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CODE-SWITCHING AS LANGUAGE TEACHING STRATEGY IN THE EFL ONLINE CLASSROOM

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Abstract

Education practices have shifted to online classrooms in this pandemic era. The lecturers and the students met online via Zoom, g-meet, etc. This study aims to reveal the use of code-switching as a language teaching strategy in EFL online classrooms. Code-switching refers to using multiple linguistic codes to communicate by any classroom participants. This study is qualitative research. The researcher analyzes and describes the functions of code-switching the lecturers perform in their natural classroom without manipulating the variables. The data is taken through class observation and questionnaires. The class is recorded, then the utterances are transcribed. This study found that the lecturers of the undergraduate program performed situational code-switching and metaphorical code-switching. The lecturers use code-switching mostly to add some information related to the lesson. The code-switching has function as clarification, repetition, recapitulation, and socialization. The lecturers have a positive attitude in using code-switching to help students understand the lesson well.

Keywords: *code-switching; language teaching strategy; online classroom*

Pendahuluan

The language used by teachers has a significant impact on the teaching and learning process. Teachers or lecturers will be able to deliver appropriate directions to students and assist students in understanding content if they use clear and proper language.¹ When English is employed as the medium of instruction in the teaching and learning process, teachers may find some challenges regarding language use.² Students may not understand the material if it is delivered in full English. Therefore, the occurrence of switching between target and source language when the teacher and students share the same L1 is unavoidable. In the Indonesian setting, the use of exclusively English as a medium of teaching English teachers tends to change from English to Indonesian language to assist pupils in understanding the material. In other words, teachers are likely to switch from the target language (L2) to the first language (L1) during their teaching practice in the classroom to give a better

¹ Thomas Wahyu Prabowo Mukti and Retno Muljani, "Code Switching in The Instructions of English Language Education Study". LLT Journal Vol. 19 No. 1, April 2016, p. 46-60.

² Sondang Pondan Perlindungan Leonak and Bonik Kurniati Amalo, "Teacher's Beliefs and Perceptions of Code Switching in English as Foreign Language". SHS Web of Conferences 42, 00034 (2018).
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understanding.³ This kind of phenomenon is better known as classroom code-switching which refers to the alternating use of more than one linguistic code in the classroom by any of the classroom participants.⁴

Since all of the education practices held online in this pandemic era, the teaching and learning process must be adapted from face-to-face classrooms are being replaced with online classrooms that use internet technologies. Online learning is defined as using the internet to access materials, engage with content, teachers, and other students, and obtain aid in the learning process to gain information, make meaning, and progress through the learning experience.⁵ Nugroho, Ilmiani, & Rekha (2020) found that one of the primary challenges of EFL teachers in online teaching is the lack of students' motivation and engagement.⁶ The reason behind that was the Students were unable to understand the lecturers' directions, even though they were provided and written clearly. Students frequently fail to read and comprehend the teachers' directions. They occasionally skipped instructions that were written a little longer. Sometimes, the students still cannot understand the instruction or material that was delivered using English (L2) even though they read it. In this case, the teacher needs to repeat the instruction using Indonesian (L1). The teacher used code-switching to instruct the students to understand better. Pradita (2015) stated that the use of code-switching as a teaching approach in MTsN Babakan Ciwaringin is consistent with Hall and Cook's theory. Code-switching serves nine functions: explaining vocabulary, giving teaching, explaining grammar, developing rapport and a good classroom, correcting spoken errors, explaining when meanings in English are unclear, testing and assessing learners, and maintaining discipline. Malik (2014) in his study in Pakistan found that Code-switching is an efficient way of teaching English, particularly to Intermediate pupils. It facilitates students' comprehension and encourages them to learn English.

Code-switching has been a popular research topic over the years in many countries. There have been quite large numbers of previous studies addressing this issue one of which concerns the practice of code-switching in the classroom's context involving bilingual or multilingual speakers. Studies regarding the use of code-switching were found to have various reasons; to facilitate teacher-learner interaction (Greggio & Gill, 2007; Syafri, Jufri, & Amri, 2019; Puspawati, 2018); to achieve pedagogical goals and to facilitate the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language, about the teacher-student relationship (Leonak & Amalo, 2018; Puspawati, 2018); to lessen students feeling nervous during the learning process (Jingxia, 2010; Shalini, Mohammed, & Krishnansamy, 2019); to stimulate students participation in the classroom (Bostanci & Çavuşoğlu, 2013; Shartiely, 2015).

Despite its benefits, the uses of code-switching in EFL classrooms seem to be still debatable in practice. From the teacher's perception, code-switching is an asset to assist in the delivery of material in an EFL course. Code-switching is usually used by teachers to keep their teaching and learning

³ Shalini Argellan, Lubna Ali Mohammed and Nithiyarobi Krishnansamy, "Code Switching Phenomenon in English Language". International Journal of Management and Human Science (IJMHS) Volume 3 Issue 1, 2019, p. 35-42.

⁴ Angel M. Y. Lin, "Code-switching in the classroom: Research Paradigms and Approaches". In K. King, Y-J. Lai, & S. May (Eds.), *Research Methods in Language and Education (Encyclopedia of Language and Education)*(pp. 1-15). Switzerland: Springer.

⁵ Arief Eko Priyo Atmojo and Arif Nugroho, "EFL Classes Must Go Online! Teaching Activities and Challenges during COVID-19 Pandemic in Indonesia". REGISTER JOURNAL Vol. 13 No.1, 2020, p. 49-76. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18326/rgt.v13i1.49-76>

⁶ Arif Nugroho, Dwi ilmiani, and Agnira Rekha, "EFL Teachers' Challenges and Insights of Online Teaching Amidst Global Pandemic". *Methasis: Journal of English Language Literature and Teaching* Vol. 4 No. 3, p. 277-291. DOI: 10.31002/metathesis.v4i3.3195

processes running smoothly. Additionally, pupils agree that code-switching has improved their understanding of the subject. Both teachers and students are enthusiastic about the use of code-switching in practical instruction. Despite this, students believe that L2 should be the primary language of instruction in the classroom. They do not have the opportunity to use L2 outside the classroom where L2 is not widely used. So, they believed that they could improve their L2 skills by practicing in the classroom.⁷

Because code-switching can also be found in online classrooms, the current study attempts to investigate the use of code-switching and its roles as language teaching tools because research on this area is scarce, particularly in EFL online classrooms.

The current study is titled "Code Switching as Language Teaching Strategies in EFL Online Classroom" based on the explanation above. The study's findings are expected to give significant information to lecturers, students, and other parties interested in learning more about code-switching in language education.

Methods

The case study approach was used to design this study. It seeks to highlight distinctive qualities and intriguing distinctions in the situation under consideration. This study aims to analyze how code-switching is a teaching strategy in online classes performed by lecturers. This method is used to in-depth study a specific individual or phenomenon in its existing context. Data was collected by a variety of methods including researcher observation, interviews, and questionnaires.

The researcher employed descriptive qualitative research since this study focuses on discovering the nature of code-switching in the classroom. According to Moleong (2004), qualitative descriptive research aims to comprehend and enlighten the existing phenomena experienced by the subject of the research such as attitude, perception, motivation, action, and so on, in a holistic manner and by describing it in words and language on the expected specific context and by using such types of accepted method. The researcher analyzes and describes the functions of code-switching the lecturers perform in their natural classroom without manipulating the variables. Classroom observation and a questionnaire were used to collect data.

Result and Discussion

The results of the classroom observation and questionnaire are presented. The data from classroom activity recordings are analyzed and labeled based on the type of code-switching and its function.

1. Type of Code-Switching

There are two types of code-switching used by the lecturer, namely, situational and metaphorical code-switching. Each of them will be explained below:

a. Situational Code-Switching

Situational code-switching occurs when the language used changes according to the situation. The speaker used one language in one situation and another language in a different situation (Wardhaugh, 2006). The researcher found that the lecturer employed situational code-switching when students seemed confused about certain things.

⁷ Mohamed Adriosh and Özge Razi, "Teacher Code Switching in EFL Undergraduate Classrooms in Libya: Functions and Perception". SAGE Open, April-June 2019, p. 1-11. DOI: 10.1177/2158244019846214

L: *Apakah itu insert the CD room? CD room itu bukannya... Insert the CD room from its case. Case itu kan tempatnya itu to. Yang biasanya bentuknya bulat.*

S: Remove, Mam.

L: *Ya. Remove kayanya ya. Dipindahkan dulu atau lepaskan. Remove the CD Room from its case. Setelah dilepaskan dari tempatnya and then ke ini PC yang biasanya keluar sendiri itu. Lalu, kita masukkan CD room ke dalam itu.*

The data above showed that the lecturer shifted from L2 to L1 when the students seemed not to understand the things discussed. The lecturer explained about the CD room and its case to the students using Indonesian languages, their first language, to make students understand better and answer the questions. This, the lecturer needs to switch to a language that is understandable for her students when the situation occurs.

b. Metaphorical Code-Switching

Language switch in metaphorical code-switching is related to particular kinds of topics or subjects. Metaphorical code-switching happens when the change of topics in a conversation requires a change in the language used (Wardhaugh, 2006). The data proved that the metaphorical code-switching employed by the lecturer, as below:

L: *Oh ini. Iya. Iya ini kayanya internet saya yang salah ini. Agak bermasalah ini.*

The lecturer talked in L1 when the topics changed from discussing the material to talking about the bad signal. The use of L1 brought the sense of having a special communication effect since the lecturer and the students share the same L1. The code-switching made the students understand that the lecturer had a problem with the internet connection in the middle of their discussion.

2. Function of Code-Switching

The lecturer performed code-switching for both pedagogical and interpersonal reasons. Based on Ferguson's (2009) classification of the functions of classroom code-switching, the functions were divided into two main functional categories, (1) for constructing and transmitting knowledge, and (2) for interpersonal relations. The first category covers three pedagogical functions: clarification, repetition, and recapitulation. The second category represents the function of socialization. The result of classroom observation shows that the functions of Clarification were the most common functions performed by the lecturer.

a. Clarification

The lecturer tended to switch to L1 to add some information related to the questions discussed. The data showed that the lecturer switched to L1 to clarify the possibility of the accident happening regarding the student's answer.

L: *Very Good. Yes. It is still possible. That is why somehow, someone where not really aware of it or who are not really care about it then disturb the plane navigation. Makanya sampe ada kecelakaan itu gara-gara flight modenya tidak diinikan. Bahkan kalau naik pesawat sebaiknya bukan flight mode, dimatikan saja. When you still have the flight mode takutnya itu nanti bisa mencet tombol yang lain gitu lo.*

Here, the lecturer first clarified the students' answers in L2, and then she added some information to give a better understanding of flight mode to the students. The lecturer added that it would be better if we turned off the phone instead of just turning on flight mode. This

function, clarification, is also used by the lecturer to clarify the student's understanding of the instruction and material discussed earlier.

L: You have to decide whether the statement here belongs to text A, text B, or neither of them. *Masih ingat kan* text A is about how to install your phone. Text B is about how...

The data showed that the lecturer asked the students whether they remembered the material for answering the next questions discussed. Then, the lecturer switched to L1 to deliver some opinions about some unclear topics, so the students could understand better.

L: *Apakah itu* insert the CD room? CD room *itu bukannya*. Insert the CD room from its case. *Case itu kan tempatnya itu to. Yang biasanya bentuknya bulat.*

L: I don't know whether is replace or remove. Remove the cover on the its box, *ya*, where it was at its top. *Karena kalau gak dipindah nanti bisa kesetrum atau menimbulkan kebakaran.* I think you have removed.

Here, the students seem confused about their answers. The lecturer tried to explain the point more in L1. The lecturer explains the case of the CD room. The function of Clarification is the most performed by the lecturer to expand the explanation of some given case.

L: Next week, I'm going to give you a quiz, small quiz for you. Since you haven't got any score for your quiz. *Soalnya ya dari unit pertama sampai unit ini ya.* And then after the next two weeks, you have to be ready for google form for your uts. *Utsnya saya lihat tadi soalnya ya mudah-mudah aja sih tentang semuanya tentang itu, tentang topik-topik itu tapi teksnya nggak sama gitu aja.*

The data revealed that this function is used to explain ideas and give broad information longer in L1. In this case, the lecturer talked about the questions for the quiz. She added that the questions are easy and cover all of the topics.

b. Repetition

The lecturer performed repetition of some L2 words in L1 to draw students' attention. In answering the question, the lecturer repeats the sentences or questions written in English using Bahasa.

L: Try your sim card in? oh another phone. *Ini berarti* another phone no.4. *Jawabannya apa?*

S: Off, mam.

L: Off? *Oh iya. Matikan jika perlu.* Change to off if necessary.

The data above showed that the lecturer repeated the questions using L1, so students paid attention and answered the questions correctly.

S: Remove, Mam.

L: *Ya, remove kayanya ya. Dipindahin dulu atau lepasin. Lepaskan.*

L: What about lift it? Yes, *mengangkat.* Put it into higher position.

L: Place? Placement. Placement test, ya. Placement. *Penempatan.*

L: We're talking about the personal here. PC. *Ini ngomongkan PC ini.*

The data revealed that the lecturer tended to repeat the sentences using L1 so they could answer the task correctly. The lecturer translates the answers such as remove, lift, and placement. Also, the teacher draws the student attention to the topic by saying “*ini ngomongkan PC ini*”

c. Recapitulation

The lecturer uses L1 to summarize the explanation of the lesson delivered using L2. This code-switching was performed to make sure the students got the intended message.

L: False then. It is possible to have it. *Apalagi kalau masih ini kan, mau take off atau mau landing ya. Tiba – tiba ini ada yang menghubungi gitu dan lupa kalau flight mode lupa diganti ke flight mode terus akhirnya masuk itu sinyalnya dan ganggu landingnya.*

The data above showed that the lecturer summarized the ideas about turning on flight mode and the possibility of the signal interrupting the take-off and landing. The lecturer delivered the message they wanted to share using L1.

L: Filling the blank in the sentences with one of the forms of the word from language focus 3. *Jadi, ini nanti ditaruh disini.* Insert, remove, replace, *sama* connect.

Here, the lecturer summarizes the instructions for the task. Students may be confused with the instruction, so the lecturer added the explanation in L1.

3. Teacher Beliefs of Code-Switching in EFL Classroom

The data were collected through a questionnaire answered by the lecturers. The lecturers agree that code-switching will facilitate the language learning process. They saw code-switching as beneficial in EFL online classrooms to help the students learn the language. One of them, strongly agrees that code-switching is an efficient and time-saving technique. The lecturer agrees that code-switching can be used in teaching language effectively. They all also agree that code-switching should be included as an integral part of the EFL lesson. The data also showed that mother language and second language did not to be separated. The practice of code-switching will not make the students' reliance and dependency on the teacher increase. However, they still believe that the more English used, the better the results for the learners.

The lecturer used code-switching mostly to add some information related to the topics or terms that were being discussed in the class. They performed both situational and metaphorical code-switching. Situational code-switching occurred with the change in the situation in the online classroom. The lecturer chose to switch from L2 to L1 when the students started to seem confused with the material. The lecturer needs to give more explanation using L1 so the students can understand better and answer the task correctly. In this case, the lecturer performed code-switching as clarification. The lecturer clarified the students' understanding and added information needed by the students. The code-switching of the lecturer also changed related to the topic of conversation. Before the discussion started, the lecturer talked about the weather that caused bad signals using their L1. It is called metaphorical code-switching. Eventually, the lecturer will switch to their L1 when changing the topic of conversation, from explaining the lesson to talking about the bad weather. This code-

switching served its function as socialization which showed their closeness since they share the same first language. The switch of L1 shows their belonging in the same society and feel more comfortable talking. Some students may feel shy and not confident to talk in L2 fully.

Another function of code-switching performed by the lecturer is repetition. Some words could make the students confused because they do not understand the meaning if not repeated in L1. The lecturer needs to repeat some terms or translate the word into L1 so the students can answer the task correctly. After explaining some material, the lecturer also summarizes the lesson by switching to L1. It is needed because some students may not fully understand the topic being discussed or they may miss some topics. This kind of situation possibly happens since the class is conducted online while the signal is not stable and the utterances of the lecturer cannot be heard as clearly as in an offline classroom. This code-switching served its function as a recapitulation.

The lecturers have positive opinions toward code-switching as a language teaching strategy. The lecturer used code-switching to facilitate the students in their classroom interaction. They use code-switching as an efficient and time-saving technique in teaching and learning language. The lecturer saw code-switching could be beneficial since there is no strict separation of mother tongue and second language in the EFL classroom. The use of code-switching in the online classroom helps the students understand the material better because students do not always pay attention to the lecturer's explanation due to the lack of signal and audio that very influences the class activities.

To explain the material, code-switching was performed during the teaching and learning process. The lecturers need to switch from L2 to L1 to help the students understand the material discussed better. The study from Suganda, Loeneto, and Zuraida about teachers' code-switching also supports the idea that code-switching can help students and teachers run the learning process smoothly.⁸ In this case, the students may seem confused about a certain topic or word, so the lecturers need to repeat the word or add some information related to the topic using L1.

Code-switching has a positive impact on EFL online classrooms. By performing code-switching, student engagement can be increased. Since the chance of students not paying attention to lecturers' explanations is higher in online classrooms, the lecturers need to make sure that the students follow the learning process well. The lecturer can attract students' attention by talking in L1 when the students start to seem confused about the topic discussed. Saionara Greggio and Gloria Gil revealed that in the teaching process, code-switching can be performed to clarify the lesson taught.⁹ This is suitable for the EFL online classroom since the students will understand the lesson better when they find difficulties in understanding certain topics.

The use of code-switching as a teaching strategy in online classrooms seemed to give many advantages for both lecturers and students. As the lecturer can clarify the lesson using L1, the students can get the information more clearly. In some cases, the lecturer has to explain some terms in L1 to add some information that can be received by students better if delivered in their first language. The use of code-switching also shows their belonging. The lecturers and students can get along well when

⁸ Lingga Agustina Suganda, Bambang A. Loeneto, & Zuraida (2018). "Teachers' Use of Code Switching in An English as Foreign Language Context in Indonesi. Script Journal: Journal of Linguistic and English Teaching, Vol. 3, No. 2.

⁹ Saionara Greggio and Gloria Gil, "Teacher's and Learners' Use of Code Switching in The English As A Foreign Language classroom: A Qualitative Study". *Linguagem & Ensino* v.10, n.2, p.371-393, jul./dez.2007

they switch to L1 since the first language makes the students feel comfortable and do not feel shy to express their ideas.

The finding of the current study revealed that the lecturer performed both situational and metaphorical code-switching. So, it could be concluded that code-switching is used in their teaching process. The lecturers used code-switching when they added some information related to the topic discussed. The lecturer also repeated some terms in L1 when the students could not differentiate the meaning or find the right answer to the task. After explaining the lesson using L2, the lecturer added summarize using L1 so the students can get the point of the lesson well.

Code-switching as a teaching strategy has been widely talked about in several previous studies. It revealed that code-switching has several functions in the teaching and learning process. Code-switching also plays a part in classroom management. Code-switching is used to discipline the students, direct or call the students, and ask students for favors. Sometimes the lecturers have to call and repeat the instruction in L1 so the students can participate in the learning process. However, Mohamed Adrios and Ogne Razi in their study of three universities in Libya stated that L2 must be the main language of instruction while L1 can be used but for limited purposes even though the teacher saw a positive attitude toward code-switching. Still, they realized the significance of code-switching performed by the lecturer for some pedagogical and social functions. Code-switching was widely used in EFL classrooms to help the students. The lecturer believes that code-switching has the opportunity to help the lecturer in delivering the material. By performing code-switching, students can be helped in encountering obstacles during the learning and teaching process.¹⁰

Conclusion

Based on the results of the classroom observation and questionnaire, it could be stated that the lecturers used code-switching in the EFL online classroom. Here two types of code-switching were performed by the lecturer, such as situational code-switching and metaphorical code-switching. The finding shows that code-switching is used as a teaching strategy. The code-switching has function of clarifying certain topics, repeating some difficult terms, and summarizing the lesson. The lecturer believes that the use of code-switching can facilitate both the lecturers and students in the learning language process.

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