

## STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE USE OF CODE-SWITCHING IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM

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### Abstract

This research aimed to investigate students' perception on the use of code-switching in English classroom and to figure out its advantages for them in learning English. Qualitative research method was applied in this research. The participants of this research were 36 students of 10<sup>th</sup> grade in vocational high school in Cimahi. There were 36 students involved in the questionnaire and only 9 students involved in the interview session. The data from questionnaire were analyzed based on the theory of Cohen (2010) in (Rahmadani, 2016) to investigate the students' perception and interview session to figure out its advantages for students in learning English. The result showed that (1) students showed their positive perceptions on the use of code-switching in English classroom being proven by 75% - 95% of the entire students and (2) students got several advantages from the use of code-switching in English classroom; enabling them to understand the material easily, helping them increase new vocabularies, helping them learn English faster, helping them understand every sentence in English easily, helping them take the main point of the learning, helping them avoid confusion, and making them comfort and confident in learning English.

**Keywords:** *code-switching, students' perception, English teaching, English classroom*

### INTRODUCTION

The comprehension of the language is very important, especially in the language learning process. Teaching language cannot be separated from the use of native and target language because if students do not get the meaning of what the teacher says, they will not get any kind of information from the teacher. In Indonesia, English is considered as a foreign language (EFL) that is English is not widely spoken or used in students' daily life. A foreign language is one not widely used in the learners' immediate social context (Saville-Troike, 2006:4). In this case, teacher sometimes uses both native language and target language to explain the material so that the students are able to understand the material very well.

In an English classroom, teacher tends to use Indonesian and English to explain the material to students. It is common for some English teachers to use Indonesian –students' native language– to the students because English cannot be taught directly. In addition, the target language cannot be taught directly and the process of learning will have to resort to a good deal of talking “about” the second language in the students' native language”. Furthermore, the use of students' native language can also be an option in a foreign classroom as long as it is necessary and it is not excess (Brown, 2001:98-99). He also stated that “first language can be a facilitating factor and not just an interfering factor” (Brown, 2000:68). In addition, Nazary (2008) also stated that it

is common for EFL teachers to use the students' mother tongue as a tool for conveying meaning as a means of interaction both in English language institutes and in the classroom. In line with Nazary's statement, Dujmović (2007) stated that it is justified to use the native language in English as a Foreign Language classes. He also stated that using native language is useful for language tasks such as defining vocabulary items, practicing the use of phrases and expressions, and explaining grammar rules and some important ideas. Therefore, the teaching of English cannot be separated from the use of native language. In an English classroom, teacher tends to change from native language to English or vice versa.

The process of changing language from native language to target language or vice versa can also be as same as the process of changing from Indonesian to English. This process of changing from one language to another is often called code-switching. Code-switching is the process of switching or changing the language that is used by the speaker in any purpose, here the speaker is the teacher. As what Wardhaugh stated about code-switching "People, then, are usually required to select a particular code whenever they choose to speak, and they may also decide to switch from one code to another or to mix codes even within sometimes very short utterances and thereby create a new code in a process known as *code-switching*" (2006:101). Furthermore, the idea of code-switching can also be defined as the use of more than one language, "The first is mainly constructed around the idea of code-switching, that is, the use of more than one language by a single speaker (Jourdan & Tuite, 2006:156). A clear definition about code-switching was also stated Trudgill by on his book "... code-switching is switching from one language variety to another" (2000:201). From the explanation above, code-switching is a process of changing or switching from one language to another language conducted by a speaker. In teaching and learning process, this process of changing or switching the language can be implemented in order to make the students understand easier in comprehending the material. Unconsciously, many English teachers in Indonesia use code-switching, that is, switching the language from Indonesian to English or English to Indonesian to make students comprehend the material easily. In line with the statement above, (Nur & Fitriyani, 2015) suggested that code-switching is one way to make easier in study language so it will be useful for teacher to be used for conveying material and communication with their students as a drill of listening and speaking for the students in teaching-learning process. Therefore, the use of code-switching is not only because of being demanded, but also because of the demand to facilitate students to learn English effectively (Fathimah, 2016).

The situations mentioned above can lead to the students' perception. According to (Goldstein, 2010), perception is concerned with explaining the operation of the senses and the experiences and behaviors resulting from stimulation of the senses. He also states that these senses can include vision, hearing, the cutaneous senses such as touch, pain, tickle, itch. To support the statement above, Mussen (1973) cited in Nursanti (2016) defines perception as the process of how the information is acquired through the sensory receptors (e.g. eyes, ears, nose, and skin) which is transformed into a perception of what we think, see, hear, smell, taste, or touch.

According to the situations and conditions mentioned above, the researchers try to figure out the students' perception on the use of code-switching in English classroom. The researchers try to find out the feeling of the students about the teachers who use code-switching in English classroom, whether it helps students in learning English or not.

## METHOD

In conducting this research, the researchers used qualitative research approach to explain deeply the meaning of the data gained in this research. According to Creswell (2014:4), qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data. To support the qualitative data, the researchers used both questionnaire and interview as instruments of this research. The questionnaire was adapted from the questionnaire in Nursanti (2016). The students were given several statements in the questionnaire and they were asked to answer based on their perceptions on the use of code-switching in English classroom. To support the data gained from the questionnaire, the researchers conducted interview session. The interview session was recorded to ease the researchers find out the result. Therefore, the data from the questionnaire and interview session were then analyzed to figure out students' perception on the use of code-switching in English classroom.

The participants of this research were 36 students of 10<sup>th</sup> grade at one of Vocational High School in Cimahi involved in questionnaire. And there were only 9 students got involved in interview session with 3 students of low achievers, 3 students of middle achievers and 3 students of high achievers.

In this research, a Likert scale was used as the kind of questionnaire. According to Cohen (2010) a Likert scale provides a range of responses to a given question or statement. It is in line with the previous statement, Ary, Jacobs, and Sorensen (2010) stated that a Likert scale shows a set of statements of the topic and asking the respondent to choose whether they strongly agree, agree, are undecided, disagree, strongly disagree as cited in Rahmadani (2016). Therefore, students who belong to a selected English classroom were given several statements as questionnaires and they were asked to answer based on their feelings and perceptions about each statement given by the researchers whether they strongly agreed, agreed, neutral, disagreed or strongly disagreed. An interview was also conducted in order to enrich the data about the benefits of using code-switching in English classroom; it was also conducted to strengthen the data collected from the questionnaires.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Results

The objective of this research is to find out students' perception on the use of code-switching in English classroom. The data were collected from the close-ended questionnaire (Nursanti, 2016) and interview session.

From the close-ended questionnaire, it could be known that most of the students feel that the use of code-switching in English classroom is useful for learning English. The table below describes the data collected from close-ended questionnaire.

No	Statements	Strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly
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		Agree				Disagree
1	The use of Indonesian language by the teacher in English classroom helps you in learning English.	50% (18)	44,4% (16)	5,6% (2)	-	-
2	The use of Indonesian language by the teacher in English classroom makes you easy to understand the material given by the teacher.	52,8% (19)	41,7% (15)	5,6% (2)	-	-
3	The use of Indonesian language by the teacher in English classroom makes you easy to understand new vocabularies in English.	41,7% (15)	50% (18)	8,3% (3)	-	-
4	The use of Indonesian language by the teacher in English classroom helps you to be fluent and accurate on your English speaking skill.	33,8% (12)	41,7% (15)	24,5% (9)	-	-
5	The use of Indonesian language by the teacher in English classroom makes you easy in English writing skill.	30,6% (11)	47,2% (17)	16,7% (6)	5,6% (2)	-
6	The use of Indonesian language by the teacher in English classroom makes you understand toward the meaning of every sentence which is explained by the teacher.	44,4% (16)	41,7% (15)	11,1% (4)	2,8% (1)	-
7	The use of Indonesian language by the teacher in English classroom makes you understand something faster and it helps your teacher in managing the time in explaining thing.	36,1% (13)	38,9% (14)	22,2% (8)	2,8% (1)	-
8	The use of Indonesian language by the teacher in English classroom makes you confused to learn English.	8,3% (3)	2,8% (1)	16,7% (6)	27,8% (10)	44,4% (16)

The data analysis form the questionnaire above were based on the theory of perception (Goldstein, 2010; Mussen, 1973, in Nursanti, 2016), code-switching (Jourdan & Tuite, 2006; Trudgill, 2000; Wardhaugh, 2006), the reasons of code-switching use in English classroom (Fathimah, 2016; Nur & Fitriyani, 2015) the justification of native language use in English classroom (Dujmović, 2007; Nazary, 2008).

## Discussions

Based on the results mentioned above, it shows that most of students showed their positive perceptions toward each of the statement given on the questionnaire. It is in line with the research conducted by Catabay, (2016); Nursanti, (2016); and Storch & Aldosari, (2010)

In the first statement, 18 students or 50% strongly agree and 16 students or 44.4% agree that the use of Indonesian language helps them in learning English, while the rest of them are neutral with the statement. This describes that the use of code-switching from Indonesian to English or vice versa does help the students in learning English.

Second statement shows that 19 students or 52.8% strongly agree and 15 students or 41.7% agree that the use of Indonesian language makes them easy to understand the material given by the teacher, while the rest of them are neutral with the statement. It also shows that the use of code-switching from Indonesian to English or vice versa makes the students easy to understand the material.

Third statement illustrates that 18 students or 50% agree and 15 students or 41.7% strongly agree that Indonesian language use in English classroom makes them easy to understand new vocabularies in English, while the rest of them are neutral. This also illustrates that code-switching use from Indonesian to English or vice versa can make them easy to understand new vocabularies in English.

In the fourth statement, 15 students or 41.7% agree and 12 students or 33.8% strongly agree that the use of Indonesian language helps students to be fluent and accurate on their English speaking skill, while the rest are neutral. Therefore, the use of code-switching can also help students to be fluent and accurate to speak in English.

Fifth statement reveals that 17 students or 47.2% agree and 11 students or 36% strongly agree with the statement saying that the use of Indonesian language makes students easy in English writing skills, while 6 students or 16.7% are neutral and the rest are disagree. It reveals that most of the students are helped by the use of code-switching in their English writing skills.

Sixth statement divulges that 16 students or 44.4% strongly agree and 15 students or 41.7% agree that the use of Indonesian language makes them easy to understand the meaning of every sentence given by the teacher, while 8 students or 22.2% are neutral and the rest are disagree. It also divulges that code-switching use help them easy to understand the meaning of every sentence given by the teacher in English classroom.

In the seventh statement, 14 students or 38.9% agree and 13 students or 36.1% strongly agree that the use on Indonesian language makes them understand something faster and it also helps the teacher to manage the time in explaining thing, while 8 students or 22.2% are neutral and the rest disagree with the statement. This also proves that the use of code-switching from Indonesian to English or vice versa can help both students understand the material faster and teachers manage the time in explaining the materials.

Last statement reflects that the use of Indonesian language makes students confused in learning English. Then 16 students or 44.4% strongly disagree with this statement, and 10 students or 27.8% disagree, while 6 students or 16.7% are neutral, 1 student or 2.8% agree and the rest are strongly agree with the statement. This condition proves that most of the students disagree that the use of code-switching makes them confused, therefore, the use of code-switching does not make them confused at all rather it helps them a lot in learning English. Finally, based on the result of the questionnaire and explanation above, the researchers concluded that students had positive perception on the use of code-switching in English classroom.

To support the result of the questionnaire, the interview session was also conducted in order to enrich and strengthen the data that related to students' perception on the use of code-switching in English Classroom. The questions of the interview session are mentioned below.

1. Do you think teachers need to switch the language from English to Indonesian language and vice versa? Why?
2. What advantages do you get if the teachers switch the language from English to Indonesian and vice versa?
3. Does switching from English to Indonesian language and vice versa help you in learning English? Why?
4. Why do you agree that switching from English to Indonesian and vice versa makes you easy in understanding the material?
5. Do you feel that switching from English to Indonesian or vice versa makes you confused in learning English?
6. As the conclusion, do you agree or disagree if the teachers switch English to Indonesian language or vice versa in English learning?

Based on the data collected in the interview session, it resulted that most of the students answered a positive agreement toward the use of code-switching in English classroom. They stated that it is necessary for the teachers to switch the language from Indonesian language to English or vice versa (Brown, 2001). This switching of the language was conducted in order to make them understand the material easily and make them confident in learning English. Therefore, there were several advantages stated by the students according to the use of code-switching in English classroom. The advantages were that code-switching enabled students to understand the material easily. It also helped them know new vocabularies, know something that was unknown before, learn English faster, easy in understanding every sentence made by teacher, take the main point of the learning, avoid the confusion, and made them comfort and confident in learning English.

## CONCLUSIONS

This research was conducted to the tenth grade of one of vocational high schools in Cimahi. According to the result of the research collected from the questionnaire and interview above, most of the students had positive perception or agreed on the use of code-switching in English classroom that it could motivate them in learning English. It is proved by the students answering strongly agree and agree for the statement number 1-7. From the statement number 1-7, it could be seen that 75%-95% of the students said that they agree or had positive perception toward the use of code-switching in English classroom. In addition, 72.2% of the students answered disagree and strongly disagree that the use of code-switching makes them confused in learning English. Therefore, the use of code-switching really helps the students in learning English and it does not make them confused. In addition, there were also several advantages of the use of code-switching in English classroom; enabling students to understand the material easily, helping them increase new vocabularies, helping them learn English faster, helping them easy in understanding every sentence in English, helping them take the main point of the learning, helping them avoid the confusion, and making them comfort and confident in learning English.

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