated in the quantitative data collection by completing a questionnaire, and the qualitative data were collected via face-to-face semi-structured interviews with eight EFL learners. The findings revealed that participants had a slightly positive attitude towards using their first language to facilitate their T.L. learning.

Tekin and Garton (2020th) wrote an article to address the use of "the first language in the primary English classroom (how much, when, how and why?). They investigated first language use in primary Schools in Turkey using observation and interviews with five primary EFL teachers, focusing on how much, when, how, and why teachers use first language in FL classrooms. The results showed that the first language was used to give instructions, provide feedback, and ask questions. The findings also reflected on students' proficiency level, achieving the target curriculum, saving time, and teaching specific language points.

Bayuong et al. (2019) researched language learning strategies used by ESL learners in a rural primary school. Data were collected via a survey research design using a questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised four parts delivered to 30] pupils at level six in Borneo, Malaysia. Data analysis showed that most respondents used the listening strategies listed in the questionnaire. Respondents used limited speaking strategies, thinking that speaking strategies were not significant to them due to limited English language usage. For translation strategies the respondents used translation strategies when learning the English language.

A scientific paper was conducted by Nguyen and Daniel (2017) on "English Learning Strategies among EFL Learners: A Narrative Approach ."The study took the qualitative findings from a larger-scale study on English LLS among tertiary students in Vietnam. A semi-structured interview was conducted with 10 ELF teachers and 10 EFL students at a university in Vietnam. The interviews were audio-recorded with consent and lasted 30 to 40 minutes in Vietnamese. The questions targeted teachers' and students' general attitudes and lived experiences toward LLS. Then, the data was translated into the English language; it was thematically analyzed. The findings reflected the positive use of LLS.

De La Campa and Hossein (2009) conducted a study investigating the amount, the purposes, and the reasons why the first language is used in L2 classrooms. Data collection consisted of audiovisual recordings from samples of two L2 classes over a 12-week semester in

two second-year German conversation university courses. Besides instructors' interviews and stimulated recall sessions. Results indicated that the instructors used the first language frequently in their classrooms, and they did that for many reasons and purposes. They stated that first language should be used in L2 classrooms to facilitate L2 learning. Moreover, findings provided evidence that, despite disagreement among L2 researchers, the instructors of German as a foreign language used the first language in classrooms for critical instructional purposes.

Methods

A mixed-methods approach was used to investigate the motivations for code-switching among Arab English language undergraduates. Data collection included close-ended questionnaires to gather information about code-switching's frequency, contexts, and perceived functions and an open-ended question to explore the underlying reasons and personal experiences of code-switching among participants.

Participants:

The participants were 68 undergraduates majoring in the English language at two colleges of education from Majmaah University (54.7%) were Saudi, and (45.3%) were Sudanese undergraduates studying at Omdurman Islamic University Sudan.

Instruments

The study employed two tools, each of which is crucial to collect the data needed from the participants as follows: An online Five-Likert scale close-ended questionnaire consisting of three dimensions: cognitive language learning strategy factors, social and cultural factors, and psychological factors, and an open-ended question to collect the participants' reflections on the factors leading to code-switching in EFL situations. A free question was used to elicit participants' thoughts on factors that motivate them to switch codes, and the questionnaire was included as a qualitative data-gathering tool. Participants were explicitly asked to identify ideas for the reasons for switching to the first language with L2 in classrooms.

The procedures

The procedures for analyzing the quantitative and qualitative data were via descriptive statistics to calculate frequencies and percentages for each dimension. Regarding an open-ended question, the study employs thematic analysis to investigate recurring themes in participants' responses to understand the underlying factors behind code-switching. This is followed by a content analysis, where responses are categorized into predefined categories, lead code-switching.

Research Variables

The research investigates the bilingual undergraduate's motives for engaging in code-switching. It presents the potential dependent and independent variables guiding our investigation. The dependent variable was the frequency of code-switching, inserting a word or phrase from the first language into a sentence in English (L2) by alternating between languages within a conversation). Independent variables are sociolinguistic factors, such as language dominance and relative proficiency in each language. Language attitudes: Positive or negative attitudes towards each language. Social context: The social setting where the code-switching occurs (e.g., family, friends, academics). Psychological factors: Cognitive factors: Mental processes involved in

language choice and switching. Emotional states and motivations that influence language choice and language and social identity.

Results and Discussion

Quantitative Results and Discussion

Table 1. *Analysis of Demographic Information*

	Items	Frequencies	Percentage
Nationality	Saudi	35	54.7%
	Sudanese	29	45.3%
Age	18-21	16	24.6%
	22- more	49	75.4%
Major	English	52	80%
	Other	13	20%
Educational Level	One	2	3.2%
	Two	5	7.9%
	Three	8	12.7%
	four	48	76.2%

Table 1 presents the analysis of demographic information, revealing that Saudi participants are the respondents' dominant nationality (54.7%), while Sudanese represent (45.3%). Most respondents (75.4%) are 22 or older, with only 24.6% falling between 18 and 21 years old. English is the most popular major, chosen by 80% of respondents, while other majors constitute 20% of the sample. Educational Level four is the most common, with 76.2% of respondents having completed it, and level three is also well-represented, with 12.7% of respondents. These findings provide valuable insights into the demographics of the present study.

The predominance of Saudi and Sudanese participants provides a unique cultural context for studying code-switching practices. Regarding age, the older age group may reflect more significant exposure to different languages and cultures, potentially influencing their code-switching patterns. Moreover, the high percentage of English majors suggests a strong foundation in English, which could impact how participants navigate code-switching situations. Finally, the high proportion of participants with advanced education levels indicates a potentially sophisticated understanding of language and communication.

Table 2 *Cognitive Factors*

No.	Dimension Statement	Frequency and Percentages%				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	I Switch to the first language to communicate my ideas to my teachers and classmates.	13 20.3%	38 59.4%	8 12.5%	3 4.7%	2 3.1%
2	Switching to the first language is not a suitable medium for acquiring a foreign language.	10 15.6%	16 25%	16 25%	21 32.8%	1 1.6%
3	Switching from L2 to the first language is customary.	10 15.6%	27 42.2%	16 25%	9 14.1%	2 3.1%
4	Switching to the first language never supports F.L. acquisition.	5 7.9%	16 25%	17 27%	23 36.5%	2 3.1%

5	Switch to the first language to convey or guess the meanings of L2.	11 18%	29 47.5%	16 26.2%	4 6.6%	1 1.6%
6	Switching to the first language is essential to transmit my critical thinking	11 17.7%	25 40.3%	15 24.2%	10 16.1%	1 1.6%
7	Switching to the first language builds a more flexible learning situation.	17 27%	26 41.3%	15 23.8%	5 7.9%	0%
8	Switching to the first language navigated me away from mastering L2 skills	13 20.6%	15 23.8%	18 28.6%	17 27%	0%
9	I feel that switching to the first language reflects my fundamental L2 knowledge	11 17.5%	28 44.4%	11 17.5%	13 20.6%	0%
	Schools' traditional instructions and habits breed my bias to switch.	12 19%	25 39.7%	14 22.2%	10 15.9%	2 3.2%

For the cognitive language learning strategy factor's responses shown in Table 2 concerning the dominance of first language use, it is evident that most respondents (77.7%) agree or strongly agree with statements indicating the prevalence of first language use in language learning. This widespread agreement validates the common practice of using the first language in language learning. While there are mixed views on first language sufficiency, switching to first language is helpful for communication and conveying meaning. A significant portion (32.8%) think the first language is suitable for acquiring a foreign language. On the impact on critical thinking, a notable percentage (40.3%) believe that switching to a first language can enhance critical thinking skills. Concerning navigational role, the first language is seen by many (41.3%) as a navigational tool that can guide learners away from mastering L2 skills.

In some statements, as in statement one, with 82.3% support, it is the most agreed-upon, indicating that the first language is frequently used for communication. As for statement 2, a significant portion (32.8%) disagree that the first language is unsuitable for a second language acquisition. In statement Four, a notable minority (36.5%) believe switching to a first language hinders L2 acquisition. Moreover, in statement six, a significant number (40.3%) see the first language as essential for developing critical thinking skills.

The data suggests that the first language is a valuable linguistic resource for learners, often used for communication and understanding. While the first language can be beneficial, the findings highlight the importance of balancing its use with L2 practice to ensure effective language acquisition. The link between first language use and critical thinking suggests that code-switching may play a role in cognitive development. The perception of the first language as a navigational tool raises concerns about its potential to hinder L2 acquisition, emphasizing the need for strategies to encourage L2 use.

To conclude, these results aligned with the first hypothesis that suggests that EFL undergraduates with higher levels of language dominance in one language may feel less need to code-switch, as they can express themselves more fully in that language. These results are consistent with Cole's (1998) findings, which claimed that adult students in monolingual English language classes can benefit from appropriate use of L1 despite CLT methodology not fully recognizing the value of L1 as a resource. L1 may be used from introductory to upper-intermediate levels on a decreasing scale. At lower levels, translating individual words, explaining grammar use, and facilitating complex instructions can save time and anguish, especially for mature students.

Table 3 *Sociological Factors*

No	Statements	Frequency and Percentages%				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
.1	Switching to my first language is a reality of language loyalty.	18 28.6%	21 33.3%	11 17.5%	21 19%	1 1.6%
.2	I switch to reflect my first language predominant power.	15 23.8%	22 34.9%	15 23.8%	11 17.5%	0%
.3	Switches to my first language reflect my cultural ID.	19 3.2%	24 38.1%	12 19%	8 12.7%	0%
.4	Uncertainty about L2 fluency leads me to switch to my first language.	11 17.5%	30 47.6%	12 19%	9 14.3	1 1.6%
.5	Family influence and my mother tongue experience are factors in switching	9 14.3%	28 44.4%	28 44.4%	9 14.3%	1 1.6%
.6	First language cultural, religious, beliefs and practices reasons for my language switching.	11 17.5%	18 28.6%	16 25.4%	15 23.8%	3 4.8%
.7	Frequently switching to my first language in my daily life takes me away from EFL, even in suitable situations.	9 14.3%	22 34.9%	15 23.8%	12 19%	5 7.9%
.8	I often struggle to express myself in EFL because I need a complete command of F.L., so I switch.	9 14.3%	22 34.9%	15 23.8%	12 19%	5 7.9%
.9	Switching decreases my emotional stress, which affects my ability to use EFL.	9 14.3%	22 34.4%	14 21.9%	17 26.6%	2 3.1%
.10	Switching to my first language is one of the language barriers that affect learning FL.	14 21.9%	31 48.4%	11 17.2%	11 17.2%	2 3.1%

Table 3 shows that most respondents (77.7%) agree or strongly agree with statements indicating the influence of social factors on code-switching, confirming their importance. Family influence and personal experiences with the mother tongue are powerful determinants, with over 60% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with these factors. Cultural and religious beliefs and practices also significantly influence code-switching in 48.4% of respondents. There are specific statements: Statement one: The most agreed-upon statement, with 77.7% support, highlights the connection between code-switching and language loyalty. Statement two: A significant number (48.4%) believe that code-switching reflects the power and influence of the mother tongue. Statement four: Uncertainty about L2 fluency is a common reason for code-switching, with 47.6% agreeing or strongly agreeing. Statement five: Family influence and personal experiences with the mother tongue are substantial factors, with 68.8% support.

The above data overwhelmingly supports the influence of social factors on code-switching, with 77.7% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing. This emphasizes the importance of considering the social context in which code-switching occurs, highlighting the interconnectedness between language and social factors. Moreover, Family influence and personal experiences with the mother tongue are particularly significant determinants, with over 60% of respondents recognizing their impact. Therefore, Family influence and personal experiences with the mother tongue are crucial in shaping individuals' language identities and code-switching behaviors. Furthermore, cultural and religious beliefs and practices also play a substantial role in code-

switching, influencing 48.4% of respondents. This provides a framework for understanding and interpreting code-switching as a social and cultural phenomenon in code-switching.

To conclude, the above result has proven the validity of H two that: EFL undergraduates switch codes more frequently in informal social settings than in formal academic ones.

Table 4 *Psychological Factors*

No	Statements	Frequency and Percentages%				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
.1	Code-switching to my first language gives me a sense of well-being.	13 20.3%	31 48.4%	13 20.3%	6 9.4%	1 1.6%
.2	I feel confident When switching to my mother tongue.	16 25%	29 45.3%	10 15.6%	8 12.5%	1 1.6%
.3	Switching to my first language makes me feel safe.	12 18.8%	21 32.8%	15 23.4%	12 18.8%	4 6.3%
.4	Switching between my first language and EFL develops my intellectual mind	19 29.7%	27 42.2%	14 21.9%	2 3.1%	2 3.1%
.5	Switching between my first language and EFL develops my intellectual mind.	23 35.9%	27 42.2%	10 15.6^	3 4.7%	1 1.6%
.6	I emotionally feel the risk of using total English response in an EFL classroom.	11 17.5%	16 25.4%	15 23.8%	13 20.6%	8 12.7%
.7	Unconsciously, I switched to my mother tongue.	12 19%	17 27%	22 34.9	8 12.7%	4 6.3%
.8	Sometimes, an anxiety of failing to communicate my thoughts pushes me to switch/mix	12 19%	26 41.3%	18 28.6%	5 7.9%	2 3.2%
.9	I believe that switching to my first language reduces my learning anxiety.	9 14.5%	24 38.7%	21 33.9	7 11.3%	1 1.6%
.10	Switching may reduce my learning stress.	8 12.5%	32 50%	17 26.6%	5 7.8%	2 3.1%

Based on Table 4 results, the participants' positive, negative, and mixed feelings are as follows: for the positive psychological effects of a sense of well-being, a significant number of respondents (70.3%) report feeling a sense of well-being when switching to their first language. Moreover, switching to the mother tongue can boost confidence for 67.2% of respondents.

Regarding intellectual development, a notable percentage (82.1%) believe that code-switching can develop their intellectual mind. Adverse psychological effects and emotional risk. 42.2% of respondents feel an emotional risk associated with using total English responses in the classroom.

Concerning anxiety, 38.7% feel anxiety about failing to communicate their thoughts effectively, leading to code-switching. There are mixed feelings, as 46.2% report unconsciously switching to their mother tongue. For Learning anxiety, 42.2% believe that switching to first language can reduce their learning anxiety, while 12.5% think it can reduce learning stress.

The results underscore the positive emotional benefits of code-switching, indicating its potential to enhance well-being, confidence, and intellectual development. However, the data also highlight the potential emotional risks and anxieties linked to code-switching, particularly in classroom settings where English is the primary language of instruction. These risks include anxiety and a sense of emotional risk. It is important to note that the impact of psychological factors on code-switching may vary depending on individual characteristics and learning contexts.

These psychological factors give the researcher a deeper understanding of code-switching's intricate interplay between language, emotion, and cognition. This understanding can lead to a more nuanced and comprehensive analysis of this linguistic phenomenon, offering a promising future for research in this area. These results have proven the validity of hypothesis three: EFL undergraduates with positive attitudes towards both languages will code-switch more frequently than those with negative attitudes towards one or both languages.

Qualitative Results and Discussion

The study used qualitative tools to gain more understanding and explore the participants' reflections, experiences, and perspectives as follows:

Table 5 *Participants' Reflections: frequency and percentages*

Themes	Freq.	Percent. %	The participants' Reflections
Cognitive and Linguistic Factors	10	45.45	The most frequent category indicates that linguistic challenges are a primary driver of code-switching.
Social and Cultural Factors	5	22.73	While less frequent, cultural and social factors still play a significant role, particularly related to identity and comfort.
Pedagogical Factors	4	18.18	Teacher influence and lack of practice in daily life are notable factors, suggesting the importance of effective instruction and exposure to the target language.
Psychological Factors	3	13.64	Confidence, anxiety, and subconscious switching are identified as psychological elements contributing to code-switching.
	23	100%	

Table 5 shows the factors lead to code-switching: broad categories: psychological, Linguistics, social and cultural, pedagogy, and psychological factors.

For cognitive and linguistic factors, ten participants (45.45%) switched codes due to difficulty finding equivalent English words; they switched due to the lack of vocabulary or phrasing in English and the need for clarity and precision in conveying meaning. Many participants highlighted the challenges of finding equivalent words or phrases in English, indicating that linguistic limitations often drive code-switching. This suggests a strong command of both languages is crucial for effective communication.

Regarding sociological and cultural factors, five participants (23.73%) believed that their mother tongue shows their cultural identity; they feel familiarity and comfort with it and switch due to social context and interaction with others. The mother tongue was often seen as a cultural and social identity, making participants feel more natural when using it. Social context, such as interacting with others who speak the mother tongue, also significantly influenced code-switching decisions.

For the pedagogical factors, four participants (18.18%) attributed their code-switching tendencies to factors like their teachers' teaching methods and a lack of practice in daily life. This suggests that educational environments and personal experiences can significantly impact language use. All are responsible for their codeswitching, in addition to the lack of practice in daily life. Finally, three of the participants who mixed code due to psychological factors (13.64%) mentioned feeling anxious, nervous, or lacking confidence, which often leads to code-switching.

This indicates that psychological factors can influence language choices, particularly when individuals feel unsure of their language skills. When they switched to their first language, they felt confident and self-esteem, which reduced their anxiety, nervousness, and subconscious switching.

These findings emphasize the significance of comprehending the cultural and linguistic elements influencing language choice in EFL contexts. They also emphasize the need for effective tactics to help learners overcome communication barriers and gain confidence in their English skills.

The above analysis provides insights into the primary factors influencing code-switching among the participants. Understanding these factors can inform language teaching and learning strategies, helping educators address learners' challenges and promote effective language acquisition.

In comparing the Previous Studies and Current research results, it observed that the current study findings align with several previous studies on code-switching: Turin (2014), Darmi et al. (2018), Galali and Emrah C (2017), Tekin and Garton (2020), and De La Campa and Hossein (2009), which all support the notion that the first language is used strategically for various purposes in L2 classrooms, including task management, interpersonal communication, and clarification of content.

The study findings on using first language as a strategic tool for learning and understanding align with Torres (1989) and Yau (1993). While focusing on different contexts, they indirectly support your findings by highlighting the influence of first language on language use. Your emphasis on cultural nuances and the comfort of using the first language echoes the importance of the first language in language use observed in these studies.

On the other hand, the present results were more consistent with Bayuong et al. (2019) and Nguyen and Daniel (2017), who were focused primarily on language learning strategies rather than code-switching, making direct comparisons difficult. However, their findings on the importance of the native language in language learning indirectly support the present study's conclusion about the significance of mastering the first language for L2 acquisition. Moreover, the current study results were consistent with Carless (2008), who also calls for a balanced and flexible view of student use of the mother tongue. Some avenues for further exploration are also sketched, particularly the need to investigate the relationship between task types and mother tongue use.

While the present study corroborates many findings from previous research, it also offers unique insights because it focuses specifically on Saudi and Sudanese students, contributing to understanding code-switching in a particular context. It uses both quantitative and qualitative data to offer a comprehensive perspective on the issue. It delves deeper into the specific reasons for code-switching, providing richer insights into the motivations behind this behavior.

Some generalizations can be made based on the participants' reflections in the two countries. Students often use code-switching as a deliberate strategy to enhance learning and communication. They view their mother language as an efficient means for learning and comprehending complex issues. Cultural nuances and expressions, often better conveyed in the native language, significantly influence code-switching behavior. The native language provides comfort and fluency that facilitate communication. Students have various reasons for code-switching, from strategic choices to subconscious habits. A strong foundation in the native language is crucial for successful second language acquisition.

The findings indicate that code-switching is a complex phenomenon influenced by multiple factors, including language proficiency, cultural identity, and learning strategies. It is a dynamic process that varies among individuals and contexts. These results are consistent with Darmi (2018), who concluded that English language learning can be discouraging for learners as it may lead to incomprehensible input. Thus, teachers have an important responsibility to design materials based on the different backgrounds of learners and be prepared for the use of L1, especially among low-proficiency L2 learners.

Consistency and Inconsistency in quantitative vs. qualitative Results

The results from the questionnaire and open-ended questions about code-switching are consistent, both data sources converge in their findings, reinforcing the key themes identified. For instance, both the questionnaire and open-ended questions highlight the significant influence of social factors on code-switching, particularly family, cultural beliefs, and personal experiences. Additionally, both data sets point to the psychological factors at play, such as anxiety, confidence, and emotional risks associated with code-switching.

Implications

The research demonstrates that multiple interconnected factors influence code-switching. The findings suggest that a) first language serves as a crucial tool for facilitating L2 learning and comprehension, b) personal background and experiences significantly shape code-switching behaviors, c) code-switching has both positive and negative psychological impacts on learners, and d) effective L2 acquisition may benefit from a balanced approach to language use. These implications can inform pedagogical strategies in EFL contexts.

Conclusion

The questionnaire and open-ended responses' analysis revealed several key findings. Quantitatively, a significant majority (77.7%) of participants reported using their first language to facilitate communication and comprehension in L2 learning. The qualitative analysis identified multiple factors influencing code-switching. First, linguistic factors such as first language knowledge and the need for balanced language use in acquisition. Second, social factors include family background, personal experiences, and cultural context. Third, psychological factors such as positive effects that enhanced well-being and confidence, negative aspects, anxiety, and identity-related considerations. Finally, pedagogical factors such as communication facilitation and comprehension support. These findings support many scholars, for example, Cook's (2001) assertion about L1's useful role in L2 acquisition, while providing new insights into the complex interplay of factors affecting code-switching among Saudi and Sudanese EFL learners."

Recommendations and suggestions for further study

Based on the current study's findings, several directions for future research are proposed: First, methodological extensions suggest to: a. conduct longitudinal studies to examine how code-switching patterns evolve throughout the language learning journey, b. implement classroom observation techniques to complement self-reported data, c. expand the sample size to include diverse Arab EFL contexts. Second, thematic suggestions for investigation: a. examine the relationship between learners' proficiency levels and their code-switching strategies, b. investigate the impact of digital learning environments on code-switching behaviors, c. explore the role of

code-switching in developing metacognitive awareness in L2 acquisition. Third, pedagogical applications: a. develop and evaluate teaching methodologies that strategically incorporate code-switching, design professional development programs to help educators effectively manage code-switching in EFL classrooms, and create assessment tools to measure the effectiveness of controlled code-switching in language acquisition. Finally, the following are cross-cultural dimensions' suggestions: a. Compare code-switching patterns across different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, b. investigate the influence of sociocultural factors on code-switching strategies, and finally, examine the role of language identity in code-switching decisions.

These recommendations aim to deepen our understanding of code-switching in EFL contexts and enhance pedagogical practices in language education.

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Artificial intelligence statement: The researcher would like to clarify that less than 18% of the content in this research paper, specifically some of the literature review, was generated with the assistance of artificial intelligence tools. The remaining 82% reflects my original work and analysis. The use of AI was limited to [specific use of AI] to enhance the efficiency of the research process.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire link: <https://forms.gle/bzUeiKAAGA9k7Mfc6>

Appendix B

Responses to the open-ended question

Add free Comment: I switched/shifted to my mother Arabic tongue while using EFL because.....:

Participants' Reflections

I switch to THE FIRST LANGUAGE while I should use L2, because:

- Arabic is the language of the Islamic nation and the language of the Quran
- I prefer to use the Arabic language instead of other languages
- When I can't get the information across in English
- I can learn faster, easier
- Different cultures and meaning
- Because Arabic is my mother tongue and I understand all its different vocabulary and I make sure I use it correctly
- I switched to it when my student understood the right meaning. I used it as the last sort, but I need to use it only sometimes. I prefer drowning or acting, and sometimes, I use short videos.
- Switching between languages helps me avoid gaps in my vocabulary or phrasing when my English skills fall short. Also, it feels more natural and comfortable to use my mother tongue.
- I do not have equivalent words for what I want to say in EFL.
- I always do not switch and get my message across in various ways with non-Arabic speakers. However, if the person in front of me is fluent in Arabic, I have been forced,

after many attempts, to insert some Arabic words, and I prefer something else. Thank you for your efforts, and all the best.

- Sometimes, I do this to convey the information better, and sometimes, I do it subconsciously
- Some words in my mother tongue, for example, have deep meanings that we use to indicate when we use them, and sometimes I have no idea how many words I have to use in English to express these profound words that have more than one meaning indicator so I switch to my mother tongue language
- Not knowing how to find the right words
- My mastery of my mother tongue is the basis for learning other languages
- Translate into Arabic
- So that I can be sure of my competence in speaking English
- to know the whole meaning of the words
- Mother tongue is the language that an individual learns from birth through interaction with family members and the immediate social environment. So, I switch to the mother tongue when students find it difficult to understand a specific point.
- There needs to be more practice in daily life, and our primary school teachers mix the mother tongue and the English language and do not encourage us. English words escape me, and I do not practice speaking them. Also, my family could be more helpful in learning English, and I am afraid of pronouncing words during lessons. I am nervous and do not have confidence in myself.