

## **Code-switching: Awareness about Its Utility in Bilingual Classrooms**

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### **Abstract**

It is not uncommon to hear bilinguals mixing two languages when speaking in different situations. In multilingual classrooms such as Pakistani ones where most of the individuals have the knowledge of two or more languages, the linguistic phenomenon of combining languages is quite common. Teachers do code-switch while teaching English in the classroom and reason for this language alternation may be that English is taught as a main/compulsory subject in Pakistan and is used as a medium of instruction at school and college levels. Despite the significance of the phenomenon, the reasons for teachers' code-switching (henceforth CS) in bilingual classroom discourse have not been investigated in Pakistan although the research on the same issue has been carried out in the developed countries in the context quite different from the one existing in Pakistani classrooms.

The main purpose of the study was to identify the significance of each function of code-switching by asking teachers why they code-switch and what specific pedagogical functions code-switching serves in the classrooms. Quantitative study based on survey data was conducted to ascertain the teachers' awareness about the functions of code-switching at the macro level. Moreover, the questionnaire used in this study was designed in accordance with the objectives of the study. This article, although preliminary in nature, attempts to highlight and explain some of the functions of code-switching in the foreign language classroom. In short, this paper has made an attempt to better understand the trends of code-switching in Pakistani EFL classrooms.

**Key words:** Code-switching, language policy, bilingual context, classroom discourse, use of L1

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### **Introduction**

The issue of linguistic switch in foreign language teaching was not a major subject of scientific study in past. But, recently, code-switching has attracted a considerable amount of attention. Fundamentally, traditions of language alternation became known with the ban on the use of the learners' first language (L1) in foreign language teaching (L2) and it was introduced with the Direct Method at the end of the nineteenth century (Cook, 2001). Although some uses of the native language (NL) are acceptable for

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Communicative Language Teaching Methodology, there is still debate over the issue. For example some of the linguists argue that an open view towards CS may lead to an overuse/injudicious use of CS by teachers (Miles Turnbull 2001). Advocates of the exclusive use of the target language, however, are losing ground and most researchers now argue in favour of a more tolerant approach to L1 use. No one, however, takes the regressive position that CS should deal with all teaching purposes; almost all argue for the introduction of a limited use of CS for the reason of classroom related discourse. This position raises many questions in methodology. Which function of CS should be selected and integrated into classroom practices? Which ones should continue to be banned? On what grounds do we decide which code switching practices are permissible and which ones are not?

In Pakistan, insufficient attention is paid to the dimensions of bilingual classroom discourse and it is the need of time to develop more understanding in the context of Pakistani bilingual classroom discourse. Therefore, the purpose of the paper was to explore the significance of different functions of CS in Pakistani bilingual classroom context.

### **Theoretical Framework of Research**

This study was guided by a number of relevant theories such as Second Language Acquisition, Bilingualism, Classroom Discourse, and these theories helped to frame the theoretical structure for the study. Moreover, the researcher tried to connect these theories with the topic of the research to understand their implications in bilingual classrooms.

#### *Purpose of the Study*

The following points are summarized by the researcher to define the purpose of the study:

- i. To examine the significance of different functions of code-switching in bilingual classrooms in Pakistan.
- ii. To find out the utility of teachers' CS in bilingual classrooms.
- iii. To investigate teachers' trends about different functions of CS.

#### *Population of the Study*

English language teachers were constituted as the population of the study and simple random sampling technique was used to select 406 teachers as a sample for study.

#### *Delimitations of the Study*

This study **was** delimited to explore and analyze the significance of different functions of code-switching related to classroom discourse e.g. code-switching related to course contents and/or classroom agenda items.

### *Research Questions*

This study attempted to answer the following research questions:

- Q.1. How do teachers decide which CS practices are more permissible and which are less?
- Q.2. What are the reasons for which the English language teachers code-switch in bilingual classroom?
- Q.3. How English language teachers determine the significance of different functions of CS in the EFL classrooms?

### **Research Methodology**

In this study, the researcher selected a type of cross sectional survey to collect information from a sample that was drawn from a predetermined population. The questionnaire was designed on the structured pattern in order to obtain useful and precise information on specified issues related to this study. Survey research is one of the most common forms of research engaged in by educational researchers. It involves researchers asking a large group of people questions about a particular topic or issue. This asking of questions, related to the issue of interest, is called a survey (Fraenkela & Wallen, 2000). Moreover, the survey helped the researcher to deal with a profile of a large population through representative sampling. This study collected data at cross-sectional level, the subjects varied in their backgrounds in terms of region, socio-economic status, and education. The researcher considered all the prerequisites of the survey to produce transparent results of the study. Besides, the researcher conducted a pilot study to determine whether a developed questionnaire would suit the purposes of the intended survey or not. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire was also determined by the pilot project and, consequently, a well planned and structured questionnaire was used to get a reliable data. Oppenheim (1992) clarifies the need of this design of research in the following words:

The analytic, relational survey is set up specifically to explore the associations between particular variables. Its design is in many ways similar to that of laboratory experiments. However, like experiments in the laboratory, it is usually set up to explore specific hypotheses. It is less orientated towards representativeness and more towards finding associations and explanations, less towards description and enumeration and more towards prediction, less likely to ask 'how many' or 'how often' than 'why' and 'what goes with that'

The research questionnaire used in this study was developed to collect the information in the areas given below section-wise:

- Section.1: Demographic information (age, sex, profession)  
Education (qualification, experience and medium of education)
- Section.2: Reasons that prompt code-switching in the EFL classroom

### **Data Collection Strategies**

The researcher used questionnaire as a main tool for obtaining data and the process of data collection took almost three months. Moreover, the researcher collected the views and opinions of the subjects from different regions of the country (Pakistan).

### **Data Analysis**

The responses of the subjects were analyzed to determine the significance of functions of CS in the EFL classrooms by applying three methods. The value of mean, mode, and standard deviation was determined for all the variables but the significance of each function of code-switching was determined on the value of mean while considering its importance in the language research. As Brown (1988) defines: “the central tendency of groups is often described in terms of means and medians. Comparing the performance of groups will often involve looking at one or both of these basic characteristics” (p. 154). The following three statistical methods were used according to the demand of the research questions:

1. Relative frequency distribution: This method was used to obtain the general percentage of the subjects’ views about the functions of code-switching and its importance.
2. Comparative studies: The general purpose of comparative studies was to determine the importance of each variable in the cluster.
3. Pearson chi-square test was used to determine the relationship between the different sections of the questionnaire and the significance level for this test was set at 0.05. The main purpose of the test was to determine the significance value of the variables e.g. gender and qualification among the subjects. Finally, the results were demonstrated by using tables.

### **Operational Definitions of Code-switching**

Different researchers have explored different perspectives about the phenomena of CS e.g. according to Gumperz (1982) code-switching is: “the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or sub-systems” (p. 59). Zentella (1981) defines the phenomenon of CS in the following words: “The ability of bilinguals to alternate between the languages in their linguistic

repertoire is generally referred to as code-switching” (p. 109).

### **Functions of Code-switching in the Bilingual Classrooms**

Importance of code-switching in relation with ESL and EFL classrooms has increased around the world as an area of special interest and investigation. Investigation of this phenomenon in the classroom suggests that teachers’ code-switching whether in teacher-led classroom discourse or in teacher-student interaction serves many pedagogical purposes. Martin-Jones (1995) explains the role of CS in bilingual classroom in these words:

Whilst the languages used in a bilingual classroom are bound to be associated with different cultural values, it is too simplistic to claim that whenever a bilingual who has the same language background as the learners switches into shared codes, s/he is invariably expressing solidarity with the learners. Code-switching is employed in more subtle and diverse ways in bilingual classroom communication. Teachers and learners exploit code contrasts to demarcate different types of discourse, to negotiate and renegotiate joint frames of reference and to exchange meaning on the spur of the moment (p. 98).

Nzwanga (2000) studied the use of code-switching at the Ohio State University in a classroom of French as a second language. She video-taped, transcribed, and then, analyzed according to the conversation analysis method of sequential analysis and she determined the informal level and the formal level of code-switching in the classroom interaction. At the informal level, code-switching performed a role of administration or management. In the formal level, code-switching was formally used in order to do functions like introducing, explaining, commenting, practicing, the target language, and so forth. Nzwanga’s study highlighted the communicative and academic roles of code-switching engaged in that meticulous atmosphere. In this paper, the researcher mainly focused on the academic functions of CS. Similarly, using ethnographic observations, Merritt et. al. (1999) also explored the determinants of teachers’ code-switching between English, Swahili and mother tongue in three Kenyan primary schools. Reasons they put forward for code-switching include e.g. the socializing role of the teacher, the importance of variation and repetition, and the teacher’s linguistic competence and insecurity. Majority of researchers focused especially on the communicative functions of codes switching in teacher-led talk in ESL/EFL classrooms. Following the same pattern, adopting a qualitative approach, Flyman-Mattsson and Burenhult (1999) carried out a preliminary study of code-switching in a French-as-a- Foreign-Language classroom. The study explored an extensive use of code-switching in teacher’s interaction with students and defined different functions of code-

switching, which included: i. Linguistic insecurity, ii. Topic switch iii. Affective functions, iv. Socializing functions, v. Repetitive functions. According to Martin-Jones (1995), Guthrie's (1984) comparative study's result proved that the monolingual teacher was less able to teach those students who were at an early stage of development and at this point he placed the bilingual teacher at advantage. Guthrie (1984) identified five communicative functions of code-switching. According to his study, Chinese switching was used: i. for translation, ii. for we code iii. For procedures and directions iv. for clarification, and v. for checking understanding. Flyman-Mattson and Burenhult (1999) suggest that "teachers switch code whether in teacher-led classroom discourse or in teacher-student interaction, may be a sophisticated language use serving a variety of pedagogical purposes" (p. 25). However, Auer in Martin-Jones (1995) acknowledged that it is impossible to compile a comprehensive inventory of the functions of code-switching because the number of functions is infinite.

In the following discussions, eleven selected functions of code-switching are discussed to recognize their significance in the Diploma TEFL classrooms.

### Discussion on Results and Implications

In order to answer the research questions, the researcher determined the importance of all the eleven functions of code-switching by using relative frequency distribution, comparative studies and Pearson chi-square tests. All the variables (functions of CS) were individually analyzed to understand their significance in the bilingual classroom discourse. The summary of statistic analysis for all the eleven functions of CS is given in appendix no.1.

The following discussion is based on the statistical results provided in the above-mentioned table 1 and this table also presents an overview of the mean, percentage, and standard deviation for the eleven determined functions of code-switching.

Table 1  
Analysis of the reasons that prompt code-switching in the EFL classroom

	Variables	Number of subjects	%	Mean	SD
i.	Clarification				
	0 No response	5	1.2		
	1. Strongly disagree	7	1.7		
	2. Disagree	17	4.2		
	3. Uncertain	24	5.9	3.95	0.876
	4. Agree	276	68.0		
	5. Strongly agree	77	19.0		
	Total	406	100.0		
ii.	Giving instructions effectively				
	0 No response	7	1.7	3.79	0.995
	1. Strongly disagree	5	1.2		

	Variables	Number of subjects	%	Mean	SD
	2. Disagree	40	9.9		
	3. Uncertain	32	7.9		
	4. Agree	252	62.1		
	5. Strongly agree	70	17.2		
	Total	406	100.0		
iii.	Translation				
	0 No response	10	2.5		
	1. Strongly disagree	7	1.7		
	2. Disagree	56	13.8	3.68	1.127
	3. Uncertain	33	8.1		
	4. Agree	224	55.2		
	5. Strongly agree	76	18.7		
	Total	406	100.0		
iv.	Socializing				
	0 No response	7	1.7		
	1. Strongly disagree	12	3.0		
	2. Disagree	47	11.6	3.61	1.069
	3. Uncertain	58	14.3		
	4. Agree	224	55.2		
	5. Strongly agree	58	14.3		
	Total	406	100.0		
v.	Linguistic Competence				
	0 No response	10	2.5		
	1. Strongly disagree	25	6.2		
	2. Disagree	95	23.4	3.17	1.216
	3. Uncertain	73	18.0		
	4. Agree	162	39.9		
	5. Strongly agree	41	10.1		
	Total	406	100.0		
vi.	Topic Shift				
	0 No response	1	2.5		
	1. Strongly disagree	14	3.4		
	2. Disagree	68	16.7	3.37	1.130
	3. Uncertain	78	19.2		
	4. Agree	195	48.0		
	5. Strongly agree	41	10.1		
	Total	406	100.0		
vii.	Ease of expression				
	0 No response	10	2.5		
	1. Strongly disagree	8	2.0		
	2. Disagree	39	9.6	3.73	1.056
	3. Uncertain	29	7.1		
	4. Agree	257	63.3		
	5. Strongly agree	63	15.5		
	Total	406	100.0		
viii.	Emphasis				
	0 No response	11	2.7		
	1. Strongly disagree	6	1.5		
	2. Disagree	60	14.8		
	3. Uncertain	57	14.0	3.55	1.110
	4. Agree	217	53.4		
	5. Strongly agree	55	13.5		
	Total	406	100.0		

	Variables	Number of subjects	%	Mean	SD
ix.	Checking understanding				
	0 No response	11	2.7		
	1. Strongly disagree	8	2.0		
	2. Disagree	54	13.3	3.61	1.116
	3. Uncertain	42	10.3		
	4. Agree	231	56.9		
	5. Strongly agree	60	14.8		
Total	406	100.0			
x.	Repetitive Functions				
	0 No response	13	3.2		
	1. Strongly disagree	8	2.0		
	2. Disagree	71	17.5	3.37	1.136
	3. Uncertain	80	19.7		
	4. Agree	193	47.5		
	5. Strongly agree	41	10.1		
Total	406	100.0			
xi.	Creating a sense of belonging				
	0 No response	16	3.9		
	1. Strongly disagree	7	1.7		
	2. Disagree	35	8.6	3.64	1.135
	3. Uncertain	54	13.3		
	4. Agree	232	57.1		
	5. Strongly agree	62	15.3		
Total	406	100.0			

### Clarification

The table 1 shows that 5 respondents (1.2%) gave no response to clarification as a reason for CS in the EFL classroom. 7 subjects strongly disagreed (1.7%) and 17 disagreed (4.2%) to this function of CS. 24 subjects (5.9%) were uncertain about the function of clarification as a reason for CS in the EFL classrooms. 276 agreed (68.0%) and 77 strongly agreed (19.0%) with this variable as a reason for CS in the EFL classroom. Aichuns (n.d.) outlines that “teachers’ concerns for unfamiliar vocabulary or expression often prompt them to code-switch. When the teacher is not sure whether the students know the meaning of the target language word or expression in question, then it is common for him/her to offer the Chinese translation for clarification.” The sample mean was 3.95 and the sample standard deviation was 0.876 for this variable. A significant difference was found in the views of males and females about the above mentioned variable ( $\chi^2 = 15.432$ ;  $df = 5$ ,  $p$ -value = 0.009). The results show that out of 172, 128 males agreed and 1 disagreed to this function of code-switching. Out of 234, 148 females agreed and 16 disagreed to this function of code-switching. No significant difference was found ( $\chi^2 = 9.073$ ;  $df = 10$ ,  $p$ -value = 0.525) among Graduate, M.A and M.Phil respondents about this function of CS.



### **Giving Instructions Effectively**

The results indicate that 7 subjects gave no response to this function (1.7%) of CS. 5 subjects strongly disagreed (1.2%), 40 disagreed (9.9%) and 32 were uncertain (7.9%) about this reason for CS. 252 subjects agreed (62.1%), 70 strongly agreed (17.2%) to this reason as the main function of CS in the EFL classroom. The sample mean was 3.79 and standard deviation was 0.995. No difference was found ( $\chi^2= 2.040$ ;  $df = 5$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.844$ ) in the opinion of males and females about the importance of this communicative functions of CS in the EFL classroom. The results show that out of 172,110 males agreed and 15 disagreed to this function of code-switching. Out of 234,142 females agreed and 25 disagreed to this function of code-switching. No significant difference was found ( $\chi^2=15.312$ ;  $df = 10$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.121$ ) in the opinion of graduate, MA and M.Phil respondents about this communicative function of CS.

### **Translation**

Teachers often switch their code to translate or elaborate the important message during the process of explaining new vocabulary, grammar points or instructions instead of continuing in the foreign language. It reduces the comprehension burden and makes it easier for students to focus on the important message conveyed. Krashen (1985) explained his views about translation and says:

The teacher speaks a little in one language, and then translates what was said into the other language. When this happens, students listen to the message in their own language and pay no attention to the English input. In addition, the teacher does not have to attempt to make the English message more comprehensible by using gestures, realia or paraphrase, since a translation is available (p. 81).

Atkinson (1987) also warns that excessive use of code-switching for translation is likely to result:

The teacher and/or the students begin to feel that they have not ‘really’ made clear or understood any item of language until it has been translated. The teacher and/or the students fail to observe the distinctions between equivalence of form, semantic equivalence, and pragmatic features and thus oversimplify to the point of using crude and inaccurate translation (pp. 241-247).

The results show that 10 subjects (2.5%) gave no response to this function of CS. 7 subjects strongly disagreed (1.7%) and 56 disagreed

(13.8%) and 33 were uncertain (8.1%). 224 agreed (55.2%) and 76 strongly agreed (18.7%) to this function as the reason for CS in the EFL classroom. The results show no difference was found in the opinion of males and females about the importance of this communicative functions of CS in the EFL classroom ( $\chi^2 = 8.902$ ;  $df = 5$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.113$ ). The results indicate that out of 172, 96 males agreed and 22 disagreed to this function of code-switching. Out of 234, 128 females agreed and 34 disagreed to this function of code-switching. A significant difference was found ( $\chi^2 = 18.911$ ;  $df = 10$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.041$ ) in the opinion of graduate, MA and M. Phil respondents about this communicative function of CS.

### **Socializing Function**

It was observed that the teachers switched from the target language to the native language and sometimes also expressed themselves in the target language (English language) while expressing their feelings of pleasure and displeasure. Flyman-Mattson and Burenhult (1999) define this kind of code-switching by dividing it in two parts, affective function and socializing function (p. 10). They believe that a common reason for code-switching among people who speak one standard language along with another language in a more vernacular style is to use one of the languages for affective functions. Flyman-Mattsson and Burenhult (1999) also define the affective functions of code-switching in the domain of classroom, for example, the spontaneous expression of emotions and emotional understanding in interacting with students.

The analysis of the reasons presented in table 1 shows that 7 respondents (1.7%) did not give response to this function of CS. 12 respondents (3.0%) strongly disagreed and 47 disagreed (11.6%) to this function as a reason for CS in the EFL classroom. 58 respondents were uncertain about this reason for CS (14.3%). 224 agreed (55.2%) and 58 strongly agreed (14.3%) with this function of CS as a reason for switches in the EFL classroom. No difference was found ( $\chi^2 = 6.445$ ;  $df = 5$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.265$ ) in the views of males and females about this function of CS. The results show that out of 172, 100 males agreed and 14 disagreed to this function of code-switching. Out of 234, 124 females agreed and 33 disagreed to this function of code-switching. No difference was found in the views of graduate, M.A, M.Phil subjects about the significance of this function of CS. ( $\chi^2 = 14.347$ ;  $df = 10$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.158$ ).

### **Linguistic Competence**

Aichuns (n.d.) while explaining the teachers' linguistic competence and insecurity claims that most English language teachers are native speakers of Chinese. Rather than true bilinguals they are monolingual individuals who

have skills and knowledge in the target language. It is possible due to this reason that they sometimes cannot recall the required target language word especially at the moment of utterance. This situation truly represents the context of Pakistani English language teaching situation where most of the English language teachers are native speakers of Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Balochi, Pushto etc and have skill oriented knowledge in the target language. This is not only true of Pakistani situation and can be replicated in most of the post colonial nations. Flyman-Mattson and Burenhult (1999) explain that teachers' code-switching due to linguistic insecurity may damage the students' confidence in the teachers' proficiency of the foreign language. A possible solution for the teacher might, therefore, be to avoid words or structures he/she cannot control or quite simply restructure the utterances. Considering it as a vital issue, Flyman-Mattson and Burenhult (1999) define that linguistic insecurity in a classroom interaction is a more complicated matter. There are a number of possible reasons for the switching from one language to another and the first of these is the notion that a speaker may not be able to express him/herself in one language so he/she switches to the other to compensate the deficiency (Crystal, 1987). This kind of conception in the classroom is very dangerous for the teachers and the learners especially in reference to EFL teachers.

The results of this function of CS show that 10 subjects did not give response to this variable (2.5%). 25 strongly disagreed (6.2%) and 95 disagreed (23.4%) to this reason for CS and 73 respondents (18.0%) were uncertain about it. 162 respondents agreed (39.9%) and 41 strongly agreed (10.1%) to this reason for CS in the EFL classroom. This reason is the last important reason for CS in the EFL classrooms in the hierarchical order of the reasons for CS. No difference was reported by the subjects ( $\chi^2=6.734$ ;  $df = 5$ ,  $p$ -value =0.241) in the views of males and females about this function of CS. The results show that out of 172, 75 males agreed and 41 disagreed to this function of code-switching. Out of 234, 87 females agreed and 54 disagreed to this function of code-switching. A difference was found in views of graduate ( $\chi^2= 14.647$ ;  $df =10$ ,  $p$ -value=0.145), M.A, M. Phil subjects about the significance of this function of CS.

### **Topic Shift**

Code-switching for topic shift is a relatively frequent phenomenon in the classroom as instructions are usually carried out in the students' mother tongue. The switch of this kind signifies that teachers consider the use of first language as a compulsory means of explaining rules of the foreign language. Martin-Jones (2003) defines that "in natural discourse this kind of topic switch is not very common, mainly because metalinguistic conversations are rare outside the classroom". Flyman-Mattson and Burenhult (1999) give two reasons: the message is so important that the

teacher is not willing to risk a misinterpretation, or the code-switching is used to get the students' attention. Likewise, it was found in the analysis of this function that 10 respondents (2.5%) gave no response to this function of CS. 14 strongly disagreed (3.4%) and 68 disagreed (16.7%) to this function as the reason for CS in the EFL classroom. It is very interesting that 78 respondents (19.2%) were uncertain about this function as a reason for CS. 195 agreed (48.0%) and 41 strongly agreed (10.1%) with this function of CS in the EFL classroom. The importance of this variable in the hierarchical order comes at the second last number. No difference was found in the views of males and females about this function of CS ( $\chi^2 = 1.877$ ;  $df = 5$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.866$ ) The results show that out of 172, 87 males agreed and 25 disagreed to this function of code-switching. Out of 234, 108 females agreed and 43 disagreed to this function of code-switching. Graduate, M.A and M. Phil subjects' views were not found ( $\chi^2 = 13.401$ ;  $df = 10$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.202$ ) different about this function of CS.

### **Ease of Expression**

The results showed that 10 subjects (2.5%) gave no response to this variable and 8 strongly disagreed (2.0%) and 39 disagreed (9.6%) to this reason for CS. 29 respondents (7.1%) were uncertain about this reason for CS. Only 29 respondents (7.1%) reported uncertainty about this variable, a small number of subjects reported uncertainty about this function, as compared to other functions e.g. 'topic shift', 'linguistic competence' and 'socializing'. Moreover, for this reason for CS, 257 respondents agreed (63.3%) and 63 strongly agreed (15.5%) with this reason for CS in the EFL classroom. While explaining the code-switching function for ease of expression, Aichuns (n.d.) defines that in other intra-sentential code-switching examples, the teacher may switch to English for ease of expression when an English word or expression finds its equivalent in several Chinese terms or when its Chinese equivalent is not easy to retrieve. In this study, no difference was found ( $\chi^2 = 5.460$ ;  $df = 5$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.362$ ) in the views of males and females about the importance of this function of CS. The results show that out of 172, 119 males agreed and 14 disagreed to this function of code-switching. Out of 234, 138 females agreed and 25 disagreed to this function of code-switching. Graduate, M.A and M.Phil subjects' views were found different ( $\chi^2 = 27.910$ ;  $df = 10$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.002$ ) about this functions of CS.

### **Emphasis**

The analysis for this reason for CS indicates that 11 subjects (2.7%) did not report about this reason and 6 strongly disagreed (1.5%) and 60 disagreed (14.8%) to this reason for CS. 57 respondents (14.0%) were

uncertain about the importance of this reason for CS in the EFL classroom. 217 respondents agreed (53.4%) and 55 strongly agreed (13.5%) with this reason for CS in the EFL classroom. While analyzing this reason, no difference was found ( $\chi^2 = 6.165$ ;  $df = 5$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.290$ ) in the view of males and females about this function of CS. The results reported that out of 172, 102 males agreed and 23 disagreed to this function of code-switching. Out of 234, 115 females agreed and 37 disagreed to this function of code-switching. Graduate, M.A and M. Phil subjects' views were not found different ( $\chi^2 = 10.712$ ;  $df = 10$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.380$ ) about this functions of CS.

### **Checking Understanding**

The table 1 illustrates that 11 subjects (2.7%) gave no response to this function of CS. 8 subjects only strongly disagreed (2.0%) and 54 disagreed (13.3%) to this function as a reason for CS. 42 subjects (10.3%) were uncertain about the importance of this reason for CS. 231 agreed (56.9%) and 60 strongly agreed (14.8%) with the importance of this variable as a reason for CS in the EFL classroom. Flyman-Mattson and Burenhult (1999) explain that the main reason for teachers' code-switching to L1 of the students is to make the students understand their utterances. Gumperz (1982) and Kamwangamalu and Lee (1991 in Brice 2000: 102) have identified the function of reiteration for checking understanding. No difference was found ( $\chi^2 = 6.655$ ;  $df = 5$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.248$ ) in the view of males and females about this functions of CS. The results show that out of 172, 106 males agreed and 21 disagreed to this function of code-switching. Out of 234, 125 females agreed and 33 disagreed to this function of code-switching. Graduate, M.A and M. Phil subjects' views were not found different ( $\chi^2 = 12.877$ ;  $df = 10$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.231$ ) about this functions of CS.

### **Repetitive Function**

The analysis of this reason for CS shows that 13 subjects (3.2%) gave no response to this reason for CS in the EFL classroom and 8 strongly disagreed (2.0%) and 71 disagreed (17.5%) to this reason for CS. 80 subjects (19.7 %) were uncertain about the importance of this function as a reason for CS and this was the highest number of subjects who showed their uncertainty about the importance of this reason for CS. 193 agreed (47.5%) and 41 strongly agreed (10.1%) about the importance of this function as a reason for CS in the EFL classroom. Flyman-Mattson and Burenhult (1999) define that "the repetition in the first language can be either partial or full and is often expanded with further information, but more frequently code-switching is used as a repetition of the previously uttered sentences" (p. 11). Commonly in the repetitive form of code-switching, the target language precedes the first language. Eldridge (1996) claims that "messages are

reinforced, emphasized or clarified where the messages have already been transmitted in one code but not understood” (p. 303). No significant difference was found in the views of males and females ( $\chi^2= 4.839$ ;  $df = 5$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.436$ ) about this functions of CS. The results show that out of 172, 90 males agreed and 30 disagreed to this function of code-switching. Out of 234, 103 females agreed and 41 disagreed to this function of code-switching. Graduate, M.A. and M. Phil subjects’ views were found different ( $\chi^2= 23.839$ ;  $df =10$ ,  $p\text{-value} =0.008$ ) about this functions of CS.

### **Creating a Sense of Belonging**

The analysis of this function of code-switching reflects that 16 subjects reported no response, 7 subjects strongly disagreed (1.7%) and 35 disagreed (8.6%) to this function as a reason for CS in the EFL classrooms. 54 subjects (13.3%) reported uncertainty about this function, 232 agreed (57.1 %) and 62 strongly agreed (15.3%) with this reason for CS in the EFL classroom. Flyman-Mattson and Burenhult (1999) define that socializing functions are closely related to affective functions i.e. when the speaker signals friendship and solidarity by using the addressee’s first language (p. 11). It seems as if the teacher code-switches when he/she wishes to be friendly with the students. It shows an obvious attempt on the teacher’s part to fraternize with the students to create a positive attitude towards the task. However, the switch might as well be ironically intended, since the student is late for class and must then be classified as having an affective function. Crystal (1987) further defines that “switching commonly occurs when an individual wishes to express solidarity with a particular social group. Rapport is established between the speaker and the listener when the listener responds with a similar switch” (p. 14). During the analysis of the data, no difference of opinion was found in the views of males and females ( $\chi^2= 5.815$ ;  $df =5$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.325$ ) about this functions of CS. The results show that out of 172, 107 males agreed and 11 disagreed to this function of code-switching. Out of 234, 125 females agreed and 24 disagreed to this function of code-switching. No difference was found in the views of graduate, M.A and M.Phil respondents ( $\chi^2= 8.635$ ;  $df =10$ ,  $p\text{-value} =0.567$ ) about this functions of CS.

### **Comments on the Findings**

In this study, majority of the teachers agreed that the following reasons prompt code-switching in the EFL classrooms. The results of the study also showed that the subjects were found divided in the ranking of the significance of reasons for code-switching but no reason was totally rejected by the subjects despite the difference of opinion about the importance of these reasons for CS. The value of each function of code-switching, mentioned below, was graded by the subjects who reported their consent on

1 to 5 ranking system about the significance of these functions/reasons for code-switching. These determined values for each of the functions of CS are given below in the hierarchal order as are determined by the subjects.

1. Clarification 276 (68.0%).
2. Ease of expression 257 (63.3%)
3. Giving instructions effectively 252 (62.1%).
4. Creating a sense of belonging 232 (57.1%)
5. Checking understanding 231 (56.9%).
6. Translation 224 (55.2%).
7. Socializing 224 (55.2%)
8. Emphasis 217 (53.4%)
9. Repetitive functions 193 (47.5%)
10. Topic shift 195 (48.0%)
11. Linguistic competence 162 (39.9%)

The results of the study demonstrate that the code-switching mostly occurred in the classroom to cater for the needs of the students. As far as the teachers' linguistic competence was concerned, only 162 subjects (39.9%) agreed to this variable as a reason for CS. It was the last important reason in all the reasons for CS. The results of the quantitative data confirmed that the respondents accepted all the eleven functions as the reasons that prompted code-switching in the bilingual classroom discourse though they were split about the significance of these functions of code-switching. There was not even a single reason that was totally rejected by the subjects in relation to its utility in the EFL classroom discourse. Clarification was the most important reason for CS and linguistic competence was the least important reason for CS.

## Conclusion

If we look at the issues of bilingual classrooms with reference to Pakistani situation and as the objectives outlined for this study, it can be confidently claimed that code-switching can cater for the needs of the students. So it is strongly recommended that use of code-switching as a strategy should be introduced for teaching English in the bilingual classroom discourse but keeping in view the level of the students. For this development, language policy along with other issues should take care of sensitive issue of percentage of code-switching with reference to bilingual classroom discourse. With the settlement of these issues, both teachers and students can establish classroom discourse in accordance with the requirement of the target language learning demands. Aguirre (1988) defines that "language alternations or code-switching in the classroom are obvious and unavoidable with culturally and linguistically diverse children and

educators should regard language alternations as a communicative strategy employed by the students learning a second language.” Unfortunately, a true understanding of language alternation behaviours is a phenomenon still not well understood by professionals in education and it may be perceived as a controversial issue (Cheng & Butler, 1989; Reyes, 1995). However, it is the consensus of many in the field of bilingual education that it is a normal occurrence, and its use as a language choice in instruction is perfectly legitimate (Brice, 2000a, 2000b; Brice & Roseberry-McKibbin, 1999). Due to this misunderstanding, educators, course developers, and teachers misunderstand language processes and cannot devise classroom strategies based on the appropriate use of languages. Therefore, it is essential for teachers and educators to understand the utility and significance of code-switching in the bilingual classroom discourse.

This study has provided significant results to highlight that the teachers don't know about the limits of the use of CS and for which functions they can/should code-switch to cater for the needs of the students. This serious situation is a main reason for students' low proficiency in the target language and due to the same imbalanced situation teachers' effectiveness is also suffering. The researcher agrees that teachers should not treat the use of CS by themselves or by learners as a sin, and CS has a place in ELT methodology if not used imprudently. Moreover, it can be claimed on the basis of the results that both learners and teachers need to be made aware of the limitations of CS because insensible use of CS can have long-lasting harmful ramifications on the learners' production of the target language. Finally, more researches in this area can open new avenues/dimensions because a better understanding of code-switching and bilingualism will have positive impacts on the planning for bilingual education.

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*Appendix 1***Summary of Statistics Analysis of Cluster 3.6 of Section 3**

Reasons that prompt CS in the EFL classroom	N		Mean	Median	Mode	SD
	Valid	Missing				
Clarification	406	0	3.95	4.00	4	.876
Giving instructions effectively	406	0	3.79	4.00	4	.995
Translation	406	0	3.68	4.00	4	1.127
Socializing	406	0	3.61	4.00	4	1.069
Linguistics competence	406	0	3.17	3.50	4	1.216
Topic shift	406	0	3.37	4.00	4	1.130
Ease of expression	406	0	3.73	4.00	4	1.056
Emphasis	406	0	3.55	4.00	4	1.110
Checking understanding	406	0	3.61	4.00	4	1.116
Repetitive function	406	0	3.37	4.00	4	1.136
Creating a sense of belonging	406	0	3.64	4.00	4	1.135

*Appendix 2***“Survey of Teachers to Investigate the Reasons for Code-Switching in Bilingual Classroom”**

Dear Respondent

**Please fill in the enclosed questionnaire carefully and don't leave any column unfilled. I assure you that all the data will be kept confidential and will be used in research work only.**

Your cooperation in this regard shall be highly appreciated.

Thanking you in anticipation.

**Basic information about research topic**

A number of previous research studies in the area of sociolinguistics & applied linguistics have talked about the role of bilingualism /multilingualism in the classroom discourse. But it is quite difficult to say that any research work addressed the issues of bilingualism in the context of Pakistani classroom discourse. The present study addresses the issues by examining the use of language alternation/ code-switching and the role it plays in EFL in Pakistani classroom discourse. Research on CS in bilingual classroom now spans almost two decades. It has been cross-disciplinary in nature and has thus reflected different currents of influences. The 1970s and the early 1980s saw the development of a substantial body of classroom-based research in this particular context especially in bilingual and multilingual settings such as Canada, South America, Africa and South Asia. So this survey is designed to determine the teachers' and students' attitude towards the implementation and use of code-switching in the bilingual classroom discourse.

**Section 1: Demographic information**

**Please tick (√) the appropriate check box below.**

- i. Name \_\_\_\_\_ (Optional ) Profession \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. Gender: 1. Male  2. Female
- iii. Age: 1. 25-30  2. 31-35  3. 36-40  4. 41&above
- iv. Qualification: 1. Graduation  2. M.A  3. M.Phil  4. PhD
- v. Currently working in: 1. City  2. Town  3.  4. Village
- vi. Teaching experience (in years): 1. 1-5  2. 6-10  3. 11-15  4. 16-20  5. 21+

- vii. Your own medium of education:  
 1. Urdu  2. English  3. Both

## Section 2: The communicative functions of CS in the EFL classroom

**Pl encircle the appropriate number against each statement**

Reasons that prompt CS in the EFL classroom	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
23. Do you think that the following reasons prompt code-switching in the EFL classroom?					
i. Clarification	1	2	3	4	5
ii. giving instructions effectively	1	2	3	4	5
iii. translation	1	2	3	4	5
iv. socializing	1	2	3	4	5
v. linguistic competence	1	2	3	4	5
vi. topic shift	1	2	3	4	5
vii. ease of expression	1	2	3	4	5
viii. emphasis	1	2	3	4	5
ix. checking understanding	1	2	3	4	5
x. repetitive functions	1	2	3	4	5
xi. creating a sense of belonging	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you very much for your assistance. If you have any query about the survey, please do not hesitate to contact the researcher on this no.0336-5299501-0519057766 or send email at [agmsfa@yahoo.com](mailto:agmsfa@yahoo.com)