

CODE-SWITCHING To what extent it benefits in EFL classroom?

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Abstract

Bilingualism and multilingualism have been an issue in linguistics for decades and moreover the technology which shortens the distance between countries or even languages and evokes code-switching. Such phenomenon has been researched by many researchers and experts of linguistics to see what actually it functions. In EFL classroom, code-switching by some researchers has been considered as language barriers while others see code-switching as the communication strategy to ease the teaching-learning process. The two coined side are still developed and invited more creative researchers to reject or to support. Code-switching which commonly occurs in foreign language classroom is still under of unconscious state of both teachers and students to conduct. The code switching on this side will neglect based on the teachers and students who employ this in EFL classroom. This paper will be based on the literature study which have been mushrooming in the current state of code-switching.

Keywords: bilingualism, multilingualism, code-switching, EFL classroom

Introduction

For decades, bilingualism has been attracting many experts to deepen more about the development since 1950s. The work of bilingualism has never been so controversial since Weinrich's theory in 1968 which has been inviting experts to develop or reject. Bilingualism, as it is more common to use, has driven the experts to tailor more detailed definition to what factors are included. According to Grosjean (1998) assimilating knowledge of two languages or more is considered as bilingualism. In support, Brown (2007) defines bilingualism as the state of learning two languages concurrently by utilizing the same strategy. In order to achieve, determining the characterized context of languages should be employed. The notion of bilingualism will be different in each society means that every context happening in society will affect the bilingualism occurrence (Liddicoat, 1991). Country with many minority languages is more likely to be bilingual in minority community only. For instance, Indonesian immigrants in Thailand are minority and they will use

Thai language as the means of communication. One of possibility which establishes such an event is immigration (Liddicoat, 2008; Altarriba & Herredia, 2008; Appel & Musyken, 2005). In support, Schrauf (2008) defines the event as language environment submerging the bilingual. What affect the development of bilingual nowadays is supported by the increasing number of repertoire community in culture and language which drives the amount of bilingualism research.

Bilinguals were considered incapable because they could not use of language appropriately. This notion was finally tackled by the view of bilingualism evokes word awareness rather than incapability. Leopold (1961) states that bilinguals have the benefits to identify meaning in language. He further explains that this advance learning occurs before monolingual could absorb the meaning of the words. Bilinguals are aware of the meaning a word could bring. Vygotsky (1962) moreover cites that the amalgam or mixture of language and thought is hard to describe whether it is phenomenon of

thought or language but nevertheless the meaning is thing contents the component of word.

The bilingualism is inseparable from its use in teaching and learning process. After knowing the general context of the bilingualism regarding to its nature, the phenomenon that emerges from the bilingualism or even multilingualism in teaching and learning is code-switching. Code-switching was initially termed by Grosjean (1982) as language alternation (Hoffman, 1991) and the person who first to term the alternation of languages as code-switching was Haugen (1956) as he states 'a bilingual introduces a completely unassimilated word from language to his speech'. In code-switching, it is important to know the role of L1 employment during teaching and learning process. In broad view, code-switching is very likely to happen as it is originated from two different perspective, pros and cons.

The use of code-switching in EFL classroom has risen debatable notion between researchers. The reason to see the role of L1 in classroom setting has escalated the level of the concept emerging from many research. Some of the researchers support with the idea of using L1 in classroom and some are in opposed side of the L1 use in EFL classroom.

The cons side believes that the conducting L1 in the classroom is the lack of the competence. It is acceptable for teachers and students to use L1 in L2 context but to see beyond of its use, some experts believe it is based on the lack of competence. This is believed as the sign of laziness, sloppiness and any other weakness during teaching-learning process (Sridhar, 1996) or lack of competency (Baker, 2001; Brice, 2000; Brown, 2006; Moore, 2002; Probyn, 2005; Valdés-Fallis, 1978). This notion flies in face of the contrary side which provokes the use of L1 in EFL classroom setting because it may hinder the learning process (Ellis, 1984; Prucha, 1983). This is emerged due to the

discouragement of the use of L1 because the price it may take. The learning process, be afraid, will be shadowed by the existence of the L1 and the learning in classroom will get disturbed. Teachers are feared to be less focus on the classroom achievement. This is still debatable since other side of the experts believes that L1 serves as tool to bridge.

The pros side proposes the contrary of the aforementioned idea that L1 bridges the teaching learning process (Cook, 2001; Macaro, 2003; Ustünel, 2016). The rise of this concept is based on the positive functions in classroom since it builds the harmony and the cooperation between teachers and students. Although the class demands monolingual, bilingual situation is encouraged for its role to activate the prior knowledge (Caine & Caine, 1994; Paradowski, 2008). Moreover, students will tend to use L1 to communicate compare to L2 (Ustünel, 2016). The overpowering of the L1 is stimulated by the repertoire abilities to communicate to each other. For example, students with high achievement in English will not attempt to speak purely in English to others because they feel more comfortable to speak in the same L1. Eventually, beside the pro and cons of the role of L1 in classroom, it is still noticed as the tool in teaching and learning process in EFL classroom setting.

Going from the arisen notions, one should be aware to what purpose the L1 serves in EFL classroom. As mention above, L1 may serve as good or bad in EFL classroom. The thing that should be neglected is how teachers employ the L1 in classroom. To what existed literature, it is comprehensible to apply L1 in L2 classroom if it eases the learning process (Cook, 2001; Macaro, 2003; Ustünel, 2016). The most acknowledged of all proposers to the L1 use was started by the work of Lado (1957), to identify the linguistics gap of two languages in classroom setting. The directive purpose of L1 in EFL classroom is to serves some functions To be clear, some functions in general to serves the purpose of

employment are divided into three they are ideational functions, textual functions and interpersonal functions (Merritt et al, 1992; Ndayipfukamiye, 1994).

Methodology

The methodology of this research was by using the literature study in which the research will be based on the existed research conducted by previous researchers. The literature study occupies a very important position in the research. Although some people distinguish between library research and field research, both require bibliography. There is an inherent difference in library research with field research, the main difference being that it lies in the purpose, function or position of the literature study in each of the studies. Field research, library searching as a first step in order to prepare a research framework aimed at obtaining similar research information, deepens the theoretical study. While in literature research, library searching is more than just serving the functions mentioned for obtaining research data. Assertiveness library research limits its activities to library materials only without the need for field research (Zed, 2008, pp. 1-2).

The subjects of this research were books and journals related to the code-switching use in EFL classroom and those would be classified based on the content which will be elaborated in results and discussion.

Finding and Discussion

The importance of the code-switching in educational context is inseparable because it shows that through code-switching teachers and students try to build interaction and communication (Macaro, 2001). The communication flows more gently with the help of the code-switching. If we imagine, momentarily, if teachers and students insist to go through strictly in one language (in this case L2), we may find that they will acquire what they are supposed to achieve

but with a very square communication, as we do not wish. As Sert has evoked the two coined situation of some teachers allow their learners to use L1 and some stick to the zero tolerance of using code-switching.

To the defenders of the code-switching using, they see that it truly helps with effective strategy of bilinguals' situation. This is seen as the thorough experiment of comforting themselves into L2 and also for both languages they are happening within. Eldridge (1996) further argues that code-switching is very helpful in educational aims as it has benefactor sides of practical. It is also considered as the way of fostering students with low-level language ability to give a well-defined explanation and meaning of the given material.

Regarding the purpose of the code-switching in low-level students, the advance level students (as we afraid that their ability is affected) use code-switching not as same as low-level. They exploit code-switching as minimum level because they are already compatible with L2 or in simple sentence they do not look back to L1 as clarification of meaning or explanation but different use (Üstunel, 2016). Eventually, either in maximum or minimum force of using code-switching, it is still regarded helpful.

Students' constant code-switching, from teachers' perspective, adjourns the development of L2 because they will tend to use the L1 rather than L2. But to go beyond the employment, students' action is affected by different level of ability and communicative repertoire (Martin-Jones, 1995, 2000) so that they will eventually switch automatically and unconsciously (Skiba, 1997, Sert, 2005). For example, when high-level students already understand the material, the low-level students will ask whether to confirm or ask for re-explanation. Another motive of doing it, such as, students with mastery gap between L2 and L1 tend to switch (Sert, 2005). They find it hard to keep up with L2 demand while they are only competence in

L1. In other hand, students also code-switch because the different mastery with their teachers. In communicating, students wish to use L2 as their teachers expected but the distinction makes students code-switching. Then, what we can conclude from the notion is it is not about the maintenance of L1 that they conduct but how they negotiate with their abilities in learning process (Simon, 2001).

Teachers' code-switching also should be viewed based on students' perspective, how they value their teachers. Although Brown (2006) states that code-switching compensates for lack of ability, it is also a tactical tool to overpower the gaps and flaws of conversation (Brown & Heredia, 2005). Teachers' use of code-switching by Tarone (1977), like students in previous explanation, serves as communication strategy such as translation, appealing for assistance, mime (Macaro, 2005), paraphrase or even avoidance. To some concern, students' code-switching may be a result of teachers' as define by Üstunel (2016) as 'teacher-induced-code-switching' where students are encouraged to code-switch while teachers use English. In a conclusion, teachers and students try to adapt the use of their language to figure their status based on the given situation of bilinguals do.

To justify the code-switching in classroom although it is urged, both teachers and students must allocate both languages with same proportion without overweighting one. If the code-switching is done to deliver teaching material then it is encouraged no to do so. Lastly, the use of code-switching in classroom should be done regarding the learning goal even when teachers find it hard or students do. So, whether the engagement of teachers and students in code-switching should be declined if it purposively limits the L2 which should be accomplished. In some case, the urge to switch code by students because of pair work and teachers because

of management task, discussing unknown words or social interaction (Macaro, 2005).

There are so many accessible purpose of the alternation in classroom. Hence, after gathering from many resources below are the reasons of the code-switching employment in EFL classroom.

Time saving: Teachers' time allocation in teaching foreign language may take time if it is conducted by using L2 only and will be easier in L1 explanation. The concurrent use of both languages should be a meeting line of teaching and learning process as Nordin et al. (2013) states that the alternation will bring them at ease because it minimizes the confusion and they do not sense that language is difficult to learn.

Discourse gap filling: Lado (1957) and later supported by Sert (2005) state that what goes beyond the engagement of the code-switching is as filling of linguistics or mastery gap. It may happen that teachers are already mastery in English while students are not or between students with different language ability try to engage in classroom.

Communication facilitation: Macaro (2005) states 'bilinguals code-switch because they find it easier or more appropriate for the purposes of communication'. As he supports that code-switching is appropriately utilized as the communication means, it does not imply that code-switching is the only way of taking the class into goal but it alters teachers and students in engaging the teaching and learning process.

Lack of facility: Malik (1994) proposes that what motivates the code-switching is due to unmatched terminology or identical words from L2 to L1. In classroom especially with specific course may find that code-switching is very helpful because it gives them ease to facilitate the teaching and learning process.

Lack of register: Different with lack of facility, lack of register because they cannot find appropriate words in their L1 so

they will use L2 instead. According to Anderson (2006) bilinguals will switch because they find L2 sounds better than L1 during conversation. This more likely happens in EFL classroom due to the high traffic use of both languages.

Mood of speaker: On this term, per se, speakers' language will be determined by the state of mind during conversation. If speakers is stable then they will be able to produce the precise words in L2 otherwise in emotional state (e.g. exhausted, pleased, excited, fear, upset or distracted) they will not be able to find the right words and will switch (Skiba, 1997)

Habitual experience: Romaine (1989) affirms that the use of 'You know' or 'I mean' is usually inserted within sentence. This case is emerged due to the 'habitually mixed discourse'. This is very commonly used by both teachers and students in EFL classroom as they are engaged in more than one language.

Other than the purposes, teachers and students also should need to neglect to the function of the code-switching employment. There are so many functions it serves yet the researcher will elaborate based on the existed literature.

Translation: During the teaching and learning process, some problems may be encountered by teachers to deliver the material especially new vocabulary. Thus, code-switching has a role as part of translating the new words to the students so they can understand what the words mean (Brice et al., 1998; Uys& van Dulm, 2011)

Clarification: This functions to give a clear explanation to students by teachers also if they find it hard to describe words in L2. Code-switching has a positive meaning in EFL classroom for teacher to conduct the teaching process (Brice et al, 1998; Moore, 2002; Uys& van Dulm, 2011).

Checking Comprehension: The teaching and learning process will go smoothly if students understand the teaching material. Instead, if there is problem that they do not get the idea of the

material it is important for teachers to check after their students comprehension by switching as this will be effectively add the information to their understanding (Brice et al, 1998; Nordin et al., 2012).

Giving procedures and direction: Other than delivering material, procedures and direction of the task are also important because after the material it is essential to administer the task. But, what hardens the process is if students do not understand the procedures or the direction of the task (Brice et al, 1998)

Classroom management: Misbehaving is a common thing to happen in classroom and to discipline students it will be more effective by using L1 rather than L2 and this function is very helpful for teacher (Uys& van Dulm, 2011).

Drawing attention: Classroom may get boring or students will feel exhausted during teaching and learning process. While their attention are away, throwing code-switching is kind of meaningful so they will feel the repertoire of language in classroom (Azlan&Narasuman, 2013)

Learning strategy: In previous function of code-switching, it is mentioned that if teachers find students hard to understand the learning material, code-switching is considered as the learning strategy in EFL classroom because it smoothens the process (Brice, 2000; Uys& van Dulm, 2011).

Conclusion

The use of the code-switching in EFL classroom is very beneficial for the sake of material transferring from teachers to students. However, the use of codes-switching should be utilized wisely by teachers regarding to its pros and cons emerging from many experts. The use of the code-switching itself can be adjusted based on its purposes and functions. The given purposes and functions are not merely the guideline for teachers and students to employ the code-switching since it is developing based on the needs in EFL

classroom. Teachers and students as the classroom components should be aware that the excessive amount of code-switching use can deviate the object of the learning since students will get distracted from L2 achievements. The fair proportions of code-switching use will give higher chance of learning achievement in EFL classroom.

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