Teachers' Code-Switching in English Language Setting

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to determine the most commonly utilized forms and the reasons for using the code-switching strategy in the context of language teaching and learning. The subjects were three teachers who practiced their teaching at different English language courses in Pekanbaru. A qualitative design was employed as the method of the research. Moreover, the data collection was conducted through observation of video and audio recordings of the classes and interviews with the teachers. Based on data analysis, the teachers implemented intra-sentential and inter-sentential code-switching. Furthermore, the results revealed that teachers consciously employed this method for multiple reasons, such as achieving communication goals, managing classrooms, and as a discourse method.

Keywords: Code-switching, language teaching

INTRODUCTION

English is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. As a foreign language, the EFL classroom is a dynamic learning environment that brings together individuals with different languages, cultures, and backgrounds. Consequently, the bilingualism phenomenon in English teaching has become increasingly commonplace. It plays a prominent role in allowing educators and learners to express their ideas and thoughts. The language teaching environment can be compared to bilingual communities where the language of instruction is often complemented by L1 (Üstünel, 2016). Bilingualism plays an essential role in classrooms because it fosters communication skills, promotes cultural understanding, and supports the development of critical thinking skills where two different languages are used for communication. As a result, the acquisition of L2 proficiency is promoted through translation and interaction between the learners' native language and their target language. In addition, the immersion method encourages the use of L1 as a mode of communication and reinforces the role of the native language in language learning (Üstünel, 2016). Bilingualism is vital in English language teaching because it allows for a more effective transfer of knowledge and skills from one language to another.

This phenomenon leads to code-switching; as Bathia and Ritchie (2013) stated code-switching is one of the most common practices bilinguals follow, taking many forms. It allows speakers to switch between their L1 and English in order to achieve their goals. Code-switching refers to the process of alternating between different language varieties or languages in a single conversation. They argue that code-switching is a strategic tool speakers use to achieve their

communicative goals. They view code-switching as a deliberate and conscious decision that speakers make in response to social, situational, and cultural factors. From their perspective, speakers code-switch to express their identities, establish relationships and negotiate power dynamics. For example, code-switching can help speakers identify with a particular social group, signal membership in that group, and maintain social relationships with members of that group. In situations where power is at play, code-switching can also serve as a way for speakers to assert their power or challenge the power of others. In addition, code-switching can also be used to manage the meaning and interpretation of language. For instance, speakers may switch between languages to convey sarcasm, irony, and humor or express emotions and attitudes. Bhatia and Ritchie emphasize that code-switching is not a random or haphazard process but rather a highly sophisticated linguistic strategy that speakers use to achieve their communicative goals. In conclusion, Bhatia and Ritchie's (2013) perspective on code-switching highlights its role as a tool for language users to achieve their communicative goals and express their identities in multilingual and multicultural settings.

Similarly, according to Young et al. (2014) and García in Thomas and Mennen (2014), code-switching is a widespread linguistic phenomenon that involves alternating between two or more languages, dialects, or registers within a single conversation. It involves using words or phrases from one language when they do not fit or work in another.

They emphasize the importance of code-switching in multilingual and multicultural communities, where it is a critical tool for effective communication. According to them, code-switching enables individuals to express themselves in ways appropriate to the social context, avoiding misunderstandings and promoting successful communication.

Furthermore, both authors view code-switching as a strategic and purposeful form of communication that allows individuals and communicates effectively in different social and cultural contexts. It is critical for facilitating effective communication in these diverse communities. Therefore, in the context of language teaching and learning, code-switching can be defined as switching between two or more languages while communicating with others to address specific purposes. In other words, it refers to the non-English language of the speaker, and switching refers to the process of substituting one language for another during a conversation or discussion.

Certain types of code-switching take place in classroom settings. Teachers use them in several ways. Transfer coding is referred to as intra-sentential code-switching and inter-sentential code-switching by Young et al. (2014) as well as Bathia and Ritchie (2013). In a bilingual environment, intra-sentential code-switching is a communicative strategy that speakers use to deliver meaning and achieve specific communicative functions. It occurs when a speaker switches back and forth between two or more languages within a single sentence without pausing between clauses. This can

90

include mixing words from different languages, using the same word in more than one language in the same clause, or using phrases from another, depending on the speaker's purpose and audience. As an example, it is illustrated by Belazi, Rubin, and Toribio in Bathia and Richie (2013) that the sentence started in English and then ended in Spanish, or vice versa, "The student brought the homework *para la profesora*." (The student brought the homework for the teacher). In this case, the students maintain the codes of both languages while communicating. The first phrase of the sentence is delivered in English, and then it switches to the Spanish language without pausing in between.

On the other hand, inter-sentential code-switching is when the shift between two or more languages occurs within sentence boundaries. The sentence example is like the following: "I'm not going to school today. *No me siento bien.*" (I do not feel well) by Young et al. (2014:48). In this circumstance, the Spanish language is being spoken and then abruptly changes to English in the middle of the sentence. This means that the students are speaking two different languages at the same time. In the context of education, inter-sentential code-switching is when teachers or students explain a particular subject in a different language (if it is not the same language). In addition, this current matter serves several different functions, including the expression of social identity, conveying specific meaning, and enhancing communicative effectiveness. It can be concluded that intra-sentential code-switching occurs when the switch is done within a sentence. In contrast, inter-sentential code-switching takes place between separate sentences.

Several factors contribute to the occurrence of code-switching in classroom settings. Bach Baqueb and Toumi in Üstünel (2016:95) asserted that there are three reasons why teachers take advantage of code-switching in their teaching strategies. First, code-switching is uttered for communicative goals. This consists of topic/question alteration, emphasis, and explanation. These authors argue that code-switching allows teachers to tailor their language use to the needs and interests of their students and to facilitate communication and understanding in the classroom. By switching between different languages, dialects, and registers, teachers can create a more dynamic and interactive learning environment that is responsive to the students' linguistic backgrounds and needs. It also allows the teachers to highlight important content and make it more comprehensible for their students. It implies that when teachers deliver English lessons to their students, they ensure they are clear about the concept discussed or what they want to emphasize in the lesson.

Second, code-switching is utilized for classroom management purposes. This refers to providing instructions to students that are easily understood and relevant to the discussed topic. It is also applied to help enforce the teacher's authority in the classroom, maintain student discipline, and promote positive learning outcomes. Code-switching helps avoid confusion between students in terms of instructions and directions given; this helps students

understand what is expected of them in the class and what task they are supposed to accomplish. In other words, teachers shift the language to drive learners to follow instructions correctly, set the class rules, and behave as expected.

Third, using code-switching helps create a discourse strategy that mostly happens to avoid misconception. In this situation, the teacher will transfer to an exceptional language to prevent students from misunderstanding what was being stated. Teachers can demonstrate a deep understanding of their students' linguistic backgrounds and needs. In this way, the teacher will be able to clarify concepts and ideas that have been delivered in English to other students who may not be fluent in that language. Teachers use students' native knowledge as a point of reference in understanding the context of the material being presented and will deliver the content using students' native languages. Students will be able to use the information to understand the topic of study better since they can relate to it more easily from their own language. Moreover, when learners experience learning difficulty in a particular topic in English, teachers sometimes use code-switching to simplify the English language to facilitate clearer understanding among students. It implies that code-switching is a strategy that can help promote greater comprehension for students by providing them with the opportunity to learn in a setting that is comfortable and familiar to them.

It is based on occurrences the researcher found during preliminary observations at several language schools in Pekanbaru. Between October 2022 and December 2022, the teachers practiced code-switching in their teaching, although it is mandatory to speak English during the learning process. Nevertheless, since each student has a different language experience, particularly those who get exposure to English for the first time at the lower levels, code-switching is necessarily inserted. However, this tendency was barely discovered in the intermediate to upper levels. Under this circumstance, the teachers will "code-switch" between Bahasa Indonesia and English to adjust the communication level to the student's learning level.

Based on the probe into the mentioned phenomenon, it led to the discovery that the teachers similarly used code-switching to the theory proposed by Young et al. and Bathia & Ritchie as to the type of code-switching used and Bach Baqueb & Toumi as to the reasons for using it. Hence, this research concerns the type of code-switching educators applied in teaching and learning. Moreover, the researchers also conducted on reasons to apply code-switching.

Furthermore, studies have been conducted on the phenomenon of code-switching in the context of classroom settings. The initial research was done by Eva Fachriyah, entitled "The Functions of Code-Switching in an English Language Classroom." The purpose of this research was to examine how a lecturer used code-switching to teach the students and to identify the functions of code-switching at one of the campuses in Serang, Banten. Then, Paramytha Wijayanti. K.D., Suparno, and Hefy Sulistyawati performed research with the title

"Teacher's Use of Code Switching and Her Motivation in English Class" The focus of this research covered the types, reasons/motivations, and functions of code-switching that the teacher produced.

The subsequent research was done by Dian Mega Putri. The goal was to reveal the teacher's attitudes towards the use of code-switching in the classroom from English (L2) to the Indonesian language (L1) or vice versa, as well as the functions of the teacher's switching to the L1 in practice in Grade IX of SMK 10 Padang. In addition, Nurhamidah, Endang Fauziati, and Slamet Supriyadi pursued research to explore whether code-switching in EFL classrooms was a beneficial tool. The last research was A Sociolinguistic Study of Code Switching in classroom Discourse by Reni Yulandari. This study intended to determine the most commonly utilized form and purpose of code-switching, as well as the impact of code-switching on the teaching and learning situation in two classes of the fourth semester at the English Education Department, University of Mataram.

This research was different from the prior research above-mentioned. The researcher found two types of code-switching during pre-observation. Therefore the uses of code-shifting are limited to inter-sentential and intra-sentential code-switching. In addition, the interview question was open-ended, where the teachers answered based on what happened in the teaching-learning process.

METHOD

This research employed qualitative design. The data collection was conducted through observations and interviews. The participants were three teachers who worked at different English language courses in Pekanbaru. To answer the first research question, the researcher observed the running classes, recorded the teaching activities, and analyzed them. After the class observation, interviews were conducted with those three teachers in order to gather data regarding the second research question. After obtaining the data, the researcher analyzed the data based on the instruments used.

According to Mills and Gay (2016:583), there are three steps to analyzing data; reading, describing, and classifying. The purpose of the reading step is to become familiar with the data. In this research, the data was video and audio recordings of the classes and interviews. Then the researcher watched and listened to the data and read the transcripts of the audio recordings. During this step, the researchers identified the participants' general patterns in the code-switching speech. The next step is describing the data in detail by identifying patterns and explaining them. Then, the researchers classified the data according to their characteristics. Finally, the findings were presented and discussed in the third step. The findings in this research were classified into two general categories: types of code-switching and motivation to use code-switching. This step aims to provide descriptive information that helps interpret the data for the research questions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Types of code-switching

Some varieties of code-switching between English and Bahasa Indonesia were discovered during the teaching process in the classroom discourse. They were uttered by those three teachers. The data from classroom observation showed that the teachers coded switched from English to Bahasa Indonesian in two ways. The first teacher shifted the language within a sentence and focused on the specific new vocabulary or language functions used in the class. The excerpt of the conversation can be seen as follows:

Excerpt 1
    T: Where did you go on holiday?
    S: (Quite)
    T: Where did you go when you didn't go to school?
    S: (Quite)
    T: Where did you go when you ***libur***?
    S: Go to Bali, Miss
Excerpt 2
    T: Where did you eat today? Did you eat ice cream? I ate rice and chicken. Do you know rice?
    S: No.
    T: I ate chicken and ***nasi***, the white one.

During the warmer session of excerpt 1, the teacher switched back and forth between English and Bahasa Indonesia within the same sentence. Instead of trying to say all the sentences in Bahasa Indonesia to help the students' comprehension, she only focused on certain parts of the sentences that contained new words. In the second part of excerpt 1, the teacher only used the word 'libur' instead of 'holiday' because the students were already familiar with it and understood what it meant

in this context. Likewise, in the second part of excerpt 1, instead of saying 'rice, the white one,' she said 'nasi, the white one' because it contained a new word for the students. Students were also familiar with the term 'nasi,' and they could understand the meaning of the word in this context because they were already familiar with it and they were familiar with the concept of 'white rice.' In this case, she started delivering her lesson using English with a pause in Bahasa Indonesia. It is categorized as intra-sentential code-switching.

The second and third teachers inserted bilingual sentences or phrases with English in the sentence boundaries while coding switching. Unlike the first teacher, they did not code-switch within their sentences but moved the entire content from one language to another by inserting bilingual words or phrases. This is shown in the following example:

Excerpt 3
    T: OK, students. Today we are going to study Standard Marine Communication Phrases. How do we signal to another ship if our ship gets cracked?
    S: We can use MAYDAY MAYDAY.
    T: What is MAYDAY MAYDAY?
    S: *Bahaya*, Miss.
    T: ***Frasa ini digunakan untuk memberikan sinyal kepada kapal-kapal yang yang ada di lautan.*** The condition could be, the ship got cracked and sank into the sea.
Excerpt 4
    T: How about PAN PAN? When do we use PAN PAN?
    S: *Mungkin darurat,* Miss.
    T: ***Ketika kapal kita dalam kondisi sangat, sangat darurat.*** PAN

PAN! The help will come quicker.

The extracts above belong to the inter-sentential type. The code-switching statement occurred when each teacher used both languages to explain a particular point. The teacher initially used English to introduce the lesson topic. After speaking in Bahasa Indonesia for quite some time to explain the use in a scenario, she switches back to English in the second segment to speak to the students more concisely by communicating the critical details of a particular situation using only English.

Excerpt 5
    S: (Enter the class)
    T: What do you say?
    S: Hello, Miss.
    T: Hello. And? What else?
    S: (Quite)
    T: You're late for 10 minutes.
    S: (Quite)
    T: *Kamu datang terlambat.* What do you say?
    S: Sorry, Miss. I'm late.
Excerpt 6
    T: Where did you go on holiday?
    S: (Quite)
    T: After you are done circling, come here and line up.
    S: Yes, Miss.
(Some students stood in line, and some of them still sat down and made some noises by hitting the table)
    T: Stand on the line, please. Don't hit the table. It's very noisy.
    S: Yes, miss. (Stood up and still made some noises by hitting the table)
    T: It's noisy. *Jangan pukul-pukul meja.*

Similarly, in excerpt 5, the teacher initially used English to greet the student and asked what he needed to say. As she spoke, the student still needed to respond to what he had to say about being late. Then the teacher continued to explain about he was being late. However, he was still silent. The teacher alternatively explained the situation in Bahasa Indonesia and switched to English to confirm the student's expected to answer in two separate sentences. The same pattern was identified in excerpt 6. The teacher started her instruction in English. Then the students respond in English. Then, the teacher asked the students to line up on the line. The students who were asked to stand in the line then responded in English, whereas those students still remained seated and made noises. Next, the teacher reminded them to stand in line and stop hitting the table. After the second reminder, the students who were still seated finally stood up, but they still made noises. Finally, the teacher warned the students by emphasizing her last sentence in the native language.

Based on the data presented above, the researcher discovered that the three teachers applied two methods of code-switching in their lessons: intra-sentential and inter-sentential. The first research question's finding is defined in these two forms of code-switching. It is aligned with the theory proposed by Young et al. (2014), where two types of code-switching are distinguished: intra-sentential and inter-sentential code-switching. It is also supported by Bathia and Ritchie (2013), who distinguish similar code-switching varieties. It can be asserted that teachers use both types of code-

95

switching in their lessons in order to communicate successfully with their students when necessary, depending on the situation and the needs of the students.

Reasons for practicing code-switching

After conducting the interview, the researcher discovered why code-switching was done by teachers in the teaching-learning process. According to the first teacher, she usually shifted the language between Indonesian and English during her lessons to help the students better understand what she was trying to say. She would first try to use shorter and simpler words and pictures before inserting a code-switch to Bahasa Indonesia when necessary. It mostly happened when her students were exposed to unfamiliar words. For instance, when she taught the function of grammar, she explained, "We use past tense for the past. The past." As the students seemed confused about the concept of past time, she alternatively added more explanations by drawing a verb tense timeline. However, they still found it difficult to understand. She finally told them, "It talks about the past, *kejadian di masa lalu*."

Furthermore, she took advantage of the use of code-switching to build a communication bridge between her and her students. While they were having a conversation as a warmer-up activity at the beginning, the teacher would ask a simple question such as, "What did you eat for lunch?" The student then responded using short and simple sentences in English. However, her students were reluctant to reply in English because of a lack of vocabulary. Therefore, she prompted the answer and hoped the students would be willing to share an expected answer. So then the conversation kept going. In other words, she switched code as a discourse strategy and communicative goal.

The second teacher also used code-switching strategically in her classroom to suit the needs of her students. Sometimes she would also utilize students' native language to help students understand certain concepts and ideas better. To facilitate a better understanding, she used Bahasa Indonesia to introduce the concept and altered it into English to carry on the explanation. By doing so, she could ensure that the students understand the lessons clearly. In other words, she switched between English and Bahasa depending on the student's needs so that they could understand her well.

The third teacher argued a different motivation as she spoke English and Bahasa Indonesia interchangeably to discipline her students more effectively when misbehaving in class. It commonly happened when she taught younger learners. She believed that inserting their mother tongue usually helped them to be more cooperative and less rowdy in the classroom. However, she claimed that this approach might not work for older learners who were more academically oriented and might not respond well to such a form of discipline. For example, if she wanted to reprimand them for being too noisy in class, which affected the others, she talked to them with a code-switching strategy like "*Jangan pukul-pukul meja*. It's noisy." In conclusion, she spoke the code-switched language to ensure everyone behaved appropriately during her lessons.

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Based on the discussion above, the researcher found three primary reasons that influence teachers to employ the code-switching strategy; to achieve communicative purposes, for a discourse approach, and as a disciplinary strategy. These causes are the finding of the last research question. They are aligned with the study by Bach Baqueb and Toumi in Üstünel (2016) on the theoretical framework of code-switching strategies at the English Foreign Language (EFL) classroom level. They stated that the use of code-switching is usually intended to achieve communicative aims, such as to elicit a specific response from the audience or to explain something more clearly to the listeners. The second motive is for discourse purposes in which code-switching is used to overcome language incapability, prevent misunderstanding, and improve comprehension. The last reason indicates a disciplinary strategy when teachers confront challenging classroom situations. All in all, it implies that inserting code-switching in teaching and learning is aimed at building practical and conducive learning situations as long as English is still the primary language spoken in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study presents exciting findings concerning code-switching in English classroom settings. Teachers use this technique as a means of instruction as little as possible to get students still exposed to English delivery. The result implied that the participants used a code-switching strategy between English and Bahasa Indonesia in two different methods: intra-sentential and inter-sentential code-switching. Nevertheless, this did not hinder the students' acquisition of the English language as they still had to produce the language and communicate in English.

The results also revealed that teachers employed this method for multiple reasons. They mainly included communicating with the students, disciplining them when necessary, and facilitating them to understand the subject being taught. This affirmed that the strategic use of code-switching is an effective tool for facilitating language learning among EFL learners as it allows both parties to communicate more efficiently. At the same time, it shows that teachers employ this strategy within their teaching contexts to address certain challenging classroom situations. Lastly, the study further reinforced that teachers inserted codes whenever necessary to aid the learning process.

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