

<b>Title:</b>	A study of Cantonese-English Code-switching in CUHK English Major and Non-English Major Students' Daily Utterances
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## **Abstract**

As code-switching in the university context is under-researched, this study focuses on the use of Cantonese-English code-switching in Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) students' daily utterances. It first investigates students' code-switching motivations, habits, and characteristics in the CUHK context. Then, it explores the differences between the daily code-switching of English Majors and Non-English Majors. With reference to Chu's (2007) research, a set of questionnaire questions are designed to test whether the Principle of Economy and Expedient code-mixing are prominent motivations of CUHK students' code-switching. 8 group discussions and follow-up interviews are conducted to obtain data on students' natural language use. 96 minutes of speech data are transcribed to explore the qualitative aspects of code-switching in English Majors and Non-English Majors daily utterances. The present study suggests that the Principle of Economy and Expedient Code-mixing remain the key motivations for students' code-switching. In general, CUHK students frequently code-switch. Moreover, Age, interlocutors, English proficiency, formality, and social status are factors affecting students' code-switching likeliness. This study also showed that code-switching frequency or likeliness has no direct relationship with students' majors. However, English Majors tend to use more English adjectives, personal names, interjections, exclamatory sentences, and English words with syllables split.

## Reflection

Before doing this research, I expected that English Majors were more likely to code-switch than students from other majors. However, this study showed me that code-switching likeliness was related to personal experience, especially students' upbringing and their peers. Students' majors were not directly related to their likeliness of code-switching. Therefore, this project helped me break the shared stereotype of "English majors code-switch more". Also, I was never aware that people would code-switch to fill the stylistic gaps when high Cantonese forms are absent. This study enabled me to explore "code-mixing" and "code-switching" in students' utterances as well. I found that most students' code-switching was "intra-sentential code-mixing" instead of "inter-sentential code-switching". In short, this project provided me with a precious opportunity to investigate various aspects of code-switching that linguistics courses have yet to discussed. In the process, I understood more about the code-switching habits and motives of CUHK students. It as well pushed me to reflect on my code-switching usage.