

CODE-SWITCHING IN THE CLASSROOM AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AMONG GRADE 7 STUDENTS AT HINAWANAN NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

Article history:

Submission: January 27, 2025

Revised: February 7, 2025

Accepted: February 21, 2025

Publication: March 7, 2025

Keywords — code-switching, English language proficiency, Grade 7 students, Loay, Bohol

This research examines code-switching in the English language proficiency of seventh-grade students at Hinawanan National High School. The study, conducted over five instructional sessions, examined disparities between pre-test and post-test scores, variances among trials, and differences in post-test performance between male and female students. A quasi-experimental one-group pretest-posttest approach was utilized to evaluate reading comprehension and writing abilities. Data were examined utilizing descriptive statistics, paired-samples t-tests, independent-samples t-tests, and analysis of variance (ANOVA). Results suggested that students typically improved on the post-tests, suggesting that code-switching may have facilitated comprehension and learning. Enhancements were more pronounced in reading than in writing. Variations between male and female students were noted across multiple trials, though not consistently across all sessions. Performance variations across trials indicate that the efficacy of



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code-switching may depend on the lecture context and students' preparedness. The research indicates that code-switching can be an effective teaching aid, especially when strategically employed. Nevertheless, further methods may be required to enhance writing proficiency. The results may enhance pedagogical approaches in multilingual environments.

INTRODUCTION

The practice of code-switching is common in areas where people speak multiple languages. These individuals routinely switch between two or more languages during discussions. What is meant by the term "code-switching" is the practice of a speaker using a different language while they are communicating with another. It has become increasingly popular as a method of communication and instruction, particularly in educational institutions that emphasize English as a Second Language (ESL). Students frequently switch to a different language to better absorb new information when studying difficult or unusual subjects. The authors Ezech et al. (2022) state that code-switching is both a language-use tendency and a learning method.

There is a continuing need to improve English proficiency. The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and other large-scale tests show that Filipino students do not perform as well as students in other countries, especially in reading and writing. According to the World Bank (2018), the Philippines' score in 2022 was well below the OECD average, placing it near the bottom among participating countries. A new poll shows that many children struggle to read the simplest things. A previous study reached the same conclusion. According to Ignacio et al. (2022), many students may not have the language skills needed to learn and communicate at a higher level.

Teachers have explored strategies to support learners. One approach involves... This is like the idea of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE), which is used in some schools in the Philippines. This approach aligns with the principles of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE), which recognizes the value of using learners' first language to support understanding.

Hinawanan National High School and other schools like it have teachers who switch between English and the local language to help students understand tough subjects and keep their attention (Casalan, 2021). Even though this approach has clear benefits, it has not yet been studied to assess its impact on students' English reading and writing skills.

A great number of research studies have investigated code-switching. Nevertheless, there is a paucity of research on its impact on the English proficiency of junior high school pupils in local contexts. The purpose of this piece of research is to investigate the impact that code-switching has on the reading comprehension and writing abilities of seventh-grade pupils. This study aims to better understand how code-switching may be related to

students' reading comprehension and writing skills.

This study compares students' performance over multiple lessons to show how well this teaching method works in the classroom.

Education is evolving in response to global trends, including Industry 5.0. There is a rising focus on skills beyond basic academic knowledge. Critical thinking, teamwork, and flexibility are now crucial. Bakkar and Kaul (2023) state that learning a new language is key to acquiring these skills. Some students may find it hard to acquire English as a second language, even if they already know more than one language.

People regularly use code-switching in their everyday communications. Alhazmi (2016) asserts that individuals modify their language based on the context, the audience, and the concepts they intend to convey. Researchers increasingly view code-switching as an important language event that involves culture, communication, and identity (Alshatti & Jamali, 2023). In the past, code-switching was seen as only a social error that did not hurt anyone. Digital communication has made code-switching increasingly widespread, especially when people communicate online (Al-Deaibes, 2021).

Research indicates that code-switching can facilitate learning when employed judiciously. It makes hard ideas clearer, lessens misunderstanding, and gets people to join in. Using students' first language can make lectures easier to understand and make them feel welcome (Altun, 2021). However, some experts caution that excessive dependence on code-switching may restrict pupils' exposure to the target language.

Teachers now often believe code-switching should be used carefully. Its value depends on how often it is used, the students' proficiency, and the lesson's goals.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a one-group pretest–posttest design, in which all participants were exposed to the same instructional intervention. While this approach allows for observing changes over time, it does not include a comparison group. As such, the findings should be interpreted with caution, as other factors may have contributed to the observed improvements.

The participants came from two current Grade 7 groups. The students did not attend different meetings as part of separate control and experimental groups; they attended all of them. This lets them see how their performance changed after the intervention was implemented and track their growth over time.

The intervention was conducted across five instructional sessions. Each class focused on a different lesson. The students took a paper-and-pencil test at the end of each lesson to see how well they understood English. There were 30 questions on each test: 15 for reading comprehension and 15 for writing. Students had to understand and make sense of the books for the reading

assignments and write clearly in English for the writing assignments.

To assess the writing outputs, a rubric was used to guide scoring. This helped ensure responses were assessed consistently against set criteria, such as clarity, organization, and language use. Before the actual implementation, the test instruments and rubric were reviewed by three experts for face validity. Their suggestions were taken into account to improve the clarity and relevance of the assessment tools. The writing rubric included criteria such as clarity of ideas, organization, grammar, and vocabulary use. To improve consistency in scoring, the rubric was reviewed and refined based on expert feedback.

A pretest was administered before the intervention to assess students' initial English proficiency. After completing the five sessions, posttests were given to see whether there were any noticeable changes in their performance. Comparing the pretest and posttest results provided a basis for understanding how code-switching may have contributed to any improvement in reading and writing skills (Bobbitt, 2020).

Students' scores were interpreted using the following proficiency levels:

Proficiency Level	Score Range
Advanced	12–15
Proficient	8–11
Developing	4–7
Beginning	0–3

The test data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies and mean scores, were used to describe the students' performance in reading and writing. These provided a general view of how students performed before and after the intervention.

To examine whether the changes in scores were statistically meaningful, paired-samples t-tests were used to compare pretest and posttest scores across the five sessions. Independent-samples t-tests were used to examine differences in post-test performance between male and female students. In addition, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine whether posttest scores differed across the five trials. A significance level of 0.05 was used to figure out what the data meant.

During the whole study, ethical concerns were carefully taken into account. The researcher first obtained permission from university officials, including the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Then, permission was asked for from the Department of Education and the staff at Hinawanan National High School.

Consent was obtained from parents or guardians, and students were also asked to provide their consent after being clearly and fully informed about the study's goal. Students could choose not to participate, and they were told that their answers would be kept confidential.

The students' names were not included in the statistics to protect their privacy. In its place, codes were used for reporting and research. All the information gathered was kept secure, and only the researcher and other authorized individuals could access it. Parents and guardians were also told they could contact anyone with questions or concerns. This helped keep things open during the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Equal numbers of male and female students were among the respondents, ensuring both groups were fairly represented. This balanced distribution enabled comparisons of performance between men and women, especially in improvements in English language skills before and after the intervention.

Students demonstrated limited proficiency in English. Many students struggled to improve in English when it was the only language used for instruction. Many of them remained at the Beginning and Developing levels throughout the meetings, suggesting they had trouble expressing their thoughts in written English. This was not the case for reading comprehension, which seemed easier but still showed areas needing work. Based on these patterns, it appears students partly understood what they were reading, but they found it harder to put that understanding into writing. This finding suggests that students may need additional support when taught solely in English, especially when they are trying to improve their practical language skills.

These findings are in line with earlier research showing that educational support can help students understand more. Code-switching and other teaching methods have been shown to help students learn more effectively and be more engaged, according to research. Similarly, other research has shown that teaching in more than one language can help make difficult ideas easier to understand, reduce confusion, and improve the learning environment.

There was a visible improvement in students' English language skills when code-switching was used as a form of instruction. This improvement was notably evident in students' comprehension of what they read. There was a considerable increase in the number of students who graduated to higher levels of competency as a result of receiving instruction in both English and their mother tongue. This indicates that the students' comprehension of texts was better. The use of simpler terminology appeared to benefit the students, as it helped them understand the material more easily.

On the other hand, improvement in writing was more limited. Despite minor improvements, a significant number of pupils remained in the Beginning and Developing stages. It would appear that switching between codes was beneficial for students' understanding of the material, but it did not have as great an impact on their writing. As a valuable skill, writing appears to require greater practice over a longer period and more time spent with the targeted language. According to our research, code-switching may help

students comprehend the material; however, to enhance their capacity to articulate their ideas in English, it may be necessary to combine it with more focused writing activities that are more comfortable for students.

The results support an earlier study showing that code-switching can help students feel more confident and less anxious about language learning, especially in understanding what they are learning in class. Often, students feel more at ease when they can use their first language to learn new things. In general, the results show that code-switching can be a useful way to teach, especially for building knowledge. However, they also show that we need more ways to improve our writing skills.

The data demonstrate that the scores before and after the test were statistically significantly different in each of the five instructional trials. In all cases, the p -values were well below 0.05, indicating that the improvements in students' performance were unlikely to be due to chance (See Table 1). Taking all of this into account, it seems that the way the intervention was taught, especially the use of code-switching, may have helped the students improve their English skills.

Table 1. *Paired Samples t -Test Results Comparing Pre-test and Post-test Scores Across Five Trials*

Trial	Mean Difference (Pre-Post)	SD	SE	95% CI [LL, UL]	t	df	p -value
Trial 1	-5.68	3.23	0.42	[-6.52, -4.85]	-13.64	59	< .001
Trial 2	-5.72	3.88	0.50	[-6.72, -4.72]	-11.43	59	< .001
Trial 3	-3.27	2.54	0.33	[-3.92, -2.61]	-9.97	59	< .001
Trial 4	-1.62	2.26	0.29	[-2.20, -1.03]	-5.55	59	< .001
Trial 5	-1.87	1.95	0.25	[-2.37, -1.36]	-7.41	59	< .001

Note. Negative mean differences indicate higher post-test scores compared to pre-test scores. All comparisons are significant at $\alpha = .05$.

Examining the mean differences in greater detail reveals a consistent pattern across all five experiments. During the early sessions (Trials 1 and 2), when the mean differences were substantial, the most significant gains were observed. In subsequent trials, the degree of improvement gradually diminished during the course of the experiment. The fact that this pattern has been observed may indicate that students initially benefited greatly from code-switching, particularly because it helped them understand unfamiliar material more effectively. The gains, on the other hand, seemed to level off over time, which may have indicated that students were becoming more accustomed to the educational technique or had reached a plateau in short-term growth.

Code-switching may be particularly useful as an early support mechanism for comprehension, according to these data, which lead to an important discovery. When students encounter unfamiliar or difficult content for the

first time, using their native language can serve as a bridge, helping them integrate their prior knowledge with new ideas. It is possible that as their comprehension increases, the relative influence of this support will become less obvious. This could be the likely explanation for the decreased mean differences observed in later trials.

From a theoretical point of view, the data can be understood in several ways that work well together. William Labov's Sociolinguistic Theory holds that language learning is more likely to succeed when the target language aligns with the learner's natural language habits. It is possible that code-switching was a normal way for the students to talk to each other, which made it easier for them to participate in class.

Dell Hymes's theory of communicative competence is also helpful in understanding why pupils improved. Students could utilize both English and their local language, so they did not have to worry about grammar all the time. Instead, they may focus on what the term meant, the situation, and how it was said. This probably helped them read and understand literature better.

According to Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis, learning occurs when pupils are presented with input that is not only comprehensible but also somewhat above their current level of comprehension. It is possible that switching between different codes would have made this input easier to understand, reduced confusion, and enabled students to participate more actively with the content. One possible explanation for the constant improvement seen throughout all trials is that this is the case.

On the other hand, a decrease in mean differences suggests that, although code-switching is beneficial, its efficacy may change over time and be contingent on the learning environment. It may be most effective when used strategically, particularly when presenting new concepts, rather than as a consistent component of the instructional process.

This result aligns with other studies showing that code-switching helps people learn languages. Studies show that teachers often use code-switching to ensure students understand and to avoid confusion, especially with students with lower levels of English proficiency. Other research shows that students usually feel positive about code-switching, especially when it helps them overcome language barriers and facilitate contact.

The data show that in most trials, there were clear differences in how well male and female students performed on the post-test. In four of the five classes, these differences were statistically significant (See Table 2). This suggests that the way the intervention was taught may have had a slightly different effect on male and female students.

Table 2. *Independent Samples t-Test Results Comparing Post-test Scores by Sex Across Five Trials*

Trial	Male Mean	Female Mean	Mean Difference (M-F)	SE Difference	95% CI [LL, UL]	t	df	p-value
Trial 1	16.80	20.37	-3.57	0.97	[-5.52, -1.62]	-3.66	58	.001
Trial 2	14.00	16.60	-2.60	0.97	[-4.54, -0.66]	-2.68	58	.009
Trial 3	17.00	18.87	-1.87	1.13	[-4.12, 0.39]	-1.66	58	.103
Trial 4	11.77	15.17	-3.40	0.90	[-5.21, -1.59]	-3.77	58	< .001
Trial 5	12.07	16.53	-4.47	0.97	[-6.41, -2.52]	-4.59	58	< .001

Note. Negative mean differences indicate higher scores among female students. Significant results at $\alpha = .05$.

In the earlier trial, female students’ average scores were higher than those of male students. In later sessions, when the differences were clearer, this trend kept happening. The fact that these differences continued in the same direction suggests that the female students may have been more interested in the lessons or gotten more out of code-switching as a way to help them. It is important to note, though, that the change was not statistically significant in one trial. This means that the differences observed between male and female students were not always consistent. They may have changed depending on factors such as the lesson, the job, or the students’ readiness.

There is a theory behind these trends that explains how social context affects the way people use language. This theory is called William Labov’s Sociolinguistic Theory. The way students approach teaching methods such as code-switching may be influenced by how they learned language in the past. Similarly, Dell Hymes’ theory holds that learning a language means more than just knowing how to use grammar correctly. It also means knowing how to use language correctly in different situations. The different scores might be due to the different ways students learn and apply these broader communication skills.

According to Stephen Krashen’s Input Hypothesis, code-switching might have helped students understand what they were learning, especially those who needed extra help. Different trials, on the other hand, showed different results. This suggests that the method may have different benefits depending on how it is used and how students respond to it at different stages of learning. Findings are generally in line with earlier studies that emphasize the role of code-switching in improving comprehension and classroom engagement. Previous research has shown that learners often find it helpful when teachers use both the native language and English to clarify meaning and reduce confusion. At the same time, some studies suggest that individual differences among learners—such as proficiency level or confidence—can influence the effectiveness of this strategy in practice.

Overall, the results suggest that while code-switching can support learning, its impact may vary across learner groups. This highlights the importance of using the strategy flexibly and responsively, taking into account students' different needs and characteristics rather than assuming a uniform effect.

Upon closer inspection of the post-test scores, it is clear that a trend holds across all five trials: female students, on average, outperformed male students. The direction of the difference has not changed, suggesting that the educational method used during the intervention may have worked slightly better with female students (See Table 3).

Table 3. *Descriptive Statistics of Post-test Scores by Sex Across Five Trials*

Trial	Sex	Mean	SD
1	Male	16.80	4.40
	Female	20.37	3.02
2	Male	14.00	4.34
	Female	16.60	3.06
3	Male	17.00	5.17
	Female	18.87	3.37
4	Male	11.77	3.32
	Female	15.17	3.67
5	Male	12.07	3.82
	Female	16.53	3.71

Note. SD = standard deviation.

Throughout the earlier testing, it was clear that there is a significant gap between male and female pupils. It appears this gap will become increasingly prominent in subsequent sessions. One possible explanation for this pattern is that as the lessons progressed, female students were able to maintain the gains they had made at the beginning and even improve upon them. This is one possible interpretation of this pattern. It is quite likely that they had greater familiarity with the learning environment, particularly after adopting code-switching, which may have made it easier for them to comprehend the material and participate in the learning process.

Still, to avoid misunderstanding, it is best to be careful about how you understand these differences. There is a consistent trend in the results, but that does not mean that one group is inherently better than the other. Differences could be caused by changes in how involved or confident people are, or how they prefer to learn. This is the most likely reason for the differences. For example, some children might feel more comfortable in a classroom where language use is fluid, while others might need more time or different kinds of help to benefit from the same method fully.

William Labov's sociolinguistic theory could be used to understand

these results from a theoretical perspective. It is suggested that social and environmental factors affect how people use words. The students had different language backgrounds before they came to school, and these may affect how they respond to strategies like code-switching. In the same way, Dell Hymes's idea of communicative competence emphasizes that learning a language is more than just studying grammar; it also entails using language effectively in specific situations. One possible reason for the differences observed is that they reveal how students practice and improve these more general speaking skills in the classroom.

When viewed through the lens of Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis, code-switching may have enhanced comprehension of the learning input, particularly for students who required further assistance. If students can see how new knowledge fits in with what they already know, it might be easier for them to be interested in it and build their confidence over time.

Code-switching has been shown to help students better understand and connect in the classroom, and these results align with other studies. Several studies have shown that students are better able to understand and express themselves when teachers use both the target language and the students' first language.

Students' post-test performance varied widely across the five instructional trials, indicating that the instructional technique was effective in different ways. Performance discrepancy may be due to several causes. The instructional technique, especially code-switching, may have varied throughout lessons. Students may have found some courses easier, especially with code-switching, while others required more time or other instructional support (See Table 4).

Table 4. *One-Way ANOVA Results for Differences in Post-test Scores Across Five Trials*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p-value
Between Groups	1210.47	4	302.62	17.52	< .001
Within Groups	5096.45	295	17.28		
Total	6306.92	299			

Note. $F(4, 295) = 17.52, p < .05$. Differences across trials are statistically significant.

The results indicate that the instructional technique was effective in certain circumstances but not in all. Variations in student preparation and prior knowledge may also contribute. Student backgrounds, prior knowledge, involvement, and English confidence varied. These differences may have affected performance across sessions, as students responded differently to the teaching structure and tempo.

These results suggest that students, subjects, and instructional strategies influence learning. Code-switching has advantages, but its effects depend on when and how it is used. These results highlight the importance of flexible

education and of adapting teaching strategies to the class's objectives and students' requirements.

These facts may be explained by William Labov's sociolinguistic theory, which emphasizes the role of context and social interaction in language use. The differences may reflect how pupils used language in different contexts. According to Dell Hymes, linguistic efficiency is determined by context, intent, and involvement. Differences in performance could indicate that pupils acquired these abilities at varying rates in the classroom.

According to Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis, learning necessitates challenge and comprehensibility. Students' comprehension of the subject matter may have been enhanced by code-switching. The intricacy and delivery of the instruction may have changed the benefit to the students. These results are consistent with other research showing that code-switching improves comprehension and lessens problems. Its effects can be influenced by context. Although code-switching supports comprehension, language proficiency is determined by subject complexity, familiarity with the issue, and strategic application. Although its effects vary by situation, we found that code-switching is effective. Therefore, adaptable, context-sensitive techniques that align with the course material and students' needs are essential for efficient language instruction.

CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated the possible advantages of code-switching for seventh-grade pupils' English fluency, specifically in reading and writing. The results indicate that students exhibited improved performance overall following the intervention, suggesting that instruction delivered in both the learners' native language and English was more comprehensible. When code-switching was used, pupils appeared more proficient at understanding and evaluating texts, particularly in reading comprehension. This underscores the need to use a familiar language as a conduit for new content, particularly in multilingual educational settings.

However, the data show that progress in writing was more limited, suggesting that this ability may require more focused practice than code-switching alone can provide. Learners may react differently depending on the context and how teaching is delivered, as evidenced by differences between male and female students and across sessions. Overall, the data show that although code-switching can be a useful support technique, it functions best when applied carefully and in conjunction with other methods that aid in the development of grasp and linguistic production.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Teachers may consider using code-switching as a supportive strategy, particularly when introducing new or complex concepts, to help improve students' understanding.
2. To strengthen writing skills, it may be helpful to include more structured and sustained writing activities that encourage students to use English more independently.
3. Instruction can be adjusted flexibly, recognizing that students may respond differently to teaching strategies depending on their needs, engagement, and readiness.
4. It may be beneficial to gradually reduce reliance on code-switching over time, allowing students to build confidence in using English on their own.
5. Future studies may explore longer-term effects of code-switching and consider other factors that could influence students' language development.

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