

AN ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH TEACHER CODE SWITCHING AND CODE MIXING TO ENCOURAGE STUDENT ENGLISH LEARNING PARTICIPATION

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ABSTRACT

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis penggunaan teacher code switching dan code mixing dalam interaksi pembelajaran bahasa Inggris serta perannya dalam mendorong partisipasi siswa selama proses pembelajaran. Penelitian dilaksanakan di kelas X AP 2 SMK Mutiara Terpadu Palabuhanratu dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif melalui pendekatan studi kasus. Partisipan penelitian terdiri atas seorang guru bahasa Inggris dan siswa di kelas yang dipilih, lima di antaranya diwawancarai secara mendalam. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi kelas, wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan guru dan siswa, dokumentasi, serta transkrip interaksi pembelajaran, dan dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru menggunakan tiga jenis code switching, yaitu inter-sentential switching (119 ujaran), intra-sentential switching (51 ujaran), dan extra-sentential switching (2 ujaran), serta dua jenis code mixing, yaitu alternation (119 ujaran) dan insertion (53 ujaran). Strategi ini diterapkan untuk menjelaskan materi pembelajaran, memberikan instruksi, mengatasi hambatan bahasa siswa, menyesuaikan penggunaan bahasa dengan tingkat kemampuan siswa, serta menjaga kelancaran interaksi kelas. Temuan juga menunjukkan bahwa teacher code switching dan code mixing membantu menciptakan kondisi pembelajaran yang memudahkan siswa memahami materi, berpartisipasi dalam diskusi, menjawab dan mengajukan pertanyaan, mengikuti instruksi, serta berinteraksi dengan lebih percaya diri. Dengan demikian, teacher code switching dan code mixing berfungsi sebagai strategi komunikasi pedagogis yang mendukung interaksi kelas dan mendorong partisipasi siswa dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris.

Kata kunci: pergantian kode; percampuran kode; bahasa guru; partisipasi siswa; kelas EFL

ABSTRAK

This study aims to analyze the use of teacher code switching and code mixing in English classroom interaction and their role in encouraging student participation during the learning process. The research was conducted in Grade X AP 2 at SMK Mutiara Terpadu Palabuhanratu using a qualitative descriptive method with a case study approach. The participants consisted of one English teacher and the students of the selected class, five of whom were interviewed in depth. Data were collected through classroom observation, semi-structured interviews with the teacher and students, documentation, and transcription of classroom interaction,

and were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings show that the teacher employed three types of code switching—inter-sentential switching (119 utterances), intra-sentential switching (51 utterances), and extra-sentential switching (2 utterances)—as well as two types of code mixing, namely alternation (119 utterances) and insertion (53 utterances). These strategies were applied to explain learning materials, give instructions, overcome students' language barriers, adapt language use to students' proficiency levels, and maintain smooth classroom interaction. The results further reveal that teacher code switching and code mixing helped create learning conditions in which students could understand the material more easily, participate in discussions, answer and ask questions, follow instructions, and interact more confidently. Thus, teacher code switching and code mixing function as pedagogical communication strategies that support classroom interaction and encourage student participation in EFL learning.

Keywords: code switching; code mixing; teacher talk; student participation; EFL classroom

A. Introduction

English language teaching at the secondary level, particularly in vocational schools, continues to face pedagogical and communicative challenges. One of the most persistent challenges is how teachers can deliver English instruction effectively without hindering students' comprehension and engagement. In EFL contexts, language functions not merely as the subject being taught but also as the primary medium for giving instructions, explaining material, and facilitating classroom interaction. Teachers are therefore required to manage their language use carefully so that learning objectives can be achieved without leaving students behind.

In practice, teachers often face a dilemma between maintaining consistent use of the target language and adjusting their language so that the material is easier for students to understand. Exclusive use of English risks leaving some students unable to keep up with the lesson, while excessive use of the first language may undermine students' exposure to the target language. A teacher's choice of instructional language is therefore not incidental but a communicative strategy shaped by students' needs, classroom dynamics, and learning objectives.

Alongside this linguistic dilemma, student participation remains a significant concern in English classrooms. Ideal classroom interaction is two-way, with teachers

and students actively asking questions, answering, discussing, and giving feedback. In reality, however, many students remain passive, offering only brief responses or choosing to stay silent when asked questions, largely because they find the teacher's language difficult to follow, fear making mistakes, lack confidence, or feel anxious about using English. As a result, learning tends to become teacher-centered, and students' opportunities to develop communicative competence are limited. Student participation itself is multidimensional, encompassing behavioral engagement (concrete actions such as answering and asking questions), cognitive engagement (how students process and understand material), and emotional engagement (students' interest, comfort, and motivation) (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004).

One communication strategy frequently used by English teachers to bridge this gap is code switching and code mixing, that is, the deliberate combination of English with Indonesian, or another language more familiar to students, during

instruction. Through this strategy, teachers can clarify meaning when students struggle with English terms or instructions, manage the classroom, emphasize key points, and create a more comfortable and inclusive learning atmosphere. By using language that is more accessible, communication barriers can be minimized and students gain a greater opportunity to engage actively, ask questions, and express opinions with more confidence.

Nevertheless, the use of code switching and code mixing in English learning remains debated: some argue that reliance on the first language may hinder students from becoming accustomed to the target language, while classroom practice often shows that this strategy helps students understand material and builds the confidence needed to participate. To date, research on teacher code switching and code mixing has mostly focused on identifying linguistic types and the reasons teachers use them, emphasizing linguistic forms and categories rather than pedagogical outcomes. There remains a gap in research examining how teachers'

code switching and code mixing specifically contribute to fostering student participation, especially in vocational high schools with linguistically diverse student populations. This gap is significant because understanding the relationship between teachers' language strategies and student engagement is essential for developing effective, participation-oriented EFL pedagogy.

Based on this background, the present study analyzes how an English teacher at SMK Mutiara Terpadu Palabuhanratu used code switching and code mixing in Grade X AP 2, and how this language strategy encouraged student participation in the learning process. Specifically, this study addresses three research questions: (1) what types of teacher code switching and code mixing are used by the English teacher; (2) how does the teacher apply teacher code switching and code mixing in classroom interaction; and (3) how does the use of teacher code switching and code mixing play a role in encouraging student participation in learning. This study is expected to contribute theoretically to applied

linguistics and language pedagogy, and practically to provide teachers, students, and future researchers with insight into using teacher code more consciously and strategically to build a more participatory EFL classroom.

B. . Research Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method with a case study approach (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This approach was chosen to explore in depth the use of teacher code switching and code mixing by an English teacher within a real classroom context. Qualitative data drawn from observations, interviews, documents, and interaction transcripts allowed the researcher to capture the actions, interactions, and meanings that emerged within the classroom (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014), thereby providing a rich description of the phenomenon under study.

The study was conducted at SMK Mutiara Terpadu Palabuhanratu, in a Grade X AP 2 class taught by an English teacher who frequently used two languages during instruction. Data collection took place during the second semester of the 2025-2026 academic year across several English

lessons, to ensure that the data obtained were sufficiently representative and reflected consistent patterns in the teacher's language use. Participants consisted of one English teacher and the students of the selected class.

Data were collected through several techniques: classroom observation supported by an observation checklist covering aspects such as the type, context, and pedagogical function of teacher code as well as forms of student participation (Creswell, 2012; Ary et al., 2010; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018); semi-structured interviews with the teacher and students to explore in depth their perceptions and experiences (Esterberg, 2002, as cited in Sugiyono, 2018); audio-video recordings to maintain the accuracy and integrity of the data (Patton, 2015); and field notes to document classroom atmosphere and nonverbal responses not captured by the recording device (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

Data were analyzed qualitatively using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) through five stages: (1)

transcribing the classroom recordings and interviews into written form; (2) identifying and classifying utterances containing code switching and code mixing as well as the forms of student participation observed; (3) coding data related to students' understanding, classroom interaction, self-confidence, and participation; (4) grouping codes with similar meanings into broader themes; and (5) interpreting the results of the analysis and drawing conclusions in relation to the research questions.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Types of Teacher Code

Switching and Code Mixing

Observation and data analysis identified five types of teacher code used by the teacher during instruction, consisting of three types of code switching, namely inter-sentential switching, intra-sentential switching, and extra-sentential switching, and two types of code mixing, namely alternation and insertion. The frequency of each type is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Frequency of Teacher Code Switching and Code Mixing Used by the Teacher

No	Category	Type	Frequency
1	Code Switching	Inter-sentential	119
2		Intra-sentential	51
3		Extra-sentential	2
4	Code Mixing	Alternation	119
5		Insertion	53

As shown in Table 1, inter-sentential switching was the most frequently used type of code switching, with 119 utterances, followed by intra-sentential switching with 51 utterances, while extra-sentential switching occurred only twice. This pattern indicates that the teacher tended to separate the use of English and Indonesian into different sentences, for example by asking a question in English and then repeating it in Indonesian, rather than mixing the two languages within a single sentence. For code mixing, alternation occurred more frequently (119 utterances) than insertion (53 utterances), showing that the teacher frequently combined English and Indonesian across clauses when

explaining material, giving instructions, introducing vocabulary, and communicating with students. These findings are consistent with Gumperz (1982) and Poplack (1980), who argue that code switching is not a random error but a purposeful communicative practice that occurs systematically according to the speaker's communicative goals.

2. Application of Teacher Code in Classroom Interaction

Analysis of the observations, field notes, and interviews revealed that the teacher applied code switching and code mixing flexibly according to classroom situations and students' level of understanding. Four themes emerged concerning how teacher code was applied in classroom interaction: addressing student language barriers, supporting learning achievement, adaptive teaching strategy, and enhancing classroom engagement.

a. Addressing Student Language Barriers

The teacher explained that students' English proficiency varies considerably, so not all students are able to follow the lesson if English is used exclusively. This necessitated

combining English and Indonesian so that all students could follow the lesson more effectively. As the teacher noted, when English is used exclusively students may appear to understand while in fact they have not grasped the content, whereas combining both languages allows them to understand immediately because both languages are familiar from daily communication. This indicates that teachers adapt their language use not only to the target language but also to students' actual comprehension.

b. Supporting Learning Achievement

The teacher repeatedly emphasized that teacher code was used not only to facilitate communication but also to ensure that every student understood the material and could achieve the intended learning objectives. This was evident when the teacher explained narrative texts and group worksheets: material was first delivered in English and then reinforced with additional explanation in Indonesian, after which students were better able to answer questions, complete group discussions, and fill

in comparison tables according to the instructions given. These findings show that teacher code functioned as a means of helping students complete learning tasks successfully, not merely as a communication tool.

c. Adaptive Teaching Strategy

The use of teacher code was not applied uniformly across all situations. The teacher explained that the decision to use English, Indonesian, or a combination of both depended on classroom conditions and students' level of understanding at a given moment: English was maintained when students appeared to understand, while Indonesian was introduced spontaneously once confusion was observed. This pattern was also evident when the teacher reverted to English once students grasped a concept that had initially been explained in Indonesian, showing that teacher code operates as a flexible, situationally responsive strategy rather than a fixed language policy.

d. Enhancing Classroom Engagement

Beyond comprehension and task completion, the teacher also used code switching and code mixing to

sustain classroom interaction, for instance by rephrasing questions in Indonesian when students hesitated to respond in English, and by using both languages to encourage discussion and maintain the flow of the lesson. This suggests that teacher code also serves an interactional function, keeping students engaged and communication moving smoothly during the learning process.

3. The Role of Teacher Code in Encouraging Student Participation

Interview and observation data also revealed the role of teacher code switching and code mixing in encouraging student participation, reflected in four themes: improving students' understanding, building students' confidence, encouraging active participation, and creating a positive learning environment.

a. Improving Students' Understanding

Students consistently reported that the combined use of English and Indonesian made the teacher's explanations easier to follow, particularly for those with limited English proficiency. As one student explained, understanding improved

when the teacher first explained the material in English and then again in Indonesian. Observational data supported this, showing that a majority of students were able to answer the teacher's questions, take notes on mixed-language instructions, and relate the material to their own experience after code-switched explanations.

b. Building Students' Confidence

Several students indicated that being allowed to respond using a mix of English and Indonesian reduced their fear of making mistakes and increased their willingness to speak up in class, compared to when they were required to use English exclusively. This suggests that teacher code lowers the affective barrier that often prevents students from participating verbally.

c. Encouraging Active Participation

Based on the interview results, four out of five students reported that teacher code switching and code mixing encouraged them to participate more actively in classroom activities, such as answering questions, asking for clarification, and taking part in group discussions,

while one student reported only a moderate increase in participation due to a remaining fear of making mistakes.

d. Creating a Positive Learning Environment

All five students interviewed perceived classroom interaction as easier and more comfortable when the teacher used both English and Indonesian. This finding indicates that teacher code contributed to an inclusive classroom atmosphere in which students felt supported rather than pressured, which in turn encouraged them to engage more willingly in learning activities.

Discussion

The findings of this study show that the English teacher did not rely on a single language during instruction but shifted between English and Indonesian according to the classroom situation, students' level of understanding, and communicative purpose. This is consistent with Gumperz (1982) and Poplack (1980), who describe code switching as a purposeful communicative practice rather than a random error, and supports the view that code switching is a natural and

functional phenomenon in bilingual or multilingual EFL classrooms.

The dominance of inter-sentential switching over intra-sentential and extra-sentential switching suggests that the teacher preferred to complete a thought in one language before shifting to the other, which may make the switch easier for students to follow than mid-sentence alternation. Similarly, the higher frequency of alternation compared to insertion indicates that the teacher's code mixing tended to occur at the clause level rather than through isolated single-word borrowings.

The application of teacher code across the four themes of addressing language barriers, supporting learning achievement, adaptive teaching strategy, and enhancing classroom engagement is in line with Sert (2005), who states that teacher code switching functions as a communication strategy to explain concepts, give instructions, and manage classroom interaction. The adaptive, situationally responsive nature of the teacher's language choices found in this study further supports the argument that code switching is a deliberate pedagogical

decision rather than an uncontrolled habit.

The role of teacher code in encouraging student participation, reflected in improved understanding, increased confidence, more active participation, and a more positive learning environment, indicates that teacher code switching and code mixing contributed to students' participation across cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions. This finding extends previous research, which has largely focused on identifying the linguistic forms and functions of code switching and code mixing, by showing how these strategies are directly linked to the fostering of student participation in a vocational EFL classroom with diverse student proficiency levels.

D. Conclusion

This study found that the English teacher used five types of teacher code during classroom interaction, consisting of three types of code switching (inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and extra-sentential switching) and two types of code mixing (alternation and insertion), with inter-sentential switching and alternation being the most frequently

used. This indicates that the teacher predominantly switched and mixed English and Indonesian through complete sentences and clauses rather than through short expressions or single-word insertions, adjusting language use flexibly according to instructional context and communicative needs.

The teacher applied code switching and code mixing as pedagogical strategies reflected in four themes: addressing student language barriers, supporting learning achievement, adaptive teaching strategy, and enhancing classroom engagement. Through the combined use of English and Indonesian, the teacher was able to clarify materials, provide more effective instructions, adjust language use to students' level of understanding, and encourage greater classroom participation, functioning as an effective instructional strategy that facilitated communication and supported the achievement of learning objectives.

Teacher code switching and code mixing also played an important role in encouraging student participation. Interview results showed that all

interviewed students felt that the use of both languages helped them understand the material more easily and made them feel more confident and less anxious during classroom interaction; most students also reported participating more actively as a result. Overall, teacher code switching and code mixing contributed to students' cognitive participation by improving comprehension, emotional participation by increasing confidence and reducing anxiety, and behavioral participation by encouraging them to answer questions, ask questions, and take part in discussions, thereby creating a supportive learning environment that fostered greater student participation throughout the learning process.

Based on these findings, English teachers are advised to use code switching and code mixing purposefully and proportionately, in accordance with students' needs and learning objectives, while still providing sufficient exposure to English so that students' target-language skills continue to develop. Future researchers are encouraged to examine teacher code switching and code mixing across different

educational levels, subjects, or larger samples, and to investigate their relationship with other aspects of learning, such as student motivation, speaking skills, or academic achievement.

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