Code-Switching in Social Media and Its Implications for Language Teaching

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Abstract

As one of the most favoured social networking sites, Facebook provides an important platform for contemporary plurilingual practices. On this site, an emerging phenomenon reflecting individual language use is code-switching, which is defined as the alternate use of more than one language or variety in a discourse. Research has shown that code-switching requires a high level of competence in the languages involved and that various functions can be assigned. As the relevance of multilingual and multicultural competences in foreign language learning increases, plurilingual practices like code-switching capture the interest of researchers.

The purpose of this thesis is to identify functions of code-switching based on a classification by Halim and Maros (2014). In addition, implications for language teaching are discussed. Arguing that the construction of identity plays a crucial part when engaging in social practice, the results are also considered in light of this aspect.

For the research the mixed methods analysis programme MAXQDA was utilised to code more than 1’000 Facebook timeline posts from six individuals. 13 different languages and 65 instances of code-switching could be identified. Furthermore, interviews with every participant were conducted to qualify the results.

Findings suggest that code-switching in online communication occurs mainly to serve the function of addressee specification, message qualification or indicating emotions/emphasis. As the data derives from Facebook, where language and identity are explicitly linked, the superior function of identity construction can be assigned to all instances of code-switching.
Note of thanks

At this point I would like to thank all those people who supported me in writing my master thesis. Special thanks go to my supervisor Catherine Diederich and my co-supervisor Sybille Heinzmann. They have patiently supported me with constructive suggestions, and I would like to thank them for the productive and appreciative cooperation.

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# Contents

**Abstract** .......................................................................................................................................................... 1  
**Note of thanks** .................................................................................................................................................. 2  
**Contents** .......................................................................................................................................................... 3  

## 1. Introduction ....................................................................................................................................................... 5  
1.1. Introduction to the Subject Matter .............................................................................................................. 5  
1.2. Relevance of the Topic ...................................................................................................................................... 5  
1.3. Research Objective .......................................................................................................................................... 6  
1.4. Research Question ......................................................................................................................................... 7  

## 2. Theory ............................................................................................................................................................... 8  
2.1. Definitions ....................................................................................................................................................... 8  
2.1.1. Code-switching .......................................................................................................................................... 8  
2.1.2. Differentiation From Other Phenomena ............................................................................................... 9  
2.1.3. My working definition ............................................................................................................................... 9  
2.1.4. Language Concepts ............................................................................................................................... 10  
2.2. History of Code-switching ........................................................................................................................... 11  
2.3. Functions of Code-switching ....................................................................................................................... 13  
2.4. Social Media ................................................................................................................................................ 15  
2.4.1. Use of Language .................................................................................................................................... 15  
2.4.2. Language and Identity ........................................................................................................................... 16  
2.4.3. Code-switching on Social Media ........................................................................................................... 17  
2.4.4. Facebook .................................................................................................................................................. 18  
2.5. Language Education .................................................................................................................................... 19  
2.5.1. Plurilingual Education ........................................................................................................................... 19  
2.5.2. Plurilingual Competences ..................................................................................................................... 20  

## 3. Methodology ....................................................................................................................................................... 23  
3.1. Overview of Research Design ..................................................................................................................... 23  
3.2. Sampling ......................................................................................................................................................... 24  
3.2.1. My Facebook Post .................................................................................................................................. 24  
3.2.2. Sampling Criteria .................................................................................................................................... 25  
3.3. Quantitative Data Analysis: Facebook posts .............................................................................................. 27  
3.3.1. Data Acquisition ..................................................................................................................................... 27  
3.3.2. MAXQDA ................................................................................................................................................ 27  
3.3.3. Coding Categories ................................................................................................................................... 28  
3.3.1. Rules for Coding .................................................................................................................................... 32
Contents

3.4. Qualitative Analysis: Interviews ........................................................................32
  3.4.1. Interview Guide .........................................................................................33
  3.4.2. Conduct of Interview ................................................................................33
  3.4.3. Data Analysis ..........................................................................................34
4. Results ..............................................................................................................35
  4.1. Overview Data Analysis ................................................................................35
  4.2. Participant Profiles ......................................................................................36
    4.2.1. Participant 1 ..........................................................................................37
    4.2.2. Participant 2 ..........................................................................................39
    4.2.3. Participant 3 ..........................................................................................41
    4.2.4. Participant 4 ..........................................................................................43
    4.2.5. Participant 5 ..........................................................................................45
    4.2.1. Participant 6 ..........................................................................................47
  4.3. Quantitative Analysis ....................................................................................49
  4.4. Qualitative Analysis ......................................................................................51
5. Discussion ..........................................................................................................55
  5.1. Functions of Code-switching ........................................................................55
  5.2. Implications for Language Teaching ..............................................................58
    5.2.1. Data Source ..........................................................................................58
    5.2.2. Promoting Plurilingualism ....................................................................59
    5.2.3. Methods to Implement Code-switching ..................................................60
    5.2.4. Teacher Requirements ..........................................................................61
    5.2.5. Conclusion ............................................................................................63
  5.3. Critique of Methodology ...............................................................................64
    5.3.1. Method and Sampling ............................................................................64
    5.3.2. Quantitative Analysis: Facebook posts ..................................................64
    5.3.3. Qualitative Analysis: Interviews ..............................................................65
  5.4. Future Research Possibilities .........................................................................67
6. Conclusion ..........................................................................................................68
Figures ....................................................................................................................69
Tables ......................................................................................................................69
Bibliography ............................................................................................................70
Appendix ..................................................................................................................72
1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction to the Subject Matter

In a constantly changing world, languages interrelate and interact. The majority of humans are plurilingual or live in a multilingual environment (Lüdi, 2006, p. 7). Thus, the connection between languages manifests itself not only as a global occurrence, but also in the individual. The matter of plurilingualism and phenomena associated with it are, therefore, of concern to a broad field of research and a large audience.

One phenomenon closely linked to plurilingualism is code-switching. It describes the act, when a plurilingual person switches between two or more languages in a single discourse, a sentence or a constituent (Poplack, 1980, p. 583). The question of why people conduct such switches can be explored from different perspectives. Linguists confirm that an instance of code-switching can fulfil several functions depending on the field of research looked at (cf. Auer, 2013; Gumperz, 1982; Poplack, 1980). Since many linguistic as well as non-linguistic factors are involved in the analysis, instances of code-switching must always be considered individually, and generalising statements about its functions should be taken with caution.

Müller et al. (2015) affirm that linguists consider code-switching as a style of speech that requires an advanced level of competence in all the languages involved. Large parts of the population, on the other hand, see code-switching as an indication for lack of competence or linguistic decline. The negative prejudices against this phenomenon are especially dominant in the pedagogical field, where the change of language is seen as degrading (p. 11). Thus, it is necessary that code-switching has to be looked at in more detail and that precast opinions about the characteristics of code-switching are corrected.

1.2. Relevance of the Topic

The phenomenon of code-switching in spoken interaction has been discussed extensively (cf. Auer, 2013; Li Wei, Milroy & Pong, 1992; Poplack, 1980) but the dimension of written production, on which the focus of this work lies, has not received such wide observation. Even fewer are scientific works analysing code-switching in social media. Androutsopoulos conducted several studies in this field (2015; 2013; 2006) and argues that in computer-
mediated communication (CMC), code-switching shares features with both written and spoken modes of communication. Nowadays, dominant social networking sites like Facebook provide one main stage on which individuals actually use their multilingual repertoire. As a consistently expanding phenomenon on social media, code-switching is receiving more attention. Still, only few studies focus on the manifestation of code-switching on Facebook.

The relevance of plurilingual and pluricultural competences in foreign language learning has increased during the last decades and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR), the international standard for describing language competences, includes an elaboration on these competences in their newest publication (Council of Europe, 2018). A companion volume was published in February 2018 in which plurilingual and intercultural education is promoted. The presented plurilingual competences include for instance the ability to «call flexibly upon an inter-related, uneven, plurilingual repertoire to: switch from one language or dialect (or variety) to another; . . . bring the whole of one’s linguistic equipment into play, experimenting with alternative forms of expression» (Council of Europe, 2018, p. 28).

According to the CEFR, different languages are not kept in strictly separated mental compartments but jointly construct a communicative competence. Languages interrelate and interact, and the use of different languages benefits the individual, therefore, a plurilingual approach in language learning is recommended (Council of Europe, 2018). A similar approach is noticeable in the Lehrplan 21, the new common curriculum of Switzerland. Under the section Sprachen im Fokus one can find competences where a comprehensive and interrelated understanding of languages is required (competence FS1F.5) (D-EDK, 2017).

1.3. Research Objective

The purpose of this thesis is to analyse instances of code-switching on the social networking site Facebook. The reason for choosing data from Facebook is, firstly, its prevalence among the online community. The number of daily users worldwide has reached nearly 1.5 billion in the first quarter of 2018 making it the most frequently used social network in the world (Statista, 2018). Secondly, Facebook allows for longer stretches of discourse, whereas other social media
sites feature a limited character count in posts. As there is only limited research regarding code-switching on Facebook, I attempt to bridge the gap with the present study.

I argue that through the purposeful use of code-switching, users reveal crucial information about their virtual selves. I aim to show that the switching between languages on Facebook presents different functions, whereby speakers construct their plurilingual selves. Especially in multilingual societies like Switzerland, switching between languages is a widespread phenomenon and it is detectable in spoken and written discourse. Being surrounded by an environment where switching between languages and dialects occurs daily, I find myself implementing such strategies and am intrigued to do research in this field. Linking this research to the educational context, I examine the value of code-switching data from a didactic perspective and evaluate its potential for foreign language teaching.

1.4. Research Question

This Master Thesis will try to shed light on the following two research questions:

1. What patterns of code-switching can be identified within Facebook posts and what are the functions of code-switching on this social media platform?

2. In what way are code-switching data of value for language teaching in the foreign language classroom?
2. Theory

2.1. Definitions

Literature proposes many different definitions of code-switching depending on the perspective the phenomenon is looked at. Below, definitions of some well-known researchers are presented followed by a distinction from similar phenomena. For the sake of clarity, I then propose my own working definition. Furthermore, the concepts of bilingualism, plurilingualism and multilingualism are explained to facilitate understanding for the reader of this thesis.

2.1.1. Code-switching

Auer (2013) describes code-switching as the alternation between two or more codes in the course of a communicative interaction (p. 1). The term code can refer to a language or a language variety (Riehl, 2013, p. 21). Characteristics of code-switching in spoken discourse are, amongst others, a smooth transition from one language to another and a seeming unawareness of the speaker (Poplack, 1980, p. 601). Code-switching can include single words, multi-word units and up to whole sentences (Riehl, 2013, p. 24). The three cited linguists in this chapter including Müller et al. (2015) agree on the fact that code-switching requires an advanced level of bilingual competence and is not used to simply fill the gap and replace untranslatable items. Poplack (1980) affirms that «Code-switching involves enough knowledge of two (or more) grammatical systems to allow the speaker to draw from each system only those rules which the other shares, when alternating one language with another» (p. 601).

In regard to syntax, Poplack (1980) distinguishes three types of switching: intra-sentential, extra-sentential and emblematic switching. The first one describes a switch between languages or varieties within a sentence, whereas the second describes a switch between two sentences. Emblematic switching includes the insertion of elements outside the syntactic structure like tags, interjections, idiomatic expressions or individual noun switches (p. 614).
2.1.2. Differentiation From Other Phenomena

**Code-mixing**

Code-mixing describes the mixing of two or more languages. Thereby, the reason for the change is not considered. It is used as a generic term in language acquisition research (Müller, et al., 2015).

**Borrowing**

When single words or short idiomatic expressions are transferred from one language into another, Gumperz (1982) defines them as a borrowing. Those utterances are grammatically integrated into the target language and can be understood as part of the vocabulary. In contrast to this, code-switching is characterised by two different grammatical systems identifiable in the switch (Gumperz, 1982, p. 66).

**Transfer**

This term is used frequently in second language acquisition and describes the transfer of language knowledge from a language A to a language B. When grammatical structures of two languages differ, a negative transfer, also called interference, is evoked. Transfer is in comparison to code-switching seen as simplification strategy that does not require as much knowledge and language skill as code-switching. (Müller, et al., 2015)

2.1.3. My working definition

In order to facilitate a precise understanding of this thesis, my personal working definition of code-switching is listed here. In this case, I rely on the definition proposed by Poplack (1980) who defines code-switching as «the alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence or constituent» (p. 583). Often linguists use the term code as a synonym for language variety (cf. Riehl, 2013; Nilep, 2006). Thus, I extend the definition by not only regarding the alternation between languages but also between varieties as code-switching.
2.1.4. Language Concepts

Bilingualism

Bilingualism refers to the ownership of two or more languages. It can be understood as an individual characteristic (individual bilingualism) or used to describe a social group (societal bilingualism) (Baker, 2011, p. 2). «Defining exactly who is or is not bilingual is essentially elusive and ultimately impossible» (Baker, 2011, p. 15). In theory, different definitions exist classifying bilingualism according to frequency or level of proficiency. In this thesis, the term bilingual is used to describe a person who speaks two languages on a proficient level.

Plurilingualism

The CEFR defines plurilingualism as «the dynamic and developing linguistic repertoire of an individual user/learner» (Council of Europe, 2018, p. 28). This competence is changing all the time and includes different skills and disparate levels of mastery in languages or varieties. As a key point it is stated, that plurilingual people «have a single, inter-related, repertoire that they combine with their general competences and various strategies in order to accomplish tasks» (Council of Europe, 2018). Thus, the term plurilingual refers to a person with a linguistic repertoire of two or more languages, regardless of the degree of mastery.

Multilingualism

The CEFR describes multilingualism as the «coexistence of different languages at the social or individual level» (Council of Europe, 2018, p. 28). Androutsopoulos (2015) widens the term and defines multilingualism as «any discourse that draws on resources associated with more than one language» (p. 187). To facilitate understanding in this thesis, the designation multilingual is only used for the social level and not to describe an individual.
2.2. History of Code-switching

The first scientific works investigating the issues of language choice and code-switching date back to around 1950 (cf. Barker, 1947; Weinreich 1953). The term code-switching was for the first time introduced by Hans Vogt in his book Language Contacts in 1954, where code-switching is mentioned in the context of bilingualism. In the book, the switching between languages is described as a cause for interferences or for real mixed languages. According to Vogt (1954), the reasons for code-switching are solely extra-linguistic. Hence, he does not consider it a linguistic phenomenon, but rather a psychological one.

Until the 1970s studies (cf. Lance, 1975; Weinreich, 1953) linked negative connotations to code-switching. Scholars thought code-switching is evidence of insufficient language knowledge and is only a random switching between languages. It was thought that code-switching was a result of poor parenting in bilingual communities and should be avoided. However, this notion was challenged by several researchers who argued for a rule-governed practice and claimed that code-switching deserves a more detailed observation (Poplack, 1980).

The research of code-switching has been influenced greatly by John J. Gumperz who conducted several studies in the 1970s focusing on the sociolinguistic and pragmatic aspects of code-switching. According to Gumperz (1982), the relationship between speakers influences the choice of language variety. Further, he argues that one can define the verbal repertoire of an individual in social as well as linguistic terms. The distinction into situational and metaphorical code-switching (cf. chapter 2.3) by Blom and Gumperz (1972) illustrate the two different approaches. Code-switching was not anymore perceived as a random switching, but rather as a mean of communication.

The syntactic form of code-switching was systematically analysed and established by Shana Poplack’s research in 1980. She analysed the speech of 20 Puerto Ricans in a bilingual community in New York and combined linguistic and extra-linguistic factors in her analytical model. Three types of code-switching appear in the analysed sequences of speech, whereas the switches can be classified according to level of constituents’ and different degrees of bilingual ability (cf. chapter 2.1.1). The results «provide strong evidence that code-switching is a verbal skill requiring a large degree of linguistic competence in more than one language,
rather than a defect arising from insufficient knowledge of one or the other» (Poplack, 1980, p. 615).

Poplack’s findings, presenting a new perspective of code-switching, induced further research. Auer (1984) analysed the connection between interaction and code-switching and introduced the field of interactional code-switching. He stresses the importance of speech in interaction and argues that the conversation itself and not the topic generates the switching. In his opinion, discourse analysis and the division into categories is problematic as it is defined externally, conducted by the analyst. He suggests a procedural and detailed analysis of language alternation, whereas it has to be taken into consideration that the negotiation itself has a social meaning (Auer, 2013).

As a conclusion to this historical review, it can be noted that nowadays a large variety of approaches towards code-switching exist. When interpreting findings, one must always consider the field of interest of the respective researcher. Observing the perception of code-switching over time, a clear shift was noticeable during the 1970s where the rather negative understanding of code-switching was superseded by a positive one. Research has shown that a high level of bilingual competence is required to alternate languages within the same conversation. Nilep (2006) argues that close observations of discourse is needed in order to make a valid and reliable statement about the function of language use. He states that

... it should not be assumed that all elements relevant to discourse and social interaction are visible to the analyst, particularly when the analyst is not embedded in the particular social structures he or she is studying ... The optimal approach to understanding these phenomena would thus seem to include ethnographic observation with close analysis of discourse, providing an empirical warrant for any theory of discourse interaction. (Nilep, 2006, pp. 15-16)

Thus, in order to understand and correctly interpret discourse analysis, knowledge about the social situation is needed by the researcher and results should always be discussed in context.
2.3. Functions of Code-switching

Different fields of research attribute diverse functions to code-switching. The main three approaches, the sociolinguistic, interactional and social code-switching are briefly presented below to point out the wide range of research. Thereby, the recurring aspect of identity is pointed out in particular.

Blom and Gumperz (1972) explored the sociolinguistic aspect of code-switching and subdivided it into situational and metaphorical/conversational code-switching. In situational code-switching language changes as a result of a new situation or social setting. Metaphorical or conversational code-switching concerns the communicative effect or subjective circumstances, for example when the speaker uses a second language to reply to the message of the interlocutor (Gumperz, 1982, pp. 59-60). Hence, the social setting is unchanged but the speaker switches between languages to enrich the situation and adapt the language to the topic.

Gumperz (1982) proposed a list of six functions for conversational code-switching including quotation marking, addressee specification, interjection, reiteration, message qualification and personalisation versus objectivisation (Gumperz, 1982, p. 80). According to him «code switching signals contextual information equivalent to what in monolingual settings is conveyed through prosody or other syntactic or lexical processes. It generates the presuppositions in terms of which the content of what is said is decoded» (1982, p. 98). The switching between languages can, therefore, serve as a signal that informs the interlocutor about the interpretation of the content.

Representators of the interactional approach argue that meaning of code-switching arises from sequential development of the conversational interaction. Hence, the change of languages provides information about the speaker's intention. Auer (1984) divides the function of code-switching into discursive-related or preference-related. In discourse-related code-switching the speaker's intention is the trigger for the change, for example a new topic is introduced. In preference-related code-switching, the speaker depends on his or her counterpart. For example, the speaker changes language, when it becomes apparent, that the other party has a low level of competence in the language used.

In the third perspective, Appel and Muysken (1987) view the social function of code-switching as prevalent. They propose a subdivision into six functions: referential, directive, expressive,
Theory

Phatic, metalinguistic and poetic. For them, the focus lies on the belongingness and social positions that can be expressed through the use of code-switching, whether it is conscious or subconscious. To make an example, the category expressive function applies when a speaker alternates language to stress self-identity or feelings towards others in a conversation.

Several other studies on the function of code-switching include a category concerning identity. One of the six functions proposed by Malik (1994) is to show identity with a group. In that category, code-switching serves as a way of sharing values and experiences by individuals of the same group or culture and, therefore, creating a sense of belonging. Also Riehl (2013) affirms that various studies have shown that code-switching activates different social identities in the speaker (p. 28). She argues that the identity function of language itself might be the trigger for code-switching. She states that her study of European immigrants in Australia has shown that the change of languages is often negotiated during the conversation, depending on the origin and language repertoire of the interlocutors. She concludes that sometimes during conversation a specific language is used for reason of identity (p. 28).

In many cases, a definite assignment of instances of code-switching to functions presents itself as a challenge for scholars. Auer (2013) argues that code-switching should be recognized as multifunctional and can hold both communicative and social function at the same time. Even though Auer originally introduced the field of interactional code-switching in 1984, he later on investigated the links between code-switching and social identity. He argues that the alternation of languages can be understood as a certain speaking style which ascribes group membership. The following statement illustrates that some instances of code-switching hold the function of identity construction:

Language alternation can be void of identity-relevant meaning in some contexts, and yet in others extremely rich in the identity-work it accomplishes. To take the constructivist approach seriously into account then, would imply finding out for each and every case exactly what identity claims are occasioned by language alternation. (Auer, 2005, p. 409)

Thus, it is the task of the analyst to precisely examine the process of interaction and identify attitudes, relationships and identities for every single case.
In conclusion it can be stated that: «Studies of identity and code-switching show that close observation of discourse can yield both empirically and theoretically rich understandings of the functions of language variation in social interaction» (Nilep, 2006, p. 14). The topic of identity and code-switching is further elaborated in chapter 2.4.3 Code-switching on Social Media where it is regarded in the light of social media.

2.4. Social Media

The technological progress of the past few decades generated a drastic change in communication. Print-based media were largely replaced by the medium of screen. Nowadays, new information and communication technologies such as social media are at the centre stage and being equipped with a laptop or a phone has become the norm in many parts of the world. A large part of the population communicates daily via social media, whereas different types of communication emerge on different media.

Scholars claim that medium as well as social and situational factors play an important role for the choice of language use (Bolander & Locher, 2010, p. 169). Thus, when doing linguistic research, both factors have to be looked at very carefully before interpreting the choice of language. This chapter sheds light on the use of language in online communication and informs about the connection between language and identity. In addition, research about code-switching on social media is presented, followed by some key information about Facebook.

2.4.1. Use of Language

According to Kress (2003) three major changes arose in result of new media. First, they allow the use of a multiplicity of modes whereby he emphasises the mode of image. Secondly, with very little effort one can reply to a message, which was more difficult or impossible with older media. Thirdly, he mentions the notion of hypertextuality which enables the user to establish a relation with other texts. In other words, communication on social media is a combination of text, emojis, images, sounds and video messages and it is more interactive than ever before. In the opinion of Wyss und Hug (2016) this is one reason why language on social media cannot be reduced to and labelled as written language but must be understood as complex and
multimodal coded production. Computer-mediated communication (CMC) shares features of spoken as well as written discourse. On the one hand, it is usually rather informal and immediate, but on the other hand there are no visual are paralinguistic cues and the addressee does not have to be present (Georgakopoulou, 2011, S. 94). Hence, CMC can be placed somewhere in between spoken and written discourse.

Alongside those changes in language use, the impact that the frame conditions of a specific medium have on the communication are not to be underestimated. Those conditions, for instance the design of the platform, the data process, the available functions or language restrictions may influence the action of the user (Schmidt, 2000). In a study about communication on WhatsApp, Wyss and Hug (2016) observed another peculiarity of social media, namely the frequent exchange of non-essential and insignificant messages. They argue that even though the information itself is of no importance the message holds the essential function of relationship maintenance. Therefore, it can be said that alongside the distribution of information the interactional aspect of communication in social media is fundamental.

2.4.2. Language and Identity

The concepts of language and identity are closely interwoven. In the last few decades, there has been an augmented interest from scholars to investigate the connection and interdependence between those two concepts (Dressler & Dressler, 2016). Bolander and Locher (2010) are stressing the fact that along with factors like age, gender, ethnicity and so forth the positioning of ourselves and others through online interaction plays and important role for identity building: «identity is constructed in and through interpersonal relationships and social practice, or through the performance of `acts of positioning` » (2010, p. 168). Thus, identity can be understood as something dynamic and situational that an individual creates through interaction with others. Dressler and Dressler (2016) investigated linguistic identity positioning in Facebook and stated the following:

Especially, social media offers a mediational means for students to play with their identity. Each site or app has its own culture, styles, and conventions. The culture of the social media site Facebook, for example, is based on how people post status updates and comments or
Theory

`like` the posts of others and thereby also influences how its users write, self-present, and evaluate others. (2016, p. 24)

It can be noted that Facebook is a platform for identity construction through language, whereas its conventions and modes of employ influence the self-representation. Hence, it must be taken into consideration that on Facebook the linguistic phenomenon of code-switching holds the function of identity construction.

### 2.4.3. Code-switching on Social Media

Non-verbal communication generates different conditions for code-switching. In contrast to verbal communication one has time to create and edit content in online communication before it is sent to someone else. Thus, the reasons and functions for code-switching on social media are much more varied and complex than in spoken discourse.

Social networking sites like Facebook provide a large amount of naturally occurring linguistic data. According to Androutsopoulos (2015) «Social networking sites must be seen as important sites of contemporary multilingual practice in a globalised and mediatised world» (p. 202). The generated data from social media is up-to-date, authentic and easily accessible in as much as the profiles are public or that the examined individual can be befriended. On the basis of research evidence Androutsopoulos argues that «computer-mediated communication (CMC) is a rich site of multilingualism and code-switching» (2015, p. 187).

Although there are several studies dealing with code-switching in online interaction, only very few consider this phenomenon on Facebook. Halim and Maros (2014) conducted a study about the functions of code-switching in Facebook interactions. They based their study on Gumperz’s (1982) conversational code-switching and identified the following causes for utterances of code-switching in Facebook: «quotation, addressee specification, reiteration, message qualification, clarification, emphasis, checking, indicating emotions, availability, principle of economy and free switching functions» (pp. 129-132). This classification will later be resumed and further elaborated in chapter 3.3.3 Coding Categories.
2.4.4. Facebook

Facebook is a social networking website founded in 2004 for Harvard students and opened for the public in 2006 (Bolander & Locher, 2010). Nowadays it is the most frequently used social network in the world with nearly 1.5 billion number of daily users worldwide (Statista, 2018). The platform offers diverse features in order to socialize with others and share information about oneself. The main activities include uploading photos, sharing links and videos, keeping updated with friends’ social activities or to connect with others. An important feature of the personal profile is the timeline where status updates can be published. Those posts are automatically shared with all the friends of one’s profile. Facebook resembles a diary or a journal as it involves the communication of personal thoughts and experiences. However, the posts are usually distributed to a large audience and the author of the post does not know who reads a post unless it is liked or commented.

When looking at the word Facebook it becomes clear that the self-representation is already included in the name of the platform with the word face. The word book can be understood as the typing or sharing of information. The combination of this is illustrated in the following statement that Facebook provides a «popular agora for writing identity into being» (D’Arcy & Young, 2012, p. 532).

Also Bolander and Locher (2010) stress the function of identity construction through language on Facebook. They distinguish between explicit and implicit identity claims. Whereas explicit refers to self-labelling on the profile, implicit means the construction of identity through the used language. In the study conducted by Bolander and Locher (2010) implicit identity claims were found more frequent, suggesting that this is the preferred way of presenting oneself. When analysing Facebook posts it is important to keep in mind that the medium itself already influences the language use and because it is a platform where everyone can create a virtual self, the factor of identity construction is prevalent.
2.5. Language Education

The following quote by the Council of Europe (2018) demonstrates the importance of language education:

"Engagement in languages started as a means to increase international understanding, promote lifelong learning and increase the quality and practicality of language education in schools. It is evident that language education is fundamental to the effective enjoyment of the right to education and other individual human rights and the rights of minorities." (p. 21)

The Council of Europe (2018) understands language education as the basic prerequisite for human rights. With policy instruments like The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR) they aim to ensure the conditions for language schooling and provide international guidelines. They further support excellence and innovation in language teaching by the aid of their institution The European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) and many more initiatives in the linguistic field.

«Increased migration, multiculturalism and multilingualism in European countries is having an impact on the significance of languages in schools and consequently on the teaching of all languages» (Boeckmann, Aalto, Abel, Atanasoska, & Lamb, 2011, p. 7). Teaching must be adapted to students and as humanity changes continuously, teaching practices should follow. Due to those recent changes, a current issue promoted strongly by the Council of Europe is plurilingualism. In the following chapters, the concepts of plurilingual education and plurilingual competences are presented in some detail. Thereby, intersections to the phenomenon code-switching are highlighted.

2.5.1. Plurilingual Education

The project Majority Language Instruction as a Basis for Plurilingual Educational (MARILLE) conducted by the ECML in 2011 sheds light on some key questions regarding plurilingual education. Plurilingualism is not limited to the use of different languages, but also includes amongst other the understanding of different discourses, language learning, language functions, language use and social and intercultural understanding (Boeckmann et al., 2011,
An online questionnaire with participants from all over Europe documents that even though it is thought that the curriculum should reflect plurilingualism, in reality it is still perceived as a problem. The ECML has drawn the following conclusion: «there is a demand for change to promote plurilingualism in all areas of education, in curricula and material development as well as in teacher training, school organisation and, finally, in practical classroom teaching» (p. 14).

The ECML defines aims and underpinning values for promoting plurilingual: «In order to promote plurilingualism, enabling all learners to develop their full range of language and languages, it is crucial to educate all learners to be part of an increasingly multilingual society» (Boeckmann et al. 2011, p. 23). They stress the fact that the promotion of plurilingualism involves all learners and all subjects and that plurilingualism should be an aspiration for all. In consequence of this, they believe that an increased interest in languages and the appreciation and enjoyment of different cultures, literatures and discourses is the case (p. 23). As a positive effect it is stated that: «An environment which values plurilingualism can increase confidence, enjoyment and awareness in using various languages, while enabling learners to develop a strong and positive sense of their own identities» (p. 23).

2.5.2. Plurilingual Competences

In February 2018 the Council of Europe published a Companion Volume, an extension of the descriptors from the CEFR, where plurilingual and pluricultural competences are brought into focus by taking into consideration some of the following new concepts:

- the capacity to respond in a sociolinguistically appropriate way by incorporating elements of other languages and/or variations of languages in his/her own discourse for communication purposes;
- the capacity to exploit one’s linguistic repertoire by purposefully blending, embedding and alternating languages at the utterance level and at the discourse level;
- a readiness and capacity to expand linguistic/plurilingualistic and cultural/pluricultural awareness through an attitude of openness and curiosity

(Council of Europe, 2018, pp. 157-158)
The listed plurilingual competences in the Companion Volume include for instance the ability to «call flexibly upon an inter-related, uneven, plurilingual repertoire to: switch from one language or dialect (or variety) to another; . . . bring the whole of one’s linguistic equipment into play, experimenting with alternative forms of expression» (p. 28). Linking those competences to the main topic of this thesis, it becomes clear that code-switching would be very suitable to foster those abilities. Further competences named are having a conversation in which one speaks another language than the interlocutor, mediation between individuals with no common language or exploiting paralinguistics.

The Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches to Languages and Cultures (FREPA) project suggest tools that enable teachers, teacher trainers and educational leaders to foster plurilingual competences. They present a set of descriptors which were developed as part of an ECML programme and aim at the promotion of plurilingual and pluricultural competence (Council of Europe, 2012). In the following, some resource descriptors from the three sections knowledge, attitudes and skills are listed. The named descriptors apply to a classroom setting where plurilingual practices like code-switching could be discussed.

Knowledge

- K 2.3 Knows that identity is constructed / defined in interaction with ‘the other’ during the process of communication
- K 5 Has some knowledge about ‘language diversity / multilingualism / plurilingualism

Attitudes

- A 2 sensitivity to the existence of other languages / cultures / persons // to the existence of linguistic / cultural / human diversity
- A 2.5 sensitivity to plurilingualism and to pluriculturalism in the immediate or remote environment
Skills

- S 1.6 Can analyse communicative repertoires which are plurilingual / in a plurilingual situation
- S 6.5.1 Can vary / alternate languages / linguistic codes / modes of communication
- S 6.5.2 Can produce a text in which registers / varieties / languages alternate functionally (when the situation allows it)

(Council of Europe, 2012, pp. 24-58)

It could be shown that the underlying concepts of the Companion Volume as well as the descriptors from the FREPA foster competences that are closely linked to the analysis, the understanding and even own production of instances of code-switching. Hence, code-switching could be used as a method to promote plurilingualism in the classroom.
3. Methodology

In this chapter the methodological approach is described. After giving an overview of the research design, the single stages are presented. The chart below summarises the complex process with some key steps. Firstly, chapter 3.2 Sampling sheds light on me informing and choosing the participants for my research. Secondly, the chapter 3.3 Quantitative Analysis: Facebook Posts informs about the data acquisition, the used software, the coding and the coding rules and categories. Thirdly, the conduction and evaluation of the interviews is explained in chapter 3.4 Qualitative Analysis: Interviews.

Figure 1 Methodology - single steps

3.1. Overview of Research Design

For this study, a mixed method research paradigm has been chosen as it allows for a better understanding of complex settings. Kuckartz (2014) defines mixed methods as a combination and integration of qualitative and quantitative methods within the same research project, resulting in two different types of data (p. 33). In this research the quantitative data consists of text files, whereas the qualitative data derives from interviews. An explanatory design has been chosen where two partial studies take place successively. Thereby, the second one aims to further elaborate the findings from the first study (Kuckartz, 2014, p.77).

The first type of data consisted of text files and was collected from previous Facebook posts from my extended social network. The accessed data included posts published prior to my
informing the participants about my research, i.e. between October 2016 – October 2018. This time frame was chosen to avoid the observer’s paradox: Labov (1972) argues that to obtain linguistic data «we have to observe how people speak when they are not being observed» (p. 113). Hence, when generating the data, the individuals were not aware that it would later be used for research purposes, however, they were asked to give consent retrospectively. The second type of data emerged from personal interviews. There, necessary knowledge about the participants was obtained in order to be able to interpret the text data correctly.

3.2. Sampling

3.2.1. My Facebook Post

I planned to look at the language use on Facebook of five to ten participants. I was aware of the fact that it would be challenging to find people with several instances of code-switching on their timeline during the past two years. Expecting that most of my Facebook audience has only limited or no knowledge about code-switching and would not be prepared to read a lengthy academic sounding request, I decided to keep it simple. On the 23rd of October 2018 I published the following post on my Facebook timeline:

![Facebook post](image)

16 people reacted to this post, whereas some replied by marking other friends or offered their help directly. In a next step, I contacted all the people who commented and those who were marked in the comments. Through Facebook messenger I asked questions regarding their language repertoire and use of language on social media. In addition, I had a look at their Facebook profile and verified if instances of code-switching were to be found. If this was the
Methodology

In this case, the participant was informed about the research and asked if he or she could imagine being part of my research. In addition, I asked all the people who reacted to my post if they knew someone else who might be suitable for my study.

3.2.2. Sampling Criteria

The generalisation of results, which is the aim of every research process, is closely linked to the selection of the sample. However, the criteria for generalisation differ in qualitative and quantitative research. While in quantitative research it is achieved through statistical representativeness, qualitative research is about peculiarity (Helfferich, 2011, p. 172f). For my research, the text data and data from the interview was from the same participants. The challenge of the sampling was, on the one hand, to find participants which provide me with data that I can compare to some degree in order to allow me to draw a general conclusion at the end. On the other hand, I was looking at something very individual and wanted to understand the personal use of code-switching.

Helfferich (2011) proposes an approach in three steps to define a sample (p. 173f). In the first step, the target group is determined as precisely and closely as possible. In the second step, the differences within the target group are looked at. A broad sample is aimed at where the examined cases should be as different and typical as possible. In the third step, taking place after the data collection, the constellation of the sample is reviewed again. In that process the sample is narrowed down in order to analyse its limitations and validity.

I applied the three-step procedure for defining the sample proposed by Helfferich (2011) to the sample definition of the present study. In a first step, I decided on the following criteria to select my participants:

- bilingual or use of more than one language on a daily basis on a proficient level
- use of code-switching on Facebook timeline
- willingness to befriend me on Facebook
- written consent for the use of Facebook posts for my research
- participation in a one-to-one online interview in either German or English
Methodology

This choice was made to confine the target group. Only the Facebook activity of people with a proficient level in more than one language were observed in this study to eliminate the possibility of a participant not having mastered two or more languages and just translating single items. Further, the participants needed to accept me as a friend on Facebook to enable me to view their activity.

In a second step, the variety within the target group was looked at. Originally, only instances of code-switching in the following languages were planned to be looked at: English, German, French, Spanish, Italian as otherwise content analysis would not have been possible. This criterion was extended because I aspired a variety as large as possible to prevent premature generalisations. If I did not understand the language myself, I asked the participants for their help with accurate translation.

After applying all the criteria to the possible participants nine remained. As proposed by Helfferich (2011), I decided to narrow down the group after the data collection in a third step. Two of the participants only used code-switching scarcely. A third person was excluded, because of two other reasons. Firstly, his timeline was very active, which would have exceeded the time frame of my work. Secondly, he differed a lot in age. Thus, the criterion that only participants aged 20-30 are considered was added in order to restrict the range of the sample. Six participants were left, which according to Helfferich (2011) is a suitable size for a sample when working on a master thesis involving interviews (p. 175).

After defining the sample, the participants had to read and fill out a consent form (cf. appendix) to avoid ethical issues. In this document, they were informed about the purpose of my study and by signing it they agreed to hand over the requested data and conduct an interview with me.

The six participants are only presented later in this work in chapter 4.2 Participant Profiles. The reason for placing the profiles under the section Results is that the presentation already includes statements about the individual use of code-switching and self-reports concerning timeline posts. For the sake of clarity and as a convenience for the reader the information is kept together.
3.3. Quantitative Data Analysis: Facebook posts

My analysis of the data followed similar procedures as Dressler and Dressler’s study about linguistic identity positioning in Facebook posts (2016) where three stages were implemented: coding for language, labelling according to major themes and further analysis for commonalities and overlaps within the grouping (p. 29). In my case the labelling was based on the functions outlined by Halim and Maros (2014). For the coding, the analysis programme MAXQDA was used to facilitate the process.

3.3.1. Data Acquisition

In alignment with Dressler and Dressler’s study (2016) the personal data from each participant was requested from Facebook in order to have all the posts in a text file. To do this, the participants received an instruction in form of a video tutorial that explained how the data can be downloaded from Facebook.com. Under the section settings – your Facebook information - download a copy of your Facebook data – one can obtain all the information Facebook has about a profile. After downloading the data, the participants were asked to send the .html files to my email account. They were informed that some time for the analysis is needed before they were contacted to organise the interview.

3.3.2. MAXQDA

MAXQDA is a software for qualitative and mixed methods research developed by and for researchers. By consulting the website www.maxqda.com one gets an overview of the different applications. Further, the textbook Analyse qualitativer Daten mit MAXQDA: Text, Audio und Video by Rädiker and Kuckartz (2019) informs in great detail about conducting research by the aid of this software. For my research, a yearly fully functional student licence was purchased. Prior to importing all the Facebook data into MAXQDA, it was edited for reasons of convenience’s sake. The content of the .html files was copied into a word document and edited to generate a clearly arranged layout. In MAXQDA the data was organised in the document system. Under the section code system sets of codes were created.
3.3.3. Coding Categories

The first set of codes was titled *languages*. There, for every new language that appeared in the data a new code was created. The second set was named *CS-functions*. This set contained possible functions for an occurrence of code-switching. The coding of the functions was based on the division of Halim and Maros (2014) into the following eleven different functions: *quotation, addressee specification, reiteration, message qualification, clarification, emphasis, checking, indicating emotions, availability, principle of economy* and *free switching functions* (p. 1). In their study, they analysed status updates posted by five bilingual users on their Facebook wall. As a foundation for their division, they used the classification of Gumperz’s (1982) conversational code-switching. For my analysis, the presented functions were adapted and extended. Categories were merged, omitted or the definitions modified.

In the following, the fundamental changes to the study by Halim and Maros (2014) are explained. The categories *switching for clarification* and *switching for reiteration* as well as *switching for indicating emotions* and *switching for emphasis* were merged for reasons of lack of selectivity. The differences are minor and it is difficult, if not impossible, to make this distinction as an analyst. The category *switching for checking* was omitted as no such instances could be analysed in the present data. One reason for a non-existence of this category could be that only timeline activity was looked at. There, rather short conversations are to be found, which differs from the rather lengthier conversations on Facebook that Halim and Maros analysed in their study. Further, the *free switching function* was excluded. This function was assigned to posts that showed no clear function, had multiple functions or could be interpreted to create a stylistic effect. As I personally thought this to be an insufficient argumentation and a classification that could apply to nearly all the posts, I decided to disregard it. However, towards the end of my analysis I added the classification *other* to be able to classify a certain post suitably as one of my participants confirmed one switch to have a personal stylistic effect.

To verify the application of my categories, I conducted an interrater reliability test (Armstrong, Gosling, Weinman, & Marteau, 2004). Two people from my personal surroundings were asked to code some of the data in order to define the degree of agreement between them. When analysing interrater reliability concise instructions for the coding of the data is important as it increases the interrater reliability (Armstrong et al., 2004). Firstly, both observers were introduced to the topic master thesis. Then, I informed them about the purpose of the study,
confronted them with the present data and the coding categories. We discussed one example each and they were informed about the possibility of multiple codes (maximum three) which I explained with another two examples. Both were then confronted with 14 different posts including code-switching and had to code them accordingly. The result of the first test was an observer agreement of 79%, the second was 86%. These results show a high degree of agreement and indicate an unambiguous and convincing categorisation. The only adaption made after the interrater reliability test was the definition of two categories, as I received the feedback that they were difficult to understand.

The following overview shows all used functions, defines them and gives one example each deriving from the collected data. The definitions are based on the ones presented in the mentioned study by Halim and Maros (2014). All the examples include English to facilitate understanding for the reader of this thesis. To accentuate the switches visually the languages other than English are marked with red colour.
Table 1: Overview of the functional categories of code-switching and their definitions, along with examples from the dataset

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category:</th>
<th>Definition:</th>
<th>Example:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Switching for quotation</td>
<td>This function is used to directly cite speech from other individuals. Usually, the switching between the code is announced by quotation marks. It is used to retain the authenticity of the message. Often, the originator of the message is noted.</td>
<td>«Oh, take the time to waste a moment Oh, facing where the lines are broken Oh, name your price to all this living Oh, never ask to be forgiven»  ¡¡YA ES HOY!! (P2, line 257)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switching for addressee specification</td>
<td>Switching for addressee specification is used to direct the message to a certain person or group of people. Hence, the language of the addressee triggers the code-switching. To assign this function, the observer needs to be informed about the language repertoire of the people involved.</td>
<td>- post in english- [name]: What's next [name]? P5 : Passe mon oow début mai puis chercher un nouveau taff 😊 ça va toi? (P5, line 144)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switching for clarification/reiteration</td>
<td>This function is assigned when code-switching is used to either clarify or repeat a message. The aim is to make the message clearer and understood by the audience.</td>
<td>HYVÄÄ SYNTYMÄPÄIVÄÄ [name]! 😊 aka happy birthday, hope you're having the best day (P4, line 14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switching for message qualification</td>
<td>This function applies when a switch is conducted to amplify or qualify the content of a message. A specific reason for the switching could also be the link of the content to a certain memory or place, which in return is bound to a specific language.</td>
<td>[name]!! feliz cumpleaños :). I hope you have a great day. I wish you the best! (P2, line 202)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Switching for indicating emotions/ Switching for emphasis</strong></td>
<td>Words and expressions have different connotations in different languages. If someone decides to switch codes to facilitate/emphasise the transfer of emotions or to expresses a feeling more accurately, this function is assigned.</td>
<td>Hey godsis! I send you a big hug with lots of love!! I hope to see you soon. <em>Te quiero mucho ¡feliz cumpleaños!</em> (P2, line 447)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Switching for availability</strong></td>
<td>A translation may result in words, phrases or expressions being less semantically accurate. Thus, if no accurate translation can be found and one decides to write a certain element/sentence in the original language it is classified as switching for availability.</td>
<td>Bah oui mon lapin, je te vois sur bbc 😊 Enjoy (P5, line 80) (note: There is no accurate translation for the word <em>Enjoy</em> in French.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Switching for principle of economy</strong></td>
<td>If someone choses to switch codes because it takes less effort to express something in another language it is coded as principle of economy. Already Gumperz (1982) observed that bilinguals tend to use the shortest and the easiest words to communicate.</td>
<td>Morjensta! Ajankuluksesi voit tykätä mun ihanan Bath-jengin kuvasta Cheer from Head to Toe julkasussa, ni he voi voittaa kivoja juttuja. Hyvää maanantaita, share likes and love etc. (P4, line 68)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3.1. Rules for Coding

As proposed by Rädiker and Kuckartz (2019, p. 86) rules were set prior to the coding to ensure a professional procedure. As mentioned earlier the layout of the Facebook data had to be edited. The files were of considerable size and for the sake of clarity only the important text was kept in the word document. The rules that guided my editing and later on the coding are listed below.

Only instances of language were analysed, hence, if the participant shared a post or uploaded a picture with no comment, the post was disregarded. If photos were directly connected to a text, only the text was used for the analysis, the picture was left out. If posts only consisted of names, places, numbers or emoticons/emojis, they were excluded from the analysis as they are universal and not tied to a certain language.

Only the post from the participant her- or himself were looked at, comments from other people were not analysed and deleted. There is only an instance of code-switching at hand if the participant and not people who comment is using more than one language. In exceptional cases, for example when a comment from someone else was necessary to understand the post of the participant, it was added in italics. Interjections or other unidentifiable expressions were cut out (example: Aaaaaie /Pff). Further, hashtags were not regarded because they are usually in English and, therefore, represent a special type of language use. Single words such as wanderlust in English or big bang in Spanish are despite their foreign origin not regarded as code-switching, as they are included in in the official dictionaries of the language.

3.4. Qualitative Analysis: Interviews

After the data analysis, an online interview was conducted with every single participant to obtain background information in order to interpret the data. The aim of the interview was to deepen and supplement the present data from the Facebook posts. The following chapters describe the development of the interview guide, the conduct and analysis of interviews.
3.4.1. Interview Guide

According to Helfferich (2011), guideline interviews are suitable when a high degree of openness is required from the participants (p. 180). As the topic of code-switching is very individual and many questions regarding personal language experience were asked a semi-structured guideline seemed most suitable for the interview. The semi-structured format was chosen because it allows the interviewees to introduce topics and structure the open narrative. In addition, the interviewer can intervene easily if needed and steer the conversation towards the research interest (Helfferich, 2011, pp. 179f.). When developing the interview guide the requirements proposed by Helfferich (2011, p. 180) were considered.

The content of the interview guide (cf. appendix) was divided into four sections: Informative questions, language experience, language awareness/ code-switching and code-switching and language learning. The interview guide was adapted for each participant in advance on the basis of the data already evaluated. Information such as the languages used in the data and individual examples of posts were noted in the guide and, thus, simplified the interview.

3.4.2. Conduct of Interview

With every participant a Face Time or Skype interview was conducted. The reason for the use of Skype was the weak connection and insufficient quality of the Face Time calls. The interviews, conducted between March and June 2019, followed the semi-structured interview guide (cf. chapter 3.4.2). Information regarding the .mp3 files with the recorded interviews is to be found in the appendix.

As the questions required a considerable amount of familiarity and personal information from the participants, it seemed important to me to start the interview with a casual conversation about their life and their well-being. An interview is the result of a joint interaction process between the narrator and the interviewer (Helfferich, 2011, p. 12). In other words, the interviewer always has a significant influence on the outcome of the interview. During the interviews, I tried to orientate myself on the areas of competence proposed by Helfferich (2011, p. 24) in order to create a suitable and neutral framework for the investigation. I proceeded with thanking them for the participation and informed them about the topic of my
master thesis and the purpose of the survey. To ensure that the participants could fully understand my questions, I presented them my working definition of code-switching and I verified that they understood it correctly. They were informed about the confidential handling of all statements and were asked for consent for recording the interview.

Towards the end of the interview, the participants were confronted with some of their own timeline posts including code-switching. They were asked to make an assumption about the reason of the switching. According to Milroy and Gordon (2003) subjective responses to particular linguistic behaviour is a valuable source for sociolinguists and researchers occasionally even utilise speakers’ self-reports of their usage. Although sociolinguists do not behold those reports as actual representations, effects of language ideology can be examined in this data (p.54f.). At the end, the interviewees had the opportunity to make a personal note to conclude the interview.

3.4.3. Data Analysis

The .mp3 files were imported into MAXQDA and transliterated. Thereby, not a complete transcription and no coding was intended. By the aid of the time mark function, only selective statements were transcribed. This method was chosen, because not all the information from the interviews were valuable for this work and, thus, resources could be saved. The audio files were marked with memos and linked to the text file of each participant. With the newly received information the defined functions were further specified, and all instances of code-switching were revised again and adapted if necessary. Chapter 4.4 Qualitative Analysis provides detailed information about the conducted changes.
4. Results

Chapter 4 first illustrates and overview of the data analysis followed by a presentation of every single participant. Thus, the reader of this thesis gets an insight into the comprehensive and individual analysis of the data, which in turn enables a deeper understanding of the following chapters. There, the results from the quantitative data analysis with MAXQDA are presented. Finally, the qualitative results, including the key insights from the interviews, are summarised.

4.1. Overview Data Analysis

The following chart visualises the three main steps of the quantitative data analysis. After the Facebook data of six participants was organised in MAXQDA, all the posts were coded according to language. In total, 13 different languages were detected. In a next step, the eight elaborated functions were assigned to instances of code-switching. After this, the interviews were conducted and by the aid of the qualitative data, the coding was revised.

*Figure 3 Overview data analysis*
4.2. Participant Profiles

In this chapter the six participants are presented, each introduced by a quote from the conducted interviews. To facilitate a general overview of each participant the essential information is listed in a table at the beginning of every introduction. In the following text, more detailed information is provided. A main element of the introduction is the presentation of timeline posts including the personal statements of the participants. All the information listed derives from the conducted interviews. The informing about the coding of the posts is to be found in chapter 4.4 Qualitative Analysis. Statements from the participants regarding the implementation of code-switching in foreign language teaching are listed in chapter 5.2.3 Methods to Implement Code-switching.

The character presentations are rather extensive as a precise understanding of someone`s language use is required to code the data. Further reasons for the length of this chapter is the interesting personal experiences and opinions about the subjects treated in the interview. This information is not withheld even though some information is not directly linked to my survey. The data serves as valuable background information to understand the participants individual use of code-switching and could be used for further studies.
4.2.1. Participant 1

«You construct this whole network of languages and not just one langue» (37:38)

Table 2 key data P1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>question</th>
<th>answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>country of residence</td>
<td>France (Geneva)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language spoken in country of residence</td>
<td>French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profession</td>
<td>student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>first language(s)</td>
<td>Spanish, Galician, Italian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>further languages</td>
<td>German, Swiss German, English, French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language experience</td>
<td>university in the French speaking part of Switzerland, stay in Kenya, family in Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awareness of CS in writing:</td>
<td>neutral (3) – aware (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>base language on social media</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>application of CS in language teaching</td>
<td>yes, as a tool to learn languages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participant 1 is a 24-year-old female student who is currently completing her studies in Geneva. She is a double citizen – her family is from Spain, but she was born in Switzerland. The interview with her was conducted in Swiss German, as this is the language we usually communicate in. Nevertheless, a variety of other languages were used by the participant and code-switching occurred frequently.

Her first acquired language was Spanish. At a very young age she was also confronted with Galician and Italian in her close surroundings and learned to understand those languages as well. At the age of five she entered kindergarten and started learning German and Swiss German. As required by the Swiss curriculum, she studied French and English at a later point. During high school she also took Latin and Old Greek modules. After completing high school in the German speaking part of Switzerland she moved to Geneva and started a bilingual degree in English and French. Other major language experiences are a six-month stay in Kenya and
visits to her family in Spain. Participant 1 states that 80% of the time she is speaking either English or French.

When asking P1 if and where she is using code-switching she answered: «jo, 100%, immer überall, di ganz Zit, i mim Kopf isch alles gmischt, und da isch scho immer gmischt gsi »(09:50). She is using code-switching daily, whereas at home she utilises German and Spanish and with friends at university or with work colleagues it is both English and French. When using code-switching in writing the language choice depends on the addressee or the topic. Everything that concerns university is discussed in French, discussions about films or the like are generally in English. Certain activities like for example cooking are usually in Spanish.

Participant 1 rates her awareness of code-switching between neutral and aware. In writing she is usually aware, but she does not plan in advance what language she will use. P1 clearly defines English as her base language on social media and states that it is also the language that is mixed into all the other languages she uses and not vice versa.

Regarding her Facebook audience she states that she primarily posts content for herself and not for others. Her audience consists of her family, people from the German speaking part of Switzerland and friends from university who speak either French or English. P1 thinks that her audience either perceives her code-switching as normal, not even noticeable (because they know her or switch themselves) or as a point of confusion (because they cannot understand all involved languages). In her eyes, her use of code-switching conveys a positive image about herself. She adds that even the people who do not understand the full message still have a positive view of her speaking several languages.

**post example 2: 24th March 2017**

Tanti auguri, [name]! 🎉🥂 le meilleur cadeau serait un petit voyage à [place], j'en suis sûre ;D profite de ta journée, tu nous manques 😊

Participant 1 explained that this instance of code-switching between Italian and French happened subconsciously. She used Italian because it is the mother tongue of the addressee and, thus, more personal and authentic. Then P1 switched to French because when spending
time with the addressee they usually communicated in French, therefore, this languages choice seemed more natural to her.

P1 has a positive image of herself being plurilingual and hopes that in education, students with varied language repertoires receive the necessary support and appreciation. In her eyes code-switching can be used as a tool to learn languages and can be implemented in teaching (cf. chapter 5.2.3).

4.2.2. Participant 2

«It happened to me that when I was learning English, I understood more of my Spanish» (39:16)

Table 3 key data P2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>question</th>
<th>answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>country of residence</td>
<td>Mexico City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language spoken in country of residence</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profession</td>
<td>Producer coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First language(s)</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further languages</td>
<td>English, French (basic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language experience</td>
<td>university in England for 1 term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awareness of CS in writing:</td>
<td>very aware (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base language on social media</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application of CS in language teaching</td>
<td>yes, when content is familiar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participant 2 grew up in a Spanish speaking environment in Mexico City. At the age of five she started studying English. A main reason for this early interest in English was that her father listened to a lot of music from the Beatles and Michael Jackson and she was eager to understand what the songs were about. She pursued the objective of learning English later in school and added French during her teens. P2 stated that she was really confused with the
study of foreign languages at school and that her speaking was not very good. During the interview she recalled the very specific moment that influenced her attitude towards English. In 2007 she encountered a situation where she struggled with communication and in the interview she said: «I got so frustrated that I don’t know how to speak or how to communicate my ideas, . . . I think one week later . . . I was studying English, proper English in an English school» (08:33).

P2 experienced code-switching herself during the term she studied abroad. When speaking Spanish to her family during that time, she sometimes could not help herself to use English words and expressions. On social media P2 uses code-switching when posting something in Spanish with an English explanation in order to facilitate understanding for her international friends. When posting something on Facebook, the chosen language depends on the content. P2 likes to use English, because then she knows that the majority of her audience understands her posts. If she posts something concerning her local surrounding in Mexico City, she uses Spanish.

P2 assumes that her audience has a rather negative image of her code-switching on Facebook. In the interview she expresses that with the following statement: «I think Mexican people, they don’t feel very comfortable with it [code-switching], our society judges to much when you speak in another language» (19:40). However, P2 seems convinced that her international friends like her using several languages on social media. Talking about English she added «this has opened to me many doors and they [Mexican people] just don’t know how to cross this fear» (20:24).

post example: 23rd November 2017

[name]!! Feliz cumpleaños! Happy birthday, I wish you have an amazing day! Grattis!

In this post three languages: Spanish, English, Swedish and, thus, two occurrences of code-switching appear. P2 explained to me that she met that person in Mexico City and he was interested in learning Spanish. That is the reason for her using Spanish. She switched to English because she wanted him to understand the full message. That person also taught P2 some Swedish, for that reason and because she wanted to include his mother tongue, she congratulated him in Swedish as well.
Results

P2 stressed the importance of understanding the culture when learning a new language. From her own experience of her English studies she states: «I had to understand the English culture or the US American culture because they express themselves in a different way» (39:46).

4.2.3. Participant 3

«I think why switching happens is also a bit of popular culture» (19:48)

Table 4 key data P3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>question</th>
<th>answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>country of residence</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language spoken in country of residence</td>
<td>Dutch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profession</td>
<td>purchaser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>first language(s)</td>
<td>Dutch, English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>further languages</td>
<td>German, French, Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language experience</td>
<td>university in England for 1 term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awareness of CS in writing:</td>
<td>very aware (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>base language on social media</td>
<td>Dutch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>application of CS in language teaching</td>
<td>yes, helps to understand the structure of a language, learning new vocabulary in context</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participant 3 was born in the Netherlands but moved to the United States at the age of two. With her parents she communicated in Dutch, in all other settings she used English. At the age of eleven her family moved back to the Netherlands. During Highschool, P2 studied German and French which she continued at University. As part of her degree she had to go abroad twice. She completed a 5-month Internship in Germany and took part in an exchange programme and spent one term at a university in England.

Participant 3 uses code-switching frequently, mostly switching between Dutch and English. This occurs mainly with friends and family but also with her international colleagues at work. She is
using code-switching on social media every once in a while and describes her use of language as very aware (5). P2 states that the language choice depends on the addressee and topic of the post. If the post concerns her family for example, it is always in Dutch. During her time in England, she used English to share her experiences with her international friends. Her Facebook audience consists of her Dutch speaking family, old friends from University or High School and international friends from her time abroad. She assumes that her audience has a positive attitude towards her plurilingual posts even though she struggles to find a reason.

**post example: 29th June 2017**

I'm officially graduated 🎓

Vandaag is het officieel, mijn scriptie afgesloten met een 8 en een 9 voor mijn verdediging!

😊 Eerst op vakantie en daarna vanaf 1 september aan de slag als Trainee Purchase Manager bij [name].

P3 started writing her post in English and then switched to Dutch. As she has many people from different backgrounds on her Facebook, using English in a post makes her feel like more people understand it: «if I only type it in Dutch, then I think maybe a third won’t understand what it says»(10:48). She is switching back to Dutch because: «if I only post it in English, I would have a fear like for some people to miss out on my own happiness» (12:11). Thereby, she refers to the part of her audience who only understands Dutch.

P3 has experienced code-switching herself in language learning. When she moved back to the Netherlands, she sometimes had trouble finding the appropriate word or expression in Dutch and used English instead. According to her, most Dutch words can be translated into English, but the other way around it is not the case. She describes her bilingual upgrowing as a very positive experience. Especially as in the Netherlands they already start in elementary school with English lessons, thus, she had always help from other children if she did not know a word in Dutch. She argues that it is very popular for the younger generation to use English, naming TV-series and musicians that have a large influence. In her eyes, the cultural context plays always a crucial part as well when talking about languages.
4.2.4. Participant 4

«I think it’s fun to make your language more rich with other languages» (32:44)

Table 5 key data P4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>question</th>
<th>answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>country of residence</td>
<td>Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language spoken in country of residence</td>
<td>Finnish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profession</td>
<td>student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>first language(s)</td>
<td>Finnish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>further languages</td>
<td>Swedish, English, Spanish (basic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language experience</td>
<td>university in England for 1 term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awareness of CS in writing:</td>
<td>very aware (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>base language on social media</td>
<td>now Finnish, during stay in England: English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>application of CS in language teaching</td>
<td>yes, helps to understand the concept of languages, only for advanced students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participant 4 grew up with Finnish as her first language. In primary school she got in contact with English. At the age of eleven she started studying Swedish at school and two years later she took a two-year Spanish course. Even though she grew up in a monolingual environment she mentions the unique situation in Finland. It is a country with two official languages and English is well-establish in the education system and widely used.

Participant 4 referred to several language experiences which have influenced her ambition to improve her foreign language skills. A major experience was her taking part in an exchange programme in 2016/17. During her yearly stay abroad, English has become her most frequently used language. She even mentioned that on social media her base language changed from Finnish to English during that period of time.

Participant 4 adapts her use of language according to the person she is talking to. She is using code-switching frequently with her friends when speaking. With people who have little
knowledge of other languages she focuses on excluding code-switching. P4 claims to use a lot of code-switching on social media. When she is writing a post, the language choice depends on the audience she wants to address. She states that: «when I use Finnish, I know that I am excluding people from understanding it» (12:40). Therefore, when trying to reach out to a large audience with a post, she uses English. If the content is specific, she would use Finnish. In the second scenario she would only include English, if it is a common English thing to say, in her words a ‘viral phrase’, or if there is no proper translation for it in Finnish.

P4 describes her Facebook audience as rather international including friends from Finland, Sweden and England. She assumes that her audience has mixed feelings about her code-switching on social media. On one hand, they get an educated and well-travelled image of her. On the other hand, she mentions that: «they think that I’m quite international and wanna show it off» (22:32). Even though she thinks some of her friends on Facebook might ‘roll their eyes’, she is convinced that the positive image is predominant.

**post example: 6th august 2018**

Morjensta! Ajankulukesi voit tykätä mun ihanan [...]-jengin kuvasta Cheer from Head to Toe julkasussa, ni he voi voittaa kivoja juttuja. Hyvää maanantaita, share likes and love etc.

With this post P4 wanted to reach out to the Finnish speaking audience of her Facebook. At the same time she was talking about her English cheerleading group and wanted them to have an idea what she was talking about. When asking her why she switched to English in the post she said: «If I use the word share in Finnish it doesn`t apply to likes and love, like both of them, and in Finnish it would sound clumsy . . . the sentence is something I wouldn`t write in Finnish. It would sound more official» (28:03).

Participant 4 wrote a post in Finnish but started it with the Spanish word *Hola*. In the interview she explained to me that she is using the words *Hola* and *Sí* in her everyday language. She states: «I think it’s fun to make your language more rich with other languages» (32:44).

During her foreign language education P4 was confronted with many situations including code-switching. Her Swedish classes were very much based on the Finnish language. The languages were often compared. P4 is currently working in a multicultural school with a CLIL class. There,
she is confronted with a variety of different languages and is using different languages in the same sentence herself. She describes the school as a language rich environment where the children are used to a variety of languages and enjoy especially the use of English. She states: «children with immigrant background, they like and enjoy switching the languages and they like when they can try to get through to the adults in different ways» (40:27). P4 sees code-switching as a very positive tool and likes to use it herself.

4.2.5. Participant 5

«The world of social media and stuff, I feel it`s better if you can speak a few languages, mixing them I think is really nice. » (08:30)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>question</th>
<th>answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>country of residence</td>
<td>changing (working on a yacht)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language spoken in country of residence</td>
<td>changing, on the yacht: English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profession</td>
<td>Second Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>first language(s)</td>
<td>French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>further languages</td>
<td>English, Dutch (only receptive), German (basic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language experience</td>
<td>two-month internship in the Netherlands working in the yachting industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awareness of CS in writing:</td>
<td>neutral (3) - aware (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>base language on social media</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>application of CS in language teaching</td>
<td>yes, experiment with something different, linking it to social media</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participant 5 is a 28-year-old male who grew up in France in a French speaking family. However, he describes his family as quite international. His father is Dutch and speaks four languages, that is why P5 got in contact with several other languages at a very young age.

At the age of eleven P5 started taking English lessons in school. At 14 he started a three-year course of German. He listed three language experiences that have influenced him strongly. When he was in his early teens, he was in contact with people from Asia trading clothing using his English knowledge. The second experience was a two-month internship in the Netherlands during high school, whereby he mostly used English to communicate during that time. He says he wanted to improve his English and states: «I`ve been lucky with good teachers» (04:50).

At a later point P4 entered the yachting industry and has now been working for four years with an English crew and uses English on a daily basis. English has become his dominant language and he states with surprise: «It`s easier for me to speak English than French» (05:45). The reason for his ambition to study English was the following: «English brings a lot of good opportunities for life like business, yachting industry or travelling the world» (05:00).

P5 is using code-switching himself when he is leaving the yacht and going back home to France. When he is writing or reading everything is fully in English, only the communication with his family is in French. In regard to his Facebook posts he states that: «most of what I`m doing is because of my job, which is on yachts, and all of them are English so would be everything in English» (12:24). He added that depending on the content of the post it can be in French as well, but he clearly defines English as his base language on Facebook.

His Facebook friends consist of his family, international people, mainly from yachting, and friends from France. He mentions two different types of mentalities in his audience. P5 assumes that people who have never travelled might think he wants to show off. However, he assumes that the other people perceive him as well-travelled and think that he is doing well. He receives very positive feedback, because even some of his French friends comment on his Facebook account in English.
47

post example: 20th August 2918

Happy birthday my bro ❤️ Vivement qu’on y retourne, Japowwww

P5 states that as his family is international and at home several languages are used, it is normal that he congratulates his brother in English. For P5 it was more natural to use English in the first part and he also added, that it is shorter than the equivalent in French. He switched back to French because that is the language he and his brother usually communicate in.

4.2.1. Participant 6

«Code-switching is an individual thing that you use as a tool to study or to express yourself in another language or to learn languages and if the teacher is bilingual or speaks more than even two languages, then she or he could help the student and for example explain.» (41:48)

Table 7 key data P6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>question</th>
<th>answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>country of residence</td>
<td>Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language spoken in country of residence</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profession</td>
<td>student (to be)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>first language(s)</td>
<td>Vietnamese, Swedish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>further languages</td>
<td>English, French (basic), Spanish (basic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language experience</td>
<td>lived in Australia for 2 years (2015-2017), travels in Vietnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awareness of CS in writing:</td>
<td>aware (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>base language on social media</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>application of CS in language teaching</td>
<td>yes, as a tool to study languages, but all students need to know all involved languages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results

P6 is a 24-year-old female who lives in the Swedish speaking part of Finland. She is of Finnish nationality, but her descendants derive from Vietnam. She is a student who took a few years off to work and travel, but she is planning to go back to university in the near future. Her first languages, Vietnamese and Swedish, were both acquired at her home. When entering school, P6 was introduced to a monolingual setting. At a later point in school English, French and Spanish were introduced.

P6 uses code-switching in spoken discourse regularly with her friends and family. With friends the switches happen mostly between Swedish and English, whereas with her family it is Swedish and Vietnamese. In writing she usually uses English and Swedish which she denominates as her strong writing languages. P6 has never learned Vietnamese in an academic context, thus, her writing is very basic. On social media her base language is English. The main reason for this choice is her international Facebook audience. Her friends list consists mainly of friends she met whilst travelling.

She lists the following reasons for code-switching: the person addressed, not knowing the word in a language, switching because a word is shorter in another language and feeling more comfortable in one language. She elaborates the last point further, stating that with English she has a higher level of identification and therefore can express herself better in that respective language.

post example: 3rd December 2017 18:19

Thanksss dude! Hoppas du lever loppan i Amerika broder😊😊

When writing this post, P6 was in Australia and her friend from Sweden was in America. Thus, she decided to start the post in English, knowing that he would understand it. Then she switched back because usually they speak Swedish and it is more personal.

P6 claims code-switching to be «another way to express yourself truly» (37:24). During primary school her dominant language changed from Vietnamese to Swedish and in the transitional period she was code-switching a lot. She mentions the importance of good teachers and states herself lucky that she only had positive experiences with code-switching in the classroom.
Results

4.3. Quantitative Analysis

In this chapter, charts designed in MAXQDA, sometimes further edited with Excel, visualise the results from the quantitative data analysis. Thereby, the focus is on the assigned functions and their overlaps. Before introducing the results of the coding for functions some general information is given in order to classify the knowledge properly.

All the participants used at least three different languages on their Facebook timeline during the two years. P1 used the largest amount with seven different language varieties. Over all six participants 65 instances of code-switching could be found, ranging from four instances per person to a maximum of 16. The instances were spread out over the time period of two years, whereas no clear pattern of when the switches occurred was noticeable. The two charts below provide detailed information about the assigned functions.

![Overview of coded functions](image)

*Figure 5 Overview of coded functions*

In total 108 functions were assigned to the 65 instances of code-switching. It becomes clear that the function of *addressee specification* is the most frequently used function with 39 times. This is followed by *message qualification* and then *indicating emotion/emphasis*. 
The minimum amount of different functions assigned to all the posts of a participant is three, the maximum of different functions is seven. The function of indicating emotion/emphasis and addressee specification was found in the coding of all participants. The functions of clarification/reiteration, availability and principle of economy were only assigned to posts of three different participants.

In MAXQDA a codemap was created to visualise the overlaps between the coded functions. The intensity of the connection between functions mirror their connection. Hence, the thicker the line between the functions, the more overlaps exist between those categories. Not visible on this figure are the categories of principle of economy and other as there was not enough information regarding their connection to the other functions for the programme. The figure shows that overlaps between the categories message qualification and addressee specification are the most frequent. Further, overlaps between addressee specification and indicating emotions/emphasis are visible. Also notable is the connection between message qualification and quotation as well as between message qualification and indicating emotions/emphasis.
In summary, these two conclusions can be put forward:

- Conclusion 1: The functions of addressee specification, message qualification and indicating emotions/emphasis were assigned the most.
- Conclusion 2: The three categories from conclusion one are also the ones who overlap the most.

### 4.4. Qualitative Analysis

This chapter first informs about the analysis of the interviews in general. It then goes on to present some of the participants’ self-reports regarding their use of code-switching functions. In addition, it is exemplified how the personal statements of the participants influenced the coding.

To begin with, some general information is provided. In total, 3 hours and 57 minutes of interview were recorded and analysed. The duration of the recorded interviews ranges from 20 – 50 minutes. The reason for this wide difference is the individual character of the participants. Their experiences and stories about language learning and use vary greatly and
some of them were complex and needed time for explanation. Furthermore, the higher the
awareness of languages, the more detailed the participants could answer the question. One of
the participants is a teacher herself which resulted in a very detailed discussion about language
learning.

As already explained earlier in this thesis, the aim of the quantitative analysis was not to
generate new data. The personal information was needed to get a step closer to understanding
why an individual might choose code-switching and, thus, the information deepened and
hopefully enhanced the accuracy of the coding. The data was also not gathered to enable
comparison between the participants. Nevertheless, some general statements about the
participants can be made.

All the participants have either studied, lived or worked abroad. They have all experienced
code-switching while speaking or in their close surroundings. The awareness of the switching is
rather high, and all of the participants mentioned the topic or the addressee as a reason for
switching. The Facebook audience was described by four participants as international and all
mentioned that speakers of different languages are part of their audience. Even though all six
see code-switching themselves as something positive, they all have their concerns whether all
the befriended people on Facebook actually perceive their use of several languages in the same
post as something positive.

In the following, three Facebook posts exemplify my coding and the revision after the
conducted interviews. Thereby, my personal argumentation and the participants` own
explanation is presented. Those posts were chosen because all three have a complex
attribution of functions, therefore, they illustrate the challenges of the coding process which is
discussed in chapter 5.1 Functions of Code-switching.
Results

P1 post example: 18th October 2018

Preis: 1.000 Fr.
Verkäufer: [name]
(VERKAUFT) Bedroom in shared apartment
1.000 Fr. – Cité-centre

We have a fully furnished room to rent in our flatshare in Saint-Jean for six months (possibly longer) starting in November. The flat is close to all main bus lines (6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 19), a 10min walk away from Cornavin train station and 5min to the Rhone river in Jonction. Spanish speakers preferably! Message me if you’re interested.

Three languages are included in this post: German, English and French. I coded the post as addressee specification because I assumed that English was used to reach out to a larger audience. Further, I assigned the function of message qualification as P1 switched from English to French using the term Cité-centre (some literature defines this as borrowing, according to my working definition it can be classified as code-switching, cf, chapter 2.1.1/2.1.2). For the German part I struggled to find a suitable function. During the interview it became clear that this post is a special case because Facebook provides certain formal guidelines when a flat is advertised. Thus, the German text was not created by the participant herself, but by Facebook, as her account was set to German. P1 confirmed that English was used to reach out to a larger amount of people and French words were used to keep authenticity. Thus, the final coding was addressee specification and message qualification.

P5 post example: 16th June 2018

Bah oui mon lapin, je te vois sur bbc 😊 Enjoy

I coded this instance of code-switching with the function availability as there is no accurate translation of the English word Enjoy in French. During the interview P5 confirmed that if he tried to translate the word into French, it would not have the exact same meaning and that it would be more complicated and longer. Even though he mentioned the length of the post, the principle of economy does not apply because the primary reason is the lack of an accurate translation. Further, he mentioned that it is cooler to use English in that case. He added, that the addressee of the post is a world traveller and thus, the code-switching is a small hint to his
Results

good friend. In light of that statement, two more categories could be considered: *addressee specification* and *indicating emotion/emphasis*. As the comment of P5 was rather vague and could be interpreted in various ways, no additional coding was added.

**P6 post example: 3rd February 2018**

Tam biệt Việt Nam ❤❤❤
See you soon again!

To begin with, I coded this instance of code-switching as *addressee specification* and *indicating emotion/emphasis*. The reason for this is that P6 switched to her base language English, reaching out to a wide audience and because the content as well as the emoji suggest an emotional function. Further, I considered the function of *message qualification or clarification/reiteration*, depending on the intended statement of the participant. During the interview, P6 confirmed that she included both languages in the post because of her audience. On the one hand, she wanted the majority of people to know that she was concluding her travels in Vietnam. On the other hand, she wanted her Vietnamese family to understand the post. She confirmed that *See you soon again* holds basically the same meaning as the Vietnamese message. Further she mentioned that she was very emotional when writing the post. Thus, my two assigned functions of *addressee specification* and *indicating emotion/emphasis* could be confirmed and the function of *clarification/reiteration* was clarified.
Discussion

5. Discussion

In the following chapters, the main findings from the conducted research for this master thesis are discussed. The research questions are answered, thereby linking the answers to the current state of research (cf. chapter 2.2/2.3). At this point it must be emphasised once again that the results cannot be generalised because of the very individual character of the topic of research. The analysed instances of code-switching from different participants can hardly be compared, as a complex setting of factors have an influence. Nevertheless, I aim to present some general statements, whereas I only list facts and not aim to interpret the applicability of the findings on a larger scale.

5.1. Functions of Code-switching

This chapter aims at answering the first research question by informing about the key aspect of this thesis, the functions of code-switching. In the following, the research question is listed once again:

1. What patterns of code-switching can be identified within Facebook posts and what are the functions of code-switching on this social media platform?

To answer the research question, first the patterns and then the functions of code-switching have to be depicted. The patterns were not systematically analysed as this would have exceeded the extent of my master thesis. Nevertheless, some key patterns are mentioned here in order to have a better understanding of the functions presented in a next step. The following findings can be noted regarding patterns of code-switching: In the majority of cases, code-switching happened between two sentences, also known as extra-sentential code-switching (cf. chapter 2.1.1). In three out of 65 cases, more than two languages were used. The most frequently used language in the analysed posts was English. Despite the fact that English is without a doubt the dominant language on social media, no reliable statement about the used languages can be made because the sample of this research was too small and the participants have different backgrounds. Further, no clear pattern of the timing of the switches could be identified.
Discussion

Regarding the functions of code-switching on Facebook, the following two conclusions from chapter 4.3. *Quantitative Analysis* play an important role and are therefore presented once again below:

- Conclusion 1: The functions of addressee specification, message qualification and indicating emotions/emphasis were assigned the most.
- Conclusion 2: The three categories from conclusion 1 are also the ones who overlap the most.

The quantitative analysis with MAXQDA has shown that from the total of 108 assigned functions the category *addressee specification* was the most frequently used with 39 times, followed by *message qualification* with 29 times and then *indicating emotion/emphasis* with 18 times. The participants stated during the interview that they usually write their posts for a certain group of their audience. This could be seen as a main reason for the frequent use of *addressee specification*. As a post shows up on the news feed from all befriended people, code-switching can be seen as a tool to direct a message to the addressee without explicitly stating that fact. In some cases, it becomes clear that the author of a post switches languages due to the involvement of a specific person. Thus, a pretended personal conversation is created, which paradoxically is visible to the whole Facebook audience. This observation supports the finding of Gumperz (1982) who argues that code-switching signals contextual information and, thus, helps to decode a message (cf. chapter 2.2). In the case of *addressee specification*, the contextual information might regard the personal relationship.

When the function of *indicating emotion/emphasis* is assigned, the contextual information is even more evident. The switching to another language can emotionally charge a message and, therefore, alternate or intensify the meaning of the actual text. In the case of message qualification, a similar argumentation applies. In this category the switching occurs to amplify or qualify the content of a message. Again, the switching helps to decode a message. When the language is alternated on the basis of a reference to a certain place or a memory, information is conveyed that would be difficult to put into text.

Even though in theory the categories have a distinct division, in practice when applying them to a post they often seem less clear. Thus, overlaps between categories are inevitable and in the case of code-switching even necessary due to its multifunctional character. The clear
overlaps between the three most frequently used categories can be explained by the emotional connotation that resonates in all three categories. When directing a message to a specific person, often including some sort of personal joke or memory, the relationship is emphasised. When coding a post as *message qualification*, the personal association of certain information and the wish to amplify it cannot be clearly separated from an emotional intention. Thus, the clear overlap between those three categories seems logical.

At this point, I would like to point out another highly relevant function of code-switching on Facebook that has not been evaluated in the research of this thesis. The following argumentation is based on the research presented in chapter 2.3 *Functions of Code-switching* and chapter 2.4.2 *Language and Identity*.

The connection between language and Identity is indisputable, which is why the factor identity must always be taken into account when analysing language. When looking at code-switching and identity, it is noticeable that in several studies, functions like *showing identity* are included. Some linguists even consider the identity function of language as a trigger for code-switching. In addition, studies analysing communication on social media confirm that through the positioning of ourselves and others through online interaction we construct our virtual identities. Further, the social networking site Facebook holds the main function of self-representation. As a last argument, I want to point out that some of the participants, not knowing any of the literature, mentioned the importance of identity when talking about their posts (cf. chapter 4.3).

I conclude that code-switching on Facebook is the ultimate combination of language use and identity construction. Thus, next to all the assigned functions in the conducted research, the superior function of *identity construction* can be assigned to all instances of code-switching. I support my argumentation with the statement from Auer (2013) who affirms that code-switching can be rich in the identity work it accomplishes. As his study investigated code-switching in bilingual speech, not all the instances had identity-relevant meaning. Since the posts I analysed were all from Facebook, which as explained above a is a platform to create a virtual self, all the posts can be attributed with the function of *identity construction*. 
5.2. Implications for Language Teaching

This chapter deals with the answering of the second research question. It takes the analysis of code-switching a step further and questions the applicability of it in language teaching. The formulated question is the following:

2. In what way are code-switching data of value for language teaching in the foreign language classroom?

Language education is defined and structured through language policy and, therefore, a very political issue. In this chapter, not the language policy and greater guidelines, but the implications for individual teachers are looked at. While numerous studies focus on the learner, the role of teachers is hardly and only selectively examined. The fact that teachers are a central influencing factor in the students` learning process has been proven multiple times (Mietzel, 2017). Hence, the implications for language teaching is given a closer look.

The presented implications are based on the results of the data collection and the experiences of the participants. The discussion is founded on four guiding questions regarding the data source, the promotion of plurilingualism in the classroom, methods of implementing code-switching and teacher requirements. In a concluding chapter, the gained insights are summarised, and the research question is answered.

5.2.1. Data Source

In what way does the present data serve as an authentic source for linguistic analysis on communicative competences in plurilingual contexts?

Unlike in many other studies, the data was not produced for the purpose of research. Only posts prior to informing the participants about the study were analysed to avoid the observer`s paradox (cf. chapter 3.1). Therefore, the posts are authentic communication from individuals on their Facebook profile. All the participants confirmed that their Facebook audience consists of people with different language repertoires, hence, a plurilingual context is given. A characteristic of a Facebook posts is that the individual decides freely and by their own
intention when and what to write. There is no other cause than the very personal intention. Thus, the analysed posts can be considered as an authentic source for linguistic analysis.

5.2.2. Promoting Plurilingualism

How can the evaluated data serve to promote plurilingualism in the classroom?

The promotion of plurilingual competences, closely linked to the promotion of pluricultural competences, implies the need of using language and cultural knowledge flexibly in communication with others (Council of Europe, 2018). Code-switching data contains several languages and often the authors are influenced from different cultural backgrounds. Hence, this the phenomenon of code-switching serves as an ideal starting point to discuss plurilingualism.

The inclusion of code-switching data in language teaching fosters a wide range of competences. In the following, some competences are listed based on the list of learners’ knowledge and skills from the European Centre for Modern Languages (Boeckmann et al., 2011, p. 27). Generally, it facilitates the understanding of different languages and language systems. Learners gain knowledge of ways of comparing different languages and language varieties, thereby, they get an insight into the analytical work with languages. Further, by the aid of the contemporary and authentic data it can be illustrated how and why languages change and develop over time. Regarding language learning, the analysis of such Facebook posts allows students to broaden their metalinguistic knowledge by recognising structures and patterns. They discover the different linguistic and communicative skills needed to create such a post. Moreover, it gives learners the opportunity to explore language functions and language use. They realise that registers are related to different social contexts and that, for example, the language used for a post on social media differs from the one used for a formal email. Also, the relationship between language and identity and language and culture can be illustrated.
5.2.3. Methods to Implement Code-switching

This chapter revolves around the following question: What are methods to implement code-switching data in foreign language teaching? During the interview I asked my participants about their personal experiences with code-switching and if they think that it could/should be used in foreign language teaching.

First of all, I would like to point out that all participants had positive experiences themselves and think, the implementation in foreign language teaching would be a positive experience for students. Below, some ideas of how this implementation could take place in the classroom are listed.

Participant 1 used code-switching as a tool to learn languages and proposes that method for students who grew up in a bilingual setting. About code-switching she states «you can profit from it, you do cross leaning, beispielsweise Haus - maison - casa, Reihen lernen . . . und den tuni di ganz Wortfamilie uf alli Sproche woni kenn quasi usehole und den merksch, ah die Sproche sind verbunde, ah da bedüted sguchi, da het de guchi Wortstamm» (34:11). From her experience, people who grew up bilingually struggle less with mixing words when learning a new language as they have different mental compartments and are more aware about the grammar and structure of languages.

She suggests that when learning French and English at school, they can be linked so that «you construct this whole network of languages and not just one langue» (37:38). A further idea would be that when treating a historical subject, the teacher could find original sources in other languages. P1 argues that original sources are more authentic and more precise, and that it could be beneficial for the students to discuss the different meanings and foci in the different sources.

P2 suggests: «show them something that they are really very related to, for example I love Friends series or Harry Potter movies» (36:35). She further mentions cartoons like SpongeBob and claims that if the students know the story they can relate to it even if they do not understand the language. Thus, students could get in contact and experiment with code-switching when they are familiar with the content and only must focus on the language.
Discussing the inclusion of the topic code-switching in secondary school P3 states:

It can improve the way you build your sentences, because I always find that speaking is the hardest part of learning a language and if you can switch it with the language you already know . . . you can just start by doing a like just a word per sentences. I think that would already make a difference. (18:16)

She proposes a method where you learn new vocabulary in context. When learning a word in a foreign language one can insert the word into a sentence in the first language. Hence, the word is connected to a context. According to P3 this would make more sense than learning random words in a foreign language.

P4 proposes to introduce code-switching in the classroom by linking it to social media. As an example she mentions inspiring influencers who use different languages on their social media accounts. P4 argues that teenagers like to understand the concept of languages and how different people use languages. In her eyes, the combination with social media would be very interesting and beneficial for teenagers as long as they understand all involved languages. Also P5 assumes that catching the interest of the students by linking code-switching to social media would be a good starting point. He further proposes to come up with a totally new approach and surprise the students by using several languages in the same sentences.

Alongside the thoughts from the participants, literature offers further ideas about the implementation of plurilingual phenomena such as code-switching. For further information for example the online teaching materials database offered by the FREPA project (cf. chapter 2.5.2.) presenting teaching activities in different languages can be consulted (Council of Europe, 2012, p. 10).

5.2.4. Teacher Requirements

What requirements does a teacher need to fulfil in order to promote plurilingualism?

During the interview three participants made reference at least once to the importance of a competent teacher when learning languages. Participant 1 even stated that teachers do not show enough appreciation for a talent in languages which she has experienced herself. She
adds the wish: «dass der Lehrer von morn das au andersch gsehnd, als nöd e Barriere oder irgend öppis, sondern als Nützlichkeit und als Bericherig» (46:52).

Teaching in a multilingual classroom or trying to foster a multilingual setting places new demands on the teacher. In order to include topics like code-switching and work with such data, a set of competences is expected from the teacher. The ECML compiled a list of teachers’ knowledge, understanding and skills for promoting plurilingualism. In the following, the key points are listed providing an indication of what is expected of a teacher when aiming for this goal. Hence, the list can be consulted by teachers who want to prepare themselves for a multilingual classroom setting.

- Knowledge of first and second language acquisition processes and intercultural learning
- Basic knowledge of linguistics
- Didactic knowledge about first and second language teaching
- Inclusive, differentiated practice: language diversity management in the classroom (multilingualism)
- Building on learners` linguistic experience and skills (plurilingualism)
- Flexible application of methods of teaching the language of instruction as first or second language
- Ability to promote autonomous learning and support ownership of learning processes
- Language teachers` ability to work together via an interdisciplinary approach
- Collaboration with other teachers in developing the transversal role of language as a medium of teaching and learning other subjects (Boeckmann et al., 2011, p. 33ff.)

This broad list of competences shows the challenge and high expectations from teachers promoting plurilingualism. When including code-switching, especially the openness towards other languages and the flexibility when teaching take an important role. This is because often complex language settings are involved due to divergent communicative repertoires.
5.2.5. Conclusion

By discussing the four sub questions the value of code-switching data for language teaching in the foreign language classroom could be elaborated in some detail. First, the analysed post could be identified as an authentic source for linguistic analysis. Secondly, it could be shown how the inclusion of code-switching data in language teaching fosters a wide range of competences. Then, various methods proposed by the participants introduced ways of working with code-switching data in the classroom. In the last chapter, a list of competences revealed the challenge and high expectations from teachers aiming at promoting plurilingualism. Thus, the research question could be answered by illustrating the value of code-switching data for fostering a plurilingual education by enriching language teaching and learning. The examples from the dataset could be used to work in a classroom, or students could create their own instances of code-switching. An important fact is, that the inclusion of code-switching does not have to be limited to foreign language teaching but can be addressed in all other school subjects as well. Those findings are only a starting point and further research has to be done to gain a more detailed insight into the topic.
5.3. Critique of Methodology

In this chapter, I will reflect critically upon the chosen methodology. Thereby, I aim to highlight areas where improvement could have been done. Firstly, the method and the sampling are looked at. Then a critique of the quantitative analysis with MAXQDA is given followed by a critical questioning of the quantitative analysis.

5.3.1. Method and Sampling

A quantitative and a qualitative approach were combined in order to gain a broad but still detailed insight into the individual use of code-switching. In a first step, quantitative data was collected and evaluated. The results were then amplified by the aid of a qualitative data collection. The chosen sequential explanatory design proved very suitable for this kind of research. For further research in this field, I would strongly recommend a mixed method design. However, for a master thesis I would narrow down the focus of the analysis and maybe consider working with already analysed data and only conduct the qualitative analysis, as the effort of both analysis was a considerable undertaking.

With respect to the sampling, it may be noted that the chosen strategy was as scientific as possible. By sharing a post on Facebook asking for participants for my study I eliminated personal preferences and avoided a direct influence of the sampling by choosing specific individuals. Only people who reacted to the post or were tagged in it were contacted. According to Helfferich (2011), six participants are considered a suitable size for a master thesis (cf. chapter 3.2.2). Of course, in order to get more reliable results, more participants and a larger quantity of data would be required.

5.3.2. Quantitative Analysis: Facebook posts

The software MAXQDA proved very suitable for mixed methods research. It is clearly arranged and facilitates the process of coding enormously. As it is a very complex software, an in-depth examination is necessary before starting the coding. In retrospect, I could have even invested even more time to deal with the textbook Analyse qualitativer Daten mit MAXQDA: Text, Audio
Discussion

und Video by Rädiker and Kuckartz (2019) in order to have less complications and open questions during the process of coding.

In general, it can be stated that the whole analysis of the posts was very time consuming. Especially the editing and arranging of the data in a word document before importing into MAXQDA was cumbersome, which probably could be replaced by a more efficient method in case of future research. The process of coding by the aid of categories was at first a challenge but worked well after gaining some experience. It must be noted here, that the classification according to functions is very subjective. However, a high percentage of interrater reliability confirmed the transparency of the coding. What must be taken into consideration is that for someone who does not know the participants personally, it is very challenging to aim to code the data for its function. Due to my personal relationships with the participants, I had different access and understanding of the data.

When looking at the coding categories it has to be stated that lists and categories are always something very subjective. As stated by Nilep (2006) lists often tend to combine linguistic structures and pragmatic or conversational functions. I tried to separate form and function and only used categories concerning the latter. Nilep (2006) further argues «Although such lists may provide a useful step in the understanding of conversational code switching, they are far from a satisfactory answer to the questions of why switching occurs as it does and what functions it serves in conversation» (p.10). A further point of criticism when analysing code-switching is that it can serve any of a number of functions and in a conversation this can change constantly and have multiple effects. Thus, any finite list of functions can be identified as arbitrary according to Nilep (2006, p. 10).

However, with regard to the data is has to be noted that it is highly authentic as it was not generated while the participants were observed. To avoid the observer’s paradox (cf. chapter 3.1) only data prior to the informing of the participants were analysed.

5.3.3. Qualitative Analysis: Interviews

The semi-structured guideline interviews proved to be a useful method for investigating personal language experience and reasons for code-switching. By the aid of the semi-structured
Discussion

interview guide it was possible to ensure that all main aspects were asked and that the procedure was similar with all participants. For future research, I would focus more on a certain aspect rather than including a broad set of questions in the guide. This would also facilitate the process of evaluating the data in the next step.

The relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee has a significant influence on the course of the interview and the results (Helfferich, 2011), especially when the topic is a very personal one. I knew all the participants personally and some I even consider as close friends. Thus, I strongly assume that this has positively influenced their openness and willingness to share personal information. Further, the participants were informed at a very early stage, that all the data would be anonymised, which gave them no reason to not be open and honest with their answers. To minimise further influence from my part, I oriented myself on the areas of competence proposed by Helfferich (2011, p.24) in order to create a suitable and neutral framework for the investigation.

During the partial transcription, I realised that even though it is saving me a lot of time, the excerpting of single words or phrases with the time mark function in MAXQDA is convenient but makes it difficult for someone else to verify and understand the data. If time is not an issue, a full transcription would be expedient.

All in all, the chosen method of quantitative and qualitative research has proved its worth in this study. In addition, I want to record that all the participants seemed to be very interested in the topic and were eager to add their own opinions concerning the subject during the interview. Some even enquired about my work at a later point, which shows that they enjoyed being part of this thesis and that the subject is one they can really relate to and that matters to them.
5.4. Future Research Possibilities

In my opinion there are several opportunities, if future research based on this topic was to be conducted. In order to obtain differentiated insights into the functions of code-switching on Facebook, it would make sense to draw a larger sample for the quantitative survey. A more comprehensive study, including the analysis of patterns such as frequency of code-switching, used languages, and particular indications for switches could be fascinating.

Further, the connection between code-switching in speaking and writing could be of interest. During the conducted interviews it became clear that the use of code-switching on social media does not necessarily reflect the use of code-switching in speaking. In addition, the connection between language experiences and the use or attitude towards code-switching could lead to fundamental insight regarding the perception of language in general.

One more research possibility I believe to be relevant would be the investigation of the status of English in code-switching on social media. Some of the participants made comments on the unique status of English on Facebook and the frequent use indicates the ubiquity of it.

Finally, it would also be interesting to investigate the implementation of code-switching in foreign language teaching and to analyse in what way students benefit from it. On the whole, there are still numerous open fields of investigation regarding the topic of code-switching and hopefully this work can inspire further research.
Conclusion

6. Conclusion

On the basis of literature review and a qualitative data analysis followed by six semi-structured guideline Interviews, the topic of code-switching on social media could be elaborated in some detail. It could be shown that a large variety of approaches towards code-switching exists, whereas linguists agree that code-switching is as a style of speech that requires an advanced level of competence in all languages involved. Further, the investigation identified the social networking site Facebook as one main stage on which individuals make use of their plurilingual repertoire.

On the basis of the results, it can be concluded that the most frequently assigned function of code-switching is *addressee specification*, followed by *message qualification* and *indicating emotion/emphasis*. By drawing on various literature the importance of identity building in online communication could be confirmed. As this thesis focused on instances of code-switching on Facebook, a social networking site with the main purpose of self-representation, the function of *identity construction* could be assigned as a superior function to all posts of this research.

It could be illustrated that with the implementation of code-switching in the classroom a valuable contribution to promoting plurilingualism can be made. Thereby, plurilingual competences such as the understanding of language systems, the broadening of metalinguistic knowledge, the exploration of language functions and the comprehension of links between language, culture and identity could be fostered. In addition, statements from the participants suggesting how such an implementation of code-switching could take place enrich those theoretical findings.

Hopefully this thesis contributes to the research in this field and help to supersede the still dominant prejudices against code-switching in the pedagogical field. In the near future, I start working as a language teacher and I aim to set an example and promote plurilingualism by including the topic of code-switching in my classroom.


Appendix

A) Consent Form

Code-switching in social media and its implications for language teaching

Annika Künzler
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Consent form for participants

St. Margrethen, Switzerland, November 13, 2018

Thank you for participating in my study within the context of my master thesis at the University of Teacher Education St. Gallen. This form explains the purpose of the Facebook data analysis, the follow-up interview and a description of your involvement.

The main purpose of my research is to gain insight into participants' use of language on their Facebook wall. Thereby, I focus on instances of code-switching and aim to identify possible functions of varying between languages. Only Facebook posts two years prior to the 23rd of October 2018 are analysed. Every participant is required to download certain data from Facebook (this process takes about two minutes, you will receive a video tutorial with an explanation) and send the file to my email account. After the analysis of the data, a short (face-to-face) interview will be conducted. The data is collected via a qualitative, semi-structured interview consisting of a few open questions. The recorded interview will presumably take place in February 2019. The recording will only serve the purpose of the study.

For the sake of anonymity your personal data will be detached from the data published in my master thesis.

By signing this consent form I certify that I __________________________ agree to the terms stated in this letter of consent. (print full name here)

__________________________________________
(Signature)  ______________________________
(Date)
Appendix

B) Interview guide

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introduction

• thanks for participating
• inform about purpose of the research
• explain my working definition of code-switching
• inform about general conditions of the interview (time: 20-40 minutes)
• ask for consent for recording
• refer to confidential handling of all statements and anonymisation

turn audio recording on

Informative questions:

1. Age, profession, country of origin, country of residence
2. What is / are your first language(s)? (What languages do your parents speak?)
3. What are further languages you speak?
   a. How were those languages acquired (context)?

Language experience

4. Have you lived in a different country/ place where a different language was spoken? If yes, where, when, what languages were used?
5. Have you participated in an exchange programme? If yes, where, when, what languages were used?
6. Do you have another experience that has affected your language skills?

Language awareness/ Code-switching:

7. Speaking: Do you sometimes use different languages in the same conversation?
8. Writing: When and in what media do you use different languages in writing? (example: sms, mail, social media, ..

I: I looked at your Facebook timeline posts from October 2016-2018 and the following languages were used: ......

9. On a scale from 1-10 how conscious do you use CS (1= unaware; 10= all the time 100% aware)
   a. Do you know what language(s) you will use for the post before you start writing it?

10. What is your base language on social media?
   a. Do you write the posts in language x and insert parts in language y or the other way around?

11. Who is the audience of your Facebook activity?
Appendix

12. Do you think that CS has an influence on how your Facebook friends perceive you? Please explain.

13. What are the reasons for you to use CS in Facebook posts/comments?

I: I’m going to read out loud 2-3 instances of CS from your Facebook timeline and ask you to think about the function/reason of the switch.

→ participant is confronted with posts

14. What is the function of CS in your post?

(The participant is not informed about the 8 categories. If the answer of the participant is not clear, the interviewer asks individual questions to categorise the statement.)

Code-Switching and language learning

15. What were your experiences with CS in the classroom/foreign language learning?
16. Do you think instances of code-switching can/should be used in foreign language teaching? Please Explain.

Ending
- Is there anything you would like to add?
- thanks for participating
- you can contact me any time; can I contact you if I have any further questions?
Appendix

C) Audio files

At the end of this thesis, a CD with the respective audio files is attached.
Eidesstattliche Erklärung

Ich erkläre hiermit, dass ich diese Bachelor-/Masterarbeit selbstständig und ohne fremde Hilfe verfasst habe, nicht anderweitig ganz oder in Teilen als Abschlussarbeit vorgelegt, keine anderen als die angegebenen Quellen oder Hilfsmittel benützt sowie wörtliche und sinngemässe Zitate als solche gekennzeichnet habe.

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Ort, Datum: St.Margrethen, 30. 08.2019

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