

Nuraliyeva S. G.

Azerbaijan University of Languages

THE ROLE OF CODE-SWITCHING IN CREATING AUTHENTICITY AND STYLISTIC EXPRESSIVENESS

This article examines the role of code-switching between English, Russian, and French in literature, focusing on the works of bilingual authors such as Vladimir Nabokov, Andrei Makine, and Tatiana Tolstaya. It investigates how code-switching functions as a stylistic device that enhances the authenticity and emotional resonance of literary texts. The paper argues that code-switching is not merely a linguistic phenomenon but a complex narrative tool that reflects cultural identity, socio-political contexts, and emotional depth in literary works. Through an analysis of key literary examples, the study highlights the significant role of multilingualism in shaping the narrative and fostering a deeper engagement with the text. By providing a theoretical framework and detailed case studies, this article contributes to the understanding of bilingualism and its impact on both the structure and reception of literary works. Code-switching functions as a crucial marker of authenticity in bilingual texts, helping to portray complex cultural identities with nuance and sincerity. It enables writers to capture the linguistic hybridity of real-life contexts, offering a more accurate and emotionally resonant literary representation of the bilingual experience. While code-switching often serves as a marker of authenticity in literature, it also performs a significant stylistic function. Authors strategically alternate between languages to create rhythm, irony, emphasis, or symbolic contrast. This stylistic usage transforms language alternation into a literary technique, enriching the text's aesthetic dimension and offering a nuanced way to convey layered meaning. The stylistic deployment of code-switching in literary texts does not only serve the intentions of the writer; it also actively engages the reader in processes of interpretation, negotiation, and affective response. Reader reception is shaped by multiple variables, including linguistic competence, cultural background, and even ideological positioning. This section explores how code-switching complicates and enriches the act of reading.

Key words: code-switching, bilingualism, authenticity, stylistic device, literary analysis, language and identity, multilingualism.

Statement of the Problem. In contemporary literary studies, code-switching—the practice of alternating between two or more languages within a single text—has emerged as a powerful stylistic and cultural device. This phenomenon has gained particular importance in the context of bilingual and multilingual literature, where writers often use language alternation not only to reflect the realities of a multilingual world but also to enrich the text with authenticity and stylistic nuance. As Poplack (1980) famously stated, code-switching is not a sign of linguistic deficiency but a complex, rule-governed behavior that serves a range of communicative functions [17, p. 589].

The role of code-switching in literature extends beyond mere linguistic decoration. It often marks moments of emotional intensity, cultural transition, or identity negotiation. In some cases, it challenges the reader, prompting deeper engagement with the text's cultural and social implications [16, p. 12]. In others,

it subtly reinforces the internal logic of a character's bilingual experience or the historical context of the narrative.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Researchers who have conducted extensive research on this topic include Anzaldúa G., Ashcroft B., Griffiths G., Tiffin H., Bhabha H.K., Bhatt R.M., Bourdieu P., Carston R., Fishman J. A., Grosjean F. and others. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the broader understanding of linguistic hybridity in literature. While much scholarly attention has been given to Spanish-English code-switching, particularly in Chicano literature [20, p. 113], fewer studies have focused on the English-Russian or English-French nexus, despite its prevalence in post-Soviet and diasporic narratives. This article addresses that gap by offering a focused, comparative analysis that highlights the unique stylistic affordances of these language pairs.

The study of code-switching in literature requires an interdisciplinary approach, encompassing

sociolinguistics, literary theory, and discourse analysis. Sociolinguistically, code-switching is viewed as a structured phenomenon governed by syntactic, pragmatic, and social rules [9, p. 7]. Literary scholars, however, tend to focus on its symbolic, expressive, and aesthetic roles within narrative structures.

According to Grosjean (1989), bilinguals do not simply switch between languages at random; they choose language forms according to context, audience, and communicative goals [9, p. 4]. This principle holds in literature, where characters and narrators often shift codes to signal a change in emotion, social register, or cultural allegiance. From a stylistic standpoint, this language alternation acts as a narrative strategy that enriches voice and tone, and often serves to challenge monolingual norms [3, p. 293].

Pavlenko (2006) further argues that code-switching in postcolonial and diasporic writing is not merely ornamental but ideological, reflecting struggles of identity, migration, and language politics [16, p. 18]. The insertion of another language, especially without translation, often signals resistance to linguistic hegemony and an assertion of hybridity. Similarly, Bhatt (2008) emphasizes that in multilingual literature, code-switching allows for subversion of dominant narratives and assertion of minority identities [5, p. 80].

In terms of categorization, Poplack (1980) distinguishes three main types of code-switching: intersentential (between sentences), intrasentential (within a sentence), and tag-switching (involving discourse markers or tags) [17, p. 589]. These types appear variably across literary texts, often blending fluidly in dialogue or interior monologue.

Task statement. This study task to investigate these layered effects by analyzing literary excerpts where code-switching is employed deliberately and meaningfully. The central thesis is that code-switching serves as a tool for both authenticity and stylistic innovation, enabling writers to craft texts that are culturally resonant and aesthetically rich. To this end, the following sections will provide a theoretical framework, examine key literary examples, and reflect on the implications of code-switching for readers and literary scholars alike.

Outline of the main material of the study. In a literary context, this taxonomy helps scholars identify how language alternation affects plot development, character construction, and thematic depth. For instance, in Vladimir Nabokov's English-language novels, Russian phrases often serve to reinforce emotional states or ironic undertones. Meanwhile,

in Andrei Makine's prose, French and Russian intermingle to evoke nostalgia and cultural duality. These theoretical insights inform our understanding of the dual function of code-switching in literature: as a mirror of real-world bilingual practices and as a narrative strategy that enhances stylistic richness.

In multilingual literature, authenticity is not merely a matter of factual accuracy but a representation of genuine lived experience. Code-switching becomes a key marker of this authenticity, as it reflects the linguistic habits, cultural references, and emotional resonance of characters and narrators who exist between linguistic worlds. When authors integrate multiple languages into their texts, they often do so not for mere ornamentation, but to truthfully portray the complex linguistic environments in which their characters operate [11, p. 107]. Similarly, Andrei Makine, a French-Russian bilingual author, employs code-switching in his novel *Dreams of My Russian Summers* (*Le Testament Français*, 1995) to mark the duality of his narrator's identity. The use of French and Russian words mirrors the character's psychological division between two cultures and two histories. Phrases like "*ma petite Russie*" juxtaposed with Russian proverbs offer insight into the protagonist's hybrid identity and emotional ties to both worlds [12, p. 121].

The role of code-switching in such narratives is more than aesthetic; it is existential. The inclusion of multilingual utterances embodies the "authentic speech" of bicultural individuals, making the narrative more credible to both monolingual and multilingual readers [15, p. 21]. Scholars argue that the linguistic behavior of characters is often shaped by social and historical realities—exile, migration, diaspora—which makes code-switching a vital tool in depicting such experiences with fidelity [10, p. 48]. Furthermore, when bilingual writers use their non-dominant languages, they challenge the dominance of English in world literature, asserting the legitimacy of hybrid voices. This is particularly significant in postcolonial and diasporic narratives, where language serves not only as a means of communication but also as a site of resistance and identity assertion [2, p. 71]. In literary texts, stylistic code-switching can serve several purposes:

The insertion of foreign words can break the expected linguistic flow, introducing a new rhythmic cadence to the narrative. For example, in Vladimir Nabokov's *The Gift* (1963), the shift between Russian and English allows for musical variation in dialogue and introspection. The repetition of short Russian phrases like "*nu shto?*" and "*tak vot*" interrupts the

English narrative and adds a melodic beat reflective of the Russian speech pattern [14, p. 154].

This rhythmic element is especially pronounced in French-English literature, where French expressions are often used for lyrical or poetic effect. In Andrei Makine's prose, for instance, the shift to French in moments of emotional reflection intensifies the beauty and euphony of the sentence: "*J'étais dans une douce nostalgie*" ("I was in a gentle nostalgia") appears amid an English paragraph, adding a stylistic softness and lyrical quality [12, p. 87]. Authors also use code-switching to draw emphasis to certain words or phrases that might lack equivalent force in the primary language. In Nabokov's *Ada, or Ardor* (1969), he writes: "She was not just 'beautiful,' but *krasavitsa* – the word was fuller, riper" [14, p. 52]. Here, the Russian term carries cultural and sensual connotations that transcend the English adjective, highlighting the stylistic potential of the switch. Sometimes, a code-switch operates symbolically, signaling a transition in the character's mindset or setting. In bilingual texts, a shift from one language to another might accompany a change in time, space, or emotional state. In *Dreams of My Russian Summers*, French is used to express intimacy and cultural longing, while Russian marks realism or memory. The stylistic switch itself becomes a symbolic act [2, p. 156].

Vladimir Nabokov, one of the most linguistically versatile authors of the twentieth century, often blended English and Russian within his English-language novels. His strategic use of Russian terms operates at the level of character psychology, cultural specificity, and aesthetic pleasure. In *Ada, or Ardor* (1969), Nabokov writes:

"He uttered with trembling lips the Russian word *grust*', untranslatable in English, meaning something more delicate than sadness and less morbid than melancholy" [14, p. 104]. Here, code-switching allows Nabokov to expose the semantic limits of English while simultaneously guiding the reader into the cultural texture of Russian emotion. The italicized word is not translated mechanically; instead, its meaning is emotionally unpacked, foregrounding the inadequacy of monolingual expression. Nabokov's approach aligns with what Fishman (1972) terms "stylistic intensification" through code-switching [8, p. 25], where the foreign term does more than decorate—it deepens the affective landscape of the prose.

French-Russian author Andrei Makine consistently navigates between French and Russian worlds in his novels, using code-switching to manifest the tension between cultural memory and identity construction.

In *Dreams of My Russian Summers* (1995), the narrator often recalls his grandmother's French stories amidst a Soviet childhood:

"She would speak of *liberté*, *âme*, and *poésie*, and I would feel the Russian winter melt a little" [12, p. 63].

The italicized French words carry ideological weight, contrasting the oppressive Soviet reality with French philosophical ideals. This juxtaposition allows Makine to dramatize the emotional exile his characters experience.

As Pavlenko (2006) suggests, such moments of code-switching function as "emotional anchors," connecting the speaker to a symbolic homeland [15, p. 124]. The switch is stylistic, yes, but also ideological, underlining resistance, memory, and longing.

This linguistic insertion is ironic—the imported phrase serves as a critique of imported values. As Heller (2007) notes, such instances reflect discursive struggles where language becomes a marker of ideological friction [10, p. 70].

In each of these examples, code-switching functions as a multidimensional device:

- Nabokov uses it to complicate emotion and highlight linguistic subtleties.
- Makine uses it to bridge memory and exile, crafting dual identities.

These authors demonstrate that code-switching in literature is not ornamental but essential—an integrated part of style, tone, and worldview. Their multilingualism is not merely biographical but formally embedded in the text itself.

One of the immediate effects of encountering code-switching in a literary text is the momentary disruption of fluency. Monolingual readers may experience disorientation or alienation when confronted with unfamiliar linguistic material. However, scholars such as Grosjean (1982) argue that this very disruption can enhance engagement, provoking a deeper interaction with the text's multilingual environment [9, p. 189].

For example, a reader encountering Nabokov's use of *grust*' (as discussed above) is not simply expected to "understand" the word but to contemplate its untranslatability, leading to a richer, more introspective reading experience. According to Kramsch (2009), this type of "foreignizing" strategy allows literature to maintain its cultural specificity while challenging the norms of linguistic homogenization [11, p. 67].

Readers who share the linguistic or cultural background of the characters in a bilingual narrative may experience moments of recognition and

affirmation. Pavlenko (2006) notes that bilingual readers often feel emotionally “rewarded” when they recognize and understand the embedded language, experiencing a deep sense of inclusion [15, p. 98].

Conversely, readers without this background might feel excluded, but such exclusion is often deliberate. As Sommer (1994) emphasizes, bilingual texts frequently “withhold meaning” as an act of resistance to cultural assimilation, placing the burden of understanding on the reader [18, p. 111]. This withholding can be politically charged, particularly in postcolonial and diasporic narratives where language becomes a site of power and struggle.

From a cognitive stylistic perspective, code-switching increases the processing load on the reader’s mind. According to Carston (2002), the presence of multiple languages requires the reader to infer meaning across linguistic borders, employing background knowledge, contextual cues, and inferencing strategies [7, p. 44]. While this can slow down the reading process, it also leads to more complex interpretive acts.

Readers must ask not only *what* a word means but *why* it is in a different language. This question, when answered, often reveals the deeper stylistic or thematic purpose behind the switch, be it irony, cultural dissonance, emotional intensity, or identity assertion.

Code-switching can also establish a closer emotional connection between narrator and reader, particularly in first-person narratives. When a character switches to their “mother tongue,” the moment is often charged with emotional significance, signaling vulnerability, nostalgia, or resistance.

For instance, in Makine’s *Dreams of My Russian Summers*, the French words spoken by the narrator’s grandmother (*liberté, âme*) take on a heightened emotional weight, offering comfort and cultural continuity [Makine, 1995, p. 63]. As Waugh (1984) notes, linguistic shifts can become markers of “narrative sincerity,” producing what she calls discursive intimacy [Waugh 1984, p. 22].

Reader reception of code-switching is far from passive; it involves active decoding, cultural negotiation, and emotional resonance. Rather than excluding or confusing the reader, code-switching can enhance the aesthetic and ethical depth of a literary work. It positions the reader as a co-participant in the linguistic and cultural drama of the text, demanding both empathy and intellectual agility.

While code-switching in literature serves stylistic and narrative functions, it also carries ideological weight. It reflects and refracts cultural power dynamics,

socio-political hierarchies, and the writer’s own negotiation of identity within historical and linguistic systems. This section explores how code-switching can both resist and reinforce cultural ideologies, particularly in contexts of post-colonialism, diaspora, and language politics.

Pierre Bourdieu (1991) conceptualized language as a form of symbolic capital, meaning that certain languages and dialects possess more cultural legitimacy and authority than others [Bourdieu 1991, p. 55]. In bilingual texts, code-switching can highlight this disparity. For instance, when a Russian-speaking character in an English novel is forced to speak English in a court setting or academic environment, the narrative may subtly underscore the dominance of English as the global lingua franca—and the resulting marginalization of the character’s native tongue.

This power dynamic is often explored in diasporic literature. In some texts, characters use English in public spaces but revert to Russian or French in intimate or emotional moments. This shifting not only delineates social spheres but also critiques linguistic imperialism, echoing Phillipson’s (1992) concerns about English as a hegemonic force [Phillipson 1992, p. 112].

Code-switching can be a powerful act of resistance and cultural affirmation, particularly in post-colonial or post-Soviet contexts. Writers may deliberately retain their native languages within predominantly English texts to defy assimilation and assert linguistic sovereignty.

Tatiana Tolstaya, for example, often uses Russian idioms and proverbs untranslated within her English essays and stories, presenting them as culturally untranslatable and thereby reinforcing the uniqueness of Russian worldview [Tolstaya, 1997, p. 41]. As Anzaldúa (1987) argued in her influential work *Borderlands/La Frontera*, “ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity” [Anzaldúa 1987, p. 59], and suppressing one often erases the other.

In this way, code-switching becomes not just a stylistic choice, but a political stance—a means of preserving cultural memory and resisting linguistic homogenization.

Andrei Makine’s novels, written in French but loaded with Russian themes, exemplify hybrid authorship. His characters often embody dual cultural allegiances, and their internal monologues shift subtly between languages even when written in one. This duality reflects what Bhabha (1994) terms the “third space” of enunciation—a cultural interstice where new identities are forged [Bhabha 1994, p. 55].

In literature dealing with migration or exile, language becomes a repository of memory. Switching to the mother tongue often marks a moment of temporal or emotional regression. In this context, code-switching does not only signal present identity but invokes historical trauma or nostalgia.

Ideologically, code-switching functions as both a mirror and critique of cultural power structures. It brings to the forefront issues of linguistic identity, postcolonial resistance, and memory politics. By weaving different linguistic threads into a single narrative, authors assert a vision of the world that is plural, contested, and deeply textured.

This study has explored the multifaceted role of code-switching in literature, emphasizing its contribution to both authenticity and stylistic expressiveness. Through the analysis of bilingual works, particularly those incorporating English, Russian, and French, we have seen how code-switching enhances the narrative depth of texts by adding cultural resonance, emotional intensity, and a unique form of linguistic creativity.

Moreover, code-switching often underscores the fragmentation of identity, particularly in post-colonial or diasporic literature. It exposes the tensions between belonging and alienation, home and exile,

and tradition and modernity. In these contexts, code-switching becomes a form of linguistic resistance, a challenge to monolingualism and cultural imperialism [1, p. 63].

Conclusions. Additionally, exploring the cognitive effects of code-switching on readers remains an open avenue for research. While studies have investigated the linguistic and sociocultural implications of switching, less attention has been paid to the neurological and cognitive processes involved in the reception of bilingual texts. Understanding how readers process and respond to code-switching could further illuminate its impact on reading practices and literary interpretation. Finally, code-switching holds significant implications for the field of literary studies. It challenges traditional notions of authenticity, linguistic purity, and literary form. By examining bilingual and multilingual works through the lens of code-switching, scholars are better able to appreciate the linguistic and cultural richness of global literature. As literature continues to reflect the complexities of global migration, cultural hybridity, and multilingual identities, code-switching offers a critical tool for understanding the evolving relationship between language, identity, and literature in the 21st century.

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Нуралієва С. Г. РОЛЬ ПЕРЕМИКАННЯ КОДУ У СТВОРЕННІ АУТЕНТИЧНОСТІ І СТИЛІСТИЧНОЇ ВИРАЗКОВОСТІ

У цій статті розглядається роль перемикання кодів між англійською, російською та французькою мовами у літературі, з упором на твори таких двомовних авторів, як Володимир Набоков, Андрій Макін та Тетяна Толстая. У ній досліджується, як перемикання кодів функціонує як стилістичний прийом, який посилює автентичність та емоційний резонанс літературних текстів. У статті стверджується, що перемикання кодів – це не просто лінгвістичне явище, а складний інструмент оповідання, який відображає культурну ідентичність, соціально-політичні контексти та емоційну глибину в літературних творах. За допомогою аналізу ключових літературних прикладів дослідження підкреслює важливу роль багатомовності у формуванні оповідання та сприяння більш глибокій взаємодії з текстом. Надаючи теоретичну основу та докладні тематичні дослідження, ця стаття робить внесок у розуміння двомовності та її впливу як на структуру, так і на сприйняття літературних творів. Перемикання кодів функціонує як найважливіший маркер автентичності у двомовних текстах, допомагаючи зображати складні культурні ідентичності з нюансами та щирістю. Це дозволяє письменникам вловлювати лінгвістичну гібридність реальних життєвих контекстів, пропонуючи точніше та емоційно резонансне літературне уявлення двомовного досвіду. Хоча перемикання кодів часто є маркером справжності в літературі, воно також виконує значну стилістичну функцію. Автори стратегічно чергують мови, щоб створити ритм, іронію, акцент чи символічний контраст. Це стилістичне використання перетворює чергування мов на літературний прийом, збагачуючи естетичний вимір тексту та пропонуючи тонкий спосіб передачі багатошарового змісту. Стилiстичне розгортання перемикання кодів у літературних текстах як служить намірам письменника; воно також активно залучає читача до процесів інтерпретації, узгодження та афективної реакції. Сприйняття читача формується безліччю змінних, включаючи мовну компетентність, культурне тло і навіть ідеологічне позиціонування. У статті розглядається, як перемикання кодів ускладнює та збагачує акт читання.

Ключові слова: кодове перемикання, білінгвізм, автентичність, стилістичний прийом, літературний аналіз, мова та ідентичність, багатомовність.