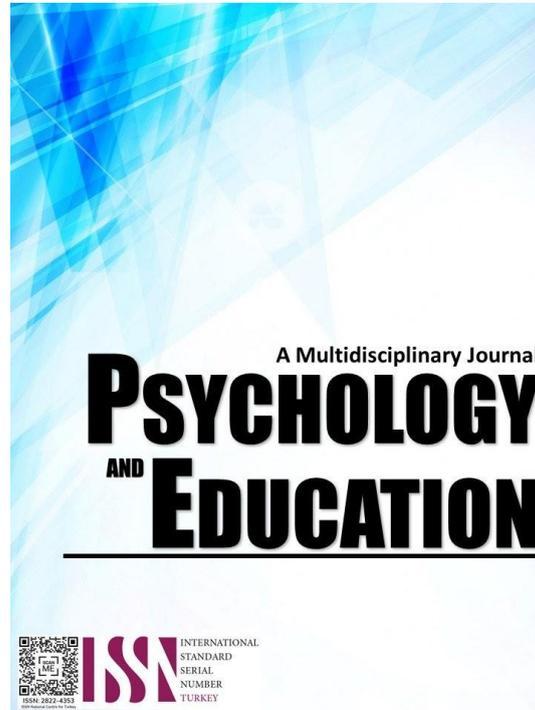# CODE-SWITCHING AS A TEACHING STRATEGY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS: EXPLORING STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS

Code-Switching as a Teaching Strategy in English Language Classrooms: Exploring Students' Attitudes and Perceptions

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Abstract

The critical role of code-switching in English language classrooms cannot be discounted, as numerous studies show that code- switching is a practical language teaching strategy. The need to code-switch may become more pronounced in a learning environment where students have limited avenues to develop and polish their English language skills besides doing in-class activities. This means that the students' progress in learning and using the English language can be slow and challenging, which may impact their overall academic performance. Thus, to promote better comprehension and task achievement in an English classroom, teachers may resort to code-switching from time to time. For instance, while the medium of instruction at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences-Al Musannah (UTAS-A) is English and code-switching inside the classrooms is not at all encouraged, teachers may switch to Arabic, the students' first language (L1), to explain some abstract and complex concepts. While studies demonstrate that code-switching may help facilitate classroom discussions, understanding of lessons, and optimum participation, it is vital to take into account how students view code-switching in a language classroom. Hence, this paper sought to explore students' attitudes and perceptions about code-switching in English classrooms at the University.

Keywords: *code-switching, code-mixing, language teaching, first language, multilingualism, teaching strategy, language classrooms*

Introduction

In Oman, English was first taught at the tertiary level in 1986, and from then on, almost all higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Sultanate adopted English as the Medium of Instruction (EMI) (Al-Mahrooqi & Tuzlukova, 2014). Implementing this educational reform in the country necessitated hiring Omani and non-Omani staff to teach English in various colleges and universities. Consequently, the number of expatriate teachers in Oman HEIs steadily increased until recently, as the country pushes forward with its Omanisation program in private and public universities and colleges. That may be so, colleges and universities in Oman are global communities as teachers from various countries continue to join the Omani teaching force not only as language teachers but also as teachers and trainers of other fields such as engineering, business, IT, and others. Generally, preparatory and post-foundation English and specialized courses in Oman HEIs are taught by Omani and non-Omani staff who are bilinguals, at the very least, as they are required to deliver English language lessons in English.

At the University of Technology and Applied Sciences-Al Musannah (UTAS-A), one of the branches of the largest university in Oman, English is taught as part of the General Foundation Program (GFP) in four (4) levels: Level 1 (Pre-Elementary Level), Level 2 (Elementary Level), Level 3 (Intermediate Level), Level 4 (Upper Intermediate Level) and in the diploma and advanced diploma levels in Post-Foundation (PF). The medium of instruction in the University is English, except for the Formal Arabic Communication course at the bachelor's degree level. Unfortunately, "when students join HEIs, they start to learn in English instead of learning English" (Al-Riyami & Dayananda, 2022, p.148). This struggle is partly due to the fact that in primary schools, the medium of instruction is usually Arabic, so most students find it challenging to speak and write in English once they reach university. This further means that most students will only begin learning how to learn in English after they leave high school which means that a majority of those enrolled in the GFP and PF English courses face the dilemma of having difficulty learning and expressing ideas in English. Hence, teachers may occasionally resort to code-switching between English and Arabic to facilitate teaching and learning in English.

Code-switching is defined by various experts and scholars as the shifting from one language to another by the participants in a communication context. Numan and Carter (2001. p.275), as cited in Altun (2021, p.21), describe the term as "a phenomenon of switching from one language to another in the same discourse." In linguistics, code-switching is the shifting from one language or dialect to another according to social context or conversational setting.

(Morrison, 2023) Understandably, code-switching happens when the participants of a communication situation are multilingual so that they can shift between languages during the communication encounter. At UTAS-A English classroom setup, code-switching happens when those involved shift from English (L2) to Arabic (L1) during a discussion.

There are varying thoughts and attitudes concerning code-switching in English classrooms. Numerous experts have highlighted some advantages and disadvantages of such a practice inside the classroom. Consequently, Kumar et al. (2021) noted that people's attitudes toward code-switching differ, and such a strategy in English classrooms is viewed positively and negatively. The same thought was posited by Dhungana in Khanal (2004), as cited by Garcines et al. (2017), saying that code-switching from L1 to L2 hinders learning English. However, it also facilitates and helps in understanding. Yildiz and Su-Bergil (2021) also noted that despite giving much attention to the reasons for EFL teachers' code-switching in their lessons, only a few studies shed light on "whether the use of mother tongue or only English in the classroom has facilitating or debilitating effect from the perspective of students' feelings, thoughts, and beliefs." (p.9) This study then aimed to investigate how students feel about code-switching as a strategy in language teaching and what they think of the supposed roles of code-switching in their language learning.

Research Questions

This study sought to determine the students' attitudes toward code-switching and their perception of its supposed functions in English classrooms. Specifically, it obtained answers to the following questions:

1. What is the overall attitude of the students toward code-switching in English classrooms?
2. What do students think about the supposed functions of code-switching in English classrooms?

Literature Review

Numerous studies have been conducted on the long-standing issue of whether using L1 in teaching L2 is effective. These investigations brought new developments, establishing various language learning and teaching theories and principles related to code-switching. In the 50s and 60s, using L1 in teaching L2 was not a practice. During those times, English-only or the monolingual approach was the accepted standard method in the classroom. Harbord (1992), as mentioned in Parry (2011), claims that the increased funding for English language training in Britain in the 1950s and 1960s fueled the rise of the monolingual approach to language teaching, although, the Direct Method or avoidance of L1 has been the most adopted method since the 1880s (Cook, 2016). According to Howatt (1984), as cited by Cook (2016), 'the monolingual principle' to classroom language teaching 'remains the bedrock notion from which the others ultimately derive.' The wide acceptance of this approach to language teaching has a far-reaching and enduring influence on teaching methods. Thus, the adverse effects of L1 on L2 learning were highlighted, while its essential and potential contributions to the learning process were generally downplayed.

Ferrer (2012) in Garcines et al. (2017) noted that with the emergence of studies on the role of form-focused instruction, more positive attitudes towards the pedagogic use of the mother tongue (L1) started to appear (p.3). Similarly, Wang (2022) revealed that researchers have discovered over time that the appropriate use of L1 in the classroom does not hinder learning a target language (L2). Jacobson (1990), cited in Cook (2016), acknowledges that there are vital situations when teachers switch from one language to another in accordance with rules to emphasize concepts, help students re-focus, reprimand or praise them, and revise previous lessons. This means that code-switching is customary in L2 learning and teaching, reflecting real-life situations where L2 users may switch to their L1 when and where appropriate.

Code-switching is widely observed in English language classrooms as participants are usually multilingual. In the words of Wibowo et al. (2017), code-switching and code-mixing often occur in situations involving bilinguals and multilinguals. Modupeola (2013) also posited that code-switching is a communicative phenomenon where a bilingual switches between two (2) languages. The same concept was put forward by Crystal (1987), as cited by Skiba (1997), suggesting that code or language switching happens when a bilingual alternates between two (2) languages during their speech with another bilingual individual. To Romburgh (2022), code-switching is 'using words or phrases from different languages or same-language varieties to fit into the current context of the speech event.' In other words, code-switching happens to people with communicative competence in two (2) languages, allowing them to shift between their speech repertoire in situations where switching is perhaps required or preferred to achieve a particular objective.

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In English language classrooms, switching between two (2) languages may happen in a student-to-student or student-to-teacher discourse and vice versa. Hutauruk (2016) pointed out that code-switching is when involved parties use two (2) or more languages alternately in the same utterance or conversation (p.7). This implies that in code-switching, communication participants utilize the elements of more than one (1) language in conveying a single idea or thought in a language situation. This same belief is purported by Memory et al. (2018), stating that code-switching is the use of two (2) or more languages interchangeably in teaching and learning for easy acquisition of knowledge by learners.

Unsurprisingly, the level of code-switching and the occasions when such a phenomenon occurs relies heavily on the individuals involved, including gender and the interpersonal relationships between the participants (Thapaliya, 2007). In addition, the extent of code-switching differs from one communication situation to another, which also means that varying contexts may result in diverse types of code-switching. This is further elucidated by Skiba (1997), who points out that in a normal conversation between two (2) bilinguals, code-switching consists of 84% percent single word switches, 10% phrase switches, and 1% clause switching.

Poplack (1980), as cited in Martiana (2013), proposed that there are three (3) types of code-switching which are tag-switching, intra-sentential switching, and inter-sentential switching. Tag switching or extra-sentential is inserting a tag, a parenthetical, an exclamation/interjection, a sentence filler, or an idiomatic expression in one language into a sentence in another language. On the other hand, intra-sentential switching happens within a sentence, while inter-sentential switching is when code-switching takes place between sentences. In inter-sentential switching, each sentence is in a different language.

Code-switching takes place in various situations for different reasons. In other words, code-switching fulfills certain functions that participants may feel, or think are necessary for a communication situation. For example, speakers code-switch to manipulate, influence, or define a situation as they wish and convey nuances of meaning and personal intention (Sert,2005). In addition, code-switching is utilized to establish or delineate ethnic boundaries, hold attention, and interest, and maintain or assert belongingness. In a classroom setting, Wang (2022) suggests that L2 learners will inevitably use L1 in the learning process, and teachers will also use L1 in the classroom to help

students learn. Chimbganda and Mokgwathi (2012) have purported the same idea, saying that students' L1 is often exploited to promote a better understanding of L2. This illustrates the mutually supportive role of L1 and L2 in language teaching.

In Pakistan, Tabassum et al. (2020) claim that code-switching is a predominantly recognized occurrence in classrooms as many teachers, instructors, and students shift from English to Urdu or any other native language to achieve varied functions. In Indonesian classrooms, as observed by Waris (2012), code-switching becomes a strategy for teachers to help students develop their skills in the English language. This was further elucidated in a study conducted by Fachriya (2017) in an ESL classroom in Indonesia where she found that the lecturer and her students code-switch to clarify, reiterate, or repeat a point, explain, ask questions, translate, check for understanding, emphasize a language element, infer, develop vocabulary, and discuss student tasks. Other identified functions of code-switching in Fachriya's (2017) study include giving feedback, aiding memorization, managing the class, entertaining the class, and general communication functions. In another study, Mujiono et al. (2013) revealed that among other functions, code-switching in EFL classrooms is resorted to for giving instructions, showing affection, creating humor, clarifying and reinforcing a request or command, asking questions, and giving suggestions or advice (p.53).

Undoubtedly, code-switching serves numerous functions in the classroom. In addition to those previously mentioned, Memory et al. (2018) point out that when teachers code-switch during lessons, they are helping their students to evaluate their experiences, allowing them to remember relevant ideas that they can use to help them learn new concepts. This is explained by Chimbganda and Mokgwathi (2012), saying that teachers use the students' L1 to increase student understanding of English. However, aside from facilitating the teaching and learning process, code-switching may also fulfill certain affective functions, such as creating a supportive environment and a sense of familiarity between and among teachers and students.

This paper investigated students' attitudes and perceptions about code-switching in English classrooms. The findings of this study will provide teachers with a better understanding of how students perceive code-switching in the classroom, so teachers can use code-switching strategically or avoid it altogether.

Methodology

This research used a cross-sectional survey design as it allowed the researcher to collect data and "make inferences from the population of interest at one point in time." (Hall, 2008) This approach is convenient and appropriate for this study as it permits the researcher to collect data much faster. Knowing that Tuesdays between 12 pm and 2 pm is the common free time of students enrolled in English courses at the University, the researcher approached those who were readily available one Tuesday afternoon at the Self-Access Center (SAC). Those who were willing to participate were given a copy of the questionnaire with an agreed-upon time to complete and submit the filled-in document.

Participants of the Study

Setia (2016) explained that cross-sectional study participants are identified according to set criteria. This study's main criterion is that participants are enrolled in an English course. Hence, the participants of this study who were approached through convenience sampling are General Foundation Program (GFP) students who were at the English Language Centre (ELC) vicinity during that particular Tuesday afternoon and the Post-Foundation (PF) students studying technical writing with the researcher as their lecturer. In this paper, all the participants are enrolled in at least one (1) English course. Specifically, this study involved 69 PF and 58 GFP students, totaling 127 participants.

Instrument of the Study

The survey tool developed for this research is a 14-item opinion poll investigating students' perceptions of code-switching in English classrooms and its supposed functions. The statements in the tool are based on previous studies and are presented in two (2) sections. Specifically, the instrument was designed by the researcher to examine the students' attitudes toward code-switching in English classrooms and their thoughts about the perceived functions of code-switching. To determine the respondents' attitude, nine (9) statements are provided, which they have to answer whether they Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree. For the perceived function of code-switching, the respondents must also respond to each statement according to their degree of agreement or disagreement with each item. The statements in the instrument used in this study are translated into Arabic to help the low-level proficiency

students understand each statement better.

Procedure

Prior to the collection of data, the survey tool was submitted to the Center's Translation and Self-Access Center (SAC) Coordinator for accuracy and readability checks and translation into Arabic. After ensuring that the tool was fit for purpose, the questionnaire was distributed to GFP and PF students studying English during the semester and who were chosen via convenient sampling. Those students who were at the SAC but did not give their consent to participate in the study were not included. Similarly, the researcher's students who opted not to take part in answering the questionnaire were also excluded.

After giving those willing participants enough time to answer the questionnaire, the completed papers were then collected, sorted, and analyzed according to the posed research questions. In particular, the responses to each item were statistically analyzed by calculating the mean or the average of the collected answers.

Results and Discussion

This section presents, analyzes, and interprets the data collected for this study.

Students' Attitude Toward Code-Switching in English Language Classrooms

Table 1. *Students' Attitude Toward Code-Switching in English Language Classrooms*

No.	Attitude الرأي	Mean
1	I would prefer my teacher to use Arabic and English in the classroom. أفضل أن يستخدم معلمي اللغتين العربية والإنجليزية في الفصل	3.9
2	Teachers should explain difficult English words in Arabic. يجب على المدرسين شرح الكلمات الإنجليزية الصعبة باللغة العربية	4.1
3	It is difficult for me to concentrate in English classes when the teacher uses English only. يصعب علي التركيز في دروس اللغة الإنجليزية عندما يستخدم المعلم اللغة الإنجليزية فقط	3.2
4	I find it helpful when teachers use Arabic when teaching English. أعتقد أنه من المفيد استخدام اللغة العربية عند تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية	3.7
5	Teachers should not explain difficult English words in Arabic. يجب على المدرسين عدم شرح الكلمات الإنجليزية الصعبة باللغة العربية	2.3
6	I would prefer my English teacher not to use Arabic in the classroom. أفضل ألا يستخدم مدرس اللغة الإنجليزية اللغة العربية في الفصل	2.5
7	English lessons should be taught in English only. يجب تدريس مواد اللغة الإنجليزية باللغة الإنجليزية فقط	3.0
8	I think using Arabic when teaching English is not a good teaching strategy. أعتقد أن استخدام اللغة العربية عند تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية لا يعتبر استراتيجية تدريس جيدة	2.6
9	I think using Arabic in English classrooms does not help. أعتقد أن استخدام اللغة العربية في فصول تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية لا يساعد في تطور اللغة	2.9
	Overall Mean	3.13

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Table 1 shows that, in general, the respondents have a neutral attitude regarding code-switching between English and Arabic in their English classrooms. This is demonstrated by the overall mean of 3.13 (Neutral) out of a 5-point Likert scale. This means that students do not resent code-switching but do not necessarily favor such a practice in their language classrooms. However, a closer look at the individual results reveals that students agree *that teachers should explain difficult English words in Arabic*. This statement garnered the highest mark of 4.1 (Agree), followed by statement 1 with a mean rating of 3.9, which states that students *prefer their teacher to use Arabic and English in the classroom*. The results imply that students do not mind if their teachers code-switch, especially when explaining advanced vocabulary. They feel that teachers may opt to code-switch and that the use of Arabic and English in an English language class is not objectionable but is rather an almost agreeable thing for teachers to do in situations that call for it. This finding supports the result of Thapaliya's (2007) study where it was found that Nepali students believe that using the Nepali language when explaining a new structure and technical vocabulary in an English classroom is important. As Waris (2012) puts it, code-switching in language classroom may be considered a useful strategy in classroom interaction, if the objective is for efficient communication of knowledge and making meaning clear to students. (p.133) Similarly, Wang (2022) posits that when used strategically, L1 in an English classroom can provide students with a good learning environment and improve their interest and motivation in learning. He argued that using learners' L1 according to their English proficiency can be a very productive scaffolding strategy. (p.48) Conversely, in a study by Kumar et al (2021) in primary language schools in India, the results show that code-switching is viewed negatively as it is prevalent and that the attitude towards this practice is generally negative.

The results of this study show that statement 3 garnered a mean of 3.2 which means that the students neither agree nor disagree that they have difficulty concentrating in their English class when teachers use English only. This indicates that students understand that an English class is to be delivered in English. This further means that the respondents recognize that their ability or inability to focus inside the classroom is not essentially language-dependent.

Meanwhile, respondents disagree (2.3/5) that teachers

should not explain difficult English words in Arabic. This corroborates their agreement with statement 2 mentioned earlier in this discussion. The respondents also do not *prefer their English teachers not to use Arabic* in the classroom (2.5/5). Moreover, the respondents disagree that *using Arabic when teaching English is not a good teaching strategy* (2.6/5) and that *using Arabic in English classrooms does not help* (2.9/5). These findings support Parry's (2011) claim that the effective use of students' mother tongue (L1) towards L2 acquisition can have enormous potential in improving students' vocabulary learning, comprehension, and English production. (p.17) Moreover, in a study conducted in schools in Sibbinda, Namibia, Memory et al (2018) claimed that *silozi* learners were observed to display understanding and interest in a lesson being discussed after teachers code-switch. This reinforces the idea that code-switching may have a positive impact on the learning environment and students feel more motivated and participative when their mother tongue (L1) is used to present or expound a foreign concept. This is supported by the result of the study conducted by Yildiz and Su-Bergil (2021) where they found that most students believe that when teachers alternate between English and Turkish in EFL classes, this significantly helps students understand their lesson. (p.23) Altun (2021) also purports that code-switching in language classrooms presents learners with comprehensible input and encourages them to interact and engage in conversations. (pp. 24-25)

On the surface, the respondents seem to feel that code-switching is neither agreeable nor disagreeable. However, analysis of their responses signifies that students agree that there are specific situations in English language classrooms where code-switching is preferred or probably even needed, as shown by their strong agreement with certain positive statements about code-switching. As postulated by Hutauruk (2016), code-switching is a strategy used for ease of expression and for explaining unfamiliar words to ensure understanding while achieving efficiency. The finding of Yildiz and Su-Bergil (2021) also elaborates that students have a positive attitude toward their teachers who are shifting from English to Turkish particularly if they have difficulty in understanding. (p.24) Alkhawaldeh (2019) also found out that EFL female students at Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University generally endorse code-switching despite negative and ambivalent attitudes by some participants. (p.145)

The students' answers to both positively worded

statements about code-switching and those sentences with the same meaning but are worded negatively are highly corroborative. This demonstrates further that the respondents have a positive attitude towards code-switching in English classrooms, and they feel that such a practice can be a helpful strategy in teaching difficult words or new concepts and that it may positively impact their language learning experience.

Students' Perception of the Supposed Functions of Code-Switching in English Language Classrooms

Table 2. *Students' Perception of the Supposed Functions of Code-Switching in English Language Classrooms*

No.	Perceived Functions	Mean
1 Facilitates understanding	I understand the English lesson more when explained in Arabic. أفهم درس اللغة الإنجليزية أكثر عند شرحها باللغة العربية	3.7
2 Makes lessons enjoyable	I enjoy the English lesson more when my teacher uses Arabic in the classroom. أستمتع أكثر بدروس اللغة الإنجليزية عندما يستخدم معلمي اللغة العربية في الفصل	3.6
3 Makes lessons interesting	The English lesson is more interesting when the teacher uses Arabic in the classroom. يكون درس اللغة الإنجليزية أكثر متعة عندما يستخدم المعلم اللغة العربية في الفصل	3.5
4 Promotes focus on learning	I am more focused on learning English when my teacher uses Arabic to explain new words and phrases. أركز أكثر على تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية عندما يستخدم معلمي اللغة العربية في شرح الكلمات والعبارات الجديدة	3.8
5 Creates a comfortable and motivating environment	I feel at ease and motivated to learn English when my teacher uses Arabic in the classroom. أشعر بالراحة والحافز في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية عندما يستخدم معلمي اللغة العربية في الفصل	3.6
	Overall Mean	3.04

The respondents have a neutral perception of the supposed functions of code-switching inside the language classrooms as shown by an overall mean of 3.04 in Table 2. This implies that the students do not necessarily agree or disagree with the supposed functions of code-switching. This result may imply that their responses to the second part of the study do not validate their positive attitude toward code-switching in the classroom discussed in the previous section. However, a closer analysis shows that while the overall mean and the mean of each statement in this section of the study fall within the neutral scale (3.5 to 3.8/5), it has to be noted that these statements about the supposed functions are not exclusive to code-switching. This means that having focus, staying motivated, and enjoying lessons inside the classrooms are not exclusively due to code-switching. The result of this study does not necessarily discount the positive function of code-switching in a language classroom, but it shows that the respondents do not directly associate these positive classroom experiences solely

with code-switching. As it is, creating a positive classroom atmosphere and ensuring a productive teaching and learning experience are multi-faceted processes that result from numerous factors and not from code-switching alone.

In a study conducted by Kumar et al (2021), they claim that inter-sentential code-switching is found to help establish a bond between teachers and their students. While this study did not particularly investigate the same, the result shows that students are more inclined to agree that code-switching by their teachers makes them *feel at ease and motivated* as shown by the mean of 3.6 in a 5-point Likert scale. This agrees with Yildiz and Su-Bergil (2021) who claimed that code-switching is seen by students as a positive contributor to creating a more comfortable class atmosphere. (p.23) The same was previously purported by Modupeola (2013) saying that code-switching helps learners enjoy their learning because they understand better, so they feel less stressed and become more comfortable learning. (p.93) This was further captured by Fachriya (2017) stating that code-switching in language teaching has numerous functions that support an effective learning process. (p.154) Specifically, Tabassum, Rafique, & Akram (2020) mention that instructors employ code-switching to achieve certain functions such as topic shifting, repetition of basic concepts, checking students' understanding, managing classes, facilitating their expression, and improving student's language competence. (p. 63)

The respondents of this study gave a rating of 3.8 to the statement that when the teachers code-switch to Arabic in explaining new words and phrases, *they stay more focused* on their learning. This shows that the students do not disagree but do not necessarily agree that code-switching helps them focus on the lesson especially when they are exposed to unfamiliar words. The statement about code-switching promoting *understanding of lessons more when explained in Arabic* got a mean of 3.7. This again signifies not an explicit agreement but also not a disagreement about the supposed function of code-switching in helping students have a better comprehension of English lessons inside the classroom. On the contrary, the data gathered by Thapaliya (2007) in a secondary school in Nepal showed that while teachers rarely use the Nepali language in an English classroom, they occasionally do so to help students better understand whatever is being discussed. This shows that the teachers acknowledge that code-switching promotes understanding in the classroom. In a study by Garcines & Alvarez (2017), they found out that university

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teachers and students in the Philippines agree that the use of code-switching facilitates understanding. Yildiz and Su-Bergil (2021) also claimed that most of the teachers in their study supported the idea that code-switching is a necessity for clarity and comprehensibility. This means that for the respondents of these previous studies, code-switching inside the classroom functions as a technique to increase comprehension. The findings of Mujiono, et al (2013) support this idea stating that the use of code-switching in English as a foreign language instruction can help students understand English materials and minimize either students' miscomprehension of the lesson or students' difficulties in understanding the English lesson in an English classroom. (p.63) Further, Chimbganda and Mokgwathi (2012) argue that the use of two (2) languages in classrooms serves a mutually supportive role and that exploiting the students' L1 can increase their understanding of the L2. (p.22) Cook, (2016) puts forward a similar idea stating that students' L1 can be an important element in producing authentic L2 users. So, instead of avoiding L1 at all costs, teachers should consider using it to help students learn and improve their English proficiency.

Overall, the participants of this current study have a neutral perception of the supposed functions of code-switching inside the language classroom. This indicates that the students are not in agreement with the identified supposed functions of the use of Arabic in their English class. However, the respondents do not find these supposed functions disagreeable as well.

Conclusion

This study looked into the attitude of students toward code-switching and their perception regarding its supposed functions in English classrooms. This investigation involved 127 students enrolled in at least one (1) English course at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences-Al Musannah (UTAS-A). The data were collected through a 14-item survey tool containing statements about code-switching that the participants will respond to with either Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree.

The results of the study reveal that respondents have a generally neutral attitude towards code-switching inside their English classroom although some specific results show the students' agreement or positive attitude in favor of code-switching to some extent. Similarly, their perception of the supposed functions of code-switching is neutral. These results imply that the participants of the study at hand do not necessarily

support code-switching, but at the same time, they do not disagree with its usage or whenever teachers switch to Arabic while teaching English. For the supposed functions of code-switching, students showed a neutral perception with the suppositions that code-switching facilitates understanding the English lesson, creates a more enjoyable and interesting English lesson, allows more focused learning, and creates a feeling of ease and increased motivation. This finding indicates that the students do not agree that their positive learning experiences are necessarily the consequences of the switch between English and Arabic.

Code-switching is not necessarily considered by the respondents as a classroom strategy that has a unique and observable positive impact on their language learning. While they do not have a negative attitude towards the practice of code-switching inside the English language classroom, they have not shown a definite agreement or explicit positive attitude towards its use in their classroom. Their neutral perception of the assumed functions of code-switching inside their English language classrooms also means that they are not specifically counting on their teachers to code-switch. While the result shows that students agree that teachers should explain difficult words in Arabic, this only affirms that code-switching is to be used only as a last resort for teachers. As was posited by Akkaya & Aydin (2019) cited in Yildiz and Su-Bergil (2021), the central point of foreign language classrooms is how and where switching should be used. (p.25) Overall, these results imply that students do not perceive code-switching as an important factor in their English language learning. Thus, teachers may consider avoiding it altogether.

A comparative analysis of responses from beginners and advanced learners of English may be considered for future investigations. This will allow for a collection of data about students' attitudes and perceptions of the supposed functions of code-switching in their English language classroom from a stratified population. Moreover, teachers' perceptions of code-switching and the prevalence or non-prevalence of code-switching in English classrooms may also be considered for future investigation as this study did not investigate these. Finally, whether the inclusion or exclusion of L1 in L2 classrooms is helpful or detrimental may also be considered as a future research topic.

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