# Code Switching As an Effective Technique Of Teaching English At The Intermediate Level In Pakistan

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## Abstract

English is a significant medium of instruction in Pakistan. Majority of Public and private institutions are paying due heed to give it a wider currency so as to enable their alumni to stand on their own toes in their practical life. Moreover, it provides them a sufficient prop to get ahead in acquiring higher education in the country as well as abroad. English is being taught by different methods. Most of the schools and colleges have adopted Direct Method so that the students may have maximum exposure to four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. Code-switching is also an effective method of teaching English, especially to students of Intermediate classes. Major motives of this technique are to inspire and arouse the interest of the students towards learning of English. It facilitates their comprehension and serves as an impetus to the learning success. The study has corroborated through the quantitative paradigm that code-switching is a useful teaching strategy particularly for teaching language learners belonging to the backward rural areas of our country. The study investigated 200 low English Proficient learners of various colleges of Khushab. It was brought out that the students showed keen interest in language acquisition, which bears ample testimony to its being an efficacious and gainful strategy for low English Proficient learners.

## Introduction

English enjoys the status of a universal lingua Franca in the modern world. It has singular importance and lofty status amidst the comity of nations. It opens up vast vistas of

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knowledge in all fields. It is the language of technology, business and education. It is almost impossible to forge ahead with the global world without English. That is why, Pakistan has retained it and given it a due share in our socio-cultural infrastructure. It is not merely an official language but also a medium of instruction. The government realizes very well that the link with the outer world and access to higher studies would be impossible without it.

In consequence, most of schools and colleges even in the rural areas are providing instruction in English. Despite this positive practice, the standard of English is declining day by day. There are various causes of this deterioration, one of them is the inability of the students to comprehend what the teachers deliver in the foreign language. Practitioners and stake-holders have tried to deal with the issue by adopting different measures. Code-switching is an up-shot of bilingualism. It shows mixture of two languages in interaction. For example our teachers mixup English and Urdu expression while teaching English to their students.

Norrish, J. (1997) held the view that the teachers code-switch when the courses are taught and the students fail to understand what the teacher delivers.[1] Main motives of this study are to find out how much is the usefulness of code-switching while teaching low proficiency language students at the intermediate level.

## Hypothesis

If the technique of code-switching is applied on low English proficiency students of Intermediate level, it will have a pleasant effect on their language acquisition.

## Literature Review

Code-switching is a popular common strategy of teaching English in our country as well as other countries. To Burden

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[1] Norrish, J. (1997). *English or English?* Attitudes, Local Varieties and English language Teaching TESL-EL, *3*(1).

(2001), Code-switching is effective in teaching a foreign language. Students find it easy and get interested to acquire a foreign language in such a comfortable environment. [2] They continue their learning process instead of dropping out.

 According to Cole, V. (1998), bilingualism assisted in English classes in Japan. Progress of learning was somewhat slow but it was nor disappointing for the learners. They gained better intelligibility in grammar and vocabulary.[3]

Ellis, R. (1994).  and state that exposure to the target language can ensure success, but it may not work in every classroom.[4]

It is after observed that English classrooms depending on Direct Methodleads to frustration, on the score that output is not possible without proper input.

To Asmah Hj O[mar. (1992). use of bilingualism has been found advantageous in learning English as foreign language in Malaysia. He further comments that it effectively functions in case of students who are weak in the English conversation classroom.[5]

Chi W.C. (2000). asserts that the bilingual teachers have got a lot of importance in China, especially for Chinese-oriented AMEP learners.[6]

Krashen, S. (1988). holds a different view. To him, use of effective model of target language in class room can be fruitful

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[2] Burden, P. (2001). *The Language Teacher.* Retrieved from: http://www.jalt-publication.org/tlt/articles/2001/04/burden

[3] Cole, S. (1998). *The Use of l1 in Communicative English Classrooms.* Retrieved from: http://www.jalt-publications.org/tlt/files/98/dec/cole.html

[4] Ellis, R. (1994). *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford, UK.: Oxford University Press.

[5] Asmah, H. O. (1992). *The Linguistic Scenery in Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur, ML.: Dewan Bahasa Dan Pustaka.

[6] Chi, W.C. (2000). *The Importance of Bilingual Teachers to Chinese-Oriented AMEP Learners*. Paper presented at the AMEP Conference 2000. Retrieved from: http://www.necltr.mq.edu.au/conference2000

for the learners of English as a foreign Language.[7]

Greggio, S. and Gil, G. (2007). investigated in this qualitative study that code-switching stands in good stead in foreign language teaching.[8]

In Pakistan, Urdu, being a national language is understood across the country. Students of varying background encounter no problem in understanding utterance in the language. Translation of different terms abstractions in Urdu removes the cobweb of misapprehension from the minds of English language learners.The teacher faces no hurdle in bringing home his message to the taught with the help of this strategy.

## Objectives

**a)** To determine how code-switching is an effective teaching strategy for the students of Intermediate classes.
**b)** To find out the relation of teacher's code-switching and learners success.
**c)** To determine how much code-switching arouses interest of the learners and keep them confident in getting ahead.
**d)** To investigate learners perceptions of teachers code-switching/mixing.

## Types

There are four major types of code-switching.

 **i.** Situational code-switching
 **ii.** Metaphorical code-switching
**iii.** Code mixing
**iv.** Tag-switching

### Classification of Code-switching

It is classified as follows:-

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[7] Krashen, S. (1998). *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning.* Great Britain: Prentice-Hall.

[8]Greggio, S., Gil, G. (2007).*Teacher's and Learner's Use of Code-Switching in English As a Foreign Language Classroom: A Qualitative Study.*

**a)** **Conversational Switching**

It occurs during the conversation between the bilinguals or multilingual. The speaker and the listener can easily shift from one language to the other.

**b)** **Situational and Metaphorical Code-switching**

Situational code-switching depends on changes from one external situation to the other. Conversely, metaphorical code-switching occurs when choice of language decides the situation.

**c)** **Intersentential Code-switching**

The speaker switches over a clause, a phrase or Lexical Level. It is the most complex sort of code-switching.

Functions of code-switching are multifarious. Code-switching performs different functions at two different levels. These are mentioned as below:-

**i.** Code-switching in removing misunderstandings.
**ii.** Shifting from one activity to another.
**iii.** To make up the scant knowledge of synonyms and antonyms (lack of vocabulary)
**iv.** Syntactical terms or any type of abstractions
**v.** To explain principles of grammar
**vi.** Students rectifying mistakes of each other.
**vii.** Self-corrections

## Conversational Functioning

Code-switching functions in conversation is a variety of ways. These are the following:-

**i.** Clarification of the interlocution
**ii.** Conflict control
**iii.** Floor-holding
**iv.** Generating interest and humour.
**v.** Interrogation Shift
**vi.** Directive
**vii.** Expressive
**viii.** Declarative

**ix.**     Emphatic via interjection

## Methodology

Research paradigm of this research paper is quantitative. It aims to investigate the impact of code-switching teaching strategy on the learners' acquisition of a foreign language. Sets of data collected from different learners of the target population were statistically/numerically analyzed to determine the relationship between the teacher and the learners.

## Population

200 students of intermediate level were selected from various colleges at Khushab. They study English as a compulsory subject from text board published by the Punjab Text Book Board Lahore.

## Sample

Random sampling was used for this specific study.It included male as well as female students of intermediate classes.

## Research Instruments

Questionnaire has been used for measuring effectiveness of code-switching strategy on the target population. This tool is reliable as regards the collectionof data from a large group of subjects. IT makes the task easy to find out the extent of success of the learners in improving their intelligibility. The tool was adapted from Scheweers (1999), Tang's. (2002) and Burden's studies.(2001). It was moulded to include Likert Scale. The Scale indicates a value ranging from 1 to 5. The analysisalso shows correlation between variables. Cumulative response value of part B was correlated with the correlative value of part C & D. SPSS software version 12.0 was used for analyses.

## Data Collection and Analysis

Data report confirmed thatmajority of the learners responded positively to the application of code-switching in the classrooms.

Analysis made it evident that code-switching can be successfully employed for various teaching and learning functions. Out of a total of 200 respondents, 68.8% showed the teacher used code-switching while explaining grammatical rules. 68.1% agreed that the strategy of code-switching made it easy for them to acquire English. 64.6% confirmed that the strategy was least used when the teacher issued instructions to the learners.69.3% of the learners showed that they enjoyed teacher's way of teaching. 52.1% admitted that their teacher's strategy helped them in feeling less lost during the lesson. Correlation between code-switching & Affective support was 0.592. It was brought out that the more teacher's code-switching, the stronger is the learner's Affective state. Comfortable environment of the classroom decreases the learner's anxiety.

72.4% of the population admitted that code-switching helped them in understanding new vocabulary. 71.6% acknowledgement that it was useful in understanding difficult ideas in the lesson 68.8% agreed that the strategy facilitated their understanding of grammar. 67.3% accepted that code-switching assisted them in performing the assigned task.

## Recommendations

In the light of the investigations about the applicability of code-switching strategy, it is pertinent to infer that it assists positively in inspiring the learners to continue learning English because of its providing a care-free class room atmosphere and this improving the students' ability of comprehension.

Nevertheless, the teachers should be very careful and cautious while code-switching. Its use should not be made excessive as it may turn the pace oflearning very slow. Besides this factor, code-switching should be used only for those learners who are weak in language acquisition. It need not be employed for the learners who possess high linguistic proficiency. The research authenticates that some of the percentage of good learners did not approve of it. It has been observed that the students of rural and backward areas are weak,

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least pushed and unresponsive. This strategy can function quite effectively if the teachers make a wise use of it. This from of classroom instructions can yield good results by fulfilling the syllabus requirement and leading the low language proficiency learners to their projected goals.

## Conclusion

Code-switching is a strong and fruitful strategy of teaching English to the learners, but it has its own limited bounds. It should, in no way, be estimated as a method. Hence it is inferred that teacher's code-switching is closely related with learners' affective support and their success in performing various classroom assignments.

In few, the strategy deserves our due appraisal for its discourse and pedagogical implications.

**Table 1. Code-Switching and Learners' Affective State**

| Sr. No | Statement | Disapproved% | Not Sure % | Approved % |
|--------|-----------|--------------|------------|------------|
| 1 | It helps me enjoy my lesson. | 24.5 | 6.2 | 69.3 |
| 2 | It helps me feel satisfied with my learning | 23.3 | 8.2 | 68.5 |
| 3 | It makes me feel comfortable to learn. | 24.5 | 7.4 | 68.1 |
| 4 | It helps me feel less tensed. | 22.1 | 13.2 | 34.6 |

| 5 | I feel less lost during the lesson. | 34.7 | 13.2 | 52.1 |

**Table 2. Correlation: Code-Switching and Affective Support**

|  | **Cumulative mean value** | **Pearson R** |
|---|---|---|
| Code-switching * | 38.2179 | *** |
| ** Affective Support | 17.4319 | 0.592 |

\* Range 10-50

\*\*Range 5-25

\*\*\* P  0.01

**Table 3. Code-switching and Learners' Learning Success**

| **Sr. No** | **Statement** | **Disapproved** | **Not Sure** | **Approved** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | It helps me to understand new words. | 19% | 8.6% | 72.4% |
| 2 | It helps me to understand the Difficult concept. | 18.3% | 10.1% | 71.6% |
| 3 | It helps me to understand English grammar. | 20.3% | 10.9% | 68.8% |
| 4 | It helps me in learning the English language in the class | 20.2% | 10.9% | 67.7% |

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| 5 | It helps me carry out the task successfully. | 20.2% | 12.5% | 67.3% |
|---|---|---|---|---|

**Table 4. Correlation: Code-Switching and Learning Success**

| | Cumulative Mean Value | Pearson R |
|---|---|---|
| Code-switching * | 38.2179 | *** |
| ** Affective Support | 18.1946 | 0.620 |

* Range 10-50

** Range 5-25

*** P  0.01

## Questionnaire

### (English Version)

This questionnaire is for research purposes only. Your answers will be treated in confidence. Please answer all the questions as accurately as you can.

1.     Male_____Female_____
2.     Name of the College_____
3.     Age _____
4.     Where do you live?                    City/ Village

(Likert Scale 5-1)

Coded as:

**5**= Strongly Agree

**4**= Agree

**3**= No opinion

**2**= Disagree

**1**= Strongly Disagree

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**1.** I feel confident in speaking in my English class.

   Strongly Agree    Agree    No Opinion    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

**2.** Code-switching should be used in English class.

   Strongly Agree        Agree    No Opinion    Disagree Strongly Disagree

**3.** Teacher should not use Urdu in English class.

  Strongly Agree   Agree   No Opinion   Disagree

   Strongly Disagree

**4.** I understand the lecture when the teacher uses code-switching.

    Strongly  Agree    Agree    No  Opinion    Disagree Strongly Disagree

**5.** Code-switching is better in explaining the lecture.

   Strongly Agree   Agree   No Opinion   Disagree    Strongly Disagree

**6.** I prefer that teacher should explain the lecture in both (Urdu and English) languages.

   Strongly Agree   Agree    No Opinion   Disagree     Strongly Disagree

**7.** Code-switching is very interesting phenomenon.

   Strongly Agree   Agree   No Opinion    Disagree     Strongly Disagree

**8.** Code-switching helps me in the preparation of the lesson.

  Strongly Agree   Agree    No Opinion    Disagree

   Strongly Disagree

**9.** Code-switching makes the lesson interesting.

Strongly Agree        Agree     No  opinion     Disagree
Strongly Disagree

**10.** I like code-switching in my English class.

Strongly Agree        Agree    No  Opinion      Disagree
Strongly Disagree

**11.** Code-switching is a waste of time.

Strongly Agree        Agree    No  opinion      Disagree
Strongly Disagree

**12.** Code-switching complicates the lesson.

Strongly Agree        Agree    No  opinion      Disagree
Strongly Disagree

**13.** Code-switching retards the pace of lesson.

Strongly Agree        Agree    No  opinion      Disagree
Strongly Disagree

**14.** I feel free confident in learning my lesson through code-switching.

Strongly Agree   Agree    No opinion    Disagree

Strongly Disagree

**15.** It saves our time and effort in learning English lesson.

Strongly Agree    Agree     No  Opinion     Disagree
Strongly Disagree

**16.** It causes boredom when the teacher uses code-switching.

Strongly Agree   Agree    No opinion    Disagree

Strongly Disagree

**17.** Code-Switching enhances the ability in understanding the lesson.

Strongly Agree    Agree    No opinion    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

**18.** Code-switching helps me in better understanding.

Strongly Agree    Agree    No Opinion    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

**19.** Code-switching hinders the process of communication.

Strongly Agree    Agree    No opinion    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

**20.** It makes me confident to speak well in my English class.

Strongly Agree    Agree    No opinion    Disagree

Strongly Disagree