

Code-Switching Differences Between Business Graduates and Non-Business Graduates in Professional Settings

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Abstract

This research investigates code-switching behaviours among business and non-business graduates within professional contexts among international companies in Kurdistan. Code-switching is the practice of alternating between languages in a conversation. It focuses on the frequency, types and situations of code-switching, the study investigates whether educational background significantly influences linguistic practices. The research reveals discernible differences among business and non-business graduates. It shows that business graduates use code-switching more appropriately than non-business graduates in the professional settings. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of language use in the workplace and the role of education in shaping communicative competence. The research explores how business graduates trained in using business terminology items and communication strategies by utilizing code-switching more effectively than non-business graduates. The study concludes that linguistic flexibility is a vital professional skill that plays a great role in achieving business success, especially in culturally diverse regions.

Keyword: (Code-switching- Business Graduates, Non-business Graduates-Business Settings)

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Introduction

With the economic development, many international companies emerged in Kurdistan. These companies seek qualified people who have language skills. Code-switching is one of the common practices in business settings and it is a common strategy used by individuals. This linguistic shift plays a significant role in building a professional environment during negotiations. As Dechapratumwan (2016, p. 17) states that the history of code-switching is deeply embedded in the rich tapestry of human language use.

This study examines the differences between business graduates and non-business graduates in using code-switching while they sit in professional settings. Business graduates trained often on business and commerce terminology in English language. On the one hand, this gives them control and power to use code-switching between Kurdish & English languages during business meetings with clients across different people. Non-business graduates on the other hand, rarely use code-switching because they were deprived of business terminology during their classes at universities and they were not exposed to business training and negotiations. Meanwhile the non-business graduates were rarely taking English classes, this negatively affected their ability to code-switch. Hamam states that (2011, p. 28) prior studies have recently shown interest in code-switching's cultural and

identity aspects, with scholars delving into how language choices reflect and shape individual and group identities.

Review of Literature

Code-switching, as the practice of switching between two or more languages, is a very common phenomenon. Its use varies between people based on their educational background and the environmental situations. Coleman (1988, p. 67) states that business graduates often display particular interpersonal skills, such as assertiveness, networking ability and confidence that are rooted in their educational background and the classes they have taken.

Mobley (1977, p. 12) urges that business graduates should be owing to their skill set and career aspirations, exhibit distinct switch patterns compared to the graduates from non-business classes. Heller (1994, p. 38) sheds light on the sociocultural aspect, highlighting how code-switching empowers people and challenges social boundaries.

The studies show that code-switching among business graduates can significantly enhance communication effectiveness in professional environment.

Nguyen, T. & Innabi, H (2012, p. 253) claimed that interview-based observation gives clarity to the researchers to capture the difficulties of the social interactions and organizational culture, provides rich qualitative information. They stated that this method is very fruitful because it gives the researchers an understanding regarding the contextual nuances of business settings.

Silverman, D. (2013, p. 179) states that interview-based observation is very fruitful in capturing authentic interactions and behaviours that might not have a good result in other methods of data collection. Ali & Khaleque (2020, p. 41) observed that code-switching is highly used among employees with a business educational background.

Code-switching in Business Settings

Giles, H. and Zhang, D. (2013, p. 45) describe code-switching as a strategic linguistic behaviour employed by bilingual and multilingual individuals to 'convey identity, establish rapport, or adapt to social norms in a professional context. This phenomenon is very common among business people especially during formal settings. Lately in Kurdistan with the emergence of many multinational companies the business terminologies were used by Kurdish native speakers, this serves as a means of asserting identity or creating a sense of

belonging within a particular group especially those who graduated in the business schools as they have the highest exposure to these terminologies.

Code-switching requires cultural and social awareness, it requires using the business norms in the right place and right locations. The speaker should understand the people whom they are talking to use code-switching, this requires a considerable effort by the speaker not to lose track of the conversation and not to create any sort of misunderstandings. Muysken (2000, p. 182) defines code switching as cognitively demanding, since it needs the language selection and contextual appropriateness especially in high-stakes business negotiations.

Code-switching among business graduates has become a tool of convincing and giving them strength and power to control the conversation. It usually empowers the negotiators by enabling them to navigate various linguistic contexts with more strength. Auer (1998, p.19) clearly describes code-switching as a strategic business tool to win the conversation because he states that code-switching serves as a communicative tool that can enhance authority, foster rapport and assert social dominance in negotiations and business exchanges. This method gives them power over the listeners that they have more linguistic capabilities which creates some sort of feeling inferior to them.

Despite the positive sides of code-switching in business, there are some negative aspects of code-switching in business settings can be shed light on. Misunderstanding and creating vague atmosphere inside is one of the most common negative sides of code-switching. Myers-Scotton (1993, p. 115) emphasises that code-switching requires a huge handling atmosphere to avoid misunderstanding. He states that despite the positive sides of code switching, it has some downsides, without careful use of it, it creates improper management of business settings.

Methodology

During the business settings, the interview-based observation technique is used, this is the most common format of data collection in qualitative research. Goodall, H. L. (2000, p. 44) discusses the concept of interview-based observation and emphasises the importance of a blend between interviewing subjects and observing them in their natural environment to gather comprehensive data. This method is chosen to examine how the business and non-

business graduates utilize code switching in professional settings. The data collected during twenty business meetings. There were 10 people to be monitored, five of them were business graduates and 5 of them were non-business graduates. The groups were divided into two, each group had five members, one of them were 5 people from business graduates and another one consisted of 5 people from non-business graduates. Each group was sent to 10 business settings with the same business goal which was convincing the customers to give better displays for upcoming UTC (Under the Cap) promotion.

During these twenty business settings, Kurdish language was used as the main business language and English was used during code-switching. The researcher observed and recorded the participants use of code-switching. Despite the observation and recording of the frequency of code-switching, the researchers captured that it effects on the business meetings. The data were collected through attending the researcher to these twenty business settings to observe the language use and the moments where code-switching was used. The data were analysed qualitatively to identify the differences between business and non-business graduates' code-switching.

The reason behind choosing this method was to observe the real-time language changes in the most authentic business environments and meetings. This method provides the real time of code-switching and clarifies the results of using it during professional settings.

The English business terminology was accurately recorded to know how many words were used and how frequently they were used, who are the users of these words, are they the business graduates or non-business graduates? What are the positive and negative sides of using code-switching during business meetings? What are the effects of using code-switching on the business sessions? All of these are recorded and observed precisely.

The Business Vocabularies for Code-Switching

During the observation of 20 business meetings, there are 50 top words widely repeated.

These words have been repeated in various situations by the business graduates while rarely noticed on non-business graduated.

Table one: Common Business words used in Code-switching

Win Win	Top shop	range	contract	promotion
Agenda	work force	budget	check	trade offer
Bottom Line	vision	investment	share	report
Top Line	mission	ROI	agree	email
Branding	customer	strategy	cost	presentation
Marketing	credit	deadline	team	service level
Displays	ceiling	meeting	plan	agreement
cold shelf	proposal	schedule	product	order
warm shelf	forecast	job	goal	delivery
promotion area	sales	deal	offer	confirm

The Results

While the researcher recorded and observed the 20 business sessions, five business graduates and non-business graduates were targeted. The results show that the five business graduates in total used and repeated the list of common business vocabulary items in code-switching hundred thirty-three times in the business meetings. While non-business graduates used only twenty-nine times out of twenty business meetings.

The uses of vocabulary items varied from one session to another, meanwhile the frequency of their use differed from each other, some words were used and repeated more frequently than others even by the business graduates based on the situations to which they were exposed. It was observed that the non-business graduates despite using the business vocabulary items rarely, few words of the list above were used more than one time in the same meeting.

Chart one: Top most Common business vocabularies used in code switching by business graduates

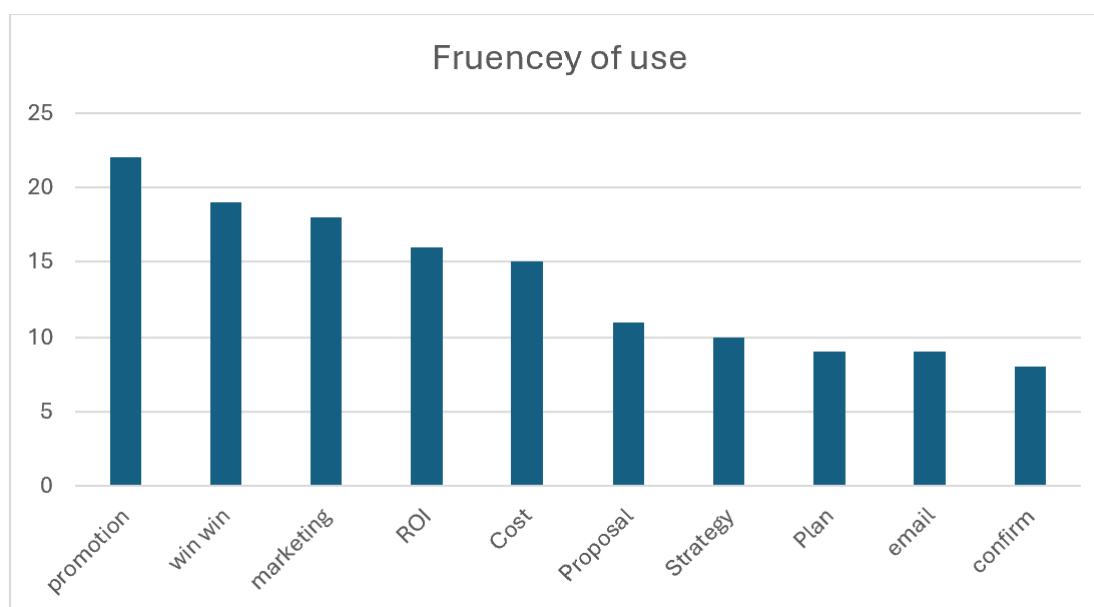


Table two: Top most Common business vocabularies used in code switching by business graduates

Key Business words	Freeneey of use
promotion	22
win win	19
marketing	18
ROI	16
Cost	15
Proposal	11
Strategy	10
Plan	9
email	9
confirm	8

Here, it can be recognized that these ten business vocabularies were used in code-switching mostly during the business settings, the word promotion is the top used word because the meetings were for convincing the customers to show profit history. The customers were approached with these words in order to convince them, while the word confirm came at the bottom of the top list where it was used eight times by the business-graduates.

Though the meetings were fully in Kurdish language and geographically it was in different locations where it held in Erbil, Sully and Duhok, the code-switching was used usefully and had better results than the meetings were not used. Out of the 20 meetings, 10

were led by business graduates, it had better results and 9 out of the 10 business meetings ended successfully in the favour of the company where the business graduates worked.

Chart Two: Top most Common business vocabularies used in code switching by non-business graduates

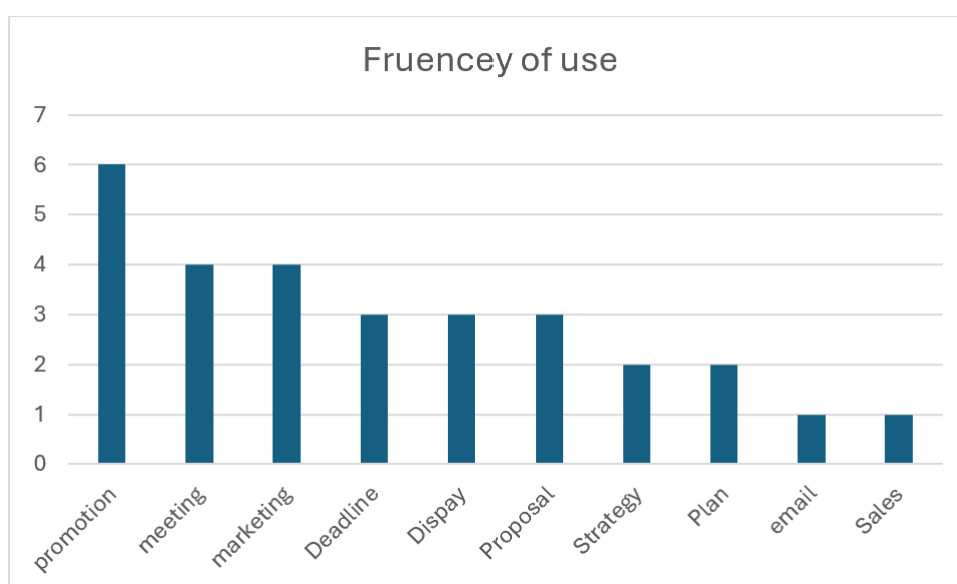


Table Three: Top most Common business vocabularies used in code switching by non-business graduates

Key Business words	Freeney of use
promotion	6
meeting	4
marketing	4
Deadline	3
Display	3
Proposal	3
Strategy	2
Plan	2
email	1
Sales	1

If we look at the above tables, it can be noticed that the business vocabularies were used in code-switching by non-business graduates only 29 times in twenty business settings, which is only 21% use of the business graduates. The word promotion took the top of the table and

it became mostly used word by non-business graduates, but compared to the business graduates its usage was only 27% of that by business graduate. The research observed that out of the 10 business settings, they could succeed in convincing the customers only in 6, while in business graduates it was 9. This shows that the business graduates were successful in 90% of the task while non business graduates were successful at 60% of the task in convincing the customers. This shows that using code-switching affects the business meetings successfully. Bakhtin (1981, P. 76) clarifies this situation in a very simple way by stating that code-switching in professional and business meetings allows the leaders and businessperson to adapt their language to various audiences and this enhances communication clarity which leads to more successful negation and collaborations.

Holmes (2013, p. 15) urges that non-business graduates often lack the strategic use of code-switching which can result in failure and miscommunication during the business negotiations. This tells us that not using code-switching during business settings can hinder relationship-building, negotiations, collaborations and all business success especially in the area where multiculturalism and multilingualism have long existed.

Conclusions

The study demonstrates that business graduates tend to use code-switching more frequently than non-business graduates in the business settings. The strategic use of code-switching by business graduates has been linked to enhanced communication, stronger relationships, and improved overall success for the institutes and companies whom they work for. The ability by the business graduates to adapt language shift and communication style to various contexts leads to significantly contributes to the success of the organizations where they work for. Despite their success at 60% of the business meetings, the non-business graduates showed that they have a lack of communication style which leads to unsuccess and results in fewer success stories to the organizations they work for. Lack of strategic language adaptation found obstacles in front of their success which leads to failure of better delivering the message and lack of communications styles and skills.

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خلاصة

يبحث هذا البحث في سلوكيات التبدل اللغوي بين خريجي الأعمال وغير المتخصصين في الأعمال ضمن السياقات المهنية بين الشركات الدولية في كردستان. التبدل اللغوي هو ممارسة التغيير بين اللغات أثناء المحادثة. يركز على وتيرة وأنواع ومواقف التبدل اللغوي، ويبحث في ما إذا كانت الخلفية التعليمية تؤثر بشكل كبير على الممارسات اللغوية. يكشف البحث عن اختلافات ملحوظة بين خريجي الأعمال وغير المتخصصين في الأعمال. ويظهر أن خريجي الأعمال يستخدمون التبدل اللغوي بشكل أكثر ملاءمة من خريجي غير المتخصصين في الأعمال في البيئات المهنية. تساهم النتائج في فهم أعمق لاستخدام اللغة في مكان العمل ودور التعليم في تشكيل الكفاءة التواصلية. يستكشف البحث كيف يستخدم خريجو الأعمال المدربون على مصطلحات الأعمال واستراتيجيات الاتصال التبدل اللغوي بشكل أكثر فعالية من خريجي غير المتخصصين في الأعمال. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن المرونة اللغوية هي مهارة مهنية حيوية تلعب دورًا كبيرًا في تحقيق النجاح في مجال الأعمال، وخاصة في المناطق ذات التنوع الثقافي.

لكلمات المفتاحية: (التبدل الرموز - خريجي إدارة الأعمال، خريجي غير إدارة الأعمال - اجتماعات العمل)

پوخته

ئەم تویژینه‌وهیه لیکۆلینه‌وه له ره‌فتاری گۆرینی کۆد ده‌کات له نیوان ده‌رچووانی بازەرگانی و نابازەرگانی له چوارچێوه‌ی پیشه‌یی له نیوان کۆمپانیا نیوده‌وه‌له‌تییه‌کان له کوردستان . گۆرینی کۆد بریتییه له پراکتیزه‌کردنی گۆرانه‌کاری له نیوان زمانه‌کاندا له کاتی گفتوگۆدا. تویژینه‌وه‌که سه‌رنج ده‌خاته سه‌ر فڕیکۆئێسی، جۆره‌کان و بارودۆخه‌کانی گۆرینی کۆد، لیکۆلینه‌وه‌که لیکۆلینه‌وه له‌وه ده‌کات که ئایا پاشخانی په‌روه‌رده‌یی کاریگه‌رییه‌کی به‌رچاوی له‌سه‌ر پراکتیکه‌کانی زمانه‌وانی هه‌یه یان نا. تویژینه‌وه‌که جیاوازییه دیاره‌کانی نیوان ده‌رچووانی بازەرگانی و نابازەرگانی ئاشکرا ده‌کات. ئەوه نیشان ده‌دات که ده‌رچووانی بازەرگانی له ژینگه‌ پیشه‌یه‌یه‌کاندا به‌ شیوه‌یه‌کی دروستتر گۆرینی کۆد به‌کارده‌هێنن له چاو ده‌رچووانی نا بازەرگانی. دۆزینه‌وه‌کان به‌شداری له تیگه‌یشتنیکی قوولتر له به‌کاره‌ینانی زمان له شوینی کار و پۆلی په‌روه‌رده له دارشتنی لێهاتویی په‌یوه‌ندیکردن. تویژینه‌وه‌که لیکۆلینه‌وه له‌وه ده‌کات که چۆن ده‌رچووانی بازەرگانی که له زاراوه‌ی بازەرگانی و ستراتیژییه‌کانی په‌یوه‌ندیکردندا راهینراون، به‌ شیوه‌یه‌کی کاریگه‌رتر له گۆرینی کۆد به‌کارده‌هێنن له چاو ده‌رچووانی نا بازەرگانی. تویژینه‌وه‌که به‌و ئەنجامه ده‌گات که نه‌رمی زمانه‌وانی کارامه‌یه‌یه‌کی پیشه‌یی گرنگه که پۆلیکی گه‌وره‌ی هه‌یه له به‌ده‌سته‌یه‌ینانی سه‌ره‌که‌وتنی بازەرگانی، به‌تایبه‌تی له ناوچه فره‌چه‌شه‌نه‌کانی کولتوویدا.

وشه سه‌ره‌کییه‌کان: (گۆرینی کۆد- ده‌رچووانی بازەرگانی، ده‌رچووانی نابازەرگانی- کۆبونه‌وه بازەرگانیه‌کان)