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CODE-SWITCHING IN DIALOGUES AMONG YOUNG INDIVIDUALS FROM KAZAKHSTAN.

Abstract. This research investigates the varieties and communicative purposes of code-switching (CS) among the youth demographic in Kazakhstan. Centered around specific research questions, the researchers investigate the complex dynamics of CS within Kazakhstan's bilingual environment. Four young individuals studying abroad participated in a focus group interview, and the results showed a range of code-switching occurrences, from intra-sentential to tag-switching, and differing levels of ability to switch codes. There are various reasons why people switch codes, such as habit or choosing the best language for a conversation. Findings were discussed with a focus on the expressive and referential functions observed among young Kazakh adults. The comfort level of speakers in a given language and audience familiarity are factors that affect code-switching. The paper acknowledges its limits and proposes directions for future investigation, promoting the examination of other factors that may impactcode-switching among young Kazakh adults.

Keywords: Code-switching, bilingualism, tag-switching, intra-sentential, inter-sentential

1 Introduction

As a constituent element within the framework of the internationalization of higher education (HE), the importance of academic mobility is increasing, as noted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2021. Nevertheless, the repercussions and influences on one's native language remain ambiguous. While code-switching (CS) originated with the advent of bilingualism, it only garnered linguistic interest after the 1970s. This phenomenon, a noteworthy aspect of bilingualism, offers avenues for exploration within the realms of grammar, the production of speech, and sociolinguistic patterns [1]. The findings of this research are significant because understanding the link between academic mobility and CS practices among young Kazakh

adults will help to generate fresh insight into CS practices. Additionally, this study explores the practice of CS from the perspectives of different regions of Kazakhstan.

The objective of this essay is to discern the varieties and communicative functions of code-switching employed by young Kazakh adults. Thus, the researchers developed the following research questions to explore the factors affecting CS and the types and conversational functions of CS in conversations between individuals.

RQ1. What types of code-switching exist in conversations of young Kazakh adults?

RQ2. Which languages are utilized in this code-switching?

RQ3. What justifications do they provide for engaging in code-switching??

With this in mind, the following section will review the literature related to CS. Then, the study method and the background information of the participants will be addressed. Next, the paper will focus on analysing the results and discussing them before concluding.

2 Previous Studies

2.1 From Bilingualism to Trilingualism in the Context of Kazakhstan

Following the 1997 language law in Kazakhstan, Kazakh and Russian emerged as state and communication languages among 126 languages [2]. Bilingualism in Kazakh and Russian has evolved through historical events, including Kazakhstan's union with Russia. Research by Mongilyova (2015) [3] indicates that residents of northern Kazakhstan often interchangeably use Kazakh and Russian based on the communicative context. Notably, northern Kazakhs lean towards Russian for knowledge acquisition, such as reading scientific literature. Students from Kazakh medium schools often translate information from Russian to Kazakh during preparation but strive to use Kazakh in family gatherings. The prevalence of Kazakh language usage increases among respondents educated in Kazakh-medium settings. Nonetheless, there is a discernible transition from bilingualism to trilingualism following the introduction of the "Kazakhstan-2050" strategy by the first president of Kazakhstan.

The strategy underscores the significance of a trilingualism policy as a pivotal step toward achieving breakthroughs in English language proficiency. English, being the contemporary "lingua franca," is perceived as a gateway to limitless opportunities in the lives of all citizens [4]. Consequently, due to evolving developments in education, especially in higher education, there is now observable discourse on the implementation of a Kazakh-English-Russian code-switching approach. The subsequent sections explore Code-Switching (CS) along with its various types and functions.

2.2 Code-switching

As noted by Smakova (2019), code-switching is common in multicultural societies, seen as a natural aspect of bilingual speech. In Kazakhstan, people proficient in multiple languages regularly switch between them in everyday conversations, including social, educational, professional, and literary contexts [5]. Conversely, Adams (2010) argues that a code-switching process occurs when bilinguals communicate, and this could be due to 'insufficient adherence to one language' in an ongoing discourse context (Weinreich, 1953 cited in Adams, 2010, p. 297). Nevertheless, the phenomenon of bilinguals engaging in code-switching during communication has been explored, and it is currently regarded as a process demanding proficient linguistic abilities [6]. Additionally, CS is identified as the primary concern [7] and the most imaginative element within the realm of bilingualism [8]. This can be because CS takes place in bilingual situations and offers the speakers expressive tools [9]. Also, it is claimed that CS can serve both positive and negative functions, representing one of the diverse roles it can play [9]. Later in this essay, the functions of code-switching will be explored in the section 'Code-Switching Functions'.

Researchers initiated the examination of code-switching in the '60s and '70s, approaching it from various perspectives—such as defining, investigating, and explaining—based on their specific objectives [8]. Despite the varied perspectives among linguists regarding the term at micro- and macro-levels [9], one may note that CS involves the systematic utilization of multiple languages in discourse and verbal communication [10] and [11]. As per Hoffmann's assertion in 1991, code-switching necessitates achieving a specific level of language proficiency. It is not exclusive to adults; children, upon recognizing their ability to speak different languages, can also switch from one language to another during conversation [6]. According to Yow et al. (2016), bilingual kids usually start blending languages at age two but don't seem to understand the finer points of language usage until age five or later [11]. As a result, the reasoning implies that young children use code-mixing instead of code-switching since they are less skilled than adults in this area.

The triggers of code-switching (CS) are intricate and influenced by personal, situational, and contextual factors. Despite the complexity, adults can regulate their code-switching behaviour. Considerations such as reputation and loyalty to a particular language play a role in shaping their code choices. For example, individuals may feel at ease code-switching among friends or those sharing a similar social background, whereas they exercise more control over their speech in formal settings or when communicating with individuals not closely connected to them [8]. The ability to control their code-switching extends to written

language as well [12]. Excluding instances of code-switching in children's speech, the study focuses on investigating the types and conversational roles of code-switching among young Kazakh adults. Due to the disagreement about exact terminology [11], the words "code-switching" and "code-mixing" are usedinterchangeably to refer to students' use of different languages in discourse.

2.3 Various Types of CS

Concerning the intricacy of CS in bilingualism, it is argued that employing linguistic terms such as 'extra-sentential', 'intra-sentential', 'tag-switching', or 'inter-sentential' can be beneficial for linguists in studying CS [7]. "Intra-sentential" pertains to CS within sentences, while "inter-sentential" refers to CS between sentences. "Tag-switching" is used when statements, tags, or interjections are presented using different languages. Barredo (1997, p. 532), referencing Schiffrin (1987), asserts that tag-switching includes not just tags or interjections but also affirmative and negative particles along with discourse markers. The author also mentions that intra-sentential code-switching involves the interchange of prepositional phrases, verbs, nouns, and adjectives [13].

2.4 Code-Switching Functions

Code-switching serves diverse functions contingent on contexts and situations, including directive, phatic, referential, poetic, and expressive functions [14]. The referential function can assist individuals in bridging gaps during the speaking process. For example, when a speaker encounters difficulty finding the precise word to articulate their idea, they may switch to a language that enables them to convey it more effectively.

Meanwhile, the directive function involves either including or excluding a person from a conversation. For example, parents may intentionally use a foreign language to prevent their children from understanding them. Conversely, speakers may deliberately use a language they know their audience comprehends. Auer (2013) notes that bilinguals can employ code-switching to showcase their ability to speak multiple languages to individuals who only speak one language. This signifies that code-switching serves not only as an indicator of belonging to a specific group but also to facilitate successful interaction with others [12].

While the expressive function may not be employed in every code-switching instance, it does signify the manner of speech. Conversely, the phatic function of code-switching is particularly effective in influencing the tone of a conversation. For example, comedians incorporate regional languages or local dialects when presenting the most engaging parts of their act. This instance also demonstrates how CS occurs not solely when utilizing distinct languages but also when different dialects coexist within a single language. CS also serves a

metalinguistic function, allowing speakers to demonstrate their proficiency in various languages. Finally, the poetic function is employed in the creation of puns and jokes [14].

3. Research Method

To investigate the types of code-switching and its conversational functions among young adults in their discussions, the researchers took a focus group interview using a limited set of open-ended and unstructured questions [15]. The duration of the focus group interview was approximately 20 minutes.

3.1 The Participants

In selecting participants, the 'judgmental sampling method' [16] was used. All four studied abroad at the master's level and shared similar interests, such as playing football. They all know each other very well, and
this level of familiarity can encourage participants to express themselves more freely and share their opinions without reservation. The participants originally came from various cities in Kazakhstan, including Balkhash, Kokshetau, Shymkent, and Petropavl. They were specifically chosen for the study because their ages fell within the range of 28 to 35, representing the young adult stage. The selection of participants aimed to enhance the chances of obtaining trustworthy data regarding the factors influencing code-switching in different regions of Kazakhstan.

Before distributing consent forms, participants were briefed on the research plan, objectives, their rights, and the anticipated duration of the interview. Once the participants agreed to participate, four consent forms were provided to each individual, allowing them to write their full names and sign. Participants were given the opportunity to review the form, and they were encouraged to pose any questions they might have had.

3.2 Recording, Transcribing, and Analysing the Interview

All four participants engaged in conversation with each other, and the PI researcher occasionally posed questions to guide the discussion toward various topics, such as travel, daily activities, and future plans. Furthermore, as the conversation aimed to prompt participants to speak as extensively as possible, the PI researcher occasionally encouraged less active participants by asking questions and occasionally participating in the conversation to create a comfortable environment during the recording process. Moreover, interviews can be deemed successful when participants delve into their personal experiences and share the events they encounter [16]. To achieve this goal, the PI researcher refrained from posing questions that could elicit brief yes or no responses from the participants.

A Xiaomi Redmi Note 10 Pro smartphone was employed for recording,

strategically positioned out of sight, to aid participants in forgetting about being recorded. This approach aimed to foster free and confident speech. Participants kept switching codes throughout the conversation. The researchers transcribed all the conversations verbatim, even though it was time-consuming because transcribing made it easier for the researchers to engage with and fully immerse in the data [17].

Researchers employed the keywords-in-context technique within focus group data analysis to ascertain the contextual relationships between words. To elaborate, the technique entails an examination of the utilization of a particular word [18]. Furthermore, in congruence with other studies [19], the dataset underwent interpretation and analysis in the form of extracts. Within these excerpts, pertinent data were identified and subsequently deliberated upon [19].

4. Results

The analysis of CS was carried out by referencing existing literature on the various types of CS, functions, and partakers' remarks on the reasons behind their CS. To ensure anonymity, individuals' names were substituted with P1, P2, P3, and P4 identifiers. The following examples were drawn based on the data collected for this study. Throughout the following examples, all *Kazakh* elements are in italics, **Russian** elements are in bold, ***English*** borrowings are in italics with bold, and English translations will be indicated in brackets.

Extract 1:

P1) **Ну ладно**, *менің есімде* **то что** *мында* **вот студенческий** *sports facilities* *маған қымбатырақ көрінді*.

(**Okay**, *I remember* **that** *here **sports facilitie**s* **for students** *seemed to be more expensive for me*).

P1 starts his utterance with the Russian phrase **ну ладно** (***Okay***) and continues with *менің есімде* (I remember), following this with **то что** (***that***), which acts as a subordinate conjunction. This CS is inter-sentential since the main clause begins in Kazakh with *"менің есімде"* (***I remember***), and "**то что**" (***that***) a Russian subordinate conjunction follows. Afterwards, he transitions to Kazakh with the phrase "*мында*" (***here***), then switches to Russian with "**вот студенческий**" (***for students***) and incorporates English elements such as "***sports facilities***." This represents intra-sentential CS as these shifts happen within the subordinate clause. Towards the conclusion of his statement, he reverts to Kazakh, stating *"маған қымбатырақ көрінді"* (***seemed to be more expensive***). This excerpt indicates the speaker's comfort with all three languages, as he seamlessly interchanges them without hesitation.

Extract 2:

P1) **Туда входит** *үш **facilities***, *үш бір-бірінен бөлек **gym**дар* **и отдельный**

бассейн, и *соның барлығы сол бір* **membership***тің ішіне кіре береді.*

  (**It includes** *three* **facilities**, *three different* **gym***s* **and a separate pool**, *all of which are included in one* **membership**).

As can be seen from the second extract of the conversation, P1 not only utilizes all three forms of CS but also incorporates the three languages (Russian, Kazakh, and English) within a single linguistic entity. For example, the participant uses English words such as **membership, facility**, and **gym**. Additionally, P1 attained the Kazakh plural suffix to the English word **gym***+дар* and added the Kazakh genitive case **membership***+тің*. One can see that in this sentence, the speaker seamlessly transitions between three languages and adeptly employs them in a single sentence without encountering any syntactic issues. The sentence commences in Russian, then shifts from Russian to Kazakh to English, ultimately concluding in Kazakh.

Extract 3:

P2) *Жоқ, жоқ, жоқ.* **Пара** *assignment***ов**, **щас не до** *trip***ов.** *Absoliut***но**.

(No. It is a time of **assignments;** it is not a time to take **trips.** **Absolutely.**)

In the third excerpt, the second speaker employs both tag-switching and intra-sentential code-switching. P2 says "жоқ" (no) in Kazakh three times, and this shows the use of negative particles [12]. He proceeds to alternate between Russian and English and vice versa within a single sentence. Furthermore, the extract illustrates his code-switching between the three languages. However, P2 predominantly uses Russian and engages in code-switching less frequently than P1. He attributes his predominant use of Russian to having attended a school where Russian was the primary language of instruction and being predominantly surrounded by Russian speakers.

Considering the subsequent examples from the data:

2) *Сен өзің* **trip***ке бардың ба*? (*Did you embark on* **a trip**?)

3) **Мне допустим** *library* **нравится**. (**I would say I love** *the library*)

4) **ну семья** *мында* **че** … (**with your family** *here*, **what more…**)

The linguistic analysis reveals that in the given examples, P2 demonstrates CS patterns. Specifically, in the second sentence, P2 transitions from Kazakh to English, followed by a switch from Russian to English in the third sentence. The final shift occurs in the fourth sentence, where P2 switches from Russian to Kazakh. These instances highlight the participant's flexibility and proficiency innavigating between different languages within the discourse.

Extract 4:

P3) …**нет**, *мен бармаймын*

  (...**no**, *I am not going*).

Throughout the interview, P3 appeared to be relatively passive. There was only

one instance where <u>he</u> engaged in a language switch, and it occurred when stating: **нет** *мен бармаймын*, (**no**, *I am not going*). He utilizes the Russian term "нет" (no) to indicate the fact, and then transitions to the Kazakh phrase "мен бармаймын" (I am not going). In other instances, he exclusively communicates in Russian. However, he asserts that despite being fluent in both Kazakh and Russian, he selects the language that is most appropriate for conversing with his colleagues and friends. Furthermore, he explains that his code-switching is motivated by the desire to bridge gaps in conversation.

Extract 5:
P4) *1. Масқара жел болды*, **я помню этот день**.
 (*There was a terrible wind,* **I remember that day**)

P4 demonstrates better management of CS compared to the previous two individuals because he incorporates the three types of code-switching in his utterance. In the first case, he engages in inter-sentential code-switching. He begins his communication in Kazakh "*масқара жел болды*" (*there was a terrible wind*) and then seamlessly switches to Russian "**я помню этот день**" (**I remember that day**). In this instance, he effortlessly utilizes both languages within a single sentence, with no apparent hesitation.

   2) *Ah. By the way, қашан келеді?*
      (*Ah, by the way*, *when will they come?*)

In the next example, P4 employs the tag-switching type of code-switching. He begins his query with the interjection '*ah*' and "**by the way**" (the English phrase), then transitions to Kazakh asks "*қашан келеді*?", which is translated into English as "***when will they come***?".

   *3) Маған Қазақстан ұнамайды. Жоқ, жоқ, **I'm a huge fan of my country. No.***
      (*I don't like Qazaqstan. No, no*, ***I'm a huge fan of my country. No.***)

The third example shows that the speaker playfully makes a humorous remark by stating in Kazakh "*маған Қазақстан ұнамайды*" (I don't like Qazaqstan), subsequently accompanied by *жоқ, жоқ*, ***I'm a huge fan of my country***. ***No.***, meaning - *no, no*, ***I'm a huge fan of my country. No.*** While his initial sentence is entirely in Kazakh, his second sentence commences with the negative particles "жоқ, жоқ" and transitions to English - ***I'm a huge fan of my country***.

   4) **но, это зависит от… от… от** *department*а,
      (**but it depends…on…on a** *departament*)

In the next excerpt, P4 utilizes intra-sentential code-switching. It becomes evident from the excerpt that he encountered difficulty recalling the term

"*department*" in Russian and, as a result, switched to English to complete his sentence. In the illustration, he initiates the sentence in Russian with "**но, это зависит**" meaning "*but it depends on*" and repeats "**от... от...**" that means "on... on...,". Then he proceeds with "**от** *department***a**", which means "*on the department*" in the English language. He might have expressed, "Это зависит от кафедры," translated as "it depends on the department," yet following a brief pause, instead of using the Russian term, he opted for the English term "*department.*" The rationale behind his code-switching likely stems from a lapse in memory regarding the precise term to articulate his idea. This illustrates that in this context, code-switching functions referentially to bridge gaps in the speaking process.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The objective of this investigation was to delineate the types of code-switching (CS) and conversational functions employed by young Kazakh individuals. Through thorough analyses, three distinct categories of code-switching [7] emerge as prevalent in the speech patterns of young Kazakh adults. Tag-switching [13] is evident when P1 initiates his speech with the Russian phrase "ну ладно" (okay), while the intra-sentential [7] type is observable in the discourse of the second participant. Concerning functions, participants actively used both functions such as referential and expressive [14]. Interestingly, the phatic function of CS [14] could not be seen in the conversation, and it could be due to the fact that each participant was from different regions. This fact possibly made the participants not use their local dialects.

The responses from participants indicate that the primary factors influencing their code-switching (CS) behaviours encompass a deficiency in the knowledge of precise vocabulary required to articulate their thoughts in a specific language. Consequently, they find it more convenient to transition to a language that provides the requisite terms or with which they possess greater linguistic comfort. Furthermore, the study underscores that code-switching (CS) extends beyond the realms of the Kazakh and Russian languages, encompassing the incorporation of English. P3 elucidates one of the contributing factors, attributing it to a shared lifestyle. He acknowledges utilizing specific English terms, such as trips and assignments which he might otherwise eschew, due to the familiarity of his audience with these terms. Here, the communicator did not attempt to establish effective communication but acted as a member of a particular group [12].

In conclusion, the study effectively achieved its objectives through the analysis of participant responses, successfully identifying code-switching types in the speech patterns of the targeted audience. However, the absence of certain CS

functions in the conversation may be attributed to the constrained time allocated for the interviews. Furthermore, while the findings suggest the likelihood of diverse CS types among young Kazakh individuals, it is crucial to acknowledge the limitation inherent in the relatively small number of participants in this research. As a recommendation for future studies, it would be beneficial not only to augment the sample size but also to encourage participants to provide more insights into the influencing factors of code-switching among young Kazakh adults.

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ҚАЗАҚСТАН ЖАСТАРЫ АРАСЫНДАҒЫ ДИАЛОГТАРДАҒЫ КОДЕКСТІ ӨЗГЕРТУ

Аңдатпа Бұл зерттеу Қазақстандағы жастар аудиториясы арасында кодты ауыстырудың (CS) әртүрлілігі мен коммуникациялық мақсаттарын зерттейді. Арнайы зерттеу сұрақтарына сүйене отырып, зерттеушілер қазақстандық қостілді ортадағы кодты ауыстырудың күрделі динамикасын зерттейді. Шетелде оқитын төрт жас фокус-топтық сұхбатқа қатысты және нәтижелер интрасентенциалдыдан тегтерді ауыстыруға дейінгі әртүрлі кодты ауыстыру тәжірибесін, сондай-ақ тілді ауыстыру қабілетінің әртүрлі деңгейлерін көрсетті. Адамдардың тілдерді өзгертуінің әртүрлі себептері бар, мысалы, әдеттер немесе сөйлеу үшін ең жақсы тілді таңдау. Нәтижелер ересек қазақ жастарында байқалатын экспрессивті және референттік функцияларға назар аудара отырып талқыланды. Белгілі бір тілде сөйлеушілердің жайлылық деңгейі және аудиториямен танысу кодты ауыстыруға әсер ететін факторлар болып табылады. Мақалада оның шектеулері мойындалады және ересек қазақ жастары арасында кодты

ауыстыруға әсер етуі мүмкін басқа факторларды зерттеуді ынталандыру арқылы болашақ зерттеулердің бағыттары ұсынылады.

Түйін сөздер: Кодты ауыстыру, қостілділік, тегтерді ауыстыру, интрасентенциалды, интерсенциалды

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СМЕНА КОДА В ДИАЛОГАХ СРЕДИ МОЛОДЫХ ЛЮДЕЙ ИЗ КАЗАХСТАНА.

Аннотация. Данное исследование рассматривает разнообразие и коммуникативные цели смены кода (CS) среди молодежной аудитории в Казахстане. Основываясь на конкретных исследовательских вопросах, исследователи изучают сложную динамику смены кода в двуязычной среде Казахстана. В фокус-групповом интервью приняли участие четыре молодых человека, изучающих за рубежом, и результаты показали разнообразные случаи смены кода, начиная с интрасентенциальной и заканчивая тег-сменой, а также различные уровни способности менять языки. Есть различные причины, по которым люди меняют языки, такие как привычка или выбор наилучшего языка для разговора. Выводы обсуждались с акцентом на экспрессивные и референтные функции, наблюдаемые среди молодых казахстанских взрослых. Уровень комфорта говорящих на определенном языке и знакомство с аудиторией - факторы, влияющие на смену кода. Статья признает свои ограничения и предлагает направления для будущего исследования, поощряя изучение других факторов, которые могут влиять на смену кода среди молодых казахстанских взрослых.

Ключевые слова: Смена кода, двуязычие, тег-смена, интрасентенциальная, интерсентенциальная