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THE FUNCTIONS OF CODE-SWITCHING USED DURING THE STUDENT-TEACHER INTERACTIONS IN THE CLASSROOMS: OBSERVATIONS AND IMPACTS

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Abstract:

The alternation among a number of languages within a stretch of language, recognized as "code-switching" (CS), is considered a valuable strategy for bilinguals in trying to make linguistic choices for purposes of communication. According to different points of view, code-switching can be viewed as a strategy to communicate meanings at the macro scale (such as identity, solidarity, etc.) or as an attempt to convey intended meaning to the hearer within the limits of conversational interaction at the micro-scale. Even though code-switching is widely accepted as a strategy for bilingual speakers, its application in foreign language learning remains controversial. However, recent researchers have emphasized its potential. This small-scale research looks at code-switching by students and teachers in an English as a foreign language lesson at Jordan University. Dialogue analysis was employed to analyze sample extracts and transcripts' code-switching occurrences. The results indicate that code-switching is being used by students and teachers to obtain access to language or as a classroom management method. This study also shows that code-switching can be utilized by learners to avoid L2 when the lesson content is irrelevant to them. In such cases, code-switching does not achieve its potential as a discourse strategy, and learning languages is unlikely to be facilitated.

Keywords:

Code-Switching, Classroom Management, Conversation, Discourse Strategy, English Foreign Language, Bilingualism, Target Language (TL).

Introduction

One feature of target language (TL) usage in the classroom is code switching. It is the alternating use of more than one language code in the classroom by any of the classroom participants, according to Lin (2018). It is the haphazard switching of two separate languages (Poplack, 2017). Because it has a certain influence on the language teaching process and also helps to stimulate the attention of language learners, determining the relevance of code-switching in language education may be important (Modupeola, 2013). If the goal is to make meaning plain and convey the language to pupils in an effective way, code-switching can be regarded as an impactful method (Sert, 2017).

Code-switching research is focused on bilingual contexts and groups, and Sert claims that code-switching in the foreign language classroom is a widely seen phenomenon. Adriosh, M., and Raz (2019) note in their work on code-switching that research on code-switching in the classroom has been performed for over two decades. According to Lee, H. L. J. (2016), there has been progress in the study of code-switching in foreign language acquisition. Researchers are becoming interested in the language classroom. According to Heugh, K. (2021), code-switching in the foreign language classroom is a worldwide phenomenon, with studies conducted in the United States, South America, Canada, Europe and South East Asia.

Literature Review

Empirical research has shown that it is difficult to discover whole classroom conversations in a single language. Other languages understood by the speakers may be utilized, resulting in language switching and mixing. Code-switching is defined by Auer, P. (2020) as "the alternative utilized by bilinguals of two or more languages in the same discussion." Language switching can occur at either the intersentential (code-switching, abbreviated CS) or intrasentential level (code-mixing, CM henceforth). Following her work on the validity of language barriers, Garca, O., Johnson, S. I., Seltzer, K., and Valdés, G. (2017) favour the word "translanguaging" to demonstrate that languages are not "hermetically sealed entities."

According to previous studies, switching between languages is a frequent linguistic behaviour that occurs in any interaction between speakers who share knowledge of the same language (Bozorgian and Fallahpour, 2015; Hall & Nilep, 2015; Raschka et al., 2009). This language practise is known as "code-switching," a field of research that has lately evolved into "translanguaging," a distinct perspective that examines the language user's linguistic repertoire holistically. Code switching is defined as a simple change between codes or languages (Pintado, 2021). In this study, code-switching is employed to preserve the binary, as L1 is considered to be mediating the FL and so operating as an instructional tool (Hinrichs, L. (2018); Pham, (2019); Yataanbaba Yldrm, 2015; Yldz Yeşilyurt, 2017).

Bilinguals employ languages depending on prestige, appropriateness, desire, skill, and other considerations which extend beyond code flipping. According to Garcia, translanguaging is the common practice of "bilingualism without diglossic functional separation" (2017). The term "code-switching" is used in this work to indicate any type of linguistic alternation between the two languages, English and Arabic.

The main objective of this study is to explore the usage of the code-switching phenomenon among the teachers and students and to identify the functions of code-switching for teachers and students in private secondary schools in Jordan.

Code-Switching Categorization in the EFL Classroom

Code-switching is distinguished from social code-switching in the foreign/second language classroom (Castellotti & Moore, 2018; Simon, 2017). As Simon (2017) points out, teachers and students in the foreign language classroom are members of the same speech community to the extent that, as stated by Maynard, D. W., and Turowetz, J. (2013), They might be defined as speakers who "share knowledge of the communication limitations and possibilities that control a considerable number of social contexts" (p. 17). However, as Simon (2017) discusses, individuals in this environment differ from those in social code-switching scenarios in at least three ways.

First, in contrast to social code-switching, language classroom participants exhibit a dissymmetrical mastery of the codes in touch. Thus, both instructors and students frequently share the school language, which in a foreign language education situation is usually the community language. Teachers' understanding of the target language, on the other hand, is often far superior to that of the pupils. When participants share the linguistic resources represented by the school and community languages, the opportunity to engage in code-switching is increased, despite the inherent limits of the educational contract, which emphasizes the necessity to speak the target language. Another factor that may determine the extent to which the original language is employed is the sociocultural distance between the target and the native language.

The first category is equivalence, which happens when the learner lacks competency in the target language, such as when s/he feels unable to explain anything in the target language. As a result, the learner employs lexical elements from the original language. Sort describes this process as a defense strategy. Floor-holding is the second category. In this case, students use local language terms to fill gaps in the dialogue in order to prevent pauses or vacant spaces. Sort believes that if kids engage in this form of code-switching over an extended period of time, it may have a deleterious impact on language learning. They may lose the ability to converse fluently.

Second, another distinction in the language classroom is the participants' institutionally and socially determined dual roles and statuses. In terms of organizationally defined roles, the teacher is regarded as a knowledge-giver, while pupils are regarded as knowledge-acquirers. Thus, as part of the pedagogical contract binding the 19 participants, language instructors are required to teach the target language, while students are required to utilize and acquire the target language. However, both students and instructors, particularly language teachers who are non-native speakers of the target language, frequently share the community's linguistic code. On the one hand, the instructor's insistence on using the target language can serve as a boundary-sustaining mechanism, whereas moments when the teacher allows for a transition to the first language can act as a border-leveling process.

Code-Switching In Bilingual Classroom

There are two techniques for accounting for CS in bilingual populations. According to a macro-sociolinguistic or "universalist" viewpoint, social motivation accounts for speakers' linguistic coding choices. As a result, a speaker's CS is linked to social and structural aspects including identity, solidarity, gender, and status (Myers-Scotton, 1993). A second approach stresses the role of CS in addressing contextual problems that bilingual speakers encounter in the context of conversational contact. As a result, CS arises as a result of sequential growth in bilingual

conversation, i.e., it is a tool in "conversational action within certain conversational settings" (Wei, 2005a, p. 276).

The universalist explanation is an identity-related effort to characterize CS within the markedness model, which states that a speaker's decision is motivated by a desire to apply a set of rights and duties that correspond to "what participants can anticipate in any given interaction type in their community" (Myers-Scotton, 1998, p. 23). Bilingual speakers understand which code is the expected (i.e., unmarked) code in a given context; this implies they understand the indexical value of a code in a bilingual (or multilingual) situation. Then they carry out CS, either to adhere to the unmarked set of rights and responsibilities or to impose a new set. As a result, CS is an attempt to achieve communication goals by selecting suitable socio-psycholinguistic behaviour (cf. Harmers & Blanc, 2004, p. 268).

Methodology

The present study explores the use of the code-switching phenomenon in private secondary schools in Jordan. It investigates to what extent code-switching is used and improves students' speaking abilities from their own perspectives. A qualitative approach was employed to accomplish the current study's aims and answer the research questions. The study population included all students in ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades at three private secondary schools in the Irbid district during the academic year (2020–2021). The total population was 270 students (120 males and 150 females). The participants were all English students. The data were collected through observations and the rationale for conducting observations as opposed to just placing a video recorder to obtain the teacher-student "speech" was to be able to understand the teachers' language choices in relation to the occurrences in the classroom, as teacher-student interactions and students' reactions or non-reactions could affect the teachers' code-switching usage and choices. Observations were captured with audio and video recorders.

The first instrument of data collection involved the observation of three ESL classes. The observations commenced from 8 September until 25 September, from the first week until the final week of the month. Each lesson was supposed to be 45 minutes. However, the duration of each lesson varied according to the teacher's lesson content. The classes in the first week were not observed following requests from the teacher, as they stated that the classes would only be 15 to 20 minutes long as they only introduced the course to the students and informed them of the assessments. Two video recorders were employed to record the classroom activities. A video recorder was placed in front of the classroom to record the students, and another video recorder was placed at the back of the classroom to record the teacher as well as the students. An audio recorder was also placed on the teacher's table in front of the classroom as a reserve in case the video recordings did not come out well. Field notes were employed to record the teacher's actions and behaviour in relation to code-switching and record students' expressions and reactions in the classroom.

Data Transcription and Coding

Observations and the post-observation interview were transcribed and coded solely by the researcher; see Appendix (A). This process was guided by grounded theory transcription and analysis techniques (Charmaz, 2014). The participants were anonymized using a pseudonym. Student images were not allowed to be captured as part of the research permission agreement between the schools' directors. The video was filmed by the researcher on September 18, 2012. All audio captured from students on the video were anonymized by S (Student).

Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the findings of the data analysis performed to address and answer the research questions posed in this current study, which focuses on investigating the phenomenon of code-switching and how teacher-student interactions in Jordanian private secondary schools. The findings for this research study are related to the qualitative findings. The classroom observations aimed to examine and compare the extent of code-switching usage by teachers and students in an English classroom and the usefulness of such use.

There are two main themes in the findings emerging from classroom observation. These themes are further divided into content-related and non-content-related themes. The code-switching phenomenon of teachers is presented and investigated. Each term is defined before the actual analysis begins. Information that relates to code-switching in the classes through teacher-student interaction is highlighted in grey to differentiate it from non-code-switching (English language). The switches to Arabic are in bold, and their translations are indicated in italics. The study conducted three classroom observations, observing each class three times and videotaping it three times.

Excerpt 1, video 2

Teacher: Write the next word on the board which is Honour, and ask the student its meaning.

Student: raised hands, **"انا يا استاذ"** **Ana ya ostath** (*I'm a teacher*)

Teacher: Teacher: respond to a particular student, Yes Mr. Muhammad,

Student: **"يشعر بالفخر من شي"** **Yashour blafaqour men sheea** (*you feel very proud at something*)

Teacher: Yeah, when are proud of something, Okay, and ask for the next question which is Host? While writing on the board, **"ايش معنى هاي الكلمه"** Ayesha ma3na hay Alkalema (*What is the meaning of this word?*)

Student: answer someone who invites guess,

Teacher: repeated the answer while writing on the board, someone who invites guess, and asks if is a verb or a noun by drawing a circling line on Host. **"مين يحكيلي هاي الكلمه اسم ولا فعل"** **meen y5kely hay alkelma esm wla fe3l** (*who can answer me, this word noun or verb*)

Student: Student: answer collectively, it's a noun,

Teacher: responded by giving example, So, Jaresh host the let's say annual celebration, okay, so this is a noun, but you are a host, **"ماذا تعني"** (*what does it mean?*)

Student: answer **Anta Mutheaf** **"انت مضياف"** (*you are hospitable*)

Teacher: **Mutheaf** **"مضياف"** (*hospitable*) has two (2), if you are studying scientifically means a Host **Ya`ani Jismul Mutheef** **"يعني تعزم ضيف"** (*invite of the guest*), if you are talking of something professional it means the one who is serving food and drinks for his guest, okay, **"واضحه الكلمه الان"** **wathha ala'mour alan ?** (Now*, the world is clear?*) **Tayeb** (Good), خ **"خلينا نتقل الى الكلمه التاليه"** (*let's move to the next word*)

T: pick flowers. You mustn't pick flowers in a park for example. You mustn't pick flowers in a Park.

S2: **"شو يعني هاي الكلمه يا استاذ"**   *(what does pick up mean?)*
T: **" يعني رفع شي ما او يلتقط "**   **(***pick up means to lift something up.)*
S2: **"كمان في سياره تسمى بيك اب بكم "**   **(** *there is also a car which is called pick up)*

T: yes, and why do we name it like this? Because there is a cargo area at the back where one can put things onto. That is why it is called pick-up.

(Class Grade 9, 16 Aug, 2022)

In example (1), the teacher uses the phrase "pick flowers" in a sentence. A student then asks in Arabic what "pick up" means, and the teacher replies or gives an equivalent meaning in Arabic. Afterward, S2 relates the word "pick up" to a type of vehicle and makes the teacher aware of this fact, who then tries to explain why the car is called that. So the teacher clarifies the meaning of the word and how the two concepts—"pick up" in the sense of lifting up and "take something along" in the sense of taking something along—interrelate and use the Arabic language to facilitate understanding. Also, he moved on to the next word. Using the Arabic language, the teacher asked the students what this word "host" meant. One of the students answered that it means to invite a guest to the house. Then the teacher began to ask the students a question in order to clarify the meaning of the word and that it could be a verb or a noun.

Excerpt 2, video 2

T: what is a prize in Arabic?
Student: **" يعني جائزه "   Y3ny Als3eer** (*it means prize*)
T: **الكلمه الي نهايتها حرف Z تعني جائزه وليس سعر البضاعه**   *(which prize? an? an award. careful. not the price of a good)*
(Class Grade 10, 19 Aug, 2022)

Example (2) occurred in the English classroom. Here the teacher wants to elicit an Arabic translation for the English word "prize Arabic translation for the English word "prize." Although the students translate it correctly, the teacher switches to Arabic to explain or elaborate on the term since there is a danger of confusion with the word "price," which has a totally different meaning.

Excerpt 3, video 5

Teacher: turned to the board and completed the sentence, the meal has been by her, after that wiped the board and ask the student with **Tayyib** (*Good*), the first word is charm while writing on the board of the vocabulary verb, and ask what do you mean by charm? While smiling,
"ايش يعني هاي الكلمه مين يحكيلي "   *Aeesh ya3ny hay Alkelmh* (what do we means by this word)
Student: It means having special quality

Teacher: teacher explain the word in Arabic and he said : **alzalama 3ndoh sefat momezah btkale jathab** **" شخص لديه صفات مميزه بتخليه جذاب "**   (*He has some peculiarities that make him attractive)*

(Class Grade 11, 27 Aug 2022)

In extract (3), the teacher introduces a new word, which is why he provides an Arabic equivalent. Although the teacher demonstrates what the students should do, he translates it into Arabic to ensure they understand.

Excerpt 4, video 4

T: I mustn't **" ماذا ياتي بعد ماست ايش بصير للفعل ؟ ماذا ياتي بعد "** *{and then follows the verb in the? What follows on mustn't? Or must? What follows? What happens to the verb? What follows? Ba3ed must esgh bejy ash beseer laalf3l b3d must ao musnt*

S17: **"ابتتحول"** *{it changes.}*

T: **" ايش الي بتحول مست ولا ماسنت ؟ هذا صحيح ممكن تكون مثبته او منفيه "** *{what changes? must or mustn't that's right. it is either positive or negative. but what happens to the verb? what is a verb?}*

S17: **" ياتي بعدها فعل "** *{a verb?}*

T: **" ايش نوع الفعل ؟ "** *{tell me a type verb.}*

S17. go.

T: go. **" نعم "** *{yes.}* what else?

S17: went.

T: what is went? what is went? (.) what is go and what is went? (3) what is go and what is went? **" ما بزبط لانه الفعل بالماضي "** *{the past form of?}*

S17: go.

T: **" ليش اخترنا الفعل المجرد لانه ياتي بعد ماست مجرد "** *(why we choose infinitive verb ? Because after must + base form)*

S17: go.

T: **"ايش تعني ؟ في اي زمن هذه الكلمه ؟ "** *{what does it mean? which form is it? the?}*

S17: base form.

T: **"نعم صحيح يجب عليك دائما ان تستخدم الفعل المجرد بعد ماست انتبه جيدا "** *{the base form. Careful okay? With must and mustn't you always have to use the base form. okay.}*

(Class Grade 9, 6 Oct 2022)

In extract (4), the teacher asks the students how sentences with 'must' and 'mustn't' are formed, or, more exactly, which verb form follows from 'must' and 'must not. This grammar point has already been dealt with in detail and practiced intensively so the students should know it. It is assumed that the actual explanation of the grammar point was done in Arabic which is why the revision is done in Arabic as well. This serves various purposes: Firstly, students are used to the Arabic explanation. Secondly, it is easier for them to understand. Thirdly, it is easier for them to reply and talk about language in Arabic. Moreover, the time factor may be of no small concern.

Conclusion and Discussion

As a distinct characteristic of the broad subject of CS, CS in the EFL classroom is distinguished by its own distinctive traits. It is placed in a conflict zone between the institutional overall purpose of teaching a foreign language, which implies that L1 should be limited, and the view that CS is a natural tendency in bilingual situations with the capacity to make discussions run. Through the insights of social constructivism, the necessity of classroom interaction for

language learning has been clearly highlighted (Walsh, 2003). As a result, it is critical to assess CS in the EFL classroom in terms of whether it aids or hinders language development.

The teacher-initiated CS in this study attempted to offer student access to language or to focus their attention to course topic, similar to the findings of Ustunel and Seedhouse (2005). However, as seen in the excerpts, this did not always result in improved classroom engagement. The data collected in this study revealed that pupils demonstrated affiliation when asked to respond in L1. Responses in L2 were, on the other hand, rare, halting, and did not extend beyond the phrase level. Responses in L1 when L2 was expected were common, indicating that pupils were dissatisfied with the teacher's instructional aims. A surprising number of cases of student CS were attempts to avoid speaking in L2 about a topic that was irrelevant to them. This impression is definitely supported by Extract 4

With an understanding of the limited dataset, which does not easily allow for generalization, the findings of this study show that using CS in the EFL classroom can be a method for avoiding communication about course topic that is irrelevant or irrelevant. Because the goal of EFL teaching is to have students actively interact in the classroom in order to enhance learning, lesson subject selection is critical. As a result, CS as a technique for avoiding L2 is undesirable since it violates educational foci.

As a result, instructors should be aware of the impact of teacher CS and alter their own CS accordingly (Sert, 2005; Ustunel & Seedhouse, 2005). Teachers could monitor their own teaching through peer observation, video- or audio-recording (Walsh, 2002; Walsh 2006; Harfitt, 2008), and research the reflected usage of the mother tongue in the associated literature to enhance awareness (e.g. Butzkamm & Caldwell, 2009). It is equally critical that teachers give adequate opportunity for learners to rehearse speaking on learner-relevant topic subjects during classroom time, especially in group or pair work where affective filters are decreased. Under these conditions, CS can realise its full potential as a language learning tool and a way of conversation control in the EFL classroom (Sampson, 2011; Eldridge, 1996).

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Appendix A

Sample of transcription of classroom observation

Arabic Native Teacher: Jordan Level/Intermediate   Time: 1-1:30

Transcription including Arabic usage/Code-switching
Ja`afar: 1
Teacher: Okay Ya Shabab (Brothers), let's get started please, today we will write some questions on the board and I want you to answer them because we already read it before, Okay Ya Shabab (Brothers)?
Student: Students were talking to each other, and answered, Okay Yalla (Okay let's start).
Teacher: write the questions on the white-board,
Student: carefully observed,
Teacher: Okay Ya Shabab (Brothers), I will like you to answer these questions, which are as follows; who discover the mask of Tutankhamun, the second question; what is the nationality

of Fadwa Tuqan, the third question; write down two achievements for Ibn Sina, and finally the fourth question; when did ibn Sina die?. Answer the questions please, I give you five (5) minutes to answer the questions.

Student: Okay

(The teacher was writing the questions on the whiteboard to the students).

Ja`afar: 2

Teacher: ask the students, let's go back please, are you ready to answer the questions?

Students: Yes teacher,

Teacher: ask the students to answer question number one (1),

Student: Read the question, who discover the mask of Tutankhamun and answer Howard Carter,

Teacher: write the answer on the board and explain to the student that the mask is considered one of the special things in the world because it's made of gold, okay Shabab (Brothers), thank you, now let's go to the second question please,

Student: read the question out loud, what is the nationality of Fadwa Tuqan, and answer that she`s Jordanian and also a Palestinian,

Teacher: explains to the students that she`s Palestinian and she has Jordan nationality, but it's forbidden to have two (2) nationality in Jordan, which means Jordan and Palestine are one nation, conclude with thank you, and ask question number three (3) who can read and answer the question?

Student: raised his hand after gotten selected, start reading the question on the board while sitting down, write down two achievements for Ibn Sina with little assistance from the teacher to get him through, and answered the book of healing,

Teacher: said Good, and write on the whiteboard the book of healing.