

Code-Switching Used in Student Presentation in EFL Classroom

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ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to find out two main issues, namely kinds and reasons of code-switching used in student presentation in EFL (English As a Foreign Language) classroom. To get the data, the researcher used qualitative descriptive method as the research methodology. The subject of the research was the fourth semester of English education department in Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidenreng Rappang. There were 6 students which were 6 female from 17 students as the target of this research. To answer two main issues, researcher used two instruments which were observation sheet and semi-structure interview. The results of this research revealed four kinds of code-switching: intra-sentential switching, intersentential switching, establishing continuity switches, and tag switching. The findings indicated that intra-sentential switching occurred 3 times, intersentential switching 6 times, establishing continuity switches 3 times, and tag switching only once. Notably, intersentential code-switching was the most frequently used type by the fourth-semester students during their group presentations, while tag switching was the least utilized. While there were also eight reasons of code-switching used by students, namely comfort and fluency 6 times, academic context 3 times, audience needs 3 times, interaction and engagement 2 times, environmental influence 1 times, skill development 3 times, situations and contexts 2 times, and difficulties in translation 2 times. Interestingly, the fourth-semester students predominantly employed comfort and fluency in their group presentations as the reason, whereas difficulties in translation was used the least.

Keywords : Code-Switching; Student Presentation; EFL

INTRODUCTION

Language is a multifaceted and evolving system of communication that allows humans to express thoughts, emotions, and transmit information through various symbols, sounds, and gestures. It is governed by a set of rules known as grammar, which encompasses syntax (sentence structure), phonology (sound patterns), and morphology (word formation). However, language is not merely a tool for day-to-day communication but also serves as a medium for artistic expression, cultural exchange, and intellectual exploration. One of the essential features of language is its capacity to represent abstract concepts and ideas, allowing humans to communicate complex and nuanced thoughts. This ability is facilitated by a rich vocabulary and the use of figurative language, such as metaphors, idioms, and proverbs, which further enhance the communicative power of language.

Language also plays a significant role in society. It is the primary tool for establishing and maintaining relationships, shaping thoughts, and influencing behaviors. Language serves various functions within society, from facilitating social interaction to promoting cooperation and understanding among individuals. Moreover, it plays a crucial role in the formation of identity. Individuals use language to express their cultural, social, and personal affiliations, which can provide a sense of belonging to a particular community or group. In this way, language helps individuals navigate their social world, create meaningful connections, and assert their position within society.

Furthermore, language is inextricably linked to social contexts and is shaped by various factors such as region, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and gender. The field of sociolinguistics is concerned with examining the relationship between language and society. It explores how different social elements, such as culture, ethnicity, class, and gender, influence language use and its variations. Sociolinguistics also looks at how language reflects and reinforces social hierarchies, power structures, and societal norms. For example, the use of regional dialects or accents can signal a person's geographic origin, while the use of specialized jargon or slang may reflect membership in a particular social group. By understanding language's connection to social contexts, sociolinguistics provides insight into human behavior and social interactions.

A core concept within sociolinguistics is "code," which refers to a system of language used in specific social contexts or by groups. This encompasses various dialects, registers, and even entirely different

languages employed by individuals or communities in different settings. One prominent phenomenon related to language use is code-switching. As defined by Holmes (1992), code-switching refers to the practice of alternating between two or more languages or varieties of language within a single conversation or discourse. This process can occur between sentences, within sentence fragments, or even at the word or morpheme level. Code-switching is not limited to multilingual individuals but also occurs when speakers use different language varieties or registers to communicate in varying social contexts.

Code-switching occurs frequently in interactions where individuals speak multiple languages, and it is an essential part of communication for many multilingual communities. Multilingual individuals often incorporate elements from various languages when interacting with others, depending on the context and the social dynamics of the conversation. Code-switching can serve various communicative purposes, including facilitating better understanding, signaling group membership, or expressing cultural identity. It is important to distinguish between code-switching and plurilingualism. While plurilingualism refers to an individual's ability to use multiple languages, code-switching refers to the act of shifting between languages during communication.

In educational settings, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, code-switching is a common occurrence. EFL classrooms are designed to teach English to students in countries where English is not the native language. These classrooms focus on developing skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English, while also addressing the cultural and social dimensions of the language. Given the diverse linguistic backgrounds of the students in EFL classrooms, code-switching often happens as students switch between their native languages and English, depending on the situation. This phenomenon has important implications for both teaching and learning in these settings, as it can influence communication, comprehension, and the overall learning experience.

Code-switching in EFL classrooms can occur for a variety of reasons. It can help students better understand complex topics, clarify meanings, or express ideas that may be difficult to articulate in English. Additionally, students may switch languages to accommodate the needs of their peers, to clarify instructions, or to enhance engagement in classroom discussions. However, excessive code-switching can also have negative effects, disrupting the flow of communication, creating confusion, or hindering the development of English proficiency. Therefore, it is important to study the types of code-switching that occur in EFL classrooms and the reasons

behind these practices to better understand their impact on student learning. This research is motivated by the observed phenomenon of code-switching during group presentations in EFL classrooms. During these presentations, students often switch between English and their native languages, which raises important questions about the role of code-switching in the learning process. While code-switching may serve as a tool for communication and understanding, it can also pose challenges if overused. The research aims to investigate the types of code-switching used by students during presentations and the reasons for their use, contributing to a better understanding of how code-switching functions within EFL classrooms.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sociolinguistics and Code-Switching

Sociolinguistics is an interdisciplinary field that connects language with social structures and contexts, examining how language varies across different social groups and situations. Code-switching, a key concept in sociolinguistics, refers to the alternation between two or more languages or dialects in a conversation. This phenomenon is most commonly observed among bilingual or multilingual individuals who shift from one language to another depending on various factors such as topic, audience, and context. According to Holmes (1992), code-switching can occur at different linguistic levels, such as between sentences, within sentences, or even within a word. It is not simply a random occurrence but a structured and purposeful practice that serves specific communicative functions.

Code-Switching in Multilingual Contexts

In multilingual societies, code-switching allows individuals to express themselves more effectively by using the most appropriate language for a given context. For example, a speaker may switch from one language to another when discussing a topic that requires more precise terminology or when engaging with different social groups. The use of multiple languages in communication highlights the interdependence of languages and shows how speakers navigate the complexities of their linguistic environments. Code-switching is thus not just a linguistic choice but also a social practice that reflects identity, cultural affiliation, and social dynamics.

Types of Code-Switching

Hoffman (1991) identifies four main types of code-switching: intra-sentential switching, intersentential switching, establishing continuity

switches, and tag switching. These types help categorize the various ways in which bilingual or multilingual speakers alternate between languages during conversation.

Intra-sentential Switching

Intra-sentential switching refers to the practice of switching languages within a single sentence. This type of switching can occur at any point within a sentence, whether between phrases or clauses. For example, a speaker might say, "I am studying for my exam, but *saya belum siap*" (I am not ready). This type of switching is common when a speaker wants to express an idea but lacks the right words in one language, switching to the other language to complete the sentence.

Intersentential Switching

Intersentential switching occurs at the sentence level, where a speaker alternates languages between separate sentences. For instance, a speaker might begin a conversation in English: "I have an important meeting tomorrow," and then switch to their native language: "*Besok harus siap-siap banget*" (Tomorrow I need to prepare a lot). This type of switching often marks a shift in topic or emphasis.

Establishing Continuity Switches

Establishing continuity switches are used to maintain the flow of conversation or establish a connection between ideas, topics, or speakers. For example, a speaker might say, "She is a good student, and *dia sangat rajin*" (and she is very diligent).

Tag Switching

Tag switching involves inserting short phrases or tag questions from one language into a sentence primarily in another language. These tag phrases, such as "you know," "right," or "okay," are often used to seek agreement or clarification. For instance: "I'll see you tomorrow, okay?" or "I love this song, right?"

Reasons for Code-Switching

There are various reasons why bilingual or multilingual speakers engage in code-switching. According to Hoffman (1991), bilingual individuals switch languages for several purposes, which can be broadly categorized into communicative, social, and emotional functions.

1. **Lexical Need.** One of the most common reasons for code-switching is the need to express a concept or idea for which there is no suitable word in one language. This is especially common in academic or technical discussions.
2. **Emotional Expression and Identity.** Speakers may switch languages to express emotions more authentically or to signal cultural affiliation and identity. This switching adds emotional depth and personal resonance to communication.
3. **Clarification and Emphasis.** Code-switching is used to clarify a point, emphasize an idea, or ensure comprehension. For example, a teacher might switch to a student's native language to explain a complex concept more accessibly.
4. **Contextual and Social Considerations.** The conversational context and the speaker-listener relationship can influence the use of code-switching. Formal versus informal settings often dictate language choice, and switching may serve to establish rapport or express solidarity.

Code-Switching in EFL Classrooms

In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, code-switching is a common and often beneficial practice. Teachers and students frequently switch between English and their native languages to enhance comprehension and communication. This practice is particularly evident during classroom interactions and group presentations, where students often alternate languages to explain ideas more clearly or to ensure that their peers understand the material. Code-switching in such situations helps reduce anxiety, increases student confidence, and improves clarity especially when dealing with complex academic content.

Research by Gumperz (1982), Nunan and Carter (2001), Harmilawati (2018), and Rahmat et al. (2018) highlights both the positive and negative pedagogical implications of code-switching in EFL contexts. On the one hand, it supports student learning by facilitating participation, allowing learners to express themselves more effectively, and bridging gaps in understanding. On the other hand, excessive reliance on code-switching may hinder the development of English language proficiency, as it may reduce students' exposure to and practice with the target language. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to strike a balance—using code-switching strategically to aid comprehension while promoting consistent use of English to build language skills.

METHOD

Design and Sample

This study employed a qualitative research design to investigate the types and reasons for code-switching used by students during their group presentations in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. As stated by Moleong (2017), qualitative research seeks to understand phenomena as experienced by individuals in their natural context, making it appropriate for exploring language behavior in real classroom settings. The participants were second-semester students from the English Education Department at Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidenreng Rappang. A total of 37 students were observed during three classroom presentation sessions. From this group, 10 students were selected purposively to participate in semi-structured interviews. The selection was based on their active involvement in presentations and their willingness to participate in follow-up discussions. The number of participants was flexible, depending on the saturation of data. If sufficient information was obtained from fewer participants, the sample size was reduced. Conversely, if more data were needed, additional participants were included, following the guidance of Saldana (2009).

Instruments and Procedures

The primary instrument in this study was the researcher, who acted as the planner, observer, interviewer, and data analyst (Creswell, 1994). To ensure the credibility and accuracy of the data, multiple instruments were used, including classroom observations, observation sheets, audio recordings, interview guidelines, and field notes. During the classroom observations, the researcher observed the students' language use while delivering group presentations. The observations focused on identifying instances of code-switching, the context in which it occurred, and its function in communication. An observation sheet was used to systematically document different types of code-switching—namely, intra-sentential, intersentential, continuity switches, and tag switching, as categorized by Hoffman (1991).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 selected students to explore the reasons behind their use of code-switching. The interviews followed an interview guide but allowed flexibility to explore participants' responses in depth, in accordance with Spradley (1979) and Patton (2002). Interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' consent to ensure that responses were captured accurately and could be revisited during analysis. Field notes were taken immediately after each interview to

document non-verbal cues and additional observations. To increase the trustworthiness of the findings, triangulation was applied by comparing the data collected through observations, interviews, and recordings. This method, as supported by Carter et al. (2014), helped minimize researcher bias and provided a more comprehensive view of the phenomenon.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study followed a qualitative, thematic approach. The researcher began by transcribing the audio recordings from the interviews and organizing the observation notes. Transcripts and notes were reviewed multiple times to ensure familiarity with the data. The researcher then applied coding to categorize the data based on the types and reasons for code-switching. Each instance of code-switching was labeled using specific codes (e.g., IS for intra-sentential, ES for intersentential, and grouped according to frequency and context. A data codification system was used to identify each participant's responses and maintain confidentiality. Patterns were identified across the data sets to determine common themes related to the reasons for code-switching, such as lexical need, emphasis, emotional expression, or clarification. The analysis process was guided by the principles outlined by Patton (2015), which emphasize reflection, flexibility, and attention to detail in qualitative research. The findings were then interpreted to draw conclusions about how and why students used code-switching during their presentations, and how this practice influenced classroom communication and learning.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the study concerning the types and reasons for code-switching used by students during group presentations in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. The data were collected through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with six female second-semester students from the English Education Department at Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidenreng Rappang. These students were selected from an initial group of 17 targeted participants. The following findings highlight the types of code-switching employed and the underlying reasons for their use, as identified through both observational data and student interviews.

Types of Code-Switching

Based on the analysis of observation sheets, four types of code-switching were identified: intersentential, intra-sentential, establishing continuity,

and tag switching. The table below summarizes the occurrences of each type across the six participants.

Type of Code-Switching	Respondent					
	F	JN	MA	NM	NA	NH
Intersentential	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Intra-sentential	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Establishing Continuity		✓		✓		✓
Tag Switching						✓

Intersentential switching, which involves changing languages between sentences, was the most frequently used type of code-switching and appeared in all six participants' presentations. This form of switching enabled students to emphasize key points, transition smoothly between ideas, and enhance the overall clarity of their messages. Intra-sentential switching, observed in five of the six participants, involved alternating languages within a single sentence. This type of switching often helped students overcome lexical gaps or articulate complex concepts more effectively, especially when they struggled to find the right words in English.

Establishing continuity switching was used by three students to maintain the cohesion of their discourse. It functioned as a linking mechanism, allowing speakers to connect sentences or parts of the presentation in a fluent and comprehensible manner. On the other hand, tag switching was the least commonly observed type, appearing in only one student's presentation. This involved inserting short discourse markers, such as "you know" or "right," into predominantly Indonesian sentences. The infrequent use of tag switching may indicate that students considered it too informal or unsuitable for the academic context of their presentations.

Reasons for Code-Switching

The semi-structured interviews revealed multiple underlying reasons for students' use of code-switching during their presentations. These reasons were categorized into eight main themes:

Comfort and Fluency

Many participants reported switching languages to enhance their comfort and fluency when presenting. One student stated, "*I feel more comfortable*

using English because I can freely express my feelings,” while another preferred Indonesian, citing its familiarity and emotional expressiveness.

Academic Context

Students acknowledged that being in an English program compelled them to use English. However, they sometimes switched to Indonesian to explain complex concepts. As one participant noted, *“Using English makes me feel more confident, but when explaining something complicated, switching languages makes it easier to communicate.”*

Audience Needs

Several students consciously code-switched to help their peers understand the material. One student shared, *“When the topic is difficult, I switch languages to help everyone understand,”* highlighting a strong awareness of their audience’s comprehension levels.

Interaction and Engagement

Code-switching was also used as a tool to engage the audience. Participants indicated that using more casual language or slang during parts of the presentation helped maintain a relaxed and interactive atmosphere. One stated, *“Switching to a casual language makes the presentation feel less formal, which can help engage the audience.”*

Environmental Influence

The classroom setting played a significant role in determining language use. One participant mentioned, *“It depends on the classroom situation—whether it’s formal or informal—that motivates us to switch languages.”* This reflected students’ adaptability to different classroom contexts.

Skill Development

Some students viewed code-switching as beneficial for language learning. One respondent commented, *“I think switching languages helps improve my English skills, especially my pronunciation and confidence.”* This indicated a pedagogical value to the practice beyond immediate communication needs.

Situational Contexts

Participants noted that topic changes within a presentation sometimes prompted a shift in language. One student explained, *“When the topic of the presentation changes, I find myself switching languages to match the new context.”*

Translation Difficulties

Finally, difficulties in translating specific terms or phrases from Indonesian to English were a common reason for switching. A student noted, *“Sometimes, I can't find the right word in English, so I switch to Indonesian to make sure the audience understands.”*

The findings from the observations and interviews highlight important insights into how and why students use code-switching during group presentations in EFL classrooms. The types of code-switching, including intra-sentential switching, intersentential switching, establishing continuity switches, and tag switching, show how students adapt their language use to suit the context, audience, and content of their presentations. The widespread use of intersentential switching indicates that students often prefer switching languages between sentences to facilitate smoother transitions and clearer communication.

The reasons for code-switching revealed a combination of linguistic, social, and academic factors. Comfort and fluency were key motivators, with many students opting to switch to a language they felt more proficient in, especially when explaining complex ideas or emotions. Audience needs and the academic context also influenced language choices, as students aimed to ensure clarity and align with the expectations of the English classroom. Interaction and engagement played a role in making presentations more relatable, with students using code-switching to establish rapport with the audience.

Furthermore, environmental influences and skill development were important factors, as students adapted their language use based on the classroom setting and saw code-switching as a tool for improving their language proficiency. The challenges students faced with difficulties in translation also underscored the practical role of code-switching in overcoming language barriers and ensuring effective communication. This study demonstrates that code-switching is a frequent and strategic tool used by students in EFL classrooms, particularly during group presentations. The types of code-switching—ranging from intersentential switching to tag switching—reflect the students' ability to adapt to the

communication needs of the presentation. The reasons for code-switching reveal a complex interplay of comfort, fluency, academic requirements, and audience engagement. Understanding the motivations behind code-switching can help educators develop more effective teaching strategies that harness the potential of multilingualism while also addressing the challenges it may pose in language learning contexts. Further research could explore the impact of code-switching on language proficiency and examine strategies for balancing its use in academic settings.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and data analysis of this study, it can be concluded that code-switching is a prevalent and purposeful practice during group presentations in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms. The study revealed that intersentential switching—shifting between languages across sentences—was the most commonly used type, followed by intrasentential switching and establishing continuity switches, with tag switching being the least observed. These types of code-switching were used strategically by students to enhance clarity, maintain flow, and adjust to the dynamics of their presentations.

The reasons behind code-switching were diverse, with the most prominent being comfort and fluency, as students often resorted to their native language when expressing ideas they found difficult to articulate in English. Other motivations included the academic context, audience comprehension, and the desire to maintain engagement. The findings suggest that code-switching serves as an adaptive strategy that helps students manage linguistic challenges and communicate more effectively in a multilingual classroom setting.

Overall, the study highlights that code-switching, when used strategically, can support students in expressing themselves, engaging their audience, and delivering presentations with greater confidence. However, to balance fluency and language development, it is important that educators provide clear guidelines on language use while also encouraging English exposure. It is recommended that lecturers support students through structured practice, feedback, and the integration of supportive tools such as visual aids to minimize excessive reliance on code-switching. Future research is encouraged to explore code-switching in broader EFL contexts, particularly how students can manage it more effectively to foster their English proficiency while still ensuring communicative clarity during academic tasks.

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