



## Code-Switching in Interactions between Teacher and Students with Different Levels of Language Proficiencies

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### Abstract

In an English teaching and learning process, teachers and students have interactions that occupy the students' first language. It can be related to the existence of code-switching. It can help them fill in the gap which occurs during a conversation. It can improve the quality of teaching and learning. This study focuses on the analysis of code-switching in the interactions between the teacher and the students with different levels of language proficiency. This study examines how the teacher produced code-switching, the students' responses towards the teacher's code-switching, and the teacher's roles code-switching. This study employed qualitative research. The instruments used for collecting data were audio-video recording, test, interview, and questionnaire. Findings of the study revealed that (1) the teacher used three types of code-switching to the students with different levels of language proficiency and the function of repetitive was the most frequent function found in the interactions, (2) the students responded to the teacher's code-switching by using English, Indonesian language or code-switching, and (3) the roles of teacher as a controller and a director have the crucial use in the interactions. Hopefully, further studies can explore code-switching deeply in the interactions between teachers and students with different language proficiency levels in instructional settings.

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## INTRODUCTION

Many people in this country use more than one language in their daily activities. Bilingualism and multilingualism exist in Indonesia. Bilingual and multilingual can change their language whenever they need to change it into another language.

In Indonesia, English is a foreign language that is usually taught only in school—a formal setting. Sometimes teachers or students switch English to Bahasa Indonesia unconsciously in the teaching and learning process. Enama (2016) stated that the target language should be accompanied by L1 as in one framework so that there is no burden of employing the mother language because it serves the precise function in the classroom to students. It indicates that code-switching is found in a social environment and a formal setting (a school). According to Hornberger and McKay (2010), code-switching is a phenomenon when there are two or more languages exist in a community. It makes speakers frequently switch from one language to another language. Code-switching is considered as a communicative phenomenon of constantly switching between two languages in a bilingual's speech repertoire (Modupeola, 2013). This switching becomes a marked feature that indicates the use of bilingual in the process. Numan and Carter (2001) briefly define code-switching as a phenomenon of switching from one language to another in the same discourse. Retnawati (2015) stated that code-switching may also be defined as the alternation between two or more languages in a speaker's speech which occurs naturally in the scheme of bilingualism. Holmes (2013) stated that a switch can also occur in the situation in which there is a speaker who wants to switch from personal interaction to a more formal transaction. In conclusion, code-switching is switching that involved two or more languages in the same discourse. It is

done to make the flow of communication smooth and understandable.

Code-switching as a strategy in delivering meanings can help teachers and students fill in the gaps when the students do not know the words in the English language. Gulzar (2010) added that the importance of code-switching with ESL and EFL classrooms has increased around the world as an area of special interest and investigation. Tariq et al. (2013) also suggested that the use of code-switching as a strategy should be encouraged to teach the foreign language in a bilingual classroom. According to Astani, Rukmini, and Sutopo (2018), code-switching may cause impacts to the languages involved in the conversations. According to Muin (2011), code-switching is commonly carried out in the interaction in learning a new language since it has functioned as a communication strategy in expressing ideas. These impacts are expected to make students easier to understand the lesson. It is in line with Mukti and Muljani (2016) who stated that the use of code-switching done by language instructors is mainly for the students' understanding. Moreover, Griffiths (2004) stated that there is a significant relationship between strategy use and language proficiency. Therefore, it is important to find out the levels of language proficiency of students to smoothen the interactions. Based on Bateman (2008), proficiency level influences both the learners' and teacher's usage of code-switching. Fareed et al. (2016) added that for beginners or low-proficiency learners, for instance, code-switching is an effective strategy to learn. By knowing this, hopefully, the teacher can know how to interact with his/her students.

Related to code-switching, Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain (2005), Greggio and Gil (2007); Hobbs, Matsuo and Payne (2010), Iqbal (2011), and Moghadam, Samad, and Shahraki (2012) conducted studies in code-switching. The results of the study

revealed that code-switching has three types which are inter-sentential code-switching, intra-sentential code-switching, and tag switching. The purposes of code-switching vary from one research to the other research. Mostly, code-switching occurs when there is a lack of vocabulary knowledge of students. Moreover, (Yulyana, 2012; Sumilia, Puspita, & Elfrida, 2019; Haryanti, Mujiyanto, & Faridi, 2018) did research related to students' responses towards code-switching. The results showed that the students had positive responses to the use of code-switching. Hopefully, the teacher uses Indonesian (L1) and English when delivering the lesson.

Although those studies are also related to code-switching, they are different from the present study. The present study not only reveals the use of code-switching in the interactions between the teacher and the students but also focuses on students' different levels of language proficiency. Sometimes, it is difficult for teachers in delivering the lesson to students who have different levels. It can decrease the quality of teaching and learning. Therefore, the uses of code-switching in interactions between teacher and students need to be uncovered to explain how the teacher uses code-switching, to explain the students' response to code-switching, and to explain the teacher's roles in code-switching.

## **METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative research design that was aimed to explain how the teacher used code-switching, to explain the students' response to code-switching, and to explain the teacher's roles in code-switching.

The subjects of this study were 32 science students with high and low language proficiency levels and a teacher of State Senior High School 2 Temanggung.

Some instruments were used to obtain data in this study such as audio-video recording, test, interview, and questionnaire. A test was used to find out students' levels of language proficiency. After that, an audio-video recording was used to get the transcription of the interactions in all meetings. From the transcription, how the teacher (the type and the function of code-switching) produced code-switching would be exposed. Then, the questionnaire was given to students to find out their responses towards code-switching. The last one was an interview that was used to reveal the teacher's roles in code-switching.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

This study was limited to three research questions that explain how the teacher used code-switching, to explain the students' response to code-switching, and to explain the teacher's roles in code-switching. The present study found that three types of code-switching were used in the interactions between the teacher and the students with different levels of language proficiency and there were three functions of code-switching. This table shows the occurrence of teacher's code-switching in the interaction with high-level students. The result is shown in table 1.

**Table 1.** Teacher's Code-Switching for High Level of Proficiency

Meeting	Frequency of Code-Switching											
	Eng-Indo			Indo-Eng			Eng-Indo-Eng			Indo-Eng-Indo		
	Inter	Intra	Tag	Inter	Intra	Tag	Inter	Intra	Tag	Inter	Intra	Tag
1	8	5	2	5	4	0	5	3	0	4	3	0
2	8	1	2	9	10	0	5	3	0	6	5	0
3	18	4	1	18	12	1	9	3	0	10	11	0
Total	34	10	5	32	26	1	19	9	0	20	19	0

Table 1 reveals the teacher's code-switching to students with a high level of language proficiency. The first category is switching from English to the Indonesian language. The table shows that intersentential CS occurs the most often. It is used 34 times by the teacher in all meetings. Intrasentential CS exists 10 times in all interactions. Tag-switching occurs 5 times in all meetings. The second category is switching from Indonesian to English. Intersentential CS appears the most often (32 times) in all meetings. The next is intrasentential CS that is found 26 times in

the transcription. Tag-switching exists only once. Based on the table, the switching from English to Indonesian to English, intersentential CS is used 19 times, intrasentential CS is used 9 times and no tag-switching is used in the interactions. According to the table, switching from Indonesian to English to Indonesian, the most frequent CS is intersentential that occurs 20 times. The next one is intrasentential CS that exists 19 times and no tag-switching exists in the interactions.

**Table 2.** Teacher's Code-Switching for Low Level of Proficiency

Meeting	Frequency of Code-Switching											
	Eng-Indo			Indo-Eng			Eng-Indo-Eng			Indo-Eng-Indo		
	Inter	Intra	Tag	Inter	Intra	Tag	Inter	Intra	Tag	Inter	Intra	Tag
1	7	2	5	3	5	0	6	3	0	4	5	0
2	10	4	1	11	14	0	9	2	0	6	3	0
3	19	5	1	18	10	1	10	4	0	10	11	0
Total	36	11	7	32	29	1	25	9	0	20	19	0

Table 2 shows the occurrence of all code-switching produced by the teacher in interaction with low-level students. Based on table 2, in the first category is English-Indonesian switching. Intersentential CS appears the most often. It was produced 36 times. Intrasentential CS is found 11 times and tag-switching appears 7 times. The second category is Indonesian-English switching. Intersentential CS exists 32 times, intrasentential CS

exists 29 times and tag-switching CS is found once in the teacher's interaction with her students. The third category is English-Indonesian-English switching. In this category, no tag-switching exists during interactions. Intersentential CS is produced 25 times and intrasentential CS is produced 9 times. The last one is Indonesian-English-Indonesian switching. In this category, no tag-switching is found in the

interactions. Intersentential CS appears 20 times. Intrасentential CS appears 19 times.

The current study reveals how the teacher produces code-switching and the functions of code-switching in the interactions.

**Table 3.** presents the function of teacher’s code-switching.

Functions of CS	High	Low	Total
topic switch	11	10	21
Repetitive	13	17	30
Affective	2	1	3

The table shows that repetitive function becomes the most frequent function produced by the teacher in the interactions with all students (either high level or low level of language proficiency). It is in line with Mattson and Burenhult’s theory (1999) which stated that the repetitive function is to explain the definition of words or even sentences to the students. It makes the instruction clear enough to understand because code-switching emphasizes what the students do in the learning activities.

**The Teacher’s Code-Switching in the Interactions with Students Who Have Different Levels of Language Proficiency**

Based on the data, three types of code-switching are found in the interactions (intersentential code-switching, intrасentential code-switching, and tag-switching).

**Intersentential Code-Switching**

Intersentential code-switching occurs between a clause or between sentences in which each clause or sentence is in one language or other languages. Intersentential code-switching refers to the use of a complete sentence that differs from the language being spoken (Tyas, Rukmini, & Faridi, 2021). In this switching, a speaker switches from one language to another between different clauses or sentences. Here is the example related to the use of intersentential code-switching.

*(Interaction T1-8)*

Teacher: But do you still remember passive voice must consist of, harus terdiri dari apa?

Marsyanda: Auxiliary be.

Interaction T1-8 shows that the teacher used code-switching for interacting with a high-level student. The teacher used English first in the sentence “but do you still remember passive voice must consist of” and then she continued it with the sentence “harus terdiri dari apa” in the Indonesian language. It is in line with the theory from Romaine. The switching occurs after a sentence in the English language and the next sentence starts with a new language that is the first language of the students (Romaine, 1995). The example exposes English-Indonesian intersentential code-switching that occurred in the teaching and learning process.

*(Interaction T1-38)*

Teacher: Come on, which one is the difficult one?

Bagian mana yang susah?

Bella: Wider.

Interaction T1-38 is one of the interactions between the teacher and the low-level student. It shows the existence of intersentential code-switching in teacher’s code-switching from English to the Indonesian language. According to Hoffman's theory (1991), intersentential code-switching occurs between clause or sentence boundary where each clause or sentence is in one language or another. Based on that,

the teacher used English at the beginning of the conversation.

Both examples reveal the function of code-switching called the repetitive function. In the interaction, after saying “must consist of” in English, she used the Indonesian words “harus terdiri dari apa?” which emphasized what instruction was. The next example also shows the same function. The teacher used the English sentence “which one is difficult?” and then used the Indonesian sentence “Bagian mana yang susah?”. Mattson and Burenhult’s theory (1999) stated that the repetitive function is to explain the definition of words or even sentences to the students. It is related to repetitive function. It makes the instruction clear enough to understand because code-switching emphasizes what the students do in the learning activities.

### **Intrasentential Code-Switching**

This typically occurs within a clause or sentence boundary in which each clause or sentence is in one language or another language. According to Jenda (2012), this type of code-switching is produced when a word, a phrase, or a clause of a foreign language is used within the sentence in a base language (ongoing means of communication). The following interaction shows the existence of intrasentential code-switching.

*(Interaction T3-100)*

Teacher: Tapi sayangnya — unfortunately, dia hasn’t informed — belum menginformasikan atau dia belum diinformasikan alasan mengapa dia begitu beruntung. Which one is the best?

Nicola: Hasn’t informed

In interaction T3-100, the teacher interacted with a high-level student. She used the Indonesian language as the opening of the sentence. She inserted the English word “unfortunately” which defines the word “sayangnya”. The teacher delivers it in English so that the students could relate it to the text being

discussed. In this case, some students who did not know the English could get new vocabulary related to the text. In conclusion, the sentences in both interactions define certain words in another language. It indicates that intrasentential code-switching in this interaction has repetitive functions. It is considered as a tool to repeat and emphasize some words in another language. Then and Ting (2011) stated that the changing of language could emphasize the message and increase the clarity of the speech content to the audience in terms of a pedagogical function of code-switching.

*(Interaction T1-30)*

Teacher: Kalau active, tidak perlu kasih auxiliary be. Okay now number 6. Setengah 9, yuk absen 9.

Bella: The building was built in 1543.

In interaction T1-30, it reveals the teacher’s code-switching when she interacts with a low-level student. The type of CS occurring is intrasentential code-switching (Indonesian to English). The word “Kalau” proved the existence of intrasentential CS. After using that word, the teacher produced the English word “active”. She also used the Indonesian words “tidak perlu kasih” and then continued it with “auxiliary be”. According to Poplack’s theory about code-switching (as cited in Jingxia, 2010), intrasentential code-switching exists within the clause or sentence and is considered the most complex form of switching. This theory is in line with the switching that occurs in interaction T1-30.

### **Tag-Switching**

Tag switching or emblematic-switching occurs as an insertion of a tag in one language into an utterance which is entirely in another, such as so, well, you know, hmm, errr, emm, I mean, right, is it right, understand, etc.

*(Interaction T2-40)*

Teacher: Nah yang menyala. Okay now group 7, where are you? The sun’s energy is

abundant, but only a limited amount has so far been used by men. Yuk?

Natasya: Energi matahari sangat melimpah, tapi hanya dengan jumlah terbatas, jauh dari yang digunakan manusia.

From the interaction T2-40, the teacher used tag-switching to deliver her ideas to a high-level student. She used the Indonesian word “yuk” as a tag that indicated the existence of tag-switching. Tag-switching, also known as emblematic switching, is the third type of code-switching and involves an exclamation, a tag, or a parenthetical remark in a language different from the rest of the sentence (Appel & Muysken, 2006). The word “yuk” actually could be inserted almost anywhere in an utterance without changing the message of the utterance.

*(Interaction T1-5)*

Teacher: We have practice 1 and practice 2, and the instruction over there is to complete the sentences in the passive or active form. So it means that not all the sentences must use passive, but we have to learn first, ini pakai pasif atau ini pakai aktif. Berarti you need to translate it also, ya tidak? Butuh Untuk diterjemahkan juga, supaya message-nya sampai. And use the past tense, gunakan bentuk past tense.

Ratih: Verb 2

Interaction T1-5 is an example of tag switching that occurs in the interaction between the teacher and a low-level student. The switching is from English to Indonesian. Tag-switching exists at the end of the sentence. The sentence starts with English and it ends with Indonesian tag-switching “ya tidak”. Poplack (2000) stated that the insertion of a tag to an utterance has virtually no ramification for the rest of the sentence because the tag has no syntactic constraints, can be moved freely and can be inserted almost anywhere in a discourse without violating any grammatical rules.

According to the results and discussions, the different usage of code-switching lies in the frequency of code-switching types and functions for high and

low levels of language proficiencies. The frequency of code-switching produced for the low-level students was more than the high-level students. It indicated that the students with low-level language proficiency relied on the teacher’s code-switching to get better understandings of the learning process. Moreover, the most frequent function of code-switching was the repetitive function which exposes the need for more explanation from the teacher about some words or maybe some sentences in the lesson.

### **The Students’ Responses towards Teacher’s Code-Switching**

This part reveals the responses of students towards teacher’s code-switching in the teaching and learning activities. The responses were collected from the interactions’ transcription and the questionnaire. In this research, the interactions occurred in meeting 1, meeting 2, and meeting 3. In those meetings, the teacher and students exchanged thoughts and ideas about the material. It is in line with Brown’s theory (2007) that defined interaction as a collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings, or ideas between two or more people, resulting in a reciprocal effect on each other. The interactions could stimulate the students to take part in the classroom. Maiza (2015) stated that classroom interaction between the teacher and students utilized by code-switching could improve the ability to speak. In achieving the goals of teaching and learning, it needs the engagement of the students.

In this research, the engagement of students was exposed by the students’ responses from transcription and questionnaire. From the transcription, a few students responded to the teacher’s code-switching. In all meetings, most of the students responded by using only English or Indonesian language. The responses in English were limited. The students only answered the questions

delivered by the teacher. They only used words that they had already known based on the text or what the teacher spoke to them. In responding to teacher's code-switching, the students also responded by using code-switching.

(Interaction T2-47)

Teacher: So the best one is group 2. Dari tadi yang Pertama kelompok 2 ya, sekarang kelompok 2 Lagi kan? Okay, next. Group 8. The sun can also be used as a source of fuel power plants. Come on. The next paragraph.

Rafida: Matahari dapat juga digunakan sebagai sumber bahan bakar untuk power plants.

In the interaction T2-47, the teacher asks the student to translate an English sentence. A student from low-level language proficiency responded to the teacher's question by using code-switching. She succeeded in translating the beginning of the sentence. But there was a part that was not translated (at the end of the sentence). It reveals that she did not know the Indonesian meaning of the English noun "power plants". Therefore, she switched from Indonesian to English. Poplack (as cited in Jingxia, 2010) stated that intrasentential code-switching occurs within the clause or sentence and is considered the most complex form of switching. This switching occurred within a sentence that indicated the existence of Indonesian-English intrasentential code-switching.

From the questionnaire, students responded to the statements with what they felt during teaching and learning activities. Four categories exist in the questionnaire. Those were (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) agree, and (4) strongly agree. The result showed that all students agreed and strongly agreed with the statements. It indicates that all students aware of the use of two languages. It revealed that all students know that code-switching is crucial in delivering knowledge. It made the instructions become clearer and helped students understand new

vocabulary. Noli et al. (2012) and Puspawati (2018) stated that students tended to exhibit positive attitudes towards code-switching because it helps them understand the materials. Obaidullah (2016) also stated that both teachers and students hold a positive attitude towards code-switching because they agree that code-switching facilitates learning and provides a better understanding of the lesson content.

Furthermore, Musmuliadi (2018) stated that code-switching helps learners enjoy their learning due to their ability to comprehend the teacher's input. Code-switching could make the students braver to ask what they do not understand. Dar et al. (2014) stated that code-switching proves to be useful to lessen anxiety and encourage the learners. Therefore, code-switching was important in increasing the students' motivation to learn and their ability to speak the English language.

According to the results and discussions, all students, whether they were high- or low-levels, they mostly responded to teacher's code-switching by using the Indonesian language that was their first language.

### **The Teacher's Roles in Code-Switching**

The teacher played some roles when she used code-switching. The teacher as a key role in the classroom should have good interactions and competencies that potentially support and help the students improve their skills in learning English (Febriana & Faridi, 2016). The roles are as a controller, a director, a manager, a facilitator, and a resource. The roles are not static and may change from one activity to another activity in the classroom (Harmer, 2001). Brown (2007) proposed five roles of a teacher and they are as a controller, a director, a manager, a facilitator, and a resource. In this research, no interactions show the role of a resource from the teacher.



Based on the transcription, the role of a controller existed when she managed students in the activities. As a controller, the teacher decided what students do during the activities. The teacher also managed when students should speak and what language forms they should use. In this research, the teacher fulfilled the role of a controller. It was also supported by the result of the interview that showed that the teacher became a controller in her teaching.

Besides being a controller, the teacher also became a director in the teaching and learning process. A director set the class' activities. In this case, the teacher should provide clear directions to students. By knowing the directions, the activities would go smoothly and the objectives of teaching and learning could be achieved.

The role of the teacher as a manager existed in meeting 2 (interactions T2-1 and T2-76). At the beginning of the class' activity, interaction T2-1 revealed that the teacher directly managed today's activities and what they should do in the next meeting. Interaction T2-76 showed that the teacher asked the students to bring more dictionaries in the next meeting. It indicated what the students must do in the next meeting. Based on those interactions, the teacher had planned the activity for the next meeting.

As a facilitator, the teacher should facilitate the learning process and make it easier for students. The role of the teacher as a manager existed in meeting 2 and 3. In the second meeting, there was only one interaction that showed the role of a facilitator. It was interaction T2-48, the teacher helped students answer the question. She facilitated them with clues related to the answer. She also produced code-switching to make it easier for students to answer the questions. In the third meeting, interactions T3-2 and T3-18 revealed the role of a facilitator. In interaction T3-2, the teacher informed the students about the goal of today's learning. After that, she also provided them

with information about what they should prepare and learn to do PAS. In conclusion, the role of the facilitator was implemented in those interactions.

It is important to know the students' level of language proficiency to know how to produce code-switching. Hopefully, the teacher knows the use of code-switching in her teaching and learning process. Considering the ability of a student in English, the roles become important in the classroom. The teacher should use a strategy to make the communication run smoothly. Based on the transcription, no interaction can reveal the teacher as a resource in students' learning.

## CONCLUSION

These conclusions are drawn to answer the research questions which are stated at the beginning of the study. First, the teacher used three types of code-switching to the students with different levels of language proficiency which were intersentential code-switching, intrasentential code-switching, and tag-switching. This study also indicated that the uses of code-switching have the topic switch, repetitive function, and affective functions for the students with a different language of proficiencies. Second, the students responded to the teacher's code-switching by using English, Indonesian language, or code-switching. Third, the roles of the teacher as a controller and a director have major use in the interaction.

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