

# **An Explorative Study to Discover the Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Code-Switching as a Teaching Strategy in Indian Classrooms**

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# DECLARATION

I, **Esha Khandelwal**, hereby declare that the dissertation titled **An Explorative Study to Discover the Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Code-Switching as a Teaching Strategy in Indian Classrooms**, submitted to Barkatullah University, Bhopal, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the three-year **Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed.** degree, is the result of my original and independent research work carried out under the supervision and guidance of **Dr. Sanjay Kumar Pandagale**, Associate Professor, Department of Education, Regional Institute of Education (RIE), NCERT, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

I further declare that this dissertation has not been submitted previously, either by me or by anyone else, for the award of any degree or diploma at Barkatullah University, Bhopal, or at any other university or institution.

**Place: RIE, Bhopal**

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# **CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **An Explorative Study to Discover the Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Code-Switching as a Teaching Strategy in Indian Classrooms**, submitted by **Ms. Esha Khandelwal**, a student of the **Three-Year Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed.** programme, bearing Roll Number 2306600315 and Enrollment Number R230664070013, of the **Regional Institute of Education, NCERT, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh**, has been carried out under my supervision and guidance.

I further certify that the work embodied in this dissertation is original and has not been submitted, either in part or in full, for the award of any degree or diploma at Barkatullah University or any other university or institution.

It is also certified that the dissertation, in its current form, is deemed suitable for submission to Barkatullah University, Bhopal, for the award of the degree of Three-Year Integrated B.Ed.-M.Ed.

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# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

This chapter introduces the study and establishes the foundation upon which the entire research is built. It outlines the background and rationale for investigating the use of code-switching as a teaching strategy in Indian classrooms, particularly in the context of the country's richly multilingual educational landscape. The chapter begins by discussing the concept of code-switching within both global and Indian educational settings, and highlights its relevance in bridging linguistic gaps between students' home languages and the medium of instruction.

It also presents the need and justification for the study by addressing the gap between the widespread use of code-switching in classrooms and the lack of systematic academic inquiry into its pedagogical effectiveness. The problem statement, research objectives, and key research questions are then detailed to define the scope and direction of the study. In addition, important terms are clarified, and the delimitations of the research are stated to specify the boundaries within which the investigation is carried out.

### **1.1 Background and Rationale**

India's education system consists of a richly multilingual environment, where alternating between languages during conversations is a common and very usual part of classroom life. Teachers often switch between English, Hindi, and regional languages to explain difficult concepts, simplify classroom interactions, or build personal rapport with students. Students, in turn, use multiple languages to easily comprehend what they're learning and to express themselves. The practice of switching between two or more languages or dialects during a conversation is popularly termed as code-switching.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has officially recognized the significance of mother tongues and regional languages, specifically in the foundation years of school education, moving towards a multilingual approach that indirectly aids the practice of code-switching. But, in spite of being so frequently used and its natural alignment with the linguistic realities of Indian classrooms, the technique of code-switching is very under-researched in theory and practice. Teachers often use it instinctively, rather than through planned instructional techniques.

Thus, the main purpose of this study is to explore the advantages and disadvantages of using code-switching as a teaching and learning technique in the Indian classroom environment. It aims to examine and analyze the opinions of both students' and teachers' on its use in the classroom transactional process. It also aims to know if they perceive it as an essential resource that improves understanding and engagement, or acts as a significant barrier to language learning and proficiency.

## 1.2 Code-Switching in Education

Code-switching, in simple terms, refers to the practice of alternating between two or more languages or dialects within a single discourse, sentence, or conversation. In the context of Indian classrooms, where multilingualism is a prevalent reality, code-switching is a frequent and often necessary practice. This alternation is not random but is driven by specific social, psychological, linguistic, and pedagogical considerations. This practice is especially used in English-medium schools, where students may not possess high proficiency in English, prompting teachers to switch to the students' first language to ensure comprehension and participation.

From a pedagogical standpoint, code-switching serves multiple purposes. It functions as a scaffolding strategy to support learners who are still acquiring proficiency in English. It allows teachers to explain difficult concepts in a language familiar to the students, to emphasize important points, and to manage the classroom more effectively. Furthermore, it helps build rapport between teachers and students, making the classroom environment more relatable and less intimidating for learners who might otherwise struggle with English-only instruction.

The theoretical roots of code-switching can be traced to early sociolinguistic studies, particularly the work of Blom and Gumperz (1972), who distinguished between situational and metaphorical code-switching. Their research laid the foundation for understanding how language choices reflect social meanings. Later, scholars like Myers-Scotton contributed models such as the Markedness Model to explain why speakers switch codes in particular contexts. In the realm of education, the concept has been supported by Vygotsky's theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which suggests that learners progress when given appropriate linguistic and cognitive support, an idea that aligns with the strategic use of code-switching.

The perceived advantages of code-switching in Indian classrooms are numerous. Teachers and students alike recognize its role in enhancing clarity, reducing anxiety, and encouraging participation. It also helps preserve students' cultural and linguistic identities, making the classroom experience more inclusive and affirming. On the other hand, some concerns have been raised regarding the overuse of code-switching, which may hinder students' progress in English language acquisition. There is also a perception among some educators and stakeholders that switching to local languages may be unprofessional or reduce the formal tone of academic instruction.

Despite these concerns, the study suggests that when used judiciously, code-switching can be a highly effective pedagogical tool in multilingual settings like India. It allows for greater engagement, deeper understanding, and improved classroom dynamics, particularly when learners are in the early stages of acquiring English proficiency. Ultimately, the effectiveness of code-switching depends on the specific educational context, the linguistic background of the students, and the instructional goals of the teacher.



### 1.3 Global and Historical Perspective

Code-switching, the technique of alternating between two or more languages or language varieties during a single conversation, has been an area of interest in the multilingual educational settings across the globe. In normal classroom settings, it can occur within a sentence, between two or more sentences, or during different stages of a lesson, like moving from explanation to discussion.

The practice of code-switching initially emerged as a field of interest within sociolinguistics through the foundational work of Blom and Gumperz (1972), who introduced the concepts of situational and metaphorical code-switching. Their research demonstrated that language alternation is contextually driven, often reflecting social roles, discourse functions, or shifts in topic rather than linguistic inadequacy. This early theoretical framing positioned code-switching as a socially meaningful and strategic linguistic behavior.

As educational systems began to embrace linguistic diversity, the pedagogical implications of code-switching became more apparent. In countries like South Africa, Singapore, Canada, and Spain, code-switching is not only prevalent but has been systematically studied and, in many cases, integrated into teaching methodologies. Adendorff (1993), emphasized the academic and interpersonal value of switching to Zulu in South African classrooms, where it enhanced subject comprehension and supported the socio-emotional needs of learners.

In Singapore, a translanguaging-based approach encourages students to shift between English and native languages (Mandarin, Malay, Tamil), recognizing multilingualism as an asset in both cognitive development and identity formation. Similarly, Spanish bilingual schools balance instruction between Spanish and regional languages like Catalan and Basque, utilizing code-switching to foster inclusivity and cultural relevance while improving understanding.

However, the global application of code-switching in education is not uniform. In countries such as Japan and France, where linguistic purity and standardization are emphasized, the use of non-standard languages or informal linguistic shifts in formal education is often discouraged. This contrast highlights the ideological and policy-based dimensions that influence the perception and practice of code-switching in educational systems worldwide.

This study seeks to bridge the gap in Indian educational research by exploring how code-switching is perceived as a teaching strategy. By situating Indian classroom practices within this global and historical context, the research highlights both the pedagogical potential and the challenges of integrating code-switching into mainstream teaching methods. In India, code-switching is extensively used in day to day classroom transactions but is yet considered largely informal.

English is often seen as a language which provides an immense amount of opportunity especially in urban and private schools. However, students from Hindi-medium or regional-medium backgrounds oftentimes struggle without occasional support in their home or regional languages. This makes it specifically essential to study how code-switching is perceived in Indian classrooms, not merely as a practical workaround but as a potential teaching strategy.

## **1.4 Indian Perspective**

In Indian classrooms, the use of code-switching has emerged as a pedagogical response to the linguistic diversity and varying English language proficiencies among learners. Teachers often resort to switching between English and vernacular languages such as Hindi, Tamil, Bengali, or Marathi to bridge the gap between the home language and the instructional language. This strategy facilitates understanding of complex content, allows for translation of unfamiliar vocabulary, and enhances the retention of subject matter. Moreover, it helps maintain the pace of the lesson by minimizing confusion and disengagement.

The need for code-switching in Indian classrooms is underscored by the socio-linguistic landscape of the country, where many students receive their early education in a vernacular medium and encounter English only after entering the formal education system. In such cases, code-switching becomes a crucial tool for inclusive pedagogy, allowing students from diverse linguistic backgrounds to participate in classroom discourse. It acts as a bridge that enables learners to connect new knowledge with their existing linguistic and cognitive frameworks, thereby supporting their academic growth.

In India, code-switching found its way into classrooms primarily through necessity rather than formal pedagogical design. As teachers began addressing the practical needs of learners who struggled with English, they intuitively adopted code-switching as a means of communication and instruction. Over time, this practice has gained recognition as a deliberate and effective teaching strategy rather than a sign of linguistic deficiency. It is now increasingly regarded as a tool that respects linguistic diversity while promoting educational access and equity.

In the Indian context, code-switching is organically embedded in classroom interactions, particularly in English-medium schools where many students come from Hindi or other regional language backgrounds. Teachers frequently shift between English and vernacular languages to clarify abstract concepts, translate terminology, or maintain student engagement. Despite its widespread use, code-switching remains largely under-theorized and is often seen as an informal or instinctive response rather than a strategic pedagogical tool. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes mother tongue and regional languages in foundational education, indirectly validating the practice of code-switching, although it does not yet formalize its instructional use.

## 1.5 Need and Justification of the Study

India's multilingual educational landscape presents a unique pedagogical challenge, wherein linguistic diversity within classrooms often results in communication barriers that can hinder effective teaching and learning. English, as a predominant medium of instruction, frequently creates a disjunction between the language of instruction and the students' linguistic competencies, particularly for learners from regional language backgrounds. In such contexts, code-switching emerges as an organic instructional practice employed by educators to navigate linguistic heterogeneity.

The need for this study stems from the growing pedagogical relevance of code-switching in Indian classrooms and the concurrent lack of systematic inquiry into its perceived effectiveness and limitations. Despite its widespread use, code-switching remains an under-theorized and under-researched strategy in the Indian academic discourse on classroom language practices. This study is justified on several grounds:

1. **Addressing Linguistic Disparities:** A significant proportion of Indian students enter English-medium institutions with limited proficiency in English. Investigating the role of code-switching can offer critical insights into how educators facilitate comprehension and participation among such learners.
2. **Pedagogical Significance:** Although code-switching is commonly practiced, it is rarely examined as a deliberate and structured teaching strategy. This study seeks to evaluate its pedagogical merit, moving beyond anecdotal or informal understandings.
3. **Policy Relevance:** The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 underscores the importance of multilingualism and the use of mother tongues in foundational learning. Findings from this study can contribute to policy dialogues on language use in classrooms and support the development of contextually grounded instructional frameworks.
4. **Enhancing Learner Engagement:** By exploring the perceived advantages and disadvantages of code-switching, the study foregrounds the student experience and examines how this strategy influences classroom engagement, comprehension, and academic performance.
5. **Promoting Culturally Responsive Pedagogy:** In a socio-culturally diverse country, code-switching may serve as a means of acknowledging students' linguistic identities and fostering an inclusive educational environment.

6. Filling a Research Gap: While international research on code-switching in education is extensive, there remains a sparseness of research focused specifically on Indian classrooms.

In light of the above mentioned reasons, the study is both timely and essential, aiming to contribute to a nuanced understanding of language practices in Indian educational settings and to inform both pedagogy and policy with empirically grounded insights.

## **1.6 Statement of the Problem**

The title of this study, “An Explorative Study to Discover the Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Code-Switching as a Teaching Strategy in Indian Classrooms”, reflects the major concern, that code-switching is a prevalent yet very under-theorized thing in Indian education system.

The prime issue is that in spite of its frequent use, code-switching is mostly perceived as an unprofessional behavior or instinctive technique rather than a well thought upon strategic choice. There is very limited empirical research in the Indian context that shows how this practice affects the quality of teaching, student’s understanding, classroom engagement, and proficiency in language. By examining and analyzing the opinions of both students and teachers, this study aims to discover when and why code-switching works, or doesn’t, and how it might be utilized or employed in more useful ways.

## **1.7 Objectives of the Study**

The primary objectives of this research are:

1. To identify the situations and circumstances in which code-switching is used by teachers in Indian classrooms in addition to its frequency.
2. To explore students’ and teachers’ opinions on benefits of using code-switching in regards to comprehension, engagement, and classroom participation.
3. To examine the disadvantages and challenges with using code-switching, including concerns like language proficiency.

## **1.8 Research Questions**

As a qualitative study, this research is guided by the following questions:

1. In what situations and circumstances do teachers most frequently use code-switching in Indian classrooms?

2. How do students view and regard the use of code-switching in their learning process?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using code-switching according to the students and teachers?
4. Does code-switching aid or restrict students' language proficiency in the medium of instruction?
5. Can code-switching be standardized or formally developed as a teaching strategy or pedagogical technique?

## **1.9 Definition of Key Terms**

1. Code-switching: The practice of alternating between two or more languages or language varieties within a single interaction, particularly within educational settings.
2. Pedagogy: The method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic discipline.
3. Multilingualism: The use of more than one language by an individual or within a society or institution.
4. Medium of Instruction: The primary language used for the purpose of teaching and communication in schools.
5. Perception: The beliefs, opinions, or attitudes held by individuals (students or teachers) based on their experience.

## **1.10 Delimitations of the Study**

This study is delimited to the following:

1. Grades 9 -12 of secondary schools located in the urban and semi-urban areas of Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.
2. Schools where English is the primary medium of instruction, but Hindi and/or regional languages are commonly used at home or among peers.
3. Teachers and students majorly from humanities and social science backgrounds, where language plays a major role.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

In this chapter, the existing body of knowledge on code-switching in educational contexts is reviewed to situate the present study within global and Indian perspectives. Findings have been synthesized from contexts as diverse as South Africa, Singapore, Spain, and Canada, highlighting both pedagogical advantages and ideological debates. Thereafter, focus has been narrowed down to the Indian landscape, identifying key studies that have documented natural code-switching practices, and pointing out the gaps, particularly the scarcity of systematic, perception-based research involving teachers and students in urban secondary schools. This review establishes the conceptual and empirical foundations for investigating the perceived advantages and disadvantages of code-switching as a deliberate teaching strategy in Indian classrooms.

#### **2.1 Key Themes in Existing Literature**

The practice of code-switching has attracted significant interest of researchers, specifically in multilingual contexts of education. One prominent theme in the literature is its specific role as a pedagogical scaffold. Scholars like Macaro (2005) and Creese & Blackledge (2010) bring to light how intentional code-switching can help students struggling with complex content presented in a second language. By integrating similar or familiar linguistic structures, instructors can bridge the gaps in comprehension, increase engagement, and help develop deeper understanding in the learners. This practice not only supports language acquisition but also helps in alignment with larger instructional goals in diverse classroom settings.

Apart from pedagogy, code-switching is also accredited for its cultural and social implications which is depicted from its use. Cummins (2000) highlights its role in asserting cultural identity and promoting inclusivity, specifically for learners from humble linguistic backgrounds. Nevertheless, this approach of inclusiveness is often balanced in opposition to the quest for linguistic constancy in instruction, specifically in systems where English is seen as a tool for global mobility (Ferguson, 2003). Moreover, this is further complicated by societal outlook toward the use of language. Garcia & Wei (2014) state that in some specific cultures, switching to home/local/regional languages may be viewed as unprofessional or a direct indication of lowered standards, a viewpoint reflected in the opinions of parts of urban India.

#### **2.2 Synthesis of International Findings**

The researches from numerous multilingual settings have essentially emphasized the contextual versatility and pedagogical importance of code-switching in teaching and learning environments. For example, in countries like Singapore, code-switching is a deliberate and strategic part of a

translanguaging style of teaching, which further helps students to smoothly move between English and their mother tongues like Mandarin, Tamil, or Malay within education environments. On the other hand, in South Africa, Adendorff (1993) discovered that code-switching can successfully bridge the gap between English language instruction and learners' home languages, especially in rural and not as much as resourced learning environments. Likewise in Spain, bilingual or multilingual schools use code-switching as a strategy to balance the utilization of Spanish with regional languages like Catalan and Basque, contributing in both comprehension and cultural identity (Cenoz & Genesee, 1998).

Economies like South Africa, Canada, Singapore, and Spain have extensively researched code-switching as an intentional teaching tool and technique. On the other hand, in countries like Japan and France where language purity is a priority, the practice of code-switching is more limited in its use and often discouraged.

In the Indian context, in spite of the highly multilingual society, structured research into strategic and intentional code-switching remains limited. Annamalai (2001) emphasized the practical importance of alternating languages in the context of Indian classrooms but also highlighted the lack of more empirical research to help in judging its long-term educational effects. Thus, collectively these global opinions state that the productiveness of the practice of code-switching majorly and primarily depends on the sociolinguistic and educational environment in which it is administered.

## **2.3 Indian Context**

In India as a diverse and multilingual nation, English is oftentimes used as the medium of instruction in the classrooms, specifically in private and urban institutions. Although, a humongous number of students belong to the Hindi-speaking or regional language households. Educators move between these languages to help students understand abstract or technical concepts very frequently. In spite of it being a very common practice, code-switching remains highly undocumented and sidelined in teacher training programs and policies in India. Researches that already exist oftentimes label code-switching as a linguistic or sociological process instead of an intended classroom strategy.

## **2.4 Literature Review**

Code-switching, the practice of alternating between two or more languages within a single conversation, has been studied extensively across sociolinguistic, educational, and cognitive domains. This review synthesizes key contributions by national and international scholars to establish a comprehensive foundation for the present research.

1. **Myers-Scotton** (1993) offered one of the most influential frameworks in understanding the structural and sociolinguistic dimensions of code-switching. Her 'Markedness Model' explains

that people use code-switching to show social meanings, like creating a sense of closeness or showing authority. In classrooms, such meaning-making processes are critical, as teachers often switch codes to align themselves with students or assert instructional authority. Her conceptualization helps explain why code-switching is not random but strategically used.

2. **Adendorff** (1996) studied South African classrooms and concluded that teachers used code-switching to foster inclusion, manage classrooms, and clarify complex ideas. His findings resonate with multilingual Indian classrooms, where similar functions, particularly clarification and classroom control are very common. Adendorff's work shows that the way code-switching helps communication is often more important than strictly following language rules or policies.

3. **Cenoz and Genesee** (1998) emphasized the educational potential of bilingual and multilingual programs. Their comparative studies showed that using students' home languages alongside the target language improved comprehension, confidence, and overall academic performance. In Indian schools, this would justify code-switching as a scaffold rather than a barrier in learning environments.

4. **Cummins** (2000) argued against the monolingual instructional model and advocated for additive bilingualism, where students' home languages are seen as assets in learning. His 'Common Underlying Proficiency' theory posits that skills transfer across languages. In this context, code-switching becomes a tool for bridging conceptual gaps, particularly for students from lower socio-economic or non-English-speaking backgrounds.

5. **Annamalai** (2001) analyzed language politics in Indian classrooms and concluded that code-switching was a practical means to reconcile policy and practice. He argued that rather than resisting it, educational frameworks should incorporate code-switching as a pedagogically sound approach in multilingual settings.

6. **Ferguson** (2003) identified teacher code-switching as a prevalent yet understudied practice in bilingual classrooms. He classified its pedagogic functions into lesson access, classroom management, and affective communication. These categories align closely with practices observed in Indian secondary classrooms, where teachers often switch to Hindi for concept reinforcement and discipline.

7. **Macaro** (2005) explored teacher code-switching in second language classrooms in the UK and proposed that it can support both cognitive and affective learning. He categorized code-switching into functional uses such as checking understanding, giving instructions, and building rapport; these functions are widely applicable to Indian English as a Second Language and English as a Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) contexts. His work legitimizes code-switching within pedagogical frameworks that prioritize student learning outcomes over rigid language separation.



8. **Saxena** (2009) investigated bilingual classroom discourse in South Asia, observing that code-switching acted as a pedagogical bridge between curriculum expectations and linguistic realities. He highlighted that teachers have the power to choose how and when to use different languages in class to help students understand better.

9. **Creese and Blackledge** (2010) introduced the concept of flexible bilingualism in classrooms. Through ethnographic studies in UK schools, they found that code-switching enabled teachers to navigate multiple linguistic and cultural identities, enhancing inclusivity. Their research supports the idea that code-switching is a pedagogical resource rather than an obstacle, reinforcing the need for inclusive linguistic practices in Indian urban schools.

10. **Canagarajah** (2013) critiqued monolingual norms in global English teaching and advocated for pedagogical approaches that accommodate multilingual realities. His framework supports the use of code-switching in classrooms as an essential component of critical pedagogy in postcolonial societies.

11. **Mohanty** (2014) focused on the inequities of language policy in Indian education and promoted multilingual education with a difference. He saw code-switching as a way to challenge the dominance of one language and to support fair learning opportunities for students from less privileged language backgrounds.

12. **Garcia and Wei** (2014) advanced the concept of ‘translanguaging’, which differs from traditional definitions of code-switching by viewing multilingualism as an integrated communicative reserve. Translanguaging legitimizes the fluid movement between languages in the classroom, empowering both teachers and students to construct knowledge meaningfully. Their work provides strong theoretical support for code-switching as a reflective, student-centered pedagogy.

13. **Vaish** (2014) conducted comparative research in Singaporean and Indian bilingual classrooms, demonstrating that code-switching enabled cognitive scaffolding and culturally relevant pedagogy. Her study supports the inclusion of home languages in the instructional process to enhance student agency.

Collectively, these scholars offer a robust foundation for conceptualizing code-switching as a legitimate, strategic, and often necessary practice in multilingual classrooms. Their work substantiates the present study's focus on exploring the perceived advantages and disadvantages of code-switching as articulated by teachers and students in urban secondary schools in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. Rather than viewing code-switching as a deviation from linguistic norms, this body of literature encourages its recognition as a context-sensitive, inclusive teaching strategy.

These scholars underscore the multifaceted role of code-switching in multilingual educational contexts, particularly in India. Their research provides the theoretical and empirical foundation

for the present study, which seeks to explore teacher and student perceptions of code-switching in urban Indian secondary classrooms. It is evident that code-switching, when strategically employed, has the potential to enhance classroom instruction, cultural relevance, and learner engagement.

## **2.5 Points of Agreement and Disagreement**

The fact that code-switching aids in language instruction is agreed upon by most of the researchers, specifically in the case of learners who are not well versed in the language. It helps them understand new material by helping them to relate it to the familiar linguistic clues they are already aware of. It also helps transform the learning environment into a more cheerful and responsive one by lowering anxiousness and increasing student participation. This is majorly accurate in areas where proficiency in the language is straightaway responsible for comprehension of abstract ideas like the fields of humanities and social sciences. This strategy can be useful in multiple fields to make complex things easier to comprehend and promote a more engaging environment.

Despite the benefits of code-switching, there is ongoing academic debate regarding its long-term impacts. A key concern is whether frequent use of multiple languages hinders students' progress in the primary language of instruction, potentially delaying their proficiency in academic Hindi or English. There is also a disagreement over the fact that code-switching proves to be a beneficial tool for achieving fluency or merely fosters dependency. Furthermore, code-switching raises issues of professional credibility in educational settings, as some educators perceive it as informal or inappropriate, leading to questions about its role in academic discourse.

## **2.6 Gaps in the Literature**

In spite of the substantial research, two crucial gaps remain in the Indian context:

1. Absence of factual, opinion-based data on the use and effects of code-switching as a teaching strategy from both teachers and students.
2. Most educators employ code-switching based on their instinct and not proper training implying minimal integration of code switching into the curriculum of teacher training.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

This chapter outlines the research design and procedures employed to explore teachers' and students' perceptions of code-switching in urban and semi-urban secondary schools in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. Methodology refers to the systematic approach and procedures adopted by a researcher to collect, analyze, and interpret data in a structured and reliable manner. It provides the foundation upon which the validity and credibility of a research study are built. In educational research, methodology is not just about the tools used for data collection, but also about the rationale for selecting those tools, the context in which the research is conducted, and the ethical considerations that guide the entire process.

This chapter presents the methodological framework adopted for the study, including the design of the research, selection of the sample, and the tools used for data collection. It also discusses the ethical safeguards put in place to ensure the protection and dignity of all participants, along with any limitations encountered during the process. By clearly outlining how the research was planned and executed, this chapter ensures transparency and helps establish the trustworthiness of the study's findings.

#### **3.1 Method of the Study**

This research adopted a qualitative exploratory method to examine the perceived advantages and disadvantages of using code-switching as a teaching strategy in Indian classrooms. The method was suitable because the goal was to understand participants' lived experiences, interpretations, and beliefs rather than test a hypothesis. Qualitative research aided in an in-depth investigation of subjective meanings and classroom practices, specifically as they relate to language, pedagogy, and identity. The research placed the responses of students and teachers at the center of analysis.

#### **3.2 Design of the Study**

The study used a qualitative, descriptive research design in urban and semi-urban areas of Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh to investigate the use of code-switching in secondary school classrooms environments. Data was collected over a period of time using multiple methods, including surveys, classroom observations, and semi-structured interviews. This multi-method approach enabled the collection of rich, contextual insights into ongoing classroom dynamics and language practices, reflecting the lived experiences of both teachers and students.

### **3.3 Population, Sample, and Sampling Method**

#### **3.3.1 Population**

The population consisted of Secondary school students (Classes 9 to 12) enrolled in English-medium schools where Hindi and regional languages are used informally and teachers primarily teaching humanities and social sciences in these same schools.

#### **3.3.2 Sample**

The study involved 100 students and 80 teachers as participants for the procedure of data collection. Individuals were selected from various schools, guaranteeing a varied sample in terms of teaching experience, gender, and socio-linguistic background. This diversity contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of code-switching practices across varied educational contexts.

#### **3.3.3 Sampling Method**

The study employed purposive sampling, selecting schools and individuals likely to have relevant experiences with code-switching in instructional settings. The sample included both experienced and new teachers and students from different class levels to ensure varied perspectives.

### **3.4 Ethical Considerations and Limitations**

#### **3.4.1 Ethical Considerations**

To guarantee the protection and respect of all participants ethical standards were strictly upheld throughout the duration of the study. After briefing the participants precisely on the nature and purpose of the research Informed consent was obtained compulsorily. With no names, school and personal details included in the final data set anonymity and confidentiality were rigorously maintained. No individual was forced or pressured to take part in the study, the participation was entirely voluntary.

#### **3.4.2 Limitations of the Study**

The study faced several limitations that must be acknowledged. Primarily, the participants may have provided socially desirable rather than entirely accurate responses as the reliance on self-reported questionnaires introduces the possibility of self-reporting bias. Geographically, the research was limited to schools in Bhopal, which limits the generalizability of the findings to

rural and metropolitan areas across India. The scope of these observations was limited due to time and access constraints, despite that classroom observations were conducted to complement the survey and interview data. Thus, the study may not reflect language practices in regions where other regional languages are more dominant as this study was primarily focused on English-Hindi code-switching.

### **3.5 Tools for Data Collection**

To explore the use of code-switching as a teaching strategy in Indian classrooms, two separate but complementary Google Forms-based questionnaires were developed; one each for teachers and students. These tools were carefully constructed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data and were designed with consideration for linguistic diversity and participant accessibility. The questionnaires were made available in both English and Hindi to ensure greater clarity, inclusivity, and ease of response for participants from varied educational and linguistic backgrounds.

#### **3.5.1 Teacher Questionnaire**

The major focus of the questionnaire was on the frequency, purpose, perceived effectiveness, and limitations of code-switching in the classroom environment. It was aimed to capture the multifaceted perceptions and practices of code-switching from the educators' perspective. It included Likert-scale items to assess the frequency of code-switching in the classroom, the specific purposes for which it was used (such as clarification, classroom management, or emotional support), and its perceived effectiveness.

Additionally, open-ended questions were included to allow teachers to elaborate on the contextual reasons behind their use or avoidance of code-switching, as well as to reflect on any observed advantages or challenges. The dual-language format (English and Hindi) aimed to reduce response fatigue and misinterpretation, especially for educators who may be more comfortable expressing nuanced pedagogical ideas in their native language.

Prior to distribution, the questionnaire was reviewed by field experts to validate content relevance and was also pilot-tested with a small group of teachers to ensure clarity, internal consistency, and appropriateness of question structure.

#### **3.5.2 Student Questionnaire**

The student questionnaire was designed to investigate students' awareness and interpretations of code-switching practices in their classrooms, particularly how such practices influenced their comprehension, class participation, engagement, and language development. The questionnaire examined their awareness of code-switching, its impact on learning, participation, and language development in the classroom.

Like the teacher version, this questionnaire also featured a combination of Likert-scale and open-ended questions. The objective was to gain a well-rounded understanding of whether students found code-switching helpful in understanding lessons, whether it increased their participation, and whether it had any impact on their ability to learn or use English more confidently. The questions were framed in simple, age-appropriate language and provided in both English and Hindi to accommodate linguistic preferences and varying levels of English proficiency.

Before large-scale distribution both tools were validated through expert feedback and pilot-tested for clarity, comprehension, and consistency. A pilot test with a small group of students ensured that the questionnaire was accessible, non-intimidating, and capable of eliciting thoughtful, genuine responses. Feedback from subject experts further helped in refining the wording and sequencing of the questions for maximum effectiveness.

By using these two interlinked but audience-specific tools, the study aimed to gather rich, contextualized data on the perceived advantages and limitations of code-switching in urban secondary school classrooms in India.

### **3.6 Procedure of the Study**

#### **3.6.1 Tool Preparation**

To align with the study's objectives the research instruments were refined and developed carefully. The tools were pilot-tested with a small group of teachers and students to ensure clarity and relevance prior to their final distribution. Additionally, to improve the language, enhance neutrality, and ensure consistency with qualitative research norms feedback from peers and field experts was incorporated.

#### **3.6.2 Data Collection**

The teacher and student questionnaires were distributed over a period of one month through in-person visits to various schools across Bhopal. For smooth administration of the forms coordination with school principals and vice principals was crucial. The questionnaires were filled efficiently, often during free periods or allocated class times, minimizing disruption to the academic schedule while encouraging active participation with their continuous support.

Within instructional settings, classroom observations were carried out to explore actual language practices and code-switching behavior alongside the questionnaires. Additionally, to get deeper qualitative insights into their experiences and perceptions structured interviews were conducted with numerous teachers and students. This comprehensive approach to data collection ensured both breadth and depth in understanding the phenomenon under study.

### **3.6.3 Data Analysis**

The process of data analysis was meticulous and multi-phased:

Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, gathered through closed-ended questions. This aided in the identification of common patterns and trends across the responses. To highlight variations across different demographic groups such as age, class level, and teaching experience, offering a clearer picture of how code-switching practices differed among participants the data was also tabulated.

Qualitative data was examined through thematic analysis which was obtained from open-ended responses, classroom observations and structured interviews. To identify recurrent words, ideas, and phrases the process began with initial coding. These codes were then grouped into broader themes such as comprehension, engagement, challenges, and language development. To explore similarities and differences between student and teacher perspectives, enriching the interpretive depth of the findings an inter-group comparison was conducted.

To strengthen the study's reliability and validity triangulation was employed. Themes that consistently emerged across both groups were given priority after comparing the data from both teachers and students. This cross-verification resulted in ensuring that the interpretations were well-grounded and reflective of the broader participant experience.

## Chapter 4

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter presents a detailed analysis and interpretation of the data collected during the study. The purpose of this chapter is to examine how teachers and students perceive the use of code-switching in secondary school classrooms, and to analyze the situations in which it is used, along with its observed benefits and drawbacks. This chapter is structured around the key research objectives and questions.

The analysis is divided into thematic sections covering student and teacher perceptions regarding the advantages of code-switching, such as improved comprehension, participation, and engagement, as well as the potential disadvantages, like challenges to language proficiency.

#### 4.1 Student and Teacher Perspectives on Code-Switching and its Use

**Table 4.1** illustrates that most students (58%) are from urban schools, indicating more exposure to diverse languages and English-medium instruction. This suggests urban classrooms may see more frequent code-switching compared to rural (30%) or semi-urban (12%) ones. A large majority (77%) speak Hindi at home, while only 10% speak English. This mismatch between home and school language increases the need for code-switching to bridge comprehension gaps.

##### 4.1 Students Demographic Profile

Variable	Options	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Grade	9th	1	1
	10th	3	3
	11th	7	7
	12th	89	89
School Type	Urban	58	58
	Rural	30	30
	Semi-Urban	12	12
Languages Spoken at Home	Hindi	77	77
	English	10	10
	Other	13	13
Medium of Instruction	English	47	47
	Hindi	16	16
	Bilingual	37	37



While 47% study in English-medium schools, 37% are in bilingual ones, and 16% in Hindi-medium. The high bilingual percentage reflects the practical use of code-switching in mixed-language classrooms to aid participation and clarity. Overall, this demographic profile supports the study's focus, showing that language background and school setting all influence the frequency and necessity of code-switching in Indian classrooms.

As presented in **Table 4.2**, the data indicates that a large majority (70%) teach in English-medium classrooms, even though many students speak Hindi or other languages at home. This language gap reinforces the need for code-switching to aid student comprehension and participation.

#### 4.2 Teachers Demographic Profile

Variable	Options	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Teaching Experience	0-5	49	61.3
	6-10	11	13.7
	11-20	13	16.2
	20+	7	8.8
Medium of Instruction	English	56	70
	Hindi	14	16.2
	Bilingual	10	13.8

Teachers using Hindi (16.2%) and bilingual (13.8%) mediums show that code-switching may already be a built-in part of their instructional practice. These teachers likely rely on it to ensure clarity and cultural connection in their lessons.

#### 4.2 Identification of the Situations in which Code-Switching is used by Teachers in Addition to its Frequency

According to the findings in **Table 4.3** a large number of students (65%) reported that teachers frequently use code-switching in the classroom. An additional 34% observed it being used occasionally, while only 1% said it was rarely used. No students indicated that it was never used, suggesting that code-switching is a common and accepted practice in Indian classrooms.

Students also identified the specific subjects where code-switching is most often used. The highest frequency was reported in Science (67%), followed by Social Science (49%), English (37%), and Mathematics (34%). This pattern shows that code-switching is more prevalent in content-heavy or language-complex subjects, where comprehension challenges are common.

### 4.3 Students' Perception on Use of Code-Switching

Statement	Options	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Teachers' usage of code-switching in the classroom.	Frequently	65	65
	Occasionally	34	34
	Rarely	1	1
	Never	0	0
Subjects in which it is mostly used.	Mathematics	34	34
	Science	67	67
	Social Science	49	49
	English	37	37
	Other	8	8

These findings indicate that teachers tend to code-switch not randomly, but strategically, mostly during conceptually difficult lessons and that teachers switch to the students' familiar language to clarify abstract concepts, technical terms, and theoretical content. Even in English, a language subject, code-switching is employed, likely to bridge grammar or vocabulary gaps.

The results shown in **Table 4.4** suggest that a large proportion of teachers use code-switching regularly: 40% report using it often and 25% always. Only 1.2% never use it, and 7.5% use it rarely. This confirms that code-switching is a common teaching practice, especially in linguistically diverse classrooms.

The primary reason for using code-switching is to explain complex concepts (82.5%). This shows that teachers rely on it as a pedagogical tool to enhance clarity and student comprehension during challenging lessons.

Beyond explanation, teachers also use code-switching to build rapport with students (50%), motivate them (42.5%), and manage classroom behavior (35%). These findings indicate that code-switching is not just used for instruction, but also to create a more engaging and supportive learning environment. Overall, code-switching is used both for instructional clarity and for maintaining positive teacher-student relationships, making it a strategic and multifaceted classroom practice.

Hence, both students and teachers clearly agree that code-switching is a common classroom practice. These aligned responses indicate that code-switching is an established and accepted strategy in Indian classrooms, particularly in linguistically diverse settings. This suggests that teachers are using it strategically when content becomes difficult to grasp.

#### 4.4 Teachers' Perception and Use of Code-Switching

Statement	Options	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Frequency of using code-switching in the classroom	Never	1	1.2
	Rarely	6	7.5
	Occasionally	21	26.3
	Often	32	40
	Always	20	25
Purpose	Explaining complex concepts	66	82.5
	Managing Classroom Behaviour	28	35
	Motivating the Students	34	42.5
	Building Rapport	40	50
	All of the above	3	3.9

This shows that code-switching plays a broader role in classroom dynamics, not only improving comprehension but also strengthening teacher-student relationships and overall classroom climate. Together, these perspectives show that code-switching is both frequent and functional. It is used deliberately to bridge linguistic gaps, support learning, and maintain classroom engagement.

#### 4.3 Exploration of Benefits of Using Code-Switching in Regards to Comprehension, Engagement, and Classroom Participation

The data in **table 4.5** strongly supports that students view code-switching as a powerful tool for comprehension. A total of 49% of students (45% strongly agree, 4% agree) believe it helps in better understanding classroom content. Notably, none of the students disagreed, showing unanimous positive perception. The most significant benefit identified was that 88% said code-switching makes complex ideas easier to understand. This highlights how switching languages clarifies academic content, particularly technical or abstract concepts that students may struggle to grasp in English alone.

Regarding engagement and participation, 40% of students reported that code-switching increases their engagement, while 43% said it encourages them to participate more actively. Additionally, 33% felt it reduces their fear of asking questions, suggesting that switching to a familiar language helps lower communication anxiety and promotes confidence.

#### 4.5 Students' Perceptions of the Advantages of Code-Switching

Statement	Options	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
It helps in better understanding.	Strongly Agree	45	45
	Agree	4	4
	Neutral	6	6
	Disagree	0	0
	Strongly Disagree	0	0
Advantages:	Makes Complex Ideas Easier to Understand	88	88
	Bridges Familiar / Unfamiliar Concepts	52	52
	Increases Engagement	40	40
	Reduces Fear of Asking Questions	33	33
	Encourages Participation	43	43

Overall, students see code-switching not just as a translation tool, but as a pedagogical strategy that enhances their learning experience, improves classroom interaction, and creates a more inclusive learning environment.

The evidence presented in **Table 4.6** demonstrates that the majority of teachers believe that code-switching significantly improves student comprehension. Over 92% (53.8% strongly agree, 38.8% agree) agreed that it helps students understand difficult concepts, showing a strong professional consensus on its pedagogical value. In terms of student comfort and inclusivity, 93.7% of teachers (55% strongly agree, 38.7% agree) said code-switching helps students feel more comfortable and included. This suggests that switching to familiar languages reduces anxiety and promotes better classroom engagement.

Additionally, 95% of teachers (47.5% strongly agree, 47.5% agree) stated that code-switching bridges the gap between home language and medium of instruction. This highlights its role in supporting multilingual classrooms and ensuring equitable access to learning. In summary, teachers view code-switching as a highly effective strategy to enhance comprehension, boost student confidence, and foster inclusive participation, aligning closely with student perspectives.

#### 4.6 Teachers' Perceptions of the Advantages of Code-Switching

Statement	Options	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Helps Students Understand Difficult Concepts	Strongly Agree	43	53.8
	Agree	31	38.8
	Neutral	4	5
	Disagree	0	0
	Strongly Disagree	2	2.5
Helps Students Feel more Comfortable and Included	Strongly Agree	44	55
	Agree	31	38.7
	Neutral	2	2.5
	Disagree	2	2.5
	Strongly Disagree	1	1.2
Bridges the Gap between Students' Home Language and the Medium of Instruction	Strongly Agree	38	47.5
	Agree	38	47.5
	Neutral	3	3.7
	Disagree	1	1.2
	Strongly Disagree	0	0

Hence, both students and teachers share a strong belief in the value of code-switching as an educational tool, particularly in enhancing comprehension. This alignment suggests that switching to familiar languages not only aids academic clarity but also creates a supportive emotional environment for students.

Additionally, bridging the gap between home language and the medium of instruction was recognized as a major advantage by teachers. Students indirectly supported this through their emphasis on reduced fear of asking questions and better connection with classroom content, particularly in complex subjects.

In summary, both groups view code-switching not merely as a communication aid, but as a powerful instructional strategy that enhances understanding, boosts confidence, and fosters inclusive, participatory learning, especially in multilingual classrooms.

#### 4.4 Exploration of the Disadvantages of Using Code-Switching

A close examination of **Table 4.7** shows that the majority of students do not view code-switching as disruptive to classroom learning. About 54% disagreed with the idea that it disrupts the flow of the lesson, and 11% strongly disagreed, while only a small percentage (9%) agreed or strongly agreed. This suggests that for most students, code-switching is well integrated into teaching without negatively affecting lesson continuity.

#### 4.7 Students' Perceptions of the Disadvantages of using Code-Switching

Question	Options	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Does it Disrupt the Flow of the lesson?	Strongly Agree	1	1
	Agree	8	8
	Neutral	26	26
	Disagree	54	54
	Strongly Disagree	11	11
Challenges faced when teachers use code-switching?	Confusion due to frequent language changes	7	7
	Loss of focus	9	9
	Difficulty in developing proficiency in one language	17	17
	Perceived as unprofessional	4	4
	None of the above	73	73

When asked about specific challenges related to code-switching, 73% of students reported no issues at all. However, some concerns were noted: 17% felt it makes it harder to develop proficiency in one language, and smaller percentages cited loss of focus (9%) or confusion due to frequent language shifts (7%). Only 4% viewed it as unprofessional.

These findings indicate that while most students are comfortable with code-switching and find it beneficial, there is a minority that believes it could interfere with language development and concentration. These concerns highlight the importance of using code-switching strategically and not excessively.

From **Table 4.8**, it can be inferred that teachers hold divided opinions on whether code-switching negatively impacts students' language proficiency. While 38.8% (6.3% strongly agree, 32.5% agree) believe frequent use can hinder students' proficiency in the medium of instruction, nearly 35% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. A significant portion (26.3%) remained neutral, indicating uncertainty or context-dependent experiences.

#### 4.8 Teachers' Perceptions of the Disadvantages of using Code-Switching

Statement	Options	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Frequent use can Hinder Students' Proficiency in the Medium of Instruction	Strongly Agree	5	6.3
	Agree	26	32.5
	Neutral	21	26.3
	Disagree	23	28.7
	Strongly Disagree	5	6.3
Creates Challenges in Maintaining Linguistic Consistency in Teaching	Yes	20	25
	No	33	41.3
	Sometimes	27	33.8
May lead to Confusion Among Students, Especially those Proficient in the Medium of Instruction	Yes	12	15
	No	45	56.3
	Not Sure	23	28.7

When it comes to maintaining linguistic consistency, 25% said code-switching creates challenges, and 33.8% said it sometimes does, while 41.3% did not perceive it as an issue. This

shows that nearly half the teachers experience at least occasional difficulty in maintaining language consistency while switching.

Only 15% of teachers believed that code-switching causes confusion among students who are already proficient in the instruction language. However, a majority (56.3%) did not see it as confusing, suggesting that most teachers feel code-switching is managed effectively without alienating proficient learners. Overall, while teachers acknowledge potential drawbacks like reduced fluency and inconsistency, most do not view code-switching as a serious disruption. The findings highlight the need for balanced and informed use, especially in classrooms with varied language proficiency levels.

Hence, students and teachers both acknowledge some potential challenges with using code-switching, but neither group views it as a major disruption to classroom learning. This suggests students generally accept and adapt to code-switching as part of the learning process. Teachers held more mixed views, particularly regarding language proficiency. They reflect a divided stance, possibly influenced by the linguistic backgrounds of their students and subjects taught.

#### **4.5 Qualitative Analysis of Open-Ended Responses, Classroom Observations and Structured Interviews on the Positive Impact of Code-Switching**

This section presents a thematic qualitative analysis of open-ended responses collected from students and teachers regarding the positive impact of code-switching as a teaching strategy in Indian classrooms. The analysis of the responses revealed several recurring patterns that illustrate how code-switching supports teaching and learning. The following key themes highlight the positive impact of code-switching on student understanding, engagement, inclusion, and emotional well-being. Key themes emerging from the data:

1. **Enhancing Conceptual Understanding** : Many respondents highlighted that code-switching aids in explaining abstract, technical, or complex topics more clearly. Teachers frequently switch to a familiar language to simplify content.
2. **Facilitating Learner Engagement**: Teachers reported that code-switching maintains learner interest and encourages active participation. When teachers incorporate local dialects or culturally relevant terms, students feel more connected to the content. This practice builds a more relatable and enjoyable learning experience.
3. **Addressing Linguistic Diversity in Classrooms**: In multilingual and mixed-proficiency classrooms, teachers rely on code-switching to ensure all students receive equitable access to content. Switching between English, Hindi, and regional languages enables differentiated instruction.



4. **Building Confidence and Reducing Anxiety:** Teachers noted that students felt more confident when allowed to engage with content in their native language. This, in turn, reduced classroom anxiety and enhanced student expression during activities like discussions, answering questions, and group tasks.

Thus, these responses collectively underscore the pedagogical value of code-switching in Indian classrooms. Teachers use code-switching not as a crutch but as a deliberate instructional strategy to bridge linguistic gaps, promote equity, and facilitate deeper understanding. The findings reveal that when employed thoughtfully, code-switching fosters a supportive learning environment where all students thrive regardless of linguistic background.

#### **4.6 Qualitative Analysis of Open-Ended Responses, Classroom Observations and Structured Interviews on Challenges Faced While Using Code-Switching**

This section presents a thematic qualitative analysis of open-ended responses collected from students and teachers regarding the challenges they have encountered when employing code-switching as a teaching strategy in Indian classrooms. While many of them indicated they faced no difficulties, several distinct patterns of challenge emerged across responses:

1. **No Challenges Encountered:** A considerable number of participants responded with 'None', or similar statements, indicating they had not faced any challenges in using code-switching. This may reflect the teachers' familiarity with bilingual contexts or their strategic use of code-switching within their comfort zones.
2. **Linguistic and Vocabulary Constraints:** Numerous teachers expressed difficulty in finding equivalent or appropriate terminology in the switched language, particularly when attempting to translate subject-specific or complex concepts. These challenges were highlighted especially when precise technical terms were unavailable in the home language or English and when teachers were not fluent in the students' regional or first languages. Such lexical gaps made explanations less effective and, at times, caused confusion among students.
3. **Pedagogical Limitations and Instructional Flow:** Many teachers pointed out that code-switching disrupted the natural flow of instruction. Specific issues mentioned include, time-consuming explanations in multiple languages and disruption of lesson rhythm due to frequent switching. These factors sometimes resulted in inefficient time management during classroom sessions.
4. **Reduced Language Acquisition and Overreliance:** Some participants observed that students began relying heavily on the easier or more familiar language, reducing their exposure and practice in the target language. This was perceived to dilute the students'

ability to think and respond in the intended language and delay mastery of grammar and vocabulary in that language.

Hence, the qualitative data reveals that while many of them did not perceive code-switching as problematic, others experienced a range of linguistic, pedagogical, cultural, and student-centered challenges. These challenges emphasize the need for strategic, inclusive, and well-informed use of code-switching tailored to the classroom's linguistic composition. It also suggests professional development in multilingual pedagogy could further empower teachers to manage these complexities effectively.

#### **4.7 Summary of Data Analysis and Interpretation**

A significant majority of respondents affirm that code-switching is a necessary teaching strategy in Indian classrooms. Their justifications reflect the unique sociolinguistic context of India, where students often speak a regional or home language that differs from the medium of instruction, usually Hindi or English.

From an academic standpoint, the data strongly indicates that teachers perceive code-switching as both pedagogically necessary and contextually responsive in Indian classrooms. This aligns with Vygotsky's social-constructivist view that learning is socially mediated, language being a key tool in that mediation. Code-switching appears to function not merely as a linguistic choice but as a pedagogical strategy to improve comprehension, engagement, and cultural relevance.

However, the analysis also reveals the need for balance and training. Teachers should be supported with professional development on when and how to code-switch effectively, so that it supports language development rather than impedes it. The findings underscore that in a multilingual country like India, code-switching is not only practical but essential. Teachers recognize its power to democratize access to content, enhance comprehension and foster a supportive learning environment.

Nevertheless, to ensure its effectiveness, strategic use, reflective teaching practices, and curricular guidelines are crucial. Over-reliance must be guarded against to maintain the integrity and development of the target language.

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

This study explored the use of code-switching in Indian classrooms through the perspectives of both students and teachers. The findings confirm that code-switching is a frequent and purposeful practice in multilingual educational contexts. It is employed most often in content-heavy subjects such as Science and Social Science, where teachers switch languages to simplify complex concepts. Students largely reported observing code-switching frequently, and

teachers acknowledged using it routinely to enhance instructional clarity, build rapport, manage behavior, and motivate learners.

Both students and teachers perceive clear benefits of code-switching, especially in improving comprehension, engagement, and classroom participation. A large majority of students stated that code-switching makes difficult content easier to understand and helps them feel more confident to ask questions and participate in class discussions. Teachers supported these observations, emphasizing that code-switching helps bridge the gap between home language and the medium of instruction, and fosters a more comfortable and inclusive classroom environment.

Despite the predominantly positive views, some challenges were acknowledged. A minority of students expressed concerns about difficulty in becoming proficient in a single language, potential confusion, and occasional loss of focus. Similarly, teachers were somewhat divided, while many did not see code-switching as disruptive, some were concerned that frequent switching might hinder students' proficiency in the language of instruction or lead to inconsistency in teaching. These insights highlight the need for balanced and strategic use of code-switching, especially in classrooms where language acquisition is a key goal.

The influence of code-switching on overall learning outcomes and classroom dynamics is overwhelmingly positive when used thoughtfully. It supports understanding, encourages student participation, and enhances the classroom atmosphere. However, the findings also suggest that excessive or unstructured use could pose risks to language fluency and instructional flow. Thus, code-switching should be treated not as a default method, but as a pedagogical strategy that is context-driven and learner-centered.

# **Chapter 5**

## **Summary, Findings and Suggestions**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter synthesizes the major outcomes of the study and draws conclusions based on the research objectives. It also offers implications and practical suggestions arising from the findings, while reflecting critically on the significance of code-switching as a pedagogical strategy in Indian classrooms. This chapter synthesizes the key findings from the data analysis and interpretation to answer the research questions concerning the situations, perceived advantages, and disadvantages of code-switching as a teaching strategy in Indian classrooms.

Beginning with a concise summary of major results, it then discusses their theoretical and practical implications for multilingual pedagogy, teacher training, and educational policy, particularly in light of NEP 2020's emphasis on mother-tongue instruction. Next, the chapter offers concrete recommendations for classroom practice, teacher-education curricula, and future research avenues to address identified gaps. Finally, it reflects on the study's limitations and highlights how these insights can inform more inclusive, culturally responsive pedagogical frameworks in India and comparable multilingual settings.

In multilingual classroom contexts like those found across India, code-switching has evolved as an intuitive and frequently practiced pedagogical tool. This research focused on exploring the perceived advantages and disadvantages of using code-switching in Indian classrooms, particularly in English-medium secondary schools in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. It examined the situations in which teachers employ code-switching, its perceived impact on student learning, and the broader implications for language development and inclusive pedagogy.

### **5.2 Statement of the Problem**

The research addressed the under-theorized yet common practice of code-switching in Indian classrooms. Despite being widely used, it is often considered informal or unprofessional. The core problem investigated was whether code-switching serves as a helpful instructional strategy or as an obstacle to developing language proficiency, and how both students and teachers perceive its utility and limitations in actual classroom interactions.

### **5.3 Objectives of the Study**

The study was conducted with the following objectives:

1. To identify the situations and circumstances in which code-switching is used by teachers in Indian classrooms in addition to its frequency.

2. To explore students' and teachers' opinions on benefits of using code-switching in regards to comprehension, engagement, and classroom participation.
3. To examine the disadvantages and challenges with using code-switching, including concerns like language proficiency.

## **5.4 Methodology**

A qualitative, exploratory approach was adopted to analyze classroom practices and subjective perceptions. Google Form-based questionnaires were administered to 100 students and 80 teachers from English-medium schools in Bhopal. Classroom observations and structured interviews added depth to the data. Purposive sampling ensured diversity in participant profiles, and thematic analysis was used to interpret open-ended responses.

Ethical protocols were observed, including informed consent, anonymity, and voluntary participation. Despite limitations related to regional focus and self-reporting bias, the study provides rich insights into the use and perception of code-switching in secondary classrooms.

## **5.5 Findings of the Study**

The study revealed several noteworthy patterns and insights regarding the use of code-switching as a pedagogical strategy in Indian secondary classrooms. These findings are categorized below for clarity:

**Prevalence and Purpose:** Code-switching emerged as a prevalent and widely accepted instructional strategy among both teachers and students. It is most commonly used in content-heavy subjects such as Science, Social Science, and English, where abstract or complex concepts often require further clarification. Teachers reported using code-switching intentionally to simplify content, while students confirmed that hearing familiar language helped them grasp difficult topics more easily.

**Perceived Advantages:** An overwhelming majority of student participants (88%) reported that code-switching significantly improved their understanding of subject matter. Additionally, 40% of students stated that it enhanced their engagement, while 43% noted increased participation in classroom discussions. Teachers echoed these sentiments, affirming that code-switching enabled them to explain difficult ideas more clearly, manage classroom behavior more effectively, and build stronger rapport with their students. Many educators viewed it as an indispensable strategy in linguistically diverse classrooms.

**Identified Challenges:** Despite its benefits, some concerns surfaced. A small portion of students (17%) expressed that frequent code-switching hindered their ability to develop English language proficiency. Teachers also raised concerns about possible overreliance on code-switching,

disruptions in linguistic consistency, and difficulties in translating subject-specific or technical terminology from English into local languages without losing meaning or precision.

**Qualitative Insights from Teachers:** Narratives from teachers further illuminated the nuanced use of code-switching. They described employing it as a bridge between academic content and students' everyday experiences, helping learners relate abstract concepts to real-life contexts. Code-switching was also noted to alleviate students' anxiety, fostering a psychologically safe and inclusive learning environment. However, some teachers acknowledged limitations, such as gaps in regional vocabulary and the occasional loss of instructional flow due to language shifts.

## **5.6 Implications and Suggestions of the Findings**

The findings of this study offer several important implications for pedagogy, teacher education, curriculum development, and language policy. These are outlined below:

**Pedagogical Training and Professional Development:** Code-switching should be repositioned from an informal practice to a strategic instructional tool. Teacher training programs, both pre-service and in-service, should incorporate modules on the pedagogical application of code-switching. Educators must be equipped with research-informed strategies that clarify when, why, and how to switch codes to support learning outcomes effectively.

**Curriculum and Policy Reform:** The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes the importance of multilingual education. This policy momentum creates an opportunity to formally integrate code-switching into curriculum frameworks, especially in states and regions characterized by linguistic diversity. Recognizing code-switching as a valid pedagogical approach would lend legitimacy to existing classroom practices and support equitable education delivery.

**Balanced Language Exposure:** While the benefits of code-switching are substantial, caution must be taken to avoid excessive reliance. Educators should use code-switching as a scaffolding mechanism, a temporary linguistic support that helps learners move towards full proficiency in the target language, rather than replacing it. Clear instructional guidelines are necessary to help teachers strike a balance between accessibility and language development.

**Promoting Inclusive Education:** Code-switching contributes to inclusive education by validating students' home languages and creating a bridge between their cultural backgrounds and the formal school environment. This alignment supports linguistic and cognitive inclusion and enhances student participation, particularly for those who may feel marginalized in English-dominant classrooms. Acknowledging and leveraging code-switching as a tool for inclusivity aligns with broader goals of educational equity.

## 5.7 Conclusion

This study affirms that code-switching, often misunderstood or underestimated in formal pedagogical discourse, is in fact a powerful and contextually appropriate teaching strategy in Indian classrooms. The findings clearly demonstrate that both students and teachers regard code-switching not as a linguistic crutch, but as a vital tool that supports learning, enhances comprehension, and fosters emotional security.

Students, particularly in multilingual settings, experience a sense of relief and connection when familiar linguistic cues are used in teaching. This sense of comfort and recognition enables them to better grasp difficult academic content, participate more confidently in class discussions, and maintain sustained engagement. Teachers, in turn, reported that code-switching helped them simplify complex subject matter, manage classroom behavior, and build stronger rapport with students, especially those from linguistically marginalized backgrounds.

Furthermore, qualitative insights highlighted that code-switching serves not merely as a language tool but as a cultural bridge. It connects the formal academic discourse of the classroom with students' lived experiences, making learning more relevant, inclusive, and accessible. This reinforces the idea that language is not just a medium of instruction but a vehicle of identity and empowerment within educational spaces.

However, the study also brings to light important challenges. Some teachers and students expressed concern about the potential overuse of code-switching, which may inadvertently slow the development of proficiency in the target language, particularly English. There were also difficulties associated with accurately translating technical or subject-specific terminology without diluting meaning. These insights underscore the need for strategic and informed application of code-switching, rather than its instinctive or unstructured use.

Therefore, this study calls for a paradigm shift in how educators, policymakers, and curriculum designers perceive and utilize code-switching. Instead of viewing it as a remedial or compensatory tactic, it should be recognized as a legitimate and valuable pedagogical resource, especially in the linguistically diverse and multilingual landscape of India. Teacher education programs must integrate training on the intentional and effective use of code-switching, while language policies should embrace its role in promoting inclusive and equitable education.

In conclusion, when employed thoughtfully and strategically, code-switching contributes significantly to the development of an inclusive, engaging, and student-centered learning environment. It supports differentiated instruction, affirms students' linguistic identities, and aligns teaching practices with the social realities of Indian classrooms. Acknowledging and systematizing its use can therefore enhance both the quality and accessibility of education, making it a cornerstone of effective multilingual pedagogy in the 21st century.

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