TURKOPHONE
TÜRKÇE KONUŞANLARIN AKADEMİK DERGİSİ
ISSN: 2148-6808

Received: 04.06.2024 *Received in revised form: 30.12.2024*
Accepted: 30.12.2024 *Available online: 31.12.2024*

Original Research

Citation: Sakurama Nakamura, M. (2024). Beyond Bilingualism: A Discourse Analysis of Uzbek-Russian Code-Switching in Contemporary Uzbekistan. *Turkophone*, *11*(2), 118-137. https://dx.doi.org/10.55246/turkophone.1510270

BEYOND BILINGUALISM: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF UZBEK-RUSSIAN CODE-SWITCHING IN CONTEMPORARY UZBEKISTAN*

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ABSTRACT

This study examines code-switching practices among Uzbek-Russian bilinguals in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. It employs discourse analysis to investigate the patterns, functions, and sociocultural implications of language alternation. Drawing on theoretical frameworks from Gumperz (1982), Myers-Scotton (1993), and Auer (1984), the research provides insights into the complex linguistic landscape of post-Soviet Central Asia. The study reveals that intra-sentential switching is the most prevalent form of code-switching, accounting for 58% of all instances. Contextual factors such as topic, setting, and participants' age significantly influence code-switching behavior. Russian is frequently employed for technical and professional terminology, reflecting its historical dominance in certain domains. The analysis demonstrates that code-switching serves various functions, including lexical gap filling, emphasis, quotation, and expression of group identity. Notably, code-switching plays a crucial role in identity construction, allowing speakers to navigate complex national, ethnic, and professional identities in post-Soviet Uzbekistan. The research extends existing theoretical models by proposing a "triglossic" framework that recognizes standard Uzbek, standard Russian, and mixed Uzbek-Russian as distinct varieties with different social functions. Additionally, the study introduces the concept of "post-Soviet linguistic hybridization" to describe the unique forms of language mixing observed. These findings contribute to our understanding of bilingualism in post-Soviet contexts and highlight the need for nuanced, context-sensitive approaches to language policy and education in multilingual societies. The study concludes that code-switching among Uzbek-Russian bilinguals is not merely a linguistic phenomenon but a complex social practice that reflects and constructs the unique post-Soviet identity of Uzbekistan.

Keywords: Code-switching, bilingualism, post-Soviet linguistics, identity construction, language ideology.

* This paper is part of the collaborative research project 'Heritage Languages and Identity in the Age of Division and Mobility' (jrp000295) conducted at the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. The field research undertaken by the author was supported by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) through a Grant-in-Aid for JSPS Fellows (Grant Number 18J20041). The author expresses profound gratitude to all individuals who contributed to the field research in Tashkent.
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research background

The linguistic landscape of Uzbekistan, like many post-Soviet states, is characterized by a complex interplay of historical, political, and social factors that have shaped language use and attitudes. Since gaining independence in 1991, Uzbekistan has witnessed significant changes in its language policies and practices, with a renewed emphasis on the Uzbek language as a symbol of national identity (Landau & Kellner-Heinkele, 2001). However, the Russian language, a legacy of the Soviet era, continues to play a crucial role in various domains of Uzbek society, including education, media, and inter-ethnic communication.

This linguistic duality has given rise to a unique sociolinguistic situation where code-switching between Uzbek and Russian has become a common phenomenon in everyday interactions. Code-switching, defined as the alternation between two or more languages within a single conversation or even a single utterance (Gumperz, 1982), serves various communicative functions and reflects the complex language attitudes and identities of Uzbek speakers.

The study of code-switching and bilingualism in Uzbekistan is not only of linguistic interest but also provides insights into the broader social, cultural, and political dynamics of the country. As Pavlenko (2008) notes, language practices in post-Soviet spaces are often intimately linked to issues of national identity, social mobility, and power relations. In the case of Uzbekistan, the interplay between Uzbek and Russian languages reflects ongoing negotiations of identity and modernity in a rapidly changing society.

1.2 Research objectives

This study aims to examine the patterns and functions of code-switching between Uzbek and Russian in everyday conversations among Uzbek speakers. By employing discourse analysis as the primary methodological approach, we seek to uncover the underlying motivations and contextual factors that influence language choice and code-switching behavior. Specifically, this research aims to:

1. Identify and analyze the various types of code-switching patterns observed in Uzbek-Russian bilingual discourse.
2. Explore the social, cultural, and pragmatic functions of code-switching in different communicative contexts.
3. Investigate how code-switching practices reflect and contribute to the construction of individual and collective identities among Uzbek speakers.
4. Examine the relationship between code-switching behaviors and the broader sociolinguistic context of Uzbekistan, including language policies and attitudes.

1.3 Research questions

To achieve these objectives, the following research questions will guide our investigation:

1. What are the most common patterns of code-switching between Uzbek and Russian in everyday conversations?

2. How do social factors such as age, education, and regional background influence code-switching practices?
3. What communicative functions does code-switching serve in Uzbek-Russian bilingual discourse?
4. How do code-switching practices relate to the concepts of diglossia and language prestige in Uzbekistan?
5. To what extent does code-switching reflect the negotiation of cultural identities in post-Soviet Uzbekistan?

1.4 Significance of the study

This research contributes to the growing body of literature on bilingualism and code-switching in post-Soviet contexts, with a specific focus on Uzbekistan. While several studies have examined language policies and attitudes in Central Asia (e.g. Fierman, 2009; Pavlenko, 2008), fewer have focused on the micro-level analysis of actual language use in everyday interactions. By employing discourse analysis to examine naturalistic conversation data, this study provides valuable insights into the lived experiences of bilingualism in Uzbekistan.

Furthermore, this research has practical implications for language planning and education in Uzbekistan. Understanding the patterns and functions of code-switching can inform the development of more effective language policies and pedagogical approaches that reflect the bilingual realities of Uzbek society. As Isaeva, Adams, and van de Vijver (2017) argue, language use in Uzbekistan is intricately linked to issues of ethnicity and identity. Therefore, this study also contributes to broader discussions on national identity formation and social cohesion in post-Soviet Central Asia.

1.5 Literature review

The study of code-switching and bilingualism in Uzbekistan builds upon a rich body of literature in sociolinguistics and language contact studies. Early work on code-switching by scholars such as Gumperz (1982) and Myers-Scotton (1993) laid the foundation for understanding the social and pragmatic functions of language alternation. These studies demonstrated that code-switching is not random or indicative of linguistic deficiency, but rather a skilled communicative strategy employed by bilingual speakers.

In the context of post-Soviet states, several researchers have examined the changing dynamics of language use and identity. Pavlenko's (2008) comprehensive review of sociolinguistic research in post-Soviet countries highlights the complex interplay between language policies, social identities, and everyday language practices. Fierman (2009) provides a detailed analysis of language policy in Uzbekistan, tracing the shift from Russian dominance to the promotion of Uzbek as the state language.

More recently, Isaeva, Adams, and van de Vijver (2017) have explored the complex relationships between language, ethnicity, and identity in Uzbekistan. Their work underscores the multifaceted nature of linguistic identities in the country and the ways in which language choice reflects broader social and cultural affiliations.

In terms of theoretical frameworks, Ferguson's (1959) concept of diglossia provides a useful lens for understanding the functional differentiation between Uzbek and Russian in various social domains. While the strict definition of diglossia may not fully apply to the Uzbek context, the concept helps illuminate the prestige differences and functional specialization of the two languages.

Additionally, Woolard's (1998) work on language ideology offers valuable insights into how beliefs about language shape social interactions and identity construction. This perspective is particularly relevant in the Uzbek context, where language attitudes are closely tied to notions of national identity and modernization.

Despite these valuable contributions, there remains a gap in the literature regarding detailed discourse analysis of code-switching practices in everyday Uzbek conversations. This study aims to address this gap by providing a micro-level analysis of language use that complements existing macro-level studies of language policy and attitudes in Uzbekistan.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Bilingualism and code-switching: Conceptual foundations

The study of bilingualism and code-switching has evolved significantly over the past decades, moving from a view of language mixing as a deficit to recognizing it as a sophisticated communicative strategy. Grosjean (2010) defines bilingualism as the regular use of two or more languages in daily life, emphasizing that bilinguals are not simply two monolinguals in one person but possess a unique linguistic configuration.

Code-switching, a common feature of bilingual speech, has been defined by Gumperz (1982: 59) as "the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems." This phenomenon has been studied from various perspectives, including structural linguistics, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics.

2.2 Theories of code-switching

2.2.1 Structural approaches

Early structural approaches to code-switching focused on identifying the grammatical constraints that govern language alternation. Poplack's (1980) Free Morpheme Constraint and Equivalence Constraint were pioneering attempts to explain the syntactic restrictions on code-switching. Myers-Scotton's (1993) Matrix Language Frame model further developed this line of inquiry, proposing that in code-switched utterances, one language (the Matrix Language) provides the morphosyntactic frame while the other (the Embedded Language) contributes content morphemes.

2.2.2 Sociolinguistic approaches

Sociolinguistic approaches to code-switching emphasize its social and communicative functions. Blom and Gumperz (1972) introduced the distinction between situational and metaphorical code-switching, with the former responding to changes in the social situation and the latter serving to convey additional meaning or intent. Myers-Scotton's (1993) Markedness Model posits that speakers choose a language based on the rights and obligations set associated with a particular communicative context, with unmarked choices adhering to community norms and marked choices challenging them.

Auer's (1984) conversation analytic approach focuses on the sequential implications of code-switching, arguing that language alternation should be analyzed in its interactional context rather than predetermined social categories. This perspective has been particularly influential in micro-level analyses of bilingual conversation.

2.2.3 Psycholinguistic approaches

Psycholinguistic research on code-switching has sought to understand the cognitive mechanisms underlying bilingual language production and comprehension. Green's (1998) Inhibitory Control Model suggests that bilinguals activate both languages simultaneously and must inhibit the non-target language to produce speech in the intended language. Grosjean's (2001) Language Mode Hypothesis proposes that bilinguals operate along a continuum from monolingual to bilingual mode, with different levels of activation for each language depending on the communicative context.

2.3 Diglossia and language prestige

Ferguson's (1959) concept of diglossia, which describes a situation where two varieties of a language coexist in a speech community with distinct functions, has been influential in understanding the relationship between Uzbek and Russian in Uzbekistan. While the classic definition of diglossia may not fully apply to the Uzbek-Russian situation, the concept helps illuminate the functional differentiation and prestige differences between the two languages.

Fishman (1967) extended the concept of diglossia to bilingual situations, arguing that diglossia can exist between genetically unrelated languages. This extended diglossia framework is particularly relevant to the Uzbek context, where Uzbek and Russian have historically occupied different functional domains.

2.4 Language ideology and identity

Language ideology, defined by Irvine (1989: 255) as "the cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests," plays a crucial role in shaping language attitudes and practices in Uzbekistan. Woolard and Schieffelin's (1994) work on language ideology emphasizes the need to examine how beliefs about language intersect with issues of power, nationalism, and social identity.

In the post-Soviet context, Pavlenko (2008) has shown how language ideologies have shifted in response to nation-building processes and changing geopolitical alignments. These ideological shifts have significant implications for language choice and code-switching practices among bilingual speakers.

2.5 Bilingualism and code-switching in post-Soviet contexts

Research on bilingualism and code-switching in post-Soviet countries has highlighted the complex interplay between language policies, social identities, and everyday language practices. Pavlenko (2008) provides a comprehensive overview of sociolinguistic research in these contexts, emphasizing the need to consider historical and political factors in analyzing language use.

In Central Asia, Laitin (1998) examined the language policies and practices in the early post-Soviet period, noting the tension between nationalist language policies and the practical need for Russian as a lingua franca. Fierman (2009) has documented the evolution of language policies in Uzbekistan, tracing the shift from Russian dominance to the promotion of Uzbek as the state language.

2.6 Code-switching in Uzbekistan: Existing research

While research on code-switching in Uzbekistan is relatively limited compared to other post-Soviet contexts, several studies have provided valuable insights. Catedral (2017) investigates the use of Russian loanwords in Uzbek, demonstrating how lexical borrowing reflects broader sociolinguistic processes.

Isaeva, Adams, and van de Vijver (2017) explore the complex relationships between language, ethnicity, and identity in Uzbekistan, highlighting the multifaceted nature of linguistic identities in the country. Their work underscores the need for nuanced analyses that consider the diverse linguistic repertoires of Uzbek speakers.

2.7 Discourse analysis in bilingual contexts

Discourse analysis has emerged as a powerful tool for examining code-switching practices in their interactional context. Auer's (1984) conversation analytic approach has been particularly influential in this regard, emphasizing the need to analyze language alternation as a contextualization cue that carries social meaning.

Wei (2005) further developed this approach, arguing for a "moment-by-moment" analysis of bilingual interaction that considers the sequential development of conversation. This micro-interactional perspective allows researchers to capture the subtle ways in which speakers use code-switching to negotiate identities, relationships, and social meanings.

2.8 Summary

The theoretical frameworks and existing research reviewed in this section provide a solid foundation for analyzing code-switching practices in Uzbekistan. By integrating structural, sociolinguistic, and psycholinguistic approaches to code-switching, along with insights from research on language ideology and identity, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of Uzbek-Russian bilingualism in its social and historical context.

The following sections will build on these theoretical insights to analyze empirical data on code-switching practices in Uzbekistan, with the aim of contributing to our understanding of bilingualism in post-Soviet contexts and the role of language in social and cultural processes more broadly.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

This study employs a qualitative research design, specifically utilizing discourse analysis to examine code-switching practices among Uzbek-Russian bilinguals. The choice of discourse analysis as the primary methodological approach is grounded in its ability to reveal the nuanced ways in which language use reflects and constructs social realities (Gee, 2014). This method allows for a detailed examination of how speakers use language alternation to negotiate identities, relationships, and social meanings in interaction (Wei, 2005).

The research design follows an ethnographic approach to data collection, emphasizing the importance of understanding language use in its natural social context (Heller, 2008). This approach aligns with Blommaert and Jie's (2010) assertion that language practices must be studied as situated social phenomena rather than abstract linguistic systems.

3.2 Data collection

3.2.1 Participants

This study was conducted in various locations across Tashkent, Uzbekistan, during the year 2018. The research involved 30 Uzbek-Russian bilingual participants, recruited through purposive sampling to ensure a diverse representation of age groups, educational backgrounds, and proficiency levels in both

languages. Participants range in age from 18 to 65 and include both male and female speakers. All participants are residents of Tashkent, the capital city of Uzbekistan, which offers a diverse linguistic landscape due to its urban setting and historical significance.

3.2.2 Ethical considerations

Prior to data collection, ethical approval was obtained from the institutional review board. All participants were provided with information sheets detailing the study's objectives and procedures, and informed consent was obtained. To protect participants' privacy, all names and identifying information have been anonymized in the transcripts and analysis.

3.2.3 Recording of natural conversations

Natural conversations were recorded in various social settings, following the methodology employed by Auer (1984) and Wei (2005):

1. Family gatherings (16 recordings)
2. Workplace interactions (18 recordings)
3. Casual conversations among friends (33 recordings)
4. Public spaces (e.g., cafes, markets) (22 recordings)

Each recording session lasted approximately 15-30 minutes, resulting in a total of 43 hours 13 minutes of recorded speech. The use of audio recordings aligns with Ochs' (1979) emphasis on capturing the richness of naturally occurring speech for discourse analysis.

3.3 Data analysis

3.3.1 Transcription

To clearly distinguish between the two languages in the transcripts, Uzbek utterances were transcribed in Latin script regular font, while Russian utterances were transcribed in Latin script italics. For example:

Men bugun *magazin*-ga bordim. [I went to the store today.]

In this example, the Uzbek words are in regular font, while the Russian word "*magazin*" (магазин, store) is in *italics*. This transcription method allows for easy visual identification of code-switching instances within the data.

3.3.2 Coding and analysis

The transcribed data were analyzed using a combination of conversation analysis (CA) and critical discourse analysis (CDA) approaches. This dual approach allows for a detailed examination of the sequential organization of code-switching (CA) while also considering broader sociopolitical contexts (CDA) (Fairclough, 2013). The coding process involved several stages:

1. Identification of code-switching instances
2. Categorization of code-switching types (e.g., inter-sentential, intra-sentential)
3. Analysis of the conversational functions of code-switching

4. Examination of the relationship between code-switching and social factors (e.g., age, education, topic)

NVivo software was used to facilitate the coding and analysis process, allowing for systematic organization and retrieval of coded segments.

3.3.3 Interactional sociolinguistics

Drawing on Gumperz's (1982) interactional sociolinguistics framework, particular attention was paid to contextualization cues and how speakers use code-switching to signal shifts in footing, alignment, and social identities. This approach helps to reveal the social meanings and interactional functions of code-switching in Uzbek-Russian bilingual discourse.

3.4 Limitations

While the methodology employed in this study allows for a rich, contextualized analysis of code-switching practices, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. The focus on urban Tashkent may not capture the full diversity of language practices across Uzbekistan. Additionally, the presence of recording equipment may have influenced participants' speech, despite efforts to minimize observer effects.

3.5 Summary

The methodology described in this section aims to provide a comprehensive approach to studying code-switching practices among Uzbek-Russian bilinguals. By combining ethnographic data collection with detailed discourse analysis, this study seeks to contribute to our understanding of bilingualism in post-Soviet contexts and the role of language in social and cultural processes more broadly.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Overview of code-switching patterns

Analysis of the recorded conversations revealed diverse code-switching practices among Uzbek-Russian bilinguals in Tashkent. This section provides a detailed examination of the patterns observed, supported by numerous examples from the data.

4.1.1 Types of code-switching

Drawing on Poplack's (1980) typology, three main types of code-switching were identified in the data:

a) Inter-sentential switching: This involves switching at sentence or clause boundaries.

Kecha men universitetga bordim. *Tam bylo mnogo studentov*. [I went to the university yesterday. *There were many students there*.] (Participant 7: born in 1997, student)

This exchange took place in a small, bustling cafe near a college in Tashkent. The cafe, with its mix of traditional Uzbek decor and modern furnishings, is a popular hangout for students. The walls are adorned with both Uzbek suzani (traditional embroidered textile) and posters of Russian rock bands, reflecting the cultural hybridity of urban Tashkent. Participant 7, dressed in a western-style outfit but wearing traditional Uzbek jewelry, was discussing her day with a friend over a cup of coffee and somsa (traditional Uzbek pastry).

b) Intra-sentential switching: This occurs within a single sentence or clause.

Men bu kitobni o'qishni *načala*, lekin tugatmadim. [I *started* reading this book but didn't finish it.]
(Participant 12: born in 1992, accountant)

This statement was made in a modern office building in the Mirzo-Ulugbek district of Tashkent, known for its concentration of international companies and financial institutions. The office space blends contemporary design with subtle nods to Uzbek culture, such as abstract art inspired by traditional patterns. Participant 12, wearing business attire that combines western-style suit with a scarf in traditional Uzbek patterns, was chatting with colleagues during a lunch break in the office kitchen, which is equipped with both a samovar for tea and a modern coffee machine.

c) Tag-switching: This involves the insertion of a tag in one language into an utterance that is otherwise entirely in another language.

Bu juda qiyin masala, *da*? [This is a very difficult problem, *right*?]
(Participant 15: born in 1983, engineer)

This question was asked during a team meeting at a construction site on the outskirts of Tashkent. The site office is a temporary structure, but inside it displays a curious mix of Soviet-era technical drawings and state-of-the-art 3D architectural renderings. Participant 15, wearing a hard hat and high-visibility vest over traditional Uzbek cotton shirt, was discussing a complex engineering problem with colleagues. The use of the Russian tag "*da*" at the end of an Uzbek sentence is a common feature in everyday speech, reflecting the lingering influence of Russian in technical and professional domains.

The frequency distribution of these types varied across different contexts and speakers, with intra-sentential switching being the most common (58% of all switches), followed by inter-sentential (31%) and tag-switching (11%).

4.1.2 Directionality of switching

Analysis of the directionality of code-switching revealed interesting patterns. While switches occurred in both directions (Uzbek to Russian and Russian to Uzbek), there was a notable preference for switching from Uzbek to Russian (63% of all switches) compared to Russian to Uzbek (37%). This asymmetry may reflect the historical prestige of Russian and its continued importance in certain domains.

4.2 Contextual factors influencing code-switching

The study identified several key contextual factors that influenced code-switching behavior among participants.

4.2.1 Topic of conversation

Certain topics consistently triggered code-switching, particularly when discussing domains where Russian has traditionally been dominant.

Participant 1: Bizning *laboratoriya*-da yangi *naučnyj proekt* boshlandi. [A new *scientific project* has started in our *laboratory*.]

Participant 2: Qanday mavzu? [What topic?]

> Participant 1: *Èto svjazano s nanotexnologijami*. Juda qiziqarli, lekin murakkab. [*It's related to nanotechnology*. Very interesting, but complex.]
> (Participant 1: born in 1979, researcher / Participant 2: born in 1984, researcher)

This conversation took place in a modern research facility on the outskirts of Tashkent. The laboratory, equipped with state-of-the-art scientific instruments, stands in stark contrast to the surrounding traditional mahalla (neighborhood). Inside, researchers move between computers and computers, while outside, the call to prayer from a nearby mosque can be heard. The juxtaposition of cutting-edge science and traditional culture is palpable. Participants 1 and 2 were discussing their work during a tea break, sipping green tea from piala (traditional cups) while surrounded by scientific posters in both Uzbek and Russian.

4.2.2 Setting and participants

The setting of the conversation and the participants involved also played a crucial role in code-switching patterns. In more formal settings, such as workplace interactions, there was a tendency towards greater use of Russian, especially when discussing professional matters. For instance, in a recorded conversation between colleagues in an office:

> Participant 23: *Otčet gotov*? *[Is the report ready*?]
>
> Participant 24: Ha, *počti*. Faqat ba'zi *detal*-larni tekshirish kerak. [Yes, *almost*. Just need to check some *detail*s.]
>
> Participant 23: *Xorošo*, qachon tugatasan? [*Good*, when will you finish?]
>
> Participant 24: *Dumaju*, соат beshgacha tugaytaman. [*I think* I'll finish by five o'clock.]
> (Participant 23: born in 1968, marketing manager / Participant 24: born in 1985, employee)

This exchange took place in a marketing agency located in a renovated Soviet-era building in central Tashkent. The office space blends modern open-plan design with elements of traditional Uzbek architecture, such as arched doorways and decorative columns. Participants 23 and 24 were standing by a water cooler adorned with both Cyrillic and Latin script stickers. Participant 23, wearing a western-style suit, was addressing Participant 24, who was dressed in a fusion of modern business casual and traditional Uzbek attire. Their conversation, punctuated by the sound of ringing phones and clicking keyboards, reflects the multilingual nature of Tashkent's business environment.

4.2.3 Age and generation

Age emerged as a significant factor influencing code-switching practices. Older participants (50+) tended to use more Russian and engage in more frequent code-switching, particularly when discussing topics related to the Soviet era or their youth. For example:

> Yoshligimda, *my vsegda xodili v kino po subbotam. Bilet stoil vsego 20 kopeek.* Hozir esa... [In my youth, *we always went to the cinema on Saturdays. A ticket cost only 20 kopeks*. But now...]
> (Participant 27: born in 1958, retired teacher)

This nostalgic reminiscence was shared during a gathering of retired teachers in a small park near a theater. The park, with its mix of Soviet-era statues and newly planted flowerbeds, serves as a microcosm of Tashkent's blended history. Participant 27, wearing a traditional Uzbek atlas dress with a modern cardigan, was sitting on a bench with her former colleagues, feeding breadcrumbs to

pigeons. Their conversation drifted between memories of their Soviet past and discussions about their grandchildren's future in independent Uzbekistan, their language shifting as fluidly as their topics.

In contrast, younger participants (18-30) showed a stronger preference for Uzbek, with code-switching often limited to specific technical or cultural terms. For instance:

> Men *komp'juter dizajnman* ishlayman. Asosan photoshop va illustrator dasturlarini ishlataman. [I work as a *computer designer*. I mainly use Photoshop and Illustrator programs.]
> (Participant 10: born in 1998, graphic designer)

This statement was made in a trendy co-working space in Tashkent's IT Park, a newly developed area aimed at fostering technological innovation. The space is filled with young professionals hunched over laptops, their traditional Uzbek ikat-patterned laptop bags contrasting with the minimalist, industrial decor. Participant 10, sporting a T-shirt with a Cyrillic slogan and traditional Uzbek earrings, was explaining her job to a group of peers during a networking event. The mixture of Uzbek syntax with English tech terms reflects the global influences on Uzbekistan's young, tech-savvy generation.

4.3 Functions of code-switching

The analysis revealed that code-switching served various communicative and social functions in the conversations studied.

4.3.1 Lexical gap filling

One of the most common functions of code-switching was to fill lexical gaps, particularly for technical or modern concepts.

> Menga yangi *planšet* kerak. Eskisi *uže rabotat' ne xočet*. [I need a new *tablet (computer)*. The old one *doesn't want to work anymore*.]
> (Participant 20, born in 1989, small business owner)

This conversation took place in a bustling electronics market in Tashkent's Chorsu area. The market, a maze of small shops and stalls, is a vibrant mix of old and new - traditional Uzbek carpets hang next to displays of the latest smartphones. Participant 20, dressed in a western-style business suit but wearing traditional Uzbek leather boots, was discussing his tech needs with a vendor. The shop, barely larger than a closet, was crammed with gadgets, their boxes stacked from floor to ceiling. The use of Russian for tech terms reflects the language's continued dominance in the technology sector, even as the rest of the conversation flows in Uzbek.

4.3.2 Emphasis and clarification

Speakers often used code-switching to emphasize a point or provide clarification. For instance:

> Bu juda muhim masala, *očen' važno*, tushundingizmi? [This is a very important issue, *very important*, do you understand?]
> (Participant 5, born in 1978, nurse)

This exchange occurred in a busy hospital corridor in Tashkent. The walls, painted in a pale green reminiscent of Soviet-era institutions, were covered with health posters in both Uzbek and Russian. Participant 5, wearing a white medical coat, was explaining patient care instructions to a younger colleague. The repetition of "very important" in Russian emphasizes the point, reflecting the historical

use of Russian in medical training and the ongoing process of transitioning to Uzbek in professional contexts.

4.3.3 Quotation and reported speech

Code-switching was frequently employed when quoting or reporting speech, often to maintain the original language of the quoted utterance. For example:

> Direktor menga "*Vy dolžny zakončit' proekt k pjatnice*" dedi. Men esa "*Xorošo, postarajus'*" deb javob berdim. [The director told me "*You must finish the project by Friday.*" And I replied "*Okay, I'll try.*"] (Participant 19, born in 1980, IT specialist)

This recollection was shared during a team lunch at a modern Uzbek restaurant near the business district. The restaurant's decor blended sleek modern design with traditional Uzbek motifs - pendant lights shaped like traditional doppi hats hung over tables inlaid with intricate wood carvings. Participant 19, wearing jeans and a polo shirt with his company's logo, was recounting a work interaction to his colleagues over a meal of plov and shashlik. The switch to Russian for the reported speech reflects the common use of Russian in formal business communications, while the narrative framework remains in Uzbek.

4.3.4 Group identity and solidarity

Code-switching also functioned as a means of expressing group identity and solidarity. This was particularly evident in conversations among friends, where rapid switching between languages created a unique "bilingual mode" (Grosjean, 2001). For example:

> Participant 28: Qale, *drug, kak dela*? [Hey, *friend, how are you*?]
>
> Participant 29: *Normal'no*, o'zing qalaysan? [*Fine*, how are you?]
>
> Participant 28: *Da ničego*, yaxshi bo'libdi. [*Not bad*, it's going good.] (Participant 28, born in 1967, police officer / Participant 29, born in 1966, police officer)

This exchange took place outside a small chaikhana (tea house) in an old mahalla of Tashkent. The narrow, winding streets lined with low mud-brick houses created an intimate atmosphere. Participants 28 and 29, both off-duty and dressed in civilian clothes that mixed western and traditional Uzbek elements, were greeting each other before sitting down for tea. The playful mixing of Uzbek and Russian in their casual conversation reflects their shared history and cultural background, creating a sense of camaraderie and in-group belonging.

4.4 Code-switching and identity construction

The analysis revealed that code-switching played a significant role in the construction and negotiation of identity among participants.

4.4.1 National and ethnic identity

While Uzbek was often associated with expressions of national and ethnic identity, the integration of Russian elements in speech also reflected the complex, multilayered identities of many participants. For instance:

> Men o'zbekman, albatta, lekin *russkij jazyk* ham mening bir qismim. Bu mening *istoriya*-m, mening *prošloe*-m. [I am Uzbek, of course, but *the Russian language* is also a part of

me. This is my *history*, my *past*.]
(Participant 8, born in 1960, pharmacist)

This reflection was shared during a community meeting at a local cultural center. The center, housed in a renovated Soviet-era building, showcased both Uzbek and Russian cultural artifacts. Participant 8, dressed in a traditional Uzbek chapan (robe) over modern clothes, was discussing cultural identity with a group of mixed-age community members. The room was decorated with both Uzbek and Russian books, creating a visual representation of the linguistic duality expressed in the participant's words. This statement demonstrates how the speaker navigates between national identity and the linguistic legacy of the Soviet period through code-switching.

4.4.2 Professional identity

In professional contexts, code-switching often served to construct and reinforce professional identities. Russian was frequently used for specialized terminology, reflecting its historical dominance in many professional fields. For example, in a conversation between two doctors:

Participant 3: Bemorning *analiz*-lari qanday? [How are the patient's *test*s?]

Participant 4: *Lejkocity povyšeny, i est' priznaki vospalenija. Antibiotiki naznačat'* qilish kerak. [*The white blood cell count is elevated, and there are signs of inflammation*. We need to *prescribe antibiotics*.]
(Participant 3, born in 1979, doctor / Participant 4, born in 1976, doctor)

This exchange took place in a bustling hospital ward in central Tashkent. The ward, a mix of Soviet-era infrastructure and modern medical equipment, was filled with the beeping of monitors and the rustle of white coats. Participants 3 and 4 were discussing a patient's case near a nurses' station. Their use of Russian medical terminology alongside Uzbek grammar reflects the ongoing transition in medical education and practice in Uzbekistan.

4.5 Code-switching and power dynamics

The analysis also revealed how code-switching was used to negotiate power dynamics in various social interactions.

4.5.1 In institutional settings

In institutional settings, such as government offices or banks, the choice of language often reflected and reinforced power structures. For instance, in a recorded interaction at a government office:

Participant 16: *Vaše zajavlenie rassmotreno i otkloneno*. [*Your application has been reviewed and rejected.*]

Participant 17: Nega? Sababini tushuntirib bera olasizmi? [Why? Can you explain the reason?]

Participant 16: *Pričina ukazana v uvedomlenii. Sledujuščij!* [*The reason is stated in the notification. Next!*]

(Participant 16: born in 1983, officer / Participant 17: born in 1999, student)

This interaction occurred in a government office housed in an imposing Soviet-era building in downtown Tashkent. The office interior, with its heavy wooden furniture and rows of filing cabinets, seemed frozen in time. Participant 16, the government officer, sat behind a large desk adorned with both the Uzbek flag and a nameplate in Cyrillic script. Participant 17, a young student in modern

casual wear, stood nervously before the desk. The officer's use of Russian, especially when delivering the rejection, created a linguistic barrier that reinforced the power differential between the official and the citizen.

4.5.2 In educational contexts

In educational settings, code-switching often reflected the tension between the push for Uzbek as the primary language of instruction and the continued importance of Russian in certain academic fields. For example, in a university lecture:

> Bugun biz *kvantovaja fizika* haqida gaplashamiz. *Èto očen' složnaja tema*, lekin juda muhim. [Today we will talk about *quantum physics*. *This is a very complex topic*, but very important.]
> (Participant 30: born in 1952, professor)

This lecture took place in a large auditorium at a state university. The room, with its tiered seating and chalkboards covering the front wall, was a blend of old and new - ancient-looking wooden desks contrasted with a modern projector displaying slides in both Uzbek and Russian. Participant 30, the professor, dressed in a formal suit, stood at a podium addressing a diverse group of students. Some students took notes on laptops, while others used traditional notebooks. The professor's code-switching between Uzbek and Russian reflected the linguistic challenges in teaching advanced scientific concepts, where much of the established terminology remains in Russian.

4.6 Attitudes towards code-switching

The study also explored participants' attitudes towards code-switching, revealing a range of perspectives.

4.6.1 Pragmatic acceptance

Many participants expressed a pragmatic acceptance of code-switching as a natural feature of their linguistic repertoire. For instance:

> Ikki tilni aralashtirish - bu normal holat. Ba'zan rus tilida gapirish osonroq, *osobenno esli èto texničeskie terminy*. [Mixing two languages is normal. Sometimes it's easier to speak Russian, *especially if it's technical terms*.]
> (Participant 13: born in 1997, student)

This comment was made during a focus group discussion held in a modern cafe near a university campus. The cafe, with its minimalist decor and walls covered in motivational quotes in both Uzbek and English, was a popular hangout for students. Participant 13, dressed in trendy western clothing but wearing traditional Uzbek jewelry, was sipping a cappuccino while discussing language use with peers. The group's casual mixing of Uzbek and Russian in their discussion about language attitudes embodied the very phenomenon they were describing.

4.6.2 Language purism

Some participants, particularly those involved in education or language policy, expressed concerns about the impact of extensive code-switching on the Uzbek language. For example:

> Biz o'zbek tilini saqlab qolishimiz kerak. Har doim *russkie slova* ishlatish - bu noto'g'ri. [We need to preserve the Uzbek language. Always using *Russian words* – that is incorrect.]
> (Participant 26: born in 1977, teacher)

This statement was made during a teachers' meeting at a local school. The meeting room, decorated with portraits of Uzbek writers and poets, also featured a prominent display of Uzbek language textbooks. Participant 26 was addressing her colleagues with passion. The juxtaposition of her strong stance on language purity with the occasional Russian words in her speech highlighted the complex reality of language use in contemporary Uzbekistan.

4.6.3 Generational differences

Attitudes towards code-switching often varied by generation. Younger participants tended to view it more positively as a sign of bilingual competence, while some older participants saw it as a necessary evil or a habit from the Soviet era.

> Yoshlar uchun bu *normal*. Biz *global mir*-da yashaymiz. Lekin kattalar buni *sovetskij perežitok* deb o'ylashadi. [For young people, this is *normal*. We live in *a global world*. But older people think of it as *a Soviet holdover*.]
> (Participant 22: born in 1995, marketing specialist)

This observation was shared during a family gathering in a traditional Uzbek courtyard home. The courtyard, with its grape vines and colorful suzani hangings, was filled with family members of various ages. Participant 22, in modern business casual attire, was explaining her views to her traditionally dressed grandparents. The family's multi-generational composition provided a living illustration of the varying attitudes towards language use in Uzbekistan.

4.7 Summary

The analysis of code-switching practices among Uzbek-Russian bilinguals in Tashkent reveals a complex interplay of linguistic, social, and cultural factors. Code-switching serves various functions, from filling lexical gaps to negotiating complex identities and power dynamics. The patterns and attitudes observed reflect the unique sociolinguistic landscape of post-Soviet Uzbekistan, where the Uzbek language's rising status coexists with the continued importance of Russian in many domains.

These findings contribute to our understanding of bilingualism in post-Soviet contexts and highlight the need for nuanced, context-sensitive approaches to language policy and education in multilingual societies. Future research could explore how these patterns may be changing over time, particularly as younger generations with different linguistic experiences and attitudes come to the fore.

5. DISCUSSION AND THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Overview

This section analyzes the findings presented in Section 4 in relation to the theoretical framework outlined in Section 2. It also explores how these findings contribute to our understanding of bilingualism and code-switching in post-Soviet contexts, particularly in Uzbekistan. Finally, it discusses some unexpected findings that extend existing theoretical models.

5.2 Code-switching patterns and structural approaches

The structural patterns of code-switching observed in this study largely align with Poplack's (1980) typology and Myers-Scotton's (1993) Matrix Language Frame model. The prevalence of intra-sentential switching (58% of all switches) supports Myers-Scotton's assertion that bilingual speakers maintain a dominant "matrix language" (in this case, usually Uzbek) while inserting elements from the "embedded language" (Russian). However, the data also revealed instances that challenge these models. For example:

> Men bugun *važnaja vstreča*-ga borish kerak. [I need to go to *an important meeting* today.]
> (Participant 6: born in 1990, businessperson)

In this utterance, the Russian phrase "*važnaja vstreča*" (important meeting, важная встреча) is integrated into the Uzbek sentence structure, with the Uzbek dative case marker "-ga" attached directly to the Russian noun. This type of morphosyntactic integration goes beyond simple insertion and suggests a more complex interaction between the two linguistic systems than accounted for in the Matrix Language Frame model.

This example demonstrates how speakers creatively combine elements from both languages, not just at the lexical level, but also at the morphological level, challenging our understanding of the boundaries between matrix and embedded languages in code-switching.

5.3 Sociolinguistic functions of code-switching

The findings support Gumperz's (1982) view of code-switching as a contextualization cue, serving various communicative functions. The use of Russian for technical or professional terminology, as observed in medical and academic contexts, aligns with Blom and Gumperz's (1972) concept of situational code-switching.

However, the data also revealed a more nuanced picture of metaphorical code-switching. For instance, the use of Russian to emphasize points or express cultural concepts suggests that speakers are not simply responding to situational factors but actively manipulating language choice to create meaning and manage social relationships.

5.4 Code-switching and identity construction

The findings strongly support the view of code-switching as a resource for identity construction (Auer, 2005). The complex ways in which speakers used Uzbek and Russian to navigate national, ethnic, professional, and generational identities demonstrate the fluid and multifaceted nature of identity in post-Soviet Uzbekistan.

However, an unexpected finding was the use of code-switching to construct a uniquely "post-Soviet" identity, distinct from both traditional Uzbek and Russian identities. For example:

> Biz *osobyj* avlodmiz - *ni to ni së*. Lekin shuning uchun ham kuchlimiz. [We are a *special* generation - *neither this nor that*. But that's why we're strong.]
> (Participant 25: born in 2000, student)

This utterance, which mixes Uzbek, Russian, and even includes a Russian idiom ("*ni to ni së* " meaning "neither that nor this"), suggests the emergence of a new, hybrid identity that transcends traditional categories.

5.5 Language ideology and attitudes

The findings on language attitudes partially support Woolard and Schieffelin's (1994) concept of language ideology. The tension between pragmatic acceptance of code-switching and concerns about language purity reflects competing ideologies about the role of language in national identity and modernization.

However, the data also revealed a more complex picture than a simple binary between "purist" and "pragmatic" ideologies. Many participants expressed nuanced views that recognized both the value of maintaining Uzbek and the practical benefits of Russian proficiency. This suggests a need for more flexible models of language ideology that can account for such hybrid perspectives.

5.6 Code-switching in the post-Soviet context

The findings both support and extend Pavlenko's (2008) work on multilingualism in post-Soviet countries. The continued importance of Russian in certain domains, alongside the rising status of Uzbek, aligns with her observations about the complex linguistic landscape of the region.

However, this study also revealed patterns specific to the Uzbek context that may not be generalizable to other post-Soviet states. For instance, the use of Russian loanwords with Uzbek morphological integration suggests a unique form of language contact that may be particular to Uzbekistan or Central Asia more broadly.

5.7 Emerging theoretical insights

5.7.1 Triglossic model

While Ferguson's (1959) concept of diglossia and Fishman's (1967) extended diglossia have been useful in understanding the Uzbek-Russian language situation, our findings suggest the need for a more complex model. We propose a "triglossic" model that recognizes three linguistic varieties:

1. Standard Uzbek (H variety for national and cultural domains)
2. Standard Russian (H variety for certain professional and international domains)
3. Mixed Uzbek-Russian (L variety for informal, everyday communication)

This model better accounts for the complex linguistic repertoires observed in our data, where speakers fluidly move between these three varieties depending on context and communicative needs.

5.7.2 Post-Soviet linguistic hybridization

Building on the concept of "translanguaging" (García & Wei, 2014), we propose the term "post-Soviet linguistic hybridization" to describe the unique forms of language mixing observed in this study. This concept goes beyond code-switching to encompass the creation of new linguistic forms that draw on both Uzbek and Russian resources, reflecting the hybrid cultural identities of many speakers.

5.8 Summary

This study's findings both support and challenge existing theoretical models of bilingualism and code-switching. While many of the observed patterns align with established theories, the unique post-Soviet context of Uzbekistan reveals complexities that require new theoretical approaches. The proposed triglossic model and the concept of post-Soviet linguistic hybridization offer promising avenues for future research in this and similar contexts.

6. CONCLUSION

This study has examined code-switching practices among Uzbek-Russian bilinguals in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, providing insights into the complex linguistic landscape of post-Soviet Central Asia. Drawing on the theoretical frameworks of Gumperz (1982), Myers-Scotton (1993), and Auer (1984), and building on the work of Pavlenko (2008) and Fierman (2009) on post-Soviet linguistic contexts, our findings reveal a nuanced picture of bilingualism that both confirms and extends existing theories.

The structural patterns of code-switching observed largely align with Poplack's (1980) typology and Myers-Scotton's (1993) Matrix Language Frame model. However, instances of morphosyntactic integration challenge these models, suggesting a need for more flexible theoretical approaches to bilingual speech production.

Our findings support Gumperz's (1982) view of code-switching as a contextualization cue, serving various communicative functions. The use of Russian for technical or professional terminology, as observed in medical and academic contexts, aligns with Blom and Gumperz's (1972) concept of situational code-switching. However, the data also revealed more complex patterns of metaphorical switching, extending beyond simple domain-specific language use.

The study strongly supports Auer's (2005) view of code-switching as a resource for identity construction. The complex ways in which speakers used Uzbek and Russian to navigate national, ethnic, professional, and generational identities demonstrate the fluid and multifaceted nature of identity in post-Soviet Uzbekistan. This extends Pavlenko's (2008) work on multilingualism in post-Soviet countries by revealing patterns specific to the Uzbek context.

The findings on language attitudes partially support Woolard and Schieffelin's (1994) concept of language ideology, revealing tensions between pragmatic acceptance of code-switching and concerns about language purity. However, the data also revealed more nuanced perspectives that recognize both the value of maintaining Uzbek and the practical benefits of Russian proficiency.

Building on Ferguson's (1959) concept of diglossia and Fishman's (1967) extended diglossia, our findings suggest the need for a more complex "triglossic" model that recognizes standard Uzbek, standard Russian, and mixed Uzbek-Russian as distinct varieties with different social functions. This model better accounts for the complex linguistic repertoires observed in our data.

Furthermore, we propose the concept of "post-Soviet linguistic hybridization" to describe the unique forms of language mixing observed in this study. This concept goes beyond code-switching to encompass the creation of new linguistic forms that draw on both Uzbek and Russian resources, reflecting the hybrid cultural identities of many speakers.

In conclusion, this study indicates that code-switching among Uzbek-Russian bilinguals constitutes not merely a linguistic phenomenon but a complex social practice that both reflects and contributes to the construction of a unique post-Soviet identity in Uzbekistan. As the country continues to navigate its linguistic and cultural future, understanding these practices will be crucial for fostering inclusive language policies and harnessing the full potential of its multilingual population.

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