
**ISLLAC: Journal of Intensive Studies on Language, Literature,
Art, and Culture**

Volume 8 Issue 1, 2024

Journal homepage: <http://journal2.um.ac.id/index.php/jisllac>



**CODE-SWITCHING PRACTICES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY: CLARITY
ENHANCEMENT IN INDONESIAN EFL EDUCATION**

Raditiya Taufik Nur Hidayat*, Rafif Akmal Fawwaz Nasution, Rahma Putri Pramesti, Zuma Adella Yuliani
Universitas Sebelas Maret

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: 23-12-2023

Accepted: 12-05-2024

Published: 28-06-2024

Keyword:

Code-switching,
clarity enhancement,
classroom teaching, EFL

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of code-switching on communication clarity in an EFL classroom in Indonesia. Data were collected through one classroom observation and interviews with one teacher and three students at a senior high school in Surakarta. Results indicate that code-switching significantly enhances communication clarity, boosting students' confidence and interest in the EFL classroom. The finding highlights the necessity for EFL teachers to incorporate code-switching strategies for effective communication and language learning activity.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is considered an English foreign language country (EFL) since English is not the official language. Indonesian is the main language used for many aspects of life, including as the main instruction in the school system (WENR, 2019). EFL, which stands for English as a foreign language, refers to the acquisition and application of the English language as a supplementary skill in a non-English-speaking nation, such as Indonesia. Educational resources are typically designed for individuals who are either pursuing English studies within their home country or attending a brief English course in an English-speaking

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: raditiya_taufik16@student.uns.ac.id (Raditiya Taufik Nur Hidayat)

ISSN: 2597-7385 (Online) - ISLLAC: Journal of Intensive Studies on Language, Literature, Art, and Culture is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

nation (British Council, 2020). In the context of pedagogy, the need for the teacher to incorporate Indonesian alongside English to accomplish effective learning activities in the EFL classroom has long been a debate.

Utilizing Indonesian in EFL can help teachers convey messages, simplify instructions, and assess student understanding. Marsella (2020), states that incorporating Indonesian in the instruction of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is an inevitable approach. According to Sibarani, C. (2019), incorporating Indonesian language within English classrooms offers several advantages. Sibarani found that comprehending complex ideas explained in Indonesian proved to be more accessible and less intimidating for the students. This finding aligns with many other research studies in this field which suggest that utilizing students' native language can facilitate teachers in effectively conveying their messages, simplifying instructional delivery, and assessing students' understanding.

However, those perspectives contrast with those of advocates of monolingualism or those supporting an English-only policy. Krashen's (1985, p. 14) states that the utilization of students' L1 in the classroom should be avoided to optimize exposure to the target language. Additionally, Polio and Duff (1994) as well as Pan & Pan (2010) argue that enhancing English usage within English classrooms is essential for advancing English proficiency. They posit that exposing students to a substantial amount of English input is crucial for achieving language proficiency.

Communication is absolutely and utterly important in all aspects of life. In the field of education, effective communication skills are a fundamental requirement for educators. They must possess the ability to communicate proficiently with both their students and colleagues within the school environment. Proficient communication skills empower teachers to gain a deeper understanding of their students and establish a positive rapport with them. Furthermore, these skills are instrumental in helping teachers resolve conflicts and maintain effective classroom management (Classplussapp, 2022). By prioritizing clarity in their communication, teachers can improve the efficacy of their messages and reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation in the classroom (Medium, 2023).

This research distinguishes itself from earlier research in several ways. First, this study focuses on the exploration of code-switching in the domain of English Language Pedagogy, particularly within the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

education in Indonesia. This study notably highlights the enhancement of communication clarity as a primary objective. As many researchers have proven the importance of code-switching in the classroom, particularly to aid students in understanding the teacher's instructions and explanations (Sibarani C, 2019), it is worthwhile to investigate more specifically how much the use of code-switching can enhance the clarity of communication.

Underlying the use of code-switching in the classroom, this present study attempts to bridge the gap by meticulously observing and analyzing how strategic code-switching enhances comprehension and clarity in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) in Indonesia. By systematically examining the practical use of code-switching strategies to enhance clarity in communication, this study attempts to provide empirical evidence and valuable insights into the effectiveness of the use of code-switching as a pedagogical tool for teachers. Thus, it makes a worthwhile contribution to the development of the teacher's teaching method in classroom interaction and gives a guideline for the teacher to monitor how English teaching should be in EFL classes. In addition, the information that is going to be obtained from this study will help to provide insight on how much the impact of code-switching occurrences enhances clarity of communication for both teachers and students.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach to explore the phenomenon of code-switching in offline English language classrooms in senior high school in Surakarta, Indonesia. The qualitative approach was deemed appropriate for this study as it allowed for an in-depth understanding of the complex interplay of factors influencing code-switching practices in the EFL classroom context. This study involved one English teacher, Tulip (pseudonym), an experienced educator, and three students - Mawar, Melati, and Lili (pseudonyms), all of whom are grade 10 or phase E students. Conducted in a senior high school in Surakarta, the research employed purposive sampling, ensuring the teacher possessed extensive experience in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). The chosen classroom aimed to represent a typical EFL learning environment in Indonesia.

Data collection was conducted through classroom observation and interviews. Classroom observation sessions were held over 45 minutes. During the observation

sessions, the researchers documented the teacher's and students' use of code-switching, paying particular attention to the frequency, context, and impact of the use of code-switching by the teacher on communication clarity in the classroom. Interviews were conducted with the teacher and three representative samples of students from the observed classroom. The interviews focused on when the teacher uses code-switching, the frequency of code-switching in the classroom, students responses when code-switching is used, factors that influence the use of code-switching, how code-switching can increase students' interest in learning, the purpose of code-switching, and the perceived impact of code-switching on the EFL instructional process.

Classroom observation data was collected using field notes and audio recordings. The field notes captured detailed observations of code-switching occurrences, including the specific language codes used, the context of code-switching, and the reactions of both teachers and students. Audio recordings were used to supplement the field notes and provide a more accurate record of classroom interactions. Interview data was collected using an interview guide. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions designed to elicit participants' views on code-switching in the EFL classroom. Interviews were audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed for analysis.

Data analysis was conducted using an inductive thematic analysis approach. The researchers first familiarize themselves with the data by repeatedly reading and reviewing the field notes, audio transcripts, and interview data. Next, the researchers coded the data to identify recurring patterns and themes related to code-switching practices. Finally, they interpreted the identified themes to draw conclusions about the nature and functions of code-switching in the EFL classroom context.

The data collected in this study included classroom observation notes, audio recordings of classroom interactions, and transcripts of structured interviews. The observation notes documented the frequency, context, and functions of code-switching occurrences. The audio recordings provided a more detailed record of classroom interactions, including nonverbal cues and intonation. The interview transcripts capture when the teacher uses code-switching, the frequency of code-switching in the classroom, students responses when code-switching is used, factors that influence the use of code-switching, how code-switching can increase students' interest in learning, the purpose of code-switching, and the perceived impact of code-switching on the EFL instructional

process.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

The Use and Influence of Code-Switching in Classroom

Tulip's teaching approach involves maintaining code-switching throughout explanations and exercises to ensure effective comprehension.

Yes, every time we enter the class, whether it's during explanations or exercises, we continuously mix both languages like that. (Tulip/Interview, 4)

The students acknowledge the teacher's frequent use of code-switching to enhance comprehension, especially when faced with challenges in understanding English.

Often, the teacher does it often. So, in English class, it's not just English alone but also mixed with Indonesian. If, for example, we don't understand the language, the teacher explains, "Oh yes, this means something like this" like that. (Melati/Interview, 2)

Tulip notes that students exhibit familiarity and automatic translation during code-switching, indicating its habitual and accepted nature in the classroom. Students have seamlessly adapted to this practice, leading to a routine where code-switching occurs without noticeable disruptions.

Oh, it's not like that anymore, I mean, we're already used to it. We translate it automatically. After translating it into English, the students don't have any reactions like 'oh, like this' or 'oh, not like that' anymore. So, they can accept it, it has become a habit, like that, it's already a routine. (Tulip/Interview, 4)

Lili provides insights into factors influencing code-switching in the classroom. She emphasizes the significant role of limited English proficiency among classmates, highlighting the necessity of code-switching for comprehension. Tulip's own observation aligns with these accounts, stating that code-switching is employed when students struggle with English terms to ensure an inclusive and accessible learning process.

Yes, because my friends don't know much English right, so it's better mixed up. (Lili/Interview, 3)

Yes, the students can, but sometimes their expressions are a bit blank, so we explain it in Indonesian, and then they understand. Before that, they can't answer. They listen, but we don't know if they understand or not. (Tulip/Interview, 4)

Tulip emphasizes that the primary purpose of code-switching is to enhance understanding, particularly in specific phases like phase E. Using only English in these phases resulted in decreased comprehension and distraction. Tulip highlights that code-switching is a strategic choice to maintain focus and comprehension, especially in classes where students may struggle with full English instruction.

...with the hope that students understand because, especially in phase E, if we use full English, many students don't understand, and they end up joking around. It becomes distracting, as they often make playful remarks, we've tried it before. That is for phase E. For phase F, it's similar, just a bit more mature. I happen to teach both phase E and phase F. (Tulip/Interview, 4)

The Influence of Code-switching on Students' Interest in Learning English

Mawar suggests that code-switching can boost interest in learning English, but this is also influenced by factors like teachers' methods and students' English proficiency. Students express varied opinions on code-switching's impact on their interest.

Yes maybe. But when it comes to interests, actually whether I want to use English or not, I'm just interested in English, again it depends on how the teacher teaches me, not depending on the language used but on how the teacher teaches me personally. (Mawar/Interview, 1)

Melati highlighted that the identified factors primarily revolve around students' knowledge. Many students face difficulties in understanding the teacher's instructions during English learning. For them, the use of code-switching is incredibly helpful, as it not only ensures clear comprehension of the lesson but also aids in the acquisition of new English vocabulary.

For friends who don't understand English, it helps understand the lesson, sis. Because if we don't understand the language, it's difficult to get into the lesson, and if the teacher uses code-switching, we can understand it quickly. (Melati/Interview, 2)

The Impact of Code-switching on Communication Clarity

The impact of code-switching on communication clarity is evident in classroom dynamics, where its use can significantly enhance understanding, particularly for students with limited English proficiency. In a discussion with Mawar, a student highlights that

while she and some classmates grasp English explanations, others struggle, necessitating additional explanations from peers.

For me, I have no problem with listening to the teacher's explanation using English as I and other friends are able to comprehend it. But for some other friends who do not really know English, they would still ask other friends the meaning of what the teacher says. (Mawar/interview, 1)

This discrepancy in language comprehension is further emphasized by Melati, who asserts that code-switching is crucial for students with limited English understanding as seen in this excerpt:

For friends who don't really understand English, it's really helpful in understanding the lesson, sis. Because if we don't understand the language, it's difficult to get into the lesson. (Melati/interview, 2)

The use of Indonesian alongside English becomes imperative, ensuring that all students can follow and comprehend the teacher's instructions. The teacher, Tulip, supports this notion, stressing the need for a balanced approach in using both languages. She emphasizes that solely relying on English may confuse students, underscoring the importance of incorporating Indonesian for effective communication as seen in this excerpt:

Yes, the students would understand (if she uses English), but it must be balanced with Indonesian. (Tulip/interview, 4)

Observations reveal that teachers utilize a trilingual approach during classroom activities, initially introducing material in English and then switching to Indonesian or Javanese for clarification when needed. This strategic use of languages addresses potential challenges students may face in understanding certain English terms or sentences.

Melati's experience echoes the benefits of code-switching, as she acknowledges the teacher's use of Indonesian to clarify English utterances, expressing gratitude for its helpfulness.

I myself also sometimes have some sentences that I don't understand and then the teacher changes them to Indonesian, so I feel like it's really helpful. (Melati/interview, 2)

This underscores the significance of code-switching as a tool for fostering clarity in communication during classroom activities, ensuring that all students, regardless of their English proficiency, can actively engage in the learning process.

Discussion

From the findings, it could be seen that there is a significant impact of the use of code-switching in communication clarity, which enhances the communication clarity between the students and the teacher. Resonating with Marsella (2020), taking into account the fact that students within the classroom possess divergent capacities to apprehend the English language, the utilization of Indonesian or the local language (students' mother tongue) plays an indispensable role for the teacher during classroom activity. The utilization of the student's native language by the teacher facilitates the student's comprehension of both explanations and instructions, particularly those students with limited English proficiency.

In the context of an EFL classroom, instances arise when students encounter unfamiliar words or sentences in English, which can potentially challenge their understanding. Recognizing the importance of clarity in communication, it is a must for the teacher to strategically utilize students' mother tongues as valuable tools for clarifying the meaning. By continuously incorporating the students' native language within the classroom activity, the teacher ensures that there will be no linguistic barrier in the classroom activity. Thus, comprehensible input as well as clarity in communication can be achieved by the teacher and the students.

This finding contradicts Krashen's assertion (1985, p. 14), stating that the utilization of students' L1 in the classroom should be avoided to optimize exposure to the target language. It was found that this, however, would only make students perplexed, leading to disengagement towards classroom activity. Therefore, exclusively employing English as the only main instruction in the EFL classroom proves to be ineffective, as it may lead to confusion rather than comprehension, leading to ineffective communication between the teacher and the students.

Related to students' perception of the use of code-switching in the classroom, the current study's findings reveal a noteworthy aspect of students' attitudes toward code-switching in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. The participants stated that they were interested in using code-switching to learn English. Code-switching helps learners to enjoy their learning due to their ability to comprehend the teacher's input. The comprehensible input also allows them to feel less stressed and more comfortable learning. Once they are comfortable with the environment, without any unnecessary

anxiety the learners can focus and participate in classroom practice and activities more successfully. This psychological support makes learners feel more relaxed and comfortable learning English (Medupeola, 2013).

Code-switching can boost students' confidence in their EFL classroom. When learning, they have to force themselves to speak English, but they don't have to be confused if they have trouble speaking it because they can just switch to their mother tongue language. The present study concludes by emphasizing how important it is to comprehend how students perceive code-switching in EFL classes. The participants' favorable attitudes toward using code-switching to learn English highlight the potential advantages of using this pedagogical strategy to improve clarity and enable a more successful language learning experience.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The study aims to investigate the use of code-switching for clarity enhancement in the classroom from the frequency of using code-switching, the influence of code-switching to increase student interest, students' perception, and the perceived impact of code-switching. The findings indicate the prevalent and intentional use of code-switching by teachers to bridge language comprehension gaps among students with different levels of English proficiency. This strategic approach ensures a smooth and focused learning process, because students can adapt well to code-switching habits. Contrary to Krashen's theory of avoiding students' L1 in the classroom, the research reveals that exclusive use of English can lead to confusion and disengagement, emphasizing the indispensability of incorporating students' mother tongues for clarity in communication during English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction. Additionally, students' positive attitudes toward code-switching demonstrate its potential to enhance comprehension and boost confidence in the EFL classroom. The participants express a genuine interest in using code-switching as a pedagogical strategy, citing its role in reducing stress, fostering comfort, and enabling a more successful language learning experience. This good perception aligns with the overarching goal of the study.

Teachers in EFL are recommended to strategically integrate code-switching as a pedagogical tool to enhance comprehension and communication clarity. Students are also encouraged to use code-switching as a tool that can boost their confidence and contribute

to a more relaxed and successful language learning. By integrating code-switching strategically and collaboratively, EFL teachers and students can create a positive, supportive, and effective learning environment where understanding, communication, and mastery of the English language thrive. This collaborative effort between teachers and students encourages effective communication and ensures a positive and supportive atmosphere for language acquisition.

REFERENCES

- Albrecht, N. J., Albrecht, P. M., & Cohen, M. (2012). Mindfully teaching in the classroom: A literature review. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education* (Online), 37(12), 1-14.
- Abdul-Zahra, S. (2010). Code-Switching in language: An applied study. *Journal Of College Of Education For Women*, 21(1), 283-296.
- Astuti, C. W. (2020). Language awareness: Language use and reasons for code-switching. *LLT Journal: A Journal on Language and Language Teaching*, 23(1), 116-130.
- Deuchar, M. (2020). *Code-switching in linguistics: A position paper*. *Languages*, 5(2), 22.
- Ibrahim, E. H. E., Shah, M. I. A., & Armia, N. T. (2013). Code-Switching in English as a Foreign Language Classroom: Teachers' Attitudes. *English Language Teaching*, 6(7), 139-150.
- Gardner-Chloros, P., & Weston, D. (2015). Code-switching and multilingualism in literature. *Language and Literature*, 24(3), 182-193.
- Gleason, J. B. (1973). *Code switching in children's language*. Cognitive development and acquisition of language, 159-167.
- Hakim, B. M., Arflida, F., & Satriani, I. (2019). Students' perception towards the use of code-switching use in EFL classroom. *Professional Journal of English Education*, 2(3), 370-375.
- Hazaymeh, W. A. (2022). Teachers' Perceptions of Code-Switching Functions and Effects in English as a Foreign Language Classroom. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 11(3), 1839-1849.
- Heller, M. (2020). *Code-switching and the politics of language*. In *The bilingualism reader* (pp. 163-176). Routledge.
- Hooks, B. (2014). *Teaching to transgress*. Routledge.
- Kumar, T., Nukapangu, V., & Hassan, A. (2021). Effectiveness of code-switching in language classroom in India at primary level: a case of L2 teachers' perspectives. *Pegem Journal of Education and Instruction*, 11(4), 379-385.
- Lin, A. Y., & Li, D. C. (2012). *Codeswitching*. In *The Routledge handbook of multilingualism* (pp. 482-493). Routledge.
- Marsella, E. (2020). Exploring teachers' use of first language (L1) in EFL classroom. *TEKNOSASTIK Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra*, 18(1), 15-24.
- Taiwo, S. (2009). Teachers' Perception of the Role of Media in Classroom Teaching in Secondary Schools. Online Submission, 8(1).
- Twenge, J. M. (2009). Generational changes and their impact in the classroom: teaching Generation Me. *Medical education*, 43(5), 398-405.
- Modupeola, O. R. (2013). Code-Switching as a teaching strategy: Implication for English Language teaching and learning in a multilingual society. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 14(3), 92-94.
- Munawaroh, Hajar (2022). The Use of Code-Switching in EFL Classroom Instruction and Interaction. *English Education Journal*, 12 (1), 38-46.
- Muysken, P. (2020). Code-switching and grammatical theory. In *The bilingualism reader* (pp. 280-297). Routledge.

- Pan, Y. C., & Pan, Y. C. (2010). The use of L1 in the foreign language classroom. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, 12(2), 87-96.
- Sibarani, C. (2019). Students' Perceptions of Teachers' Use of Bahasa Indonesia in the English Classroom. *JET (Journal of English Teaching)*, 5(3), 217-229.