

## **Original Research Article**

### **CODE SWITCHING AND CODE MIXING ON SOCIAL MEDIA WRITING SKILLS AMONG UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES IN EKITI STATE, NIGERIA**

#### **ABSTRACT**

*The study investigated code switching and code mixing on social media writing skills of the University undergraduates in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The study investigated the level of code switching and code mixing among male and female undergraduates on social media writing and it also examines the influence of code switching and code mixing on social media writing skills among universities undergraduates in Ekiti State. The descriptive survey research design was adopted in the study. Multistage sampling procedure was used to select the sample. The first stage purposive sampling techniques were used to sample all the four university in Ekiti state. The second stage, proportional sampling technique was used to sample from of the four universities. The third stage simple random sampling techniques was used to sample undergraduates from each faculty in four universities. Questionnaire was used to collect data on the study. Section A focused on the demographic variables of the respondents such as name of university, faculty and level of study and undergraduate background. Section B was made up items to elicit information on code mixing and code switching undergraduates on social media writing skills. The reliability of the instrument was determined through test, re-test method and in doing this, the instrument administered on 20 respondents outside the sample twice within the interval of two weeks. The two responses were correlated and analysed using test re-test, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.73. The data collected was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics such as the frequency counts percentages and bar chart were used to answer research questions. Hypotheses 1 and 2 were tested using Pearson's Product moment correlation; hypotheses 3, 4 were tested using t-test. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. It was recommended among others that University undergraduates should stick to the option of language they choose to use on social media and that code switching and code mixing should be used alongside with*

*quotation marks to indicate deliberate use of other codes on social media to show compliance with syntactic rules guiding writing.*

## **Introduction**

The phenomenon of code switching and code mixing can be attributed to British traders and Christian missionaries who lived in Badagry, close to Lagos in the southwest of Nigeria, in the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century. While the slave trade was in practise, the merchants engaged in code switching. After the slave trade was abolished in 1807, the freed slaves of Nigerian descent returned to their native land. Many of them later worked as interpreters for Christian missionaries after being exposed to western education and Christianity.

The fact remains that before the advent of the white men, the exact number of languages spoken in Nigeria appeared to be unknown. English naturally evolved into the official language of government after the British colonised Nigeria. However, that does not stop parents from using the mother tongue to communicate with their children. In most cases, children are fond of using their mother tongues in their various primary schools. Moreover, the creation of schools is an integral part of the missionaries' operations in coastal areas of Nigeria, where they trained their converts to work as catechists and teachers in the missions.

In order to accommodate the rising demand for Western education, the colonial authority also started to establish schools, communicate in English language at that time. It is sufficient to say that English during this time served primarily as an instrumental language for bridging the gap between the natives and the British. People started to get interested in the language during this time because they considered it as a sign of social standing.

The fact that English is the primary medium of instruction in Nigerian schools demonstrates how important the language is to the development of the country. English is a required subject at every educational level, from elementary school to higher institutions, and it is more than just a classroom subject. In Nigeria, a credit pass in English language was a requirement for applicants to gain admission into postsecondary institutions such Universities, Colleges of Education, and Polytechnics. In addition, to graduate from tertiary institutions, first-year students are required to enrol in and successfully complete a course on 'Use of English.' Majority of universities also offered English as remedial instruction. Students from different regions of Nigeria who attended postsecondary institutions now speak English as their first language.

English language holds a special place in Nigeria's educational system. English continues to be the dominant language in business, media, education and communication. In fact, all university courses continue to be taught exclusively in English, with the exception of those that focus on teaching indigenous and foreign languages. As a result, proficiency in the use of English Language proficiency serves as a benchmark for assessing people's level of education.

English is provided as a general studies course in Nigerian universities with the goal of assisting students in achieving a passable level of proficiency in the language. Ayodabo and Acheoah (2013) assert that socio-cultural and environmental factors prevent Nigerians learning English as a second language from attaining the same degree of phonological proficiency as English speakers do. However, it is advised that tertiary students work hard to develop communicative English proficiency. Considering the multilingual and multicultural nature of Nigeria, it became obvious that the only language that can foster her development is English. This shows that because Nigeria had a multilingual language, English coexists in Nigeria with a number of local languages. Although English is widely used for communication, numerous highly codified Nigerian dialects are still used in various parts of the nation. Both English and Nigerian languages have benefited from the interactions between them. The phenomena of interference, which explains how languages have changed how English is used on social media, is the one that receives the most press. Social media come in many different forms, but the most well-known ones are Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, BBM, Path, Instagram, Skype, and Myspace. Others are blog, WordPress, online encyclopaedia popularly known as Wikipedia, Flickr, YouTube, and virtual social worlds known as Second Life (Hamid, 2016). Individual students use at least one or two of these social media with the aid of internet. Ofodu (2014) asserts that social media can be easily accessed via mobile phone such as Android, iPhone, iPad and tablets.

In Ekiti and other parts of the world, university freshmen use social media at a rate that seems to be rising daily, and many of them rely on it for communication and chit-chatting. One might be tempted to draw the conclusion that university students have incorporated social media into their social lives because it allows them to interact, collaborate, share information, and communicate with other users while also allowing them to represent themselves and create a virtual social network (Sari, 2017). It appears that undergraduate students at Nigerian higher institutions are giving more weight to using social media. Therefore, it is clear that social media has created whole new opportunities for social engagement in the educational field. As a result, it is assumed that the majority of university students utilise English, the nation's official language and the primary business language on social media, to communicate information and opinions on social media.

However, the development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) ushered in the sporadic use of digital devices, such as the internet in the 21st century throughout the world and this has given room for criticisms on many writings on social platforms. ICT plays a vital role in all types of technological developments including social media which allow the public to quickly contact, evaluate, share and transfer either data, views, knowledge, data collection, representation, processing and dissemination of political issues, racial subjects, religious issues, books, movies, love affairs and relationship among friends, family members and strangers (Rimmer, 2017).

Similar to this, social media facilitates the free exchange of thoughts, information, and opinions between people and the general public (Meike & Young, 2017). Social media as an online platform is said to be focused on fostering relationships between individuals who have similar interests, backgrounds, or activities. According to Onifade and Alabi

(2012), social media enable individuals to connect online to create a group, a forum, and a community where information may be shared without regard to a person's physical location. Social media are online platform where ideas can be shared in order to build relationship among friends, family and strangers. Therefore, it is believed that majority of university undergraduates share information and views on the social media with the use of English language which is the official language of the country, and the principal language of business on social media.

More so, it is observed that electronic gadgets such as mobile phones, desktops and notebooks on which social media are operated offer their users the option of the language which they prefer to use. However, the dominant business language on social media has been English. The language settings for technological devices and social networking platforms including WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, and Skype are in English. Because of this, it appears that college students who prefer to speak in English rather than their mother tongue while on campus are more likely to utilise social media.

Despite the influence of English on highly codified Nigerian languages like Yoruba, Hausa, and Igbo, the indigenous languages are still the dominant ones in the various parts of the nation. The use of English by Nigerians, notably Ekiti university freshmen, has been impacted by the interplay between Nigerian languages and the English language. The writing skills of university undergraduates on social media are alarmingly weak and substandard. Many students process their thoughts in mother tongues and so produce expressions that have effect on their writing (Ofodu, Olajobi and Adesugba 2019). These weaknesses generally arise in inappropriate use of words, spellings and coinages. These phenomena are noticeable in the writings of undergraduates on social media.

Therefore, to write a sensible sentence on a social platform, the university undergraduates are expected to think deeply and gather their thoughts together before writing. This is because writing has become more sophisticated that readers want to see writers to effectively make use of spellings, grammar, and punctuations appropriately. Writing has been seen as a core skill that enables writers to think, because a beautiful idea on social platform may be flawed by code switching and code mixing of mother tongues for second language. Generally, writing has some problems associated with it. Writing problems can be classified into linguistic and psychological problems. Haider (2012) and Rico (2014) attributed writing problems to lack of confidence caused by teaching strategy. One could add that weakness in thinking process, and lack of quick mind mapping could also contribute to the problem of writing among university undergraduates.

In other word, the other notable phenomena is contact with code-switching and code mixing among university undergraduates as well as other bilingual speakers who alternate second language together with their mother tongue are observed in the writing of university undergraduates on social media. According to Otemuyiwa (2011), code-switching and code mixing is an example of linguistic interaction phenomena. The alternating use of two or more languages in the same discussion is known as code-switching. When a speaker needs to fill a gap with a suitable word that is unknown in the second language (L2), code switching or code mixing L1 to L2 switching occurs. On

social media, switching can occasionally be seen among various persons, between statements, or even within a single sentence. In other words, code switching and code mixing could happen across clauses, sentences, or even inside a single sentence. When a single word, phrase, or sentence moves between two languages in university undergraduate writing, this is known as code-switching (Taweel&Btoosh, 2012). According to Adetuyi, Owaniyi, and Adeniran (2017), code flipping is a common occurrence in multilingual communities like Nigeria where speakers utilise their first language, also known as their native language, and their second language, also known as their acquired language, in various contexts.

According to Eldridge (2016), code swapping between speakers of different languages can happen for one of three reasons. When speakers are unable to communicate themselves in a single language, they use code switching as a first resort. As a result, they move to a different language to make up for their lack of writing proficiency. The psychological basis for code switching and code mixing when speakers seek to show support for a specific social group or include other speakers is the second explanation. The ability to switch, on the other hand, can potentially exclude people who do not speak the conversational language. The last socio-psychological aspect is switching, which occurs when speakers want to make a point of expressing their attitudes to the audience.

However, university undergraduates' attitude and interest in code switching and code mixing seems to negate the factors responsible for code switching and code mixing as stated by some scholars who have worked on code mixing and code switching. As a matter of fact, people code switch to show emphasis, in order to feel more convenient. The use of code switching seems to be part of the undergraduates' ways of life which may not be easily avoided by them during formal writing including social media writing. This indicates that the undergraduates are virtually product of bilingualism which means that they naturally speak a language or more languages besides English as a second language.

Although code flipping have their uses, as some researchers have noted, it is recommended that undergraduates practise both on social media since it allows them to develop their interpersonal relationships and their ability to adapt to any scenario. Choy (2011) argued that code flipping can improve communication amongst people who live in a community with a variety of cultural backgrounds, which supported this observation.

Despite the alleged necessity of code switching and code mixing, if not utilised correctly and mindfully, they appear to have detrimental effects on undergraduates' language proficiency. The excessive use of code switching and mixing is thought to have a detrimental effect on university undergraduate students' writing abilities. According to Roy-Campbell (2011), code flipping and mother tongue mingling among kids in schools caused them to lose interest in studying and improving their proficiency in the English language in the classroom. The usage of code switching and code mixing by university students may have a negative impact on their writing in formal contexts because virtual learning and interviews are growing more and more common throughout the world, especially in the job market.

Tariq (2012) claims that the use of code switching and code mixing on social media writing was observed to have negatively affected students' academic achievement and proficiency in English language up to tertiary institutions. The use of code switching

and code mixing on Facebook, according to Akram and Albalawi (2016), distracts pupils and their ability to focus and perform well in English language classes. These submissions affirm that the use of code switching on social media writing by university undergraduates may negatively affect their proficiency in English language. So, as university undergraduates in Ekiti State, they are expected to use quotation marks on social media writing that involves two languages where one is dominant and the other is recessive in order to show to other social media users that it was a deliberate act and not a mark of weakness.

Grammatically, people use insertion to show strong emotion or surprise to gain attention. So, if university undergraduates will use insertion, they are expected to use English insertions under interjections like 'wao', 'Alas' rather than 'oga o' see you see'abi o' on social media platform. In Nigeria universities, both public and private, English language instruction is essentially required of all students who do not major in English. This indicates that English language is being studied by all undergraduates in the country as part of General Studies with the aim of improving on their proficiency in both speaking and writing skills gathered in secondary schools before securing admission to university.

In other words, both public and private universities in the country use English language as the medium of instruction for all courses except for linguistic courses like French, Yoruba or Latin. English is a language of business and instruction in Universities in Nigeria because it is the official language of the country. Therefore, undergraduates are expected to lay much emphasis on writing of English language on social media rather than mixing or switching code on social platform. The point being raised here is that code switching and code mixing are very common among Undergraduates in Nigeria and particularly in Ekiti. It appears that the students could not do without mixing or switching from mother tongue with the English language.

Moreover, it is observed that gender of the undergraduates is one of the important factors determining the use of code switching and code mixing on social media writing skills. It appears that code switching are very prevalent among male Undergraduates than their female counterparts. The reason for this may not be too far from the fact that male undergraduates are socially mixed than the female undergraduates, though, both male and female undergraduates have the tendency to code switch and code mixing on social media writing.

Kennison (2013) opines that male students develop and use more languages than female students. Ishan and Hua (2015) objected to the observation of Denison as they assert that female students tend to code-mix a lot during conversations on social media than male students. However, Rita and Hamad (2012) were of the opinion that both male and female undergraduates code-mix and code-switch on social media. This suggests that there is no gender difference to code switching on social media writing skills among undergraduates in Ekiti State, Nigeria. This necessitated its inclusion as a variable in this study.

It is believed that the background of university undergraduates which places English as second language and rate mother tongue as first language may trigger the use of code switching on social media writing skills among university undergraduates. The

thrust of this study is to describe the influence of code switching on social media writing skills among university undergraduates in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Apparently, there have been records of code-switching and code mixing on social media writing skills of university undergraduates as evident on students' writing on Facebook, WhatsApp and other social media platforms. The rate at which university undergraduates in Ekiti mix Pidgin and their mother tongue with English on social media writing seems to be at an increase daily. The inability of university undergraduates to write pure English without switching code on the social media in this virtual world, that examinations and interviews are conducted in the online depicts weakness in their thinking ability and writing skills. The blame has been on their lack of awareness that too much of code switching and code mixing affects them in formal settings, because the language in which they think has effects on their speaking and writing skills. The language they speak also influences what they write on social media. It shows that the university undergraduates who involve in too much code switching and code mixing have deficiency in their thinking even in academic environment. The outcome is seen on social media writing among university undergraduates. Observation has shown that university undergraduates in Ekiti State cannot express themselves completely in a second language on social media writing.

The problem seems unnoticed by university undergraduates that what they write depict their ability because presently there is no formal setting in which they can have more audience than social media. Therefore, the interest in code switching and code mixing among university students revealed that they are unaware that they are displaying one of the unfavourable traits that cause code switching and code mixing. So, the university undergraduates interest in code switching shows that they are not aware that it was due to lack of appropriate grammar in English language to fill the gap of word not know that led to mixing or switching of code. Again, there could be problem of transliteration, that is, direct translation of English to mother tongue on social media. It could also affect university undergraduates in formal setting, most especially in virtual learning and interviews.

So, as university undergraduates, they should know that social media writing can be accessed by anybody and that English language is the principal language of social media. Hence, one will expect university undergraduates to carefully select their choice of words, rather than mixing and switching anyhow. Based on these problems, the study investigates university undergraduates writing skills on social media.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to examine the influence of code mixing and code switching of university undergraduates on social media writing in Ekiti State. Specifically, the study is designed to identify the:

1. Influence of code switching and code mixing on social media writing skill.
2. The influence that code switching and code mixing have on undergraduates that refused planning and organising their thinking before writing on social media.

3. Need for university undergraduates to develop their word repertoire in order to have enough vocabulary in stock.
4. The need to create awareness, that social media has large audience across the globe.
5. The need to create the awareness that whatever they write on social media depict their ability on writing skills.
6. The type of code switching and code mixing that is more prevalent among University.
7. The level of code-switching and code mixing among State, Federal and Private Universities
8. The influence of negative impact on writing proficiency in English language.
9. Influence of gender on social media writing skill of university undergraduates.

### **Research Questions**

The following questions are raised to guide the study:

- a. What type of code switching and code mixing is more prevalent among university undergraduates?
- b. What is the attitude of university undergraduates towards code switching and code mixing on social media?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following research hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study:

1. There is no significant difference between the use of code switching and code mixing on social media writing by university undergraduates in Ekiti State, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference between code switching and code mixing of Undergraduates writing skill on social media
3. There is no significant influence of code switching and code mixing by university undergraduates on social media writing skill
4. There is no significant difference between male and female university undergraduates' social media writing skills.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive research design because the study described code switching and code mixing on social media writing skills among university undergraduates in Ekiti State, Nigeria without manipulating any of the variables. The descriptive research design of survey type was used to gather information from large population by employing the use of samples. Therefore, survey research design was adopted for this study because it focuses on the entire population of university undergraduates in Ekiti State, Nigeria from where sample was drawn in order to collect information from the respondents. The findings of the study was generalised on the entire population. The population for this study consisted 52,405 university undergraduates in the four universities in Ekiti State Nigeria. Three of the four universities are public: Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti with 23,000 undergraduates (EKSU Ado-Ekiti Portal Ekiti

Ranking and Review UniRank) and Federal University, Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE) with about 18,500 undergraduates(FUOYE)Portal, Department of Degradation and social Statistic) BOUESTI with about 2,405 undergraduates(BOUESTI Portal, bouesti.edu.ng) while Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti(ABUAD) is a private university with 8,500 undergraduates (ABUAD Portal, Department of Degradation and Social Statistics), EKSU has 10 faculties, FUOYE has 7Faculties, ABUAD has 5 Faculties and BOUESTI has three colleges. The sample for the study was 525 undergraduates from the four Universities. Undergraduates in each of the four universities were sampled for the study. That is, EKSU (230), FUOYE (185) ABUAD (85)and BOESTI (25). Multistage sampling procedure was used to select the sample. The first stage purposive sampling technique was used to sample all the four Universities in Ekiti State. The second stage, proportional sampling technique was used to select undergraduates in each of the four Universsities. And in the third stage, simple random sampling technique was used to sample 23 undergraduates from each of the 10 Faculties in EKSU, 27 undergraduates from each of the seven Faculties in FUOYE, 17 undergraduates from five Faculties in ABUAD and 8 undergraduates from the three colleges in BOU One research instrument was used. The instrument was a self-designed instrument tagged Code Switching and Code Mixing among University Undergraduates Questionnaire (CSCMUUQ) which was used to collect data in the study. Section A focused on the demographic variables of the respondents such as name of university, faculty and level of study and undergraduate background. Section B based on 30items focusing on code switching and code mixing of undergraduates on social media writing skills. The instrument was patterned on Lakers 4-point rating scale as SA – Strongly Agree, A - Agree, D - Disagree, SD - Strongly Disagree. The instrument was analysed into types of code switching and code mixing. The analyses also compared code switching and code mixing among private and public universities.

### **The Analysis of the findings**

The analysis of the data collected and the results are reported as follow:

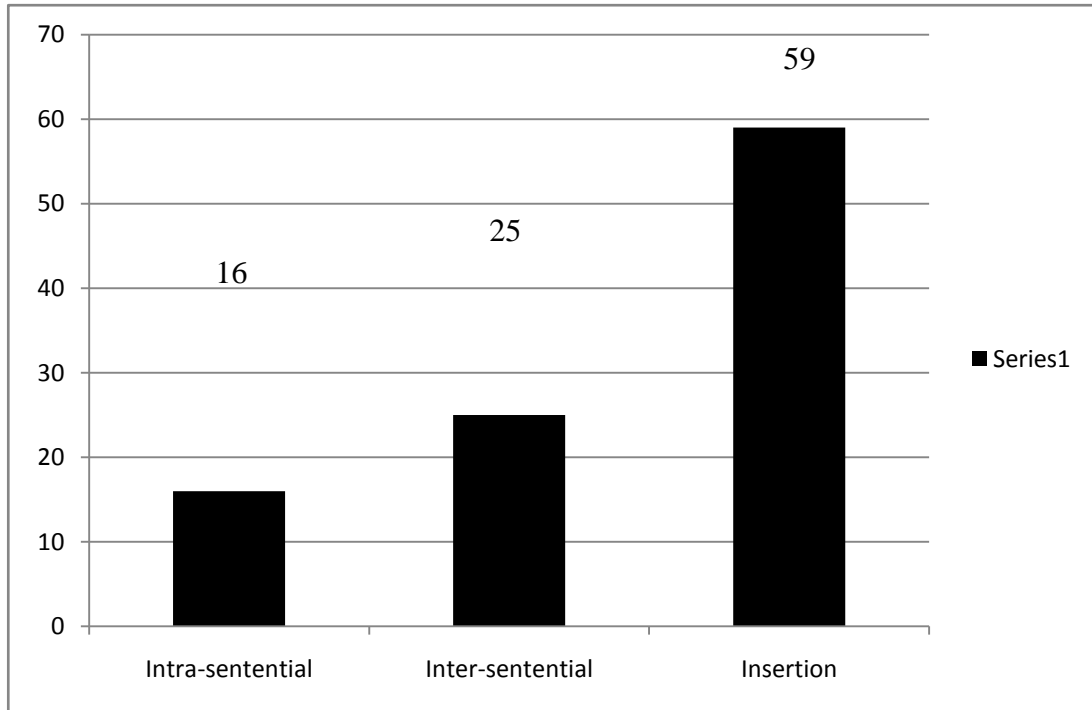
**Research Question 1:** What type of code switching and code mixing is more prevalent among university undergraduates?

**Table 1:** Frequency counts and percentages of the types of code switching and code mixing that is more prevalent among university undergraduates.

<i>Types of Code Switching</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Intra-sentential	80	16	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Inter-sentential	125	25	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Insertion	295	59	1 <sup>st</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>13.285</b>

Table 1 shows the frequency counts and percentages of the types of code switching engaged by undergraduates to be 80 (16%), 125 (25%), and 295 (59%) for

intra-sentential, inter-sentential and insertion respectively. Insertion type of code is ranked 1<sup>st</sup>, followed by inter-sentential and intra-sentential types of code switching. It could be said from this table that the most prevalent code switching type among undergraduates is insertion.



**Figure 1:** Bar chart of the prevalent code switching type among university undergraduates

Figure 1 showed that insertion code switching had 59% which is the highest, inter-sentential code switching had 25% while intra-sentential code switching had 15%, which is the lowest number.

From the above, it could be said that insertion code switching is more prevalent among university undergraduates in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

**Table 2:** Descriptive analysis of the attitude of undergraduates towards code switching on social media.

S/N	Items	Agree		Disagree	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1.	code switching and code mixing have become part and parcel of me	240	48.00	260	52.00
2.	I can hardly write on the social platform without switching codes	310	62.00	190	38.00

3.	I see pidgin becoming more popular in our platform	295	59.00	205	41.00
4.	I am not aware that too much of code switching and code mixing could have negative influence on my formal writing	312	62.40	188	37.60
5.	My writing on social media depicts my ability	411	82.20	89	17.80
6.	I see myself as a good thinker as a result of my use of code switching	362	72.40	138	27.60
7.	My involvement in code switching and code mixing depict my deficiency in thinking	418	83.60	82	16.40

Table 3 shows the attitude of undergraduates towards code switching and code mixing on social media. 418 (83.60%) respondents said that their involvement in code switching depict their deficiency in thinking, while 411 (82.20%) of them said that writing on social media depicts their ability. I see myself as a good thinker as a result of my use of code switching and code mixing, this was the response of about 362 (72.40%) of the respondents, while about 312 (62.40%) of them said that they are not aware that too much of code switching and code mixing could have negative influence on their formal writing. About 310(62.00%) of the respondents said that they can hardly write on the social platform without switching codes and this was buttressed by about 295 (59.00%) of the respondents who see pidgin becoming more popular in their platform. From the above, it could be said that university undergraduates have positive attitude towards code switching and code mixing on social media.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference between the use of code switching and code mixing on social media writing by university undergraduates in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

**Table 3:** t-test showing the difference between the use of code switching and code mixing on social media writing by university undergraduates in Ekiti State, Nigeria

<i>Variables</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t<sub>cal</sub></i>	<i>t<sub>tab</sub></i>
Code Switching and Code Mixing	500	32.370	13.285	499	5.185*	1.960
Social Media Writing Skill	500	37.042	15.150			

\*p < 0.05 (Significant Result)

Table 3 shows that the  $t_{cal}$  (5.185) is greater than  $t_{tab}$  (1.960) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is not accepted, this implies that there is a significant difference between the use of code switching and code mixing on social media writing by university undergraduates in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference between code switching and code mixing of undergraduates writing skill on social media

**Table 4:** t-test showing the difference between the use of code switching and code mixing of university undergraduates in Ekiti State, Nigeria

<i>Variables</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>t<sub>cal</sub></i>	<i>t<sub>tab</sub></i>
Code Mixing	500	30.940	15.670	499	1.556	1.960
Code Switching	500	32.370	13.285			

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant influence of code switching and code mixing by university undergraduates on social media skill

**Table 5:** Analysis of variance (ANOVA) showing the influence of code switching and code mixing by university undergraduates on social media writing skill

<i>Source</i>	<i>Type III Sum of squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>ρ - value</i>
Corrected Model	11129.990 <sup>a</sup>	52	214.038	.925	.624
Intercept	79332.342	1	79332.342	342.935	.000
Code Mixing	203.419	1	203.419	.879	.349
Code Switching	10442.954	51	204.764	.885	.698
Error	103406.128	447	231.334		
Total	800591.000	500			
Corrected Total	114536.118	499			

a. R-squared = .097 (Adjusted R-squared= -.008)

P > 0.05 (Result Not Significant)

Table 5 shows that F = 342.935, p(0.000) < 0.05 and the coefficient of (r) = 0.008. Therefore, there is a significant influence of code switching and code mixing by university undergraduates on social media writing skill.

**Hypothesis 4:** There is no significant difference between male and female university undergraduates' social media writing skills

**Table 6 :** t-test showing gender difference of university undergraduates' social media writing skills

<i>Gender</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>t<sub>cal</sub></i>	<i>t<sub>tab</sub></i>
Male	180	40.100	14.009	498	3.520*	1.960
Female	320	35.322	15.514			

\*p < 0.05 (Significant Result)

Table 6 shows that the  $t_{cal}$  (3.520) is greater than  $t_{tab}$  (1.960) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is not accepted, this implies that there is a significant difference between male and female university undergraduates social media writing skills.

## Discussion

This study was directed at analysing code switching and code mixing on social media writing among university undergraduates in Ekiti State Nigeria. The presentation of the data was carried out in two stages. Stage one involves descriptive analyses while the second stage covers testing of hypothesis earlier postulated. The result shows that the mean and the standard deviation of the types code switching and code mixing engaged by undergraduates. The mean is apparently higher in inter-sentential (36.504) than intra sentential (33.363) and in section (30.349). It could say that most prevalent code switching and code mixing type among university undergraduates is inter-sentential.

The undergraduates should endeavour to have enough vocabulary in their stock repertoire and they should ensure that they organise and process their thought before writing on social media in order to avoid switching of code which has become addicted behaviour that could affect undergraduates in virtue learning and interviews.

The analysis of mean and standard deviation of type of code switching and code mixing among university undergraduates show the congruent lexical is higher 40.35 & (12.673) intra-lexical mean 29.760, and 15.686, insertion 16.129 for mean and 3.939 for sp. Since the mean is apparently higher than the other types so, it could be said that the prevalent code mixing type among undergraduate is congruent lexical.

The university undergraduates can avoid the negative impact of mixing prefix and suffix within a word on social media writing as it would enable them to overcome the influence of code switching and code mixing on social media writing. The result of this study further shows that the attitude of undergraduates towards code switching and code mixing is positive because about 418 (83.60%) indicated that their involvement in code switching depict their deficiency in thinking, so they see code switching while 411 and code mixing as bail out to fill the gap with words not known in L1. (82.20%) said their writing on social media depict their deficiency in thinking. 342 (62.40%) agree that, they are not aware that too much of code switching and code mixing could have negative influence on their formal writing. About 310 (62.00%) of the respondents agreed that, they can hardly write on the social platform without mixing or switching codes, as 295 (59.00%) of the respondent who see pidgin becoming more popular on their platform.

The aims of this study include to examine the level of code switching and code mixing in Universities in Ekiti State, to investigate the level of code switching and code mixing of male and female among University undergraduates on social media writing, to examine the influence of code switching and code mixing on social media writing skills among Universities undergraduates in Ekiti State. A hypothesis was hence formulated as there is no significant difference between the age of code switching and social media writing by university undergraduates in Ekiti State, Nigeria to test the hypothesis t-test was that  $t_{cal}$  (5.185) greater than  $t_{tab}$  (1.960) at 0.05 level of significance. Since the nul

hypothesis was not accepted, it shows there is no significant difference between the use of code switching on social media writing by university undergraduates in Ekiti State.

Similarly, various researchers around the globe have worked on code switching and code mixing on social media especially between English and other languages. For example, Hida (2020) in their article uncovered the use of mixing and switching of Keminggris language (speaking and acting like British people) on social media. so also Harmed (2013) investigated the students' use of social networks in relation to gender. He used questionnaire to sample 120 undergraduates. The result showed that students use social network for social matters than for academics. It also showed that there were no gender differences in the using of social networks between male and female students. Emmanuel et al (2013) in their paper, reveals that the university undergraduates use social media for communication with their friends and sharing information. The light of findings reviewed, one could say that, code switching and code mixing on social media among university undergraduates is no longer new. The findings have similarities with the researchers' findings, in that the scholars investigated university undergraduates. Some of them used questionnaire which is similar to the researcher's work. Furthermore, the researcher also investigated gender differences. The studies showed that there was no significant difference between male and female use of code switching and code mixing on social media writing.

However, none of the researcher has investigated code-switching and code mixing on social media writing skills among university undergraduates in Ekiti State Nigeria. The researcher's finding reveals that female students use code switching and code mixing on social media writing than the male undergraduates. The researcher is of the pinion that too much of code switching and code mixing could have negative influence on students in virtual learning and interviews. Emmanuel et al (2012) suggest that university undergraduates using social media do not direct their use of social media towards their academic pursuits.

Therefore, the university undergraduates should redirect their mindset and be more conscious that too much of code mixing and code mixing could affect them in virtual learning and in view.

### **Summary of the study**

This study investigated the use of code switching and code mixing among university undergraduates on social media writing skill in Ekiti State, Nigeria. A lot of related literatures were reviewed on the use of code switching and code mixing on social media writing skill. The previous studies indicated that the use of social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp and many more are very common among undergraduates. The studies revealed that the purpose of using social media among the students includes for learning and social relations.

Furthermore, the reviewed literatures showed that code switching and code mixing are common phenomena and that their uses are very common among undergraduates on daily basis particularly on social media writing which serve as the main source of information for the undergraduates. The previous studies revealed that undergraduates' use of code mixing and code switching is influenced by personal factors particularly gender. However, the previous studies revealed contradictory findings about the use of code mixing and code switching and among undergraduates on the basis of their gender. Some studies believed that code mixing and code switching are more prevalent among male than female undergraduates in universities.

It is revealed through the reviewed studies that the use of code mixing and code switching on social media is very prevalent among undergraduates in Ekiti State, Nigeria due to the bilingual nature of the people investigating the area. The previous studies showed that code mixing and code switching occurred mostly during the conversation on social media writing such as Face book, WhatsApp, and Twitter and that the use has significant impact on the use of Standard English language. Previous studies revealed that the use of code switching and code mixing has effect on writing and speaking skills of undergraduates in Nigeria.

However, despite the fact that some studies have been carried out by other researchers on code switching and code mixing among university undergraduates, it seems none of these researchers have done any work on code switching and code mixing and on social media writing among university undergraduates in Ekiti state. Thus, this study is geared towards filling this gap. Therefore, this study is to examine the influence of code mixing and code switching on social media and writing skills of university undergraduates in Ekiti State, Nigeria with the view to identifying reasons why university undergraduates find it difficult to construct a simple sentence without mixing or switching code on social media. It also sought a way of creating the consciousness in university undergraduates that too much of code switching and code mixing on social media writing could affect their writing in formal settings and to encourage university undergraduates to plan and organise their thinking before writing on social media as well as to help them develop their word repertoire in order to have enough vocabulary in stock.

In addition, the study tries to create awareness that social media has a large audience across the globe. So, as university undergraduates, they should endeavour to write standard English because code switching or code mixing could mean a lack of appropriate lexical item to make up for the word not known in English, which depicts weakness among university undergraduates.

The study attempted to identify the influence of code switching and code mixing on social media writing. It further examined the influence of negative impact of code switching and code mixing on virtue learning and interviews. The population for the study consisted of all the university undergraduates in university Ekiti State. A multistage sampling procedure was used to select the sample.

A purposive sampling technique was used to sample the four universities in Ekiti State universities at the first stage. At the second stage, proportional sampling technique was used to select undergraduates in each of the universities. The third stage involved the use of simple random sampling technique. One instrument was used for the study. Five hundred twenty-five (525) copies of instrument were administered, and only 500 were returned, which invariably change the sample of the study to 500.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for the data analysis. The three research questions raised in the study were answered using mean and standard deviation, frequency count percentage and graphs. Hypotheses 1,2 and 4 were tested using t-test while hypothesis 3 was tested using analysis of variance (Zway ANDVA). The study revealed that:

1. The most prevalent types of code switching and code mixing among university undergraduates is inter-sentential
2. The most prevalent code mixing among undergraduates is congruent lexical.
3. The attitude of undergraduates towards code switching and code mixing depict their deficiency in quick mind mapping and thinking process.
4. The respondent are not aware that too much of code switching and code mixing could have negative influence on their formal writing because they could hardly write on social media platform without mixing or switching code.

### **Conclusion**

From the findings of the study it was realised that most of the university undergraduates have become addicted through their code switching and code mixing communicative evidence on social media. The study revealed that, the undergraduates are not awareness that too much of code switching and code mixing could have negative influence on their writing ability in virtue learning. The findings shows that, most the undergraduate are not aware that whenever they mix code or switch code without quotation mark on social media depict their ability in writing, showing their deficiency in L2, so, they use other codes to fill the gap with words not known L2.

Furthermore, this study gave vivid insight to both undergraduates and linguistic expert on the need to develop vocabulary repertoire in order to have enough vocabulary in stock to enhance good writing that can be flown by code switching and code mixing on social media if not properly guided in view at this study will create the awareness that it is very important for undergraduate in Ekiti state to plan and organise their thought before writing on social media.

## Recommendations

The recommendations on the findings were as follow:

1. The university undergraduates in Ekiti state should endeavour to write on social media without mixing code.
2. The undergraduates and language experts should take pain to be more versatile in developing their vocabulary repertoire in order to have enough English vocabulary in stock before writing on social media.
3. The use of code switching and code mixing should be used alongside with quotation marks to indicate deliberate usage on social media to show compliance with syntactic rule.
4. University undergraduates should stick to the option of language they choose to use on social media since the audience are made up of many tribes, so there is no need of showing identity or solidarity to other social media users. Therefore, code switching and code mixing could be limited to sending SMS message to family or friends.

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