

CODE-SWITCHING AS A TEACHING STRATEGY IN SELECT SUBJECTS OF GRADE 9 LEARNERS IN THE DISTRICT OF BOTOLAN

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to describe code-switching as a teaching strategy in selected subjects among Grade 9 students in the District of Botolan, Division of Zambales, Philippines. This study utilized the descriptive research method to obtain precise insights into the use of code-switching as a teaching strategy in selected subjects. Data were collected from 30 teachers actively engaged in teaching English, Mathematics, and Science, along with 270 students. The investigation was carried out across seven participating schools within the Botolan District, Division of Zambales. Findings revealed that among the teacher-respondents, many were in their late thirties, a majority had pursued graduate studies, and their fields of specialization were distributed across Science, Mathematics, and English. The academic performance of students in the three subjects, English, Mathematics, and Science, was consistently at the Approaching Proficiency (AP) level. This suggests that students possess adequate knowledge and skills, and with proper guidance from teachers and peers, they are able to perform their tasks with sufficient understanding. In terms of perceptions of code-switching, teachers rated their use of inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and tag-switching as “Sometimes”, indicating that code-switching is occasionally employed as a teaching strategy. Based on the data, most respondents are around 41 years old, have earned units in the master’s program, and their specialization aligns with the needs of public schools. Students’ academic performance in English, Mathematics, and Science consistently falls within the Approaching Proficiency (AP) level. This indicates that they possess adequate knowledge and skills, and with proper guidance from teachers and peers, they are able to perform their tasks with sufficient understanding. The use of code-switching—whether inter-sentential, intra-sentential, or tag-switching—is generally rated as “Sometimes,” showing that teachers occasionally employ it as a teaching strategy. No significant differences emerge in perceptions of code-switching when grouped according to respondents’ profiles. However, a moderate positive correlation exists between tag-switching and academic performance, while intra-sentential and inter-sentential code-switching show no significant relationship

Keywords: Teaching Strategy, Code-Switching, Academic Performance

INTRODUCTION

Communication is important in our daily lives wherever we go. In church, school, office, market, street, and even at home. We feel joy and enthusiasm whenever we successfully express our thoughts and feelings to others. However, when our communication fails, we feel sadness and disappointment. We must remember that the success of communication depends on the expected reaction of the person receiving our message (Sali-ot et al., 2011).

Language is essential in connecting people with one another. It is the main tool of communication. Through language, people are able to express their thoughts, feelings, and emotions to each other. Indeed, every race has its own language; a language learned and used to understand one another. Different races have different languages. The Philippines is one of the countries with its own language. Although there is a recognized national language, it cannot be denied that people use different languages due to differences in environment, origin, and individual abilities. Filipino serves as the lingua franca and national language, which is said to have various forms. The Filipino language is not uniform, and this is noticeable to an observant or analytical person (Suazon-Lorenzo et al., 2002).

Globally, code-switching has emerged as both a pedagogical instrument and a sociolinguistic concern. On one hand, it serves as a bridge for comprehension, enabling learners to grasp complex concepts with greater clarity. On the other hand, it raises critical issues related to linguistic identity, cultural preservation, and the dominance of certain languages over others. Comparative studies across diverse contexts underscore that while code-switching can facilitate understanding, it may simultaneously perpetuate inequalities when students are compelled to conform to so-called “prestige” languages such as English.

It is stated in our present Constitution, Article XIV, Section 6: “The national language of the Philippines is Filipino. As it is being developed, it shall be further enriched based on existing languages of the Philippines and other languages.” This provision serves as a strong foundation to move away from the old interpretation that the national language is based solely on Tagalog. It clearly implies that various languages exist while the desired national language continues to be developed (Nuncio, 2014).

One of the significant changes in Philippine education is the medium of instruction used in schools. The use of the mother tongue or native language in teaching subjects, especially in preschool and the first three grades of elementary education, has been given importance. The Department of Education (DepEd) issued Department Order No. 74, s. 2009, regarding the implementation of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in teaching from preschool up to Grade 3 in elementary schools.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research aimed to describe code-switching as a teaching strategy in selected subjects of Grade 9 students in the Botolan District, Division of Zambales.

The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the teachers according to:
 - 1.1. Age;
 - 1.2. Highest Educational Attainment; and
 - 1.3. Major or Area of Concentration?
2. What is the level of academic performance of the students in English, Mathematics, and Science?
3. How can the extent of code-switching in teaching be described according to:
 - 3.1. Inter-sentential code-switching;
 - 3.2. Intra-sentential code-switching; and
 - 3.3. Tag-switching?
4. Is there a significant difference in the use of code-switching in student learning when teachers are grouped according to their profile?
5. Is there a relationship between the use of code-switching in teaching and the students' level of academic performance?

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employed the descriptive method of research to gather precise answers regarding code-switching as a teaching strategy in selected subjects of the students. The questionnaire served as the primary instrument for data collection.

RESEARCH METHOD

The descriptive method was designed for researcher to study a present condition. Best (1963) explained that descriptive research is an investigation that describes and interprets a subject or phenomenon. It deals with existing conditions, ongoing relationships, current practices, beliefs and processes, perceived effects, or established trends.

LOCAL STUDY

The locale of this research was conducted in public secondary schools within the Botolan District, Division of Zambales. The public schools in Botolan, Zambales included: Beneg National High School, Botolan National High School, Loob-Bunga National High School, New Taugtog National High School, Lakas High School, Panan National High School and Baquilan National High School.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study consisted of thirty (30) teachers who were teaching English, Mathematics, and Science. It covered seven (7) participating schools in the Botolan District, Division of Zambales, Philippines. Slovin’s sampling formula was used in selecting the student respondents to ensure reliable representation.

The following table presents the respondents based on their respective schools and the number of participants.

District	School	Target Respondents	
		Teacher	Students
Botolan	Beneg National High School	3	16
	Botolan National High School	8	110
	Lakas High School	3	5
	Loob-Bunga High School	3	40
	New Taugtog National High School	6	45
	Panan National High School	3	15
	Baquilan National High School	4	39
	Total	30	270

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The primary tool used in this study is a self-constructed questionnaire, designed to gather information on the extent of code-switching in teaching at public secondary schools in the Botolan District, Division of Zambales, Philippines. The instrument consists of two parts: the first identifies the profile of teachers in terms of age, highest educational attainment, and area of specialization; the second describes the extent of code-switching in teaching, specifically inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and tag-switching. Each item is answered through a check-mark system, enabling the researcher to determine how frequently teachers employ code-switching as a teaching strategy in selected subjects.

The questionnaire was developed based on reviewed literature and related studies, with guidance from experts in language and education. Prior to distribution, the instrument underwent a validation process to ensure clarity and comprehensibility. Items that were found to be confusing were revised accordingly, resulting in a final version that accurately reflects the objectives of the study and ensures reliable responses from the participants.

DATA GATHERING PROCEDURE

The researcher distributed the questionnaires and patiently guided the respondents through detailed reading and explanation to ensure full understanding by each teacher in the secondary schools of Botolan. The researcher spent one week in administering the questionnaires and collecting the data, which were freely answered by the respondents.

DATA ANALYSIS

To analyze the data, the researcher employed several statistical methods. The **percentage** was used to show the proportion of variables, following Punzalan (1992), with the formula $P = \frac{f}{N} \times 100$, where P represents the percentage, f the frequency, and N the total number. To determine the average level of responses, the **weighted mean** was applied, following Calmorin (2003), using the formula $WM = \frac{\sum fx}{N}$, where WM denotes the weighted mean, fx the product of frequency and value, and N the total number of cases. To test whether significant differences existed among the variables in the null hypothesis, **Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)** was conducted by computing the sum of squares, mean squares, and the F-ratio. Finally, the **Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient** was used to measure the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The values of r were interpreted using a standardized scale, where ± 1.00 indicates perfect correlation and ± 0.00 – ± 0.30 indicates little or no correlation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section contains the presentation, interpretation, and analysis of the collected data to provide assurance in addressing the questions raised in the first chapter.

Profile Of Teacher–Respondents

1.1 Age

The second table presents the frequency, percentage, and distribution of the respondents according to their age.

Table 2 Frequency, Percentage, and Distribution of Respondents According to Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
56 - 60	2	6.67
51 - 55	3	10.00
41 - 45	3	10.00
36 - 40	8	26.67

31 - 35	4	13.33
26 - 30	4	13.33
21 - 25	6	20.00
Total Number	30	100.00
Mean of Age	40.5 or 41 years old	

From the thirty (30) respondents, two (2) or 6.67 percent are aged 56 to 60; three (3) or 10.00 percent belong to the age group 51 to 55; three (3) or 10.00 percent are aged 41 to 45; eight (8) or 26.67 percent fall within the age group 36 to 40; four (4) or 13.33 percent are aged 31 to 35; four (4) or 13.33 percent are aged 26 to 30; and six (6) or 20.00 percent belong to the youngest age group of 21 to 25 years old. The mean age of the respondents is 40.5, or approximately 41 years old.

The findings revealed that the respondents were in the middle stage of their lives. This age can be considered a period when individuals accept responsibilities that present greater challenges and opportunities.

1.2 Highest Educational Attainment

The third table presents the frequency, percentage, and distribution of the respondents according to their highest educational attainment.

Table 3 Frequency, Percentage, and Distribution of Respondents According to Highest Educational Attainment

Highest Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
Ed.D. Units	2	6.67
MA Graduate	4	13.33
MA Units	18	60.00
BSE	6	20.00
Total	30	100

From the thirty (30) respondents, two (2) or 6.67 percent are enrolled in Ed.D. units; four (4) or 13.33 percent are MA graduates; eighteen (18) or 60.00 percent have earned units in MA; and six (6) or 20.00 percent are college graduates.

The data confirmed that most teachers have earned units in their master’s programs. The table shows that many are continuing their graduate and doctoral studies to further strengthen their leadership aspirations. Based on interviews, respondents pursue higher education either through educational

assistance provided by the local government or through self-funded study as a form of investment, believing that upon completion, it will yield greater incentives.

1.3 Major or Field of Concentration

The fourth table presents the frequency, percentage, and distribution of the respondents according to their major or field of concentration.

Table 4 Frequency, Percentage, and Distribution of Respondents According to Major or Field of Concentration

Major or Field of Concentration	Frequency	Percentage
English	9	30.00
Mathematics	10	33.33
Science	11	36.70
Total Number	30	100.00

From the thirty (30) respondents, nine (9) or 30.00 percent are majors in English; ten (10) or 33.33 percent are majors in Mathematics; and eleven (11) or 36.70 percent are majors in Science.

2. Level of Academic Performance

The fifth table presents the academic performance of the students.

Table 5 Descriptive Academic Performance in the Subjects English, Mathematics, and Science

Subject	Grade	Level of Proficiency	Symbol
English	82.12	Approaching Proficiency	AP
Mathematics	83.39	Approaching Proficiency	AP
Science	82.45	Approaching Proficiency	AP

From the table, it is shown that the average weighted mean in English is 82.12, in Mathematics 83.39, and in Science 82.45. All of these fall under the category of Approaching Proficiency (AP). At the end of the quarter, the performance of students must be reflected in the report card using levels of

proficiency. The equivalent numerical value of Approaching Proficiency ranges from 80 to 84 percent. At this level, the student has developed the essential components of understanding and, with minimal guidance from the teacher or assistance from peers, is able to apply this understanding through authentic performance tasks (DepEd Memorandum No. 158, s. 2011).

3. Perceptions on the Use of Code-Switching

3.1. Inter-sentential

Table 6 presents the respondents’ perceptions regarding the use of code-switching in teaching, specifically in terms of inter-sentential code-switching.

Table 6 Perceptions of Respondents on the Use of Code-Switching According to Inter-sentential

Inter-sentential code switching		AWM	DR
1	Speaking after completing a sentence in one language and shifting to another language in the next sentence.	3.23	S
2	Speaking between independent sentences, with one in the matrix language and the other in the embedded language within the same conversation.	2.93	S
3	Use at the clause or sentence boundary.	2.97	S
4	Requires proficiency in both languages.	3.33	S
5	The native language is used first, followed by the second language.	2.83	S
6	The second language is used first, followed by the native language.	3.13	S
7	Applied in narration, description, exposition, and argumentation.	3.30	S
8	Broadens teaching and learning, serving as a pathway to fluency in both languages.	3.37	S
9	Demonstrates knowledge of both languages without interruption within a clause or sentence.	3.13	S
Overall Weighted Mean		3.14	S

Based on the results of inter-sentential code-switching, which obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.14, interpreted as *Sometimes (MS)*, it is evident that respondents believe this strategy broadens

teaching and learning, serving as a pathway toward fluency in speaking two languages. On the other hand, the lowest perception was recorded in the use of the native language first followed by the second language. According to the results of Lee’s (2010) study, most teachers reported that they use various forms of code-switching. However, the findings also revealed that code-switching is not consistently practiced, with more responses indicating “rarely” and “sometimes” compared to other options.

3.2. Intra-sentential

Table seven presents the responses of the participants regarding their perceptions of the use of code-switching in teaching, specifically in terms of intra-sentential code-switching.

Table 7 Perceptions of Respondents on the Use of Code-Switching According to Intra-sentential

Intra-sentential code switching		AWM	DR
1	Involves the use of a single morpheme.	2.77	S
2	Involves the use of a phrase or clause within a word.	2.67	S
3	Involves the use of a clause from another language within the same sentence.	2.90	S
4	Often characterized by the presence of verbal particles.	2.80	S
5	Use of words within a sentence to make meaning easier to understand.	3.07	S
6	Involves the use of a word directly due to limited vocabulary.	2.83	S
7	Involves the use of dialectal words.	2.80	S
8	Creates new words by alternating two languages within a single sentence.	2.87	S
9	Allows the sharing of personal feelings to describe reality.	3.00	S
Overall Weighted Mean		2.86	S

Based on the results of intra-sentential code-switching, which obtained an overall weighted mean of **2.86**, interpreted as *Sometimes (S)*, it is evident that respondents believe this strategy is used to insert words within a sentence to make the intended message or information easier to understand. On the other hand, the lowest perception was recorded in the use of phrases or clauses within a word. It is clearly shown that, in terms of intra-sentential code-switching, respondents believe that inserting words within a sentence makes the intended message or information easier to understand, while the use of phrases or clauses within a word received lower ratings. Intra-sentential code-switching refers to

switching within a sentence or at the clause level. This type of switching involves elements within a clause, including particles, single words, or fragmented morphemes. It is the most frequent form of switching, which places greater emphasis on the level of syntax. Poplack (1980) defined this type of code-switching as requiring integration, and therefore it is typically employed only by proficient bilinguals. It is also observed that intra-sentential switching occurs repeatedly when teachers teach grammar, shifting from the second language (L2) to the first language (L1), particularly in explaining various grammatical terms.

3.3. Tag-Switching

Table eight clearly presents the respondents’ perceptions regarding the use of code-switching in teaching, specifically in terms of tag-switching.

Table 8 Perceptions of Respondents on the Use of Code-Switching According to Tag-switching

Tag switching		AWM	DR
1	Switching that involves the use of a single word.	2.60	S
2	Use of linking markers that convey idiomatic expressions from one language to another.	2.60	S
3	Insertion of a particular phrase into another language system.	2.57	O
4	Use of tag-switching to clarify the subject being explained.	3.07	S
5	Use of tag-switching in certain words to elicit more information from the interlocutor.	2.93	S
6	Use of tag-switching to emphasize or ensure the accuracy of the intended information.	3.00	S
7	Use of tag-switching to express agreement or disagreement with the interlocutor.	2.90	S
8	Use of tag-switching at the beginning and end of a sentence.	2.57	O
Overall Weighted Mean		2.78	S

Based on the results of tag-switching, which obtained an overall weighted mean of **2.78**, interpreted as *Sometimes (S)*, it is evident that respondents believe tag-switching is primarily used to clarify the subject being explained. Meanwhile, similar lower perceptions were observed in the insertion of a particular phrase into another language system and in the use of tag-switching at the beginning and end of a sentence.

4. Differences in Perceptions of Inter-sentential Code-Switching When Grouped According to the Respondents' Profile

4.1. Inter-sentential

This section presents the variations in respondents' perceptions of inter-sentential code-switching when classified according to their demographic and professional profiles.

Table nine presents the statistical results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), which was conducted to measure the differences in respondents' perceptions of inter-sentential code-switching when classified according to their demographic and professional profiles.

Table 9 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the Differences in Respondents' Perceptions of Inter-sentential Code-Switching When Grouped According to Profile

Source of Variation		SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Decision/ Interpretation
Age	Between Groups	2.50	6	0.42	0.79	0.58	Accept Ho
	Within Groups	12.06	23	0.52			No Significant Difference
	Total	14.56	29				
Highest Educational Attainment	Between Groups	1.51	3	0.50	1.00	0.41	Accept Ho
	Within Groups	13.05	26	0.50			No Significant Difference
	Total	14.56	29				
Major/Field of Specialization	Between Groups	2.08	2	1.04	0.72	0.25	Accept Ho
	Within Groups	12.48	27	0.46			No Significant Difference
	Total	14.56	29				

The computed differences for age (0.58), highest educational attainment (0.41), and field of specialization (0.25) are all greater than the 0.05 alpha level of significance. This indicates that age, highest educational attainment, and field of specialization of the respondents show no significant differences in their perceptions of inter-sentential code-switching. Thus, the null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted.

Based on the data gathered, it can be concluded that respondents' age, highest educational attainment,

and field of specialization showed no significant differences in their perceptions of inter-sentential code-switching. This condition reflects the similarity of respondents' views regarding the use of inter-sentential code-switching. The study revealed that such practice broadens teaching and learning, enabling students to become fluent in speaking two languages. Messages are effectively conveyed through narration, description, exposition, and justification.

In this regard, the findings are consistent with Yletyinen's (2004) study, which identified inter-sentential code-switching as one of the types used in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). In classrooms, it is primarily employed for translation or for clarifying certain aspects, such as grammar. Similarly, Vazquez (2013) emphasized that the quality of education serves as the foundation for effective and fruitful student learning. To be effective, teachers must employ diverse strategies and instructional materials suited to each lesson. Teaching is thus a creative endeavor that awakens students' interest and engagement in all tasks assigned by the teacher. Yletyinen study further confirmed that inter-sentential code-switching is commonly used in EFL classrooms, particularly for translation and grammatical explanation.

4.2. Intra-sentential

Table 10 presents the statistical results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), which was conducted to measure the differences in respondents' perceptions of intra-sentential code-switching when grouped according to their demographic and professional profiles.

Table 10 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the Differences in Respondents' Perceptions of Intra-sentential Code-Switching When Grouped According to Profile

Source of Variation		SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Decision/ Interpretation
Edad	Between Groups	0.81	6	0.14	0.21	0.97	Accept Ho No Significant Difference
	Within Groups	14.57	23	0.63			
	Total	15.39	29				
Highest Educational Attainment	Between Groups	0.87	3	0.29	0.52	0.67	Accept Ho No Significant Difference
	Within Groups	14.52	26	0.56			

	Total	15.39	29				
Major/Field of Specialization	Between Groups	0.51	2	0.255	0.462	0.83	Accept Ho
	Within Groups	14.88	27	0.551			No Significant Difference
	Total	15.39	29				

The computed differences for age (0.97), highest educational attainment (0.67), and field of specialization (0.83) are all greater than the 0.05 alpha level of significance. This indicates that age, highest educational attainment, and field of specialization of the respondents show **no significant differences** in their perceptions of intra-sentential code-switching. Thus, the null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted, meaning that these demographic variables do not influence respondents’ views on intra-sentential code-switching.

Based on the data gathered, it can be concluded that the respondents’ age, highest educational attainment, and field of specialization do not differ in their perspectives on intra-sentential code-switching. This reflects a shared perception among respondents regarding its use in teaching and communication. The absence of differences is attributed to the respondents’ shared perspectives on intra-sentential code-switching. Teachers consistently experienced that using words within a sentence makes the message more easily understood by students. This practice also allows them to share personal insights to illustrate reality.

4.3. Tag-Switching

Table 11 presents the statistical results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), which was conducted to measure the differences in respondents’ perceptions of tag-switching when grouped according to their demographic and professional profiles.

Table 11 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the Differences in Respondents’ Perceptions of Tag-Switching When Grouped According to Profile

Source of Variation		SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Decision/ Interpretation
Age	Between Groups	2.91	6	0.48	0.53	0.78	Accept Ho – No Significant Difference
	Within Groups	20.96	23	0.91			
	Total	23.87	29				

Highest Educational Attainment	Between Groups	5.00	3	1.67	2.30	0.10	Accept Ho – No Significant Difference
	Within Groups	18.87	26	0.73			
	Total	23.87	29				
Major/Field of Specialization	Between Groups	0.92	2	0.46	0.541	0.79	Accept Ho – No Significant Difference
	Within Groups	22.95	27	0.85			
	Total	23.87	29				

The computed differences for age (0.78), highest educational attainment (0.10), and field of specialization (0.79) are all greater than the 0.05 alpha level of significance. This indicates that age, highest educational attainment, and field of specialization of the respondents show no significant differences in their perceptions of tag-switching. Thus, the null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted, meaning that these demographic variables do not influence respondents' views on tag-switching.

5. Measure of Relationship

Table 12 presents the results of the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r), which was used to measure the relationship between students' academic performance and the use of code-switching.

Table 12 Pearson r Results on the Relationship Between Academic Performance and Code-Switching

Correlations

Source of Correlations		Academic Performance	Intra-sentential	Inter-sentential	Tag
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.061	-.026	.427*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.749	.891	.019
	N	30	30	30	30
Intra-sentential	Pearson Correlation	.061	1	-.014	-.075
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.749		.942	.694

Inter-sentential	N	30	30	30	30
	Pearson Correlation	-.026	-.014	1	-.238
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.891	.942		.205
Tag	N	30	30	30	30
	Pearson Correlation	.427*	-.075	-.238	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.019	.694	.205	
	N	30	30	30	30

relation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The computation of the Pearson r correlation yielded values of 0.061 for intra-sentential code-switching and -0.026 for inter-sentential code-switching, both of which indicate no significant relationship with academic performance. In contrast, tag-switching obtained a Pearson r value of 0.427*, which demonstrates a moderate positive correlation. This finding implies that the use of tag-switching is associated with achieving better and higher academic performance. The results further suggest that tag-switching is effective in enhancing students' comprehension and serves as a valuable instructional strategy for teachers. By clarifying the intended message, tag-switching facilitates deeper understanding of the lesson content and strengthens classroom communication.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that respondents, with a mean age of 41, are at a stage where professional responsibilities are readily embraced, supported by graduate studies and relevant specializations. Students' performance in English, Mathematics, and Science was at the Approaching Proficiency level, reflecting adequate knowledge and skills that improve with guidance. Code-switching—whether inter-sentential, intra-sentential, or tag-switching—was generally perceived as “Sometimes,” with no significant differences across demographic profiles. A moderate correlation was found between academic performance and tag-switching, highlighting its instructional potential. Accordingly, teachers should undergo seminars to enhance strategies and linguistic awareness, while formal instruction may be complemented by code-switching into regional or familiar languages to foster participation. Researchers are encouraged to replicate similar studies in varied contexts, and future investigations should expand in scope to validate and enrich these findings.

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