

Forms and Functions of Written Codeswitching among College Students on Facebook: Implications on English Language Teaching

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Abstract. The dearth of sociolinguistic investigations into written codeswitching (CS) has prompted the researcher to explore the forms and functions of codeswitching in college students' Facebook (FB) posts using Thurlow's Typology of Communicative Themes and Functions. Further, the study examined how CS may affect English language teaching. The researcher used the descriptive-analysis method as the research design to detail the characteristics of a specific phenomenon, i.e., codeswitching on Facebook. Using convenience sampling, 175 students from two universities participated in the study. Results reveal that intersentential codeswitching is the most prevalent form among college students, followed by intra-word, intrasentential, and tag-switching. Moreover, most of their written code switches were categorized under Informational-Relational Orientation (IRO), indicating that students use Facebook to seek information, ask favors, and build relationships. Employing codeswitching in English language teaching may be considered a pragmatic language behavior for easy interaction and knowledge acquisition, especially for complex concepts in language learning. However, codeswitching should not be considered an alternative technique for teaching the English language, but the use of codeswitching may be allowed in class activities only to a limited extent. English language teachers should integrate online media literacy to familiarize learners with online communication norms and codeswitching patterns, recognize students' diverse language repertoires, and adopt a balanced approach emphasizing fluency in standard English while recognizing the importance of codeswitching in communication.

Keywords: College students; English language teaching; Facebook; Written code-switching.

1.0 Introduction

Codeswitching is a common yet complex linguistic phenomenon in a multilingual community like the Philippines, particularly among Filipino-English bilinguals. This practice arises due to the country's linguistic diversity, with more or less 186 languages (Borlongan, 2023). Codeswitching in the Philippines is not just a random combination of two languages; instead, it is guided, arranged, and regulated by social and cultural norms (Gan, 2010), reflecting the bilingual capabilities of Filipinos who commonly speak Filipino and English. Codeswitching, as described by Myers-Scotton (1993), is when two languages or varieties of the same language alternate or switch in the same conversation. Therefore, it is the process by which speakers shift from one language to another – a linguistic skill honed by bilinguals.

In the Philippine context, Bautista (2004), who did several intensive investigations on codeswitching, views Filipino-English codeswitching as an informal discourse, particularly prevalent “among middle-upper class, college-educated, urbanized Filipinos.” She also stresses that codeswitching is the fastest and most convenient way of saying something to the interlocutor. In addition, codeswitching serves various roles, including precision, transition, comic effect, atmosphere, bridging or creating social distance, snob appeal, and secrecy. Bautista further asserts that Taglish—a blend of Tagalog and English—has become an essential linguistic tool for educated, middle-class Filipinos, influenced by sociocultural factors and modern communication dynamics. Citing Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), she explains that Taglish results from “hegemonizing tendencies” of modern life and Philippine society. Unlike Japanese, Taglish is not just about borrowing or loaning words from English nor acquiring ready-made phrases; it is about the involvement of switching Tagalog and English languages.

Numerous researchers have identified several kinds of code-switching throughout the years. However, the most notable one is Poplack’s (1980) three categorizations of code-switching: intersentential codeswitching, intra-sentential codeswitching, and tag-switching. Intersentential codeswitching occurs between sentences or between clause levels in two different languages. On the other hand, intra-sentential codeswitching occurs within a sentence or a clause, necessitating central integration of codeswitches in a sentence. Further, it involves considerable syntactic risk because phrases and words from a second language (L2) are incorporated into the first language (L1) within a sentence. Tag-switching involves a tag phrase or a word in one language. It is commonly used in intra-sentential switches (Yletyinen, 2004).

In the study of Riparip (2024), the most prevalent form of codeswitching among college students on social media, particularly Facebook, is intersentential codeswitching. Further, it is a widespread language behavior among this group of individuals. In the said study, it was also found that students who use intra-word codeswitching tend to have poor vocabulary. Meanwhile, McArthur (2015) explains that intra-word codeswitching occurs when a word inserts morphemes in a sentence. This type is commonly used by bilingual speakers when a word has no equivalent in the target language, or the equivalent word is too long to utter, so they use the most efficient and most straightforward one.

Moreover, several studies show that codeswitching can support learning in academic contexts and is a legitimate and potent resource for learning and teaching for bilingual students and teachers (Bernardo, 2005; Borlongan, 2009; Martin, 2006). In one of the recent studies on CS, Borlongan (2021) investigated English-Tagalog codeswitching in English language classes in Metro Manila, the Philippines, concluding that codeswitching is an effective strategy for both teachers and students in learning a target language, even when the switched language is not the target language. Thus, a new typology of codeswitching was proposed, suggesting that distinctions should not be based on whether codeswitching is performed by teachers or students but rather on whether it is intentional or involuntary. Hence, codeswitching should not be seen as detrimental to the learning process, even in the learning of languages. On the other hand, Abad (2011) found that codeswitching in classroom discussions improved students’ understanding of complex subjects like Chemistry and Geometry. This indicates that this linguistic strategy can enhance comprehension. Valerio (2014) observed that students in Quirino province view codeswitching positively, associating it with sharper learning abilities. However, Gan’s (2014) findings suggest excessive reliance on codeswitching might negatively impact English proficiency. Similarly, Ka and Amabarini (2022) demonstrated that codeswitching in Indonesian classrooms improved literacy and engagement in early learners, emphasizing that this practice can facilitate knowledge transfer without causing language deficiencies.

Domede (2023) further supports this perspective, arguing that codeswitching is a practical tool in English language classrooms, especially where students have limited opportunities to practice English outside of class. In addition, Memory, Nkengbeza, and Liswaniso (2018) highlight that codeswitching positively impacts English language learning by helping students learn challenging concepts. It also enables active participation and supports self-expression among those with limited English proficiency. Codeswitching is also prevalent in various social media sites such as Facebook, Tiktok, Instagram, and Twitter (Riparip, 2024; Daulay, 2024; Elhija, 2023; Wulandari & Susylowati, 2021; Sihombing & Meisuri, 2014). These studies explore CS in different digital communication platforms. Wulandari and Susylowati (2021) and Sihombing and Meisuri (2014) investigate the types and reasons for CS on Twitter. Their studies reveal that intersentential switching is the most prevalent type, driven by lexical needs or metaphorical contexts. Daulay (2024) and Elhija (2023) explore similar themes on platforms like

Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp, identifying tag-switching and intra-sentential switching as frequent, with motivations ranging from bilingualism to trends. Riparip (2024) broadens the scope to college students' Facebook statuses, highlighting the influence of CS on grammar and vocabulary, though no significant correlation with formal writing ability was found.

The present study was anchored on Thurlow's Typology of Communicative Themes and Functions. In his 2003 discourse analysis on text messaging of the so-called "net generation" or the young people, Thurlow looked into their text messages, analyzed their meanings and communicative intent, and identified and categorized the primary functional orientation of each message. Nine (9) multifunctional categories emerged from the corpora of text messages, i.e., Informational-Practical Orientation, Informational-Relational Orientation, Practical Arrangement Orientation, Social Arrangement Orientation, Salutary Orientation, Friendship Maintenance Orientation, Romantic Orientation, Sexual Orientation, and Chain Messages.

In Informational-Practical Orientation, messages deal primarily with exchanging practical details or straightforward requests for information. In Informational-Relational Orientation, messages deal primarily with more solidary information exchanges or requests for personal favors. Under Practical Arrangement Orientation, while perhaps implicitly recreational, messages deal mainly with plans to meet or the coordination of shopping and other household expeditions. The Social Arrangement Orientation category talks about plans for meeting up, such as recreational planning, going out together for the evening, going to the cinema, and other social arrangements. In Salutary Orientation, messages are non-specific, usually very brief, and often flippant; many are little more than simple, friendly greetings. In Friendship Maintenance Orientation, messages deal with 'friendship work' such as apologies, words of support, and thanks. In romantic orientation, it is usually more so than in the friendship maintenance category, which includes romantic expressions of love, intimacy, and affection. In Sexual Orientation, messages in this category have explicit sexual overtones. Finally, chain messages are comparatively longer epigrams, jokes, or word plays passed on from messenger to messenger.

Given the prevalence of codeswitching in social and academic settings, this study sought to examine the forms and functions of codeswitching on Facebook, specifically among college students. The study addressed the following questions: (1) How prevalent is code-switching in the Facebook statuses of subjects based on intersentential, intra-sentential, tag-switching, and intra-word switching? (2) What are the communicative functions of codeswitching in Facebook statuses, based on Thurlow's (2003) Typology of Communicative Themes and Functions? (3) What are the implications of the study's findings on English language teaching?

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The researcher used the descriptive analysis method. Descriptive research focuses on the present conditions that may have different forms, such as an increased quantity of knowledge, a new generalization, and a discovery of a new causal relationship (Calmorin & Calmorin, 2007). Specifically, the researcher used analysis and correlational methods. According to Calmorin and Calmorin (2007), descriptive – analysis describes "the nature of an object by separating it into its parts. It also determines the composition, structure or substructure that occurs as units within a larger structure." In the present study, the descriptive research design was complemented by correlational methods and content analysis to analyze the forms and functions of CS in Facebook posts. It allows for a clearer understanding of the linguistic behavior of the participants, specifically focusing on the prevalence of CS in social media.

2.2 Research Participants

Employing a convenience sampling technique, 175 students from two universities participated in the study, and consent was sought. These college students were former and present students of the researcher, and they have been friends with him on Facebook for more than one year. For the inclusion criteria, only students who actively use Facebook and engage in CS are eligible for the study. In contrast, exclusion criteria exclude those with insufficient Facebook activity or those who do not exhibit CS behavior.

2.3 Research Instrument

The researcher followed Thurlow's Typology of Communicative Themes and Functions in analyzing the study corpora and categorizing the forms and functions of CS within the participants' Facebook posts. Thurlow's typology is best used in the study as it has a structured framework for identifying different types of CS and their communicative purposes. To analyze the forms of CS, the researcher used Poplack's (1980) and McArthur's (2015) categorizations, which are the established classifications in CS studies.

2.4 Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher asked permission from his students to be part of the study. They were also oriented afterward about the study he was conducting. Then, the researcher informed the students that their information on Facebook would be treated confidentially and only used for the study. After ensuring that all students were adequately apprised of the research considerations, he started collating Facebook data that would serve as his corpora. The researcher copied and pasted all the statuses of the students and selected all that used codeswitching. Statuses written purely in Filipino, Tagalog, English, or any dialects were discarded. Only those using codeswitching were included in the database that the researcher will develop. Each subject was labeled with numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc.). The researcher analyzed all the corpora when the necessary and complete data were collected. He used a grid to make sure that everything was accounted for. Judgment for each codeswitch was based on the definition of each form of codeswitching and its functions. The same grid with different labels was used for students' CS functions. Language experts checked the analysis of the corpora for comments and suggestions.

2.5 Data Analysis

The statistical tools used in interpreting and analyzing the data were the frequency and percentage formula to determine the distribution of respondents' profiles and the frequency of different forms and functions of CS in Facebook posts. Mean calculations were used to analyze the data. These tools were appropriate for summarizing the data and identifying trends in CS behavior. To make the findings more reliable, the researcher consulted language experts to review the analysis and provide feedback on the categorization and interpretation of CS instances to ensure the data interpretation's accuracy.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are essential in conducting the study to ensure that participants' rights are prioritized and not violated. The participants received an informed consent form stating the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits. Thus, they voluntarily agreed to participate. Furthermore, the researcher adhered to confidentiality principles, safeguarding participants' identities by securely storing all data. The researcher ensured that the highest standards of integrity were upheld by conducting the study transparently, avoiding data manipulation, and accurately reporting the findings.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Forms of Codeswitching in the Facebook Statuses of the Subjects

As shown in Table 1, 1641 codeswitches were found in the corpora of the study. Most student subjects (792 or 48.26 percent) used intersentential codeswitching in their Facebook statuses. Thus, it is the most prevalent code-switching on Facebook. Intra-word codeswitching yielded 425 or 25.90 percent of the total codeswitches, followed by intrasentential codeswitching, which got 394 or 24.01 percent, and only 30 or 1.83 percent of the subjects used tag-switching.

Table 1. *Prevalent forms of codeswitching*

Forms of Codeswitching	Mean	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Intersentential	4.53	792	48.2
Intra-sentential	2.26	394	24.0
Intra-word	2.43	425	25.9
Tag-switching	0.17	30	1.83

Poplack (1980) states that "intersentential switching involves a switch at a clause or sentence level in different languages." This switching occurs between sentences and clauses and requires more fluency in the two linguistic systems used in the conversation. The following were some instances of intersentential codeswitching on the subjects' Facebook posts:

- (1) *I miss you bro, *name withheld*! Naalala kita bigla. (I miss you bro, *name withheld*! I suddenly remembered you.)*
- (2) *Home at last. Salamat guys. Good night. (Home at last. Thank you, guys. Good night.)*
- (3) *Honestly, nagtatampo ako sayo. Jk pero love padin kita. Miss you see you soon love. Dami mo dapat ikwento sa akin. Okay? Luv u. (Honestly, I'm upset with you. Just kidding, but I still love you. Miss you, see you soon, love. You have a lot to tell me. Okay? Love you.)*
- (4) *What a game! Parang scripted. (What a game! It seems scripted.)*

This finding implies that Facebook users prefer switching languages at clause or sentence levels for convenience and easy understanding. The use of codeswitching at any syntactic level entails good or average knowledge of two languages being switched. When a person who uses intersentential codeswitching switches to another language, the Matrix Language (ML), the dominant language in the discourse, follows the rules of other languages. In sentence 1, the Facebook user switches at the sentence level, which starts in English as the matrix language and ends in his native tongue, Filipino, or what is termed bilingualism as Embedded Language (EL). Hidayat (n.d.) analyzed codeswitching on Facebook comments and found that intersentential codeswitching is also the most dominant code-switching on Facebook. In his study, lexical need is why Facebook users alternate languages. They use this speech switching to maintain the flow of conversation and to look for an exact term of ML or EL that does not have an equivalent in the used language.

On the other hand, intra-word codeswitching came second among the types of switches. McArthur (2015) explains that intra-word codeswitching occurs within a word, inserting morphemes in a sentence. This can be attributed to the fact that Filipinos usually combine morphemes in a word or sentence. This type is commonly used by bilingual speakers when a word has no equivalent in the target language because of cultural limitations, or the equivalent word is too long to utter, so they use the most efficient and straightforward one.

Listed below were examples of intra-word codeswitching found on subjects' Facebook statuses:

- (1) *Ma-try nga ito. (Let me try this.)*
- (2) *Panget! Gusto ko yung picture natin nato! (Ugly! I like this picture of us!)*
- (3) *Yung feeling na andami naten gustong puntahan pero di makapunta dahil alang budget saklap friend, hahahaha. (The feeling when we want to go to many places but cannot because of the budget. So sad, friend, hahaha.)*
- (4) **name withheld* sorry naaaa! Namimiss kasi kita eh. (*name withheld* I am so sorry! I miss you.)*
- (5) *Hi, baby! Yung namesmerized ka at natarstruck sa kagwapuhan niya. (Hi, baby! When you are mesmerized and starstruck by his good looks!)*
- (6) *Nakaka-high blood ang traffic!! (The traffic is making my blood pressure rise.)*

It can be noted that students often use intra-word switching to facilitate their lack of vocabulary words in their native tongue or their second language. In 1980, Poplack studied Spanish-English switches, which became the landmark in codeswitching. This study led to the development of free-morpheme constraints and equivalence constraints. Free morpheme constraint says that "codes may be switched after any constituent in discourse provided that constituent is not a bound morpheme (Poplack, 1980, p. 585)." However, many critics say that Poplack's model on constraints is "insufficiently restrictive"; thus, many exceptions should be considered (Belazi, Rubin, & Toribio, 1994).

In the model, only the free morphemes can be switched with other languages; bound morphemes cannot be. However, in sentences 1-6, bound morphemes are combined with the English words to produce a codeswitched word. One reason for this restriction is that Poplack based her theory on the corpora she gathered, which were Spanish-English discourses, and this does not apply to other switch codes in different countries, such as the Filipino-English codeswitching. The intra-word codeswitching implies that students codeswitch because they have a deficiency in vocabulary words, which can be attributed to a decline of interest in reading, which was validated by the study of Mareva and Mapako (2012) that language deficiency is the reason why people of Zimbabwe switch from Shona to English or vice-versa.

Intrasentential codeswitching occurs within a sentence or a clause, and Yletyinen (2004) explained that this requires a significant combination of codeswitches in a sentence. It involves syntactic risk because phrases and words from L2 are incorporated into the first language within a sentence. This means that a person's Matrix Language (ML) will be fused to the Embedded Language (EL) and then ML and EL again. Language experts say intrasentential codeswitching necessitates competence in both languages and linguistic systems. Intrasentential codeswitching is considered the most challenging form of codeswitching because this, according to Romaine (1985), is "avoided by all" since the interlocutor thinks that when they use intrasentential codeswitching, they violate syntactic rules.

Presented below were occurrences of intrasentential codeswitching on the students' Facebook posts:

- (1) *And so I met this guy, at first hindi pa naman talaga ako ganun ka-clingy sa kanya to the point na nami-miss ko siya agad. But later on, sa tuwing uuwi na siya or maghihiwalay lang kami saglit kasi may class yung isa sa amin, minsan nga bibili lang siya tapos ang tagal, nami-miss ko na siya. (And so I met this guy, at first, I wasn't really that clingy to him to the point that I miss him right away. But later on, every time he goes home or we part ways briefly because one of us has a class, sometimes he just goes to buy something and takes a while, I already miss him.)*
- (2) *Simple lang ang nakasulat pero bukod sa nahipo (natouch) ako, eh talaga namang it struck me through the heart up to the lungs. (The words are simple, but aside from being touched, it struck me through the heart up to the lungs.)*
- (3) *I have this feeling na ugh ang hirap i-explain pero grabe ang sarap pala talaga mabuhay. Thank you, Lord! (I have this feeling that, ugh, it is hard to explain, but it feels good to be alive. Thank you, Lord!)*
- (4) *Sa August, I want a new BAG or next week na?? hihihihihihhi. (In August, I want a new BAG, or should I have it next week already?? hihihihihihhi.)*

Table 2 presents the different functions of the codeswitches of the students' in their Facebook statuses. Using Thurlow's model, which was developed in 2003, the researcher analyzed 1202 codeswitches found in the corpora of the study. There were only eight (8) functions since Sexual Orientation (SO) did not appear on the corpora of the study. In addition, SO talks about intimate and private sexual messages, which are not allowed on Facebook since it is posted publicly. Most of the subjects' code switches were categorized under Informational-Relational Orientation (IRO) with 450 or 37.44 percent, and Friendship-Maintenance Orientation (FMO) came second with 242 or 20.13 percent. Based on the results, Social-Arrangement Orientation (SAO) and Salutory Orientation (SO) shared almost the same number of code switches, 84 (6.99 percent) and 83 (6.91 percent), respectively. In addition, Chain Messages (CM) had 27 switches, or 2.25 percent.

Table 2. Functions of codeswitching in the subjects' Facebook statuses

Functions of Codeswitching	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Informational-Relational Orientation (IRO)	450	37.4
Practical-Arrangement Orientation (PAO)	109	9.07
Informational-Practical Orientation (IPO)	159	13.2
Friendship-Maintenance Orientation (FMO)	242	20.1
Social-Arrangement Orientation (SAO)	84	6.99
Salutory Orientation (SO)	83	6.91
Romantic Orientation (RO)	48	3.99
Chain Messages (CM)	27	2.25

There are significant differences between the results of the present study and that of Thurlow's (2003) study, which revealed that the text messages of young people were mainly under Friendship-Maintenance Orientation (FMO) which yielded the highest percentage (28 percent), followed by Salutory Information (17 percent), Practical-Arrangement Orientation (15 percent), Informational-Practical Orientation (14 percent), Social Arrangement Orientation (9 percent), Romantic Orientation (9 percent) Informational-Relational Orientation (8 percent) Sexual Orientation (3 percent), and Chain Messages (2 percent). However, the present study's dominant orientation is Informational-Relational Orientation (IRO) and Friendship-Maintenance Orientation (FMO).

This implies that students use Facebook to ask for personal favors from their virtual friends. They also use this tool to build interpersonal relationships in the online world. This can be corroborated by Bosco's (2007) study on the text messages of the people of Hong Kong, which revealed that interpersonal relationships are often the topic of text conversations. Most of the statuses of the students aim to establish camaraderie among netizens. It develops

their friendships through posting feelings, emotions, and happiness on Facebook and exchanging messages that are personally important to them. Hence, these college students send congratulatory messages, support their friends, wish well, offer help, invite friends to a party, and so on.

Table 3. *Illustrative examples of the functions of the subjects' codeswitching*

Themes	Examples
Informational-Relational Orientation (IRO)	Umabot na hanggang ulo ang baha sa tapat ng subdivision nm. Please pray for the safety of everyone. #GodBless (Flooding in front of our subdivision has reached head level. Please pray for the safety of everyone.) #GodBless)
Practical-Arrangement Orientation (PAO)	Ako busy maglinis ng kwarto hahaha. (I'm busy cleaning my room hahaha.)
Informational-Practical Orientation (IPO)	Gagawa kami ng short story sa skul ^_^ any topic ivi-video? May dialogue may scene yung topic na naisip naming ng co-director ko na bes ko ay magbestfriend na ng kamalabuan dahil my karelasyon na ung bes nya (We're creating a short story for school ^_^ any topic suggestions? The topic we thought of with my co-director is about best friends who drifted apart because one of them already has a romantic relationship.)
Friendship-Maintenance Orientation (FMO)	Happy Birthday, *name withheld* enjoy your special day! Cute cute mo para kang sanggol!! Hehehe God bless you and stay ind and pretty J love lots (Happy Birthday, *name withheld* enjoy your special day! You're so cute, you look like a baby!! Hehe God bless you and stay kind and pretty J love lots)
Social-Arrangement Orientation (SAO)	MAG-TRAITRAINING NA PO TALAGA AKO MAMAYA Date daw after exam. Hahahaha! TARA sa #VictoryMetroEast!!! PUNTA KAYOOOOO! SAMAHAN KO KAYO)) ALAM NATHIS THURS 5PM/ FRI 5PM/7PM Salutory Orientation (SO) Goodluck on your exam mama.. birthday wish ko makapasa ka sa exam mo love you.. haha Hi miss! Bata ka palang pala miss universe ka na! TBC! Miss ko na kayo!
Romantic Orientation (RO)	Sweetest. You still never failed to surprise me and make me smile. Thank you so much for the effort mahal ko! Kahit di ka nakapunta kahapon, bawing bawi naman. Haaays. So talagang kinalkal ko siya! Haha. Favourite part ko dyan ay yun kitkat, potchi at trollissss!!! Lalong lalo na yung cute na cute na bunny may mayayakap na ako tuwing namimiss kita!! I love yo I love you I love you sooo much! Thank you miss na ule agad kitaaa. HUUUUUG! PS kala ko sapatos na talaga na like. Nagexpect ako, hahahaha. Jk! Thank you ule. Mwaa! J
Chain Messages (CM)	Boy1: pre, ozone layer k aba? Boy 2: bakit pre? Boy 1: eh kasi pag wala ka, pano na ang mundo? Boy 2: SH*T! Pre! Kilig ako, labyu! Nyahaha "Ang forever, tinatrabaho."

3.2 Implications of English Language Teaching

Determining the prevalent forms and functions of written code-switching among college students may significantly impact the teaching of the English language. With the advent of social media, young people, especially college students, rely primarily on codeswitching as their mode of communication on different online platforms. Further, CS also plays an essential role in virtual communication, especially in memes, jokes, online shopping, online games, and other digital interactions. Identifying the forms and functions of written codeswitching may better inform English teachers to meet students' communicative needs in diverse situations.

The field of language education has to recognize codeswitching as a natural and prevalent phenomenon in the use of language. While Bautista (2004) stressed that CS is complex speech behavior, codeswitching is still the fastest and most convenient way of saying something to an interlocutor. This is why CS is the go-to language behavior of young people online. English teachers should also acknowledge CS as a valid communication rather than viewing it as a deviation from standard English. They can include CS in language learning activities to encourage linguistic flexibility and intercultural competence. They can create a more inclusive and culturally responsive classroom environment.

The results also reveal that intersentential codeswitching is the most prevalent among the types of codeswitching. Yletyinen (2004) explains that intersentential codeswitching occurs between sentences or clause levels in two languages. This implies that teachers should develop lessons that explicitly teach techniques for transitioning between languages at the sentence level. This may consist of identifying boundaries between languages, understanding context signaling codeswitching, or altering language in different communicative situations.

Another study finding is the common usage of Informational-Relational Orientation (IRO) in their Facebook posts, dealing mainly with more solidary information exchanges or requests for personal favors (Thurlow, 2003). IRO serves specific communicative functions such as seeking information or establishing peer relationships. In line with this finding, English language instruction can take advantage of it by including authentic texts that integrate the cultural knowledge and communication skills required for successful interaction among speakers who share different first languages or are bilinguals or communicative tasks that mirror real-world interactions on social media platforms.

However, it is essential to maintain a balanced approach to incorporating codeswitching into English language teaching. While codeswitching can facilitate communication and comprehension, it should not overshadow the importance of mastering standard English grammar, syntax, and vocabulary. English language teachers should provide explicit instruction on when and how to appropriately code-switch, emphasizing the importance of code-switching as a strategic tool rather than a linguistic crutch. In brief, the findings highlight the importance of identifying, determining, and understanding written code-switching in social media platforms. Thus, integrating codeswitching into English language teaching practices is encouraged. Pedagogically, codeswitching should not be considered an alternative technique for teaching language, but the use of codeswitching may be allowed in class activities only to a limited extent. In addition, retooling of teaching strategies in English lessons should be given primordial significance. Communicative tasks and topics must be suitable for the future needs of 21st-century learners and their linguistic abilities.

4.0 Conclusion

The study confirmed that codeswitching is a language phenomenon usually among young adolescents online, especially on Facebook. This language occurrence indicated the use of popular language, as reflected in their online posts and updates. It is now said to be a dominant communicative culture in the virtual world. Moreover, the findings reveal that intersentential codeswitching is the most prevalent form among college students. This implies that students seamlessly move between languages (L1 to L2 or L2 to L1) to express themselves appropriately in digital discourse.

On the other hand, Informational-Relational Orientation (IRO) is the most commonly used function on Facebook, suggesting that students often use language alternation to perform specific communicative functions, such as asking for support or help, finding or looking for information, or building relationships, albeit virtual. This illustrates how CS is a pragmatic language behavior, i.e., students use it strategically to meet specific communicative goals such as requesting help, providing information, or sustaining social relationships. Based on these findings, recommendations for improving English language teaching are proper. Language teachers should introduce digital or online media literacy to the students to ensure that learners get familiar with and understand online communication norms, including codeswitching. This aligns with the Vowel Approach in Online Media Literacy by Riparip (2022), which includes awareness, education, integration, optimization, and utilization (Riparip & Caballes, 2024).

Through the lessons and classroom activities, teachers should assist language learners in critically exploring digital texts and scrutinizing codeswitching patterns, mainly so that CS is used by the students in virtual environments with versatility. Further, language teachers should acknowledge the variety of language repertoires students use due to the onset of social media. Hence, teachers can create inclusive language learning environments where students feel empowered to improve their language skills, both online and offline. As Bernardo (2005) and Borlongan (2012) have long espoused, CS should not be frowned upon by different stakeholders in the education sector, such as policymakers, administrators, and managers. Despite this approach, they contend that such a bilingual policy should not be made legal in Philippine classrooms. Instead, “relax our language prescription in formal school environments to allow students and teachers to benefit from this efficacious resource of developing knowledge and understanding” (Bernardo, 2005, p.165).

In addition, there must be an integration of pragmatic skills into English language teaching so that students can make use of CS strategically in various communicative situations such as role-playing, simulations, or daily-life immersions to practice using CS for specific communication purposes like seeking help, giving information or establishing rapport with fellow students. English teachers should adopt a balanced approach whereby fluency

in standard English is emphasized and recognize the importance of codeswitching in communication. For example, teachers must give explicit instructions on when and how to convert one language to another by ensuring their students know the social context in which code-switching is acceptable and effective. In conclusion, when teachers and students use CS, this is not an indication of language deficiency but a strategic employment of the linguistic resources available to them to achieve their ultimate goal, i.e., effective learning (Borlongan, 2012).

5.0 Contributions of Authors

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