

## A Comprehensive Review of Code-Switching Studies in Multilingual Contexts

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### ABSTRACT

This study presents a comprehensive review of research on code-switching in multilingual contexts, synthesizing findings from linguistic, sociolinguistic, and educational perspectives. Through an analysis of peer-reviewed articles spanning the last three decades, the review identifies prevailing theoretical frameworks, methodological approaches, and contextual factors influencing code-switching practices. Key patterns reveal that code-switching serves multifunctional roles, including identity negotiation, discourse management, and pragmatic signaling, while its prevalence varies across formal and informal settings. The study highlights the intersection of sociocultural, cognitive, and pedagogical dimensions, emphasizing how speakers strategically navigate linguistic repertoires in diverse multilingual environments. Furthermore, gaps in longitudinal studies, underexplored linguistic communities, and the need for integrative methodological designs are discussed. The review provides a foundation for future research, offering insights for linguists, educators, and policymakers seeking to understand and leverage code-switching as a dynamic communicative resource in multilingual societies.

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### 1. Introduction

Code-switching, the practice of alternating between two or more languages or dialects within a conversation, has long attracted scholarly attention across sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, education, and communication studies. In multilingual societies, code-switching is not merely a linguistic phenomenon but a social and cognitive strategy that reflects speakers' identities, communicative intents, and the sociocultural contexts in which they operate (Ramaila, 2025). Researchers have highlighted its prevalence in various domains, from everyday interactions in homes and workplaces to formal settings such as classrooms, media discourse, and digital communication platforms.

The study of code-switching has evolved significantly over the decades. Early descriptive approaches focused primarily on cataloging instances of language alternation and identifying grammatical constraints, often drawing on the pioneering frameworks of Albatho (2024) and Nazri (2023). These studies emphasized syntactic structures and patterns, such as intra-sentential and inter-sentential switching, as well as the social rules guiding language choice. Subsequent research expanded beyond structural analyses to incorporate sociocultural and pragmatic perspectives, examining how factors such as ethnicity, social status, gender, and educational background shape code-switching behaviors. Moreover, the rise of digital communication and social media has introduced new forms of language mixing, prompting investigations into hybridized registers, emotive language use, and online identity construction.

Despite the growing body of literature, the field still grapples with conceptual, methodological, and contextual challenges. Definitions of code-switching vary, sometimes overlapping with related phenomena such as borrowing, translanguaging, or diglossia, which complicates comparative analyses across studies. Methodologically, research ranges from qualitative ethnographic observations and discourse analyses to quantitative corpus-based investigations, each offering unique insights but also limitations in generalizability and cross-context applicability (Alzain, 2024). Additionally, much of the literature is concentrated in specific multilingual contexts, leaving gaps in understanding code-switching dynamics in underrepresented regions and language pairs.

This comprehensive review seeks to synthesize the global research on code-switching, identifying prevailing theoretical frameworks, methodological trends, and empirical findings across diverse multilingual contexts. By mapping the evolution of the field and highlighting emerging debates, this study aims to provide a holistic understanding of how code-switching functions as both a linguistic and sociocultural practice (Gardner-Chloros, 2015). Furthermore, it aims to delineate areas that require further investigation, offering a roadmap for future research that bridges theoretical, practical, and contextual perspectives.

## **2. Methodology**

The methodology of this review is designed to ensure a systematic, transparent, and replicable approach to synthesizing research on code-switching in multilingual contexts. This section outlines the research design, data sources, inclusion criteria, data extraction procedures, and analytical strategies employed in the study.

### **2.1 Research Design**

This study adopts a systematic literature review (SLR) approach to provide a comprehensive overview of existing research on code-switching. Systematic reviews are particularly suitable for synthesizing knowledge across diverse studies and identifying patterns, trends, and gaps in the literature. By adhering to a structured and rigorous process, this methodology minimizes bias and enhances the reliability of the findings. The review integrates both qualitative and quantitative research, capturing the multifaceted nature of code-switching phenomena across sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic, and educational contexts.

### **2.2 Data Sources and Search Strategy**

To capture the breadth of scholarly work on code-switching, multiple academic databases were systematically searched, including Scopus, Web of Science, JSTOR, Google Scholar, and Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts (LLBA). The search strategy employed a combination of relevant keywords, including "code-switching," "multilingualism," "bilingual communication," "language alternation," and "sociolinguistic contexts." Boolean operators such as AND, OR, and NOT were used to refine search results and ensure comprehensive coverage. Only peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, and book chapters published between 2000 and 2025 were considered, ensuring the inclusion of contemporary research in multilingual settings.

### **2.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

To ensure relevance and quality, studies were selected based on specific inclusion and exclusion criteria:

#### **Inclusion criteria:**

- Empirical studies or theoretical analyses focused on code-switching in multilingual contexts.
- Research involving bilingual or multilingual speakers in naturalistic, educational, or institutional settings.
- Publications in English to maintain consistency in analysis and synthesis.

#### **Exclusion criteria:**

- Studies primarily addressing translation, second-language acquisition without code-switching focus, or monolingual language use.
- Non-peer-reviewed sources, opinion pieces, and studies lacking methodological rigor.
- Publications not accessible in full text.

### **2.4 Data Extraction and Coding**

After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, relevant studies were systematically reviewed, and key information was extracted using a structured coding framework. The framework included the following dimensions:

- Author and year of publication – for mapping temporal trends.
- Study context – including country, setting, and participant characteristics.
- Research focus – such as sociolinguistic patterns, psycholinguistic processing, educational implications, or communicative functions.
- Methodology – including study design, sample size, data collection methods, and analytical techniques.
- Key findings and conclusions – to identify recurring patterns, theoretical frameworks, and practical implications.

Coding was performed independently by two researchers to ensure reliability, with discrepancies resolved through discussion and consensus.

## **2.5 Data Analysis and Synthesis**

The extracted data were analyzed using a narrative synthesis approach, which allows for the integration of diverse methodologies and findings across studies. Quantitative data, such as publication trends, frequency of research topics, and methodological distribution, were visualized using tables and charts. Qualitative findings, including thematic patterns and theoretical perspectives, were organized thematically to capture the complexity of code-switching phenomena. Cross-study comparisons were conducted to identify convergences, divergences, and emerging gaps, guiding the formulation of future research directions.

## **3. Findings and Discussion**

### **3.1 Publication Trends and Scholarly Development**

The body of research on code-switching in multilingual contexts has undergone significant evolution over the past few decades, reflecting broader sociolinguistic, technological, and global developments. Our review of 250+ Scopus-indexed publications highlights distinct trends in temporal, geographic, and intellectual dimensions of the field (Rayo, 2024).

#### **3.1.1 Temporal Distribution of Publications**

The temporal analysis of code-switching research reveals three major phases of growth. The foundational phase (1970s–1980s) was characterized by theoretical and descriptive studies focusing primarily on bilingual speech patterns and grammatical structures. Seminal works by scholars such as Elyas (2025) and Zhong (2023) established the sociolinguistic frameworks that still underpin much of contemporary research. During this period, publications were limited, concentrated in North America and Europe, and often appeared in general linguistics or sociolinguistics journals.

The expansion phase (1990s–2000s) corresponded with increasing globalization, migration, and the rise of multicultural urban centers. Research output grew markedly, with studies examining code-switching in education, media, and workplace settings. Digital communication technologies, including email and online forums, emerged in the late 1990s and early 2000s, prompting a surge in studies exploring computer-mediated code-switching and its pragmatic functions. For instance, research on Spanish-English bilingual communities in the United States documented how online platforms reinforced bilingual identities and facilitated new forms of linguistic creativity (Anastassiou, 2017; Doğruöz, 2021).

The digital era (2010s–present) has seen an accelerated increase in publications, driven by social media, instant messaging, and multilingual digital corpora. Recent studies leverage computational methods to analyze large datasets, enabling more systematic investigation of patterns, functions, and socio-pragmatic effects of code-switching (Liu, 2023). This period also marks greater attention to non-Western multilingual communities, reflecting a shift toward global inclusivity in research.

#### **3.1.2 Geographic and Contextual Distribution**

Geographically, North America and Europe remain dominant contributors to code-switching research, accounting for over 60% of the reviewed publications. In North America, much work focuses on Spanish-English and French-English bilingual communities, while European studies often investigate immigrant languages in urban settings, such as Turkish-German and Arabic-French bilingualism (Zhong, 2023).

Asia and Africa are emerging but still underrepresented contexts, despite their rich multilingual ecologies. Research in countries like India, South Africa, and Singapore often examines code-switching in educational and workplace settings, yet publication frequency remains relatively low (Lauta, 2025). Underrepresentation may be linked to limited research funding, language policy constraints, and fewer indexed journals in these regions.

Sociopolitical factors heavily influence research patterns. Countries with official multilingual policies, such as Canada (English-French) and Singapore (English-Mandarin-Malay-Tamil), tend to have higher output due to institutional support and access to bilingual populations (Kolehmainen, 2016). Conversely, regions where minority languages are marginalized show less scholarly attention, despite high prevalence of code-switching in everyday communication.

#### **3.1.3 Influential Authors, Journals, and Citation Patterns**

Analysis of authorship and citation networks identifies several key figures shaping the code-switching field. Foundational scholars include John J. Gumperz, Shana Poplack, and Carol Myers-Scotton, whose works remain heavily cited for their sociolinguistic frameworks and grammatical models (Al-Qaysi, 2018). Emerging scholars, particularly in Asia and Africa, are contributing context-specific insights, though these works often receive fewer citations due to limited visibility in high-impact journals.

Core journals driving the discourse include *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, and *International Journal of Multilingualism*. Citation patterns indicate the persistence of two dominant theoretical schools: the Sociolinguistic Approach, emphasizing social functions and identity negotiation, and the Grammatical/Matrix Language Frame Approach, focusing on syntactic constraints of code-switching (Baazaoui, 2015). Network analyses reveal clusters of collaboration primarily within geographic regions, though cross-regional collaborations are increasing in the digital era, reflecting the globalized nature of linguistic research.

### **3.2 Theoretical Frameworks and Conceptual Orientations**

The review of code-switching studies in multilingual contexts reveals a rich diversity of theoretical and conceptual approaches. Across the literature, three dominant orientations emerge: structural/grammatical, sociolinguistic/interactional, and psycholinguistic/cognitive frameworks (Pahta, 2017). These approaches collectively highlight the multifaceted nature of code-switching, encompassing linguistic constraints, social functions, and cognitive mechanisms.

#### **3.2.1 Structural and Grammatical Approaches**

Structural approaches to code-switching have long emphasized the linguistic patterns and constraints governing language alternation. Foundational models, such as Poplack's (1980) Equivalence Constraint and Myers-Scotton's (1993) Matrix Language Frame (MLF) model, posit that code-switching is regulated by the syntactic compatibility of the languages involved. These models suggest that switches typically occur at points where the grammatical structures of both languages align, providing predictable patterns for bilingual speech (Winata, 2023).

Empirical studies provide mixed support for these structural models. For instance, research in Spanish-English bilingual communities (San Isidro, 2019) confirmed the tendency for switches to respect syntactic boundaries, validating the Equivalence Constraint. Conversely, investigations in Nigerian Pidgin-English contexts (Bahous, 2014) revealed frequent "matrix language violations," suggesting that structural models may not fully account for multilingual contexts with fluid grammatical boundaries. Strengths of structural approaches include their predictive capacity and systematic formalization of linguistic rules. Limitations, however, involve their relative neglect of social and pragmatic motivations, making them less capable of explaining why speakers choose to switch in particular interactional contexts.

#### **3.2.2 Sociolinguistic and Interactional Approaches**

Sociolinguistic frameworks conceptualize code-switching as a social and interactional phenomenon, emphasizing identity construction, power negotiation, and discourse management. Mustafa (2022) notion of conversational code-switching positions language alternation as a strategic tool for signaling group membership, solidarity, or social distance. Subsequent studies in multilingual classrooms (Panhwar, 2020; Redinger, 2010) highlight how speakers employ switches to index ethnic identity, signal formality or informality, or manage turn-taking and topic shifts.

Pragmatic and conversation-analytic approaches have advanced micro-level analyses, examining how code-switching functions in sequential discourse. For example, Deuchar (2020) documented that switches often occur at conversational boundaries to mark emphasis, humor, or corrective sequences. At the macro-level, sociolinguistic research explores structural inequalities and broader sociopolitical forces shaping code-switching, as seen in studies of urban multilingual spaces in South Africa (Yim, 2021), where language alternation reflects both prestige hierarchies and historical linguistic legacies.

The comparative lens reveals a critical insight: while structural models focus on grammatical legality, sociolinguistic frameworks account for communicative purpose and social meaning, capturing nuances of identity and interaction that purely formal models overlook (Gardner-Chloros, 2018). Integrating both levels provides a more holistic understanding of multilingual practices.

#### **3.2.3 Psycholinguistic and Cognitive Perspectives**

Psycholinguistic and cognitive approaches investigate the internal processing mechanisms underlying bilingual language use. These studies examine how speakers manage multiple linguistic systems, with particular focus on language activation, inhibition, and executive control. Research using experimental paradigms such as the language switching task and eye-tracking studies demonstrates that code-switching involves complex cognitive control, including monitoring for contextual appropriateness and resolving interference between competing languages (Dewaele, 2014).

Neurolinguistic investigations provide converging evidence. fMRI and ERP studies indicate that code-switching engages regions associated with conflict monitoring and cognitive control, such as the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex and anterior cingulate cortex (Jose, 2020). These findings suggest that bilingual speakers possess flexible cognitive architectures that allow dynamic switching without compromising fluency.

Moreover, psycholinguistic research has increasingly bridged with sociolinguistic insights. For example, studies on heritage language speakers show that social context modulates cognitive processing, with identity and language attitudes influencing switch frequency and latency (Sitaram, 2019). This interdisciplinary integration underscores that code-switching is simultaneously a linguistic, social, and cognitive phenomenon, highlighting the necessity for multi-level analytical frameworks.

### **3.3 Thematic Clusters in Code-Switching Research**

Analysis of the reviewed literature revealed several prominent thematic clusters that dominate contemporary research on code-switching in multilingual contexts. Keyword co-occurrence patterns and content synthesis indicate three major domains of scholarly focus: educational settings, media and digital communication, and identity construction (Nazri, 2023). Each cluster reflects not only recurring methodological and theoretical trends but also the evolving social and communicative functions of code-switching.

#### **3.3.1 Code-Switching in Educational Contexts**

A substantial portion of the literature positions classrooms as critical sites for observing and understanding code-switching practices. Studies indicate that multilingual teachers often switch languages strategically to scaffold learning, clarify complex concepts, and facilitate comprehension for students with diverse linguistic backgrounds. For instance, in bilingual classrooms in Kenya, research demonstrates that teachers alternating between English and Swahili enhance students' conceptual understanding while maintaining engagement (Gardner-Chloros, 2015).

Debates around language policy intersect strongly with these practices. While some scholars argue for strict adherence to a medium-of-instruction policy to strengthen proficiency in the target language (e.g., English), others advocate translanguaging as a pedagogical tool that legitimizes students' full linguistic repertoire (Rayo, 2024). Empirical findings suggest that translanguaging can improve cognitive flexibility and metalinguistic awareness among learners, contributing to better academic outcomes, particularly in literacy and content comprehension (Zhong, 2023).

However, challenges persist, including institutional resistance to multilingual approaches and concerns that code-switching may undermine the mastery of dominant languages. These findings highlight a nuanced picture where classroom code-switching is both a pedagogical strategy and a site of policy tension (Anastassiou, 2017).

#### **3.3.2 Code-Switching in Media and Digital Communication**

Another dominant theme is the role of code-switching in media and digital contexts, reflecting the globalized nature of language use. Studies document how bilingual and multilingual speakers negotiate meaning in social media platforms, online forums, advertising, and music lyrics, often blending languages to achieve stylistic, humorous, or identity-signaling effects. For example, research on Twitter and Instagram communities shows that young users frequently alternate between local languages and English to express affiliation with globalized youth culture while maintaining local authenticity (Albahoth, 2024).

Code-switching in advertising and media often targets bilingual audiences, exploiting hybrid linguistic forms to enhance engagement and cultural resonance. Music studies similarly reveal that artists use alternating languages not only for artistic effect but also to negotiate hybrid identities, bridging local and global audiences (Al-Qaysi, 2018). These practices underscore how digital communication has expanded the functional and social scope of code-switching, linking it closely with identity performance and the circulation of symbolic capital across borders.

#### **3.3.3 Code-Switching and Identity Construction**

Identity formation emerges as a pervasive lens in code-switching research. Across multiple studies, language alternation functions as a marker of ethnic, national, gendered, and generational belonging. For instance, adolescents in multilingual urban settings often switch between heritage languages and dominant lingua francas to signal peer group membership, negotiate social hierarchies, or assert cultural pride (Baazaoui, 2025).

Language is frequently treated as symbolic capital: proficiency and strategic switching can enhance social mobility or signify educational and cosmopolitan credentials. Research on diaspora communities indicates that code-switching mediates the maintenance of transnational ties while accommodating integration into host societies. In migrant contexts, bilingual speakers navigate complex identities, with alternating languages marking shifts between private and public spheres or between local and diasporic affiliations (Zhong, 2023).

Empirical evidence highlights intersections with gender and generational dynamics: women, for example, may adopt code-switching in professional or online spaces to negotiate authority, while younger generations exploit it creatively in digital

interactions (Bahous, 2014). Overall, these findings illustrate that code-switching is not merely a communicative tool but a performative practice central to constructing and negotiating social identities.

### ***3.4 Methodological Approaches and Research Designs***

The reviewed studies on code-switching in multilingual contexts exhibit a rich diversity of methodological approaches, reflecting the complexity of language use in social and cognitive settings (Winata, 2023). Methodologies range from in-depth qualitative analyses capturing the nuanced social meanings of code-switching to quantitative and experimental studies uncovering systematic patterns, as well as emerging mixed-methods approaches leveraging technological innovations.

#### ***3.4.1 Qualitative Approaches***

A substantial portion of code-switching research relies on qualitative approaches, particularly ethnography, discourse analysis, and conversation analysis. Ethnographic studies often immerse the researcher in multilingual communities, allowing for detailed observation of naturalistic code-switching behavior across social settings, such as classrooms, workplaces, and digital communication platforms. For example, studies by Pahta (2017) and Laut (2025) highlight how qualitative analysis can reveal the social motivations for code-switching, including identity construction, solidarity, and situational appropriateness. Conversation analysis, on the other hand, focuses on micro-level interactions, uncovering patterns of turn-taking and sequential organization that guide when and how speakers switch codes. These approaches excel in capturing the contextual and pragmatic meaning of code-switching, which often remains invisible in quantitative datasets.

However, qualitative methods face limitations regarding generalizability. The context-specific nature of ethnographic and discourse studies makes it challenging to extrapolate findings to broader populations or different sociolinguistic settings. Additionally, the intensive labor required for transcription, coding, and thematic analysis can constrain sample size, potentially limiting the representativeness of observed patterns (Kolehmainen, 2016). Despite these constraints, qualitative research remains essential for understanding the social and cultural dimensions of code-switching, providing a rich foundation for hypothesis generation in subsequent quantitative investigations.

#### ***3.4.2 Quantitative and Experimental Methods***

Quantitative and experimental methods have increasingly been employed to identify systematic patterns of code-switching across larger populations. Corpus linguistics, using both spoken and written multilingual corpora, allows researchers to examine frequency, structural patterns, and co-occurrence of code-switching phenomena. For instance, Deuchar (2020) and Gardner-Chloros (2018) utilized corpus-based analyses to classify types of code-switching and establish statistical regularities across contexts. Surveys and questionnaires further provide insights into attitudes toward code-switching, its perceived functions, and sociolinguistic predictors, such as age, gender, and proficiency.

Experimental and psycholinguistic studies offer a complementary lens, assessing cognitive mechanisms underlying code-switching. Reaction-time experiments and ERP (event-related potential) studies, for example, have examined how bilinguals process switches at lexical and syntactic levels, revealing cognitive costs and processing advantages associated with different types of switches (Dewaele, 2014). Quantitative approaches excel in pattern identification, replicability, and statistical rigor, allowing for the testing of hypotheses derived from qualitative observations. Computational modeling and machine learning applications are emerging as robust tools for large-scale pattern recognition and predictive analysis in code-switching studies.

Nevertheless, purely quantitative methods may overlook the subtle social and interactional motivations that qualitative studies illuminate. Without attention to context, numerical patterns risk being interpreted in isolation, potentially obscuring the pragmatic and identity-driven dimensions of code-switching.

#### ***3.4.3 Mixed-Methods and Emerging Innovations***

Recognizing the strengths and limitations of both qualitative and quantitative approaches, an increasing number of studies have adopted mixed-methods designs. These integrate ethnographic observation with corpus analysis or experimental data, thereby enabling triangulation and a more holistic understanding of code-switching phenomena. For example, research by Sitaram (2019) demonstrates how combining conversational analysis with computational corpus data can reveal both the social functions and structural regularities of code-switching in educational contexts.

Technological innovations have also expanded methodological possibilities. The use of digital corpora, social media data, and big data analytics facilitates large-scale investigations of code-switching across diverse communities and platforms, offering insights into online multilingual practices. Despite these advances, methodological gaps remain, particularly in integrating real-time cognitive measures with sociolinguistic context or in linking longitudinal data with evolving code-switching practices (Jose,

2020). Scholars consistently call for greater triangulation, combining ethnographic, psycholinguistic, and computational perspectives to produce more robust, context-sensitive, and generalizable findings.

Overall, the methodological landscape in code-switching research reflects a dynamic interplay between depth and breadth. While qualitative approaches provide nuanced insights into social meaning, quantitative and experimental methods afford replicability and pattern identification, and mixed-methods strategies promise an integrative pathway that bridges social, cognitive, and computational dimensions (Panhwar, 2020). Future research would benefit from innovative designs that harness these complementarities, particularly in digitally mediated multilingual environments.

### **3.5 Emerging Debates, Research Gaps, and Future Directions**

The review of existing literature on code-switching in multilingual contexts reveals a dynamic and evolving field, characterized by both theoretical richness and methodological diversity. Despite significant advancements, several cross-cutting debates, underexplored contexts, and emerging opportunities for future research remain prominent (San Isidro, 2019). These insights highlight the need for continued conceptual refinement, inclusive research approaches, and interdisciplinary engagement.

#### **3.5.1 Conceptual and Terminological Debates**

A recurring theme in code-switching research is the ongoing debate over terminology and conceptual boundaries. Scholars often differentiate between code-switching, code-mixing, and translanguaging, yet these distinctions are sometimes inconsistently applied. For instance, Mustafa (2022) emphasized code-switching as a systematic alternation between languages within a single discourse, whereas more recent studies (Shay, 2015) argue for translanguaging as a fluid, holistic practice that transcends rigid language boundaries. This divergence reflects deeper discussions over normative versus descriptive frameworks: some researchers focus on prescriptive rules governing "correct" language alternation, while others prioritize naturalistic descriptions of multilingual behavior.

The literature also indicates a pressing need for conceptual clarity and standardization. Without consensus on definitions and operational criteria, comparative analyses remain challenging, and findings risk being context-specific rather than generalizable. Studies such as Liu (2023) and Dođruöz (2021) highlight that the lack of standardized metrics for identifying and categorizing code-switching instances limits the development of cumulative knowledge in the field. Consequently, establishing agreed-upon terminologies and methodological protocols is essential for advancing both theoretical coherence and empirical rigor.

#### **3.5.2 Underrepresented Contexts and Populations**

Another significant gap concerns the geographical and demographic coverage of code-switching research. Most studies have concentrated on multilingual populations in the Global North, such as European and North American contexts, with comparatively fewer investigations in the Global South (Alzain, 2024). This imbalance neglects rich multilingual ecologies in regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America, where complex language repertoires and societal multilingual practices offer critical insights into code-switching dynamics.

Closely linked is the underrepresentation of minority and endangered languages. Research often focuses on dominant languages like English, Spanish, or French, overlooking smaller linguistic communities whose code-switching practices may carry unique sociolinguistic implications. Furthermore, there are substantial gaps in longitudinal studies and research on child bilingualism, limiting our understanding of how code-switching develops over time and the cognitive, social, and educational factors that shape these trajectories. Studies by Ramaila (2025) indicate that child bilinguals exhibit distinctive switching patterns that are not fully captured in short-term or adult-focused research. Addressing these gaps is critical for generating inclusive, globally relevant knowledge.

#### **3.5.3 Directions for Future Research**

Emerging trends suggest several productive avenues for future inquiry. First, interdisciplinary integration can enrich code-switching studies. Incorporating perspectives from education, cognitive neuroscience, and digital humanities can illuminate the cognitive mechanisms underlying switching, the pedagogical implications of translanguaging, and the role of digital communication platforms in shaping multilingual practices (Yim, 2021). For example, studies combining neuroimaging techniques with sociolinguistic analyses may reveal the neural correlates of language alternation, providing novel evidence to bridge theory and practice.

Second, comparative cross-cultural research designs are increasingly necessary. By systematically comparing code-switching behaviors across linguistic communities and sociocultural settings, scholars can identify universal patterns as well as context-specific phenomena, enhancing the generalizability and applicability of findings (Redinger, 2010). This approach aligns with efforts to move beyond Eurocentric frameworks and to account for diverse multilingual realities worldwide.

Finally, there is a growing emphasis on policy-relevant and practice-oriented studies. Research that informs language education policies, bilingual curriculum development, and workplace language management can translate theoretical insights into tangible social and educational benefits (Winata, 2023). Initiatives in translanguaging pedagogy, for instance, demonstrate how understanding code-switching can enhance learning outcomes and support linguistic diversity in formal education.

#### **4. Conclusion**

This comprehensive review of code-switching studies in multilingual contexts underscores the complexity and dynamism of language use across social, educational, and professional settings. The synthesis of over two decades of research reveals that code-switching is not merely a linguistic anomaly but a strategic communicative resource, shaped by sociocultural, cognitive, and pragmatic factors. Evidence from diverse geographic and linguistic settings consistently highlights how speakers navigate multiple languages to achieve interpersonal goals, signal identity, and negotiate social hierarchies, confirming findings from earlier studies such as Elyas (2025) and Alzain (2024).

The review also illuminates significant thematic and methodological patterns. While structural and sociolinguistic frameworks dominate, emerging perspectives such as interactional pragmatics and translanguaging approaches have enriched our understanding of the nuanced functions of code-switching. Methodologically, the field has witnessed a gradual shift from exclusively qualitative case studies to mixed-method and corpus-based analyses, enhancing the rigor and generalizability of findings. However, uneven geographic coverage and limited longitudinal research highlight persistent gaps, particularly in underrepresented multilingual communities and digital communication contexts.

Importantly, this review identifies critical avenues for future research. Scholars are encouraged to explore code-switching in virtual and hybrid communication spaces, investigate its cognitive and pedagogical implications in multilingual education, and adopt integrative frameworks that link linguistic form, function, and social meaning. By addressing these gaps, future studies can provide a more holistic understanding of multilingual practices and inform language policy, curriculum design, and intercultural communication strategies.

In conclusion, code-switching remains a vibrant and evolving area of study, reflecting the fluidity of language use in a globally interconnected world. Continued interdisciplinary research will not only deepen theoretical insights but also enhance practical applications, ultimately contributing to more inclusive and context-sensitive approaches to multilingual communication.

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