

# Code Switching Phenomenon in English Language Classrooms at the Tertiary Level

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## Abstract

Code switching and mixing of languages happen widely in the educators' discourse as well as the students in the classroom. In many occasions, code switching often divides opinion especially among English Language learners in Malaysia. Consequently, the present study aimed at the level of students practicing code-switching in English teaching classroom at the tertiary level. This study attempts to illustrate how lecturers' and students' practice code switching in the Malaysian tertiary atmosphere. This study was designed using a quantitative method. A convenient purposive sampling was used for this study which involves both international and local students in a class. The data was collected from 40 students. The results show that code switching is employed through both teachers and students to function various purposes in ESL classroom. It was also found that code exchanging is normally utilized by the educators to encourage and oblige their understudies' grip and cognizance of the objective dialect and to constrict their understudies' learning nerves. Moreover, code exchanging is utilized by understudies as an acting technique to adjust for their clearness for the information passed on by their lecturers.

**Keywords:** Code switching; multilingual; tertiary level.

## 1. Introduction

Language is a gadget to support social coordinated effort between people. In every association, the dialect is used as a medium to pass on insights, suppositions and explicit messages (Thomas and McDonagh D.C, 2013). The dialect used can be verbal or non-verbal. In any case, the perception of the message isn't dependent on dialect itself, yet furthermore on the unique situation and non-verbal direct of the overall public, who are connected with associations. The satisfaction of verbal trade is exposed to how examiners coordinate to co-create affiliations. At present, most higher learning universities in Malaysia have announced that the medium of instruction in content subject classrooms to be the English language, which is the most critical second language in the nation.

Sociolinguistics discuss that language is associated with its practical use (Adams, Matu, & Ongarora, 2012). This discussion is particularly true in the Malaysian context which is a rich linguistic setting. In such a context, people use language in their daily interaction and select, consciously or unconsciously, different languages from their linguistic repertoires. Consequently, switching between languages that technically explained as code switching is a widespread phenomenon in Malaysia. This situation also intensified in a context of language use like Lincoln University College that not only local Malaysians students, but also International students are attending classes.

In the Malaysian multi-cultural society, code switching is a common and hotly-debated subject in language research. In line with this view, code switching is greatly described as the alternation between two codes (two languages) human beings who share those specific codes (Skiba, 1997). Consequently, the present study endeavors to scrutinize both lecturers' and students' code switching in English teaching classroom at the tertiary level in the Malaysian context. In other words, this study attempts to illustrate how lecturers' and students' practice code switching in the Malaysian tertiary atmosphere. Moreover, the examination attempts to reveal insight into how understudies see their English teacher's code-exchanging rehearses as a compelling correspondence system in helping their comprehension amid exercises.

Code exchanging happens not exclusively among understudies' correspondence anyway also among instructors' so as to encourage understudies' considering procedure. The components of instructors' code-exchanging in the classroom have been a region of concentrate every now and again investigated by specialists (David and McLellan, 1996). Regardless, relatively few have taken a gander at it from both the understudies' and teachers' viewpoints in light of what they accept about their instructors' code-exchanging (Ling, Jin, Tong, Tarmizi, and Sahiddan, 2013). This marvel happens in different spaces, for example, the family, work, and religion, fellowship just as the educating and learning area particularly in the tertiary dimension. Tertiary training in Malaysia is an entrancing zone to inquire about code-exchanging in light of the way that Malaysians

are for the most part non-nearby speakers of English, yet, the mode of guidance in colleges is English. Eventually, this prompts lecturers' need to code-switch to any other languages that are understood better by students beside to English in order to assist students' better understanding during the process of teaching and learning. However, the factor of code-switching by lecturers varies depending on the content or area of the study. It could be caused by the switch of theme or topic, which may create emotional capacities, emphasizing key words, and facilitating learners' second language learning. Although many researches of code-switching phenomenon share many features, they additionally have a broad vary in patterns and the frequency of code switching is exceptionally different (Bakaeva, 2010). Some researchers argue that deeper research on the marvel of code changing from sociolinguistic view in different settings are expected to achieve a clearer portrayed elucidation of the wonder of code exchanging (Alenezi, 2010; Alrowais, 2012). Notwithstanding the consistency of this standard, this study endeavors to research the dimension of rehearsing code exchanging at the tertiary training in Malaysia's multilingual classroom.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 English Language Competency**

Malaysia is a multi-ethnic and multilingual nation with masses of around 28 million people and no substantially less than one hundred dialects and, first languages. The scope of populaces in Malaysia is ethnically and semantically heterogeneous. Malaysia is occupied with Bumiputra (65.1%), of whom the Malays are of the most elevated number of populaces, Chinese (26%), Indians (7.7%) and distinctive ethnic social events (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2010 July 2). Most Malaysians are bilingual, as Malay is the national dialect (first dialect) and the mechanism of guidance in state schools, while English is a second dialect for Malaysians.

Malaysia used to be under the British standard from the late eighteenth until the mid-twentieth hundreds of years. The colonization included Peninsular Malaysia and East Malaysia (Sabah and Sarawak) (Thirusankul and Yunus, 2014). At the point when the Federation of Malaya got its freedom in 1957, Malay was picked as the national dialect. Despite the fact that Malay in those days was utilized "politically and intrinsically" the countrywide dialect, English was never again disposed of. In spite of the fact that there has been accentuation on Bahasa Melayu, English is given noteworthiness in the medium of instruction and strategy as well as the 'second dialect' in Malaysia. It must be instructed proficiently at national schools so Malaysians who have experienced the national training framework (open examination) can chat in the dialect (Asmah, 2007). In any case, it does never again expect them to talk like a local speaker. It would be fine on the off chance that they "could talk with perfect musicality and stretch and deliver the hints of English suitably well for an audience to have the ability to perceive relative words" (cited in Asmah). To give believability to this status it is made a required subject in the Malaysian schools. Each Malaysian understudy needs to sit for it in the 'Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia' (SPM).

In this manner, it is seen that understudies want to code switch between dialects as they discover it a supportive learning procedure. Macaro (2005) found, by means of address room perceptions, that instructors' and understudies' code-exchanging in the ESL classroom can be a helpful dialect methodology. This would be in accordance with Ahmad (2008) examination who, by means of a survey ponder dependent on 257 members, considered how low capability students were impacted by their educators' utilization of code-exchanging in the dialect classroom. The investigation suggested that instructors' code-exchanging in the ESL classroom is a genuine resource for low capability students and that educators' code-changing is identified with students' help. Nonetheless, Xiaoil's (2013) suggested that if the instructor every now and again code-switch in the classroom this will prompt a risk of understudies constraining their utilization of the objective dialect.

In a study published in "Science and Education Center Canadian", Fakeye (2012) referred to that it is empowered that guardians and educators need an invaluable mentality toward code exchanging and it ought not to be considered as an image of semantic ineptitude however treasured in the classroom with the goal of:

- a. giving satisfactory clarification to perform exercises over the educational programs and work with writings that are for the most part written in English.
- b. educating and adapting new vocabulary in the classroom.
- c. improving an association with understudies or making known the expert of the educator.

These include expanding the incorporation, cooperation, view of understudies in the acing procedure, developing fewer formal connections between members, passing on contemplations and thoughts in straightforwardness, accomplishing exercises and, adding to an "open to instruction" academic guide (Creese and Blackledge, 2010).

## **2.2 Code Switching**

Diverse researchers have characterized "code-switching" in various ways. David (2003,2006) defined code switching as the mixing of languages in particular multilingual settings, such as what happens frequently in Malaysia. In line with David, Scotton (1993) argued that code switching is a general and natural phenomenon in the multilingual context of language use. Code-switching alludes by blending, by bilinguals and multilingual, of somewhere around two dialects in talking, regularly with no assortment in conversationalist or subject. Such exchanging may also happen at any dimension of the etymological structure, on the other hand, its occasion inside the points of confinement of a single sentence, constituent, or even word, has pulled in most phonetic thought.

Garcia (2009) displayed how being versatile in the address room and empowering code exchanging can assist the understudies with upgrading in L2. In a fourth grade bilingual class, a late arrived Spanish talking woman creates a positioned Spanish paper in September. In any case, in the midst of English as a Second Language (ESL) class, she can just duplicate quickly English dialect sentences that she appears in childlike ways – "I see an educator ", "I see an understudy", "I see a clock". In any case, when the instructor offers her the choice to write in any dialect she needs, the understudy rapidly endeavors to join new English words and expressions into her Spanish articles.

## **2.3 The effects of code switching in the classroom**

The scholarly utilization of code switching includes a more unpredictable and arbitrary impact than can be completely clarified by a student's capacity to talk in a specific language (Auer, 1998). A substantial number of circumstances are thought to be reasons for code switching, one of which is connected to students' semantic capacity. Thus, students may involve in the process of code switching keeping in mind the end goal to conquer semantic weaknesses; anyway, code-switching can also be sensitive to priming but bottom-up methods of control cannot be adequate because bilingual speakers may additionally code-switch in order to convey their communicative intentions (Myers-Scotton, Carol, & Janice, 2017).

In different cases, an absence of at least one words in either dialect may prompt code-exchanging. In other words, bilinguals clarify that they code switch when they can't locate the right articulation or term. Frequently the target language just does not have the correct word required keeping in mind the end goal to keep up an exchange easily, and code switching is fundamental (Rodrigo, 2016).

Furthermore, code switching can have a positive effect in a scholastic setting. Essential training expertise is the potential to exchange information to students in a reasonable and proficient way, as a consequence code switching can be a helpful device in the classroom for both the educators and students (Bista, 2010). Code switching may likewise be utilized to underscore a point or to add more power to an expression. On a mental level, students regularly code-switch when they feel worn out or irate. For instance, when the speaker is in a decent mind-set, the suitable word or articulation in their second dialect is effectively distinguished. Be that as it may, if the speaker is diverted in any capacity, they may additionally assume that it's difficult to get a handle on the right word. Speakers might also use their languages in a range of approaches to engage and must be capable to accredit different patterns of language use (Green, David, & Jubin, 2013).

## **2.4 Code Switching as a Positive Behaviour**

Cook (1989) introduced a procedure of utilizing code exchanging as a second dialect showing instrument through proportional dialect educating. This methodology expects understudies to switch dialects at foreordained focuses blending understudies who gain proficiency with each other's dialects. Along these lines, the understudies switch back and forth between the two dialects and trade the jobs of both understudy and the instructor. A comparable framework may likewise be utilized whereby the teacher utilizes code exchanging by means of the beginning of the exercise in the primary dialect and afterward moves into the second and back (Cook, 1991). This strategy makes the subject as open as could reasonably be expected and is practically identical to the 'New Concurrent Approach' through Rodolpho Jacobson (creator and editorial manager of Trends in Linguistics) which is illustrated in Cook (1991). The methodology motivates instructors to adjust the utilization of dialects inside every exercise with the educator permitted to swap dialects at positive key focuses, for example, throughout essential ideas, when understudies are getting diverted, sooner or later of corrections or when understudies are lauded and taught off. On this premise, exchanging may moreover be utilized as a powerful training methodology for second dialect learning.

As per Moghadam, Samad, and Shahraki, (2012) code exchanging can be an important framework in classroom association, chiefly if the objective is to exclude and pass on the data to understudies in a powerful way. A better understanding of code exchanging and bilingualism has influenced the arrangement for bilingual instructing. Program engineers and strategy producers should know that by virtue of dialect, first, we make comprehension and observation and later on, we make dialect.

Moreover, English dialect understudies adapt best when their necessities are met (Ovando and Carols, 2012). The versatility of the instructor in the classroom with code-exchanging can reinforce that the dialect

capability occurs. Also, it is fundamental to be socially delicate and careful. Supporting code exchanging as a technique to pick up a second dialect enables instructors to build up those "breakthrough moments" in the understudies. In addition, it can create and propel a positive issue in the classroom by enabling understudies to adopt new words, articulations or terms while feeling that their past or earlier learning in their local dialect is across the board and is a bit of them that can help them with prevailing in the new condition (Cerqua, 2000; Harmer, 2007). David (2009) introduced the jobs of code exchanging in the Malaysian family area. They uncover that code exchanging frequently happens in a casual space. The family plays out a fundamental job in which code-exchanging practice regularly happens. It is up to the family to decide; should one utilize Malay which is the National dialect, or English an International dialect, or one's ethnic dialect, or a blended talk comprising of more than one dialect which reasons that decisions about dialect decision at home are intricate. Like this setting of study, Burhanuddeen (2006) displayed about the dialect decision or urban bilingual Malays in the capital city of Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur), she found that they use Bahasa Melayu as the predominant dialect with grandparents, while English without anyone else's input, or joined with Malay, is favored for collaboration with relatives. As per her investigation, she referred to that such a longing with grandparents shows respectfulness and regard. Moreover, Kuang (2006) who is from a Chinese legacy sees that the discussion of a Malaysian Chinese little child who has been presented to two dialects (English and Mandarin), on the grounds of birth. His articulations are found to switch back and forth among Mandarin and English which outcomes a mixed code.

### **3. Research Method**

#### **3.1 Research design**

A quantitative method was selected as the research design for this study. This method is chosen to provide a general overview of the phenomenon of code switching hence determining the level of practice of code switching between students and lecturer in the English Language Classroom. The quantitative method was used as a method to test the research objectives by assessing the relationship between variables (Cresswell 2013). Data from the questionnaire were analyzed in SPSS software of simple frequency counts and percentage.

#### **3.2 Setting**

The study took place at Lincoln University College, Malaysia, intensified in a context of language use like Lincoln University College that not only has local Malaysian students but also International students are attending classes. Lincoln University College, Petaling Jaya was established in 2002 known as Lincoln College (LC) which was upgraded in 2011. Lincoln University College is one of the premier private institutions of higher education authorized by the Ministry of Higher Education and Malaysian Qualifying Agency (MQA-National Accreditation Board).

#### **3.3 Sample**

The sampling frame refers to a master list of the population which is used to make a random sample from which data is collected (Sekaran, 2003; Zikmund, 2000). Moreover, Schurr, Pagel, Cabral, Groeneveld, Bykova, & O'Hara (2012) define the sample as a "subset of a population that is used to study the population as a whole". It is added that one way to determine the sample size is to select a sufficient number of students for the statistical procedures a researcher plans to use to ensure achieving comprehensive representativeness of the population (Cresswell, 2013).

This study used a purposive convenient sampling for quantitative data that involves undergraduate students taking English for Professional Purposes (EPP) course. Both international and local students participated in this study. Moreover, sample selected were segregated according to different races (Malay, Indian, Chinese, and Internationals) and genders (male and female). A total of 40 students assigned to this course belonged to the intermediate level of proficiency group of learners as this course is a required subject for them to take up as they are from the business background. Those who are locals possessed MUET while the international students possessed IELTS when they first register for their undergraduate programmes. The inclusion and exclusion criteria are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Inclusion and exclusion criteria of the study

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Inclusion</i>	<i>Exclusion</i>
Age	18 and above	below 18
Gender	Male and female	-
Race	Malay, Chinese, Indian and others	-
Nationality	Malaysians, internationals	-

### 3.4 Data collection

#### 3.4.1 Questionnaire

Students were reminded that their reaction to the surveys ought to be found on the lecture that they had quite recently gone to. The questionnaire was adapted from El Fiki's (1999) in a college setting also, reviewing the questionnaires set by Ariffin (2011). These items were set to gauge data on the students' perspectives on the lecturer's language use and the attitude towards the use. Data from the questionnaire were analyzed in SPSS software of simple frequency counts and percentage.

The questionnaire starts with an introduction, which explained the topic of research, the purpose of data collection, and the sincere thanks in advance to all of the students' cooperation. This furnished the students with information about the topic and the purpose of the study was a generalization of finding without another purpose. Structured statistics from the questionnaire were analyzed using the deductive approach. The coding system of the Likert scale was used (Appendix A) and numerical values had been assigned to each code. The codes have been arranged according to numerical orders of 1 to 4, primarily based on the Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Agree, 4= Strongly agree. Literature has shown that questionnaires with Likert Scale are regularly used to measure mindset or attitude and grant a range of responses to a given query or statement (Jamieson, 2004).

### 4. Findings and Discussion

#### 4.1 Statistics result of the study

The statistics result is presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Statistics result of the study

<i>Question</i>	<i>Valid</i>	<i>Missing</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>Std.Deviation</i>	<i>Range</i>
1	40	0	3.2	3.5	4	0.992	3
2	40	0	1.95	2.0	1	1.061	3
3	40	0	3.2	3.5	4	0.992	3
4	40	0	3.28	4	4	1.012	3
5	40	0	2.2	2	1	1.114	3
6	40	0	1.6	1	1	0.9	3
7	40	0	3.45	4	4	0.904	3
8	40	0	1.55	1	1	0.846	3

The analysis made it evident that code switching can be efficiently employed for a range of teaching and learning functions. Out of a total of 40 respondents, the highest mean is 3.45 which recorded 0.904 for standard deviation, mode and median were 4 where the students proved code switching is not a problem to them. Whereas, the lowest mean is 1.55 which also resulted in the lowest mode and median (1) with 0.846 standard deviation. The lowest result shows that students do not tune out when the lecturer code switches. To conclude, most of the students preferred to code switch in many circumstances.

#### ***4.2 Maximizing the use of code switching in the classroom***

As clear in the outcomes from the poll, the majority of the understudies arrived at a resolution and concurred that they might want the teacher to augment the utilization of code exchanging in his/her addresses. Clearly code exchanging is a valuable educating and learning asset which can be used to build up the understudies' dialect learning background. Macaro (2005) found, through classroom discernments, that teacher' and understudies' code switch in the dialect classroom can be believed to be a valuable dialect system. As per the outcome, it is seen that the understudies wanted the instructor to boost the utilization of code exchanging in his or her classes which shows the discoveries of the examination by Rodolpho Jacobson, which is sketched out in Cook (1991). This method makes the exercise as open as could be expected under the circumstances and is practically identical to the 'New Concurrent Approach'. This system enables the instructors to adjust the utilization of dialects inside every exercise with the teacher permitted to switch dialects at certain key focuses, for example, for the span of essential ideas, when understudies are getting occupied, throughout corrections or when understudies are commended and reprimanded. On this premise, exchanging may likewise be utilized as a powerful instructing methodology for second dialect learning.

#### ***4.3 Preference of frequent code switching***

In the questionnaire, it was found that most of the respondents strongly agree and prefer frequent code switching for transmitting knowledge by 50% than using sole language. Subsequently, the other 30% of them agree that they prefer frequent code switch as well. It is found that students code switch to fit in both consciously and unconsciously to act or to talk more like those around them which reflects the findings of the study by Giles (1979) who proposes his theory of Communication Accommodation to highlight the motivation behind speakers' code switching. Accordingly, there are two reasons for code switching. The first one, according to Giles (1979), is convergence which refers to the desire of speaker to be closer and behaves friendlier toward an interlocutor. The second reason of code switching, according to Giles (1979), is divergence which refers to psychological behavior of the speaker that tries to put a distance between themselves and their interlocutors. Accommodation theory sees the assist of frequent coherence between the speakers which brings about the speaker's trade of his or her discourse to that of the speaker.

#### ***4.4 Code switching enhances better understanding of the lecture***

As clear in the results from the poll, a large portion of the understudies concurred that teacher code exchanging permits and improves the dialect learning process. It is evident that the understudies acknowledge that code exchanging is a helpful educating and learning device which can be used to enhance the understudies' dialect learning background and prompts better comprehension on addresses in the classroom. It is likewise seen that the utilization of code exchanging is essential which is equivalent to the discoveries of the investigation by Ariffin and Husin (2011). Then again, code exchanging can be a helpful gadget in the classroom for the instructors just as the understudies (Bista, 2010). In accordance with this, Moghadam et. al., (2012) communicated that code exchanging can be a decent decision of system in classroom association, particularly if the goal is to clear up and pass on the data to understudies in an effective way. Better cognizance of code exchanging and bilingualism has influenced the educating and learning readiness of bilingual instructing. Program designers and approach creators ought to recollect that by virtue of dialect, first, we make handle or understanding and thereafter we make dialect.

#### ***4.5 Code switching to meet the needs of the students***

From the perspective of understudies' regarding code exchanging, it is trusted that the incessant utilization of code exchanging by means of speakers amid classroom educating and learning urges understudies to take part in learning and meet their wants on understanding the substance and stream of the subject instructed. These envelope expanding the incorporation, investment, comprehension of understudies in the instructing and learning process, making less formal connections between interlocutors, passing on thoughts all the more effectively, achieving exercises and, adding to an "open to instruction" educational asset (Creese and Blackledge, 2010). Then again, Garcia (2008) exhibited how being versatile in the classroom and empowering code changing to happen can assist the understudies with gaining ground in learning their second dialect. It is seen that the code-exchanging marvel has become exceptionally convenient for educators and understudies from assorted societies. Likewise, English dialect understudies adapt best when their necessities are met (Ovando and Carols, 2012). The flexibility of the teacher in the classroom as ways code-exchanging can reinforce that the dialect capability occurs. Furthermore, it is quintessential to be socially touchy and careful. Supporting code exchanging as a strategy to instruct and gain proficiency with a second dialect enables instructors to construct these "breakthrough moments" in the understudies. Besides, it can enhance a superb situation in the classroom.

## **5. Implications, Limitations, and Recommendations**

### **5.1 Implications**

The present study shows that it is important for higher educational institutions as well as schools to understand and be aware of the positive and negative sides of code switching in the classroom. In the view of the present study, it is vital for higher education institutions and in addition schools to comprehend and know about the positive and negative sides of code switching in the classroom. This study has yielded findings which supply a higher grasp of the prevalence of code switching in classroom lectures.

This Finding May Imply in Different Dimensions:

- Language education policy makers need to think about the opportunity of acknowledging or legitimizing the inclusion of code switching as viable teaching and learning strategy in the classroom.
- Classroom code switching is often related to low proficiency students and learning contexts.
- Education authorities may want to implement gathering and preparing materials which focuses on developing students' communicative abilities and expanding students' repertoire of target language vocabulary.
- The findings of this study can also contribute to the improvement of internship programmes, particularly among Malaysian internship lecturers and teachers.
- Internship lecturers and future lecturers, as well as teachers, will advantage substantially from comprehensive and complete training programmes which define the features of classroom code switching.

### **5.2 Limitations and Recommendations**

Firstly, this study only conducted in four weeks whereby the researcher should ensure teaching and learning to take place effectively without any disruptiveness. Another limitation is that the researcher should distribute the questionnaire as well as to be analytical in the interpretation of data. The participants who are the contributors to the existing study was confined to 40 students joining one private university in Selangor whilst this investigation did not encompass those students from other private and public universities. This was due to the of the time constraint. Therefore, future studies should be expanded to encompass several other universities in Malaysia and comparing between private and public universities in order to be able to gain outcomes that could be greater, more generalized and replicated.

## **6. Conclusion**

The point of convergence of the investigation was to clarify how understudies and speakers in a multilingual/multicultural setting of dialect use code exchanging as a strategy in instructing and learning in a private college at Selangor, Malaysia. The information was gathered with the quantitative methodology. The results demonstrate that code exchanging is utilized by educators and understudies to work various highlights in the ESL classroom. English dialect students adapt best when their necessities are met (Ovando and Carols, 2012). The adaptability of the educator in the classroom as far as code-exchanging can guarantee that dialect proficiency happens. Furthermore, it is imperative to be socially mindful and touchy. Supporting code-exchanging in the classroom as an instrument to obtain a second dialect enables instructors to upsurge those "open to instruction minutes" in understudies. Moreover, it advances viable and positive condition in the classroom by permitting understudies to look at and adapt new words, expressions or terms while feeling that their earlier learning in their first language is significant and that it is a period of them that can help them to be fruitful in various regions. It was additionally discovered that code exchanging by the educators is utilized essentially to encourage and oblige understudies' understanding and cognizance of target dialect. It is additionally used to constrict understudies' learning tensions. By and large, results uncovered that code exchanging is utilized by understudies as learning methodology and considering a way to deal with adjusting for their lucidity for the addresses passed on by their instructors.

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