Code switching in the context of Bangladeshi Secondary School Students

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Declaration

This dissertation is composed of my original work. The materials has been used here all are attached as references. I have also attached the contribution and help that I took throughout my dissertation in the acknowledgment section.

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Abstract

With the emergence of culture and trend everything changes. Young stars are creating culture so with the help of their survey it is clear that code switching is creating a culture by itself. A significant number of students do switch their codes with some other languages. Basically the influence comes by the friend circles and also from the media or social media. In secondary level students use social media where they are very much active in switching the codes. Moreover, the interesting fact is that the students are very much welcoming towards switching the codes. The students even do not think that it can have any negative impact on the society. On other hand they think that code switching will be good for them as it will be a scope for practicing other language at a same time.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

Language is the main way of our communication and we use many languages in our daily life. English language works as a *lingua franca* among people of different countries who wants to communicate among them for different purposes. In Bangladesh English is also very popular as English speaking people are being given importance to any profession. Most of the institutes and companies are English medium. Though our official language is Bengali, the use ofEnglish is very frequent in Bangladesh. On top of that English is considered as the second language of Bangladesh. At office, university, school, college, medical center, media even in the street billboard we can observe the use of English language. We cannot really spend a single day without English language.

Now, when we communicate orally that is spoken and when we write using symbols or codes that is called codification. In meanwhile of using codes and codification we sometimes switch the codes (languages) into different codes that is called code switching (Iqbal, 2011. p. 188). According to Ronald Wardhaugh (1986), the term code is referred to any kind of system which is used by many people in their communication. So, what we use to communicate with others that is a code referred differently in different places.We Bangladeshi people mostly switch our codes from Bengali to English. The reason we mostly use English language is the frequent use of English language everywhere. From the admission test of a school to career life, English

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is being taught to the students in terms of different departments.Now a days, English is not only

limited in language classes but it has also gained its priority in different other departmental

courses. No matter what the class is but the medium of instruction is in English. That means

code-switching exists in a vast number in our daily life. Along with our regional language

(Bengali), this code-switching involves English as a medium of economic power, social realities

and political force. So the learning and teaching in classroom is a blend of mother tongue and

English. MamokgethiSetati and Jill Adler (2001) also said, code switching usually comes with

the practice of classroom activities. Most of the educational institution uses English as a

complementary subject so, it is very obvious that the students get used to with bilingual or

multilingual setting. Most of the time, teacher also switch the codes.So classroom is the best

place where students can easily practice code switching and make themselves efficient learners

to their main language as a learning resource (as cited in Iqbal, 2011, p. 189).

Besides, language varies on culture. In other words culture changes with the flow of language.

Actually culture and language both are interrelated with each other. So, in Bangladesh the young

stars switch their languages into English. Young stars or even secondary level students use

English languages because of the media. Children or young stars are dependent on media and

internet and they gets influenced by Asian or western culture mostly. On top of that, T.V serials,

cartoonsor movies, social media are very much popular in our country to the secondary level

students. Lalita Malik (1994) says, Code-switching depends on situation for an example an

instructor or any other person who knows English uses English in their communication.

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However, English speaking teacher will use L1 (first language)as a natural process. Code switching is very common in classroom interactions by the learners or even by the teachers. However, teachers do not like the students using any other language except English. Teachers also assumes that the students are weak in English because of that frequent use in L1 (first language)(as cited in Iqbal, 2011, p. 189). On this regard it is clear that the rapid use of English encourage us to habituate with English on the other hand, as Bengali is our L1, we mix both the languages to be comfortable. Therefore, a study is needed to determine the reasons behind code switching in the context of Bangladeshi secondary level students.

1.1 Problem Statement

Language is an important element to express ourselves. From the beginning of human life language has been changed a lot and also language varies from one country to another even from one place to another. Now a day in our country among the young stars has a tendency to speak in English. They try to speak in English often and that leads them to switch from English to Bengali language. Therefore it is an important issue to study in English.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

People are now very much dependent on technology like internet and media. Both are available for all types of age's people at a cheap rate. So, they can be easily aware of everything in the worldwide. Most importantly, the medium of access to internet is *lingua franka*. So again, they need to use English and also get used to code switch.

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1.3Central Research Question

This research attempted to find out the answers of the following questions related to the changes occurred in code switching of Bangladeshi secondary level students.

1. Why is code switching common to the secondary school students of Bangladesh?

2. What are the secondary school student's views on code switching?

3. What are the social impacts on code switching?

1.3 Significance of the Study

Code switching is a very popular issue so this research will be helpful for both students and teachers. They will be more careful about their language. This research can be also used to compare with other country and will be useful for secondary resource as well.

1.5 Delimitation

This research is conducted on the secondary level students and school teachers for secondary level of the Dhaka city. The collected data was directly collected from these students and teachers to make an accurate survey over this area of code switching. However, materials from internet will be used to get theoretical information of this area.

1.6 Limitation

The time and universities chosen were limited because this research was done as a part of the researcher's undergraduate course completion. If there were more time available the number of

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collected data would be more and thus would be more accurate and representative. However, the collected samples were analyzed deeply to get an accurate and correct situation of the field of code switching.

1.7 Operational Definition

There are some terms and definitions which have been frequently used in this research paper to support my arguments. They are:

1.7.1 CLT

CLT or Communicative Language Teaching unlike other methods enables the students to communicate using the target language. The rules and norms of grammar of the target language do not play an important role in CLT, but how good students are able to communicate in real life situations is given preference (Freeman, 2000, p. 121). So, CLT aims at 'communicative competence' which according to Canale and Swain has four components. Those are: Grammatical competence, Sociolinguistic competence, Strategic competence and Discourse competence (Murcia, Dornyei, Thurrell, 1995, p. 7)

1.7.2 ELT

It is the acronym of English Language Teaching. It covers syllabus/ curriculum design, materials development, testing system etc. necessary for teaching English to the speakers of other languages (Shahidullah, 2002; Maniruzzaman, 1998).

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1.7.3 EFL

It stands for English as a foreign language. A foreign language like English inBangladesh is used in specific formal situations, not in day to day life communication (Maniruzzaman, 1998).

1.7.4 Stress

Stress means prominence in pronunciation normally produced by four factors 'loudness' of voice, 'length' of syllables, 'pitch' related to frequency of vibration of the vocal folds as well as to low/high tone and 'quality' of vowels functioning individually or in combination (Roach, 2000; Maniruzzaman, 2004).

1.7.5 Intonation

According to Wells (2006), intonation is the melody of speech. Maniruzzaman(2006b) states that intonation is a systematic and regular feature of speech. Itpossesses definite patterns that can be analyzed according to their structures and functions. This phenomenon is employed by the speaker to convey information over and above that which is expressed through the utterances or sentences (*ibid*.).

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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

We cannot survive a single day without language. A person who is dumb he or she also needs language to communicate with others. The communication of language can differ from person to person but everyone needs it. But every single nation has different language. English language is the common language in all over the world. It is also popular in Bangladesh. There are huge number of English medium schools,colleges and universities in Bangladesh.Now a day's English medium institutions are very much popular to all generation. Therefore English has a great influence on young generation for that reason they get encourages to use English.

2.1 Code switching

To understand code switching we have to understand first what code means. Code can be seen as a simple verbal component like a morpheme. However, it also can explain a lot. Every single language is also known as code for example, Bengali is a code. Several scholars have defined code-switching in many different ways. Linguist Hymes (1974) defines code-switching like "when a common way is taken for different culture user of two or more languages that varies both language and speech styles" while Bokamba (1989) defines both concepts thus: Code-switching is the mixing of words, phrases and sentences from two distinct grammatical (sub) systems across sentence boundaries within the same speech event. Code-mixing is the embedding of various linguistic units such as affixes (bound morphemes), words (unbound

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morphemes), phrases and clauses from a co-operative activity where the participants continue their conversation by saying, hearing and understanding.

2.2 Background of Code Switching:

In Bangladesh code switching most of the time happens within English and Bengali languages. Now, it is important to know that why these languages are introduced in Bangladesh and became so important that people frequently switches their languages among them.

Bangladesh was under British colonialism for more than 100 years. That time Bangladesh was a part of an Indian subcontinent. The use of English emerged through British colonialism about two hundred years ago (Das, 2009). At first it was mandatory to know English as it was the only language through people could communicate as trade commerce and business was going on (Rahman, 1999). With the time being the demand of English is rapidly growing up as people were conscious about their development of business, education, politics and communication (Das,2009).

2.3 Classification of Code Switching:

Scholars have classified code switching in many ways. Among them Ronald Wardhaugh (1992) classified code switching in two ways such as, Situational code switching and other one is Metaphorical code switching. When any particular situation affects the language that means situation changes the language that is a situational language. However, a topic is needed to be changed in a language that type of code switching is known as metaphorical code switching (p.106).

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On the other hand, many researchers have come to conclusion that there are three types of code switching such as, tag switching, inter sentential and intra sentential (Poplack, 1980;Wardaugh, 1992; Holmes, 1992; and Romaine, 1995).On the other hand. Hoffman (1991) described three types of code switching. These are:

(i) Inter-sentential switching: When code switching occursoutside aclause or a sentence that switching is called inter-sentential switching. In this type of switching needs a good understanding in both languages. For example, Tumiamarkothasunbe, I know that.

(ii) Intra-sentential switching: When code switching occurs within the sentence then that sentence is known as intra-sentential switching. Generally it is seen that who is not very much good in both languages also can switch by using this form. For example. "Ajamra all day shopping korbo."

(iii)Tag switching: When code switching occurs at the end of a sentence with another language is known as tag switching. For example, "She is cute, na? (ascited in Chakrawarti .2010.p.72)

2.4 Reasons of Code switching

According toWardhaugh (1992) there are some factors that are responsible for code switching including Diglossia, Bilingualism and Multilingualism.

2.4.1. Diglossia

According to Wardhaugh (1992) "A diglossic situation exists in a society when it has two

 distinct codes which show clear functional separation; that is one code is employed in one set of

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Circumstancesand the other in an entirely different set" (p.90). He also claimed that people have

two varieties of languages in a diglossic situation. One variety is known as low variety which is

usually used in informal conversation such as friend's conversation. Another one is known as

high variety which is used in formal speaking such as in an office meeting. Usually high variety

is considered as more prestigious than the low variety. Speakers of thediglossic society often

change the two varieties in their daily conversation (Wardhaugh, 1992. p.91).

2.4.2. Bilingualism and Multilingualism

There are so many researchers have studied that bilingual code switching can be used as a

strategy to indicate a shift in discourse modes for example, from narration to comment or from

assertion to question. Bilingual speakers frequently do these mode shifts in a conversation. Fina

provides examples to demonstrate how Spanish/English bilinguals use mode shifts strategically

to add personal commentary to the conversation (as cited in Becker. 1989, p. 136)

2.4.3 Culture

Raymond Williams defines culture as, "A general state or habit of mind, a general process of

intellectual and aesthetic development, a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period or a

group, the works and practice of intellectual and especially artistic activity"(qtd. in Storey 2).

Therefore, culture represents people's way of life, what they eat, drink, dress, norms, behavior

altogether they are culture. Among them language is a prominent element of culture as by the

help of this element a state's literature, music, poems are being made up.

Chapter 3

Research design

3.0 Introduction

Code switching getting its popularity day by day. It is a new trend especially for the young generation. Throughout this entire chapter researches has been done by taking interview and yes/no question answer also some multiple question answer. The survey has been focused on the secondary school student's reaction. Moreover, the objective of this research, the questionnaire, the importance of this research on culture and society, the participants, instruments, both of the survey and interview questionnaire, how the survey has been conducted has been included in this research design.

3.1 Research Objective

The objective of this research is to go in depth of the various reasons of code switching in Bangladeshi secondary students and its impact on the society.

3.2 Research Question

a. What are the main reasons that leads a student to switch their codes?

b. The main languages the students use in their conversation?

c. The use of different languages is conscious or subconscious?

d. Code switching has any negative impact on the Bangladeshi society?

3.3 Importance of the study

Young stars are the future of a nation. Therefore it is very important to take care of them and lead them in proper way. Now it is a trend to talk in English among the youngsters. Especially

the school students does that very often. This research paper shows the importance of code switching.

3.4 Participants

The participants of this research were fifty secondary school students who reads the top ranking English medium schools in Dhaka city. The participants are randomly chosen from the five different schools including American Standard International School, Australian International School, Grace International School, The City SchoolInternationaland Chittagong Grammar School. Among the participants 22 were girls and 28 were boys. As the participants are from secondary school the age range is mostly 10 to 16 years.

3.5 Instruments

This research has been conducted by some yes/no questions and some multiple question answer. Along with the survey questions students were being interviewed by six questions.

3.6 Methods of data analysis

A mixed method has been applied to this research. Most of the questions were quantitative but some has multiple choice questions.Thirty students has given a short interview some of the questions.

3.7Limitations

There are so many English medium schools in Dhaka city. It is easy to take interview from the schools but some of the schools are not very cooperative to take the interview also some students were not serious while having the interview.

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Chapter 4

Findings and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the results of the present study on code switching in the context of Bangladeshi secondary school students. There are five English medium schools has been surveyed for this research. Thus the research has been conducted to examine how popular code switching is among secondary level students also the effects of code switching in the culture.Most of the questions were quantitative including multiple choice questions and yes no question answer. Moreover there were six interview open ended questions which has been interviewed over thirty secondary school students.

4.2 Results of the Student's Questions

This research paper basically focused only on the students. The level of those students is secondary having the age of around 11 to 16 who are level 6 to 10 students in Bangladeshi context.Inthis research paper fifty students has been surveyed with the help of eleven yes/no question answer and three multiple choice question. Moreover other thirty students has been surveyed with the help of six open ended question. There are five secondary schools has been chosen to take the survey done for this research.From each five school ten students had been selected randomly in terms of age and grade. The survey questions and interview questions are included in the appendix 1 and 2. There are some tables which will provide the result of this survey in detail.

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Table 1

Do you often use other languages with your native language in conversation?

Answer Type	No of Students	Percentage
Yes	35	70%
No	3	6%
No Comment	12	24%

On the basis of table 1, there 70% students of the total participants switches their codes from native language to other language. However, 24% students of the total participants chose no comment option whereas around 6% students of the total participants chose option no that means they do not switch their languages. Therefore the result of this question was quite expected as code switching is happening very frequently.

Table 2

Do you intentionally switch your codes?

Answer Type	No of Students	Percentage
Yes	30	60%
No	15	30%
No Comment	5	10%

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Above table 2 shows that 60% of the students of the total percentage intentionally switch their codes on the other hand there are 30 % of the students mixes language unintentionally. 10% of the total student did not give their feedback on that. So, it clearly shows that most of the time when students speak to themselves they most of the students switch their languages unintentionally.

Table 3

Do you feel pressure to use English Language?

Answer Type	No of Students	Percentage
Yes	2	4%
No	45	90%
No Comment	3	6%

Table 3 shows that the most of the students of the percentage around 90% students confessed that there is no pressure to use English language. In contrast of that scenario there are 4% student of the total percentage use the English language due to the pressure of English language. But unfortunate there are 6% students did not wanted to confess anything but no comment.

Table 4

Is it the English language you use mostly?

Answer Type	No of Students	Percentage

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Yes	10	20%
No	40	80%
No Comment	00	00%

Students use English language to switch their codes from their naïve language to English language but this above table shows that the most of the students around 80% of the total percentage of the students do not use English language most of the time. Whereas, only 20% of the total student use English language most of the time. No student takes the no comment option. Everyone was comfortable in this question to give their answer. The results are showing that most of the students use their native language most of the time.

Table 5

Does informal conversation motivate you to switch your codes most?

Answer Type	No of Students	Percentage
Yes	43	86%
No	3	6%
No Comment	4	8%

Table 5 indicates that informal situation leads students to switch their codes more frequently. 86% of the student of the total student thinks that they mix their languages in the informal situation mostly. In contrast to that there are 6% students who thinks that informal situation does not motivate them to mix their languages. Results show that in the informal situation students mostly switch their languages.

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Table 6

Do you usually switch your codes in speaking?

Answer Type	No of Students	Percentage
Yes	45	90%
No	3	6%
No Comment	2	4%

In the above table 6 around 90% of the total student agrees that they switch their languages. From 50 students 45 students thinks that they switch one code to another code. On the contrary 6% of the total student thinks that they do not switch their codes. In addition 2% of the students has no comment on that point.

Table 7

Do you enjoy switching your codes?

Answer Type	No of Students	Percentage
Yes	43	86%
No	2	4%
No Comment	5	10%

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As there is a lot of number of students switch their codes they do it as they love to switch the codes. Table 7 indicates that there are 86% of the total percentage of the students switch the codes having enjoying it. But 5% of the total student has no comment on that matter where 4% of the total student does not like to switch the codes.So the result on that issue is the students switch the codes and also they loves to switch the codes.

Table 8

Do you think it is going to be a new culture to switch your codes?

Answer Type	No of Students	Percentage
Yes	50	100%
No	00	00%
No Comment	00	00%

In table 8 among fifty students all of them agreed on the issue that switching the codes is a new trend. So the result of that fact is switching codes itself creating a new trend or era as it is a common phenomenon.

Table 9

Do you think that youths are being influenced by switching the codes?

Answer Type	No of Students	Percentage
Yes	43	86%

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No	2	4%
No Comment	5	10%

Code switching is a common trend to the young stars and around 86% of the total percentage thinks that they are being influenced to use English language as everywhere English is given priority for all. Though around 4% of the total student thinks that there is no influence to use English language and there are around 10% of the total student has no comment on this regard.

Table 10

Do you have positive attitudes towards switching your codes?

Answer Type	No of Students	Percentage
Yes	48	96%
No	1	2%
No Comment	1	2%

From table 10 it shows that 96% of the total students has positive attitudes towards mixing the languages. On other hand there are 2% of the total students has no positive attitudes on mixing the languages. Same percentage around 2% of the total students has no comment on this issue.

Table 11

Do you think that code switching has negative impact on your mother tongue?

Answer Type	No of Students	Percentage

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Yes	20	40%
No	30	60%
No Comment	00	00%

The result of this questionnaire clearly shows that there are most of the students who thinks that there is no negative impact on their native language mixing the languages. Around 60% of the total students thinks that no negative impact in native language where 40% students thinks that mixing the languages has negative impact on native language.

Table 12

What are the main factors that lead you to switch your codes?

Answer Type	No of Students	Percentage
Media	5	10%
Friends	30	60%
Showing smartness	15	30%

There are some factors behind mixing the codes. This questionnaire shows that the strongest point on mixing the codes is with friends. That means informal situation motivates the students mostly around 60% of the total student. There is another factor that is strong enough for the students to mixing the languages and that is around 30% of the total students which is showing smartness. Apart from these strong factors there is 10% influence of media among the students.

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Table 13

The languages you use mostly?

Answer Type	No of Students	Percentage
English	15	30%
Bangla	30	60%
Others	5	10%

The research has been conducted in Bangladesh and Bangladesh has Bangla as native language so majority of the students around 60% of the total students speak in Bangla language. In the same manner in this research there were some international students also joined this survey so they use their native language English around 30% of the total percentage and 10% other languages of the total percentage. So the result shows that students use their own native language most of the time.

Table 14

In what type of writing you mostly mix your codes?

Answer Type	No of Students	Percentage
In text messages	30	60%
Formal writing	00	00%
In social media	20	40%

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According to the table 14 most of the response is on around 60% of the total student do the mixing in text message writing. Other 40% of the total student mix their languages in social media writing. Therefore the result from this table is most of the students do switch the codes in text messages and in social media otherwise the students do not mix their languages in any kind of formal writing.

4.3 Findings in terms of Research Questions

Q.1. What are the reasons for switching your codes?

In response to this question a number of students replied that this is comfortable for them to switch codes as they are bilingual and sometimes they use it unconsciously. As for example they told that they know only the English words for some of the words so it will not be fluent if they start to find out the Bangla word.

Q.2. What situation leads you to switch your codes and why?

Around ninety percentage of the total student told that with friends they switch their codes mostly but there is some other areas also what leads them to switch their codes frequently that is in social media like, facebook, instragram, viber, whatsapp and others.

Q.3. What are the languages you use in your conversation mostly?

Most of the students said that they use mostly Bangla and English language but there are some more students who are not Bangladeshi they use Urdu as their nationality is Pakistani. So two

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major languages are dominating and they are native language and other one is English language.

Therefore students are using the native languages along with English languages.

Q. 4. Is there any pressure that influences you to switch your codes?

In response to this question students confidently said that there is no pressure that they get from

any one to switch their codes however, they feel like to switch their codes specially in informal

situation as others are doing the same manner.

Q. 5. Do you think that switching codes will be good for your culture?

Among thirty students 25 students agreed on that fact that code switching will be good for the

culture. Most of the students said that it is good to switch the codes because this is how this is

how they get a scope for practicing more and more.

On the other hand who thinks it will not be good for the culture because every culture has its

own identity and they think that it should not be mixed.

Q. 6.In which field you mostly switch your codes? Writing or spoken and why?

Around 28 percentage of the total student thinks that they switch their codes mostly in speaking.

The reason behind it on their perception knows the both languages very well. So it becomes so

frequent and also unconsciously they use the languages.

However, the other 2 percentage of the students who thinks that they switch their codes in

writing mostly do it in social media like facebook, blog, instragram, viber, whatsapp and others.

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Chapter 5

Conclusion

The influence of English language is getting its popularity day by day. On top of that young generation always try to grab something new. Throughout the research it has been seen that code switching is a very common phenomenon towards the young stars. However it has been seen that mostly the informal situation leads young stars to switch their codes most frequent. It is kind of natural process as subconsciously students are mixing codes in their usual life. In addition most student argued that there is no pressure that leads them to speak in English rather they speak in English by their own. Although the students are aware of the fact that the young stars mostly mixes their codes and also it is creating a new culture.

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Appendix 1

Survey questionnaire

Topic: code switching in the context of Bangladeshi school students

Name:

Age:

Institution name:

Grade:

Gender:

Native Language:

NOTE: Code Switching is mixing more than one language in a conversation. For example: ami football khela like kori.

1. Do you often use other languages with your native language in conversation?

a) Yes   b) No   c) No comment

2. Do you intentionally switch your codes?

a) Yes   b) No   c) No comment

3. Do you feel pressure to use English Language?

a) Yes   b) No   c) No comment

4. Is it the English language you use mostly?

a) Yes   b) No   c) No comment

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5. Informal conversation motivates you to switch your codes most?

a) Yes   b) No   c) No comment

6. Do you usually switch your codes in speaking?

a) Yes   b) No   c) No comment

7. Do you enjoy switching your codes?

a) Yes   b) No   c) No comment

8. Do you think it is going to be a new culture to switch your codes?

a) Yes   b) No   c) No comment

9. Do you think that youths are being influenced by switching the codes?

a) Yes   b) No   c) No comment

10. Do you have positive attitudes towards switching your codes?

a) Yes   b) No   c) No comment

11. Do you think that code switching has negative impact on your mother tongue?

a) Yes   b) No   c) No comment

12. What are the main factors that leads you to switch your codes?

a) Media   b) Friends   c) Showing smartness

13. The languages you use mostly?

a) English   b) Bangla   c) Others

14. In what type of writing you mostly mix your codes?

a) In text messages   b) Formal writing   c) In social media

Code switching in the context of Bangladeshi school students

Code switching in the context of Bangladeshi school students

Appendix 2

Interview questions

For secondary school students

1. What are the main reasons for switching your codes?
2. What situation leads you to switch your codes and why?
3. What are the languages you use in your conversation mostly?
4. Is there any pressure that influence you to switch your codes?
5. Do you think that switching codes will be good for your culture?
6. In which field you mostly switch your codes? Writing or spoken and why?