

# Code-Switching in Asian EFL Classroom and the Teachers' Perception

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## ABSTRACT

There are many pros and cons related to the use of code-switching in EFL class. The use of code-switching, according to Khaerunnisa (2016) is considered as a useful instrument to help students and teacher in EFL class. In contrast, Macaro (2005) explains that the use of code-switching in EFL class is not sufficient to support students' development in mastering L2 when teachers keep using L1 in their deliverance. This research aims to discuss how teachers react to the use of code switching in class. Furthermore, this research reveals the role of code-switching through the use of it in EFL class. Moreover, the data in this research are taken from scientific articles in three different countries in Asia, namely Indonesia, Pakistan, and Turkey, therefore library research is applied as the technique of data collecting in this research. The data analysis shows that the use of code-switching in three countries have various use and function. The finding shows that In Indonesia and Turkey, the use of code-switching in EFL class is part of teaching method that enables the teachers to explain the lesson comprehensively. Meanwhile, the use of code-switching in Pakistan tends to be implemented as an instrument to build teachers-students engagement.

**Keywords:** Code-switching, EFL class, English teaching.

## INTRODUCTION

The advancement of technology that moves rapidly in this modern era has successfully changed people's habit in many life aspects. People nowadays have a wider chance to meet and interact to anyone across the globe as the result of no barriers among countries so that people tend to use international language in attempt to provide a comprehensive and understandable communication. For this reason, English acquisition in this modern era plays significant role as a basic skill and requirements that should be mastered to adapt and hence, compete in broader scope.

This rapid change and movement in language use have finally spread the influence in education field. In such a situation, some countries where English is spoken as foreign language (such as Turkey, Pakistan, and Indonesia) are competing to lift up and develop English language teaching. Therefore, it is expected that the proper teaching method especially in teaching English will equip students in terms of skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Furthermore, this idea is hoped to fulfil students' necessity to adapt and compete globally.

However, the idea to provide applicable ways and to find out the best technique in teaching students from non-English speaking countries encounters its

difficulty. Issues in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) are said to be a long discussion from time to time. For example, Goss (1999) observes that the challenges in Japanese EFL students are in terms of insufficient preparation of teachers, lack of students' motivation, and large class sizes. Moreover, in Indonesia and Pakistan, as it is explained by Nurhamidah, Fauziati and Supriyadi (2018), Bhatti, Shamsudin, and Said (2018), and Gulzar (2010) what becomes the issues in those two countries are related to the students' ability to fully receive English as the main language in lesson deliverance. This difficulty is mainly influenced by the use of L1 in EFL students. Furthermore, Nurhamidah, Fauziati, and Supriyadi (2018) explain that the lack of L2 in Indonesian students is also influenced by the Indonesian environment that does not comprehensively use English so that the students are not used to convey their thoughts and ideas in English.

Therefore, to build the same idea and understanding some teachers use code-switching as their instrument to deliver the lesson. However, code-switching may be applied differently depending on the level of necessity. For instance, the use of code switching in Indonesia, according to Khaerunnisa (2016) and Nurhamidah, Fauziati, and Supriyadi (2018) is applied as one of the strategies to offer an alternative way to explain a particular vocabulary, phrases from L2 to L1.

Nevertheless, the use of code-switching is used differently from Indonesia. Code switching in Pakistan EFL, as it is conveyed by Bhatti, Shamsudin, and Said (2018), is applied to emphasise and clarify some words meaning in L1. Based on the two examples of how code-switching is applied in Indonesia and Pakistan we can see that code-switching is said to be a “bridge” that links L2 to L1 or vice versa. In other words, code switching is considered as one of additional instrument especially in EFL class to help students in understanding and absorbing knowledge especially in English as foreign language classroom.

EFL classroom is one of simple communities where people from different backgrounds, speaking ability and language competence gather and do some interactions inside. Therefore, the use of code-switching in one and another country will have different uses and implications. Therefore, those phenomena raise the researcher’s attention to observe the discussion in related topics of discussion.

### Literature Review

Code-switching in sociolinguistics is not a new discussion in recent years. The first discussion of code-switching as it was discussed by Haugen (as cited in Nurhamidah, Fauziati and Supriyadi, 2018) was a result of bilingualism that was reflected in someone’s speech. In other words, code-switching is created as the result of someone’s ability in mastering more than one language. Many scholars such as Lin (2013) and Domalewska (2017) explain that code switching is a condition when someone uses two languages and shifts to another language. By this definition we can define that code-switching is an event when a particular speaker in a certain language switch from one language to another language.

There are various reasons why someone chooses to switch from one language to another language. Someone’s ability to use more than one language may be one of the reasons why code-switching is involved in such an utterance. However, someone’s competence in using two languages is not the only reason why code-switching happens. The other factor referred to the dominant language that a certain person may have. Domalewska (2017) asserts when the acquisition of L1 is stronger than L2, then there is a tendency for a certain person to switch to L1 in the current conversation. The other example as it is taken from Gulzar (2010) - the use of code-switching is aimed to avoid misunderstanding. In this case, the use of code-switching is influenced by the audience who are involved in a conversation. This situation may describe someone in

a position where there is a group of audience who are mostly L1 speakers, and at the same time there is such a condition where all the audience are insisted to speak in L2. Then, at this moment, there is a tendency for certain people to do code-switching in L1. This attempt to switch the code in L1 is merely to avoid misunderstanding because of failing to find the nearest word in L2. By depending on the use of code-switching, the speaker will confidently convey the idea without worrying about the misperception that the other audience may have.

### Statement of the problem

The two research questions are drawn up to present a discussion on the related topic:

1. How are teachers’ perspectives on code-switching in EFL classroom as seen in the literature on Indonesia, Pakistan and Turkey?
2. What are the uses of code-switching in EFL classrooms as seen in the literature in Indonesia, Pakistan and Turkey?

### The Objective of the Study

The presented research objective is used to clarify the course of discussion:

1. To find teachers’ perspective on code-switching in EFL classroom.
2. To search the use of code-switching in an EFL classroom.

### The Scope of the Study

The discussion in this research concerns the teachers’ perspective on the application of code-switching in EFL classrooms. More specifically, the use of code-switching in EFL classrooms will only be based on three countries in Asia including Indonesia, Pakistan, and Turkey. The three countries are chosen since they have some aspects in common, such as in terms of ethnicity which affect multilingual society. This is the reason why the use of English in Indonesia, Pakistan, and Turkey, especially in teaching, is interesting to be discussed. Moreover, this research is aimed to reveal the use of code-switching in EFL classrooms.

### The Significance of the Study

It is expected that this research will contribute beneficial insight to both the readers and the researcher. In terms of knowledge, the readers are expected to obtain helpful reference, especially in English teaching and education. Specifically, this research is expected to enrich the bigger picture of perspective in relation to

teachers' improvement in teaching so that the use of code-switching can be one of advantageous instruments to be implemented in EFL class. At last, this research is expected to encourage other researchers to conduct further research in EFL especially in relation to the use of code switching in EFL Class.

## METHOD

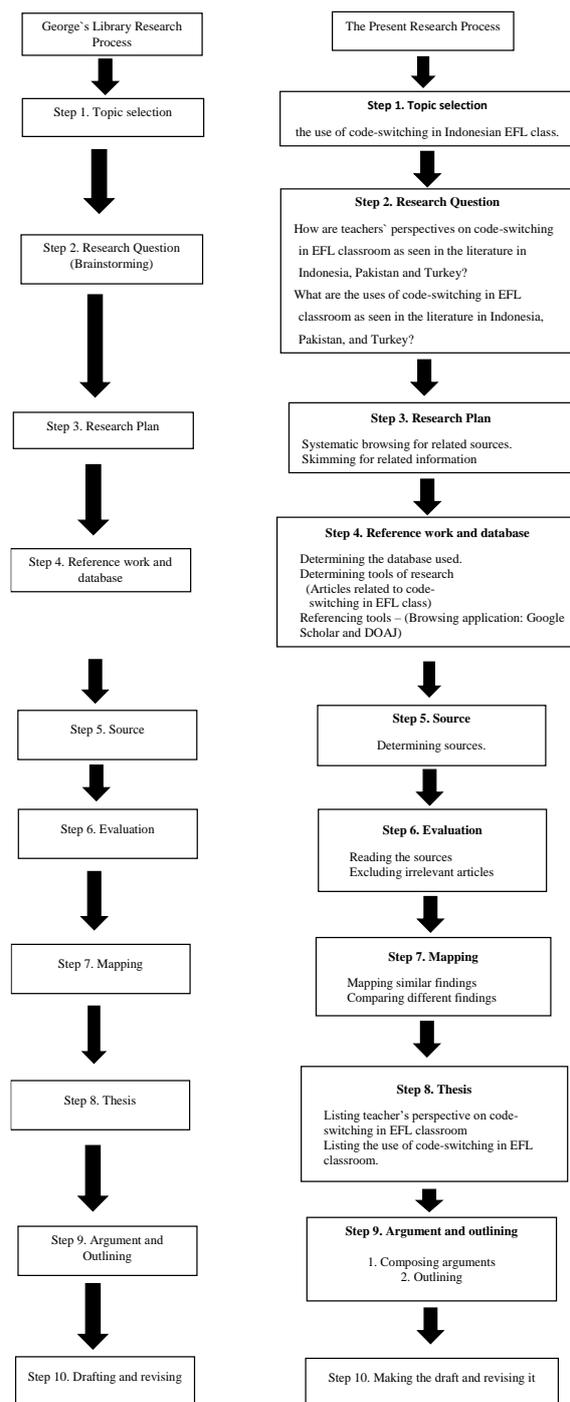
Conducting research demands a large knowledge which is related to the topic of discussion. Besides, the ability to arrange proper steps and determine the right way to conduct research are necessary. Furthermore, the research method plays the essential role in discerning, observing, and analyzing a certain discussion.

Furthermore, in comprehending the term research, and method more comprehensively, some related statements which are stated by the experts may clarify the two terms. According to Rajasekar, Philominathan, and Chinnathambi (2013), research may conclude as a scientific and systematic search which is related to information on a specific topic. Moreover, "Scientific method is the pursuit of truth as determined by logical considerations" (Kothari, 2004, p. 9). Kothari says that method is the process of obtaining or gaining a truth that lies within a certain case. The use of method or scientific method is another terminology that deals with the way of thinking to get something. Therefore, a method in a certain research function as the technique or manner in observing something. In short, method of research or research method is a way to systematically solve the research problem. It may be understood as a scientific study that deals on how research is done scientifically.

Related to the topic of discussion, the method discussed is intended to reveal the teacher's perspective on code-switching in EFL classrooms and the use of code-switching in EFL classrooms. The discussion in this chapter includes the approach/model of development, source of data, limitation of the study, data collection instrument, data analysis.

### The Approach/Model of Development

This research applies the use of library research; therefore, George (2008) explains that library research concerns on review and the data interpretation on the selected articles. The following figure provides the steps and procedure in conducting library research. The provided figure here is the adaptation of library research model from George (2008)



### Source of Data

In conducting library research, the whole research data are taken from related discussion and research on the code-switching in EFL classes in the form of articles. Google Scholar and DOAJ were the primary applications used as the instruments to collect the data in the present study. The keywords used in the Google Scholar and DOAJ search engine are - sociolinguistics and ELT, code-switching in ELT, the role of code-switching in EFL classroom, the student-teachers perception in the use of code-switching.

### Limitation of the Study

In order to keep the discussion on the right track, a set of barriers to limit the study is considered sufficient. The discussion of Sociolinguistics may be conducted through many ranges of scopes. However, the discussion in this research concerns the study of code-switching. Moreover, the discussion of code-switching in this case is discussed in terms of Indonesian, Pakistan, and Turkish teachers' perspective in EFL and its use due to the use of code-switching in the classroom.

### Data Collection Instrument

This research involves the analysis and review from the collected articles related to the use of code-switching in Indonesian EFL class. The step in collecting the data includes selecting the research topic, formulating research questions, planning research, referencing work and database, choosing the right sources, evaluating, mapping the findings, reporting the finding in the form of academic writing, composing arguments, revising the thesis draft.

### Data Analysis & Discussion

Data analysis is one of the most crucial parts in research. Data analysis includes the whole data which are observed and analyzed in the research. The use of data analysis in this research is to point and determine the discussion. In this case, the intended discussion focuses on the use of code-switching in EFL class. Dealing with research entitled *Code-switching in EFL Classrooms and the Teachers' Perceptions*, the data analysis of this research is related to articles that discuss and explain code-switching in EFL class, the use of code-switching and the teachers' perception in relation to the use of code switching. Therefore, the data include some articles and research reports.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The role of code-switching as seen in Domalewska (2017) and Gulzar (2010), code-switching is a useful instrument to be applied in daily conversation. Moreover, code-switching serves as an alternative way for a speaker to avoid misunderstanding and misperception in a conversation, hence it is expected that the switch from L2 to L1 or vice versa will keep the conversation running smoothly.

On the other hand, different perspectives about the use of code-switching takes place in the education field. As it is explained by Littlewood and Yu (2011) and Macaro (2005) the use of code switching in education,

especially in EFL class is not sufficient and it is considered an irrelevant teaching method. In this case, Littlewood and Yu (2011) affirm that teachers should be model and example in four aspects of skill in language – speaking, writing, reading, and listening. Therefore, code switching should not be spoken in class as it will influence students' motivation in using English. Consequently, it will discourage students from speaking in L2.

Meanwhile, Macaro (2005) argues that there are several reasons why code-switching should be avoided. First, students should get more inputs in L2 compared to L1. When teachers switch to L1, students' production in L2 will not obtain the maximum outcome. Second, the use of minimal L1 in EFL classrooms will evade students from getting involved in such a negotiation to use L1. Third, code-switching is a distraction that blurs the figure of L2. For this reason, code-switching is not suggested to be applied as a teaching method.

On the contrary, the use of code-switching in EFL class is not always regarded as a distraction or even improper teaching method. Many scholars such as Walsh (2002) who states that there should be a tool that links the L1 to L2 since students in EFL are composed by different background and language competence. In addition, the use of L1 is a suitable way to explain what lies in L2 so that the whole part of the discussion can be delivered well. Furthermore, Khaerunnisa (2016) conveys that code-switching can be a very useful teaching strategy to check students' understanding. In this case, when students can explain the idea in L2 and transfer it to L1 well, then, it is said that the students understand the lesson comprehensively. Furthermore, it is also expected this kind of output will help the other students to comprehend the lesson.

There are many pros and cons related to the use of code-switching in EFL class. Apart from justifying code-switching in EFL class, students' understanding and comprehension should be the priority in lesson deliverance. As a result, it is expected that the use of code-switching can encourage students to learn more as they have a big picture in L1 and L2.

### Teachers' Code Switching

There are many aspects why teachers do code-switching in the EFL classroom. Based on the function, Tabassum, Rafique, Akram, and Khan (2020) explains that there are three main reasons why teachers switch to other language, they are as follows:

1. *Topic Switch*. This particular section comprises teachers' intention to engage students in particular

discussion even-though sometimes the topic discussed has nothing to do with the lesson. So, the topic here can be the random talk, or a related experience about the topic. Topic switch does not last for the entire lesson, once a particular topic has reached the end of discussion, then the teachers switch to the L2.

2. *Repetitive Function*. This section includes the repetition of a particular word, phrase, or sentence in L1. Repetitive function aims to check students' understanding about related topics that have been discussed.
3. *Affective Function*. This section provides one of teachers' ways to motivate students or grows\ students' interest to participate in a lesson. Usually, teachers will do code-switching when they want to give their students compliments, or just to encourage students to be brave in conveying their ideas and opinions.

### Students' Code-Switching

In this discussion, code-switching is not merely spoken by the teacher. In this case, students also do the same thing as they are also part of the EFL classroom. Moreover, Tabassum et al. (2020) conveys that there are four reasons why students switch their codes:

1. *Equivalence*. In this section, students do the code switching purely because they do not have capabilities to construct or fail to find the same referent from L1 to L2. As a result, they are switching the code by using the language that they have acquired.
2. *Floor Holding*. This section is nearly the same as equivalence. The only difference between *equivalence* and *floor holding* takes place as they cannot remember the word that they want to speak. In this case, students understand the intended word, but they do not remember it.
3. *Reiteration*. This section shows students' struggle to rephrase the word or utterance in L2.
4. *Conflict Control*. In this section students try to avoid misunderstanding by speaking the word in L1. This kind of code-switching is just to clarify that they are not using the wrong word or utterance during the conversation.

### Indonesian EFL Code-Switching

The presented analysis in this section discusses teachers' code switching in Indonesian EFL according to Nurhamidah et al. (2018) Indonesian teachers tend to use code switching as part of teaching strategy. In addition, code-switching in Indonesian EFL class is applied in the following conditions:

1. Teachers do code-switching as a result of failing to find the proper equivalent in L2.

2. To check students' understanding in learning a particular part of a lesson.
3. Code-switching is applied as part of class management. In other words, code-switching is used to give an instruction, command or to discipline students in class.

The following conditions provide a brief explanation how code-switching is applied in Indonesian EFL. Furthermore, the use of code switching is implemented as the teaching instruments that help teachers deliver the lesson in class.

### Pakistan EFL Code-Switching

Different from Indonesian code-switching in EFL class, the use of code-switching in Pakistan EFL is applied to engage and encourage students to participate in class. According to Bhatti, Shamsudin, and Said (2018), Pakistan code-switching is used in the following conditions:

1. Teachers use code-switching to change a topic. Usually, it happens when teachers are intended to give an intermezzo. In order to get an interactive conversation, then the use of code-switching is applied.
2. Teachers employ code-switching to emphasize and confirm a certain word that is spoken during the lesson.
3. Teachers implement code-switching to appreciate students' work. By giving a compliment in L1, it is expected that the students will be encouraged and motivated.

This explanation shows that code-switching in Pakistan EFL is not always concerning the teachers' deliverance in class. However, the use of code-switching in Pakistan EFL is said to be an instrument to engage teachers-students rapport.

### Turkish EFL Code Switching

Turkish code-switching in EFL class is considered as the combination of Indonesian and Pakistan code-switching. In this case, Yataganbaba and Yildirim (2015) explains that the use of code-switching in Turkish EFL is applied in the following conditions:

1. Teachers employ code-switching as part of class management – giving instruction and command to students.
2. Code-switching is used to confirm students in relation to checking their understanding.
3. Code-switching is applied as teachers' media in serving intermezzo in class.
4. Code-switching is implemented as a tool to correct students' mistakes.

In some aspects, Turkish code-switching in EFL may have some similarities to Indonesian and Pakistan code-switching models. Apart from the use of code-switching in Indonesian and Pakistan EFL, Turkish code-switching is said to be teaching approach and teaching method in EFL class as the use of it is not solely providing an alternative way to engage students and teacher, yet it is used as a means to evaluate and correct students' performance in class.

## CONCLUSION

This research provides a description on how code-switching is applied in three different countries, namely Indonesia, Pakistan, and Turkey. Specifically, the discussion of code-switching here is concerning the EFL classroom as it is considered as one of simple communities where people from different backgrounds, speaking ability and language competence gather and do some interactions inside. Therefore, the use of code-switching in one and another country will have different uses and implications. Moreover, the data analysis here comprises the three scholars from different countries (Nurhamidah, Fauziati and Supriyadi, 2018; Yatanganbaba, 2015). The research method employs the use of library research taken from George (2008) where all the data are analyzed and interpreted.

In terms of the research finding, the analysis reveals various functions and perspectives in the application of code switching in the three different countries. According to Indonesian scholar Nurhamidah, Fauziati and Supriyadi (2018), code-switching plays a significant role to clarify some utterances in the form of words, phrases or sentences that do not have the same referent in Indonesian context. Furthermore, Nurhamidah, Fauziati and Supriyadi (2018) add that the use of code-switching is aimed to serve broader knowledge in L1. In short, we can say that code-switching in Indonesian EFL tends to be used as a teaching method to clarify parts of the lesson. Moreover, Indonesian EFL is said to be concerned with content deliverance. By providing code-switching in teachers' explanations, we can see that the focus in Indonesian EFL class is to serve understandable material for students.

Pakistan EFL applies code-switching as an attempt to get students in an engaging way. Therefore, the use of code-switching in Pakistan is more to attract students to get involved in conversations, consequently, it is expected that in those conversations students' interest in related fields can be improved so that it will result in a good outcome in the form of skills or knowledge. In short, we can see that Pakistan EFL orientation is

concerned with skill development. It is reflected through the use of code-switching in Pakistan EFL where teachers use L1 apart from the material deliverance.

Nevertheless, Turkish EFL provides the use of code-switching as a teaching method and an approach to engage students. Turkish code-switching as a teaching medium is reflected in the use of it when teachers implement code-switching as a tool to confirm students' understanding. Meanwhile, Turkish code-switching as an approach to engage students is where code-switching is used when teachers aim to change the lesson topic or just to have an intermezzo. By looking at the two roles of code switching in the Turkish EFL classroom we can learn that Turkish teachers are concerned with material deliverance and students' skills in using L2.

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