# A STUDY OF CODE-SWITCHING USED BY AN ENGLISH TEACHER IN TEENAGERS' EFL CLASS

**Hede, G.[1] and Mardijono, J.[2]**
[1,2] English Department, Faculty of Letters, Petra Christian University, Siwalankerto 121-131, Surabaya 60236, East Java, INDONESIA
E-mails: gloriahede17@yahoo.com; josefa@peter.petra.ac.id

**ABSTRACT**

This study is aimed to analyze the types of code-switching used by the teacher and under what circumstances the switching occur to identify its function. Using qualitative approach, the writer did this study based on code-switching theory of Wardhaugh (2006) and classroom interaction of Walsh (2011). The findings revealed that the teacher used both types of code-switching, intra-sentential and inter-sentential switching. The function of the code-switching identified through the four features of classroom interaction were control of interaction to control the participation, content, procedure of the lesson; speech modification to clarify meaning, to ensure the students' understanding; elicitation technique to elicit response for checking comprehension; repair to correct error directly or get the students to correct the errors. From this study, it could be concluded that the teacher used code-switching to make the learning process clearer, so the students would not get confused and would not have misunderstanding in the classroom.

**Key words:** Code-switching, Inter-sentential, Intra-sentential, Function of code-switching

Many speakers have the ability to use several varieties of language (bilingualism, even multilingualism) (Wardhaugh, 2006). Because of the fact that most of the people in the world are bilingual and multilingual speakers, speakers must choose a particular code when they want to speak (Wardhaugh, 2006). This phenomenon is known as code-switching.

Code-switching could also occur in the classroom. Code-switching in EFL classroom is "a good strategy of efficiency in foreign language teaching" (Liu, 2010, p.10). Therefore, the writer would like to find out the types of code-switching used by the teacher in teenagers classroom. Moreover, the writer wanted to find out under what circumstances the code-switching occurred to identify its function. The writer used the theory of Wardhaugh (2006) and Walsh (2011) to analyze the teacher's use of code-switching in teaching English and the classroom interaction. The code could be a particular language, dialect, style, register, or variety. There are also two kinds of code-switching (Wardhaugh, 2006). The first is inter-sentential, in which code-switching happens between sentences. The second type is intra-sentential, in which code-switching happens within a single sentence (Wardhaugh, 2006).

In order to identify the function of code-switching, there are four features of classroom interaction used. The first feature is control of the interaction. Teachers are the ones who have the authority and the power to control the patterns of communication by managing the topic of conversation and turn-taking. Furthermore, teachers also control content, procedure of a lesson, and participation. Teachers are also able to interrupt, direct the discussion, and switch topics (Walsh, 2011).

The second is speech modification. Teachers modify their spoken language. Speech modification as stated by Walsh (2011, p.6-7) is used "to ensure that class is following, that everyone understands, and that the learners do not 'get lost'". It is also to clarify, to check or to confirm meanings. Moreover, speech modification is used to repeat, to clarify requests, asking students for clarification, to minimize breakdowns and misunderstandings. In speech modification, teachers use transition markers/discourse markers to signal the beginnings and endings of activities in a lesson (Walsh, 2011).

The third is elicitation technique. It is usually used by the teachers to get learners to respond, to check understanding, to guide learners towards particular response, to promote involvement, and concept checking. It is dominated by questions. There are two types of questions

that can be found in elicitation technique, display and referential questions (Walsh, 2011). Walsh (2011) stated that display question is a question which the answer is already known by the teacher. It is used to check and evaluate students understanding, previous learning, and etc. the responds for displays question tend to be simple and short. Referential question is a question which is used to promote discussion and debate, engage learners, and produce longer and more complex responses. Referential question often begin with *wh*-questions such as what, why, etc. (Walsh, 2011).

The last is repair. It refers to the way teachers deal with error. The correction of the errors can be indirect and direct (Walsh, 2011). When teachers face error they can ignore the error completely, indicate that error has been made and correct it, indicate that error has been made and get the learner who made it to correct it, or indicate that error has been made and get other learners to correct it (Walsh, 2011).

## METHODS

In this study, the writer used qualitative approach. The key instrument of this study was the writer herself, who collected and analyzed the data. The source of data in this research was the teacher's talks in the classroom during the observation in General English classroom for teenagers at Petra Language Center (PLC). The data in this study was the teacher's utterances in General English classroom which contained code-switching.

In collecting the data, firstly, after having all the formal permission from the Head of PLC and the PLC coordinator, the writer started the observation. The writer used audio recorder to record the teacher's talk in the classrooms. The transcription of the recording was done by the writer after she recorded all the meetings. From four recordings only one was chosen to be transcribed and analyzed based on the talks which contained the most code-switching. In the transcription, the writer bold all the teacher's talks that contained code-switching. The writer used three digits number in the system of numbering the data. The first digit represented the teacher, the second digit represented the topic, and the third digit represented order of the utterances which contained code-switching.

After labeling the utterances which contained code-switching in the transcription, the writer started to analyze the data by identifying and categorizing the types of code-switching and the function related to the four features of classroom interaction, utilizing the following table.

Table 1. The analysis of types of code-switching and the function

| No. | Utterances | Type of code-switching | | Function of code-switching (Based on Classroom interaction features) | Note |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Inter-sentential | Intra-sentential | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

The writer used check (√) symbol in identifying the types and the functions of code-switching. The data were analyzed to identify and categorize the types of code-switching occurring in the teacher discourse and the functions related to the four features of classroom interaction, control of the interaction (CI), speech modification (SM), elicitation technique (ET), and repair (R) from Walsh's theory (2011).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings revealed that the teacher did code-switching in the classroom using both types, inter-sentential and intra-sentential. She also switched the code under the four features of classroom interaction. The findings can be summarized in the following table.

Table 2. The Summary of Type and Function of Code-Switching Used by the Teacher

| Function / Type | CI | SM | ET | R |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Inter-sentential | √ | √ | √ (the most dominant) | √ (the least dominant) |
| Intra-sentential | √ (the least dominant) | √ (the most dominant) | √ | √ |

Note:
CI       : Control of Interaction
SM       : Speech Modification
ET       : Elicitation Technique
R        : Repair

**The Types of Code-Switching**
      In the classroom discourse, the teacher used both types, inter-sentential and intra-sentential. In one topic, sometimes the teacher only switched using one type, inter-sentential or intra-sentential, but sometimes she used both types in one topic of conversation. The codes used in the classroom were English and Bahasa Indonesia. In inter-sentential, the switching occurred between sentences. The switching usually happened after a sentence in the first code had been completed and the following sentence would start with a different code.
      1.7.1 T: That's good. What's your father called? So what is the answer?
      What? **Papanya namanya siapa** *(What is her father's name)***?** What is your answer?
      The teacher and the student were discussing about the answer of listening exercise. The teacher asked the student in English but then she switched to Bahasa Indonesia in the level of a sentence. She repeated the sentence that she said in English to Bahasa Indonesia, **"Papanya namanya siapa?"** and then continued using English again.
      From the analysis of the teacher talks in the classroom, for intra-sentential type, the switching was done in the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of a sentence.
      1.4. T:  No= can I see? Anyway you promise the homework, don't forget.
      Okay= Aaa isntruction**nya tadi** miss **bilang adalah kamu harus tulis jawabannya bukan** question**nya** *(Aaa the instruction that I've told you just now is you have to write down the answer not the question)***. Jadi** *(so)* listen to the questions but you write down the answer.
      The teacher inserted some Bahasa Indonesia phrases and word in English as she explained the instruction to the student. From the example, it could be seen that when the teacher switched in intra-sentential type, in one sentence she sometimes switched in the three parts of the sentence, beginning, middle, and end. However, the switching also could be done only in one part, whether it was in the beginning, middle, or the end of a sentence, such as seen in the last sentence in the example. The teacher only switched at the beginning of the sentence by inserting Bahasa Indonesia word "**jadi**".

**The Functions of Code-Switching**
      The functions of code-switching can be identified through the four features of classroom interaction. First, control of the interaction was to control procedure of the lesson, participation, and the topic of conversation.
      1.5.1- 1.5.3 T: =Okay=  Hii <when another student comes> So many people wear purple today= **Nanti aja ya** *(later ok)* eeehm we already start so you you just follow after this,

29

okay? **Untuk listening kedua** *(for the second listening)*. **Kita bahas dulu ya** *(We discuss first ok)*. Here we go. Okay, let's start number one what is the answer?

The example above showed that the teacher switched from English to Bahasa Indonesia when she wanted to control the procedure of the lesson by telling the student that they had started the lesson and needed to discuss first what they were doing at that time, so the student could follow later after they discussed the previous activity. The second was speech modification. The speech was modified into another language which is English to Indonesia.

> 1.13.1 T: Capital city. Number four. Where is James come from? Where does James come from? **Jamesnya berasal dari mana** *(Where does James come from?)***?=** and where does his mom Come from? James mom comes from= and Where does Eli come from? Where does Jerry come from?

From the example it could be seen that the teacher switched the code when she wanted to repeat in Bahasa Indonesia what she said in English and to make the students understand about the question so the student could answer it. The third was elicitation technique was used to elicit response from the students to check the students' comprehension by asking them questions.

> 1.6.1 T: Fifteen. And number four is about, can somebody tell me the
> question that you hear? What's that? **Pertanyaannya apa tadi yang kalian dengar** *(What is the question that you hear)***?**

The teacher switched the code from English to Bahasa Indonesia when she wanted to elicit response to do comprehension checking, so she asked the students about what they heard. The last one was repair. In repair, it shows how the teacher dealt with errors made by the students.

> 1.40.1 T: I'm sorry. It's not you. Sorry, sorry. <Checking other students' work> **Kamu pake** do **ato** are **nih** *(Do you use "do" or "are")***?=**

> 1.40.3- 1.40.8 T: Do **berarti** are **ga perlu ya** *("Do" means that "are" is not needed okay)***?** Where do you come from? **Tapi kalo kamu ga pke** from **pake** are **bisa** *(But if you don't use "do" you can use "are")***,** where are you from? **Jadi** come**nya hilang,** okay *(So, "come" is deleted, okay)***? Dua-duanya bisa cuman ga bisa di pake dalam waktu yang bersamaan** *(You can use both but not in the same time)*. **Klo kamu pake** are **berarti cuma** from where do you ee where are you from, okay *(If you use "are", it means that you only use from, where are you from)***? Ketika kamu pakai** do **berarti** are **nya hilang** where do you come**nya masuk** *(When you use "do", it means that "are" is deleted and "come" is inserted)* (   ).

When checking a student's work, the teacher found that there were errors. The student was confused about the use of "do" and "are" in order to form a question "Where do you come from?" or "Where are you from?" Therefore here the teacher switched the code from English to Bahasa Indonesia when she indicated error had been made and she tried to correct or clarify it by herself so the student understood. Sometimes the teacher would give the chance to the students to correct the error by themselves.

From the findings, it could be seen that the teacher switched in both types of switching, intra-sentential and inter-sentential, from English to Bahasa Indonesia. The teacher's use of both type of code-switching may be due to some reasons. Firstly, the teacher used inter-sentential switching which was done in a whole sentence because she wanted to make everything really clear for the students and they could understand well without any confusion. Probably the teacher felt that the sentence in English she used was not familiar for the students so she needed to repeat the whole sentence in Bahasa Indonesia in order to help the students understood what she said and could follow the lesson well. Secondly, the teacher also used intra-sentential switching because she might think that in one sentence there were some English words that the students might not understand, so she switched at the word or phrase level only.

The teacher also did the code-switching under the four classroom interaction features. Classroom interaction is used to facilitate learning for the students. Based on the analysis, elicitation technique was the most dominant in inter-sentential type and repair was the least dominant. In intra-sentential type, speech modification was the most dominant, and control of the interaction was the least dominant. From the whole analysis, speech modification was the most

dominant. It could be assumed that the switching that the teacher did in the classroom was to make the students better understand about what they learnt, so there would be no misunderstanding or confusion for the student in learning the foreign language. This was in line with Walsh's (2011, p.6-7) theory that speech modification is used "to ensure that the class is following, that everyone understands and that learners do not 'get lost'". Repair was the least dominant from the whole analysis. There were errors made by the students but there were not so many code-switching related to how the teacher faced the errors. Therefore repair was the least dominant type of functions.

**CONCLUSION**

This study was about the use of code-switching by a teacher in a teenagers' class using English as the medium of instruction. The theories applied in this study were code-switching of Wardhaugh (2006) and classroom interaction of Walsh (2011). The findings revealed that, firstly, the teacher did code-switching using both types, intra-sentential and inter-sentential switching. The switching was from English to Bahasa Indonesia. Secondly, the code-switching could occur under some circumstances related to classroom interaction features such as, control of the interaction, speech modification, elicitation techniques, and repair (Walsh, 2011) as the function of code-switching.

In control of the interaction, the teacher switched mostly because she wanted to control the participation of the students and the procedure of the lesson. In speech modification feature, the writer found that the teacher repeated what she said in English to Bahasa Indonesia in order to clarify something and to make sure the students understand. The teacher switched from English to Bahasa Indonesia in the form of questions because she wanted to elicit responses from the students for concept or comprehension checking, in elicitation technique. Moreover, the teacher switched to indicate that errors had been made by the students. Mostly the teacher was the one who corrected or clarified the errors. From the study, it could be concluded that the teacher used code-switching in the classroom to help the students in their language learning process. By using code-switching, mostly the teacher could make clearer instructions, clearer clarification, clearer corrections, clearer explanation for the students in learning foreign language and could avoid misunderstanding in the classroom.

**REFERENCES**

Liu, J. (2010). Teachers' Code-Switching to the L1 in EFL Classroom. *The Open Applied Linguistics Journal, 3,* 10-23.

Walsh, S. (2011). *Exploring classroom discourse: language in action.* London: Routledge.

Wardhaugh, R. (2006). *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (5th ed.). Oxford: Basil Blackwell.