

ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

CODE-SWITCHING IN SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING OF ENGLISH: DOES IT MATTER?

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ABSTRACT

Bosnian and Herzegovinian English language instructors and ESL students widely acknowledge using more than one language code in formal classroom settings. Code-switching is caused by various factors or were specific communication goals must have been involved. This study aims to discover how ESL students view code-switching by English language instructors in secondary schools in Tuzla. For that purpose, three research questions have been defined: (1) Is there a significant difference in students' attitudes towards code-switching based on gender? (2) Is there a statistically significant difference in students' attitudes towards code-switching? and (3) Is there a statistically significant difference in students' attitudes towards code-switching based on a grade level? The study demonstrated students' attitudes, usage, and opinions toward code-switching in the classroom. Most ESL students favor code-switching, which is equally gender-based, high frequency in use and grade level incidence constant. In terms of code-switching use of mother tongue becomes, by default, a facilitator of task completion and cognitive collaboration. Code-switching is also believed to help ESL students understand the target language. The findings suggest that code-switching is required when using the first language in the classroom to help students master English.

Keywords: code-switching, frequency of codeswitching, types of CS, reasons for codeswitching



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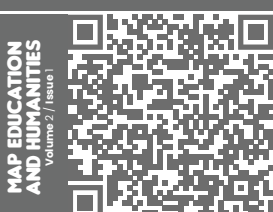
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Introduction

In linguistics, code-switching is switching between two or more languages in a conversation or an expression (Cunningham, 1999). It has been studied extensively for many years and is now considered a distinct linguistic field. Modern world migration, globalization, and the interconnection of languages and cultures contribute to this. As a result, code-switching is becoming increasingly popular these days. In the bilingual world, code-switching is an essential part of everyday life, as people switch between languages unintentionally or intentionally all the time.

Societies where different languages or dialects are spoken naturally express their thoughts and ideas through code-switching. A natural and inexorable ability to switch between codes is not an indication of linguistic incompetence. On the contrary, it indicates natural and inevitable linguistic ability. Today, many researchers view code-switching as an essential ability to switch from one language or dialect to another during communication. As discussed below, some linguists claim that code-switching is a sign of language incapacity. A bilingual world makes it inevitable to use multiple languages or dialects within a single communication process. Others argue that code-switching is a sign of linguistic ignorance and should be avoided during a conversation. This is a complex issue.

Wardhaugh (2015) defines "code" as a separate system used during inter-person communication. So, it is a dialect or language that one party occasionally uses. Code-switching uses materials from two or more languages in the same utterance or conversation. This phenomenon seems natural for people who grew up bilingual and learned two or more languages or dialects. In this sense, code-switching does not imply a lack of language ability. The ability to skillfully mix phrases or words from different languages during a conversation for various purposes will be discussed later in this paper. Thus, code-switching is natural and even necessary for some cultures and nations.

Code-switching is the production of discourse that combines two or more varieties of a person's linguistic repertoire (Myers-Scotton, 2017). Bilinguals can use two or more languages within one utterance without interrupting the flow of speech, thus making the conversation more colorful and fuller of emotions (Saunders, 1988). This proves that code-switching helps diversify one's speech, en-

riches the communication process, and improves mutual understanding. Thus, it should be a natural way of expressing one's thoughts and ideas, especially in a bilingual world where people can easily switch between languages (Delić & Bećirović, 2018).

However, some scientists classify code-switching as "interference", a concept that is both supported and disapproved. As a result, Weinreich (1953) defined interference as a deviation from the approved norms of either language in the speech of bilinguals who know more than one language or dialect. Some linguists oppose this idea, while others support it. So "interference" and "code-switching" are classified differently. Reasons for this come from researchers' uncertainty about whether it is interference or code-switching when using some aspects of one language (Langman, 2001). Because actual interference involves assimilating certain linguistic features, code-switching is rejected as an example of interference. Adding an utterly unassimilated word or phrase from another language to one's speech does not constitute code-switching.

Further research into code-switching necessitates discussing its primary goals. The main goal of code-switching is to maintain or remove social boundaries. Using code-switching, one can establish relationships between people from different social groups, professions, or ages. Code-switching is frequently used to avoid or reduce stressful situations in two-way communication. It is also used in speech to adapt to another person, encourage action, or draw attention. While it may appear natural, code-switching is used for purposes other than causing misunderstandings between two parties during a conversation.

Code-switching is frequently used to enhance or organize one's speech (Adendorff, 1996). By adding phrases from another language to a conversation, code-switching can fill gaps in the speaker's speech and compensate for the lack of appropriate expression.

Additionally, code-switching occurs in educational settings, such as in second or foreign languages classes. According to Abrams and Reaser (2011), second-language learners have two linguistic units but only one meaning unit in their brains. As a result, even though second language learners may communicate in their second language (L2), they still think in their first language (L1).

In educational contexts, code-switching is frequently regarded as L1 transfer interference. Despite the widespread belief that code-switching hinders learning a second language, some researchers now believe it can aid the process (DiCamilla & Antón, 2012).

Literature review

Using two languages in the same conversation is what Myers-Scotton (2006) means by code-switching (p. 239). When it comes to code-mixing is a similar concept to code-switching. Researchers frequently make a distinction between the two aforementioned concepts. According to Muysken (2000), code-switching is used when the two codes retain their monolingual characteristics, while code-mixing is used when the two languages begin to converge somehow. However, Myers-Scotton (1993) distinguishes between the two terms, stating that code-switching occurs when bilinguals switch back and forth between two languages during a single conversation with another bilingual person. In contrast, code-mixing uses multiple languages in the same sentence.

Types of CS

Sankoff and Poplack (1981) describe three types of CS syntactically based on their observations of numerous CS cases: tag-switching, intra-sentential switching, and inter-sentential switching. The insertion of a tag or a short-fixed phrase in one language into an utterance that is otherwise entirely in the other language is called tag-switching, emblematic switching, or extra-sentential switching. The term "inter-sentential switching" refers to the switching between two languages at the boundary of a clause or a sentence. It can occur when one speaker picks up where another has left off. A switch that occurs within a clause or sentence boundary is intra-sentential. The speaker must be fluent in both languages to use this grammatical structure.

Developing classroom CS research

According to Holmes (2013), three phases of classroom CS are explained as follows: the first phase of CS research drew attention in the 1970s and early 1980s in US bilingual education programs for linguistic minorities. These studies focused on the quantitative impact of CS in bilingual classroom communication on children's linguistic development. Thus, they started using audio recordings and a descriptive framework to study classroom

communication. They observed how teachers and students complete tasks in two languages. Code choice values also became more significant for them.

The researchers used this approach to analyze teaching/learning situations regarding participants' linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Zentella (1981) identified pragmatic functions of CS as easing admonition, making asides, and making meta-linguistic comments. Like Guthrie (1984), this identification does not distinguish for pedagogical or social reasons. In a study of Kenyan primary school students, Merritt et al. (1992) found that teachers switching often helped focus or regain students' attention or clarify, enhance, or reinforce lesson material. Merritt identified a total of four syntactic CS types. The first type of code contains no additional information or instructions. As the activity of textual instruction progresses, code-switching occurs. These two types are similar to inter-sentential switching in that they involve a whole sentence or interaction. The third type involves translation or word substitution within a sentence. This list comprises interactional particles such as discourse markers, classroom management routines, and terms of address.

In addition, CS can be used in two ways, according to Auer (1998): discourse-related switching and participant-related switching. The former is helpful in the classroom for marking topic changes and other communicative acts, while the latter takes into account the listener's linguistic preferences. This may occur when learners have difficulty understanding the teacher's instructional language or the target language.

Classroom as a specific CS context

Many of the above studies use bilingual or multilingual classroom discourse. Language classroom communication is multi-layered and difficult to analyze (Dervić & Bećirović, 2020). Simon (2001) develops a model that includes both the social and pedagogical aspects of code-switching since the primary goal of communication in this context is to facilitate learning, mainly foreign language learning.

However, few CS studies have investigated young learners' classrooms in China (Chen & Tsai, 2012). Codeswitching in FL classrooms for young learners may be unique. They aim to discover patterns of L1 and TL distribution in teachers' talk and

the functions of teachers' CS in primary English.

Background

Reasons for code-switching in bilingual communities

Why do bilinguals code-switch? This is undoubtedly one of the most pressing questions about bilingualism. Previous studies have found numerous reasons for code-switching unrelated to a lack of proficiency in either of the languages. Unlike situational code-switching, metaphorical code-switching occurs when language cannot be interpreted through the context in which it is used. Changing the subject matter of the conversation is the most likely cause of code-switching. Code-switching adds meaning to the conversation even if it is done unconsciously. According to Gumperz (1982), code-switching is how the speaker changes the social distance between the interlocutors in a given interaction. He distinguishes between "us" and "them" when programming. A common characteristic of the "we-code" lingua franca is a sense of belonging and camaraderie. The colonial or matrix language, often associated with formality and stiffness, is commonly used in their code.

According to Gumperz (1982), context and a speaker's background play a role in interpreting these codes, i.e., we-code and they-code. Code-switching is distinguished from borrowing by the author. His definition of borrowing is "the introduction of single words or short, frozen, idiomatic phrases from one variety into another" (Gumperz, 1982, p. 66). Words and phrases from other languages must be adopted into one's language before being used in a sentence. On the other hand, it "relies on the meaningful juxtaposition of what speakers must process as strings formed according to two distinct grammatical systems" (Gumperz, 1982, p. 66).

Attitudes to code-switching in the classroom

Studies show that attitudes toward these communicative behaviors are shaped by factors that are either community-specific, like language status and appropriateness, or speaker-specific, like proficiency and personal judgment (Yaman & Bećirović, 2016). For example, some people accept CS/CM (code-switching/code-mixing) as an everyday occurrence in any bilingual scheme. CS/CM is recognised as a communication style and a regular speech pattern among speakers. CS/CM

as bilingual pedagogy in CLIL classrooms has been debated, with both proponents and detractors.

Creese and Blackledge (2010) describe CS/CM as a "local, pragmatic coping tactics and responses to the socio-economic dominance of English in Hong Kong, where many students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds struggled to obtain an English-medium education; for its socio-economic value" (p. 177). Arthur and Martin's (2006) found similar patterns in Brunei's content and language integrated learning (CLLIL). They discovered that CS/CM is used to help students understand and learn bilingually. The study found that teachers who used CS with students proficient in the target language helped increase student inclusion, participation, and understanding in the learning process, develop relationships between participants, communicate ideas more efficiently, and complete lessons (Mašić et al., 2020).

Teachers struggle between "access to meaning and access to English" (Setati, Adler, Reed & Bapoo, 2010). While students can reformulate concepts in their native language, they must receive and produce content in English because it is the language of assessment (Dervić & Bećirović, 2019).

Using CS/CM in class may hinder students' ability to answer questions in pure English. Another disadvantage of CS/CM in the classroom is shown by Payawal-Gabriel and Reyes-Otero (2006). The study claims that math teachers using CS/CM in their lessons negatively affect student learning. Their research shows that teachers' CS/CM confused students, affecting lesson comprehension.

Bilinguals themselves have criticized the use of CS/CM in the classroom. According to Shin (2005), "bilinguals may feel embarrassed about their code-switching and attribute it to careless language habits" (p.18). However, using a local language alongside the "official" language in the lesson is well-known; it is often lambasted as "bad practice" blamed on teachers' lack of English-language competence or put aside or swept under the carpet (Creese & Blackledge, 2010, p. 1035).

Methodology

Research questions

The purpose of this study is to examine students' attitudes towards code-switching. Research questions are as follows:

1. Is there a significant difference in students' attitudes towards code-switching based on gender?
2. Is there a statistically significant difference in students' attitudes towards code-switching?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference in students' attitudes towards code-switching based on a grade level?

Participants

The examination sample consisted of 91 students from secondary schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The participants were pre-determined and chosen based on their ability to provide an opportunity to achieve the study's objectives. Thus, there were 58 (52.7%) first-grade students, 22 (20%) third-grade students and 11 (10%) fourth-grade students. There were 37 (40.7%) males and 54 (59.3%) females aged from 15 to 19. The participant's English language competence is essential as it may account for the instructor's language behaviour in the classroom.

The study showed that 29 students (21.9%) achieved a beginner level, 38 (81.8%) were on an intermediate level, and 24 students (26.4%) were on an advanced level as regards the CEFR.

Instruments and procedures

The instrument consisted of three parts. The first part incorporated demographic questions such as gender, age, overall GPA, grade level, nationality, and proficiency level. The second part comprised self-reported questionnaires used to gather information about students' perceptions of teachers' code-switching behavior while lecturing and their attitudes toward the language situation in the classroom. In addition, students were reminded that their responses to the questionnaire should be based on their English-language lessons from the previous weeks. El Fiki's (1999) questionnaire items were adapted for this survey. After obtaining informed consent from the administration of the schools, school instructors and students participated in an interview which was the third part.

This was done to get precise data on how students perceive teachers' code-switching. The instrument comprised 13 items divided into two subscales, namely students' attitudes towards instructors' code-switching (13 items, e.g., mixing English and L1 is a common phenomenon in the lectures I have attended in this institution); factors for

opting to code switch among students (10 items, e.g., lack of competence, filling the gap in speaking). Students and school administrators signed informed consent forms before the investigators provided the data collection instruments, which were then tailored to meet the needs of high schools. It was made clear and explained in detail that the data gathered from the Likert-type scale would be anonymous, voluntary, and confidential.

Data analysis

This data was analyzed using the IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and three statistical methods. Students' attitudes towards instructors' code-switching and factors for determining code-switching among students were assessed using means (M) and standard deviations (SD). The effect of grade level on student interactions was also examined using a One-way ANOVA. The Independent Samples T-Test was conducted to compare differences between males and females in their attitudes towards code-switching.

Results

The Independent Samples T-Test was performed to examine whether there is a significant impact on students' attitudes towards CS based on gender.

The test results displayed in Table 1 show that gender does not significantly impact students' attitudes towards CS. There was not a significant difference in the scores for males ($M=2.35$, $SD=0.23$) and females ($M=2.27$, $SD=0.31$) conditions; $t(108)=1.37$, $p=0.173$. The result claims that students equally code-switch, and there is no significant gender difference.

There are instances of code-switching in the participants' conversations and instances of unswitched code. To detect differences in code-switching patterns, the gender of the participants is considered to be an important variable. In conversations in which only men or only women were present, women tended to code-switch more frequently than men, whereas in mixed conversations, men tended to have more instances of CS than women.

Additionally, the Independent Samples T-Test was conducted to compare differences between males and females in their attitudes towards code-switching, as shown in Table 2. There was a significant difference in the scores for males

(M=3.25, SD=0.81) and females (M=3.61, SD=0.79) conditions; $t(108) = -2.34, p = 0.021$.

Therefore, when contextual words are taken as a whole, it is reasonable to claim that there is a gender difference.

A one-way ANOVA examined grade level differences in students' attitudes towards

code-switching. As mentioned previously, the grade level included four levels.

To determine the difference among the students' attitudes toward using code-switching concerning their grade levels, an analysis of means and standard deviations score values for different students' grade levels was performed, as shown in Table 3.

Table 1.
Students' attitudes concerning their gender

Gender	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Male	48	2.3510	.23316	.03365
Female	62	2.2767	.31408	.03989

Table 2.
Attitudes towards code-switching by T-test

	Levene's test for equality of variances		T-test for equality of means						
	F	T Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. error difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.061	.806	-2.346	108.000	.021	-.36310	.15475	-.66985	-.05636
Equal variances not assumed			-2.339	100.034	.021	-.36310	.15522	-.67105	-.05516

Table 3.
Mean and Standard Deviation of students' attitudes regarding their grade level

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.405	4	.101	1.280	.283
Within Groups	8.316	105	.079		
Total	8.722	109			

Furthermore, the post hoc comparisons effect of grade level on attitudes towards CS, shown in Table 4, indicated that the mean score for the first-grade students, H1 (M=2.25, SD=0.32) was not significantly different than for second-grade students, H2 (M=2.37, SD=0.11). In addition, the post hoc comparisons effect of grade level on attitudes towards CS indicated that the mean score for the third-grade students, H3 (M=2.37, SD=0.21) was not significantly different than for fourth-grade students, H4 (M=2.23, SD=0.13). If we want to compare H4- and H1-graders the results are as follows: H4 (M=2.23, SD=0.13) was not significantly different than in H1 (M=2.25, SD=0.32).

Discussion

The current study's findings indicate that differences do not significantly influence differences in attitudes toward code-switching in gender or grade level. There was a noticeably high frequency of code-switching among male and female participants in the current study. The absence of gender-based differences could be attributed to the appropriate instructional environment to which these learners were exposed, and it appears that all groups experienced code-switching as an unconscious act of communication.

Furthermore, the data reveals a clear pattern of instructors' language used in the classroom.

More than half of the students claimed that both B/C/S language and English used for classroom instruction as a common practice. The interviews reveal that the mixture of B/C/S language and English was so standard in most of the lectures they attended that they were barely aware of it while they were in class. Some even asserted that it is expected to mix both languages in communication and it is common among bilingual speakers in any context of communication, regardless of the situation. However, according to Forman (2005), "generally, although not always, the students will have a common LI and share this with their teacher" (p. 70). Using students' first language in ESL classes is challenging because most are multilingual.

Students and teachers can communicate more effectively using their mother tongues as a common language. Teachers are expected to be role models and mentors for their students in the classroom (Bećirović & Akbarov, 2015). Students who have difficulty comprehending the language can be monitored to determine when to use their native tongue. In this way, using one's mother tongue is paramount.

Table 4.
Effect of grade level on attitudes towards CS

	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error	95% confidence interval for mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower bound	Upper bound		
H1	46	2.2559	.32638	.04812	2.1589	2.3528	1.54	3.00
H2	12	2.3782	.11577	.03342	2.3046	2.4518	2.15	2.54
H3	22	2.3706	.21051	.04488	2.2773	2.4640	2.08	2.85
H4	11	2.2308	.13323	.04017	2.1413	2.3203	2.00	2.38
Total	91	2.2967	.26612	.02790	2.2413	2.3521	1.54	3.00

Macaro (2005, p. 63) supports using the mother tongue in monolingual classes. According to him, "considerable attention and discussion" are needed in any attempt to develop a "post-communicative" method of teaching English to adults and adolescents. Using one's mother tongue can help make a task more meaningful. As a result, the students have no trouble concentrating on their work. Language learning benefits from L1 because it facilitates task completion and creates an environment conducive to social and cognitive collaboration where students can offer support and assistance throughout the task (Mahmutoğlu, 2013).

Some students admitted that the proficient instructors required students to improve their English proficiency to overcome any language barriers. However, instructors' proficiency levels could not account for actual language use in interaction. Even proficient instructors had to resort to B/C/S to accommodate students who could not speak English. The proficient instructors frequently mixed B/C/S language and English in their speech when they perceived students who could not understand English lectures.

According to interviews, teachers were aware of the institution's language policy. Their students and teachers' English proficiency influenced their language choice and use. This resulted in their classroom behaviour in code-switching.

Moreover, the data revealed that students with lower English proficiency tolerated the instructors' CS more than the more proficient group. The former group favoured the instructors' CS behaviour because they wanted to understand the lectures. The necessity of CS was favored. They agreed that most materials and references were in English but felt their limited English proficiency hampered comprehension. Thus, the instructor's choice of language seemed to be a practical solution. While most students agreed that using the B/C/S language helped them understand lectures better, they also agreed that English helped them learn their subjects. They were unconcerned about language usage in the classroom. In a content-based classroom, the emphasis is on meaning rather than structure (Bećirović & Polz, 2021; Bećirović & Akbarov, 2016).

On the other hand, the more talented group despised the instructors' CS. They felt that B/C/S language should be used sparingly to expose students to English, as most references are in that lan-

guage. Change from English to B/C/S language to solve comprehension problems did not seem long-term for less proficient students.

Further, self-study comprehension issues are possible. This proficient group claimed that any English input could prepare them for self-study and future careers. Interestingly, these students claim that the instructor's instruction can help them improve their English language skills. Moreover, they argued that using a mixture of languages to explain a concept lacked structural integrity. They had not been provided with or exposed to the proper model for explaining the concepts in English, which was necessary. If they had to write all their answers in English for exams, they would experience difficulties.

They also argued that understanding the concept was insufficient if they could not correctly answer the questions. The more proficient group felt both.

As for the study's limitations and suggestions for further research, incorporating gender as a confounding variable in code-switching related corpus construction and experiment design could also be conducted and contribute to the study's value. In addition to this, some other variables could also be considered, such as the impact of instructors' CS, students' language proficiency level and some demographic variables. Likewise, the examination sample included participants from school that offers a national curriculum taught entirely in English. Further research may incorporate the differences between students studying at different schools and backgrounds.

Conclusion

Mixing English and B/C/S languages is an expected communicative behaviour in classrooms, despite the school's explicit language policy of using English as the medium of instruction. To determine whether to support or counterbalance existing linguistic policy and regulation, the report on speakers' actual language use and attitudes is critical.

The findings help us understand how speakers adhere to the policy. Although attitudes towards language are challenging to measure, the study has significant implications on classroom language use. According to Kamisah (2007), any language policy regulation does not impede the speaker's language creativity and personal choice. Language

attitudes are “invisible societal pressures” that interact with “visible” policy plans (Kachru, 1997). Thus, knowing whether or not these two forces agree can help set further plans for treating any conflicts that may arise.

The findings show that the occurrence of CS/CM is mainly due to the participant’s linguistic competence. Instructors’ English language skills are usually insufficient to deliver lectures in that language. The student’s English language skills are also inadequate. Thus, both instructors’ and students’ linguistic ineptness must be addressed. The findings show that instructors must urgently improve their English proficiency. These instructors could benefit from a series of development courses on English language proficiency and communication skills in English. Students need more EAP and ESP courses to prepare for the language demands of their studies.

The study’s findings also suggest a clear assessment of implementation. The widespread use of CS/CM in classrooms suggests that the policy has not been adequately implemented or assessed. Speakers cannot be expected to follow any policy imposed on them blindly. Thus, the policy should be continuously assessed to ensure the policy’s sustainability, students’ learning and linguistic development, and instructors’ professionalism.

There is also evidence that instructors and students do not fully understand the policy. Insufficient English language proficiency among instructors and students has been cited as a significant cause of CS/CM.

This has a big impact on their English language development. Most importantly, the findings have aided in any language training needs for instructors to teach in English effectively. As implied by the student’s responses, the language used in the classroom can impact the learning process. In order to teach students more effectively, instructors should pay closer attention to the language they use during their lectures.

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