

Exploring teachers' perceptions about the use of code switching in EFL classroom: A case study of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University, Shaheed Benazir Abad

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Abstract

The current study highlights teachers' perceptions and the functions of code switching in the department of English at Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Shaheed Benazir Abad. A Qualitative study is conducted from the teaching faculty of English department at Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University, Shaheed Benazir Abad. Researcher collected data from participants through semi structured interview. Researcher adapted protocols for semi structured interviews from the study of Mohammed Magid and Abdul Rahim Hamid Mugaddam (2013) and Muhammad Malek Othman (2015) because the afore mentioned scholars did not included semi structured interview in their studies. Data from semi structured were transcribed and analyzed through content analysis. Both deductive and inductive approaches were used in the analysis. The finding of this study reveals that code switching is one of the best tools for teachers while teaching in EFL classrooms. It has positive impact on EFL teachers to clarify the students regarding each and every piece of knowledge about the topic.

Keywords: Code Switching, Bilinguals, Multilingual, Perceptions, EFL Classroom, SBBU SBA

1. Introduction

The purpose of this research is to investigate the phenomenon of switching codes in the Pakistani EFL classrooms. The term code switching is direct transfer from one language to another language in a single statement (Gumperz, 1982).

Pakistan is one of the typical social phenomena in the perspective of linguistic expressions and its usage because multiple languages are spoken in this community. Most of the spoken language of the people is native language as their mother tongue and Urdu as national language which is the lingua franca of the state. Moreover, English is the official language of the country as well as the language of instruction in the higher educational Institutions. Thus, the educated Pakistani can understand and speak English as well. Resultantly, a common Pakistani is either bilingual or

multilingual. Bilinguals are the people who have linguistic competence in two languages while multilingual have command in more than two languages (Rahman, 2010). Generally, in a multilingual society the bilingual and the multilingual speakers frequently shift from one to another language in their conversation in a single turn to achieve the communicative functions (Gumperz, 1982).

In Pakistan two education systems run parallel: Private and Public sector educational institutions. In private educational institutions English is the medium of instructions while national language is taught as a compulsory subject (Panhwar, 2018). Contrary, in public sector the medium of instruction of educational institutions is Urdu or regional languages while English is taught as a compulsory subject till grade 10; however, there is a dramatic change in the medium of instructions from mother tongue to English language (Panhwar, 2018). Simultaneously English is taught as Second language (ESL) or foreign language (EFL) in the higher educational institutions of the state. In such multilingual teaching scenario, the switching from one to another language is a frequent practice (Panhwar, 2018).

The current study explores the use of code switching in EFL classroom and functions of code switching in the Department of English, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Shaheed Benazir Abad (SBBU SBA) Sindh Pakistan.

1.1 Theoretical Background

The certain theories and studies have been conducted by the researchers to develop a good theoretical frame work. In current study the researcher tracked guidance from the several studies including the study of Magid and Mugaddam (2013) and Othman (2015) reveals that code switching has played major role in teaching at EFL classes. In the Panhwar's (2018) study, she discusses the aspects of code switching in the social and academic context at Hyderabad city. This elaborates the social capacities of code exchanging that the inhabitants of the Hyderabad city are either multilingual or bilingual. They take help of code switching to convey their message successfully to the audiences. In the study of (Panhwar, 2018) it is explored that code switching is employed as a successful educating and learning strategy. Some other studies which have been referred by the researcher is included Gulzar (2010) switching codes is utility of bilingualism and in bilingual EFL classroom. (Gumperz, 1982) and (Mayer Scotton, 1993) and Outgoing capability remains the introductory perception foundation code switching. Presented through Hymes (1977), the view supporters for capability in communication where narrators devour the information of at what time to express, when not, in adding to whatever to altercation immediate with whom, while, wherever, in what manner (Hymes, 1977). In Pakistan the educational system is complex. The public sector where the medium of instruction is Urdu or the regional languages (i.e. Sindhi, Pushto, and Balochi) and English is taught as compulsory subject after 6th grade. After grade 10th the education system switches into English. The public sectors may be divided into two categories according to the language of instruction: the Urdu medium school and Sindhi medium schools where English is taught as compulsory subject after 5th grade. Whereas, in private schools the language of instruction is English and Urdu is taught as compulsory language while Sindhi is not taught or encouraged to speak inside or outside of the classroom (Panhwar, 2018).

1.2 Research Objectives

1. To explore teachers' perceptions about the use of code switching in EFL classroom in the Department of English, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Shaheed Benazir Abad (SBBU SBA).
2. To identify the impacts of code switching in EFL teaching and learning environment.

1.3 Research Questions

Following are the research questions of the current study:

1. What are the teachers' perceptions about the use of code switching in the EFL classroom at Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Shaheed Benazir Abad, Sindh, Pakistan?
2. What are the functions of code switching in EFL classrooms in the Department of English at Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Shaheed Benazir Abad Sindh Pakistan?

1.4 Language Policy in Pakistan

Pakistan has some dominant spoken languages like, Urdu, Punjabi, Sndhi, Pashto, Balochi, Siraiki, Brahvi with their higher number of speakers in different corners of the country (Rahman, 2010).

In the constitution of Pakistan in 1973 Urdu language has improved once again and obtained its status as the official and instructional language of Pakistan and will be working till further orders. It has clearly replaced English by Urdu from national and official rank (Article 251). Rahman (2002) conducted a study about language policy of Pakistan and this time he came across with the observation that people of Pakistan like to enroll their children in English medium schools. The reason was that people are interested to look like European culture, their values and customs. They feel proud to be the part of European civilization. They want to show of people while talking in English language (Rahman, 2002). The policy of Pakistan from the day of independence to till now is to establish Urdu language as the official and identity maker and sole language of instructions in the classrooms, however, dream yet to be materialized due to the importance of English at universal level (Panhwar Fareeda, 2018).

1.5 Pakistan's Education System

To understand the use of code switching in EFL classroom in Pakistan, it is important to know about Pakistan in order to understand its educational system. The employment of code switching in the EFL classroom is extensively investigated in the different research. As explained earlier, the aims of the current study is to explore and analyze the perceptions of teachers' and learners' about the use of code switching in the EFL classroom and functions of code switching in EFL classroom at Department of English, SBBU in order to know that how and why the code switching can be helping or vice versa tool to be used to achieve the target goals of teaching. Relying on the conducted mixed methodology the data is gathered from the 1st and 2nd year (undergraduate) students of Department of English, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University (SBBU). The study further deemed to help in understanding perceptions of the participants to know the advantages or disadvantage for the stake holder (i.e. teachers and learners) are facing in Pakistan generally and especially in Sindh province.

2. Literature Review

People speak one language in homes and another language in the institutions, offices and at other places they use other languages this kind of language change is known as code switching (Gumperz, 1982). The switching codes in one language to target language are predicated by the

speakers and they know more than the one language and its use in the multilingual environment (Baker, 2006).

2.1 Varieties of code switching

Previous researches have told us that inter sentential, intra sentential, phrasal; word level and clausal level type of code switching can be observed in (Iqbal, 2011).

2.1.1 The intra sentential code switching

In this type of switching codes teachers or learners' switches code after the completion of sentence. Like, the Shakespeare was the dramatist of renaissance age. "*Lekin us k dramas aaj tak famous hen*" (but his dramas are still famous till today). This evidence shows that after the completion of sentence teacher feels need to switch in the native language (Bhatti, Shamsudin, & Seriaznita, 2018).

2.1.2 The Inter-Sentential Code Switching

The instructor is in the mid of sentence and feels need to convey the message completely. In this regard teachers switching of codes in to the regional language to convey the message successfully. As Kawish newspaper reported prime minster Imran Khan's speech, "In order to achieve success"*humen din rat aik kr k apne mulk ki tarqi k liye mehnat krni ho ge* (we have to work hard day and night for the betterment of our country) than we will be called victorious" (Kawish, 8 February, 2109).

2.1.3 World level code switching

Code switching also takes place at the word level. During lecture teachers mostly are speaking entirely in the English language but consciously or unconsciously their tongue slips to the regional language and no matter they do not utter more words but one or two words they can utter in their regional language for the purpose of better communication with the learners. It might be known as the tradition or fashion of the modern era the *jageer dari* system (feudalism) has ruined the country (Bhatti, Shamsudin, & Seriaznita, 2018).

2.1.4 Phrasal level code switching

Phrasal level switching of codes is mostly collective in the English as second language teaching and learning in the EFL classroom. He is of the view that to teach English to the nonnative language learners is quite difficult target to teach them without the help of code switching in to the native tongues. In this regard teacher has to shift from one language in to other and the code switching takes place at the greater level which is known the phrasal level of code switching (Iqbal, 2011) "Like, ye *Jo hum literature Ki bat krte hen na to* (when we talk about the literature so,) it has a vital and intimate connection with our life". Such kind of code switching is the phenomena of language interchange o one another. These types of code-switching shows that bilingual or multilingual speakers use native language deliberately during their teaching and learning process which are quite helpful and understandable for the teachers and learners to make their communication fruitful (Iqbal, 2011).

3. Methods

The current research follows qualitative method to explore the answers of research questions of current research. The context of current study is the department of English at Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Shaheed Benazir Abad Sindh Pakistan.

3.1 Participants

Participants are the teachers of English department who are teaching English as foreign language in the university. The total number of teachers is 18 including 10 male teachers and 08 female teachers who are teaching at the different ranks/positions like, associate professors, assistant professors and lecturers having different years of teaching background at the higher grades. The simple random sampling is used to collect the data from the participants. Five teachers participated and shared their views about the asked questions.

3.2 Interviews

Interviews play a vital role in the domain of qualitative research. It helps the researcher to gain knowledge about the behavior, capabilities, outlooks, and ideas of an individual (Saldana et al., 2011). Semi-structured interviews are guided in that they use a predetermined set of questions and topics to which the interviewees are to reply. The interviewer may ask more questions, depending on the flow of the interview (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 123).

Researcher adapted protocols for semi structured interviews from the study of Mohammed Magid and Abdul Rahim Hamid Mugaddam (2013) and Muhammad Malek Othman (2015). The adapted interview questions were piloted before the data collection process. Data from semi structured interviews were transcribed and analyzed through content analysis. Both deductive and inductive approaches were used in the analysis. The interviews were recorded before recording the teachers were informed about the purpose of recording and their consents were taken and were ensured about the secrecy of their shared information.

4. Findings

In order to investigate the research question related to explore the teachers' perception of code-switching in EFL classroom in SBBU. The qualitative data is collected through a semi-structured questionnaire for interviews. Thematic analysis method is used to address the qualitative data. First, the themes of interviewed data are presented in the form of table. Second, these themes are further elaborated under the head of each question.

4.1 When do you use Code-switching in EFL classroom?

Answering the first question, four teachers out of five have indicated that they firmly use code-switching while teaching English as second language. Learners don't have second language competence enough to understand the complicated language such as figurative language, technical terms and teaching subjects of literature. When learners are not getting lecture in a proper way. They used to code switch as learners develop their understanding and comprehension. They explain all the complex difficult terms in Urdu or Sindhi language. So, they use code-switching when they feel it has necessity. One of the teachers indicated that he does not like to use code-switching in the EFL classrooms. He always uses simple vocabulary and gives his students much more exposure of English language. Slowly and gradually his students develop competence in

English language. So as long as a class is in progress, as long as teaching is concerned, they prefer to continue in English. He often uses language which is students friendly. If he is dealing with first- or second-year students, he understands that learners are understanding concepts in literature and language is not enough. So, he uses some basic and common vocabulary to make his students comprehensive. It is concluded that eighty percent of the teacher participants have interest in code-switching. On the other hand, twenty percent teachers' participant does not support the code-switching in EFL classroom.

4.2 What are the reasons for your Code-switching in EFL classroom?

Answering the second question two of the teachers have indicated that learner's linguistics competence, learners' have multilingual background, learners' different native languages are the reasons of their code-switching. Two of the teachers indicated that informal shape of the class, teachers are not prepared for delivering a lecture, students came from the college sides they don't have enough vocabulary to understand whole lecture, complex ideas and topics they need to be more clearance. Sometimes class seems informal due to extra burden such as assignments, presentations their all intension remain on there and leave to make interest in the classroom activity. Teaching literature included poetry, prose, novel or drama they don't understand to connect the ideas or to make them better understanding of such subjects there is need of code-switching from English to Sindhi or Urdu. When they do not understand the contextual meaning of the lecture they convert or switch their language to the code-switching. So, there is a need of code-switching from English to Sindhi or Urdu language in EFL classrooms. One teacher was pro English, so he said there is no reason for code-switching, as he indicated earlier that he does not switch the code in the classroom. It is concluded that the data of question 2 reveal that the majority of the teachers use code-switching. As it has different reasons to employ in the classroom and it has positive impacts on teaching and learning in EFL classroom.

4.3. How far do you agree that code-switching play role in teaching at EFL classrooms?

Answering the question three, three teachers indicated that there are several functions of code-switching. They apply expressive function in order to direct harmony and intimacy with the Sindhi/Urdu speakers. In order to poetic function they switch codes for creating students' interest. It is involved some time jokes, laughter and quoting something etc. In case of Meta linguistic function teachers switch codes into native language for looking at language versions in the perspective of sociolinguistics and similarity and dissimilarity between target language and native language. As far as referential function, teachers switch codes in native language for amplification of unacquainted ideas and lack of equivalency. These all functions of code-switching achieved significant value in teaching and learning in EFL classrooms. According to them in order to achieve the maximum meaning of the language, learners' expression of ideas and direct asking questions achieve real goal of teaching and learning. By applying such functions learners 'participate actively and achieved high order goal. They come up with the number of questions, if they are not capable to ask in English, they use their native language Urdu/Sindhi. In this process teacher starts to switch code in the learners' native language. So that teaching and learning process do not stop. Two teachers indicated it does not play any role in learning language, it just destroys learner's language fluency and listening power. The qualitative result of question third shows that the majority of the teachers like the code-switching of both teachers and students in the classroom.

4.4 In your opinion in what ways can Code-switching increase the level of your students' knowledge in EFL classroom?

Replying to question 4, three teachers revealed that code-switching increase the level of their students' knowledge in a positive sense. If they are able to make them understand word, sentence or paragraph they will response in a positive way. Students are familiar what teacher is going to teach and what could be the best way to learn. Teachers always encouraged to learners as they speak up and inform teachers about the problems they faced and also what could be the best solution. However, teachers switch codes to solve problems in a positive sense. Code-switching makes comfortable to the teachers to teach and learners to understand the teaching learning environment. Due to code-switching students are free from complexity and improve their comprehension and linguistics competence in both languages. One of the teachers indicated that the subjects of literature cannot be understood without code-switching for those who are newly enrolled. So, they use code switch when they teach literature and it turn out positive for both learners and teachers. In case of functional English, they don't use code-switching. In this way slowly and gradually learners develop their linguistics competence and increase their knowledge by using code-switching. One teacher participant indicated that it can't improve the level, understanding or comprehension. It is very bad habit to teach them in the language other than target language. It does not help them to adjust with mother language. The results of question 4 explain that a wide number of the participants like to use code-switching in the classroom; the minority of the participants does not support code-switching.

4.5 How does code-switching make teaching performance better in EFL classroom?

Answering to the question 5th, three teachers have indicated that code-switching makes teaching performance elegant. In our educational setting most of the teachers are non-native instructors of English language. They are habitual to communicate in their native languages. So, while delivering lecture suddenly teachers switch code from second language to first language or when any complex point comes teachers switch code intentionally in a sense that they can continue flow of teaching and learning. In this process teaching becomes effective and over comes students' hesitation and teachers make them involve in the discussion during the class by asking certain questions. They further pointed out that they are teaching multilingual learners, so they try to have a uniform language especially English language. Related outcomes is observed from the study of Fareed and Khalid (2014) they illustrated that code-switching is an inevitable linguistic phenomenon of bilingual or multilingual classrooms in Pakistan and it can be used as an effective teaching strategy in language classrooms (Fareed & Khalid, 2014, p. 119). Code-switching in initial batches makes effective teaching, learners always remain in good touch with the teachers and focus on given instruction accordingly. They further said that the use of different techniques, methods and models make them understand and surely code-switching is a technique which is one of them. Two of the teachers indicated that code-switching is the biggest loss of teaching. It does not make better teaching in any condition. It does not have any positive influence on the EFL learners. The concluding results explain that a greater number of the participants support the code-switching environment in the classroom.

4.6 Themes of Qualitative Data Analysis

Semi structured interview Questions	Main Theme	Sub Themes
Q 1: When do you use Code-switching in EFL classroom?	Second Language competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of lecture • Technical terms
2: What are the reasons for your Code-switching in EFL classroom?	Language Background of learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multilingual background • Non-native speakers • Unprepared lectures • Better understanding
Q no 3: How functions of code-switching play role in teaching and learning in EFL classrooms?	Functions of Code-switching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressive • Poetic • Referential • Language fluency • Sharp vocabulary
Q no.4 In your opinion in what ways can Code-switching increases the level of your students' knowledge in EFL classroom?	Ways for increasing learners' knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive ways • Solve problems • Increase comprehension • Build interest
Q no.5 How does code-switching make teaching performance better in EFL classroom?	Better teaching performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of different techniques and methods • Inevitable language change • Effective teaching s • Uniform language

5. Discussion

The teachers` participants in semi-structured interviews responded that the majority of teachers are opined that using code-switching is a good thing when they teach to first and second-year students. Switching code is useful to them when students do not get more points when students need more understanding of any topic. Code-switching has many rationales such as learners' linguistics competence, learners' multilingual background, learners' different native languages, informal shapes of the class and sometimes they themselves are not prepared for delivering lectures. However there are certain functions of code-switching included poetic function, directive function, referential function, metalinguistic function, phatic function, and expressive functions. These all functions of code-switching achieved significant value in teaching and learning in EFL classrooms. According to them to achieve the maximum meaning of the language, expressive function; metacognitive function and directive function plays a vital role in EFL teaching and

learning. If there is code-switching then the classroom environment would be very productive, conducive, the level of learning of the students can be enhanced. They further said it can help learners when students are giving a presentation. The first difficult task for students is to come in front of the audience and present their material. It decreases their anxiety. Code-switching has always been a positive impact on EFL learners. It makes teaching performance better because learners understand the entire thing accordingly. In our educational setting, most of the teachers are non-native instructors of the English language. They are habitual to communicate in their native languages. So, while delivering lectures suddenly teachers switch code from the second language to the first language or when any complex point comes teachers switch code intentionally in a sense that they can continue the flow of teaching and learning. Code-switching makes it comfortable for the teachers to teach and learners to understand the teaching-learning environment. (16.7%) means one out of five is pro-English doesn't like to use code-switching in the EFL classrooms. He often uses language which is students friendly. In his sense switching code is a crime, It just teaches them a very bad habit, relies on or to fall back to the mother tongue. It does not help them to adjust to their mother language. The qualitative nature of the current study reveals data in the light of its objectives and research questions that code switching has seen as an interactive tool in EFL classroom. The findings of the current research are solely related to the perceptions of EFL teachers and the functions of code switching performed in the classrooms. The data suggests that it is fifty percent teachers who use Sindhi or Urdu language because of competency level of students. As far as, qualitative findings are concerned, the teachers interviewed were of the opinion that instructors use Sindhi or Urdu language because the students of first year mainly do not understand English language. A cross question was posed to teachers whether students ask for using Urdu or Sindhi language while lecture. Teachers replied that most of the students complain personally and asked for using Urdu and Sindhi language while lecture. Therefore, observing the competence level of students, the teachers use Urdu or Sindhi language. The participants answered this giving the reasons behind this perception. The participant teachers interviewed reasoned that students coming university have different language background. When they come to university, they do not understand English language in a fluent manner. Therefore, the teachers have to switch the code from English to Sindhi or Urdu. The interviewer also asked about intermediate English learning of students. They replied that intermediate level does not make students competent in English learning. Most of the students lack listening, speaking and writing skills. Four teacher participants say that code-switching solves problems of target language learning. It also increases comprehension level of students when complications occur during lecture. The analysis represented that teachers frequently used code-switching in their routine life. . Moreover, the current study identifies that code-switching helps teacher to develop linguistic competence, and cultural identity of the target language learners. However, teachers switch between codes; so that, students may comprehend classroom discussion. Furthermore, code-switching also benefits students to comprehend difficult terminologies available in the target language, by doing this, they may relate their work with real life examples.

6. Conclusion

This study donates to the field of ELT and is the very first study at the Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University, Shaheed Benazir Abad (SBBU, SBA). In this institute, the teachers and learners are teaching and learning English as a second language. All teachers and students of the department of English have different opinions about the usage of code-switching. Some have view switching codes are a beneficial tool, it facilitates and brings positive changes in the classroom and others

are vice versa to the notion which is mentioned. It is an understood gap that is filled by the researcher in the educational setting. The results of the current study contribute to switching codes is an inevitable factor in the language learning classroom. It has an intimate connection with language learners and teachers. It is seen that it is always available with the bi/multilingual. It has positive impacts on EFL learners and teachers. Both teachers and learners use code-switching when they feel the necessity in the EFL classroom. In the viewpoint of the current study, teachers are aware of the fact that communicating in English with students is not merely an ordinary procedure in the classroom. Therefore, code-switching has multiple functions that are deliberately serving a purpose. It is concluded that most of the learners and instructors are in favor of switching codes. This favour suggests, what the researcher assumes, that code-switching is an imperative phenomenon in countries where English has the status of the second language. This assumption is proved when the results of the current study disclosed findings. On the other hand, it may be argued that the scholars who emphasize the Direct Teaching Method of language over the Translation Method do not eradicate the bent of mind towards the Translation Method. Therefore, code-switching in the academic environment cannot be ignored, particularly in the case of Pakistan.

6.1. Implications and suggestions for Teachers, Educators and further studies

It is quite a common factor that can be observed in the language learning classroom. Especially it is noticeable in the EFL classroom where teachers and learners are multilingual. Multilingual environments knowingly or unknowingly give birth to code-switching and code-switching has an ability to fulfill the needs of the classroom. The current study has many insinuations for the teachers, language policymakers, and further researchers in their researches in the same domain. The current research has explored teachers' and learners' perceptions of code-switching in an EFL class. The present study says that code-switching is a useful plan to employ in language learning classrooms. It can bring a positive mode for teachers and learners to convey the essence of teachings and learning. This research has explored that teachers and learners of the department of English at Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Shaheed Benazir Abad are using code-switching techniques in the classroom and it has positive impacts on classroom activities. This study suggests policymakers to revise the policy of language to insert the native languages in the syllabus. Moreover, the institution holders must be lenient to allow teachers and learners to express their ideas and feelings during EFL classrooms when they feel the need for it. This action of authorities can bring ease for students to open the gate s for new coming ideas which are not discovered due to the banned on native language use in teaching and learning process. In this regard, teachers and learners will actively participate. Moreover, it sharpens the learners' syntactic strength, clear the mean of teaching, and make learner and teacher-friendly to talk. The concluding comment is that code-switching has many implications in its sense to employ it in the learning and teaching environment as well as in the domain of language policymaking.

6.2. Limitations of the Study

There are some limitations to this study. The first limitation is the sample size. The sample size of the study is restricted to 105 participants. The second is to the qualitative study participants. On the qualitative part, only teachers were interviewed. The third limitation is to the department and the batch of students. The study was conducted only in the department of English, SBBU. The first and second-year students were selected to give the questionnaire/

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