

## CODE-SWITCHING AS A PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGY IN ARABIC LANGUAGE TEACHING AT THE STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY

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### Abstract

The increasing use of multiple languages in educational settings has intensified code-switching, particularly in foreign language classrooms. This study aims to investigate (1) the reasons why Arabic language students engage in code-switching and (2) the extent to which code-switching supports Arabic language teaching from teachers' perspectives. This research employed a mixed-methods design. The population consisted of Arabic language students and lecturers from three Indonesian universities: UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, and UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. Using purposive sampling, 300 students were selected as respondents for the quantitative phase, and 9 lecturers were selected for the qualitative phase. Quantitative data were collected through a 21-item Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that the primary reasons for code-switching are academic, particularly to ask questions, clarify meaning, and compensate for limited vocabulary, while social and personal factors are less significant. From the teachers' perspectives, code-switching provides pedagogical benefits, such as enhancing students' comprehension of complex concepts and unfamiliar vocabulary. However, it also presents drawbacks, including reduced exposure to the target language and limited vocabulary development. This study concludes that code-switching functions as a strategic pedagogical tool when used selectively, especially at lower proficiency levels, but should be minimized to optimize Arabic language acquisition.

### Keywords

Arabic Language Teaching; Code-Switching; Pedagogical Strategy.



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## INTRODUCTION

The increasing prevalence of multilingual practices in everyday communication reflects the broader impact of globalization and modernization on contemporary societies (Kostyk et al., 2025; Ou & Gu, 2020; Stein-Smith, 2016; Tomyuk et al., 2019). In this context, globalization not only facilitates cross-cultural interaction but also compels individuals to acquire proficiency in multiple languages. The motivations underlying foreign language learning are diverse and multifaceted. According to research conducted by the UK Subject Center for Languages, there are more than 700 identified reasons for learning foreign languages, with the most prominent being economic incentives, such as improved income prospects, and intrinsic satisfaction derived from the learning process. Consequently, language functions as a fundamental medium for sustaining interpersonal communication, as it enables individuals to engage in social interaction and cross-cultural communication in diverse contexts (Aljarelah, 2024; Mailani, 2022; Zhang et al., 2025), as well as a social instrument through which individuals articulate ideas, construct meanings, and express emotions (Jumarizah et al., 2025; Rosmaria, 2025; Usman et al., 2020; Waruwu et al., 2023).

Within this multilingual landscape, Arabic emerges as a significant language to be acquired, particularly in the Indonesian context. Its importance is closely linked to Indonesia's status as one of the countries with the largest Muslim populations globally, where Arabic proficiency is often considered essential across various professional domains, including translation, diplomacy, education, and commerce. This socio-religious and professional relevance has contributed to the growing interest in studying Arabic at the tertiary level (Yul et al., 2025).

As a target language in Indonesian higher education, Arabic is expected to be actively practiced in classroom interactions to facilitate the development of students' linguistic competence (Muslim & Harisca, 2021). However, empirical evidence indicates that students do not consistently maintain use of the target language during instructional activities. Instead, they frequently shift to Indonesian, their first language, for various communicative purposes. This phenomenon, commonly referred to as code-switching, involves the alternation between two or more languages within a single discourse, sentence, or linguistic unit (Almoayidi, 2018; Ayu Wulandari et al., 2023; Vallejo, 2018; Wei, 2018; Winata et al., 2022). It may also occur when speakers transition between different languages or dialects within conversational contexts (R. D. Wahyuni et al., 2023). From a typological perspective, code-switching can be categorized into internal and external forms: the former occurs within the same language across different styles or dialects, whereas the latter involves shifts between distinct languages (Firdaus et al., 2025; Kaamiliyaa et al., 2023).

Despite its frequent occurrence, the reasons for students' code-switching in Arabic language classrooms remain a subject of ongoing debate, particularly in Indonesian universities. Ideally, learners are expected to maximize their use of the target language to enhance proficiency (Devi Rafika Sari et al., 2025; Ellis, 2017; Sato & Ballinger, 2016). Nevertheless, the persistence of code-switching suggests that it may serve certain communicative or pedagogical functions (Lasagabaster & Doiz, 2021; Macaro et al., 2018). This raises important questions regarding the motivations behind such practices and their potential implications for language learning. Furthermore, it is crucial to examine whether code-switching is a beneficial instructional strategy or a hindrance to effective language acquisition, particularly from educators' perspectives.

In addition to the general tendency toward functional bilingual interaction in Arabic language classrooms, preliminary field observations conducted prior to this study indicate that the implementation of Arabic as the exclusive medium of instruction remains a debated issue across Indonesian Islamic universities, particularly within Arabic language departments. Informal interviews with several Arabic language lecturers at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, and UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta reveal divergent pedagogical stances regarding language use policies in classroom interaction. On one hand, some lecturers advocate the exclusive use of Arabic on the basis that it strengthens cognitive language acquisition and maximizes learners' exposure to the target language. On the other hand, some lecturers express concern that strict monolingual policies may impede students' comprehension of essential course content, particularly at the beginner and intermediate levels, where linguistic competence is still developing.

This divergence in pedagogical perspectives reflects a broader communicative tension in classroom practice between the ideal of full target-language immersion and the practical necessity of providing comprehension support through the first language. Within this context, code-switching emerges as a potential mediating strategy for negotiating this tension, enabling both lecturers and students to co-construct meaning while maintaining instructional effectiveness. Nevertheless, this situation simultaneously raises fundamental questions regarding how speech acts between lecturers and students are actually realized in classroom interaction, as well as how language alternation practices shape the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes in Arabic language education.

This communicative tension suggests that code-switching in Arabic language classrooms cannot be adequately understood solely as a matter of language choice, but rather as part of a broader interactional practice embedded in classroom discourse. In this sense, language alternation becomes a meaningful resource through which participants manage understanding, negotiate

instructional content, and maintain the continuity of classroom interaction under varying levels of linguistic competence. This phenomenon can be theoretically framed through a sociolinguistic perspective that emphasizes language as a dynamic resource in interaction. Gumperz (1982) conceptualizes code-switching as a conversational strategy employed by speakers to negotiate meaning, manage interactional flow, and signal shifts in contextual footing. From this perspective, the alternation between Arabic and Indonesian in classroom interaction does not merely indicate linguistic limitation, but rather functions as an interactional strategy to sustain communicative effectiveness and ensure shared understanding between lecturers and students.

Furthermore, Sert (2005) classifies the functions of code-switching in second language classrooms into several pedagogical roles, including clarification, reiteration, and floor-holding. Within the context of this study, students' use of Indonesian may be interpreted as a clarification strategy when they encounter difficulties in expressing ideas in Arabic, as well as a floor-holding mechanism to maintain interactional continuity and avoid communication breakdown. Similarly, lecturers' use of code-switching serves pedagogical purposes, particularly in explaining complex grammatical structures, clarifying abstract concepts, and ensuring students' comprehension of instructional material. Consequently, code-switching in Arabic-language classrooms functions not only as a linguistic phenomenon but also as a pedagogical strategy that enhances the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

The interpretations offered by Gumperz (1982) and Sert (2005) thus highlight that code-switching in classroom discourse is not a peripheral phenomenon but an integral part of interactional and pedagogical practices that require systematic empirical investigation in specific educational contexts. This theoretical understanding implies that code-switching operates within complex classroom dynamics that warrant further examination in relation to actual pedagogical practices and learning processes. Investigating code-switching in Arabic language classrooms is therefore essential to determine its pedagogical value. The findings of such research are expected to provide empirical insights that can guide instructors in making informed decisions regarding the permissibility and strategic use of code-switching in instructional settings. Additionally, this inquiry may help identify specific contexts and conditions under which code-switching can be effectively utilized without undermining the objectives of language instruction. Ultimately, a clearer understanding of this phenomenon may contribute to more effective teaching practices and improved learning outcomes in Arabic language education in Indonesian universities.

In the field of sociolinguistics, code-switching has been widely explored and has attracted considerable scholarly attention (Ryan, 2014; Sebba et al., 2017; Wodak, 2017). However, recent studies tend to focus on its occurrence in literary works, song lyrics, EFL teaching among Arabic-language students, and in pesantren (Islamic boarding school) environments. For instance, Renggi Vrika and Melisa Rezi (2022) studied lecturers' code-switching in the EFL classroom of Arabic language and literature students, Hanifah (2024) examined code-switching and code-mixing in song lyrics by Aunur Rofiq Lil Firdaus, while Lestari, Muassomah, and Yurisa (2023) analyzed code-mixing in the Arabic film *Alrawabi School for Girls* directed by Tima Shomali. Similarly, Fadlil and Herdiana (2023) investigated code-switching and code-mixing in formal communication within an Islamic boarding school context. Wahyuni and Thamrin (2024) explored code-switching in the daily conversations of female students at Pondok Pesantren Nuruttauhid Bulukumba, South Sulawesi. In a different context, Thaariq et al. (2025) analyzed Arabic–Indonesian bilingual practices in YouTube content, highlighting the role of code-switching and code-mixing in reinforcing messages and expressing social identity.

Previous studies that specifically examine Arabic–Indonesian code-switching in classroom settings have been conducted by Ahmad H. Syahid et al. (2025) and Devi Rafika Sari et al. (2025). However, these studies primarily focus on identifying the forms or types of code-switching rather than exploring the underlying reasons or its pedagogical implications from teachers' perspectives. Moreover, such studies are generally limited to a single research site, thereby limiting the generalizability of their findings. In response to these limitations, the present study seeks to offer a novel contribution by investigating both the motivations and pedagogical functions of Arabic–Indonesian code-switching through a multi-site approach involving several Indonesian universities.

Accordingly, this study aims to: (1) identify the factors that motivate Arabic language students in Indonesian universities to engage in code-switching during the process of learning Arabic as a target language; and (2) examine teachers' perspectives on whether code-switching facilitates or hinders the effectiveness of Arabic language instruction in higher education contexts.

## METHOD

This study employed a mixed-methods design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to address the research questions comprehensively. The quantitative component was utilized to examine the question: "Why do Arabic language learners in Indonesian universities engage in code-switching during classroom interactions?" To this end, a structured questionnaire

comprising 21 items on a five-point Likert scale was administered. The instrument was systematically organized into three dimensions—academic, social, and personal—each representing distinct factors that may influence students’ code-switching behavior in the classroom context. The data for this component were obtained from Arabic-language students enrolled at three Indonesian universities, which represent the study's population.

In addition, the qualitative approach was implemented to explore the second research question: “To what extent does code-switching contribute to the effectiveness of Arabic language teaching in Indonesian universities?” Data for this phase were collected through semi-structured interviews with Arabic language instructors. Specifically, three lecturers from each participating university (UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, and UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta) were purposively selected to provide in-depth insights into their pedagogical perspectives.

The study involved 300 students enrolled in Arabic language programs and 9 Arabic language lecturers from 3 selected universities in Indonesia. The participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their active involvement in Arabic language teaching and learning. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, with the assistance of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), while qualitative data were examined using the analytical framework proposed by Miles and Huberman, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Findings

#### Quantitative Findings

To examine the factors underlying students’ engagement in code-switching during Arabic language learning, statistical analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The overall distribution of responses is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Quantitative Data Results

Factor	No.	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Academic	1	To facilitate asking questions to the lecturer	8 (2.7%)	22 (7.3%)	49 (16.3%)	142 (47.3%)	79 (26.3%)
	2	Due to difficulties in understanding grammatical structures	15 (5%)	30 (10%)	80 (26.7%)	133 (44.3%)	42 (14%)

	3	Due to limited vocabulary knowledge	22 (7.3%)	29 (9.7%)	60 (20%) (43.7%)	131 (43.7%)	58 (19.3%)
	4	To express ideas more clearly to the lecturer	0 (0%)	27 (9%)	129 (43%)	114 (38%)	30 (10%)
	5	To reinforce arguments during peer discussions	16 (5.3%)	33 (11%)	109 (36.4%)	97 (32.3%)	45 (15%)
	6	To respond to challenging questions during presentations	23 (7.7%)	46 (15.3%)	105 (35%)	100 (33.3%)	26 (8.7%)
	7	To clarify technical or academic terminology	17 (5.7%)	29 (9.7%)	109 (36.3%)	104 (34.7%)	41 (13.6%)
<b>Social</b>	8	When classmates have difficulty understanding messages delivered in Arabic	20 (6.7%)	8 (2.7%)	69 (23%)	134 (44.6%)	69 (23%)
	9	Due to the limited ability to express oneself in Arabic	69 (23%)	101 (33.7%)	85 (28.3%)	34 (11.3%)	11 (3.7%)
	10	To enhance classmates' understanding of the lesson	23 (7.7%)	55 (18.3%)	121 (40.3%)	82 (27.3%)	19 (6.4%)
	11	Because speaking Arabic in class may be perceived as showing off	89 (29.7%)	87 (29%)	78 (26%)	31 (10.3%)	15 (5%)
	12	To bridge the communicative gap between students and lecturers	23 (7.7%)	75 (25%)	111 (37%)	74 (24.6%)	17 (5.7%)
	13	Due to a lack of peer encouragement to consistently use Arabic	37 (12.3%)	70 (23.3%)	123 (41%)	62 (20.7%)	8 (2.7%)
	14	Due to the absence of teacher reinforcement for using Arabic	66 (22%)	88 (29.3%)	77 (25.7%)	45 (15%)	24 (8%)
<b>Personal</b>	15	Due to boredom during class activities	34 (11.3%)	43 (14.3%)	121 (40.4%)	84 (28%)	18 (6%)
	16	Due to emotional reactions (e.g., frustration toward classmates)	22 (7.3%)	44 (14.7%)	133 (44.4%)	79 (26.3%)	22 (7.3%)
	17	To increase confidence in expressing ideas	28 (9.3%)	60 (20%)	99 (33%)	93 (31%)	20 (6.7%)
	18	Due to a reluctance to interact with peers who have higher Arabic proficiency	41 (13.7%)	99 (33%)	88 (29.3%)	49 (16.3%)	23 (7.7%)
	19	Due to the absence of sanctions for not using Arabic	10 (3.3%)	81 (27%)	40 (13.3%)	150 (50%)	19 (6.4%)
	20	Due to hesitation in communicating with the opposite gender in Arabic	52 (17.3%)	100 (33.3%)	98 (32.7%)	36 (12%)	14 (4.7%)
	21	Due to feelings of shyness when speaking a foreign language	128 (42.7%)	74 (24.7%)	59 (19.6%)	27 (9%)	12 (4%)

*Source: Primary data collected through a questionnaire distributed to 300 Arabic language students at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, and UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta*

Based on the data presented in Table 1, the findings indicate that the most dominant factor underlying students' code-switching behavior corresponds to Item 1. A total of 221 of 300 participants (73.6%) reported agreement or strong agreement with the statement, suggesting that the primary motivation for alternating between Arabic and Indonesian is to facilitate interaction with lecturers. More specifically, the use of Indonesian enables students to formulate and convey questions more effectively during Arabic language instruction. The second most prominent factor is reflected in Item 8, where 203 participants (67.6%) expressed agreement or strong agreement. This finding demonstrates that students tend to switch to Indonesian when their peers have difficulty understanding Arabic messages, indicating that communicative clarity and mutual comprehension are crucial in shaping language choice in classroom interactions.

Furthermore, several other items also show relatively high levels of agreement. For instance, 189 participants (63%) reported switching to Indonesian when they were unable to recall specific vocabulary during Arabic communication. Similarly, 175 participants (58.3%) reported a preference for using Indonesian when facing grammatical difficulties, particularly when seeking clarification from lecturers. In addition, 169 participants (56.4%) acknowledged that the absence of sanctions for using Indonesian in Arabic classes encourages them to engage in code-switching. Collectively, these findings suggest that both linguistic limitations and institutional conditions significantly contribute to students' reliance on code-switching as a communicative strategy.

In contrast, the least influential factor identified in this study is associated with students' feelings of anxiety or shyness when speaking a foreign language. Only 39 of 300 participants expressed agreement or strong agreement with this statement, suggesting that affective barriers, such as language anxiety, are not the primary drivers of code-switching behavior in this context. A similar pattern is observed in several other low-frequency responses. For example, only 45 participants (15%) agreed that their ability to express themselves influences their use of Indonesian in Arabic classes. Likewise, 46 participants (15.3%) perceived speaking Arabic as a form of showing off, while 50 participants (16.7%) reported reluctance to use Arabic when interacting with peers of a different gender. These relatively low percentages suggest that social perception and interpersonal factors are less significant compared to academic and communicative considerations.

To further illustrate these trends, the following bar charts compare the most and least frequently reported reasons for students' code-switching behavior in Arabic language learning contexts.

**Figure I.** The Most Popular Reasons for Code-

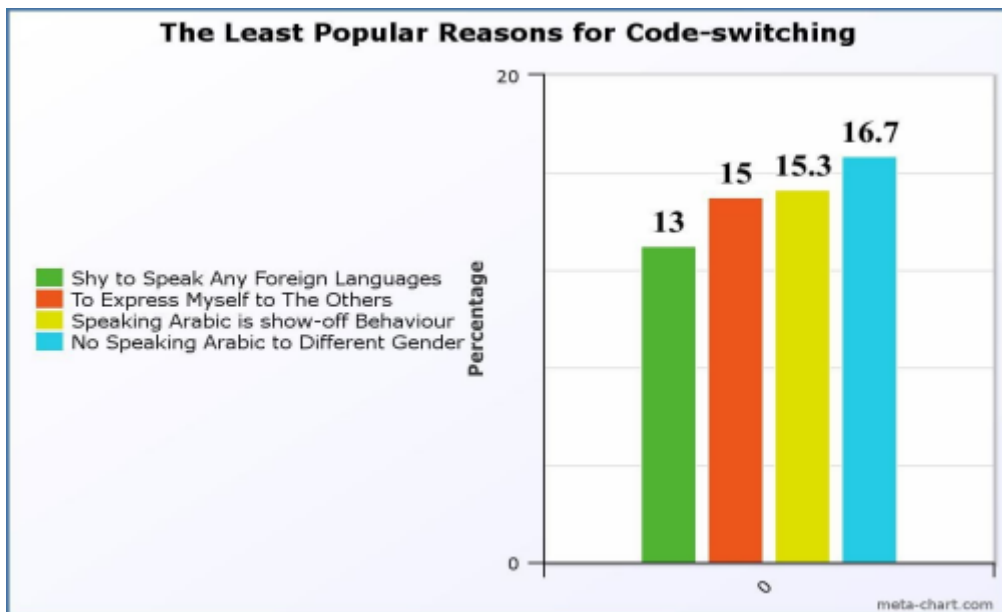
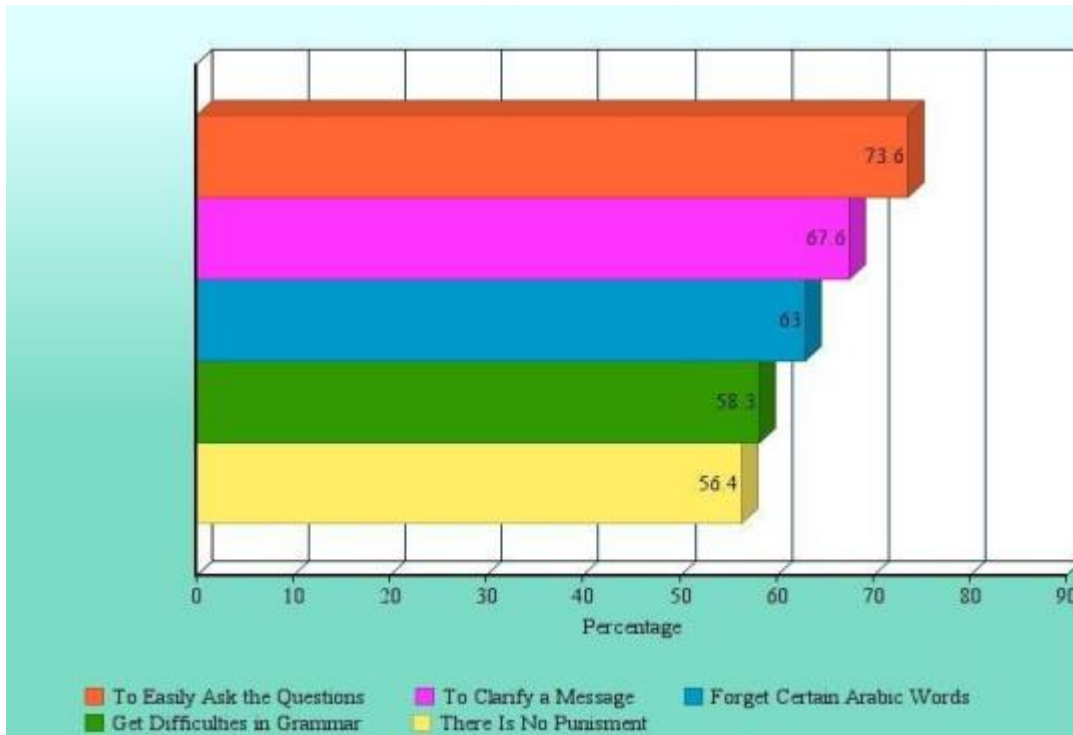


Figure 1 provides a visual comparison of the most and least frequently reported reasons for students' code-switching. Rather than presenting new data, the figure highlights the overall pattern

identified in Table 1, emphasizing the clear contrast between dominant and marginal factors. As illustrated, academic-related reasons, particularly those associated with facilitating interaction with lecturers, emerge as the most dominant factors of code-switching. In contrast, affective factors, such as feelings of shyness when speaking a foreign language, appear as the least influential. This visual representation reinforces the quantitative findings, which show that code-switching is predominantly shaped by communicative and academic needs rather than emotional or interpersonal considerations.

### Quantitative Findings

As indicated in the questionnaire design, the items were systematically categorized into three dimensions—academic, social, and personal—representing distinct factors underlying students' code-switching behavior in the classroom. The aggregated results across these dimensions are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Three Aspects of Code-Switching in This Study

No	Aspect	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Academic	14.4 (4.8%)	30.8 (10.3%)	91.6 (30.5%)	117.3 (39.1%)	45.9 (15.3%)
2	Social	46.7 (15.6%)	69.1 (23.1%)	94.9 (31.6%)	66 (21.9%)	23.3 (7.8%)
3	Personal	45 (14.9%)	71.6 (23.9%)	91.1 (30.4%)	74 (24.7%)	18.3 (6.1%)

*Source: Primary data collected through a questionnaire distributed to 300 Arabic language students at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, and UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta*

Based on the data presented above, academic factors emerge as the most influential dimension driving students' code-switching behavior. A total of 54.4% of respondents expressed agreement or strong agreement with statements related to academic purposes, indicating that linguistic challenges and instructional demands play a dominant role in shaping language alternation practices. This is followed by personal factors (30.8%) and social factors (29.7%), suggesting that although affective and interactional considerations contribute to code-switching, their influence is comparatively less significant than academic needs.

### Qualitative Findings

The qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews consisting of ten guiding questions. The first question explored participants' views on the use of Indonesian in Arabic language classrooms. The majority of respondents expressed a negative stance toward this practice, perceiving it as a limitation that may hinder students' language development. They argued that

consistent exposure to and use of Arabic are essential for achieving fluency. From this perspective, reliance on Indonesian is considered counterproductive, as it may reduce students' opportunities to develop their Arabic proficiency.

Nevertheless, a minority of participants offered a more flexible perspective. One respondent emphasized that the appropriateness of using Indonesian depends on students' proficiency levels. In this case, students are grouped based on placement test results: those in advanced classes are required to use Arabic exclusively, whereas beginners and intermediate learners are permitted to use Indonesian when necessary. Another participant suggested a balanced approach, advocating for a proportional use of both Arabic and Indonesian (e.g., 50:50) to enhance students' comprehension of instructional content. These differing perspectives indicate that the use of Indonesian is context-dependent rather than categorically rejected.

Subsequent interview questions examined the specific conditions under which instructors use Indonesian or Arabic during teaching. Several participants reported using Indonesian primarily for academic purposes, such as explaining technical terminology, clarifying complex concepts, summarizing lessons, and translating unfamiliar vocabulary. Additionally, one participant noted that Indonesian is particularly useful when teaching beginner-level students, who may struggle to comprehend instruction delivered entirely in Arabic.

Conversely, when asked about contexts in which they exclusively use Arabic, participants provided varied responses. Some instructors reported consistently using Arabic in conversation classes and with advanced learners, arguing that immersion enhances students' communicative competence and facilitates the achievement of instructional goals. In contrast, another participant indicated that using Arabic exclusively is not always effective, particularly given the heterogeneous proficiency levels among students. Interestingly, one respondent reported deliberately using full Arabic instruction at the beginning of the course to stimulate students' interest and motivation. Other participants preferred a bilingual approach, combining Arabic and Indonesian to balance comprehension and exposure.

Regarding the pedagogical implications of code-switching, all participants acknowledged its advantages, particularly in academic contexts. Code-switching was perceived as facilitating clearer explanations of technical terms, improving students' understanding of lesson content, and supporting the interpretation of unfamiliar vocabulary. However, most participants also highlighted several drawbacks. These include reduced vocabulary acquisition, decreased learner autonomy in consulting dictionaries, limited active language use, and a tendency toward passive learning

behavior. One participant additionally noted that code-switching can be time-consuming for instructors, as it often involves repeating explanations in both languages.

When asked which language is more effective in achieving instructional objectives, participants' responses varied. Some argued that exclusive use of Arabic leads to better learning outcomes, while others emphasized the effectiveness of Indonesian in ensuring comprehension. Several participants adopted a situational perspective, suggesting that language choice depends on the nature of the lesson and students' proficiency levels. For example, Indonesian was considered more effective for teaching grammar, whereas Arabic was preferred for speaking-oriented courses. Others favored a multilingual approach, combining both languages without rigid rules.

Further discussion addressed the impact of enforcing or not enforcing the use of Arabic in the classroom. Most participants agreed that requiring students to use Arabic contributes positively to their linguistic development, including improvements in vocabulary, pronunciation, and overall communicative competence. However, some participants noted that such requirements may discourage lower-proficiency students, leading to reduced participation. Conversely, allowing students to use Indonesian may increase classroom participation but may do so at the expense of language proficiency.

Finally, participants were asked to identify situations in which Indonesian use is permitted or restricted. Many agreed that Indonesian may be used when students lack sufficient vocabulary or when engaging in receptive skills such as listening and reading. In contrast, its use is often restricted during activities involving native speakers or formal instructional contexts. Some participants also indicated that Indonesian may be used to support productive skills when necessary, although others adopted a more permissive stance, allowing flexible language use in the classroom.

### **Emerging Patterns from Qualitative Data**

The analysis of interview data reveals several key patterns: 1) The use of Arabic as the primary medium of instruction is generally regarded as essential for language acquisition; 2) Indonesian is employed strategically for academic purposes, particularly for explaining complex concepts and facilitating comprehension; 3) Code-switching is perceived as pedagogically beneficial, although it may also produce negative effects on students' language development; 4) Enforcing the use of Arabic enhances linguistic competence but may reduce participation among lower-level learners; 5) Allowing Indonesian increases participation but may limit language proficiency gains;

6) Indonesian tends to be permitted in receptive skill activities, whereas Arabic is emphasized in productive skill development.

### **Discussion**

The quantitative findings indicate that the most prominent motivations underlying students' code-switching from Arabic to Indonesian in classroom settings are primarily academic. The three most frequently reported reasons include facilitating the formulation of questions addressed to lecturers, clarifying messages during interaction, and compensating for lexical gaps when specific Arabic vocabulary is unavailable. In contrast, the least influential factors are associated with affective and social considerations, such as feelings of shyness when speaking a foreign language, perceptions of self-expression, the belief that speaking Arabic may be interpreted as showing off, and reluctance to communicate with peers of a different gender. Overall, more than half of the respondents attributed their code-switching practices to academic demands, while personal and social factors played comparatively minor roles.

The qualitative findings further corroborate this pattern by demonstrating that code-switching entails both pedagogical advantages and limitations. On the one hand, it serves as an effective instructional strategy that enables teachers to enhance students' comprehension. Specifically, code-switching facilitates the explanation of technical terminology, clarifies unfamiliar vocabulary, and ensures that students grasp the lesson's essential content. On the other hand, excessive use may lead to unintended negative consequences for learners. These include limited exposure to the target language, reduced motivation to consult lexical resources independently, and restricted vocabulary development, ultimately resulting in weaker communicative competence.

A closer examination of the dominant quantitative finding — namely, students' preference for using Indonesian to ask questions — raises important pedagogical considerations. This tendency suggests that students may lack sufficient Arabic linguistic resources to articulate their inquiries effectively. However, it may also reflect classroom norms shaped by teachers' attitudes toward language use. The qualitative data provide further insight into this issue, revealing that many instructors allow the use of Indonesian, particularly when students encounter lexical difficulties. In some cases, teachers adopt a flexible stance, allowing Indonesian regardless of specific conditions.

In light of these findings, it can be argued that the high percentage of students (73.6%) who reported using Indonesian to ask questions is closely linked to their limited Arabic vocabulary. This interpretation is supported by teachers' acknowledgment that students may resort to Indonesian when they lack the necessary lexical items to express their intended meanings. This result is

consistent with previous research conducted by Pollard (2002) which demonstrated that code-switching in bilingual educational settings facilitates students' ability to communicate ideas more effectively. Similarly, Bista (2010) found that bilingual learners engage in code-switching to enhance clarity, avoid misunderstanding, and maintain communicative efficiency.

Another key finding concerns the use of code-switching to clarify messages, particularly when interlocutors fail to understand Arabic. This phenomenon aligns with what Sert (2005) describes as reiteration, in which speakers restate their message in another language to ensure comprehension. From a different theoretical perspective, Gumperz and Blom (1982) categorize this practice as *metaphorical switching*, which is employed to convey meaning more effectively within specific communicative contexts. Additionally, students' tendency to switch to Indonesian when encountering unknown vocabulary can be interpreted as a strategy to sustain conversational flow. Sert (2005) refers to this function as *floor-holding*, where learners draw on their first language to avoid communication breakdowns. This behavior reflects students' willingness to maintain interaction despite linguistic limitations, suggesting a form of strategic competence rather than mere deficiency.

Conversely, the relatively low percentage of students attributing code-switching to shyness indicates that affective factors are not the primary determinants of language alternation in this context. This finding suggests that students generally have sufficient confidence to engage in foreign-language use. Such confidence is widely recognized as a key motivational factor in second language acquisition (Dörnyei, 1994). However, the limited agreement with statements related to self-expression contrasts with Pollard's (2002) findings, which emphasize the role of code-switching in enhancing students' expressive abilities. This discrepancy may indicate contextual differences, particularly in terms of instructional practices and learner expectations.

Importantly, the dominance of academic factors in the quantitative data is strongly supported by the qualitative findings. Teachers reported primarily using code-switching for instructional purposes, such as explaining complex concepts, summarizing lesson content, and clarifying unfamiliar vocabulary. This alignment between students' needs and teachers' practices highlights the central role of academic considerations in shaping code-switching behavior. In this sense, code-switching functions as a shared pedagogical resource that facilitates both teaching effectiveness and learning comprehension within Arabic language classrooms.

### **Comparison with Recent Studies on Code-Switching in Arabic Language Contexts**

The findings of this study are broadly consistent with several previous investigations of code-switching in Arabic language learning contexts, while also placing greater emphasis on the

predominance of academic motivations. In line with the study by Devi Revika Sari et al. (2025), code-switching in classroom interaction primarily serves as a communicative strategy to facilitate understanding and maintain interpersonal rapport among participants. This tendency is clearly reflected in the present findings, where students frequently resort to Indonesian to ensure that their intended meanings are conveyed accurately, particularly in interactions with lecturers and peers.

A similar pattern is also evident when compared with Kaamiliyaa et al. (2023), which identify habitual language use and functional objectives as central factors underlying code-switching practices. Within the context of this study, students' alternation between Arabic and Indonesian can be understood not only as an immediate response to communicative demands, but also as an extension of their established bilingual practices in academic settings. This indicates that code-switching is not an occasional occurrence, but rather an integral component of students' linguistic behavior.

Moreover, the present findings resonate with the study conducted by Rifki Firdaus et al. (2025), which conceptualizes code-switching as a practical linguistic strategy in multilingual academic environments. The current study further substantiates this view by demonstrating that code-switching plays a crucial role in facilitating comprehension, supporting the expression of ideas, and maintaining the continuity of interaction, particularly when students encounter linguistic limitations. However, while Firdaus highlights the dual function of code-switching in both communicative and socio-cultural dimensions, this study's findings suggest that academic and communicative considerations are more salient than identity-related factors in the context of Indonesian higher education.

In addition, the results of this study reinforce the argument proposed by Ahmad Habibi Syahid et al. (2025), who position code-switching as both a communicative and pedagogical resource in Arabic language instruction. The qualitative data reveal that instructors intentionally employ code-switching to explain complex grammatical concepts, clarify meaning, and enhance students' overall comprehension. This suggests that code-switching is not regarded as a deficiency in language proficiency, but rather as a strategic instructional practice, particularly for learners at lower levels of proficiency. Despite these similarities, a notable difference emerges when the present findings are compared with studies that emphasize the role of social and identity-related factors in shaping code-switching behavior. While previous research highlights the influence of interpersonal dynamics and identity expression, the current study indicates that such factors exert relatively limited influence. This divergence may be explained by differences in institutional contexts, where university

classrooms tend to prioritize academic performance and instructional effectiveness over the construction of social identity.

Overall, this study contributes to the existing literature by offering a more focused interpretation of code-switching as a predominantly academic and pedagogical phenomenon in Arabic language classrooms in Indonesian higher education. By incorporating both students' experiences and teachers' perspectives across multiple institutional settings, the study provides a more nuanced and contextually grounded understanding of code-switching practices, thereby extending and refining insights from previous research.

## CONCLUSION

This study investigated the reasons underlying code-switching among Arabic language students in Indonesian universities and examined its pedagogical implications from teachers' perspectives. The findings indicate that students' code-switching behavior is predominantly influenced by academic factors, particularly the need to facilitate questioning, clarify meaning, and compensate for linguistic limitations such as insufficient vocabulary and grammatical difficulties, while social and personal factors play a comparatively minor role. From the instructors' perspectives, code-switching functions as a useful pedagogical strategy that enhances students' comprehension of complex concepts and unfamiliar vocabulary; however, its excessive use may reduce exposure to the target language and hinder vocabulary development and communicative competence. Therefore, code-switching should be employed selectively and strategically, taking into account students' proficiency levels and instructional contexts. Overall, this study highlights that code-switching can be an effective pedagogical tool when used appropriately. However, further research across broader institutional contexts is needed to provide more comprehensive insights into its role in Arabic language education.

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