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Everyday Code-Switching Practices: Identity, Pragmatic Functions, and Social Context

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Abstract **– This study examines code-switching practices that arise as a natural result of multilingualism in daily life. The main purpose of the research is to reveal individuals' code-switching behaviors in different social contexts such as family, friend group and work/academic environment, the pragmatic functions of these behaviors and their role in identity/belonging construction. The study was conducted using a mixed methods approach and with multilingual participants aged 18-35. Participants are proficient in Azerbaijani, Russian and English languages. A survey form was used in the data collection process; the social contexts in which the participants preferred which languages, their frequency of code switching and the meanings they attributed to these behaviors were analyzed. It has been determined that code switching is used most to increase emotional closeness in the family environment; that it functions to strengthen humor, emphasis and group belonging around friends; and that it is preferred in order to facilitate technical explanations and provide prestige in business and academic environments. The immense majority of respondents highlighted that the code-switching assists them reveal their individuality in the best way and reinforces their sense of social identity.**

Conclusively, code-switching is not merely a linguistic fashion, but is a multi-dimensional method of communication that controls their social status, identities and social interaction. This study makes important contributions to sociolinguistics by revealing the functions that code-switching plays in daily life and sheds light on large-scale future research.

Keywords **–** ***code-switching; multilingualism; identity construction; pragmatic functions; social context.***

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I. INTRODUCTION

In everyday life, multilingualism has become a standard where people switch languages. In this context, code-switching, that is, language switching, is not only a linguistic choice but also a communication strategy that carries social and pragmatic functions in daily life. Multilingualism has made it commonplace for individuals to switch between different languages. As a communication strategy, code-switching carries social and pragmatic functions. Code-switching can occur in different contexts between individuals speaking two or more languages, and allows the speaker to express identity, belonging and social relationships. According to the findings of sociolinguistic research, code-switching is not only a linguistic manifestation, but with the help of this type of linguistic success, cultural and social identity is being built [1].

Individuals may exhibit different language preferences in different social contexts, such as a circle of friends, family or work environment in everyday life. As an example, intimate family language and the language of choice in a group of the friends or a formal business environment might be different. In this context, code-switching allows individuals to demonstrate behaviour in accordance with social norms, express their group belonging, and realize their pragmatic goals during communication.

Although the role of code-switching in identity construction has been widely studied in the literature, studies on daily life practices and contextual differences are limited. Despite the fact that the role of code-switching in identity construction has been widely studied in the literature, studies on daily life practices and contextual differences are limited. This study considers examination of code-switching practices in daily life from the perspective of identity formation, pragmatic functions and social context. Thus, it is a study aimed at providing a new perspective to both linguistics and sociolinguistics literature.

Although code-switching is a fairly common communication behaviour in everyday life, the effects of this phenomenon on individuals' identity, belonging and social relationships are not sufficiently understood. Current studies generally consider code-switching in the context of education, social media or formal environments and often ignore the language switching practices that occur in individuals' natural and spontaneous conversations [2]. This complicates the perception of the social and practical imperative of the language choice of people and its contribution to the formation of the identity.

The language behaviours of individuals may vary depending on their family, friend group or work environment. However, the effect of these differences on pragmatic functions and the role of these differences in the construction of belonging or identity are still unclear [3]. For example, language shifts made with humour or group codes in a friend circle may differ from code-switching examples that express emotional closeness in a family environment or are used as a prestige language in formal environments.

The lack of studies about code-switching behaviours is understandable mostly because there is no systematic study that is conducted on code-switching behaviors in the context of both spontaneous and everyday conversations. Understanding the functions of language switching actions performed by individuals in daily life, in relation to identity, belonging and social context, is important for both sociolinguistic and multilingualism research. The main problem is

that the ways in which code-switching occurs in different social contexts and its pragmatic functions are still not well understood.

A. Research Objectives

This paper attempts to explore systematically the inter-relations between pragmatic functions, social context and code-switching behaviour in everyday life. The first goal of the research is to determine the code–switching examples that individuals perform in different social contexts – such as family, friend group and work environment - and to reveal the frequency, type and characteristics of these behaviors. In this way, it will be possible to understand in which contexts language switching practices are more common in daily communication.

Secondly, the paper is intended to examine the pragmatic roles of code-switching. In this respect, it will be examined how language changes are used by individuals for different communication purposes such as humour, emphasis, group belonging or social distance adjustment. Thus, it will be possible to show that code-switching is not only a linguistic preference but also a communication strategy that has social and pragmatic functions.

The third task is to comprehend the practice of code-switching attitudes to form the identity and sense of belonging of individuals. How language choices that vary according to social contexts affect individuals' ways of expressing themselves and their place in in-group or out-group relationships will be investigated. In this way, new insights will be provided into how individuals shape their identities and direct their interactions in social relationships through their language choices.

Finally, this research will contribute to the existing body of literature and contribute to future studies of sociolinguistics, which specifically investigate code-switching in practice in the real world. Consequently, the findings of the study will be able to make valuable contributions in both academic and applied contexts – in areas such as language education, intercultural communication and multilingualism policies.

B. Research questions

1. How often and in what manner aspects of code-switching behaviour do people perform in various social settings (family, friend group, workplace) in their everyday lives, and what are the pragmatic functions of such behaviours?
2. How is the practice of code switching used to construct and attach identity and belonging, and how does it affect individuals in terms of relationships in the social spheres?

II. Literature review

Among the principal subjects of debating about code-switching as it applies in linguistics, the use of language preference by individuals, depending on the social scenarios, is highly focused on. Poplack's (1980) study [1] is one of the most important sources that explains both the structural and social aspects of code switching. According to him, the linguistic boundaries of code switching are subject to certain rules, and in the social context, it indicates identity, belonging and group membership.

According to Myers-Scotton (1993) Markedness Model [4], code-switching should not be seen as a random tradition, but as a gradual, purposeful choice of languages which indicates a power balance and expectations in social relations. This model holds that people move through their innings of marked or unmarked words of language in various social situations.

Simultaneously, the structural aspect of code switching is described with the help of the Matrix Language Frame Model (MLFM). In this model, the language which is on the matrix language of the sentence is exposed and the language that appears as additions or particles [5]. Thus, it is understood that code switching is not only a social

phenomenon but also a structure based on grammatical rules.

The linguistic capital approach offered by Bourdieu (1991) throws some light on the dimensions of social status and prestige of code-switching [6]. The choice of high-status / hegemonic language as everyday interaction allows social actors to navigate their social situations. Especially in multilingual societies, linguistic capital serves as an important resource in individuals' social and economic relations.

Finally, the role of code-switching in the processes of creating belonging and “us/them” distinctions within the framework of identity theories is emphasized [7]. It is seen that code switching performed in different social contexts, such as family, friend group, and business environment in daily life, carries both pragmatic functions and serves to identity construction.

The social functions of code-switching go beyond being just a linguistic phenomenon and play a decisive role in the establishment of identity, belonging and social relations. In multilingual communities, individuals switch between languages in daily life in accordance with different social contexts and regulate their relationships through these strategies.

Code-switching practices between Azerbaijani, Russian and English have a strong effect on the sense of identity and belonging, according to a study conducted on young adults in Baku by Abdurahmanova (2018) [8]. Similarly, Soltanova (2023) emphasizes that the social context is decisive in language choice and reveals that individuals develop different code-switching strategies in formal environments, friend groups and within the family [9].

Zuercher (2009) examined the pedagogical functions of code-switching in the context of education in Azerbaijan and stated that these practices facilitate learning in teacher-student communication and also contribute to academic identity development [10]. This indicates that there are significant roles of code switching in not only social relationships but also in institutional settings.

The same can be found in studies throughout the diaspora. Kuleshova (2020) emphasizes that code-switching practices between English and Russian by Russian-origin students living in America are functional both in preserving cultural identity and in adapting to the host society [11].

In the context of Central Asia, Shermatova, Totobayev, and Bahry (2024) examined code-switching examples between English, Russian and Kyrgyz in Kyrgyzstan, showing that these practices play a central role in creating social belonging [12]. In the same way, Khalilli (2025) specified the use of code-switching by multilingual societies to develop ethnic identity and cultural expression and claimed that language could be taken strategically, playing the role of social capital production [13].

These studies generally reveal the importance of the pragmatic functions of code-switching (establishing closeness, signalling status, expressing belongingness) in social communication.

Belonging and identity construction demonstrate that code-switching is a linguistic process, but it is also an indexical social action. Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) sociocultural identity approach asserts that identity is a phenomenon produced by interaction and that speakers position their identities using posture, style and all language/varieties; this framework is effective in explaining the ability of code switching to signal belonging [14].

Emphasizing the interactional dimension, Auer (1998) shows that intra-speech code-switching negotiates identity and group boundaries through local meaning-making processes (e.g. differentiation, framing) [15]. This perspective explains that young people, by changing codes in peer circles or diaspora contexts, both mark the categories of “we” and activate multiple identities according to situations.

On a structural plane, Myers-Scotton’s Matrix Language Frame (MLF) model reminds us that

identity performance occurs not only under semantic but also under specific morphosyntactic constraints [5]; The matrix language—embedded language relationship concretizes which elements stand out as “our language” and which ones emphasize prestige or affinity [16].

These theoretical lines find empirical correspondence in İnan’s (2022) study on the Meskhetian Turks: The patterns observed in the MLF framework in Turkish-Russian bilingualism regularly shape the indicators of belonging in everyday speech (e.g. naming, address forms, idioms). Thus, they speak both the ethnic-cultural origin and the norms of the social sphere in which they are located in the same interaction, depending on the situation [17].

Khalilli (2025) from the latest period argues that code-switching in multilingual communities functions as a visible marker of ethnic identity; and that it organizes narratives of membership, hybridity and resistance in the same discourse, especially in formal/institutional, everyday and digital environments [13].

Code-switching is the communication of an individual by changing the way of language, expression or behaviour in different social contexts. Goffman (1959) states that individuals direct their interactions by presenting themselves differently according to the context of their social roles [18]. This perspective provides the basis for making sense of code-switching in both family, friends and work settings.

The family context is the earliest observed domain of code-switching. Bernstein (1971) showed that the social class and communication style within the family, with the concepts of “elaborated” and “restricted” codes, affect children’s linguistic skills and code choice [19]. Rodríguez-Fornells and colleagues (2012) found that the tendencies of bilingual individuals to change codes in the family environment are associated with cognitive control and language dominance [20]. Grosjean (1982) points out that bilingual children can show a preference for the use of one of the languages more often in situations at home [21]. These results confirm the importance of the family context in socialization and in language transmission.

The friend group is a context in which identity and belonging come to the fore for code switching. Myers-Scotton (1993) states that the markedness model explains which language individuals will use in their social circle through social expectations and group norms [4]. According to the ethnographic researches done by Gumperz (1982), he was able to unveil the communicative roles of language shifts when interacting with friends [22]. Romaine (1995) showed that young people strengthen their social bonds and reinforce their group identity by using different languages flexibly in their peer groups [23].

In the work environment, code-switching is a professional and adaptive endeavour. According to Socarraz-Novoa (2015), workers in a multilingual environment are likely to speak a different language when giving out technical information, socializing or communicating formally [24]. McCluney et al. (2019) emphasize that code-switching strategies of minority employees provide a career advantage but also bring psychological burden [25]. The study by Angouri (2018) has indicated, however, that the use of language at the workplace is strongly linked to power relations and hierarchy [26].

Muysken (2000) reviewed the typology and syntactic structure of code switching [27]. In a critical survey, Rayo et al. (2024) have evaluated the aspects of the code-switching process, including its cognitive, social and cultural aspects [28]. This interdisciplinary approach enables us to gain a better understanding of how we can approach socialization at the family level, belongingness at the friends level and harmony at the workplace level. Also, Johnson and colleagues (2021) discussed the social-cognitive and emotional determinants of the act of code-switching, where the emotional conditions and social expectations of the individual have a profound effect on the linguistic behaviour of the individual [29]. These findings indicate that the

contextual aspects, in addition to being individual psychological factors, influence

Code-switching is the usual occurrence in the field of education, which serves as a pedagogical and emotional role in the educational process. The study by Nazeri (2023) on the opinion of both students and teachers on the use of code switching in English language teaching in Iran demonstrates that students have rather a positive attitude towards the use of code switching in the situation under consideration [30]. There were differences in students' attitudes depending on variables such as age, gender and grade level, but the majority stated that it made learning easier. Teachers emphasize that code switching does not create addiction in students as long as it is not excessive; on the contrary, it reinforces the meaning and clarifies the explanations.

Buskivadze (2021), who examined business English lessons in Georgia, shows that teachers use code-switching quite frequently and that its main functions are to clarify instructions, present complex concepts in a comparative manner and strengthen classroom interaction. Students and teachers, however, mention that too much code switching may inhibit target-language input. Code switching is, thus, an efficient didactic tool to be used consciously without absolute excess as well [31].

As a large-scale study of Zuercher (2009) in the Azerbaijani situation demonstrates, code-switching between Azerbaijani and Russian cannot be discussed only as a pedagogical phenomenon, but also as a socio-pragmatic one, in connection with the history of language policy and identity construction [10]. In this respect, code-switching can be deemed as an indication of identity and belonging performances occurring within a classroom setting, in addition to playing the supportive role of establishing conceptual bridges across languages.

Abbasova and Gahramanova (2024) revealed that code switching is used as a pedagogical tool by teachers in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms in Azerbaijan, and students resort to this strategy in order to facilitate their learning processes [32].

Code switching in digital space is a feature that is gaining increasing amount of awareness, particularly in multilingual societies. Consumers move across language boundaries on social media, forums and messaging applications, not only achieving the functional role of communication but also combining identities. Research on this has revealed code-switching as a language process as well as a socio-cultural accommodation.

The example of Azerbaijan clearly shows this situation. Soltanova (2023) states that historical language policies, social status expectations and the global identity search of young generations are at the root of the phenomenon of code switching in Azerbaijan [9]. Therefore, the alternations among Russian, English and Azerbaijani in the process of digital communication play the role of not only reflections of modernization trends but also local identity.

In the realm of digital media, Putri (2023) analyzed TikTok comments and discovered that users employed code switching to generate humor, to stress visual and affective messages and to show in-group belonging [33]. This case is crucial in indicating the functioning of linguistic creativity in social media around the world.

A sociocultural linguistic study done by Chad Nilep (2006) has brought out the fact that the social context influences language choice through code-switching. Nilep claims that speakers typically use the choice of language not only to communicate but also to indicate their social identities and social places [34].

Cholpon Chotaeva (2004) examines the function of language in nation-building in regards to Kyrgyzstan. It is the language policy that constitutes, as emphasized by Chotaeva, a crucial factor of national identity. The social role of the positioning of the Kirghiz language as an official language has helped contribute positively to the social identity and the reformulation of ethnic

identity [35]. It means that code switching is directly connected with culture and politics.

John J. Gumperz (1982) considers code-switching as an interactional strategy from a sociolinguistic perspective. According to Gumperz, the functions of code switching include quoting, qualifying the message, determining the address form and regulating social relations [22]. Therefore, code switching has the function of generating meaning in a social context and managing social relations.

Helena Bani-Shoraka (2005) discusses the code-switching patterns of persons who speak the same Persian and Azerbaijani. As Bani-Shoraka notes, the code switching is a power negotiation of social hierarchy, mostly in cases where there is a point of dispute and controversy [36]. This case shows that code switching is not only a communicative issue but also a cultural and social reflection at the same time.

All these studies indicate that code switching is embedded in contextual social and cultural environments. Individuals express their social identities, reinforce their cultural affiliations and create meaning in social relations by changing codes.

III. Materials and methods

A. Research Design

This research is conducted based on a mixed-method research approach. The aim is to conduct a deep analysis not only with numerical data but also with the participants' code-switching behaviours and preferences in daily life. Code-switching practices in daily life have been determined as the focus of the research. Participants express what languages they use in different social contexts, such as family, friends and academic/business environment, their frequency of code switching and their pragmatic functions through answers. These contexts are the prime factors that determine people's language choices, and they play a very significant factor in shaping of social relations.

A single questionnaire form was prepared to measure the code-switching tendencies of the participants. The survey allows us to reveal in which situations and in which contexts the participants change codes, what language strategies they use and the differences associated with social roles. Basic demographic information is also collected.

The research is conducted on a small-scale sample, and an integrated analysis of quantitative and qualitative data is performed based on both literature review findings and survey responses. This method offers a complete insight into how individuals tend to code-switch when using a language in their daily lives and how it correlates with social environments.

B. Participants

The participants were randomly selected among typical population in Azerbaijan. The sample included both male and female participants, and the ages were around 18-35. All participants experience using more than one language (Azerbaijani, Russian and English) in daily life.

The participants formed a diversified group in order to observe code-switching behaviours in different social contexts; they were able to report their language choices in contexts such as the family environment, the friend group and the academic/work environment. The sample was relatively small-scale, easily available, and the application of the survey and compiling of data was done in a very practical way.

Demographic information of the participants (age, gender, education level and language background) was collected and allowed the analysis to examine the relationships between social context and code-switching behaviours. This structure supported the collection of reliable data in line with the aims of the research.

The respondents were the residents of Baku and Sumgayit, which were two important cities of Azerbaijan. The majority of the respondents are university students or people who graduated with a university degree, and also have varied social

classes. The participants were involved in the research voluntarily, and the identity data of the participants in the study carried out under all the ethical principles were stored in a confidential way and personal privacy was guarded. In the course of the research, anonymity and confidentiality were preserved.

C. Data collection

The research used a survey form by means of a Google Form. Data collection was based on the preparation of the survey that was to measure code-switching behaviours and preferences of the participants in their daily lives. Participants were asked to complete the questionnaire and indicate which languages they speak in the various social settings (family, friend-group, academic/work-environment) and the frequency of code-switching. As well, participants were able to assign how much they preferred their language by use of pragmatic functions and social roles. The questionnaire was distributed on social networks through Google Form, and two weeks were given to receive responses. The answers of the participants were entered in a secure way, which guarantees data integrity. This process ensured that reliable data was obtained in accordance with the purposes of the research.

D. Data analysis

The data collected in the research were evaluated within the scope of quantitative and qualitative analysis. The survey results were expressed in figures and analyzed according to the frequency of shifting between languages and preferred languages in different social contexts. First of all, the data were analyzed with basic statistics; frequency, percentage distributions and average values were calculated. These analyses provided an overview of which languages the participants used more often in which contexts and their code-switching tendencies.

Then, the results of the survey were compared to the literature review and explained in light of the theoretical framework. This comparison provided an understanding of the relationship between code-switching behaviours and social context and pragmatic functions. During the analysis process, the language preferences and strategic code-switching tendencies of the participants within the framework of different social roles were also evaluated.

The data analysis process allowed a comprehensive examination to be carried out both numerically and contextually in accordance with the objectives of the research. This approach made it possible to understand the trends of code switching in the daily language use of participants in Azerbaijan by associating them with social contexts and linguistic strategies.

IV. Results and discussion

A. Findings

The data obtained from the research show that participants use code-switching behaviours extensively in daily life and that this behaviour has different functions according to social contexts. Russian and English languages are preferred in the academic/business environment, while Azerbaijani has a dominant position in family communication, as it is examined which languages the participants use more frequently in which social environments. In the family environment, in particular, 78% of the participants used Azerbaijani as the main language of communication, while it was observed that code-switching was common for the purpose of emotional closeness or humour. This demonstrates that code-switching serves both identity and pragmatic purposes across contexts, as illustrated in Figure 1.

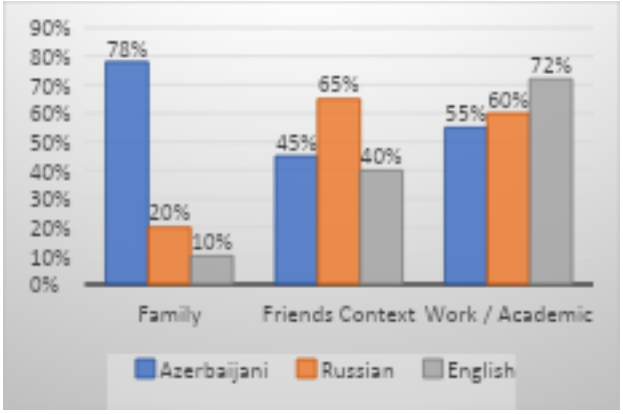


Fig 1. Language preferences by social context (%)

It has been revealed that the use of multiple languages occurs more freely and creatively in the context of friend groups. 65% of the participants stated that they used both Azerbaijani and Russian in their conversations with friends, and 40% used English as an additional symbolic language. In this context, it is seen that code switching is especially preferred to make jokes, to emphasize in-group solidarity or to highlight certain social identities. To illustrate, there were some respondents who shared that, they communicated with English words more as a form of popular culture or a status symbol.

Code-switching behaviour has a more functional quality in academic and business environments. 72% of the participants showed a tendency to use English in formal or semi-formal meetings, and it was observed that English was used in the translation of technical terms. On the other hand, Russian was the second most frequently used language in this context, related to traditional habits. 55% of the participants stated that they facilitate explanations by returning to Azerbaijani on certain issues in the business environment. This demonstrates that code-switching is not merely a signifier that purports a sense of identity and belonging, but rather it serves pragmatic and pedagogical purposes as well.

When the pragmatic functions of code-switching are examined, the most common justifications among the participants are listed as follows: creating humour (62%), establishing emotional closeness (58%), emphasizing an idea (47%) and adjusting social distance (35%). For example, it has been stated that a language change in a family environment is often made in order to express compassion or resentment more effectively. On the other hand, it has been revealed that code switching in friend groups is a tool that strengthens intra-group belonging, determines group boundaries through common passwords and jokes. In sum, these findings reveal the main communicative purposes of code-switching in everyday life, as illustrated in Figure 2.



Fig 2. Pragmatic functions of code-switching

Some differences were also observed between the participants' demographic characteristics and their code-switching tendencies. While participants between the ages of 18-25 used English more intensively in their friend groups, those between the ages of 26-35 were seen to use Russian more dominantly. It is understood that the preference for English increases as the education level increases, but this preference is very limited in the family environment. Although there was no significant difference in terms of gender, it was noted that female participants stated that they communicated by changing English codes more often, especially on social media.

When looked at in a regional context, it was determined that all three languages were used in a balanced manner among the participants living in Baku, while the Azerbaijani-Russian duo was more dominant in Sumgayit. This indicates that there are strong historical and socio-economic factors which affect the language that people use in their daily conversations.

Finally, a large majority of the participants (81%) stated that code switching allowed them to better express their personal identity, while 67% stated that this behaviour strengthened their sense of social belonging. It can be concluded that code-switching is not only a linguistic practice but also an identity performance. Nonetheless, 29% also said that too much code switching, particularly in a business environment, could be detrimental to the seriousness or professional look.

Overall, the findings reveal that code-switching is a multidimensional communication strategy for the participants. The option of using various languages in diverse social settings enables users to exercise control over their identity and their social roles. Therefore, it has been seen that code switching takes on both functional and symbolic roles in different areas of everyday life.

B. Discussion

The findings obtained in this study show that the participants use code-switching behaviour quite intensively in their daily lives and that this behaviour has functions that vary according to different social contexts. When the obtained data were compared with the theoretical frameworks in the existing literature and previous studies, both parallels and some unique differences were observed. In this section, the findings will be discussed in a comparative manner with the previous literature; similarities, differences and their possible causes will be discussed.

Based on the data of the research, 81% of the respondents mentioned they could represent their personal identity better through the means of code switching, and 67% related their social belonging complemented. This result coincides with the identity theories of Bucholtz and Hall (2005) [14]. To them, identity is something that is always being created in the process of interaction, and there is a form of display of identity positions by means of language varieties done by the speakers. Similarly, the approach taken by Auer (1998) also concludes that code-switching is instrumental in defining the boundaries of categories and marking who belongs to the group [15].

On the other hand, the fact that participants use code switching more in the family environment for the purpose of establishing emotional closeness and expressing sincerity is similar to Grosjean's (1982) studies on bilingualism. Grosjean noted that children usually use one language more predominantly in the home environment, but language changes are intensified in emotional contexts. This situation is also clearly seen in the current study [21].

Participants listed the most frequently occurring functions of code-switching as making humour (62%), developing emotional closeness (58%), serving to emphasize (47%), and acting to adjust the social distance (35%). These results reflect Gumperz's (1982) definition of code switching as such an interactional strategy. Gumperz argues that language switching has functions such as quoting, qualifying the message, determining the form of address and regulating social relations [22]. The fact that participants prefer to switch codes, especially for making jokes in friend groups, is in direct parallel with this theoretical approach.

However, the emergence of humour as such a dominant function in research diverges from many studies in the current literature. For example, in Soltanova's (2023) study, it was emphasized that young people in Azerbaijan use code-switching more as a means of showing social status or establishing official/digital identity [9]. The fact that everyday communicative purposes such as humour and closeness are more prominent in this study may be explained by the fact that the sample is in a smaller age range (18–35).

The results show that social context greatly influences code-switching decision-making. Azerbaijani is most common at home (78%), multilingualism surfaces more freely and playfully among friends; English and Russian have more practical uses in the business/academic context. This outcome is equivalent to Goffman's (1959) framework, which claims that individuals demonstrate different kinds of interaction at various roles in society [18].

A similar picture in the literature is explained by Bernstein's (1971) concepts of "elaborated" and "restricted" codes. While more limited and close-context language forms are preferred in the family environment, extended, status-indicating language forms come to the fore in the business environment [19]. English usage for technical terms in the business environment of the participants and their habitual use of Russian can also be explained by Bourdieu's (1991) concept of "linguistic capital". English is an international status symbol and prestige capital for the participants, and Russian is a cultural and socio-historical capital [6].

It is also interesting to note that differences between participants exist in terms of age and level of education. The participants under 26 (18-25) spoke more English within their friend circles, whereas those above 26 (26-35) spoke more Russian. This finding is congruent with the ones obtained by Khalilli (2025) under the premise that code-switching can be applied in multilingual societies as a form of ethnic identity and cultural expression [13]. The rise in the preference of English with the rise in education level indicates the perceived instruments of international prestige and modernization of English. However, the fact that English remains quite limited in the family environment reveals that identity and belonging are still established through the local language (Azerbaijani).

Although there was no significant difference in terms of gender, it is noteworthy that female participants stated that they used English more, especially on social media. This situation is also similar to Putri's (2023) study, which emphasizes the role of code switching on social media in creating humour, emphasis and group belonging [33].

The results of the present research can be summarized as being in accordance with the general tendencies in the literature, yet having certain differences. For example, while McCluney et al.'s (2019) study argues that code switching in business life provides a career advantage but comes with a psychological burden, in this study [25], participants stated that code switching is mostly used for functional and pedagogical purposes in the work environment. This difference can be explained by the language policies and cultural habits of the business environment in Azerbaijan.

Moreover, while the literature usually focuses on code switching in educational or digital contexts [10], [30], the orientation of this study to the natural and spontaneous conversations of everyday life provides an original contribution. The fact that participants choose to code-switch for humour, sincerity and emphasis in their daily conversations shows that code-switching is at the centre of not only formal or academic but also ordinary social interactions.

Finally, this research confirms again that code switching is a functional as well as symbolic communicative strategy. The results indicate that code-switching functions differently depending on the contexts and that individuals, through this strategy, differentially construct identities and social selves. While the prominent theoretical frameworks in the literature [1], [4], 6] support these results, the fact that the research highlights humour and emotional intimacy functions in particular adds a new dimension to the literature. Therefore, this study reveals that code-switching is not only a linguistic choice but also a multidimensional practice in which identity performance, social belonging and pragmatic purposes are integrated in daily life.

TABLE 1. COMPARISON OF SURVEY FINDINGS AND LITERATURE

Survey Findings (Percentages)	Interpretation in Context	Comparison with Literature
62% - humor	Humor - dominant pragmatic function, especially in friend groups	Gumperz (1982) - an interactional strategy for jokes and group bonding

58% - emotional closeness	emotional attachment in family communication	Grosjean (1982) and Rodríguez-Fornells et al. (2012) - emotional roles of bilingual speech in families
47% - emphasis	Switching languages strengthens specific points	Auer (1998) - intra-speech code-switching helps negotiate meaning and highlight focus
35% - adjusting social distance	Used to decrease or increase formality in interactions	Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model (1993) - language choice as negotiation of social distance
78% - Azerbaijani as main family language	Azerbaijani - dominant at home, code-switching used for intimacy or humor	Bernstein (1971) and Grosjean (1982) - family as key context for language socialization
65% - Azerbaijani + Russian with friends	Peer groups foster bilingual creativity and identity marking	Romaine (1995) and Bucholtz & Hall (2005) - peer groups use flexible language for identity
40% - English in peer groups (symbolic)	English used as prestige and popular culture marker	Bourdieu (1991) - linguistic capital; Soltanova (2023) - status function of English
72% - English in work/academic settings	English used for formal and technical purposes	Angouri (2018) - workplace code-switching reflects hierarchy and professionalism
55% - switch back to Azerbaijani in work	Used to clarify or facilitate explanations	Socarraz-Novoa (2015) - practical adaptation in multilingual workplaces
81% - expresses personal identity	Code-switching reflects personal identity	Bucholtz & Hall (2005); Khalilli (2025) - identity construction through multilingual practices
67% - strengthen belonging	Switching reinforces social inclusion and group membership	Auer (1998); Abdurahmanova (2018) - code-switching as group solidarity marker
29% - think excessive switching harms professionalism	Too much code-switching reduces seriousness at work	McCluney et al. (2019) discuss both career advantages and burdens of workplace code-switching

V. Conclusion

This study has explored the impact of code switching as far as communication style, social roles and identity formulation in everyday life of individuals are concerned. The facts obtained during the study prove that code switching can be viewed not only as a linguistic decision, but also as a complex means of interaction. People switch

between different languages in different social environments, both facilitating their communication and reorganizing their social relationships.

The most important finding that stands out in the research is that code switching acquires different functions according to the context. This strategy, which is used for the purpose of establishing more emotional closeness and increasing intimacy in the family environment, appears to produce humour in groups of friends, strengthen intra-group belonging and serve as an indicator of identity. In business or academic settings, code-switching has been seen to have more functions, such as explaining, conveying technical terms or providing prestige in formal communication. These distinctions indicate that social settings have a large impact on language.

The vast majority of the individuals participating in the research stated that code switching helped them express their personal identities better. At the same time, it was stated that the sense of social belonging was strengthened in this way. Participants strategically use different languages in different environments to both stage their personal identities and fulfill their social roles. In this way, code-switching allows people to be more dynamic in their everyday activities and adjust to varying societal demands.

The data obtained show that code-switching is closely related to social conditions beyond individual preferences. While the predominance of the mother tongue in the family environment indicates the preservation of local belonging and cultural identity, it is observed that multilingualism is experienced in a free and creative way around friends. It has been revealed that foreign languages are preferred more functionally and for prestige purposes in business and academic environments. This shows that individuals manage their social relations through different languages in different areas of life.

The study found differences in the behaviour of code-switching according to age and education level. The modernization and globalization trends explain the occurrence of young individuals resorting to foreign languages more, especially in their group of friends. On the other hand, the preservation of the local language in the family environment shows that identity and belonging are still strongly established through the local language. Although the use of international languages increases as the education level increases, the central role of the local language in daily intimate relations continues. This situation reveals that both global and local identities are kept alive simultaneously.

The general results of the research show that code switching is a multidimensional social phenomenon. Using language change in languages, people are not only exchanging messages, but they are also redefining the nature of their social relationships, establishing their identity and supporting their sense of belonging. Code switching provides both individual and social advantages to individuals in everyday life, thanks to its flexibility and functionality. Nevertheless, some of the participants also stated that the overuse of code-switching may convey a negative impression, particularly in formal circumstances. This demonstrates why it is good to use code switching, but carefully and in a balanced manner, even in any context.

In conclusion, this study reveals that code switching is a comprehensive practice that has not only linguistic, but also social, cultural and pragmatic dimensions. Code-switching serves to make people more strongly identified, to satisfy social belonging and to change social contexts. In this regard, code-switching occupies a central location in the current multilingual societies as a form of personal expression as well as a means of social conciliation.

It could be advantageous to carry out major future studies in larger samples, ages, social classes, and within digital surroundings, to add to a much better view of the role played by code-switching in social life. Such studies will make the function of the multilingualism phenomenon not only as a

linguistic phenomenon but also as a socio-cultural capital clearer.

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