

## **Relationship between Socio-demographic, Classroom Code-Switching and Vocabulary Acquisition Strategies among First Year Students**

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### **Abstract**

This study aimed to determine the relationship between socio-demographic, classroom code-switching, and vocabulary acquisition strategies of first year students at the Visayas State University-Tolosa campus. Moreover, it aimed to evaluate the relationships between code-switching and the socio-demographic profile of the respondents; vocabulary acquisition strategies and socio-demographic profile; and code-switching usage and vocabulary acquisition strategies. Respondents were randomly selected - 10 and 15 participants - from the two blocks (per program) and the survey was done through two sets of questionnaires sent through a Google form. The socio-demographic profile data, code switching usage, and vocabulary acquisition strategies were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Chi-square and Spearman's rho correlation were used to test relationships among the variables. Results showed that students basically "agree" with the items written under classroom code-switching, and "often" they do vocabulary acquisition strategies. Further, results revealed that there are no significant relationships between socio-demographic profile and code-switching usage, and socio-demographic profile and vocabulary acquisition strategies regardless of the respondents' age, sex, Mother Tongue and type of school attended. Although the use of either of the two techniques such as code-switching and vocabulary acquisition strategies seemed effective based from several studies, the present study revealed that there is no significant relationship between them. This would mean that students still learn the English language in any of the two ways. Thus, perceived with no positive trait by schools and the language teachers, all educators were advised to take lead in establishing some restrictions on code-switching to achieve mastery in language learning.

**Keywords:** *Language, Vocabulary, Acquisition Strategies, Code-Switching*

### **1. Introduction**

Code-switching inside the classroom is not new among students and teachers. The same is true with vocabulary acquisition strategies. Nonetheless, it is but necessary to find out whether code-switching affects one's vocabulary acquisition strategies. Code-switching is a linguistic phenomenon done through shifting of two or more languages within a specific speech act or discourse (Tian & Macaro, 2012; Albarillo, 2018). It has various functions that widen people's engagements, topics on conversations or interactions in specific contexts or other circumstances (Al-Qaysi, 2018; He et al., 2020; Quirk, 2021). Moreover, code-switching can be effective to clarify or emphasize a point, to substitute a word from an unknown word in the target language, to express a concept that has no parallel meaning to the culture of the other language, to augment a request, to express belongingness and

camaraderie, to ease tension and inject humor into a conversation, and in some bilingual situations, code-switching happens when certain topics are presented.

As an avenue for global communication, English as the *lingua franca*, is widely used in various fields relative to its complex structure and vast spectrum. Learners strategize various methods or vocabulary acquisition strategies to comprehensively acquire thoughts similar to the speaker's end (Gusti, 2016). Learners do code-switch or use code-switching as a platform to ensure and develop mutual understanding, sometimes at the expense of the English language. The learner switches to another language when they face difficulty to express thoughts in straight English or to send the message across. Hence, acquiring English vocabulary skills needs to be developed. On the other hand, language learning is a conscious process which takes formal learning situation or a self-study program (Zaščerinska, 2010) and is vital in the unification of all languages. Zhang (2010) asserted that people executing collaborative learning activity excel at a higher achievement level than those on competitive and individualistic learning structures. Hence, various challenging contexts will encourage a student to utilize and strategize different methods, techniques, or strategies to learn a language and when surrounded by competitive or fully equipped individuals.

Vocabulary is one of the significant elements of the language system which constitutes the very basis of language development. It is also known as the building block of language, thereto emphasized that without vocabulary acquisition, no language acquisition can occur (Nie & Zhou, 2017). Thus, in learning a language, vocabulary plays its core. It is the fundamental factor in communication with other people (Kuzyk et al., 2020) and took its great significance to language speakers' language competence because the lack of appropriate and sufficient vocabulary knowledge can hinder understanding to other people or convey meaningful ideas. An extensive vocabulary is constantly viewed and considered as an asset. Even in mastering a language, text comprehension or production, vocabulary learning is widely acknowledged for it keeps its essential role in the command of one's vocabulary knowledge (Teng, 2015). Hence, learners should intensively familiarize a word, including pronunciation, meaning, spelling, register, frequency, morphology, syntax, and collocational aspects (Abdulloh, 2021; Read et al., 2021).

Vocabulary in second language acquisition (SLA) now gained a well-deserved recognition, for its significance was unnoticed for a span of time (Erlandsson and Wallgren, 2017). To start learners' vocabulary journey is to provide list of vocabulary words with word definitions. Thus, employing vocabulary acquisition strategies help them become motivated and independent in learning the English language (Song & Lee, 2019; Kuzyk et al., 2020). However, most of the students at university levels experience incompetence for themselves for the lack sufficient knowledge and vague exposure to various vocabulary acquisition strategies which affects learners' interaction with peers or elaboration of thoughts with teachers which needs attention and practice from the start of learning or acquisition process of the English language. Hence, this study aimed to evaluate the use of code-switching in the classroom setting and vocabulary acquisition strategies. Moreover, this may heighten teachers and other researchers' apprehension to strategize appropriate methods or techniques in teaching which will develop students' English communication skills and employability of various vocabulary acquisition strategies.

Results of this study can provide positive thoughts on the employment of code-switching in the classroom and vocabulary acquisition strategies. The findings of this study can be useful to the students, teachers, and researchers. To the respondents, they may know the importance of honing and exposing themselves to various vocabulary acquisition strategies which help become more effective and productive learners in their second language and enhance their proficiency levels. Besides, if learners acquire the vocabulary in their target language, they need a good foundation of vocabulary acquisition strategies. Moreover, this study may aid choosing strategies appropriate to their learning styles.

## **2. Research Objectives**

Generally, this study focused on the classroom code-switching and vocabulary acquisition strategies among first year students from the four programs in the Visayas State University-Tolosa Campus. Specifically, it aimed to:

- 1) determine the students' socio-demographic profile;
- 2) determine the students' code-switching usage;
- 3) determine the students' vocabulary acquisition strategies;
- 4) determine the relationship between the students' socio-demographic profile, their usage of code-switching in the classroom, and use of vocabulary acquisition strategies; and
- 5) analyze the relationship between the students' classroom code-switching usage and vocabulary acquisition strategies.

## **3. Research Questions**

In this study, it aims to answer the following research questions:

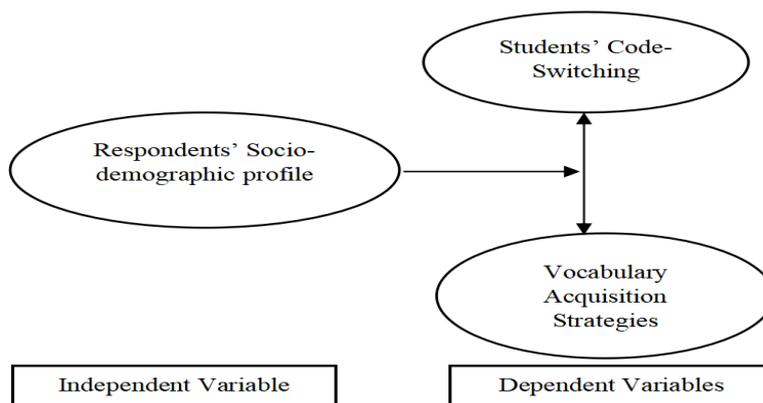
- 1) What are the students' socio-demographic profile?
- 2) What is the level of the students' code-switching usage?
- 3) What is the level of the students' vocabulary acquisition strategies?
- 4) Is there any relationship between the students' socio-demographic profile and their usage of code-switching in the classroom, and use of vocabulary acquisition strategies?
- 5) Is there any relationship between the students' classroom code-switching usage and vocabulary acquisition strategies?

## **4. Conceptual Framework of the Study**

Code-switching is the utilization of two language varieties in the same conversation (Myers-Scotton, 2006; Kremin et al., 2020). Brice and Brice (2000), cited by Hughes et al. (2006), stated that code-switching encompass the use of complete sentences, phrases, and borrowed words from another language or from another context for emphatic purposes (Ahmad & Barner-Rasmussen, 2019). According to Alqahtani (2015), vocabulary is one of the knowledge areas in language which portray a great role for learners in language acquisition. In addition, a significant aspect in language development is the learners' vocabulary development (Linse, 2005). Same through with the vocabulary learning or acquisition strategies which hones students' strong vocabularies which is influenced by some determinants such as socio-demographic profile, learning environment, and experiences (Rubin et al., 2007; Orosco, 2017). The framework of this study was patterned from Eldridge's (1996) study, "Four Functions of Code-Switching," cited in Oclay Sert's study,

"The Functions of Code-Switching in ELT Classroom" (2005). In the current study, the researcher envisioned to seek the relationship between socio-demographic profiles, code-switching usage, and vocabulary acquisition strategies among first year students at the Visayas State University-Tolosa campus. Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of the study.

**Figure 1.** Framework Model of the Study



## 5. Research Methodology

### 5.1 Research design

This study followed a descriptive-correlational quantitative design. In this study, the variables were summarized using some descriptive measures to evaluate its various characteristics. Furthermore, the relationships among variables were determined using correlational methods that occur naturally between them.

### 5.2 Respondents and ethical procedure

The first year students at the Visayas State University-Tolosa campus, Tanghas Tolosa Leyte, Philippines which comprised the four programs namely: Bachelor of Science in Fisheries (BSFi), Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd), Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) and Bachelor of Science in Criminology (BSCrim) were selected through random sampling method taking 10 and 15 participants from the two blocks (per program). Before the conduct of the survey, a consent letter was given to the school head and respective degree program advisers. After that, the respondents were informed that their participation was voluntary and information gathered was treated as confidential.

### 5.3 Data collection and research instruments

The students were given two sets of a survey questionnaire in a Google form composed of 27 questions about code-switching and another 18 close-ended questions for the vocabulary acquisition strategies with Cronbach's alpha of 0.79 and 0.89, respectively. Additionally, students were also asked some of their demographic profiles and to provide their honest responses in a 4-Point Likert scale for the questions about code-switching and a 5-point interval for the vocabulary acquisition strategies. Respondents were asked to rate a survey questionnaire adopted from a study entitled "*The effects of IsiZulu /English code switching as a medium of instruction on students' performance in and attitudes towards*

*biology*” (Olugbara, 2008) to assess students’ attitudes toward code switching. Moreover, the respondents rated each statement in the Language Strategy Survey (LSS) adopted from Cohen and Chi (2001), using 5-point interval of which 5 refers to “very often”, 4 as “often”, 3 as “sometimes”, 2 as “seldom” and 1 as “not applicable”. The instrument consisted 18 language strategy items for the vocabulary strategies and the 27 questions for the 4-Point Likert scale which comprised the following: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The survey-questionnaires were sent to the respondents thru virtual platforms on May 21, 2021 and were administered by the researcher. Respondents were given fifteen to twenty-five minutes to answer the google forms.

#### 5.4 Data analysis

The data gathered by the researcher were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage for the respondents’ socio-demographic profile and median for the respondents’ code-switching usage and vocabulary acquisition strategies. Chi-square test was used to know the relationship between the respondents’ socio-demographic profile, their usage of code-switching in the classroom, and use of vocabulary acquisition strategies while Spearman’s rho correlation was employed for the relationship between the respondents’ classroom code-switching usage and vocabulary acquisition strategies.

### 6. Results and Discussion

#### 6.1 Respondents’ socio-demographic profile

Results showed that among the 100 first year respondents, more than half (60%) were 19 years old, 17% aged 20 and 14% were 18 years old. The oldest respondent was 30 years old and others were 21-25 years old. As for the sex aspect, the percentage of female respondents is 69% while 31% were male respondents. Most of them (92%) were Waray native speakers, 5% were Tagalog/Filipino speakers and 3% were Cebuano speakers. This is mainly due to the fact that VSU-Tolosa and its nearby municipalities are Waraynons. Almost all of the respondents graduated from public high schools which comprised 97% while 3% came from private high schools as illustrated in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Respondents’ Socio-Demographic Profile

RESPONDENTS AGE	FREQUENCY				PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION			
	BSFi	BEEd	BSEd	BSCrim	BSFi	BEEd	BSEd	BSCrim
18	4	2	6	2	16%	8%	24%	8%
19	15	13	14	18	60%	52%	56%	72%
20	5	6	3	3	20%	24%	12%	12%
21	0	2	0	0	0%	8%	0%	0%
22	0	0	1	1	0%	0%	4%	4%
23	0	1	0	1	0%	4%	0%	4%
25	1	1	0	0	4%	4%	0%	0%
28	0	0	1	0	0%	0%	4%	0%
30	0	1	0	0	0%	4%	0%	0%
Total	25	25	25	25	100%	100%	100%	100%

<b>SEX</b>								
Male	8	4	5	14	32%	96%	20%	56%
Female	17	21	20	11	68%	4%	80%	44%
Total	25	25	25	25	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>MOTHER TONGUE</b>								
Waray	23	24	22	23	92%	96%	88%	92%
Tagalog/Filipino	0	1	3	1	0%	4%	12%	4%
Cebuano	2	0	0	1	8%	0%	0%	4%
Total	25	25	25	25	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>TYPE OF SCHOOL ATTENDED</b>								
Public	23	25	25	24	92%	100%	100%	96%
Private	2	0	0	1	8%	0%	0%	4%
Total	25	25	25	25	100%	100%	100%	100%

### 6.2 Classroom code-switching usage

As observed in Table 2, majority of the respondents “strongly agree” (Median=4) with the following indicators: *teaching the course in vernacular and English makes it easy for them to understand, respect their instructors more when teaching in vernacular and English, and teaching the course in vernacular and English increases their chances of passing the exams.* This means that using the respondents' Mother Tongue and the English language seemed advantageous for them in acquiring knowledge, passing the examinations, and understanding better when teachers code-switch in class since the languages employed were familiar to them, what they keep on using and hearing and what they were exposed most of the time.

**Table 2.** Classroom Code-Switching Usage among the Respondents

CLASSROOM CODE-SWITCHING USAGE	MEDIAN	OVERALL RESPONSE
Teaching the course both in vernacular and English makes it easy for me to understand.	4	Strongly Agree
I respect instructors more when teaching in vernacular and English.	4	Strongly Agree
Teaching the course in vernacular and English increases my chances of passing the exams.	4	Strongly Agree
Teaching the course in two languages is beneficial to me.	3	Agree
Teaching the course in vernacular and English is desirable to me.	3	Agree
Teaching the course in vernacular is desirable to me.	3	Agree
Teaching the course in English is desirable to me.	3	Agree
Teaching the course in vernacular makes it easy for me to understand.	3	Agree
Teaching the course in English makes it easy for me to understand.	3	Agree
I am fluent when speaking in vernacular.	3	Agree
I am fluent when I code-switch.	3	Agree

Mixing of vernacular and English strengthens my English.	3	Agree
I respect instructors more when teaching in vernacular.	3	Agree
I respect instructors more when teaching in English.	3	Agree
I can express my ideas more when I speak in vernacular.	3	Agree
I can express my ideas more when I speak in English.	3	Agree
I can express my ideas more when I speak both in vernacular and English.	3	Agree
I prefer to code-switch when answering questions.	3	Agree
I prefer to speak in English when answering questions.	3	Agree
I prefer to speak in vernacular when answering questions.	3	Agree
Teaching the course in vernacular increases my chances of passing the exams.	3	Agree
Teaching the course in English increases my chances of passing the exams.	3	Agree
Teaching the course in only one language is beneficial to me.	2	Disagree
It confuses me when course instructor teaches in vernacular and English at the same class period.	2	Disagree
Mixing of vernacular and English leads to the weakness of my vernacular.	2	Disagree
Mixing of vernacular and English leads to the weakness of my English.	2	Disagree
I am fluent when speaking in English.	2	Disagree
<b>Over all median Code-switching usage perception score</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Students at undergraduate level shared positive perception toward teachers who code-switch because it is an advantage for them to comprehend lecture at ease (Fareed et al., 2016). Moreover, according to Yao (2011), teacher's code-switching boost students' confidence to communicate orally and actively participate in class, a boon to students' gain understanding of lectures (Selamat, 2014), and facilitated the learning process. Meanwhile, the respondents predominantly agree (Median=3) on the following indicators: *teaching the course in two languages is beneficial to them, teaching the course in vernacular and English is desirable to them, teaching the course in vernacular is desirable to them and teaching the course in vernacular or in English makes it easy for them to understand*. These indicate that students were proficient in their Mother Tongue and efficient in understanding English because they can understand both languages and it is easier for them to learn what is being taught. The more that they were exposed to the language, the more that they equipped themselves in learning and used it advantageously.

Students perceived code-switching useful in various opportunities (Green, 2018). Keller (2016) has explained that code-switching maintains learners' attention on a broad task while strategizing ways to provide solution to a specific learning issue in the classroom. In addition, students agree with the following indicators: *they are fluent when speaking in vernacular and when they code-switch, mixing of vernacular and English strengthens their English, they respect instructors more when teaching in vernacular or in English, they can express their ideas more when they speak in vernacular and when they speak in English, they can also express their ideas more when they speak both in vernacular and English*. Unanimously, all the student respondents agree that they found code-switching beneficial because it serves as their scaffold in learning and in expressing themselves. More so, they

respect their instructors more when they code-switch because students know the reason why teachers do code-switch, that is, to facilitate learning. Code-switching escalates the learning environment with greater understanding and involvement among learners (Chowdhury, 2012). They perceived fluency when they do code-switch and found it a resource tool in producing meaning for a specific class period.

Moreover, Gulzar (2010) reported that in Pakistani EFL class code-switching is much more functional in terms of clarification, translation, repetition, socialization, effective instruction and topic shift. Hence, learners find code-switching beneficial in the classroom as well as in social communication. Also, mixing both languages as observed did not weaken their view on the use of the two languages. Instead, it developed their horizon more in the acquisition of knowledge. They also emphasized that they were not fluent when speaking in English so, the more that they will employ code-switching. According to Azlan and Narasuman (2013), code-switching helped improve students' English proficiency. When speakers communicate in the target language, higher competence level is acquired compared to when conversing the first language (Berlin, 2017) because numerous exposure to the target language adds the capacity to enhance communication skills better.

Furthermore, they also agree with the following items: *they prefer to code-switch when answering questions, they prefer to speak in English and in vernacular when answering questions, teaching the course in vernacular increases their chances of passing the exams same through in English*. These highlighted that code-switching is a medium used by students to communicate or express thoughts spontaneously and when answering questions for they numerously nurtured understanding on both languages from childhood and to the period they are in now. Code-switching is particularly applied in instances where an individual is facing challenges in expressing ideas because it enables the speech continuity rather than presenting the intercession of language (Skiba, 1997). This strategy supports communication for information and social interaction purposes since it is a tool for meaning transference (Bensen & Çavuşoğlu, 2013).

Contrary to the first perception “strongly agree” of the student respondents, there were a number of them who disagreed (Median=2) with the following indicators: *that teaching the course in only one language is beneficial to them, it confuses them when the course instructor teaches in vernacular and English at the same class period, mixing of vernacular and English leads to the weakness of their vernacular, mixing of vernacular and English leads to the weakness of their English and they are fluent when speaking in English*. These disagreements led to the fact that these learners as nonnative speakers of the English language already have the background on the importance of learning a foreign language, for them to better understand what was taught and gained mastery in learning a language. Thus, code-switch in class made confusions pragmatically and syntactically. However, the overall perception for the classroom code-switching usage among student in this study is considered as “Agree”. Recognizing the overall perception toward classroom code-switching, the students have positive attitude toward this strategy. They do code-switch when necessary.

Respondents in this present study also agree that teachers who code-switch allow them to understand more the lessons and increase their chances of passing the course. This

finding is in agreement to the observations by Bensen and Çavuşoğlu (2013) that teachers' practice code-switching to clarify meaning and to stimulate active participation and engagement of their students in the classroom. Yet, according to Adriosh and Razi (2019), they switched to the learners' native language for limited and careful purposes, that is when they elaborated classroom lessons to ensure meaningful discussions. Teachers consider the goal of shared understanding among students not just to build collocation properties in them. This strategy allows the teacher only to build the gap from known to unknown thus, play an important role in language teaching (He et al., 2020).

### 6.3 Vocabulary acquisition strategies usage

In Table 3, a number of students “sometimes” (Median=3) used vocabulary acquisition strategies. *They sometimes write out new words in meaningful sentences, practice new action verbs by acting them out, systematically use flashcards to learn new words, and sometimes practice using familiar words in different ways.* This indicates that the mentioned strategies were only used in order to establish which is most effective in the acquisition of vocabulary words. Moreover, it is essential among learners to know how to seek appropriate strategies to empower word knowledge (Perez & Alvira, 2016) and to employ in diverse contexts. Thus, application of particular kinds of strategies increases word attainment which increases second language ability as well. In fact, having a vast vocabulary knowledge upholds reading comprehension ability and reading ability can contribute to vocabulary enhancement, in turn.

**Table 3.** Vocabulary Acquisition Strategies Used among the Respondents

VOCABULARY ACQUISITION STRATEGIES	MEDIAN	OVERALL RESPONSE
Pay attention to the structure of the new word.	4	Often
Break the word into parts where I can identify.	4	Often
Associate the sound of a new word to the sound of a word that is more familiar to me.	4	Often
Use rhyming to remember new words.	4	Often
Make a mental image of a new word.	4	Often
List new words with other words that are related to it.	4	Often
Go over new words often when I first learn to help me remember them.	4	Often
Review words periodically so will not forget them.	4	Often
Look at meaningful parts of the word to remind me of the meaning of the word.	4	Often
Exert efforts to remember the situation where I first hear or see the word or remember the page where I saw it written.	4	Often
Visualize the spelling of the word in mind.	4	Often
Try using new words in a variety of way.	4	Often
Makes effort to use idiomatic expressions in the new language.	4	Often
Write out new words in meaningful sentences.	3	Sometimes
Practice new action verbs by acting them out.	3	Sometimes
Use flash cards in systematic way to learn new words.	3	Sometimes
Practice using familiar words in different ways.	3	Sometimes

**Over all median vocabulary acquisition strategies perception score** **4** **Often**

On the other hand, majority of the respondents who answered “Often” (Median=4) used the various vocabulary acquisition strategies such as *paying attention to the structure of the new word, breaking words into parts for ease in identification, associating the sound of a new word to those familiar ones or rhyming words, visualize words, list down new ones, go over new words and review often to help one remember, try using new words in a variety of ways or use it as idiomatic expressions*. This means that learners can strategize or create ways to learn and enhance their vocabulary skills. Pineda (2010) has found out the strategies used by university students when they read a text were limited just as to infer meaning from the text to learn new words and divert to their native language to gain understanding on what they read. Thornbury (2004) has also claimed that vocabulary acquisition does not only demands on labeling but more on categorizing skills. Thus, students will always need to develop their capacity to expand their stored level of words. In addition, Oxford (1990) has stated that some components of language usage are noted consciously as manifested from direct instruction but then manifested unconsciously or automatic through practice. This situation emphasized the vitality of training or practice to be able to organize, interconnect, and link previous word knowledge to the new one in order to create or discover new information. In doing so, learners can establish profound vocabulary words to be used in both passive and active ways. Hence, the respondents’ overall perception score is “Often” (Median=4) which means that the students used different vocabulary acquisition strategies or special ways to familiarize new words and understand them. More than memorizing definitions, integrating the words or meanings of words often into the students’ existing knowledge will help them successfully learn the language (Levine et al., 2020). Moreover, different learning acquisition strategies could aid the learners in the process of mastering the target language (Akhter, 2018).

#### 6.4 Relationship between socio-demographic profile and code-switching usage

Different variables such as age, sex, native language, and type of high school attended can affect the code-switching and vocabulary acquisition strategies that take place between or among individuals (Jagero & Odongo, 2011; Hyuang et al., 2020). Different age groups have different maturity levels when it comes to code-switching. From the results of the present study, there is no significant relationship between age and code-switching (Table 4). Most of the respondents were 18 to 20 years old. This would mean that older learners learn quicker than younger ones in terms of code-switching since the maturity level and attention to ways had been developed and are rarely confused as to which language to use. In addition, today’s generation needs careful observation and attention in learning a language. Though, code-switching plays a crucial role in language awareness it would still depends on the individual’s willingness to learn a particular language, no matter the age.

**Table 4.** Socio-Demographic Profile Versus Code-Switching Usage

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE VS CODE-SWITCHING USAGE	$\chi^2$ -computed	df	p-value
Age	20.605 <sup>ns</sup>	24	0.662

Sex	2.665 <sup>ns</sup>	3	0.446
Mother tongue	3.815 <sup>ns</sup>	6	0.702
Type of School Attended	0.233 <sup>ns</sup>	3	0.972

Note: ns - not significant

Sex, which was reported as a confounding variable in linguistics, is reported to influence code-switching in adult bilingualism. As the nature of females being more self-conscious and showing off their identity as new women of the generation, they tend to code-switch more than males (Wong, 2006). However, the result in the present study contradicts to what has been stated. There is no significant difference between the sex of the respondents and code-switching (Table 4). Sixty-nine percent (69%) of the respondents were female while 31% were male. In the study of Hyuang et al. (2020), they have observed the existence of gender differences in code-switching of Mandarin-English child bilinguals wherein male participants code-switched more than females in terms of intra-code-switching. In the study of Jagero and Odongo (2011), they have observed gender differences in the context of code-switching and has indicated that socio-psychological differences between male and female account for how they view themselves when they are alone and when they are with the opposite sex. Little yet is known whether or not there is really a significant difference between gender and code-switching. In this study, it may seem that the no significant difference result may be due to the fact that the respondents are more or less in the same age group and are Gen Z where code-switching is already a part of their being creative and resourceful to communicate effectively.

In terms of the use of Mother Tongue and code-switching, no significant difference was observed in the present study in Table 4. Whether the students use the Mother Tongue or code-switch to English language does not affect one's learning. In fact, they can utilize both in order to widen their knowledge and understanding as reported in Table 2. Bilingual or multilingual people generally tend to switch language codes during ordinary conversations. It has been a debate whether switching back and forth between the native language and English language is helpful or impeding (Levine et al., 2020). Obviously, in the present study, it is helpful as students who are majority Waray speakers can clearly understand when teachers code-switch and can express their ideas better and spontaneously. Using the native language makes an opportunity for knowledge improvement, confidence promotion, as well as cultural and social identity development (Lee, 2010). Similarly, code-switching facilitates English teaching and learning processes by finding out messages behind code-switching (Akhter, 2018). In the Philippines, English is a subject and the dominant medium of instruction from elementary up to graduate studies. Thus, code-switching is already a natural occurrence in the country.

Socio-economic attributes of students determine which type of school they attended. Public schools are government-funded while private schools are run by private owners. On a daily basis, students encounter English in classrooms, social media, paper and/or books, and other modalities. It is a common perception in the Philippines that those who attend private schools are the rich children who speak English as their first language while those who attend public schools speak the Mother Tongue and learn English in schools. Nowadays, bilingualism is no longer for elites and highly educated. It is becoming a necessity for

survival in modern society. Regardless of the school the student has attended, code-switching can be effectively used by private or public-school goers.

### 6.5 Relationship between socio-demographic profile and vocabulary acquisition strategies

Vocabulary acquisition/learning strategies are defined as the efforts by the learner to acquire new words or to make the words they learn permanent (Alfadil, 2020; Uchihara & Clenton, 2020). According to Baharudin and Ismail (2014) vocabulary acquisition or learning strategies are vital element for communicative competence and language mastery. Also, are considered fundamental elements in the system of learning a language. Learners classify vocabulary as a challenging area (Baskin et al., 2017) for an individual needs competence and effort in honing vocabulary knowledge. In this present study, results showed that all socio-demographic profile of the student respondents do not have relationship with vocabulary acquisition strategy as shown in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Socio-Demographic Profile Versus Vocabulary Acquisition Strategies

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE VS VOCABULARY ACQUISITION STRATEGIES	$\chi^2$ -computed	df	p-value
Age	9.062 <sup>ns</sup>	8	0.337
Sex	1.622 <sup>ns</sup>	1	0.203
Mother tongue	1.992 <sup>ns</sup>	2	0.369
Type of School Attended	1.585 <sup>ns</sup>	1	0.208

Note: ns - not significant

This observation is similar with the above-mentioned results on code-switching. Studies have shown that age, sex, Mother Tongue, and type of school could affect the vocabulary acquisition strategies of students (Naeimi & Chow Voon Foo, 2015; Orosco, 2017; Yow et al., 2018). In this study, it tells otherwise. Aside from the fact that the respondents are mature enough to know different strategies in acquiring vocabulary, these students are more exposed to different types of media platforms that could help enhance their vocabulary regardless of age, sex, the Mother Tongue they speak, and from where they graduated. It was reported that the performance of Filipino students in English proficiency test is deteriorating and may be attributed to poor reading comprehension as more become interested in games and social networking applications (apps) more than reading (Larioque, 2019). In contrast, Erzad and Suciati (2018) have believed that social media can improve the English language quality because they are fun, interesting, easy to access, effective and informative.

### 6.6 Relationship between classroom code-switching usage and vocabulary acquisition strategies

Classroom code-switching usage has no relationship with vocabulary acquisition strategies based on the coefficient determination. Only 0.068% of the differences in students' code-switching usage perception can be attributed to their vocabulary strategies perception

(Table 6). This result implies that even if the students exert effort in vocabulary acquisition, they may still not perform well in code-switching and vice versa. This is due to some other factors that might affect the teaching-learning process.

**Table 6.** Classroom Code-Switching Usage Versus Vocabulary Acquisition Strategies

	SAMPLE SIZE	$\hat{r}_s$	$\hat{r}_s^2 \times 100$ (%)	p-value
CLASSROOM CODE-SWITCHING USAGE VS VOCABULARY ACQUISITION STRATEGIES	100	0.026 <sup>ns</sup>	0.068	0.799

Note: ns - not significant

The way the new word is presented to the students usually depends on the teacher's individual beliefs and teaching strategies (Mazur et al. 2016; Akhter, 2018). Teachers' use of code-switching matters to their teaching efficiency and the ability to provide comprehensive teaching pedagogy to the students. However, there were few studies corroborated on the negative effect of code-switching. Tsukamoto (2012) has stated that Japanese students had a negative concept on teachers' code-switching with the thought and possibility that it would hinder second language acquisition. Teachers' code-switching affects the students' fluency of knowledge acquisition and provide gap in enhancing one's literacy of the English language. Li (2008) has noted that despite the advantageous role of code-switching both in speech and writing of multilingual societies (often with English as the second language) still within these societies, multilingual speakers are usually being mocked. In addition, in an academic context, learners with greater linguistic ability often perceive code-switching as a hurdle to acquire competence in the English language (Arrifin and Husin, 2011). Based from their findings, competent language learners found it difficult to move forward or improve in the context of code-switching. Even other studies have arrived similar conclusions. Bista (2010) conducted a study in the United States found that code-switching had a negative impact on the linguistic learning ability of students but also highlighted lack of ability in the second language as its primary cause. In addition, code-switching can be a barrier to learning, can be disruptive to the learning environment, and can be a sign of linguistic deficiency. The local languages cannot be the media for instruction because these languages lack sufficient terminologies. Enhancing one's vocabulary is necessary for academic instruction and learning efficiency since vocabulary is the basic factor necessary for mastering a language. The purpose why we learn second language is for communication or social interaction. Hence, language educators should be equipped with language competence, efficiency, and employ various strategies to ensure sufficient knowledge and skills among learners.

## 7. Conclusion and Suggestions

This study investigated the socio-demographic, code-switching usage, and vocabulary acquisition strategies of first year students. Results from the present study revealed that there were no significant relationships between the respondents' socio-demographic profile, their code-switching usage, and vocabulary acquisition strategies. Furthermore, there was no significant relationship between the respondents' socio-demographic profile, code-switching usage, and vocabulary acquisition strategies. Moreover, there was no significant relationship

between the respondents' classroom code-switching usage and vocabulary acquisition strategies. This study, therefore, concludes that code-switching and vocabulary acquisition strategies are two independent variables and that code-switching helps in understanding the lessons more no matter what vocabulary acquisition strategies the students may have. In addition, teachers are advised to limit learners' code-switching and lay the ground works on enhancing language learning and language competence. Conclusively, the following are suggestions for future studies to dig deeper on the code-switching usage, and vocabulary acquisition strategies: investigate the learners and educators' attitudes toward the use of English language across all undergraduate level courses in VSU-Tolosa; examine attitudes of the Senior High School Students toward code-switching in classrooms; and conduct studies on the English vocabulary strategies employed by the English language instructors to improve English education.

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