

Original Article

Students' Perceptions of Code-Switching Utilization and Academic Writing Performance: A Mixed-Methods Study

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Abstract. This study examined the relationship between students' perceptions of code-switching utilization and academic writing performance in a multilingual Philippine English classroom. Specifically, it aimed to: (1) determine the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization, (2) assess their level of academic writing performance, (3) analyze the relationship between these two variables, and (4) explore students' perceptions of how code-switching relates to their writing. A convergent parallel mixed-methods design with connected sampling was employed. Quantitative data were collected from 98 Grade 10 students at Saint Michael's School of Padada, Inc., during the 2025-2026 school year using a survey questionnaire and an academic writing assessment. Qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with nine purposively selected students from the same group. Descriptive statistics (mean) and inferential analysis (Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient) were used for quantitative data, while thematic analysis was applied to qualitative responses. Findings revealed a high extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization ($M = 4.15$) and a good level of academic writing performance ($M = 2.50$). A significant weak positive relationship was found between the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization and writing performance ($\rho = 0.27$, $p = .007$). Qualitative results indicated that students perceived code-switching as supporting comprehension, idea organization, anxiety reduction, and clarity of expression. The study concludes that students' positive perceptions of code-switching utilization may indicate its potential as a pedagogical resource when used strategically alongside the continuous development of English academic writing skills. However, findings are context-specific and require further investigation across diverse settings.

Keywords: *Academic writing; Code-switching; English language instruction; Mixed-methods; Multilingual classrooms.*

Language plays a vital role in teaching as it enables students to better understand lessons and express their ideas effectively. In multilingual classrooms, students are naturally exposed to more than one language at home, in school, and in the community. This reality is supported by the Department of Education (DepEd) through policies introduced in 2006 that promoted the use of the mother tongue and multilingual approaches to improve learning. Despite these efforts, many Filipino students continue to struggle with English in formal

academic tasks, particularly in writing. While students may better understand lessons when teachers use more than one language, challenges remain when they are required to produce outputs using English only.

The extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization, defined as the degree to which students perceive their use of two or more languages within a conversation or utterance (Morrison, 2024), is a common classroom phenomenon in the Philippines. This practice typically involves English, Filipino, and local languages such as Bisaya. Academic writing, on the other hand, requires formal language, clear organization, and grammatical accuracy (Alig, 2024). These two variables frequently intersect in multilingual classrooms, where perceptions of code-switching utilization are often associated with strategies to support comprehension and participation.

Recent studies highlight the potential benefits of code-switching in language learning. Taufiq et al. (2022) found that code-switching increased students' participation in classroom interaction by allowing them to express ideas more confidently despite limited English proficiency. Similarly, learners in various English as a Second Language (ESL) contexts continue to experience difficulties in academic writing, particularly in grammar, vocabulary, and organization (Rahman, 2024). These findings suggest that language limitations often hinder students' performance in English-only academic tasks. However, other studies caution that excessive reliance on code-switching may negatively affect grammatical accuracy and limit opportunities for sustained English language use (Nteziyaremye et al., 2024).

In the Philippine context, code-switching has been shown to enhance comprehension and classroom engagement, as students switch between English and local languages to clarify meaning and participate more actively (Villarin & Emperador, 2023; Villarazo & Nemenzo, 2025). Despite these advantages, Filipino learners continue to encounter challenges in academic writing, including limited vocabulary, weak grammatical control, and difficulty in organizing coherent texts (Ada & Funa, 2025). Taken together, these studies suggest that while code-switching supports comprehension and participation, the relationship between students' perceptions of code-switching utilization and their academic writing performance remains inconclusive. Existing research has largely focused on the immediate benefits of code-switching or on general writing difficulties, with limited attention given to how students' perceptions of this practice relate to writing outcomes, particularly in localized multilingual contexts such as Bisaya-speaking classrooms.

At Saint Michael's School of Padada, Inc. (SMSP) in Davao del Sur, Bisaya-English code-switching is commonly observed during classroom instruction. While this practice appears to support students' understanding and participation, many Grade 10 students still struggle to produce academic texts in English, particularly in grammar, vocabulary, coherence, and organization. This is reflected in the Global Resources for Assessment Curriculum and Evaluation (GRACE) pre-test results for the 2025-2026 school year, which indicate developing levels in grammar (33%), vocabulary (23%), and writing (32%). In view of this gap, this study aimed to determine the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching use, assess students' academic writing performance, analyze the significant relationship between these two variables, and explore students' perceptions of how code-switching relates to their academic writing. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of how students' perceptions of code-switching utilization function as a pedagogical strategy and provide insights for improving English language instruction in multilingual classrooms.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods design with connected sampling. According to Katz-Buonincontro (2024), convergent or concurrent mixed methods designs, also called parallel designs, gather quantitative and qualitative data separately or in parallel. Unlike sequential mixed methods designs, data design, collection, and analysis in convergent designs do not influence later stages of data collection. This design was appropriate for the present study because the researcher had no conceptual reason to sequence the quantitative and qualitative elements, and both phases were conducted within the same timeframe.

While the design is labeled "convergent parallel" in terms of the overall structure and the timing of data collection, the qualitative sampling was connected to the quantitative phase—participants were selected based on quantitative results. This is still aligned with convergent design principles because both phases were conducted within the same timeframe, and the integration occurred after separate analyses (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

Selecting qualitative participants after quantitative analysis is a common practice in mixed-methods research and does not negate the parallel nature of data collection; rather, it represents a connected sampling strategy within a parallel design framework.

In the qualitative part, the study explored students' perceptions of how code-switching relates to their academic writing performance. Through semi-structured interviews, the students shared their experiences and feelings about using two or more languages in class. This helped the researcher understand how students perceived code-switching as either helpful or hindering to their ability to write in English, what challenges they faced, and how it related to their confidence, clarity, and organization in writing.

Following the convergent design, both sets of data were analyzed separately. The quantitative data were analyzed using statistical methods, while the qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis. After collecting and analyzing both sets of data, the results from the quantitative and qualitative parts were integrated or corroborated. This integration showed how the students' perceptions of code-switching aligned with the patterns observed in their academic writing performance. By combining these perspectives, the study provided a deeper, more holistic understanding of the relationship between the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization and academic writing performance among Grade 10 students at Saint Michael's School of Padada, Inc. during the school year 2025-2026.

Participants and Sampling Technique

Quantitative Samples

The study population comprised all Grade 10 students of Saint Michael's School of Padada, Inc. (SMSP) for the School Year 2025-2026. A total of 104 students were enrolled in the three sections: 10-SN (37), 10-SR (34), and 10-SPC (33). Since the number of students was manageable, the study used complete enumeration for the quantitative phase. Complete enumeration meant that all Grade 10 students were invited to participate in the survey and writing activity to ensure the data represented the entire population. However, participation remained voluntary. Only students who submitted signed Parent Consent and Student Assent forms were included in the study. Students who chose not to participate were not penalized, and their decision did not affect their grades or academic standing. Of the total population, six (6) students were excluded from the study due to non-submission of the Parent Consent and Student Assent forms: two (2) from 10-SN, one (1) from 10-SR, and three (3) from 10-SPC. Therefore, the final number of respondents for the quantitative phase was 98 students. Using complete enumeration helped reduce sampling errors and provided a clearer picture of the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization and academic writing performance.

Table 1. Actual Respondents of the Study		
Section	Population (N)	% of Total
10 - SN	35	35.7 %
10 - SR	33	33.7 %
10 - SPC	30	30.6 %
Total	98	100 %

Qualitative Informants

For the qualitative phase, the study used purposive sampling to choose nine (9) interview participants. These interviewees were students who completed the survey and writing activity. The selection was based on two main criteria derived from the quantitative phase results. The first criterion was the high extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization. Students in this group were considered because they could best describe how code-switching occurred in the classroom. The second criterion was variation in writing performance. From the group of high code-switchers, the study selected students with varying levels of writing performance: three (3) with high scores, three (3) with average scores, and three (3) with low scores. This equal distribution of three (3) participants per performance level ensured that the qualitative data would capture a balanced range of perspectives. It also allowed the researcher to explore why students with a similar extent of perceptions of code-switching utilization may still have different writing outcomes.

It is important to acknowledge that qualitative participants were selected based on high perceptions of code-switching utilization. This sampling strategy likely contributed to the predominantly positive views expressed in the interviews. The qualitative findings should therefore be interpreted as reflecting the perspectives of students who already perceive code-switching positively. The full range of student views—including neutral or negative

experiences – may not be captured. Future research should include students with low or moderate perceptions of code-switching to provide a more balanced exploration.

The total of nine (9) qualitative informants was justified by Wutich et al. (2024), who found that nine (9) interviews are sufficient to reach theme saturation. Theme saturation means that the range of thematic issues within the data can be identified with nine (9) participants. Therefore, having nine (9) informants, equally distributed across three (3) levels of writing performance, was considered adequate for exploring students' perceptions of how code-switching relates to their academic writing performance. Students who met the selection criteria were invited individually to participate in the interview. However, participation in the qualitative phase was strictly voluntary. Even if a student qualified based on the criteria, he or she could still decline the invitation without penalty. Refusal to participate in the interview did not affect the student's grades, academic standing, or relationship with teachers. Only those who provided consent for the interview were included.

Research Instrument

This study used both quantitative and qualitative research instruments to gather complete and meaningful data on the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization in the classroom and how it related to their academic writing performance. The instruments were organized according to the two phases of the study: the quantitative phase and the qualitative phase. The quantitative instruments focused on collecting measurable data on students' perceptions and academic writing performance, while the qualitative instruments aimed to elicit deeper insights and explanations from participants' experiences and responses.

Quantitative Phase

For the quantitative part, two main instruments were used: (1) a survey questionnaire on the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization, and (2) an academic writing assessment. The survey questionnaire was adopted from Torres (2025) in his study titled "Students' Perspectives on Code-Switching in English Instruction." The instrument was used in its original form without any modifications. It was designed to measure the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization in the classroom across three indicators. The first indicator, Engagement in Class Activities or Discussions, consisted of five (5) items; the second, Academic Output or Achievement, also had five (5) items; and the third indicator, Understanding of Given Directions or Guidelines, included five (5) items. The instrument measured the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization in terms of engagement in class activities or discussions, academic output or achievement, and understanding of given directions or guidelines. For each item, students were asked to indicate their level of agreement using a five-point Likert scale.

Scale	Description	Interpretation
5	Strongly Agree	Very high perception of code-switching supporting the indicator
4	Agree	High perception of code-switching supporting the indicator
3	Neutral	Moderate perception of code-switching supporting the indicator
2	Disagree	Low perception of code-switching supporting the indicator
1	Strongly Disagree	Very low perception of code-switching supporting the indicator

The instrument underwent content validation by three experts in Language Teaching and Educational Research to ensure its clarity, relevance, and appropriateness for Grade 10 students in the context of the present study. In the original validation study, Torres (2025) reported Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.867 for Academic Output or Achievement and 0.944 for Understanding of Given Directions or Guidelines, indicating good to excellent internal consistency. The instrument was adopted without modifications for the present study and was additionally validated by experts in the local context.

Additionally, each student was asked to write a 150- to 200-word essay on the topic "How I Usually Spend My Free Time" within 30 minutes. The word limit was set to ensure that students could complete the task within the time frame while producing a sufficient sample of writing to assess content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and coherence. According to a study by researchers at a Malaysian public university, a 150- to 200-word paragraph writing task was found to be adequate for detecting writing errors and assessing writing competence (Abdullah et al., 2021). The decision to use a single essay was supported by research indicating that even a single essay assessment can be reasonably valid, particularly when combined with other measures such as surveys and interviews (Breland et al., 1987; Olinghouse et al., 2012). More recently, Yu et al. (2025) found that writing assessments do not require expensive administration, high-stakes conditions, proctoring, or time limits to produce

valid and useful results. This finding further supports the use of a single essay for research purposes, particularly when combined with other data sources. The following considerations further justified this decision. First, the study was conducted during the fourth quarter of the school year, at which point the Grade 10 students had already completed most of their English writing requirements and had developed foundational writing skills through regular classroom practice. Second, Saint Michael's School of Padada, Inc. implements a strict no-cellphone policy inside the school, which helps ensure that students' written outputs are their original work, free from external assistance from artificial intelligence tools, online sources, or peer collaboration.

Students were expected to demonstrate clear ideas, an organized structure, correct grammar, and appropriate vocabulary. The essays were evaluated using an academic writing rubric adapted from Anderson and Armbruster (2019). The rubric included five indicators: Content and Ideas, Organization, Grammar and Mechanics, Vocabulary and Word Choice, and Cohesion and Coherence. The scoring followed a four-point scale.

Scale	Description	Interpretation
4	Excellent	Outstanding performance; meets all criteria with high proficiency
3	Good	Above average performance; meets most criteria satisfactorily
2	Satisfactory	Adequate performance; meets minimum criteria but needs improvement
1	Needs Improvement	Below expectations; fails to meet many criteria

The essays were evaluated by the researcher using an academic writing rubric adapted from Anderson and Armbruster (2019). Inter-rater reliability was not established as the researcher served as the sole rater for the writing assessment. However, the rubric was validated by three experts in language teaching and educational research, and clear scoring criteria were provided to minimize subjectivity.

Qualitative Phase

For the qualitative part, the study used a semi-structured interview guide. This instrument explored the students' perceptions of the relationship between code-switching and their academic writing performance. The semi-structured format allowed the researcher to ask follow-up questions based on students' responses, enabling the collection of deeper, richer information that complemented the quantitative data. Experts reviewed the interview guide to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study's objectives. The informants for the interviews were selected through purposive sampling, focusing on students who demonstrated a high extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization and represented different levels of writing performance (high, average, low). This selection ensured that the interviews captured a variety of perspectives on how students perceive code-switching in relation to their academic writing.

Data Gathering Procedure

Before data collection, ethical clearance and institutional permissions were secured. Parent consent and student assent were obtained since participants were minors. Data were collected through face-to-face administration. The survey questionnaire and writing assessment were conducted simultaneously within approximately 30-40 minutes. Teachers were not involved in administering or accessing the data to minimize bias. After the quantitative phase, students were selected for interviews based on two criteria: high perceptions of code-switching utilization and variation in writing performance (high, average, low). Selected students were invited for semi-structured interviews conducted in a private setting, each lasting approximately 25-30 minutes. With participants' consent, interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed verbatim.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data gathered in this study were carefully and systematically analyzed to ensure results were valid, reliable, and aligned with the study's objectives. The analysis was divided into two parts: quantitative and qualitative. Since this study employed a mixed-methods design, both numerical data and narrative responses were examined to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization in the classroom and its relationship to students' academic writing performance. For the quantitative phase of the study, the data obtained from the survey questionnaire and the academic writing assessment were organized, tallied, and encoded for statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics, such as the mean, were used to determine the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization and the level of their academic writing performance. The Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient (ρ) and the corresponding p-value were used to determine the significant relationship between the variables at the 0.05 level of significance.

To determine the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization, the mean scores of the survey responses were computed and interpreted using a five-point scale. A very high mean indicated a very high perception of code-switching, supporting the indicator. A high mean indicated a high perception of code-switching, supporting the indicator. A moderate mean indicated a moderate perception of code-switching, supporting the indicator. A low mean indicated a low perception of code-switching, supporting the indicator, while a very low mean indicated a very low perception of code-switching, supporting the indicator.

Through this interpretation, the study described the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization across the following indicators: Engagement in Class Activities or Discussions, Academic Output or Achievement, and Understanding of Given Directions or Guidelines.

For academic writing performance, students' writing outputs were evaluated using an academic writing rubric adapted from Anderson and Armbruster (2019). The rubric included five (5) indicators: Content and Ideas, Organization, Grammar and Mechanics, Vocabulary and Word Choice, and Cohesion and Coherence. The scores obtained from the rubric were totaled and interpreted using a descriptive scale. A score in the excellent range indicated that the student demonstrated strong and clear writing skills. A good score indicated that the student met most of the expected writing criteria. A satisfactory score indicated that the student met the minimum writing requirements but still needed improvement. A needs improvement score indicated that several or most of the writing criteria were not met.

After describing the two main variables, a correlation analysis was used to determine whether a significant relationship existed between the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization and their academic writing performance. The Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient (ρ) was selected based on the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality, which revealed that code-switching scores significantly deviated from normality ($W = 0.9435$, $p < .001$). Although writing scores did not significantly deviate from normality ($W = 0.9783$, $p = .104$), the violation for code-switching warranted the use of Spearman's rho, which does not assume a normal distribution and is appropriate for ordinal or non-normally distributed continuous variables. The analysis identified whether the relationship between the two variables was positive, negative, or not significant. The results of this analysis provided an objective basis for understanding whether the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization was related to higher or lower levels of academic writing performance among Grade 10 students.

For the qualitative phase of the study, the responses from the semi-structured interviews were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a method used to identify, analyze, and report patterns or themes within qualitative data. This method allowed researchers to examine participants' experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of a particular phenomenon. The researcher carefully transcribed the recorded interviews and read the transcripts several times to become familiar with the participants' responses. During this process, meaningful statements, repeated ideas, and significant experiences related to code-switching and academic writing were identified. These statements were then coded and grouped into categories that represent similar ideas or experiences. From these categories, broader themes were developed to capture the main patterns found in the participants' responses. The identified themes represented the students' perceptions, views, and insights on how code-switching relates to their academic writing performance. Through this process, the researcher not only described the students' experiences but also interpreted how they perceived code-switching in relation to their writing, particularly in terms of clarity of ideas, grammar, vocabulary, and organization. This deeper analysis was important because it captured the students' own understanding of the relationship of code-switching and connected their views to the objectives of the study (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

After both quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed, the findings were integrated or corroborated. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2017), in a convergent parallel design, the researcher collects both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time, analyzes them separately, and then merges or integrates the results to compare, contrast, or combine the findings. This integration is critical for understanding how the two data types complement or contrast with each other in addressing the research questions. Following this approach, the results of the statistical analysis (mean, Spearman's ρ , and p-value) were compared with the themes that emerged from the thematic analysis of the interview data. The purpose of this corroboration was to determine whether the quantitative findings were supported, explained, or contradicted by the qualitative experiences

shared by the students. Areas where the results aligned strengthened the study's conclusions, while discrepancies highlighted new questions or complexities. As Creswell and Plano Clark (2017) explained, this integration provides a more complete understanding of the research problem than either data set alone could provide. A table of convergence showing the quantitative findings alongside the qualitative themes is presented in the results and discussion. The table highlights areas of agreement, complementation, or divergence, followed by a thorough discussion of the information presented.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical standards throughout the research process. Ethical clearance was obtained from the institutional research ethics committee before data collection. Permissions were also secured from the school administration. Since participants were minors, informed consent from parents and assent from students were obtained. Participation was voluntary, and students were informed that their responses would not affect their academic standing. Confidentiality was strictly maintained by anonymizing all data and securely storing research materials. Only the researcher had access to the data, which would be retained for five years before proper disposal. All participants were treated with respect, and ethical principles such as honesty, transparency, and data integrity were observed throughout the study.

Results and Discussion

Extent of Students' Perceptions of Code-Switching Utilization

The first objective was to determine the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization in terms of: (a) engagement in class activities or discussions, (b) academic output or achievement, and (c) understanding of given directions or guidelines.

Table 2. *Extent of Students' Perceptions of Code-Switching Utilization in Terms of Engagement in Class Activities or Discussions*

Statements	Mean	Verbal Description
Explain the topic more effectively.	4.49	Very High
Interact openly with my teacher & classmates.	4.33	Very High
Express myself more clearly in discussions.	4.17	High
Take part in different classroom activities.	4.06	High
Discuss and negotiate with my teacher.	4.11	High
Mean	4.23	Very High

Note. 4.20 – 5.00 Very High 3.40 – 4.19 High 2.60 – 3.39 Moderate 1.80 – 2.59 Low 1.00 – 1.79 Very Low

As presented in Table 2, the highest-rated item in engagement in class activities or discussions was "Explain the topic more effectively," which obtained a mean of 4.49, described as Very High. This finding suggests that students relied heavily on code-switching to clarify and elaborate their ideas during class discussions. When students encountered difficulty expressing themselves in English, switching to a more familiar language allowed them to sustain communication and provide more complete responses. The second highest item, "Interact openly with my teacher and classmates" ($M = 4.33$, Very High), further indicated that code-switching reduces communication barriers. Items such as "Take part in different classroom activities" ($M = 4.06$) and "Discuss and negotiate with my teacher and classmates" ($M = 4.11$) obtained slightly lower means but remained within the High range. This suggests that while code-switching supports engagement, participation may still be influenced by other factors such as individual confidence levels, classroom environment, and student motivation (Nawaz, 2023).

Table 3. *Extent of Students' Perceptions of Code-Switching Utilization in Terms of Academic Output or Achievement*

Statements	Mean	Verbal Description
Finish my work before or when it is due.	3.96	High
Follow directions correctly.	4.24	Very High
Feel a sense of belonging within a group.	4.04	High
Apply what I have learned in class.	4.18	High
Do classroom activities independently or with little help.	4.07	High
Mean	4.10	High

Note. 4.20 – 5.00 Very High 3.40 – 4.19 High 2.60 – 3.39 Moderate 1.80 – 2.59 Low 1.00 – 1.79 Very Low

As shown in Table 3, the highest-rated item in academic output or achievement was "Follow directions correctly," with a mean of 4.24 and described as Very High. This finding suggests that comprehension is a key factor in successful task performance. When students clearly understood instructions through code-switching, they

produced more accurate outputs. The items "Apply what I have learned in class" (M = 4.18, High) and "Do classroom activities independently with little help" (M = 4.07, High) further indicated that code-switching supported knowledge transfer and independent work. This finding aligns with Rehman et al. (2025), who found a positive relationship between code-switching and academic performance as students performed better when difficult lessons were clarified using a familiar language. The relatively lower mean for "Finish my work before or when it is due" (M = 3.96, High) revealed an important distinction. While code-switching enhanced comprehension, it did not directly ensure efficiency in task completion. This suggests that finishing on time depends not only on understanding the task but also on writing speed, time management, and English fluency (Mahardika & Utami, 2024).

Table 4. *Extent of Students' Perceptions of Code-Switching Utilization in Terms of Understanding of Given Directions or Guidelines*

Statements	Mean	Verbal Description
Clearly express my ideas in class.	3.96	High
Understand my teacher's lessons more easily.	4.24	Very High
Freely express my thoughts and opinions.	4.04	High
Connect real-life situations to the lesson.	4.18	High
Explain myself better without hesitation.	4.07	High
Mean	4.13	High

Note. 4.20 – 5.00 Very High 3.40 – 4.19 High 2.60 – 3.39 Moderate 1.80 – 2.59 Low 1.00 – 1.79 Very Low

As presented in Table 4, the highest-rated item in understanding of given directions or guidelines was "Understand teachers' lessons more easily," which obtained a mean of 4.24, described as Very High. This finding suggests that students benefited greatly from using a familiar language to process information. When lessons were explained through code-switching, students were able to grasp concepts more effectively. "Connect real-life situations to the lesson" (M = 4.18, High) indicated that code-switching helped students relate academic content to their experiences, which is essential for meaningful learning. This finding showed that comprehension was not limited to surface understanding but extended to deeper processing of concepts. This finding supports Memory et al. (2018), who found that students better understood instructions when teachers used both English and the first language, and Habintwali et al. (2024), who reported that students were more capable of completing tasks correctly when instructions were clarified through code-switching.

Table 5. *Summary of the Extent of Students' Perceptions of Code-Switching Utilization*

Indicator	Mean	Description
Engagement in Class Activities or Discussions	4.23	Very High
Academic Output or Achievement	4.10	High
Understanding of Given Directions or Guidelines	4.13	High
Overall Mean	4.15	High

Note. 4.20 – 5.00 Very High 3.40 – 4.19 High 2.60 – 3.39 Moderate 1.80 – 2.59 Low 1.00 – 1.79 Very Low

As shown in Table 5, the overall mean for the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization was 4.15, which is described as High. This indicates that students frequently perceived themselves as using code-switching in the classroom, suggesting that code-switching was not only present but functioned as a regular part of classroom interaction and learning. Among the three indicators, Engagement in Class Activities or Discussions obtained the highest mean (M = 4.23, Very High). This finding indicates that code-switching played the strongest role in promoting students' participation. When students were allowed to shift between languages, they became more comfortable expressing their ideas and interacting with teachers and classmates.

Academic Output or Achievement obtained the lowest mean (M = 4.10, High). Although it ranked lowest, the result still reflects that code-switching supported students in completing tasks, following instructions, and applying what they learned. However, this finding also suggests that academic performance may not rely solely on code-switching. Other factors such as motivation, study habits, and instructional strategy may also influence students' outputs. Understanding of Given Directions or Guidelines (M = 4.13, High) indicates that code-switching helped students better comprehend lessons and classroom expectations. This result implies that using a familiar language served as a support mechanism, reducing confusion and improving the clarity of instructions.

Overall, the findings suggest that the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization functioned as an effective classroom strategy that enhanced participation, comprehension, and task performance. In multilingual classrooms, using a familiar language may help bridge communication gaps and promote more

meaningful engagement in learning.

Level of Students' Academic Writing Performance

The second objective of the study was to assess the level of students' academic writing performance in terms of five criteria: content and ideas, organization, grammar and mechanics, vocabulary and word choice, and cohesion and coherence. The students' essays were evaluated using an adapted rubric from Anderson and Armbruster (2019).

Table 6. *Summary of Academic Writing Performance*

Indicator	Mean	Description
Content & Ideas	2.91	Good
Organization	2.55	Good
Grammar & Mechanics	2.06	Satisfactory
Vocabulary & Word Choice	2.46	Satisfactory
Cohesion & Coherence	2.53	Good
Overall Mean	2.50	Good

Note. 3.10 – 4.00 Excellent 2.10 – 3.00 Good 1.10 – 2.00 Satisfactory 0.01 – 1.00 Needs Improvement

As shown in Table 6, the overall mean for students' academic writing performance was 2.50, described as Good. This result indicates that students demonstrated satisfactory writing skills overall, but there were notable differences across the five criteria. Among the five criteria, Content and Ideas had the highest mean (2.91, Good), while Grammar and Mechanics had the lowest mean (2.06, Satisfactory). This pattern suggests that students were better at generating ideas than they were at applying correct grammatical structures. The gap of 0.85 between the highest (Content) and the lowest (Grammar) is substantial and reveals that grammar was the most challenging area for students. A Good rating for Content and Ideas (2.91) means that students could generally present relevant ideas, but the development and depth of these ideas varied. A Good rating for Organization (2.55) and Cohesion (2.53) indicates that students could structure their essays with basic logical flow, but transitions between ideas were sometimes weak.

However, Satisfactory ratings for Grammar and Mechanics (2.06) and Vocabulary and Word Choice (2.46) reveal more serious concerns. A Satisfactory rating means that students met only minimum requirements but needed significant improvement. Common grammar errors likely included subject-verb agreement issues, tense inconsistency, incorrect punctuation, and spelling mistakes. The low vocabulary score suggests that students relied on repetitive and basic words, lacking the variety and precision expected at the Grade 10 level. This finding aligns with Urbano et al. (2021), who found that Filipino students commonly struggled in writing due to shallow vocabulary, grammar difficulties, poor organization, and limited topic knowledge. Filomeno (2025) found that students commonly committed errors in subject-verb agreement, verb tense, punctuation, and capitalization. The Satisfactory rating for grammar in this study confirms that these difficulties persist even at the Grade 10 level.

Relationship Between Code-Switching and Writing Performance

Assumption Testing

Before conducting inferential analysis, assumption checks were performed. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality revealed that code-switching scores significantly deviated from normality ($W = 0.9435$, $p < .001$), whereas writing scores did not ($W = 0.9783$, $p = .104$). Skewness values were -0.6586 for code-switching and -0.0361 for writing. Outlier screening using z-scores revealed no extreme outliers (critical value $|z| > 3.29$). Because the normality assumption was violated for code-switching, the non-parametric Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient was used in place of Pearson's r .

Correlation Analysis

The third objective of the study was to determine the significant relationship between the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization and their academic writing performance. A correlation analysis was conducted to test the null hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance.

Table 7. *Relationship Between the Extent of Students' Perceptions of Code-Switching Utilization and Academic Writing Performance*

Variable	ρ (rho)	df	p-value	Interpretation
Code-Switching and Academic Writing Performance	0.27	96	.007	Significant, Weak Positive

As shown in Table 7, the correlation analysis revealed a p -value of 0.27 and a p -value of .007. Since the p -value

was lower than the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that there was a significant relationship between the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization and academic writing performance. The ρ -value of 0.27 indicates a weak positive relationship between the two variables. In practical terms, this finding means that as students' perceptions of code-switching utilization increased, their academic writing performance also tended to increase, although the relationship was weak. A weak positive correlation indicates that code-switching alone does not strongly predict writing performance. Other factors not measured in this study—such as students' prior English proficiency, study habits, motivation, and quality of writing instruction—likely played significant roles in determining writing performance (Villarazo & Nemenzo, 2025).

The weak positive correlation ($\rho = 0.27$) indicates that approximately 7.3% of the variation in writing scores can be explained by the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization. This modest effect size suggests that while a relationship exists, other unmeasured factors likely play more substantial roles in determining writing performance. This finding aligns with Rehman et al. (2025), who found a positive relationship between code-switching and academic performance, explaining that students performed better when difficult lessons were clarified using a familiar language. Torres (2025) likewise reported that learners who experienced strategic code-switching demonstrated improved classroom achievement and task accomplishment. However, the weak positive relationship found in this study also supports the caution raised by Villarin and Emperador (2023), who found no significant relationship between attitudes toward code-switching and academic grades. Their findings suggested that other factors such as motivation, study habits, and teaching quality also affect achievement. The present study's ρ -value of 0.27 is statistically significant but weak, confirming that a relationship exists but is not strong. Villarazo and Nemenzo (2025) similarly found that while code-switching improved comprehension and participation, it did not significantly predict academic performance.

Student Perceptions of the Relationship Between Code-Switching Utilization and Academic Writing Performance

This section describes the qualitative findings on Grade 10 students' perceptions of how code-switching relates to their academic writing performance. The findings revealed that students generally viewed code-switching as a practical and supportive learning strategy. According to the participants, code-switching helped them understand instructions, organize ideas, reduce anxiety, collaborate with peers, and communicate their thoughts more clearly during writing-related tasks.

The student participants consistently expressed this view. In the Davao del Sur context, where students naturally alternated between English and Bisaya in everyday conversation, they saw no conflict between using their local dialect and improving their academic writing. Instead, they treated code-switching—particularly between Bisaya and English—as a natural part of the writing process. It helped them start their drafts, express ideas more freely, and review their sentences before submitting their final outputs.

Table 8. *Thematic Structure of Student Perceptions*

Overarching Theme	Major Theme	Clustered Themes
Code-Switching as a Cognitive and Communicative Bridge for Academic Success	Enhanced Conceptual Understanding and Task Accuracy	Clarification of Complex Instructions; Translation as a Drafting Strategy
	Psychological Empowerment and Communication Confidence	Anxiety Reduction and Fear of "Wrong Grammar"; Facilitating Group Cohesion and Collaboration
	Expressive Fluency and Intellectual Depth	Overcoming Expressive Limitations; Ensuring Idea Clarity for the Audience

Code-Switching as a Cognitive and Communicative Bridge

At the core of the students' responses was a central idea: code-switching served as a bridge between their first language and English, supporting both learning and writing performance. It functioned both as a cognitive tool that helped students process information, generate ideas, and understand tasks, and as a communicative tool that enabled them to express themselves more effectively in academic contexts. The participants did not view code-switching as merely shifting from one language to another. Rather, they regarded it as a practical strategy that allowed them to manage language difficulties, reduce confusion, and complete academic tasks with greater confidence. Through this process, students were able to participate more meaningfully in classroom activities while improving the quality of their written outputs.

Enhanced Conceptual Understanding and Task Accuracy

Clarification of Complex Instructions. One way students used code-switching was to better understand instructions and classroom tasks. A participant stated, "*Nakatabang jud ang code-switching para masabtan nako ang instruction nga para dili ko ma mali and... ma tama pud nako akong answer*" (Participant 1), meaning "Code-switching really helps me understand the instructions so that I won't make mistakes and I can answer correctly." This response highlighted that comprehension was directly linked to accuracy in task performance. When instructions were not fully understood, errors were more likely to occur, not necessarily because of a lack of knowledge, but because of language barriers.

Another participant shared, "*Mas masabtan jud siya... masabtan kung unsay buhaton, og unsay dili buhaton... dali na siya ma answer-an kung kabalo na unsay buhaton*" (Participant 4), meaning "It becomes easier to understand... you know what to do and what not to do... and it becomes easier to answer when you already know what to do." This statement emphasized the importance of procedural clarity in academic tasks. When students clearly understood both the requirements and limitations of a task, they were better able to organize their responses and produce appropriate outputs.

Similarly, one participant explained, "*Mas nadali nakog sabtan ang mga guidelines... easy to understand na lang kay mas master man nako ang Bisaya kesa English*" (Participant 6), meaning "I was able to understand the guidelines more easily because I am more proficient in Bisaya than in English." This indicated that language proficiency played a crucial role in comprehension. By accessing instructions in a more familiar language, students reduced cognitive strain and focused on higher-order thinking skills such as idea development and organization.

Translation as a Drafting Strategy for Writing. Another finding showed that students used code-switching as part of their writing process, particularly during idea generation and drafting. Many participants reported that they initially thought in Bisaya and then translated their ideas into English when writing.

One participant stated, "*Naay uban... itranslate gani nga kaning words sa Bisaya... maghuna-huna na lang jud ka nga itranslate na lang jud nimo siya into English*" (Participant 1), meaning "Sometimes... I translate words from Bisaya... I just think of translating them into English." This response showed that translation was a natural cognitive process in writing. The students first constructed meaning in the first language and then converted it into English, indicating that code-switching supported idea formulation.

Another participant shared, "*Kung mag write kag essay... kung mag Bisaya ra ka, kay murag ma straight man nimog sulat, miss*" (Participant 5), meaning "When you write an essay... if you think in Bisaya, you can write more smoothly." This highlighted that conceptualizing ideas in the first language facilitated smoother, more continuous thought development. It suggested that code-switching helped reduce hesitation during writing and supported fluency in idea generation.

A different student explained, "*Sample if naghimo kag sentence sa Bisaya, unya iconvert nimog English...*" (Participant 8), meaning "For example, you create a sentence in Bisaya, then convert it into English." This demonstrated that translation had become a habitual strategy in composing written responses.

These responses indicated that code-switching served as a pre-writing and drafting strategy, helping students organize and develop their ideas before expressing them in English. By reducing cognitive load, students could focus first on content and meaning, which were essential components of effective academic writing.

Psychological Empowerment and Communication Confidence

Anxiety Reduction and Fear of "Wrong Grammar." Students expressed that code-switching helped reduce their fear of making grammatical errors and being judged by others. This emotional support encouraged them to participate more actively in academic tasks.

One participant stated, "*Mas confident ko nga mag-code-switching... kay mahadlok ko ma wrong grammar po. Mahadlok ko i-judge po*" (Participant 3), meaning "I feel more confident when I use code-switching because I'm afraid of making grammatical mistakes and being judged." This response highlighted that fear of grammatical errors could hinder participation. Code-switching provided a sense of security, allowing students to express their ideas despite

limited English proficiency.

Another participant shared, "*Mas ma low imong confidence kay mahadlok pud ka ma bash gani, maulawan. Pag mag code-switching ta, mas ma boost imong confidence*" (Participant 6), meaning "Your confidence becomes low because you're afraid of being criticized or embarrassed. When we use code-switching, it boosts our confidence." This indicated that code-switching helped restore confidence and reduced anxiety associated with language use.

A different student said, "*Makatabang siya... para sa mental block miss. Mao ng makaballhin kag lain language like Bisaya*" (Participant 9), meaning "It helps when you experience a mental block... you can switch to another language like Bisaya." This showed that code-switching allowed students to continue expressing ideas even when they struggled to find the right English words.

Facilitating Group Cohesion and Collaboration. Students also found code-switching beneficial when working in groups, as it enhanced communication and strengthened peer relationships.

One participant stated, "*Maka communicate jud mig tarong as a group... naa man pud guy uban, mga classmates namo, maglisod gud pud og sabot sa in English, so mao to mag code-switching na lang jud mi*" (Participant 1), meaning "We can communicate properly as a group... some of our classmates have difficulty understanding English, so we use code-switching." This response showed that code-switching ensured mutual understanding among group members, which was essential for collaborative tasks.

Another participant stated, "*Murag maka feel ka nga murag belong ka ana nga group kay murag same gud mo og vibes pud*" (Participant 2), meaning "You feel like you belong in the group because you share the same vibe." This highlighted the role of shared language in creating a sense of belonging and comfort within the group.

A different student explained, "*Kung mag groupings mi... mag English among isa ka kauban tapos mo Bisaya siya kay para makasabot mig tarong*" (Participant 5), meaning "During group work, one of our members speaks in English and then switches to Bisaya so we can understand properly." This showed that students flexibly adjusted their language use depending on what best supported the group's understanding.

Expressive Fluency and Intellectual Depth

Overcoming Expressive Limitations. Students further explained that code-switching helped them express their ideas more freely, particularly when they lacked the appropriate English vocabulary.

One participant stated, "*Matarong nako siyag explain, akong emotion murag mag madaghan akuang explain, mahaba ba*" (Participant 4), meaning "I can explain it properly... my explanation becomes longer and more detailed." This suggested that code-switching enabled students to elaborate their ideas more fully.

Another participant shared, "*Ginagamit nako ang code-switching when it comes na kanang murag ma bulol na gani ko... murag di na jud masundan og kanang other word sa English so mao to murag ma change into Bisaya*" (Participant 1), meaning "I use code-switching when I struggle to speak... when I can't continue in English, I switch to Bisaya." This indicated that code-switching helped sustain communication despite language limitations.

A different student said, "*Mas maka answer ko miss... daghan siya mo kuan sa akong utok nga answer*" (Participant 7), meaning "I can answer more... it gives me more ideas in my mind." This implied that using the first language stimulated idea generation and supported deeper thinking.

Ensuring Idea Clarity for the Audience. Students also emphasized that they used code-switching to ensure that others clearly understood their ideas.

One participant stated, "*Kuan... pag sabot sa mga akong isulti, sa akong ideas nga kanang murag masabtan jud siya sa tanan*" (Participant 1), meaning "For understanding my ideas... everyone can really understand them." This reflected the importance students placed on audience comprehension.

Another participant stated, "*Dako kaayo siyag tabang miss kay mas ma-express nako ang word nga dili nila masabtan... mas ma klaro sa Bisaya kay uban pud English word gud is lisod pud sabton ba*" (Participant 6), meaning "It helps a lot

because it becomes clearer in Bisaya since some English words are difficult to understand." This suggested that certain concepts were more effectively communicated using the local language.

Based on the findings, Grade 10 students generally perceived code-switching as a valuable support mechanism in academic writing. It helped them understand instructions, generate ideas, organize thoughts, reduce anxiety, collaborate with peers, and express ideas more clearly. The participants did not view code-switching as a sign of weakness or lack of competence. Instead, they regarded it as a practical linguistic strategy that enabled them to participate meaningfully in learning while managing the demands of writing in English. One student explained that using Bisaya during brainstorming helped produce more ideas. Another described how switching to Bisaya during a mental block helped them continue writing rather than stopping completely. However, the findings also suggested the need for balanced and guided use of code-switching. While it provided immediate academic support, students must also be gradually strengthened in independent English writing, grammar development, and use of formal academic language.

Corroboration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

To systematically compare the quantitative and qualitative results, Table 9 presents the convergence of findings from both phases of the study.

Table 9. Convergence of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Quantitative Findings	Qualitative Explanation	Integration Type	Explanation of Integration
Engagement highest (M=4.23)	"Code-switching reduces anxiety" (P3) and "boosts confidence" (P6)	Convergent and Complementary	The qualitative data confirmed the high quantitative score and explained why engagement was high: code-switching was associated with lower affective barriers.
Understanding high (M=4.13)	"Clarifies complex instructions" (P1, P4) and "helps understand guidelines" (P6)	Convergent and Complementary	Qualitative responses strongly supported the quantitative finding, revealing that procedural clarity through code-switching drove comprehension.
Content and Ideas highest among writing criteria (2.91)	Students used Bisaya to brainstorm and generate more ideas before writing (P5, P7, P8)	Convergent and Complementary	Qualitative data explained that code-switching served as a pre-writing drafting strategy, directly supporting the high score in content generation.
Organization (2.55)	Code-switching helped students organize thoughts and know what to write first (P4)	Complementary	While organization scored moderately, qualitative data confirmed that code-switching provided structural support, though less frequently than content development.
Grammar lowest among writing criteria (M=2.06)	Students still feared "wrong grammar" (P3); code-switching helps but does not eliminate the problem	Divergent (Partially)	A disconnect existed: students used code-switching extensively but still performed poorly in grammar. Qualitative data revealed that fear of grammar errors persisted despite code-switching use.
Weak positive correlation ($\rho=0.27$, $p=.007$)	Code-switching helped with ideas and understanding, but grammar and vocabulary remained weak. Students still needed explicit instruction in these areas.	Complementary	The qualitative data explained why the correlation was positive but weak: code-switching supported cognitive aspects but did not replace direct grammar and vocabulary instruction.

The qualitative findings converged with, complemented, and partially diverged from the quantitative results. As shown in Table 9, three types of integration were observed: convergent and complementary findings occurred when qualitative data both confirmed and explained quantitative results; complementary findings occurred when qualitative data explained quantitative results without direct confirmation of the score itself; and partially divergent findings occurred when a disconnect existed between the two data sources. This integration strengthened the validity of the conclusions by demonstrating how numerical data and participant experiences informed and enriched one another.

When examined together, the two data sources revealed a coherent pattern: code-switching was associated with

lower affective barriers, provided procedural clarity, and served as a pre-writing drafting strategy, but it did not eliminate grammar errors or replace explicit instruction.

First, the quantitative results showed that engagement received the highest mean ($M = 4.23$). The qualitative findings converged with and complemented this result, as participants stated that code-switching "reduces anxiety" (P3) and "boosts confidence" (P6). The integration was convergent because the qualitative data confirmed the high quantitative score. It was also complementary because the qualitative data explained why engagement was high: code-switching was associated with lower affective barriers.

Second, the quantitative results showed that understanding was also high ($M = 4.13$). The qualitative findings strongly supported this result, as participants reported that code-switching "clarifies complex instructions" (P1, P4) and "helps understand guidelines" (P6). The integration was convergent because the qualitative responses confirmed the high quantitative score. It was also complementary because the qualitative data revealed the mechanism behind comprehension: procedural clarity through code-switching drove students' understanding of tasks and instructions.

Third, the quantitative results showed that among the writing criteria, content and ideas received the highest mean ($M = 2.91$). The qualitative findings explained this result, as participants reported using Bisaya to brainstorm and generate more ideas before writing (P5, P7, P8). The integration was convergent and complementary because the qualitative data confirmed that code-switching supported content generation and explained how students achieved this high score: code-switching served as a pre-writing drafting strategy, allowing students to develop ideas in their first language before translating them into English.

Fourth, the quantitative results showed that organization received a moderate mean score ($M = 2.55$). The qualitative findings complemented this result, as one participant stated that code-switching helped students organize their thoughts and know what to write first (P4). The integration was complementary because while organization scored only moderately, the qualitative data confirmed that code-switching did provide some structural support. However, the qualitative data also suggested that this support occurred less frequently than content development, which explained why the mean for organization was lower than that for content and ideas.

Fifth, the quantitative results showed that grammar received the lowest mean among the writing criteria ($M = 2.06$). The integration here was partially divergent. The qualitative data revealed that students still feared "wrong grammar" (P3) and that code-switching helped but did not eliminate the problem. A disconnect existed: students used code-switching extensively, as shown in the high scores for engagement and understanding, but they still performed poorly in grammar. The qualitative data explained this divergence by revealing that fear of grammar errors persisted despite code-switching use. This partial divergence was valuable because it identified a specific limitation of code-switching: it was associated with comprehension and confidence but did not automatically teach correct grammatical structures.

Finally, the quantitative findings revealed a significant weak positive relationship between the extent of students' perceptions of code-switching utilization and academic writing performance ($\rho = 0.27$, $p = .007$). The qualitative findings were complementary to this result. Participants reported that code-switching helped with ideas and understanding, but grammar and vocabulary remained weak, and students still needed explicit instruction in these areas. The qualitative data explained why the correlation was positive but weak: code-switching supported cognitive aspects of writing, such as idea generation and comprehension, but it did not replace direct grammar and vocabulary instruction. Therefore, students improved in some areas but not in others, resulting in a weak positive correlation.

Overall, Grade 10 students demonstrated a high extent of perceptions of code-switching utilization ($M = 4.15$) and a good level of academic writing performance ($M = 2.50$). Engagement obtained the highest mean (4.23) among code-switching indicators, while Grammar and Mechanics obtained the lowest (2.06) in writing performance. A significant weak positive relationship was found between the two variables ($\rho = 0.27$, $p = .007$), suggesting that code-switching was associated with comprehension and participation, but other unmeasured factors also influenced writing performance.

This pattern indicated that while code-switching was associated with benefits in engagement and understanding,

its direct relationship with grammatical accuracy was limited. Grammar and vocabulary development still required explicit instruction. These results indicated that code-switching could function as a meaningful instructional strategy in multilingual classrooms when combined with explicit writing instruction.

Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between students' perceptions of code-switching utilization and academic writing performance in a multilingual Philippine classroom. The findings revealed a significant but weak positive relationship ($\rho = 0.27$, $p = .007$), indicating that students who viewed code-switching favorably tended to perform slightly better in writing. However, the weak effect size ($\rho^2 = 0.0729$) indicates that only 7.3% of the variance in writing scores was explained by code-switching perceptions, implying that other factors—such as prior English proficiency, study habits, and instructional quality—played more substantial roles. Qualitative findings complemented this by showing that students perceived code-switching as a cognitive bridge that supported comprehension, idea generation, and anxiety reduction. Despite these benefits, students continued to struggle with grammar and vocabulary, indicating that although code-switching supported the cognitive aspects of writing, it did not eliminate the need for explicit instruction.

The integration of findings suggests a coherent pattern: code-switching is associated with benefits in engagement and content development, but its relationship with grammatical accuracy is limited. For practice, teachers may consider adopting a two-stage writing process where code-switching is allowed during brainstorming and drafting, but English-only is required for final outputs, alongside explicit grammar instruction. Administrators might reconsider strict "English-only" policies and adopt flexible translanguaging approaches that validate students' first language as a learning tool. However, these implications are context-specific, as the study was conducted in one school with 98 Grade 10 students and measured perceptions rather than actual behavior. Future research should include varied student perspectives, multiple writing tasks, and longitudinal designs to examine the long-term relationship between code-switching and writing development. Ultimately, code-switching may serve as a meaningful pedagogical resource when used strategically—not to be eliminated, but to be utilized as a temporary scaffold toward stronger English proficiency.

Contributions of Authors

Cristy L. Bellela: Conceptualization, data gathering, data analysis, proposal writing, manuscript preparation, and final revision.

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