Code- Switching among Teachers of English Language Service Courses at PAUC: Types and Functions

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ABSTRACT- The current study aimed at investigating the most common types and functions of code- switching that teachers use in foreign language classes at Palestine Ahliya University College (PAUC). The study addressed the following questions:
1- **To what extent do teachers switch codes in TEFL classrooms while teaching English service courses?**
2- **What are the main types of code-switching observed in the TEFL classes?**
3- **What language functions do the code-switches serve?**
4- **What language categories are identified for the code- switches used by TEFL teachers?**
The study explored the issue by using classroom observation among all part- time instructors of English service course (remedial, English skills 1 & English skills 2) at PAUC. Results of the study showed that teachers tend to switch when explaining grammatical rules and they also switch to present new concepts and encourage students to participate in classroom activities.

Keywords--- Code switching, inter-sentential, service courses, language functions

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1. INTRODUCTION

Code- switching is one of the key linguistic issues which have been addressed by researchers and specialists in the fields of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) over the past period. Code- switching occurs when the teacher or students change from one language to another during the course of instruction. More often, in the foreign language classroom, change is from the foreign language to the mother tongue or native language (L1) of the majority of students in the classroom.

Code- switching is defined by Myers-Scotton (1993), as "the use of two or more languages in the same conversation, usually within the same conversational turn, or even within the same sentence of that turn". Code-switching is also defined as a phenomenon that exists in bilingual societies where people have the opportunity to use two or more languages, to communicate. Being able to speak more than one language, bilinguals can code switch and use their languages as resources to find better ways to convey meaning.

Wahdani (2008) stated that code- switching may serve some functions, pointing out that "expressing group identity, repetition used for clarification, being emphatic about something, softening or strengthening request or command, intention for clarifying the speech content for interlocutor and excluding other people when a comment is intended for only a limited audience may lead to use code-switching."

Code-switching is classified into inter-sentential, and intra-sentential. According to Myers- Scotton (1993), "inter-sentential code- switching occurs when an interlocutor switches from one language to the other between sentences, so an entire sentence may be generated before there is a switch back to the other language. In the case of intra-sentential code switching, it occurs within a sentence or sentence fragment".

Consequently, the current study comes to investigate types and functions of code-switches that EFL teachers use in foreign language classes at Palestine Ahliya University College (PAUC).

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

EFL teachers observe that most university students are unable to express themselves through using English communicatively. Literature review shows that one of the main reasons behind this significant weakness was code-switching; thus, the current study is an attempt to shed light on the most common types and functions of code- switches that teachers use in foreign language classes at Palestine Ahliya University College (PAUC).

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESIONS

The study attempts to develop a full understanding of the code-switches implemented by TEFL teachers at Palestine Ahliya University College (PAUC). It aims to identify the extent to which code-switching takes place in English classes, classify the code-switches implemented by teachers, identify the language functions of the switches spotted, and explain the sociolinguistic factors that help further them. Therefore, the study addresses the following questions:

5- To what extent do teachers switch codes in TEFL classrooms while teaching English service courses?
6- What are the main types of code-switching observed in the TEFL classes?
7- What language functions do the code-switches serve?
8- What language categories are identified for the code- switches used by TEFL teachers?

4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study counts for some reasons. First, there is no study conducted in this field, at PAUC. It also highlights the factors which influence the teachers to code- switch in classroom. The study also counts as it attempts to find ways that limit code switching in English classes. Finally, the study also minds to determine the general frequency of code switching (CS), i.e. whether factors such as course type, teacher and student's proficiency have an impact on CS frequency.

It is hoped that the results of this study would be of benefit to language instructors and EFL learners. The results could help in guiding EFL instructors to effectively address code-switching- related issues. In addition, the results could help EFL learners be aware of the nature of code-switching, its types and functions.

5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The current study is confined to investigating the most common types and functions of code-switching.
- The current study is confined to English teachers of service courses at Palestine Ahliya University College (PAUC).
- The study was conducted during spring 2017.

6. REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND RELATED STUDIES

Linguists have investigated in their studies reasons, types and functions of Code-Mixing (CM) and Code-Switching (CS). Ayeomoni (2006) presented in his study the reasons of CS and CM. He pointed to sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic reasons. He also reported in his study other reasons of CM and CS like self-pride, integrity, comfortability, prestige and status. Other reasons include westernization, modernization, professionalism, efficiency and social advancement are also considered to be important reasons for CM (Akere, 1977; Bokamba, 1989; Hymes, 1962; Kachru, 1989; Kamwangamalu, 1989).

Code-Switching takes a variety of forms, it can occur within or at the end or beginning of sentences. Bista (2010), Hijazi (2013) and Esen (2016) highlighted the difference between Inter-sentential and Intra-sentential Code-Switching. In Inter-sentential Code-Switching, the language switch is carried out within sentence boundaries. This type is often observed between fluent bilingual speakers (Jisa, 2000). Esen (2016) and Bista (2010) as reported in Hijazi (2013), pointed out to the Intra-sentential Code-Switching and stated that it occurs in the middle of the sentence without hesitation or making pauses that may indicate the shift. This type of Code-Switching is more sophisticated than the first one.

The third type of Code-Switching is tag-switching, which is also indicated in Esen (2016) as Extra Code-Switching. "Tag-switching involves the inclusion of a tag (e.g. oh my God, you know, right etc.) in a language other than that of the whole sentence and these tags may freely insert at any point in a sentence" (Hijazi, 2013).

Bista (2010) states another type of Code- Switching, which is called "Code Changing". It is characterized by fluent intra-sentential shifts, transferring focus from one language to another. It is motivated by situational and stylistic factors and the switch between two languages is conscious and intentional.

As for studies conducted in the field, Masrahi (2016) carried out a research to explore the causes of Code Switching by Low Level EFL learners at Jazan University, Saudi Arabia. Code switching has been observed in both teachers and students' discourse. The research employs questionnaire technique to collect the data through teachers' perspective. The sample consists of 29 participants; all of them are highly qualified EFL teachers at Jazan University from multilingual backgrounds and diverse nationalities. The results demonstrate that students switch code on account of multiple reasons including learning and social factors. Nevertheless, code switching facilitates learners when they lack lexical or syntactical knowledge, The English Language Centre of Jazan University needs to devise a strategy to minimize it to the least possible level .

Abdullah (2015) conducted a study to posit some points touching the use of Code-switching and mixing of English and Arabic . The objectives of this study were to show whether Arab students at Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) code-switch and mix to English in their daily contacts or not and Why Arab students at AMU code switch and mix to English. It investigated 100 Arab students of different educational levels ,nationalities and ages. They are at 3 levels of education: Bachelors, Masters, and Ph.D. at AMU. The tool used for data collection in this study was a questionnaire. The result have shown that most of Arab students at AMU do code-switch and mix to English in their conversations. Findings also show that the reasons Arab students at AMU code-switch and mix to English refer to the lack of knowledge in English.

Johansson (2014) studied "code- switching in the English classroom aiming at answering the following main question: "What teachers do and what their students wish they did". Another main purpose of the interviews was to look into some teachers general views on code switching and also to find out when they code switched and whether they had a specific purpose in doing so. The researcher used interviews and a questionnaire in order to study the extent to which teachers code switch in the classroom and students attitudes towards it. The researcher found that five teachers use code switching. According to the syllabus, teaching should be conducted in English as far as possible. Results showed that they all gave somewhat different explanations as to why they code switch. The researcher also found that the majority of the students (54%) preferred a combination of English and Swedish when learning grammar. Swedish was in fact the least preferred language alternative (13%) whilst one third of the students preferred only English.

Makulloluwa (2013) Studied "Code switching in the Second Language classroom". The researcher used three research instruments, audio recording of the classes, teacher interviews and non-participant observations were utilized to collect qualitative data. The research found that students' L1 is used by teachers in varying degrees in the university ESL classroom to realize a number of communicative goals. The study also revealed that L1 is used for interactional, pedagogical and administrative purposes in the classroom. A majority of the teachers demonstrated a positive attitude towards the use of L1 in the classroom fulfills dual functions; a compensatory strategy in the face of low L2 comprehensibility of the students and also as a strategy to create a positive classroom

Bailey (2011) studied Code switching in the foreign language classroom: Students' attitudes and perceptions and the factors impacting them. The researcher conducted a survey among students enrolled in foreign language classes at The University of Toledo, Ohio, USA. In this section, information is provided on the methodological aspects of the study. This information includes information on the design of the questionnaire for the survey, the participants, collecting of the data, coding, and data entry. The researcher found that language anxiety does play a role in impacting students' perceptions and attitudes toward CS. High language anxiety students had more favorable attitudes toward their teachers' CS.

Abdul-Zahra (2010) studied code -switching in language: An Applied study. The researcher used observation to deal with the question "Why do bilinguals switch languages?" The researcher found that the interlocutor is the most critical factor influencing a speaker's code choice. She also discovers that there is a high correlation between speaker's patterns of language choice and his social network, the speaker's contacts in the community. Similarly, Bell (1991: 69-102) sees that the interlocutor or the audience is the main motivation behind variation in speech style. She also found that switching occurs when the participants wish to convey their attitude to the listener, for the native language (we-code) is used to show formality.

Bista (2010) claims that most fluent CS occurs unconsciously, and speakers are often surprised when told that they have been switching codes. The other finding of the study is that there were instances in which switching to L1 was initiated by the student. There were occasions where students requested the teacher to explain an area of ambiguity in L1 and the teacher had to oblige. This confirms the findings of Rolin-Ianziti and Brownlie (2002), who claim that CS is sometimes initiated by the students.

Badrul, and Kamaruzaman (2009) studied "teachers code- switching in classroom Instructions for low English proficient learners" He used a questionnaire, it was pilot tested. The actual study involved a random sampling survey of two hundred and ninety students. He found that a total of 72.7 percent of the respondents acknowledged that code switching was used, when the teachers were explaining the meaning of new words. More than 71 percent of the respondents, also, acknowledged that code- switching was used when teachers were elaborating on matters pertaining to classroom management.

Nilep (2006) studied "code switching in sociocultural linguistics. The researcher used foundational studies and early studies: The emergence of code switching. The researcher found that studies of identity and code- switching show that close observation of discourse can yield both empirically and theoretically rich understanding of the functions of language variation in social interaction. The researcher also found that speakers use communicative codes in their attempts linguistic or paralinguistic to communicate with other language users. Similarly, speakers may switch the form of their contributions in order to signal a change in situation, shifting relevance of social roles, or alternative ways of understanding a conversational contribution. In other words, switching codes is a means by which language users may contextualize communication.

Sert (2005) studied "the functions of code switching in TEFL classrooms". The researcher used classroom observations to collect data. He found that code switching can be used for self-expressions and is a way of modifying language for the sake of personal intentions. It is also used in order to build intimate interpersonal relationships among members of a bilingual community, it may be claimed that it is a tool for creating linguistic solidarity especially between individuals who share the same ethno-cultural identity.

Yletyinen (2004) studied The Functions of Code switching in TEFL Classrooms Discourse. He found that in Secondary school lessons, Finnish is used more by the pupils than by teachers. Among other things, the pupils have private conversations during the classes in Finnish.

7. RESEARCH METHOD

7.1. Introduction

This section aims at shedding light on the research method used in the study. It highlights the participants and explains why the classroom observation is used to test code- switching as a linguistic phenomenon. Then it tells how the research method is applied. Finally it shows how the data collected is processed and analyzed.

7.2. Participants

The sample of the study consisted of all part- time instructors of English service course (remedial, English skills 1 & English skills 2) at PAUC, totaling 11 teachers.

7.3. Instrumentation

To achieve the purpose of the study, the researchers used classroom observation .It is a good method as it enables the researchers to collect data in a genuine learning environment. That is to say both teachers and their learners are expected to behave naturally, so the data to be collected will be trustworthy. Therefore, the tool is supposed to measure what is intended to measure. In experimental research, validity of the research tool is important as it enables the researcher to draw some true conclusions about what is going on in TEFL.

7.4. Procedures

A series of focus points were then written down to match the research questions. A total of 10 classes, (20 minutes each) were observed. Attendance covered both morning and afternoon classes. It also included some arrangements with teachers to attend either the first part or second of each lesson. For more representations, attendance also covered different linguistic activities, such as reading comprehension, grammar, vocabulary etc.

7.5. Data Collection

Data was collected through classroom observation. The researchers observed the extent to which teachers switch codes in EFL classrooms while teaching face to face.

They also observed types and functions of code-switching in the TEFL classes in addition to the social and the linguistic factors affecting code-switching.

It is important to note here that confidentiality and privacy were all guaranteed by using fake names and symbols.

8. RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

8.1. Introduction

This section aims at addressing the research questions. It processes the data collected to draw some conclusions for questions 1 to 4. The section also outlines classroom observations.

8.2. Results and Discussion

To answer RQ1 '*To what extent do teachers switch codes in TEFL classrooms while teaching English service course?',* The researchers observed performance of the teachers in the class, It was highly noted that the total number of switches varied a lot from one instructor to another. For example, in a 10 minute-time morning class, one teacher switched 20 times, whereas in another afternoon class, the instructor switched more. During the first observation, the teacher spoke in Arabic with the students about a non-lesson related matter. In some cases, the teachers realized their mistake and switched back to English in the middle of the conversation.

As the researchers observed, teachers tend to switch for social and linguistic purposes. Code-switching was used when the teachers were checking if the students understood what he/she said, especially while explaining grammatical rules, difficult concepts, and when teachers provided explanations on grammatical aspects or items as well as in class tests to be administered. At the same time, the researchers found that code-switching was used while establishing contact with the learners. The function for which code-switching was least used when students were given instructions to complete tasks.

Part- timer teachers of service courses at PAUC tend to switch codes to some extent. The total number of switches varies from one instructor to another. For example, while one instructor switched (11) times, another switched 16; a third only 8 times. In the observations carried out, 44 attempts were spotted and analyzed for further analysis.

To answer RQ2 "*What are the main types of code-switching observed in the TEFL classes?"*, part- time teachers of service courses switched between and within sentences. More frequently, they switch between sentences. They switch to the student's L1 Arabic code, to make sure that the students are following up.

The data collected, as shown in table (1), indicate that both types of switches take place. The distribution of the switches shows a high frequency as well as a percentage (70.5%) for the inter-sentential type. More than two-thirds of the switches took place between sentences. The other type, however, occurs less (29.5%). Only one-third of the switches is categorized as an intra-sentential switches.

Table (1) : Types of Switches in English Classes

Types of switches	Frequencies	Percentage
Inter sentential	31	70.5%
Intra sentential	13	29.5%
Total	44	100%

To address RQ3 *"What language functions do the code-switches serve?",* the functions of the code-switches TEFL teachers at PAUC unconsciously tend to operationalize, are both instructional and referential. When giving instructions, they switch to L1, either, to make sure that their learners can understand the target task or to provide their learners with some basic knowledge.

The functions of code switching may be whether for affective or repetitive purposes. Affective functions serve expression of emotions and code- switching is used by the teachers in order to build intimate relations with the students, e.g. greeting others. It is also used for creating a supportive language environment in the classroom.

Another function of code- switching in classroom settings is the repetitive function. In this case, the teacher uses code switching in order to transfer the necessary knowledge for the students for clarifying purposes. The teacher code switches to native language in order to clarify a sentence or a meaning for an efficient comprehension.

In the data collected, five basic functions were identified as shown in table 2. They include suasion, giving instructions, asking questions, expressing meaning, and informing. Analysis shows a high percentage (about 59%) for informing, i.e. giving information. Asking questions came next with a percentage of 22.7% .

Table (2): Language Functions of the Switches

Functions	Frequencies	Percentages
Suasion	1	2.3%
Giving instructions	6	13.6%
Asking questions	10	22.7%
Expressing meaning	1	2.3%
Informing	26	59.1%

With regard to RQ4 *"What language categories are identified for the code switches used by TEFL teachers?"*, the data collected, as indicated in table 3,   showed different categories of noun, verb, adjective, prepositions, articles and conjunctions. Among these, English verbs and Arabic nouns scored the highest percentage (20.25% and 16.2% respectively). This shows that switching usually takes place in both categories of verbs and nouns. However, adjectives came next with an average of (9% and 7.2 respectively).

It was clear that TEFL teachers switch between nouns and verbs in English and Arabic. There are some differences within the same category, such as: 11.25% for English nouns and 16.2% for Arabic nouns.

Table (3): Language Categories

Language category	Code	Frequencies	Percentages
Nouns	English	25	11.25%
	Arabic	36	16.2%
Verbs	English	45	20.25%
	Arabic	35	15.75%
Adjectives	English	20	9%
	Arabic	16	7.2%
Prepositions	English	13	5.85%
	Arabic	12	5.4%
Conjunctions	English	8	3.6%
	Arabic	3	1.35%
Articles	English	2	0.9%
	Arabic	7	3.15%

9. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

TEFL teachers can avoid the use of code- switching, by using effective teaching methods such as total physical response, the discovery approach and the communicative approach. Such methods enable teachers to explain new meanings, and grammatical rules in the foreign language, by acting or negotiating the meaning to facilitate its understanding for students. More focus should be on learning by doing and the activation of pairings, grouping and role-playing to encourage students use the language rather than just being passive one through listening to their teachers. Teachers should play the role of facilitators rather than translators to L1. The adoption of such techniques in addition to some e-learning techniques will limit this huge number of switches.

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