Teachers' Use of Code Switching in An English as A Foreign Language Context in Indonesia

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Abstract
This study proposed to investigate the phenomena of code switching which refers to the use of English and Indonesian as a medium of instruction used by the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in their classroom discourse. It depicted the attitudes of EFL teachers and their students towards the patterns, functions, and influence of code switching in two EFL classes in Indonesia. The data were collected from classroom observation, interview, and questionnaire which explored the occurrence of code switching during the teaching and learning process as well as the teachers and students' perception on its use in the classroom context. The results indicated that the switching between English and Indonesian in the EFL classrooms was very natural since it also became a tool to show the cultural, social, and communicative aspects of each language despite the amount of its use which varied greatly from teacher to teacher due to their students' English competence.
Keywords: code switching, medium of instruction, English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

INTRODUCTION

Code switching is generally defined as a shift from one language to another by the speaker during speech. It occurs when bilingual speakers switch from one language to another in the same discourse, sometimes within the same utterances involving the alternate use of two languages or linguistic varieties within the same utterance or during the same conversation (Hoffmann, 1991). According to Bhatia, J.K., & Ritchie (2004), a vast majority of bilinguals themselves hold a negative view of code-mixed speech. They consider language mixing/switching to be a sign of "laziness", an "inadvertent" speech act, an "impurity," and instance of linguistic decadence and a potential danger to their own linguistic performance. However, Zentella (1999) claims that code switching is more common during informal interpersonal interactions, including those that take place between family members in natural contexts. In the context of teaching, classroom code switching is defined as an alternating use of more than two linguistic codes in the classroom by any of the classroom participants, such as teachers and students (Lin, 2007). Code switching has long existed as an outcome of language contact observed vastly especially in multicultural and multilingual communities Liu (2010), where the use of two or more languages as media of instruction involves to varying degrees (Hamers, J. F. & Blanc, 2000).

The medium of instruction is the language used by the teacher in teaching. The choice of language as medium of instruction plays an important role in the teaching and learning process. Through various studies, researchers believe that a language of instruction is an enabling tool which facilitates the learning of content subjects (Kyeyune, 2010). The language used for learning and teaching is crucial for learners' acquisition of knowledge and understanding and the development of their skills, and for their ability to demonstrate their acquired knowledge effectively in assignments and examinations. If learners do not know the language used as a medium of instruction well enough, they will have problems to develop educationally (Brock-Utne, B., & Alidou, 2011). In addition, Tam (2011) emphasizes the richness and relevance of instruction when both teachers and learners are conversant with the language of instruction. Teachers give more examples and generate a rich discourse when they use a familiar language. Similarly, learners engage in collaborative construction of knowledge through more animated classroom interactions.

In principle, using English, when it is a second/ foreign language, as a language of teaching and learning might not be an obstacle to the full development of learners' conceptual abilities, provided they are fully conversant in the language of instruction (Webb, 2004).

However, extensive research shows that some learners are not proficient enough in English to be able to use it appropriately as the language of instruction (Brock-Utne, B., & Alidou, 2011); (Kyeyune, 2010); (Suganda, 2016); and (Webb, 2004).

In this study code switching refers to the use of English and Indonesian as a medium of instruction used by the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in their classroom discourse. Since language as a medium of instruction plays an important role in the teaching and learning process, teachers should pay more attention on the choice of languages they use in the classroom context. Teachers have good reason and/or function when switching and mixing between the target language and the first language during the teaching and learning process.

Several researchers have studied and investigated the functions, factors, characters and effects of code switching in wide ranges of linguistics domains. Yataganbaba, E., & Yildirim (2015) even claim that L1 use mainly results from lack of L2 proficiency in which the necessity of code switching is determined by the classroom condition because code switching may be considered as a useful strategy in classroom interaction, especially if the aim is to make meanings clear and to transfer the knowledge to students in an efficient way (Gabusi, 2007). The arguments given for mother tongue or L1 as medium of instruction in schools were more linked to the child and its needs, the individual and the local context, factors such as concept formation, cultural identity, and closer relation between school and home (Cantoni, 2007). The use of L1 and target language has been seen as complementary, depending on the characteristics and stages of the language learning process. Therefore, EFL classroom teachers sometimes prefer to use the students' L1 to explain and organize a task and to manage behavior in the belief that this will facilitate the medium-centered language-related goals of the lesson (Ellis, 2015). In addition, with regards to students-teacher relationship as part of a positive learning environment, code switching also helps foster a better relationship with the students (Moghadam, S. H., Samad, A. A., & Shahraki, 2012). However, the overuse of L1 will naturally reduce the amount of exposure to L2; therefore, attempt should be made to keep a balance between the use of L1 and L2.

Code switching usually occurs unconsciously by the teachers and is used as a good strategy in explaining instructions, translating difficult vocabulary, managing class, giving background information and reducing students' nervousness (Jingxia, 2010) cited in (Fareed, M., Humayun, S., & Akhtar, 2016). Setati, M., Adler, J., Reed, Y., & Bapoo (2002) state that switching to a language that learners and teachers understand better assists them in the

understanding of concepts and communication of ideas. The maintenance of this strategy could support classroom communication and exploratory talk, a particular type of learner talk. In other words, learners and teachers share similar understanding on the subject matter they are involved in. Ahmad, B. H., & Jusoff (2009) found that teachers' code switching is strongly believed as an effective teaching strategy when dealing with low English proficient students, in which various positive functions of code switching, such as explaining new vocabulary, grammar, and new concepts, and relaxing learners would improve learners' comprehensible input during the learning process. Meanwhile, Kim (2006) indicates the positive factors of code switching for language education by discussing societal factors related to the reasons and motivations for these phenomena, in which code switching helps teachers to foster a better relationship with the students (Moghadam, S. H., Samad, A. A., & Shahraki, 2012).

The reasons and/or functions of teacher code switching are recognized as topic switch, affective functions, and repetitive functions (Mattsson, A. F., & Burenhult, 1999). In topic switching, the teacher alters his or her language considering the topic being taught. This usually occurs in teaching grammar, while students focus on the new knowledge. Affective functions are important in the declaration of emotions, and building solidarity and intimate relationship between the teacher and the student. In repetitive functions, code switching is used to clarify the meaning of a word, while stressing on the content for better comprehension.

In addition, Kim (2006) also indicates the positive factors of code switching for language education by discussing societal factors related to the reasons and motivations for these phenomena. With regards to students-teacher relationship as part of a positive learning environment, code switching helps foster a better relationship with the students (Moghadam, S. H., Samad, A. A., & Shahraki, 2012). While, Ahmad, B. H., & Jusoff (2009) found that teachers' code switching is strongly believed as an effective teaching strategy when dealing with low English proficient students, in which various positive functions of code switching, such as explaining new vocabulary, grammar, and new concepts, and relaxing learners would improve the learners' comprehensible input during the learning process.

The language used by someone is closely related to his/her culture. In addition, according to Greene, M. D., & Walker (2004), code-switching is a strategy at negotiating power for the speaker and it reflects culture and identity and promotes solidarity. Both the target language's culture and the first language's culture are simultaneously present and can

be simultaneously engaged because culture interrelates with language whenever it is used. Meanwhile, because cultures vary with time, place, social group, and age group, some cultural variants are privileged over others by the dominant cultural group (Liddicoat, A. J., Papademetre, L., Scarino, A., & Kohler, 2003). Therefore, the switching sometimes occurs since the speaker is following the common usage of the word in his/her culture, which can be slightly different from the culture in the target language.

However, a search of the literature revealed that limited studies have focused on code switching in EFL discourse in Indonesia as a multilingual country with multicultural students who possess at least two languages, where English is still served as a foreign language. Code switching or the use of English and Indonesian as a medium of instruction is just claimed as one of the useful conversational strategies in the classroom discourse, while the cultural and social aspects are still needed to be further investigated.

In view of these shortcomings, this study proposes to identify and evaluate the teachers and students' attitudes towards the patterns, function, and influence of code switching used in the classroom discourse, especially in contributing to the interaction among teachers and students by addressing to the cultural, social, and communicative aspects. This present study has mainly investigated the teachers and students' perspective with regard to the code switching as a strategy used to facilitate learning English as a foreign language in Indonesian context.

METHODOLOGY

The case study was used to investigate the teachers' use of code switching in the context of learning English as one of the compulsory subjects in one of the universities in Indonesia. The participants in this study were 42 students from one faculty (F1) and their five-year-teaching-experienced teacher (T1) and 31 students of another faculty (F2) and their six-year-teaching-experienced teacher (T2). The students were non-English majoring taking English subject in their faculties.

The data were collected through class observation, interview, and questionnaire. The observation was carried out in the two sample classes. The two teachers (T1 and T2) teaching in the class were observed and recorded for approximately 200 minutes within the schedule of two times 100 minutes teaching hours. Then the recorded video was transcribed and analyzed.

A semi structured interview was held with the two teachers to identify their perception on the use of code switching as the medium of instruction in their classes, their students' attitude and performance are related to their use of code switching, and the reasons why they code switch. Generally, there are twelve aspects which were asked to the teachers in the interview, namely: (1) their teaching experience, (2) their relationship with the students, (3) their perception on their students' competence in English, (4) their perception of their own English competence, (5) the use of English as the medium of instruction in their classes, (6) the language they use in the classes, (7) the reasons why they use the languages, (8) the switching of English and Indonesian in their classes, (9) the factors of their code switching in teaching, and (10) their students' performance related to their use of code switching.

The semi-structured individual interviews were conducted in order to allow respondents to express themselves as exhaustively as possible on questions related to how they handle their learning tasks and strategies they use to increase subject matter understanding. Also, the interviews helped the researcher to follow-up some of the questions or issues that were raised during the interview. Each interview lasted 25 minutes on average. The researcher asked the respondents for permission to tape record them and they accepted. The questions were formulated both in English and Indonesian language and the respondents were allowed to respond in the language of their choice. Both answered in English.

In addition, a set of questionnaire for these 73 university students was the additional data to find out about the students' perception in relation to their teachers' use of code switching in the classroom context. The questionnaire consisted of 13 questions about students' motivation in English, the medium of instruction that the teacher used in the class, and the use of code switching by teacher during the teaching and learning process. The questionnaire mostly asked about the students' perception in terms of the reasons and function they preferred due to their teachers using code switching in the classroom context.

The data from the observation and interview were transcribed, described, and analyzed in depth for getting the function and pattern of code switching conducted by the teachers, while the student respondents' answers for each statement from the questionnaire were put in percentage to reveal their perception on the code switching conducted by their teachers. The interview questions and the questionnaire were designed by the researchers of this study. The validity and reliability issues were gained through triangulation of multiple data sources (interviews, questionnaire, and videos of lessons).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the transcripts showed that the teacher frequently switched between English and Indonesian (even Palembangnese, the L1 of most students) in the classroom. In the process of code-switching, the teacher used complete English utterances, but she also inserted some Indonesian words into her English sentences. In certain cases, she used mostly Indonesian utterances, but she also inserted some English words into her Indonesian sentences.

Language	Teacher 1 (T1) in F1		Teacher 2 (T2) in F2		Mean
	%	Average	%	Average	
English	61.30	53.62	65.72	70.53	62.08 %
	45.95		75.33		
Indonesian	38.70	46.38	34.28	29.47	37.92%
	54.05		24.67		

Table 1 The Frequency and Comparative Occurrence of the Patterns of the Languages Used

Table 1 shows the percentage of using English (62.08%) which is more dominant than Indonesian (37.92%) in both classes. However, the average of using Indonesian is higher in F1 class (46.38%) than F2 class (29.47%). While, the average of using English is more in F2 (70.53%) than in F1 class (53.62%).

Table 2 shows that T1 code switched between English and Indonesian 65.91% for repetitive function, 16.67% for topic switch, and 18.18% for affective function. On the other hand, T2 code switched between English and Indonesian 78.33% for topic switch, 13.33% for repetitive function, and 8.33% for affective function. In average the teachers code switched 47.5% for topic switch, 39.62% for repetitive function, and 13.57% for affective function.

The topic switch was done in relation to the focus of explaining grammar content during the class. The repetitive function was mostly done for clarifying and emphasizing T1 and T2's utterances, explanation, and instruction. Finally, the affective function was made to develop or maintain solidarity or friendship between T1 and T2 with their students, to show understanding of students' reaction or problems, and to joke or to warn the students.

Functions	Teacher 1 (T1)	Teacher 2 (T2)	Average
Topic switch	16.67%	78.33%	47.5%
Affective function	18.18%	8.33%	13.57%
Repetitive function	65.91%	13.33%	39.62%

Table 2 The Frequency and Comparative Occurrence of the Functions of Code Switching in the Two Classes

The results of the transcripts also show that there were several main factors in terms of purpose for teachers to use code switching during the teaching and learning process. Several main details and extracts showing the three main functions of code switching used by the teachers during the classroom context are as follows:

(1) Repetitive functions

For clarifying the meaning of the instructions, the teachers code switched from L2 to L1. Here, they stressed the importance of the foreign language content for efficient comprehension. They repeated what was said, usually in the form of translation or approximate translation.

Extract 1

T1: Okay, still confused? Still get confused? Sakinah? Yes. Which one?

Yang mana masih bingung?

[Which one is still confusing for you?]

T1 asked her students if they were still confused about the topic. She addressed one student, asked her in English, got her response, and then repeated her utterances by switching to Indonesian.

(2) Topic switch

Code switching at topic switch was found during the observation since the two teachers focused mostly on the grammar instruction. Grammar instruction was usually carried out in the students' L1, while conversation was mostly performed in L2.

Extract 2

S1: Miss, number four.

T2: Yes, number four. What's wrong with it?

Inikan kata kerja, jadi bukan 'to be' *yang keluar. Berarti dia langsung. Berhubung ini sudah* negative, so we change into positive.

[**This is a verb, so don't use** 'to be'. **Use the verb directly. Because it is in** negative,...]

A student was confused and asked T2 in English about the answer for question number four in the exercise. T2 first responded in English because it was mere a conversation, then she switched to Indonesian when she was explaining the grammatical aspect of the topic.

Extract 3

T1: "It was a very nice wedding gift."**Ubah ke dalam** past perfect. **Ada dua** options, **bisa** perfect. **Kalo** past perfect **jadi apa?**

[**Change into** past perfect. **There are two** options, **it can be** perfect. **What will it become if it is** past perfect?]

T1 only mentioned the sample English sentence for the topic, then directly explained the grammatical point in Indonesian. She only inserted certain technical grammar terms in English in her Indonesian utterances.

(3) Affective functions

Although the most important task of the teachers is to impart knowledge to the students, it is still inevitable that teachers should perform sometimes even as actors to use any kind of devices to attract the students' attention. In the course of instruction, teacher may switch between L2 and L1 for interpersonal purposes, such as to develop or maintain solidarity or friendship between teacher and students, to show understanding of the problems, to joke or to warn their students.

Extract 4

T1: Reported speech*nya* *"Miss asked Rama why Rama was looking at her"* Okay? Rama, *jawabla ngapo?* [smiling]

[Rama, **answer me why**?]

Ss: [laughing]

Code switching from English to Indonesian occurred here in which the expression of "Rama, *jawablah ngapo?"* was made consciously by T1 to joke with her student named Rama. This also made the whole class laugh.

Extract 5

T2: No problem. I like *coretan*.

[scratch]

Here T2 was walking around the class monitoring the students doing the exercise. She came closer to one student and found out that the student had made many scratches on his exercise sheet. The student seemed afraid, but T2 tried to calm him down during their English conversation. T2 then used the term 'scratch' in Indonesian for showing her understanding of the students' problems.

Moreover, the data from the observation revealed another important function that made the teacher code switch, namely following the usage found in one's culture. Since the language used by someone is closely related to his/her culture, sometimes code switching occurs because the speaker is following the common usage of the word in his/her culture, which can be slightly different from the culture in other language.

Extract 6

T2: *UASnya nanti* **miss** *ganti, ya. Soalnya ada, tapi lebih susah.*

[**I** will change the final test. The questions will be harder]

T2 inserted the English word "miss" in her Indonesian expression. The insertion of the word "miss" showed the culture in Indonesian which is not common to use the word "I" to call herself as a teacher while talking to the students.

Extract 7

T1: Ani said that she was cooking at the kitchen, jadi *bukan* 'asked' **ye.**

[so not 'asked' **okay**]

The word "*ye*" is common to be found in Indonesian culture, especially in Palembangnese. In extract 7, '*ye*' was used by T1 to make sure that the students had understood her explanation. In English, the meaning is similar to the word 'okay' which is sometimes put at the end of a sentence.

Extracts 6 and 7 show that code switching occurs in relation to the cultural aspect. The cultural background of the teachers as an Indonesian, especially Palembangnese results in the switching and mixing of English with the common cultural expression as well as habit in their Indonesian and Palembangnese cultures.

In addition, the data from the interview revealed that the teachers' beliefs and attitudes appeared to influence their decisions to switch codes. The teacher who feels the need to use less L1 due to her students' English competence spoke far more English than the other teacher.

The main reason causing the different percentage of using English and Indonesian and the different functions of code switching conducted by the two teachers is due to the students'

English competence. T1 teaching in F1 used more English because she claimed that her students' English competence was in average level and she believed her students still understood when she exposed more English. While T2 teaching in F2 claimed that her students' English competence was below average, therefore, she used more Indonesian and code switching for topic switch in order to teach grammar more effectively and efficiently. Therefore, it is in line with the statement from Ahmad, B. H., & Jusoff, (2009) about teachers' code switching which is strongly believed as an effective teaching strategy when dealing with low English proficient students.

Moreover, during the interview both teachers claimed that another important factor or reason of their code switching in the classroom context is for affective function. From their observation on the students' reaction, they claimed that if they code switched, their students were happier and more enthusiastic rather than feeling confused and under pressure during the teaching and learning. This result in students having better comprehension in understanding their explanation during the classroom discourse.

On the other hand, the results of the questionnaire show that most students had a positive perception towards their teachers' use of code switching since 33.75% students agreed and 62.75% students strongly agreed with the statement "Switching between English and Indonesian in teaching is one of the effective learning strategies." In terms of the function, 51.21% students strongly agreed and 48.79% students agreed if their teachers switch between English and Indonesian in explaining the materials; 69.01% students strongly agreed with their teachers' use of code switching during the teaching and learning process for making them easier to understand the material/lesson since 65.79% students strongly agreed with the use of code switching for making them easier to comprehend the vocabulary, the terms, and/or the definition of the topic/material. These show that students hold positive attitude towards their teachers' use of code switching.

Interpretation

The results of the observation and the interview show that basically the function of code switching used by the teachers in their EFL classroom discourse is in terms of communicative aspect. Their main reason of using code switching in the classroom context is to have a natural and better communication with the students so that the students would understand their teaching better since code switching is considered as a useful strategy in classroom interaction, especially if the aim is to make meanings clear and to transfer the

knowledge to students in an efficient way Gabusi (2007) as Brock-Utne (2007) also claims that students engage in meaningful conversations and build on previous knowledge through the use of a familiar language. English as the only medium of instruction impedes effective learning and interaction. Using the first language to clear misunderstanding, reduce confusion and thus facilitate learning could be regarded as a valuable communicative and pedagogic strategy.

Another important function of code switching used by the teachers is in terms of the social aspect. In order to build a positive and warm relationship with the students, the teachers switched and mixed English and Indonesian/Palembangnese. They claimed that the students were happier and more enthusiastic during the teaching and learning process when they used code switching than when she used full English, which made her students confused and under pressured.

Meanwhile, in terms of cultural aspect, the cultural background of the teachers influences the code switching used in their classroom discourse. The combination of the first language and the target language (Indonesian/Palembangnese language and English) occurs naturally and involves the combination of the sentence pattern in both languages. The common cultural expression and habit in the Indonesian and Palembangnese cultures were mixed and combined into the English sentence structure. This shows that both the target language's culture and the first language's culture are simultaneously present and can be simultaneously engaged as learning to communicate in an additional language involves developing an awareness of the ways in which culture interrelates with language whenever it is used (Liddicoat, A. J., Papademetre, L., Scarino, A., & Kohler, 2003).

Usually teachers' beliefs and attitudes influence their use of code switching. The teachers use code switching mostly to maintain their teaching and learning process to run smoothly. The main factor why the teachers code switched is because they wanted to have a better communication with their students so that the students would understand their teaching better. The teachers also believed that the students would have better comprehension on the lesson as well as higher enthusiasm and motivation because of their teachers' use of code switching during the teaching and learning process, as Mokhtar (2015) claims that teachers try their best to attract their students' attention by uttering some jokes and also at times code switching to enhance their students' understanding. Whereas, students also had the same belief that code-switching has helped them understand the lesson better.

Better communication also includes the cultural aspects, in which building a good interaction and/or communication must take into account the role of social attitudes and of individual culture as Fishman (1971) argues that in multilingual communities, questions of nationalism, group equality, dominance, and political change have strong basis in attitudes to language, language choice and language policies.

Meanwhile, the results of the questionnaire show that in general the students have positive attitude toward their teachers' use of English and Indonesian as a medium of instruction during the teaching and learning process. They find it more helpful if the teachers switch between English and Indonesian in the class for making them learn English better.

In addition, the data from the interview also revealed that the main reason causing the different percentage of using English and Indonesian and the different functions of code switching conducted by the two teachers is due to the students' English competence as Bensen, H., & Cavusoglu (2013) claim that code switching should not be used with high level students who have better competence in the target language, and it was described as "a must with low level students" for **a** number of purposes such as building up confidence or clarifying meaning.

CONCLUSION

The study has concluded that code switching is an inevitable linguistic phenomenon of EFL classroom. It is important to remember that code switching contributes to effective language learning and communication. Switching between English and Indonesian in EFL classroom in Indonesia is very natural since it accommodates the cultural, social, and communicative aspects in each language for maintaining a good communication between teachers and students. Therefore, they have positive attitude toward the use of code switching in their EFL classroom since it contributes to the smooth flow of the classroom interaction. Basically, code switching is still a strategy that can be tried by the teacher to help the students. Teachers who conduct code switching can be particularly supportive in some situations; however, it must be part of an intentional and balanced approach in which teachers follow a clear plan for when they use each language and are clear about the specific goals they seek to accomplish.

Future researchers are recommended to investigate the use of code switching in promoting students' competence.

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