



OTAKHONOVA MAHLIYOKHAN KAMOLIDDINOVNA

Andijan State Institute of Foreign Languages
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Pedagogical Sciences

E-mail: otaxonova@bk.ru

Andijan, Uzbekistan

ANALYSES AND INTERPRETATIONS OF FINDINGS REGARDING CODE-SWITCHING IN UZBEKISTAN

Iyun
2026

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada O‘zbekistonda kod almashish (code-switching) hodisasining lingvistik, ijtimoiy va madaniy jihatlarini tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqotning maqsadi o‘zbek, rus va ingliz tillari o‘rtasidagi kod almashishning yuzaga kelish omillari hamda uning jamiyatdagi funksiyalarini aniqlashdan iborat. Tadqiqotda sotsiolingvistik va tavsifiy tahlil metodlaridan foydalanildi. Natijalar shuni ko‘rsatadiki, kod almashish ko‘p tillilik, tarixiy omillar, ta‘lim tizimi, urbanizatsiya va raqamli kommunikatsiya ta‘sirida shakllanmoqda. Ayniqsa, yoshlar nutqida ingliz tilining faollashuvi yangi kommunikativ tendensiyalarni yuzaga keltirmoqda. Shuningdek, mahalliy tadqiqotlarning asosan ta‘lim jarayoniga qaratilgani, ijtimoiy-madaniy va texnologik kontekstlar esa yetarlicha o‘rganilmagani aniqlandi. Xulosa sifatida, kod almashish O‘zbekistondagi zamonaviy ko‘p tilli jamiyatning muhim kommunikativ vositasi ekanligi hamda ushbu hodisani yanada chuqurroq tadqiq etish zarurligi ta‘kidlanadi.

Kalit so‘zlar: kod almashish, bilingvizm, ko‘p tillilik, lingvistik repertuar, til siyosati, identifikatsiya, O‘zbekiston, raqamli kommunikatsiya.

June
2026

Abstract: Code-switching — alternating between two or more linguistic codes within a single interaction — remains a highly visible yet often under-recognized practice in multilingual communities. In Uzbekistan, everyday communication frequently involves Uzbek and Russian alongside other minority languages and, increasingly, English. Using sociolinguistic and descriptive methods of analysis, this article synthesizes key conceptual approaches to code-switching and interprets major contextual factors shaping the phenomenon in Uzbekistan, including historical legacies, identity marking, educational policy, urban–rural differences, and the growing

role of digital communication and technology. The discussion highlights that much local research has tended to focus on pedagogical settings, while broader sociocultural and technological contexts present strong potential for further inquiry.

Keywords: code-switching, bilingualism, multilingualism, linguistic repertoire, language policy, identity, Uzbekistan, digital communication.

Introduction. Numerous sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic, and structural perspectives on code-switching tend to overlap in different studies, according to a detailed examination of concepts and methodologies. It can be difficult for researchers to sort through different concepts and methods and determine their limits. Reviews of the field have therefore listed a variety of concepts and research areas to help readers understand segmental approaches to code-mixing [1].

The practice of using two or more languages during a single conversation is known as code-switching. Even though this phenomenon occurs frequently in society, most people are unaware of it. In multilingual societies the mother tongue, which is acquired from a young age, usually comes first, followed by the national or wider language of communication that unites different communities [2]. Many people therefore have at least two languages in their repertoire.

A linguistic repertoire is the range of languages or varieties that a person can use. Which code is used depends on the circumstances and the people involved. The standard pattern of a code can be described through the typical settings, locations, participants and topics of interaction: a typical family conversation, for instance, takes place at a family member's house, deals with family activities and involves family members as participants [3].

Although the definition of code-switching varies widely, sociolinguists agree that it occurs when two or more individuals who are proficient in several languages, or at least in several varieties of a language, switch between two or more codes during a single conversation. People who live in a community where two or more languages are regularly spoken tend to switch between them, and this phenomenon has attracted considerable academic attention.

Two further concepts are central to the field: situational and metaphorical switching. Metaphorical switching refers to the symbolic use of a code to convey complex meaning; like a metaphor, well-used code-switching enriches communication, and the symbolic or social significance of the two codes is a major driving force behind the switch [4]. Bilingual and multilingual speakers can draw on their wider linguistic resources to express emotional meaning and nuances of the speaker's attitude. Situational switching, as the name suggests, is the adjustment of one's language to a changing situation: external factors, such as a change of participants during a conversation, lead to a change of code. For example, a multilingual person may use one language with family members and another with neighbours [5]. According to R. Wardhaugh, such switching is not necessarily

driven by a conscious intention, and the topic of conversation may remain constant [11].

The aim of the study is to identify the factors that cause code-switching between Uzbek, Russian and English in Uzbekistan and to interpret its functions in society. To achieve this aim, the following **objectives** were set: 1) to summarise the main conceptual approaches to code-switching; 2) to identify the key contexts in which code-switching occurs in Uzbekistan; 3) to describe the historical, cultural, educational, social and technological factors that shape it; 4) to outline directions for further research.

Research methodology. The study is a qualitative, descriptive investigation based on sociolinguistic analysis. Its material consists of international research on code-switching — conceptual reviews, meta-analyses and methodological studies [1; 3; 4; 8] — as well as observations of everyday, educational and online communication of Uzbek speakers. The sociolinguistic method was used to relate language choice to participants, settings and topics, while the descriptive method was used to systematise the contexts and factors of code-switching. The findings were then interpreted in the light of the situational and metaphorical models of switching and the markedness approach of C. Myers-Scotton [9].

Results. The investigation of code-switching in Uzbekistan explores how speakers of Uzbek, Russian and other minority languages dynamically employ a variety of languages in their daily communication. These phenomena can be interpreted from many perspectives, such as cultural identity, social dynamics and the impact of globalisation. The key contexts for studying code-switching in Uzbekistan are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Key contexts of code-switching in Uzbekistan

Context	Manifestation
Bilingualism and multilingualism	Many Uzbeks speak both Russian and Uzbek well; code-switching frequently happens in media, education and daily conversations.
Cultural identity	Code-switching indicates social connection and group membership and shows how people move through their cultural environments.
Social settings	It is common in peer groups, companies and families, where it can be used to establish authority or familiarity.
Technology	Social media and digital communication have produced new code-switching patterns among younger generations.
Language policy and education	Language regulations and the emphasis on Uzbek in education affect switching behaviour and attitudes towards other languages [7].

A number of societal, historical and linguistic factors affect code-switching in Uzbekistan. The most significant of them are described below and summarised in Table 2.

Multilingualism and bilingualism. In addition to Uzbek (the state language)

and Russian, many Uzbeks speak English, Tajik or other regional languages. In both official and casual settings this multilingual environment makes code-switching easier. Russian is particularly common in technical, scientific and business domains, which frequently leads to switching when speakers converse with Russian speakers or discuss particular subjects.

The historical impact of the Soviet period. Russian was firmly ingrained in Uzbek society during the decades of the Soviet Union, particularly in government, the media and education.

Cultural expression and identity. Code-switching can serve as a symbol of solidarity or ethnic identity. For instance, Uzbeks who also speak Tajik may alternate between Uzbek and Tajik depending on the audience and cultural setting. Switching to English or Russian may also be perceived by younger Uzbeks, particularly those exposed to global media, as a symbol of a modern or cosmopolitan identity [8].

The education system and language policy. The school system’s emphasis on studying several languages — Uzbek, Russian and English — makes students proficient in switching between them. State language policy influences the situations and degree of code-switching by favouring Uzbek while promoting competence in Russian and English.

The urban–rural divide. Code-switching is more common in urban areas, where Russian and English are more widely used in daily life. In rural areas Uzbek tends to predominate, and switching is less frequent, although Russian may still be used occasionally.

Technology. Contemporary technology has had a strong influence on Uzbek speakers’ switching into English through social media and the internet, digital communication, wider access to English-language content and e-learning solutions. English is the lingua franca of digital services, programming and technology: Uzbeks working in STEM fields are exposed mainly to English technical terms, and because Uzbek equivalents may not exist or may sound less natural, this exposure frequently results in code-switching in professional conversations [9]. Language-learning applications such as Duolingo and Babbel, including AI-driven ones that adapt instruction to the learner’s needs, further encourage bilingualism and exposure to English, which reinforces code-switching [10].

Table 2. Factors influencing code-switching in Uzbekistan

Factor	Effect on code-switching	Main languages involved
Multilingual environment	makes switching easy in official and casual settings	Uzbek, Russian, Tajik, English
Soviet historical legacy	Russian remains rooted in government, media and education	Uzbek – Russian
Identity	marks solidarity, ethnic belonging or a cosmopolitan image	Uzbek – Tajik; Uzbek – English

Factor	Effect on code-switching	Main languages involved
Education and language policy	develops competence in several languages	Uzbek, Russian, English
Urban vs rural setting	more switching in cities, less in villages	Uzbek – Russian – English
Technology and digital media	English terms and new patterns among young people	Uzbek – English

Discussion. Compared with earlier research, the present findings show that the topic has a wide scope. Research on code-switching has not yet attracted many scholars in Uzbekistan: the existing studies cover a limited number of themes, and the majority are concerned with code-switching in English language teaching and learning [5; 6; 7]. For scholars and linguists alike, code-switching in Uzbek society therefore opens a new field of inquiry.

The country’s socio-political development is gradually embracing a new trend of blending English with the native tongue. Significant changes occurred when the country opened up to international tourism and Tashkent began to develop a more cosmopolitan culture. As a result, many people — especially young people — increasingly mix English with their native language. This shows how important English has become in contemporary Uzbek culture.

From the perspective of the situational and metaphorical models, Uzbek–Russian switching is largely situational, being determined by the domain (business, science, administration) and the participants, while switching to English among young people is more often metaphorical and identity-related: it signals modernity, belonging to a global community and digital literacy. In terms of the markedness approach [9], Russian has become an unmarked choice in certain professional domains, whereas English is still a marked choice that carries additional social meaning.

At the same time, the general public is largely unaware of how this mixed way of speaking is formed, which presents several challenges for researchers. Further studies based on recorded spoken and online corpora are needed, and computational processing of code-switched Uzbek texts is a promising direction for future research [8].

Conclusion. The analysis leads to the following conclusions:

1. Code-switching is an everyday and natural communicative practice in multilingual Uzbekistan, involving primarily Uzbek and Russian, and increasingly English.
2. The phenomenon is shaped by a combination of factors: the multilingual environment, the historical legacy of the Soviet period, identity marking, education and language policy, the urban–rural divide and the rapid growth of digital technology.
3. Switching between Uzbek and Russian is mostly situational and domain-

related, while switching to English among young people often has a symbolic, identity-marking function.

4. Local research has so far focused mainly on pedagogical settings; broader sociocultural and technological contexts of code-switching in Uzbekistan offer strong potential for further inquiry.

References

1. Almelhi A. M. Understanding Code-Switching from a Sociolinguistic Perspective: A Meta-Analysis // *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*. – 2020. – Vol. 8, No. 1. – P. 34–45.
2. Beatty-Martínez A. L., Navarro-Torres C. A., Dussias P. E. Code-Switching: A Bilingual Toolkit for Opportunistic Speech Planning // *Frontiers in Psychology*. – 2020. – Vol. 11. – Article 1699.
3. Zhong X., Ang L. H., Sharmini S. Systematic Literature Review of Conversational Code-Switching in Multilingual Society from a Sociolinguistic Perspective // *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*. – 2023. – Vol. 13, No. 2. – P. 123–132.
4. Hoot B., Koronkiewicz B., Ramos S. Methodological Considerations in Code-Switching Research. – 2013.
5. Sakaria S., Priyana J. Code-Switching: A Pedagogical Strategy in Bilingual Classrooms // *American Journal of Educational Research*. – 2018. – Vol. 6, No. 3. – P. 175–180.
6. Özdemir B. How to Prevent Students' Code-Switching during Group Work // *International Journal of Languages, Literature and Linguistics*. – 2015. – Vol. 1, No. 1. – P. 15–19.
7. Vela Gámez M. A. Code-Switching as a Learning Strategy for EFL Learners // *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation*. – 2023. – Vol. 6, No. 10. – P. 95–103.
8. Çetinoğlu Ö., Schulz S., Vu N. T. Challenges of Computational Processing of Code-Switching // *Proceedings of the Second Workshop on Computational Approaches to Code Switching*. – Austin, 2016. – P. 1–11.
9. Myers-Scotton C. *Social Motivations for Code-Switching: Evidence from Africa*. – Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993. – 177 p.
10. Godwin-Jones R. Chasing the Butterfly Effect: Informal Language Learning Online as a Complex System // *Language Learning & Technology*. – 2018. – Vol. 22, No. 2. – P. 8–27.
11. Wardhaugh R. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. 3rd ed. – Oxford: Blackwell, 1998. – 464 p.