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The Impact of Arabic-English Code-Switching on Listening and Speaking Proficiency: Challenges Faced by Bilingual Undergraduates at Omar AL-mokhtar University / Department of English Faculty of Arts (AL-Baida city)

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أثر التناوب اللغوي بين العربية والإنجليزية على مهارتي الاستماع والتحدث: التحديات التي يواجهها طلاب الجامعة ثنائي اللغة في جامعة عمر المختار / قسم اللغة الإنجليزية كلية الآداب (مدينة البيضاء)

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Abstract:
This study investigates the phenomenon of Arabic-English code-switching (CS) among bilingual undergraduates at Omar AL-Mokhtar University (AL-Baida city), specifically examining its impact on listening and speaking proficiency. In the context of foreign language acquisition, code-switching often emerges as a compensatory strategy but may simultaneously hinder fluency development. The research aims to identify the specific challenges students face when navigating between their native Arabic and the target English language in academic settings. Utilizing a quantitative approach, a structured questionnaire was administered to 40 undergraduate students (spanning first to fourth years), representing both genders. The data reveals that while code-switching facilitates immediate comprehension, it contributes to significant long-term challenges. In listening, 65% of participants reported difficulty with rapid English speech without Arabic scaffolding, and 55% struggled with unfamiliar accents. In speaking, anxiety regarding fluency (70%) and pronunciation accuracy (60%) were identified as primary drivers for reverting to Arabic. The findings suggest that excessive reliance on code-switching may create a dependency that inhibits the automaticity required for advanced proficiency. The study concludes with pedagogical recommendations for balancing native language use with immersive English practices to reduce anxiety and enhance communicative competence.

Keywords: Code-switching, Bilingualism, Listening Proficiency, Speaking Anxiety, EFL, Arabic-English, Omar AL-Mokhtar University.

الملخص:
تبحث هذه الدراسة ظاهرة التبديل اللغوي (CS) بين العربية والإنجليزية لدى طلاب المرحلة الجامعية ثنائيي اللغة في جامعة عمر المختار (مدينة البيضاء)، حيث تفحص تحديدًا تأثيرها على كفاءة الاستماع والتحدث. في سياق اكتساب اللغة الأجنبية، غالبًا ما يظهر التبديل اللغوي كاستراتيجية تعويضية ولكنه قد يعيق في الوقت نفسه تطوير الطلاقة. يهدف البحث

إلى تحديد التحديات المحددة التي يواجهها الطلاب عند التنقل بين لغتهم الأم العربية واللغة الإنجليزية المستهدفة في الأوساط الأكاديمية. باستخدام نهج كمي، تم توزيع استبيان منظم على 40 طالبًا جامعيًا (من السنة الأولى إلى الرابعة)، يمثلون كلا الجنسين. تكشف البيانات أنه بينما يسهل التبديل اللغوي الفهم الفوري، فإنه يساهم في تحديات كبيرة على المدى الطويل. في الاستماع، أفاد 65% من المشاركين بصعوبة في فهم الكلام الإنجليزي السريع دون دعم من العربية، وواجه 55% صعوبة مع اللهجات غير المألوفة. في التحدث، تم تحديد القلق المتعلق بالطلاقة (70%) ودقة النطق (60%) كمحركات أساسية للعودة إلى العربية. تشير النتائج إلى أن الاعتماد المفرط على التبديل اللغوي قد يخلق اعتمادية تعيق التلقائية المطلوبة للكفاءة المتقدمة. تختتم الدراسة بتوصيات تربوية لتحقيق التوازن بين استخدام اللغة الأم والممارسات الإنجليزية الانغماسية لتقليل القلق وتعزيز الكفاءة التواصلية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التبديل اللغوي، ثنائية اللغة، إتقان الاستماع، قلق التحدث، اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، العربية-الإنجليزية، جامعة عمر المختار.

Introduction:

Contextual Overview:

In the increasingly globalized landscape of higher education, the ability to operate bilingually is not merely an asset but often a necessity. For students at Omar AL-mokhtar University, specifically within the Department of English Language in Al-Baida city, the navigation between their mother tongue, Arabic, and the medium of instruction or research, English, is a daily cognitive reality. This linguistic negotiation frequently manifests as code-switching (CS), defined generally as the alternation between two or more languages within a single conversation or utterance. The Libyan educational context presents a specific set of sociolinguistic variables; English is highly valued as a language of science, technology, and international commerce, yet the exposure to the language outside of formal academic settings remains relatively limited. Consequently, the classroom becomes the primary, if not sole, arena for linguistic experimentation and acquisition.

While traditionally viewed in some prescriptive circles as a sign of linguistic deficiency or a failure to master the target language, contemporary sociolinguistic research increasingly frames code-switching as a complex communicative resource. It functions as a pragmatic tool that bilinguals use to negotiate identity, establish solidarity, and manage conversation. However, within the specific context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, the implications of this practice on the development of core skills, specifically listening and speaking, remain a subject of intense debate. The friction between the natural bilingual tendency to switch languages and the pedagogical imperative to maximize target language exposure creates a dilemma for both learners and educators.

The linguistic environment in Libya, and specifically within the academic corridors of the English Language Department at Omar AL-Mokhtar University, constitute an exceptional case study. Students here often enter university with varying degrees of exposure to English, primarily derived from formal classroom instruction in secondary schools where the Grammar-Translation Method often predominates. This previous educational background emphasizes reading and writing over oral/aural skills. Consequently, when faced with the rigorous demands of an undergraduate curriculum, which often requires processing complex academic lectures in real-time and participating in spontaneous oral discourse,students frequently resort to code-switching. It serves as a bridge, a means to fill lexical gaps, or a strategy to maintain conversational flow when the cognitive load of exclusive English use becomes overwhelming. Yet, it is crucial to question whether this bridge eventually becomes a barrier to higher-level proficiency.

Theoretical Framework:

This research is grounded in multiple theoretical perspectives that help explain the complex relationship between code-switching and language proficiency development. To understand why students at Omar AL-mokhtar University switch between Arabic and English, and the consequences thereof, we must look at acquisition through interactionist, output-oriented, and psychological lenses.

First, Long's Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1996) suggests that language acquisition is facilitated through interaction where learners negotiate meaning. In this view, code-switching can be seen as a negotiation strategy that learners employ when communication breaks down (Macaro, 2009). When a student fails to understand a lecture segment or cannot retrieve a word, switching to Arabic resolves the immediate impasse. However, while this may serve immediate communicative needs, the question remains whether it truly facilitates long-term acquisition or merely circumvents the cognitive processing necessary for development. If the "negotiation" always defaults to the L1, the interlanguage system may not be sufficiently stretched.

Second, Swain's Output Hypothesis (Swain, 1995) argues that for learners to achieve high levels of linguistic competence, they must be “pushed” to produce "comprehensible output" in the target language. This hypothesis suggests that output serves multiple functions: it helps learners notice gaps

in their knowledge, allows them to test hypotheses about the target language structure, and promotes the development of automaticity (Swain & Lapkin, 1995). If students consistently switch to Arabic whenever they encounter a hurdle in speaking or listening, they may be bypassing the critical cognitive struggle necessary for interlanguage development. As García and Wei (2022) note, while translanguaging practices can be pedagogically beneficial, there is a fine line between strategic use and over-reliance that prevents target language development.

Additionally, this study draws on Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (Krashen, 1982), which posits that emotional variables such as anxiety can create a mental block that prevents learners from fully processing comprehensible input. Research has consistently shown that foreign language anxiety significantly impacts both listening comprehension and speaking performance (Horwitz, 1983; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). When students experience high anxiety, code-switching to their L1 may temporarily lower the affective filter, creating a sense of safety. However, it also reduces exposure to the target language and limits opportunities for automaticity to develop. The present study investigates whether this temporary anxiety relief through code-switching ultimately undermines proficiency development in the long run.

Finally, Myers-Scotton's Matrix Language Frame Model (Myers-Scotton, 2002) provides a structural framework for understanding code-switching patterns. According to this model, one language serves as the matrix or base language, while the other provides embedded elements. In the context of Arabic-English bilinguals at Omar Almokhtar University, Arabic typically functions as the matrix language, with English elements embedded when necessary. This study posits that while CS reduces immediate communicative anxiety, it may inadvertently fossilize errors or limit the expansion of the learner's English phonological and semantic networks, particularly if English never assumes the role of matrix language in academic discourse (Lyster 2004).

Research Problem and its Importance:

Despite the prevalence of code-switching in Libyan classrooms, there is a scarcity of localized research that quantifies its specific impact on the productive (speaking) and receptive (listening) skills of undergraduates. Much of the existing literature focuses on the teacher's use of CS as a pedagogical tool, debating whether teachers should use the L1 to explain grammar or manage the class. There is a distinct gap in understanding the student's perspective and the internal challenges they face because of, or in conjunction with, this bilingual toggling. Do students switch because they cannot hear the sounds correctly (listening deficiency), or do they switch because they fear mispronunciation (speaking anxiety)? Furthermore, there is limited data on how this evolves from freshman to senior year.

Addressing this gap is significant for curriculum designers and instructors at Omar Almokhtar University. If the data shows that listening challenges (such as speed) are the primary driver of code-switching, the pedagogical response should be different than if the driver is speaking anxiety. This study aims to highlight the need for pedagogical interventions that address the root causes of code-switching rather than merely prohibiting it, offering a data-driven basis for reforming classroom practices in Al-Baida.

Research Objectives:

The primary objective of this study is to analyze the relationship between Arabic-English code-switching and the proficiency challenges faced by undergraduate students. Specifically, this study seeks to:

- Identify the key listening challenges (e.g., speed of delivery, accent familiarity) that act as triggers for code-switching among students.
- Examine the speaking difficulties (e.g., fluency anxiety, pronunciation uncertainty) that lead students to revert to Arabic during academic discourse.
- Determine the prevalence of these challenges across different year groups (first through fourth year) to assess if proficiency development mitigates reliance on CS.

Literature Review:

The Concept of Code-Switching in EFL:

Code-switching involves the fluid alternation between two languages in a single communicative episode. In the EFL context, this phenomenon has evolved from being perceived as "interference" to being recognized as a strategic competence. Early researchers often viewed L1 use in the L2 classroom as a source of negative transfer, potentially leading to fossilization. However, more recent studies in the Arab world and beyond emphasize the functional value of CS. Alshugithri, (2019) notes that in Saudi universities, CS is often used for clarification, checking comprehension, and reducing social distance between interlocutors. It serves a scaffolding function, allowing students to access complex concepts that would be opaque in English alone.

Code-Switching and Listening Comprehension:

Listening is an active process of constructing meaning, involving both bottom-up processing (decoding sounds) and top-down processing (using background knowledge). When L2 learners encounter difficulties in bottom-up processing, such as parsing a continuous stream of rapid speech, they experience cognitive overload. Research by Vandergrift and Goh (2012) suggests that less proficient listeners often rely on mental translation to their L1 to make sense of the input. This translation process, however, consumes cognitive resources. If the learner is busy translating the first sentence into Arabic, they often miss the second sentence of the English input. This "processing lag" creates gaps in comprehension, which the student then attempts to fill by asking peers in Arabic, thus triggering a code-switch. The literature suggests a cyclical relationship: poor listening skills prompt L1 use, and excessive L1 use prevents the development of rapid L2 processing skills.

Code-Switching and Speaking Anxiety:

The relationship between speaking and code-switching is heavily mediated by psychological factors. Horwitz (1983) identifies "communication apprehension" as a key component of foreign language anxiety. In cultures where "face" and public image are important, the fear of making a grammatical error or sounding "foolish" can be paralyzing. Rezaee, Fathi (2021) found that EFL learners switch to their L1 to avoid this anxiety. By switching to the native tongue, the speaker regains control and fluency, thereby protecting their self-esteem. However, this avoidance strategy denies the learner the practice needed to overcome the anxiety. The literature indicates that while CS is an effective coping mechanism for anxiety in the short term, it may be detrimental to the development of oral fluency in the long term (Sert 2005).

Methodological framework and data collection:

Research Design:

To achieve the objectives outlined above, a descriptive analytical approach was adopted, drawing on quantitative research methodologies commonly employed in applied linguistics studies (Dörnyei, 2007). This method allows for the quantification of student perceptions and experiences regarding their language use, providing measurable data on the frequency and motivations behind code-switching. A survey-based design was chosen as it allows for the efficient collection of data regarding internal cognitive states (such as anxiety) and self-assessed proficiency challenges that are not immediately observable through classroom observation alone.

Participants and Research Setting:

The study sample consisted of 40 undergraduate students from the Department of English at Omar Almokhtar University in Al-Baida city. The participants were selected using stratified random sampling to ensure equal representation across all four academic years (10 students per year). This stratification is crucial for the study's validity, as it allows the researchers to observe potential developmental trends, specifically, whether senior students rely less on code-switching than freshmen. The gender distribution was mixed, with 22 female students (55%) and 18 male students (45%), reflecting the general composition of the department.

The age range of participants was 18-23 years, with a mean age of 20.5 years. All participants were native Arabic speakers (specifically the Libyan dialect) who had been learning English as a foreign language for at least 10 years, beginning from preparatory school. However, their exposure to English outside the classroom varied, with most reporting limited opportunities for naturalistic practice. All participants took part voluntarily, and each provided informed consent before any data were collected.

Instrumentation:

Data was collected using a structured questionnaire designed specifically for this study, following best practices in questionnaire development for language learning research (Brown, 2001). The questionnaire was divided into three distinct sections:

- **Section 1:** The participants. This section gathered background information including year of study, gender, age, and years of English learning.
- **Section 2:** Listening Proficiency Challenges. This section contained 10 items probing specific listening difficulties, such as the speed of delivery, unfamiliar accents, and the cognitive need to translate incoming English into Arabic to understand it. These items were informed by previous research on L2 listening challenges (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012).
- **Section 3:** Speaking Proficiency Challenges. This section consisted of 10 items addressing variables such as fear of making mistakes (anxiety), difficulties with pronunciation, and the frequency of "blanking out" (searching for words) which necessitates a switch to Arabic (Horwitz, 1983).

Responses were measured using a five-point Likert-type frequency scale (Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never). This scale was chosen to allow for nuanced response options that capture the varying degrees of challenge intensity experienced by participants (Alhassan et al. 2022). The items

were presented bilingually (English and Arabic) to eliminate any comprehension barriers that might affect response accuracy, ensuring that lower-proficiency students could still respond accurately to the content of the questions.

Data Collection Procedure:

The questionnaire was administered during regular class time with the permission of course instructors. This setting ensured a high response rate and allowed the researchers to clarify any ambiguities in real-time. The survey was designed to be completed in about twenty minutes by each student. Data collection took place over a two-week period in December 2025 to ensure all year groups could participate without schedule conflicts. The collected data was then coded and analyzed to determine frequencies and percentages.

Analysis of Data and Key Results:

The collected data was analyzed to determine the frequency and percentage of key challenges. The results indicate a strong correlation between listening difficulties, speaking anxiety, and the urge to code-switch. Below is the detailed analysis of the primary challenges identified.

Challenges in Listening Proficiency:

The data suggests that for many students at Omar Almokhtar University, code-switching is a reaction to an inability to process exclusive English input in real-time. A significant portion of the sample indicated that "Rapid Speech" is a primary barrier. When lecturers or audio materials are too fast, students mentally switch to Arabic to catch up, subsequent details in the process.

Table 1: Key Listening Challenges Triggering Code-Switching (N=40)

Challenge Category	High Impact (Always/Often)	Moderate Impact (Sometimes)	Low Impact (Rarely/Never)
Rapid Speech Delivery	65% (26)	25% (10)	10% (4)
Unfamiliar Accents	55% (22)	30% (12)	15% (6)
Mental Translation Lag	60% (24)	20% (8)	20% (8)

As shown in Table 1, 65% of students report that rapid speech is a high-impact challenge. This is a substantial majority, suggesting that their auditory processing speed in English has not yet reached the level of automaticity required for academic environments. Consequently, they are forced to rely on their native Arabic framework to process meaning. Furthermore, the "Mental Translation Lag", the time taken to translate English to Arabic mentally, was a significant hurdle for 60% of the students. This indicates that these students are not yet "thinking in English," but rather mediating their listening through Arabic. The reliance on translation is a cognitive bottleneck; as the brain works to translate the first sentence, the speaker has already moved on to the third, leading to comprehension breakdown and a subsequent switch to Arabic to ask for clarification.

The issue of "Unfamiliar Accents" (55% high impact) further complicates the listening process. Students accustomed to a specific "classroom English" or a standard variety often struggle when exposed to different dialects or natural speech patterns, prompting a retreat to the safety of the L1.

Challenges in Speaking Proficiency:

In terms of speaking, the data reveals that psychological factors play as large a role as linguistic ones. Code-switching here acts as a safety mechanism or a "crutch." Students frequently switch to Arabic not necessarily because they don't know the English word, but because they are anxious about pronunciation or fluency.

Table (2): Key Speaking Challenges Leading to Code-Switching (N=40)

Challenge Category	High Impact (Always/Often)	Moderate Impact (Sometimes)	Low Impact (Rarely/Never)
Fluency Anxiety (Fear of pausing)	70% (28)	20% (8)	10% (4)
Pronunciation Uncertainty	60% (24)	25% (10)	15% (6)
Vocabulary Retrieval Difficulty	50% (20)	35% (14)	15% (6)

Table 2 highlights a critical finding: 70% of participants experience high fluency anxiety. This anxiety manifests as a fear of pausing or silence. In conversation, silence can be socially awkward, and students feel pressure to maintain the flow. When they cannot access the English phrase immediately, they are driven to fill the gap with Arabic rather than attempting to circumlocute in English. Additionally, 60% cited pronunciation uncertainty as a major factor. This points to a lack of phonological confidence that persists even up to the fourth year of study for some students. The reliance on CS in speaking appears to be a coping strategy to avoid the embarrassment of errors, which ironically prevents the practice needed to correct those errors. Vocabulary retrieval difficulty, while significant at 50%, is

notably lower than the psychological factor of anxiety, suggesting that the barrier is often affective rather than purely lexical.

Year-Group Comparisons:

While the tables above present aggregate data, a closer look at the breakdown by year group (though not tabulated separately here for brevity) revealed an expected but concerning trend. While "Vocabulary Retrieval Difficulty" decreased noticeably between first-year and fourth-year students, "Fluency Anxiety" remained stubbornly high. Fourth-year students, despite having a larger vocabulary, still reported high levels of anxiety regarding pronunciation and accent, leading to continued code-switching. This suggests that while linguistic competence improves with time, communicative confidence does not necessarily follow the same trajectory without specific intervention.

Discussion and Results:

The Processing Speed Dilemma:

The findings of this study align with the broader literature on bilingualism which suggests that while code-switching is a natural bilingual behavior, in an academic learning context, it can signal underlying proficiency gaps (Myer-Scotton, 2002). The high percentages in "Rapid Speech" (Listening) suggest a "Processing Speed Dilemma." According to the Cognitive Load Theory, working memory is limited. When students at Omar Almokhtar University attempt to process rapid English, their working memory becomes overloaded. To manage this load, they switch to Arabic, which requires less cognitive effort.

This finding is particularly significant because it challenges the notion that students code-switch simply because they are "lazy" or unmotivated. Instead, it frames code-switching as a cognitive necessity for survival in a fast-paced lecture environment. This aligns with Vandergrift and Goh's (2012) observation that L2 listening requires automatic processing. The persistence of the "Mental Translation Lag" (60%) indicates that many students are still trapped in the translation stage of learning, unable to bypass the L1 to access meaning directly from the L2.

The Anxiety Loop in Speaking:

The remarkably high percentage of students experiencing fluency anxiety (70%) creates what can be termed an "Anxiety Loop." Students switch to Arabic to reduce anxiety in the moment, but this very strategy prevents them from developing the fluency that would ultimately reduce their anxiety. As Swain (1995) argued, learners need to engage in "pushed output",the struggle to express complex ideas in the target language is exactly what drives acquisition. When a student at Omar Almokhtar University switches to Arabic to avoid a pause or a difficult pronunciation, they short-circuit this process. They deny themselves the "productive discomfort" necessary for growth (Calvo Armisen, 2025).

The pronunciation uncertainty (60%) further exacerbates this loop. In the Libyan context, where exposure to native speakers is rare, students often lack a reliable internal model for pronunciation. The fear of negative evaluation by peers, who may be quick to criticize non-standard accents—drives students to retreat to Arabic. This finding echoes Horwitz (1983) regarding the debilitating effects of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety.

Theoretical Implications for Language Acquisition:

The results of this study have implications for how we understand the role of the L1 in L2 acquisition. While translanguaging theories suggest that bilingual learners naturally and beneficially draw on their full linguistic repertoire (García & Wei, 2022), the current findings suggest that in formal learning contexts, excessive code-switching acts as a double-edged sword. It facilitates immediate communication (Interaction Hypothesis) but hinders the development of automaticity (Output Hypothesis). The mental translation lag indicates that many students are operating within a coordinate bilingualism model rather than a compound one, separating the languages rather than integrating the concepts.

Furthermore, the persistence of these challenges across year levels raises questions about the effectiveness of current pedagogical approaches. If fourth-year students still exhibit high levels of listening and speaking difficulties that trigger code-switching, it suggests that the curriculum may not be adequately scaffolding students' transition from heavy L1 reliance to more autonomous L2 use (Sert, 2005).

Pedagogical Recommendations:

Based on these findings, several pedagogical interventions are recommended to help students at Omar Almokhtar University balance their bilingual resources with the need for English proficiency.

Enhancing Listening Proficiency:

Graduated Speed Training: Instructors should use audio materials that can be adjusted for speed. Starting with slower speech and gradually increasing the rate can help students build processing automaticity without inducing the cognitive overload that triggers code-switching (Griffiths, 1992; Zhao, 1997).

Accent Diversity Exposure: The curriculum should consciously include listening materials featuring various global English accents (British, American, Australian, Non-Native). This reduces the shock of "Unfamiliar Accents" and builds phonological flexibility.

Metacognitive Strategy Instruction: Teachers should explicitly teach listening strategies, such as predicting content and tolerating ambiguity. Teaching students that they do not need to understand every single word to grasp the main idea can reduce the urge to mentally translate everything into Arabic.

Reducing Speaking Anxiety:

Fluency First Approach: In speaking activities, instructors should emphasize that fluency is prioritized over accuracy. Techniques such as 4/3/2 fluency practice (where students repeat the same talk in 4 minutes, then 3, then 2) can help build automaticity and confidence (dos Santos, Ramírez-Ávila, 2022).

Strategic Competence Training: Instead of switching to Arabic when they lack a word, students should be taught "circumlocution strategies", how to describe a word they don't know using simple English (e.g., "the thing you use to open a door instead of “key”). This keeps the brain operating in English.

Safe Speaking Environments: Creating small group activities where students speak to peers rather than the whole class can lower the "affective filter." (Krashen, 1982; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). Normalizing errors as a sign of learning rather than failure is crucial for the Libyan context to overcome the fear of judgement (Corder, 1967; Horwitz et al., 1986). Research has consistently shown that peer interaction in small groups reduces anxiety while promoting collaborative dialogue that facilitates language acquisition (Long, 1996; Swain, 2000).

Limitation and Future Research:

Despite yielding significant insights, this investigation exhibits boundary conditions warranting scholarly transparency. The sample size of 40 students, while sufficient for a descriptive study, is relatively small and drawn from a single institution (Omar Almokhtar University). Consequently, the findings may not be fully generalizable to all Libyan universities. Additionally, Additionally, the study relied on self-reported data through questionnaires. Future research could benefit from a mixed-methods approach, incorporating classroom observations and interviews to triangulate the data. Longitudinal studies following the same cohort of students from their first to their fourth year would also provide more definitive data on the developmental trajectory of code-switching behaviors.

Conclusion:

This study set out to investigate the impact of Arabic-English code-switching on the listening and speaking proficiency of undergraduates at Omar Almokhtar University. The findings reveal a complex landscape where code-switching serves as both a necessary scaffold and a potential hindrance. The high prevalence of code-switching triggered by rapid speech and fluency anxiety indicates that students are using their L1 to compensate for processing limitations and psychological stressors.

The study concludes that while prohibiting code-switching entirely is neither practical nor pedagogically sound, a laissez-faire approach is equally detrimental. Excessive reliance on Arabic prevents the development of the very skills, rapid auditory processing and confident oral production, that students need to succeed. Therefore, a balanced pedagogical approach is required: one that acknowledges the L1 as a resource but actively pushes students towards L2 autonomy through targeted listening training and anxiety-reducing speaking practices. By addressing the root causes of code-switching, cognitive overload and fear of failure, educators can help students bridge the gap between bilingual dependence and true English proficiency.

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