The Effects of Code Switching in English Language Classroom during Online Distance Learning

Mafarhanatul Akmal Ahmad Kamal[1], Bazrina Ramly[2]

[1]The Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450 Shah Alam, Selangor Darul Ehsan, [2]Center of Foundation Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Kampus Dengkil, 43800 Dengkil, Selangor Darul Ehsan
Corresponding Author Email: bazrina6784@uitm.edu.my

Abstract
There are many conflicting views on the usage of code switching (CS) in English Language classroom (ESL) as many believe that the target language, English, should be the medium of instruction. However, CS seems to be an alternative way in teaching English language to promote better understanding. Especially in this sudden outbreak of coronavirus pandemic, teaching and learning have been shifted to Online Distance Learning (ODL) to adapt to the new norm. This situation has made CS as an effective alternative in amplifying English language teaching and learning process. That is why Shartiely (2016) suggests that the implementation of CS will facilitate learning in language classes, Hence, this research aims to investigate the effectiveness of code switching in the learning and teaching of English language subject through Open Distance Learning (ODL). 50 educators are required to answer a questionnaire consists of 20 questions which covers the frequency on the usage of CS and their opinion on the implementation of CS as an interactive tool in ESL classroom. Meanwhile, 372 students need to answer a questionnaire which consists of 20 questions on the implementation of CS as an interactive tool in the ESL classroom. It is hoped that the findings of this research could provide insights into the usage of CS in the teaching of English language as an interactive tool in online ESL classrooms.
Keywords: Code Switching, ESL Classroom, Online Learning

Introduction
Globalisation has further elevated the importance of English as a second language in Malaysia even more, as it is widely regarded as the language of tools that enable Malaysians to compete in a borderless world. This situation has gradually influenced the shift toward English as the medium of instruction in higher education since the passage of the Education Act of 1996, which permitted the use of English as the medium of instruction for technical areas in tertiary education courses (Wan & Sirat, 2018). Consequently, English has emerged as the language of communication and instruction in tertiary education and employment globally

(Badiozaman et al., 2019; Chen & Kraklow, 2014; De Costa et al., 2021; Rao, 2019). Since then, English language has been the primary medium of instruction for teaching and learning in most universities in Malaysia, owing to the fact that proficiency in the language is deemed inevitable and fundamental.

As Malaysia is a multilingual country with a diverse population speaking a variety of different languages, code switching is a common practice. Due to early exposure to English, the majority of Malaysians are bilingual or multilingual, with their mother tongue or Malay language serving as the national language and English serving as a second or third language. Code switching is defined as a bilingual speaker's use of two languages in the same stretch of speech (Bullock & Toribio, 2009). Myers-Scotton (1997) as cited in Nunan and Carter (2013) echoed that code switching occurs when bilingual speakers switch from one language to another in the same discourse, sometimes within the same utterance. It is a linguistic conversational phenomenon that refers to the simultaneous use of two distinct languages or dialects within a single sentence or discourse.

Code Switching and its Forms

Code switching manifests itself in a variety of ways. Myers-Scotton (2011) stated that the alternation of languages can happen within or between sentences or utterances (intra-sentential switching) or between sentences or utterances (inter-sentential switching). Poplack (1980) differentiates three types of code switching namely tag switching, inter-sentential code switching, and intra-sentential code switching. Tag-switching is the process of incorporating a tag or short phrase from one language into another. It is unlikely to violate grammatical rules or functions, and thus can be used in any position within a discourse. For instance, "Everything is fine. *Kan*? (Right?)" The tag *'kan'* denotes an ambiguity that begs for confirmation. According to Bhatti et al (2018), tags do not interfere with linguistic concerns in language classes; rather, they serve as a social tool for establishing rapport between educators and students. Following that, inter-sentential code switching occurs at the clausal level, involving complete sentences in both the target and mother tongue languages. For instance, "I am hungry. *Jom pergi makan* (Let's go and eat). Let's go!" The sentences changed completely from one language to the next.

Meanwhile, intra-sentential code switching occurs within the sentence. Meanwhile, intra-sentential code switching occurs at the clausal, sentential, or even word level within the sentence (Ansar, 2017; Hoffman, 1991; Maghfiroh, 2018; Poplack, 1980) without the hesitations, interruptions, or pauses associated with language changes. It frequently occurs when someone is speaking one language and abruptly switches to another, sometimes without realising it. For instance, "I've had enough of *duduk rumah* (staying at home) for far too long." As difficult as it is to use intra-sentential, speakers must be well-versed in the grammar of both languages. Thus, Poplack (1980) as cited in Koban (2013), stated that the majority of proficient bilinguals preferred intra-sentential code switching, whereas less proficient bilinguals preferred single-word and tag switches.

Having had mastery of one specific language, the mother tongue, one tends to switch to another language to accommodate and facilitate conversation. Code switching serves as a communicative strategy by lowering the barriers created by language differences (Caparaz & Gustilo, 2017). Switching between languages frequently during conversation is a natural

process in bilingual and multilingual contexts, as speakers have language control over their respective languages (Kelkoula & Djailed, 2018). Apart from filling linguistic gaps in conversation, Wu (2021) stated that Malaysians use code switching as an identity marker to indicate membership in a particular group identity. In a study by Halim and Maros (2014) investigating the various pragmatic and aesthetic functions of code-switching used in the online communication activity on Facebook indicated that people switch languages to express their emotions, thoughts, and feelings. Besides, they prefer to use simpler English and Malay words to economise and clarify statements as well as to emphasise on certain ideas and messages.

Code Switching in Classroom Context
Despite being exposed to a variety of races and languages as a child, English proficiency has remained a perennial issue in Malaysia (Suliman et al., 2021). Even after years of primary and secondary education, Malaysian students' proficiency and competency have not significantly improved (Yunus & Sukri, 2017), even more so when entering tertiary education. Thus, code switching can occur in a variety of contexts, including language classes, in which students and educators share or differ in their first language. Due to linguistic incompetence or a lack of language ability, some students prefer to use their mother tongue exclusively or in combination with their first and second languages, particularly in language class, to aid in their learning and comprehension of the lesson. According to Shartiely (2016), code switching or the simultaneous use of multiple languages, has been proposed as a method for educators and students to bridge the linguistics divide. However, many believe that incorporating CS into English language instruction is a mistake that will jeopardise its success.

Cook (2001) argued that using first language in class would discourage students from using the target language, defeating the primary goal of language classes. Dykhanova (2015) added that the majority of educators and students had a negative attitude toward code switching, contradicting Alenezi's (2010) findings that Kuwait University students had a positive attitude toward code switching. Nonetheless, code switching is prevalent in some bilingual communities and does not appear to impair or disrupt comprehension (Beatty-Martnez et al., 2018). Switching between the target and another language is typically brief and temporary in language classes, with the target language occupying the majority of instructional time (Probyn, 2015, as cited in Sun et al., 2019).

A study conducted by Paramesvaran and Lim (2018) on the practise of codeswitching during English lessons for average primary school students in a rural Malaysian national school discovered that code switching encouraged students' participation. The students felt less overwhelmed and were able to participate actively in both verbal and written tasks when their teacher instructed and explained in a way that suited their individual learning abilities through code switching. Additionally, a study conducted by Tati et al (2020) among community college students in Sabah to investigate different types of code switching in a multilingual English language classroom discovered that code switching increased students' confidence when communicating messages and facilitated their interaction in English.

Thus, this demonstrates that incorporating code switching into language classes will facilitate learning because code switching is not used as the primary mode of instruction but rather to assist students in grasping the language context in English language classes. Furthermore,

code switching can help students to better understand their lessons. Yow (2018) asserts that code switching does not imply a lack of proficiency in either language, but rather a thorough understanding of both languages' grammatical systems. Additionally, code switching is a common practise in language classrooms to assist in learning (Rido et al., 2015).

Code Switching in ODL ESL Classrooms / in English Language Classroom During Open and Distance Learning

Malaysia is one of the countries where the citizens can speak at least 2 languages fluently (Lew, 2014). Since 1980s, the educational system in Malaysia has adapted both Malay and English as the main medium in the teaching and learning process. Plus, The National Education Policy has also stated that Malay and English are required to be taught at all educational institutions in Malaysia (Lee, 2010). Due to the adaptation of these two languages, Malaysians have been exposed to these two languages simultaneously since they were small. This exposure has led Malaysians to switch between Malay and English language in their daily conversations, or better known as code switching. Myers (2008) proposes that code switching means the insertion of L1 to the L2 of the learners. Sert (2005) also suggests that code-switching happens among bilinguals as a sign of solidarity between those who are from the same ethno-cultural identity.

The practice of code-switching has been debated by scholars for many years. Practically, code-switching is an acceptable thing to do when being applied in daily conversations, but the debate starts when code-switching is being practiced in classrooms, especially ESL classrooms. Some students would compel to code-switching as it could help them to overcome any linguistics hurdles. This is supported by studies conducted by Adibah (2016); Nurhamidah et al (2018) where they found that the weak students would choose code-switching method to help them to understand the grammar and ESL content better. This is in parallel with the findings in the study done by Tibategeza and Plessis (2018) where their participants claimed that learning ESL is easier when the teachers use the language, they are familiar with.

Even though the students in Malaysia have been exposed to both Malay and English language since they were in kindergarten, the usage for both of the languages varies. This results to different level of proficiency among Malaysian students. Students with low English proficiency would have more challenges in coping with the ESL content compared to the students with high English proficiency. Accordingly, this is where the usage of code-switching in ESL classrooms is highlighted. Code-switching method can help the students to feel motivated and less afraid to learn English. According to Krashen Affective Filter Hypothesis (1985), learning outcome can be more fruitful if students' affective filter is reduced. This is further proven by Ahmad and Jusoff (2009) where they suggest that code-switching provides a 'helping-medium' for students to understand ESL content better as it encourages effective information transfer by the teachers.

However, there are studies that have opposing views on the usage of code-switching. Some studies found that the usage of code-switching in ESL classrooms could result to deficiency in English language proficiency and students' confidence in speaking English would also deteriorate (Aljoundi, 2013; Mokgwathi & Webb, 2013). Samihah and Parilah (2020) also claimed that when educators use code-switching in ESL classrooms, it would cause an

overreliance on L1 among students. Students would consider code-switching as a 'refuge' when they do not understand any words or any topic in ESL subject. Without having any extra effort to learn ESL, students would just code-switch when they find any difficult topics such as grammar. Moreover, Maishara et al (2013) argue that code-switching usage could affect the quality of L2 input. This is because, when educators use both Malay and English language in ESL classrooms, students would not get the full ESL content compared to when educators use only English language (Jingxia, 2010). As a result, Malaysian students would face difficulties when they are in a situation where only English language can be used.

These concerns have been the cause of the debate on the usage of code-switching. That is why, the usage of L1 in ESL classrooms should be limited (Samihah & Parilah, 2020). It is true that the use of L1 for education purposes is a fundamental 'linguistic human right' of a student (Skuttnab-Kagnas, 1994; Cook, 2000). However, just to ensure students' understanding and linguistics human right in ESL classroom, educators should not neglect the importance of English language in ESL classrooms. Based on previous studies, code-switching method can be used in ESL classrooms but there are restrictions that educators and students need to abide, 1) put a limitation on the usage of L1 in ESL classrooms and 2) do not let the students perceive code-switching method as a 'refuge' but rather an aid to help them understand better in ESL classrooms.

Hence, this current study aims to investigate the usage of code-switching by pinning on the restrictions, in Open Distance Learning (ODL) ESL classrooms. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, classes in Malaysia have changed from physical face-to-face class to online classes. This change has resulted to many difficulties faced by both students and educators such as poor internet connection, unclear voice projection or unresponsive students. Particularly for ESL subjects, extra effort needs to be put by the students and educators as there are four integrated skills that need to be taught throughout the semester. That is why, this study wants to examine the effect of code-switching in ODL ESL classrooms.

Research Methodology

This quantitative study used a purposive sampling technique to elicit sufficient responses regarding the effects of code switching in online English classrooms from various foundation institutions throughout Peninsular Malaysia. This study included two categories of respondents: (a) educators and (b) foundation students. 21 educators and 245 students from various foundation institutions participated in this study. The centre of foundation studies involved are as follows:

1. ASASIpintar Pre-University Program, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)
2. Centre of Foundation Studies for Agriculture Science, Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (UPM)
3. Centre of Foundation Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM)
4. Centre of Defence Foundation, Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia (UPNM)
5. Science and Medicine Foundation, Centre Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UniSZA)
6. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Foundation Centre, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT)
7. Centre for Foundation Studies in Management, Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM)
8. Centre for Foundation Studies, *International Islamic University Malaysia* (*IIUM*)

9. Centre for Foundation Studies in Science Universiti Malaya (UM), and Tamhidi (Foundation Studies) for Medicine
10. Dentistry and Science Islamic Science, University of Malaysia (USIM)

Respondents were solicited via email to the respective centre of foundation studies as well as their social media platforms such as Instagram and Twitter. To ensure the data collection was appropriate, permission from the Universiti Teknologi MARA Research Ethics Committee was obtained prior to data collection. The approval code for the study is REC/02/2021 (MR/71). Participation was completely voluntary, and all responses were kept completely confidential.

This study collected data through the use of online self-administered questionnaires comprised of 29 and 24 items for educators and students, respectively. The questionnaires are adapted based on El Fiki's (1999) research on code mixing between Arabic and English in an academic setting. Both educator and student questionnaires contained three sections: (a) demographic information, (b) the frequency with which educators used code switching, and (c) the effectiveness of code switching in online English classrooms.

Particularly for students, these items are designed to elicit information about students' perceptions of educators' frequency of code switching during lectures and the effectiveness of code switching used to aid students' comprehension in online English classrooms. On the other hand, for educators, the questions are designed to elicit information about the frequency with which they use code switching and the rationale behind their use of code switching in the teaching of English language subjects during online classes. As respondents may attempt to portray themselves in a more socially acceptable way, they tend to avoid extreme response categories and thus prefer neutral responses. In order to produce an ipsative (forced choice) measure in which there is no indifferent or neutral option, a narrower spectrum within the 4-point Likert scale was utilised in the questionnaire, and respondents were required to respond without bias, extremism, or fabricated responses (Bürkner et al.; 2019, Chyung et al., 2017; Taherdoost, 2019). Furthermore, according to Sun et al. (2019), the midpoint option represents meanings other than a moderate level of the trait that the scale is meant to measure.

The data collected from Google forms was then converted to Google sheets and analysed using IBM SPSS for Windows version 26 for descriptive frequency (n) and percentage analysis (%).

Findings and Discussion
    i.   **Students**
  A. Demographic Background

Table 1

Participants' Demographic Background

Factor		Frequency	Percentage
Gender			
	n	245	100
	% Male	75	30.6
	% Female	170	69.4
First Language			
	n	245	100
	%Bahasa Malaysia	233	95.1
	%Mandarin	5	2.0
	%Tamil	3	1.2
	%English	3	1.2
	%German	1	0.4
Foundation Centre			
	n	245	100
	%UKM	25	10.2
	%UPM	40	16.3
	%UiTM	73	29.8
	%UPNM	30	12.2
	%UNISZA	15	6.1
	%UMT	4	1.6
	%UUM	13	5.3
	%IIUM	12	4.9
	%UM	21	8.6
	%USIM	12	4.9

In order to answer the research question for this paper, there are 3 factors that were used to identify the participants for this paper which are gender, first language and foundation centre.

The gender composition for the student respondents was 30.6% male and 69.4% female while the first language composition was 95.1% Bahasa Malaysia, 2.0% Mandarin, 1.2% Tamil, 1.2% English and 0.4% German. Although the distribution for gender is not fairly distributed, it would not affect the main purpose of this study as both genders are students. However, for the first language, only the participants whose first language is Malay language will be selected for this study as this study aims to find the usage of L1 which is Malay language in ESL classrooms.

According to the MyGovernment Portal, there are 10 foundation centres in the Peninsular of Malaysia Hence, the respondents for this study were from the selected foundation centres which are UKM (10.2%), UPM (16.3%), UiTM (29.8%), UPNM (12.2%), UNISZA (6.1), UMT (1.6%), UUM (5.3%), IIUM (4.9%), UM (8.6%) and USIM (4.9%). In line with the aim of this study, it is

vital for the respondents for this study to be from foundation centres and not from other level of study.

B. Frequency of Code-Switching by Educators

Table 2
Frequency of Code-switching by Educators

Item	Statement	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1	Mixing English and BM is a common phenomenon in the ESL lectures I have attended.	44.5%	36.3%	17.1%	2%
2	The lecturer's main language during English class is always English.	74.7%	22%	2.9%	0.4%
3	The lecturer's frequently mixes BM with English in his/her lectures.	29.8%	42.4%	22%	5.7%
4	The lecturer usually maintains the English terminology but uses BM to give further explanation.	54.3%	31.8%	10.2%	3.7%
5	The lecturer does not even have any difficulties in delivering lectures in English.	74.3%	22.9%	2.9%	0%
6	The lecturer always switches to BM when we do not understand the lectures.	42.4%	42.4%	11.4%	3.7%
7	How many times do you believe your lecturer engages in code switching in a 2-hour class?	21.2%	50.2%	23.3%	5.3%

Table 2 shows the data for the frequency of code-switching by the educators. This data was obtained from the students' perspective. Based on Item 1, majority of the students (44.5%) chose always to show that mixing English and BM is a common phenomenon in ESL classrooms and 36.3% chose sometimes to describe Item 1. This shows that the usage of both English and Malay language in ESL classrooms is not a peculiar thing to do. This is supported by Item 3 and 7, where majority of students (42.4% & 50.2% respectively) chose sometimes to show the frequency of their educators use code-switching in ESL classrooms. Even though the usage of code-switching is not 'always', but the need to use code-switching is ESL classrooms cannot be denied as most of the students chose 'sometimes' and not 'rarely' or 'never' to describe the frequency of educators use code-switching.

However, the usage of code-switching does not mean the lack of proficiency on the part of the lecturers. This is proven in Item 2 and 5 (74.7% & 74.3% respectively) chose 'always' to show that their educators do not have any difficulties in terms of delivering lectures in English. Item 4 and 6 further explains behind the reason why the educators are still using both Malay

and English language in their ESL classrooms despite them having good English proficiency. As shown in Item 4 and 6, majority of the students (54.3% & 42.4% respectively) chose 'always' to show the frequency of their educators using Malay language is to give further explanation and to help them understand ESL subject better. For Item 6, 42.4% of the students also chose 'sometimes' to show the educators' frequency to switch to Malay language when the students faced difficulties to understand certain topics in ESL subject. Hence, this shows that educators tend to switch to Malay language in ESL classrooms with one purpose which is to make the students understand better. This is parallel with Noli Maishara et al. (2013) where they state that the usage of code-switching in ESL classrooms could save time and help to minimise the confusion among the students.

C. Effectiveness of Code-switching in English as Second Language (ESL) Classroom during Open Distance Learning (0DL)

Table 3
The Appropriateness of Using Malay Language in ESL Classrooms

Item	Statement	Yes	No	More English, Less BM	Less English, more BM	It depends on the topics
1	In your opinion, is it appropriate to use Malay language in an English class?	13.1%	7.8%	48.2%	0.8%	30.2%

Based on the appropriateness of using Malay language in ESL classrooms data as shown in Table 3, majority of students (48.2%) prefer to have more English and less Malay language as compared to saying yes (13.1%). Also, there percentage is quite high for the choice of 'It depends on the topics' which is at 30.2%. Even though majority of students did not choose 'Yes' but for them to choose 'More English, Less BM' shows that they do recognise the use of BM in ESL classrooms.

Table 4
Malay Language Helps to Learn English

Item	Statement	Yes	No	It depends on the topics
2	Do you think Malay language can help learning English?	45.7%	3.7%	50.6%

Despite the fact that the students would want less BM in Item 1, Item 2 shows that majority of them (50.6%) agreed that Malay language can help in the English learning based on the topics. This is supported by another 45.7% of students who chose 'Yes' when it comes to the helping role of Malay language in ESL classrooms.

Table 5

The Best Way to Explain the Complex English Language

Item	Statement	Malay and simple English	Body Language	Pictures
3	Which of the following is the best way to explain the complex English language?	77.1%	7.6%	15.3%

Students in Malaysia have indeed perceived English language as one of the challenging subjects (Choy & Troudi, 2006). Hence, English educators in Malaysia have to find ways to make it simpler for the students. Thus, based on Item 3, majority of students (77.1%) chose 'Malay and simple English' as the best way to explain the complex English language. This shows that Malaysian students are not trying to neglect English in total, but they do agree that the use of Malay language is ESL classrooms will make it easier for them to understand the complexity of English language learning.

Table 6

Students' Feelings

Item	Statement	1	2	3	More	None
4	How many times do you feel confused when your English lecturer speaks in L2 (English language)?	20.8%	24.1%	10.6%	19.2%	25.3%

Item 3 is supported by Item 4 where majority of the students (25.3) chose 'None' to describe their confusion when the English lecturer speaks in L2. This data is supported by Item 7 where the students were asked how they feel when the educators use Malay language in ESL classrooms. It was found that 66.5% of the students chose 'Understand as well when he or she speaks in English' and this shows that most of Malaysian students do not have difficulties in understand English language spoken by their educators. However, it can be denied from the data that the confusion is there as students did choose '1', '2' and 'More' (20.8%, 24.1% & 19.2% respectively) to show that some of them did have confusion when their English lecturers speak English.

Table 7

Students' Needs (Explanation)

Item	Statement	Repeat the explanation	Explain again in English but in a different way	Explain in Bahasa Malaysia
5	If your lecturer explains something that you do not understand, you want him or her to	14.7%	69.4%	15.9%

The fact that students got confused sometimes when their English lecturers speak English language, majority of them (69.4%) still chose 'Explain again in English but in a different way'. This shows that even though Malaysian students think Malay language can help in the learning of English language, it does not diminish their eagerness to still use English in ESL classrooms. This is supported by Item 6, where 62.4% of the students still chose English when the educators teach grammar. Hence, this current study contradicts with the earlier studies (Ellis, 1984; Chaudron; 1988) which claimed that the usage of code-switching in ESL classrooms might result to the students rely too much of the educators' code-switching.

Table 8
Students' Needs (Grammar)

Item	Statement	English	Bahasa Malaysia	Both
6	When my lecturer explains grammar, I want him or her to use	62.4%	2.9%	34.7%

Table 9
Students' Feelings (Lecturers Speak English During Class)

Item	Statement	Understand better	Understand less	Understand as well when he or she speaks English
7	When my lecturer speaks BM during English class, I feel that I	30.2%	3.3%	66.5%

Table 10
Students' Needs (Preferred Language)

Item	Statement	English	Bahasa Malaysia	Both are better
8	When I ask a question in BM, I want the lecturer to answer me in	21.2%	7.8%	71%

Previous items did acknowledge students' ability to understand English language. However, Item 8 highlighted the usage of code-switching where majority of the students (71%) chose 'Both are better' which means that most of the students would want their educators to code-switch when answering their questions pertaining ESL subject. This is most probably because majority of the students agreed that code-switching in ESL classrooms is not interrupting and is indeed helpful in making them understand better in ESL classrooms as shown in Item 9 and 10 (78.8% & 91.4% respectively). Yet, Item 11 shows a quite fair distribution where 50.2% of the students chose 'No' and 49.8%' chose 'Yes'. This data is in line with Item 1 and 2 where the students chose 'It depends on topics' which describes further the 'almost' 50-50 choice of the students for Item 11.

Table 11
Role of Code Switching in English Class

Item	Statement	Yes	No
9	From the view of fluency, do you think code-switching is some kind of interrupting?	21.2%	78.8%
10	From the view of accuracy, do you think code-switching is helpful in making you understand better in an English class?	91.4%	8.6%
11	Do you prefer for the lecturers to do more frequent switches when they teach English language subject?	49.8%	50.2&

Table 12
Mix of English and Malay Language

Item	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
12	When the lecturers mix BM and English in ESL classroom, it helps me to pay attention in class.	27.8	59.2	11.8	1.2
13	Mixing of BM and English in ESL classroom leads to the strengthen of my English.	26.5	51.4	20.4	1.6
14	Mixing of BM and English in ESL classroom leads to the weakness of my English.	7.3	20	46.9	25.7
15	I respect lecturer more when teaching in Malay and English.	31.4	44.1	19.6	4.9
16	I respect lecturer more when teaching only in English.	24.9	44.9	26.1	4.1
17	Teaching in English in English subject class increases my chances of passing the subject.	42	46.9	10.2	0.8
18	Teaching in Malay and English in the English subject class increases my chances of passing the subject.	36.7	45.3	16.3	1.6
19	When the lecturer mixes BM and English in ESL classroom, I tune out.	4.5	17.1	50.6	27.8

Table 12 shows the effectiveness of code-switching in ESL classrooms where most of the students strongly agreed and agreed that the mix of BM and English in ESL classroom would enhance their understanding of the ESL subject itself (refer Item 12, 13,14 & 17). However, Malaysian students do show their flexibility in terms of the usage of code-switching in ESL classrooms as most of them strongly agreed and agreed that teaching English subject by either mixing both Malay and English language or solely English in ESL classroom would also increase their chances of passing the subject. This shows that the usage of code-switching in ESL classrooms, particularly, in Malaysia would not result the students being too dependent on Malay language or for them to neglect the importance of English language in ESL classrooms. Item 15 and 16 also show that students would still respect their educators despite of their educators' usage of code-switching in ESL classrooms. In short, code-switching is an effective

tool that would bring positive outcome instead of negative drawbacks as claimed by previous studies.

D. **Educators**

The findings of the research are discussed in relation to the 29-item and 24-item questionnaires administered to educators and students, respectively. There are three sections: demographic information, educators' frequency of code switching, and the effectiveness of code switching.

Table 13

Participants' Demographic Background

Factor		Frequency	Percentage
Gender			
	n	21	100
	% Male	3	14.3
	% Female	18	85.7
Years of Teaching			
	n	21	100
	%Less than 5 years	6	28.6
	% More than 5 years but less than 10 years	8	38.1
	%More than 10 years but less than 15 years	5	23.8
	%More than 15 years but less than 20 years	1	4.8
	% More than 20 years	1	4.8
Foundation Centre			
	n	21	100
	%UPM	5	23.8
	%UiTM	9	42.9
	%UPNM	3	14.3
	%UUM	1	4.8
	%UM	1	4.8
	%USIM	2	9.5

Table 13 shows the demographics of educators who participated in this research. This research enrolled 21 educators, with males accounting for 14.3% and females accounting for 85.7%. The majority of educators (38.2%) have more than five years of teaching experience, followed by those with less than five years (28.6 %). Only one participant had more than two decades of teaching experience (4.8 %). All of these participants were teaching foundation

students at UiTM (42.9%), UPM (23.8%), UPNM (14.3%), USIM (9.5%), and UUM and UM (4.8%), respectively.

Table 14
Frequency of Code-switching by Educators

Item	Statement	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1	When you teach in ESL classroom, your main language is always English.	90.5%	9.5%	0%	0%
2	Do you mix BM with English in your ESL classroom?	0%	42.9%	28.6%	28.6%
3	I always maintain the English terminology, but I use BM to give further explanation.	28.6%	23.8%	23.8%	23.8%
4	When the students do not understand, I will switch to BM.	9.5%	28.6%	33.3%	6%
5	How many times do you think you engage in code switching in a 2-hour class?	4.8%	9.5%	57.1%	28.6%

Table 14 summarises the frequency with which educators employed code switching in English language classroom during open and distance learning. Each item is rated on a scale of 'always', 'sometimes', 'rarely', and 'never'. Item 1 indicates that the vast majority (90.5%) of educators used English as their primary medium of instruction throughout online classes. This is in line with Probyn (2015, cited in Sun et al., 2019), who asserts that code switching should not consume the majority of target language instructional time and demonstrates that the use of other languages is still prevalent, albeit in a very limited capacity. Item 2 revealed that the majority of them (42.9%) occasionally used Malay language in their instruction. This is further explained in Item 3, where the majority of respondents (28.6%) preferred to retain the terminology in English with an additional explanation in Malay language, while 23.8% responded that they never used a language other than English to explain to students. According to Item 4, only 6% of educators refused to switch to Malay language if their students did not understand the lesson. Meanwhile, only 9.5% would switch languages, and the majority of educators rarely used code switching to aid students' comprehension. This is in contrast to Shartiely (2016), who proposes that educators use code switching to bridge the linguistics divide among students, with the ultimate concern being the students' understanding. Item 5 summarises the educator's use of code switching by stating that the majority (57.1%) rarely used it, followed by never use it (28.6%), and occasionally used it (9.5%), leaving only 4.8% tend to use it in a two-hour class. Despite the fact that code switching is a common practise in language classes and aids in the acquisition of language capabilities, the majority of educators agree with Dykhanova (2015) that they have a negative attitude toward code switching.

Table 15
Effectiveness of Code Switching

Item	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Lecturers who switch codes from English to Malay or from Malay to English in ESL classroom can express themselves clearly in both languages.	28.6%	28.6%	28.6%	14.3%
2	Lecturers who switch codes from English to Malay or from Malay to English may cause difficulty in understanding.	9.5%	23.8%	66.7%	0%
3	Lecturers who switch codes from English to Malay or from Malay to English pollute languages.	9.5%	14.3%	57.1%	19%
4	Lecturers who switch codes from English to Malay are deficient in English.	14.3%	4.8%	61.9%	19%
5	Lecturers who switch codes from English to Malay or from Malay to English can do so in all kinds of topics in ESL classroom.	19%	23.8%	42.9%	14.3%
6	Lecturers who switch codes from English to Malay can better explain the grammatical points and lexical items in the text.	23.8%	33.3%	28.6%	14.3%
7	Lecturers who switch codes from English to Malay can better elicit responses from students.	33.3%	33.3%	23.8%	9.5%
8	Lecturers who switch codes from English to Malay can better clarify the lesson content taught.	19.0%	38.1%	33.3%	9.5%
9	Lecturers who switch codes from English to Malay can better clarify task instruction.	23.8%	28.6%	38.1%	9.5%
10	Lecturers who code-switch from English to Malay can better engage students' attention.	19.0%	33.3%	42.9%	4.8%

11	Lecturers who switch codes from English to Malay can better encourage students to learn English subject.	23.8%	19.0%	47.6%	9.5%
12	Lecturers who switch codes from English to Malay can helps the students to pay attention in class.	19.0%	33.3%	42.9%	4.8%
13	Lecturers who switch codes from English to Malay can strengthen the students' English proficiency skills better.	14.3%	28.6%	33.3%	23.8%
14	Lecturers who switch codes from English to Malay can weaken the students' English proficiency skills.	23.8%	28.6%	42.9%	4.8%
15	Lecturers who use only English in ESL classroom can increase the students' chances of passing the subject	23.8%	42.9%	23.8%	9.5%
16	Lecturers who use both English and Malay in ESL classroom can increase the students' chances of passing the subject.	14.3%	38.1%	38.1%	9.5%

Table 15 outlines the educators' attitudes on the effectiveness of using code switching as one of the strategic tools in language teaching during open and distance learning. As evidenced by Item 2, Item 3, Item 4, and Item 14 with 66.7%, 57.1%, 61.9%, and 42.2%, respectively, the majority of educators disagree that code switching hinders students' English learning progress. This is consistent with the findings of Beatty-Martnez et al (2018), who found that code switching is common and does not appear to hinder the students' ability or understanding. However, despite the belief that code switching would not discourage students from learning and utilising the English language, educators disagree with the use of code switching in the English classroom to improve students' learning, which contradicts the findings of Rido et al (2015) that code switching is a common practise in language classrooms to facilitate learning. This is supported by Items 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13, which have respective percentages of 38.1%, 42.9%, 47.6%, 42.3%, and 33.3%. It is interesting to note that the majority of educators (42.9%) preferred to use only English in ESL classrooms in order to increase their students' chances of passing the subject (Item 15). Contrarily, for Item 16, the percentage of educators who opted to use code switching to elevate their students' passing rates was the same for agree and disagree, at 38.1% each. This demonstrates that the use of code switching in ESL classrooms remains debatable, as Dykhanova (2015) argues that the majority of educators have a negative attitude toward code switching. Moreover, Samihah and Parihah (2020) concurred that the use of code switching by educators may result in

students' overdependence on L1. However, code switching is deemed necessary as a means of bridging linguistic gaps and encouraging students to learn, particularly when ESL students struggle to comprehend any words or subjects (Noli Maishara et al., 2013; Paramesvaran and Lim, 2018S; Samihah & Parilah, 2020; Shartiely, 2016; Tati et al., 2020).

Conclusion

Despite the mismatch between students' and educators' needs for code switching, this study demonstrates that the use of code switching does not impede students' learning progress. Students state that the in-depth explanation on certain ESL topics could be expanded through the usage of their first language, Malay language. As a result, code switching is believed to enhance the understanding towards ESL subjects better and increase their ESL subjects passing rate. On the other hand, the educators prefer to use English language as a medium of instruction in ESL classes, but they do not diminish the role of Malay language in explaining certain challenging topics to students. In addition, educators also highlight the function of Malay language in filling the language gaps among students from different English proficiency levels. Indeed, due to the nature of online learning, where the medium of instruction is not direct, code switching could be one of the tools for learning the language in ESL classrooms, particularly for defining difficult words and topics. In short, the finding of this research suggests that code switching is an efficient tool that brings positive outcome instead of negative impediment as argued by previous studies in the ESL learning and teaching process. Furthermore, this research proposes a different perspective to be investigated by future research through the expansion of different educational levels (e.g., undergraduates & postgraduates), different subjects, and a larger population scale.

Acknowledgement

References

Abutalebi, J., & Green, D. W. (2008). Control mechanisms in bilingual language production: Neural evidence from language switching studies. *Language and Cognitive Processes*, 23, 557–582.

Alenezi, A. A. (2010). Students' language attitude towards using codeswitching as a medium of instruction in the college of health science: An exploratory study. ARECLS, 7, 1-22.

Badiozaman, I., Leong, H., & Jikus, O. (2019). Students' perception and use of English in higher education institutions. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, *11*(1), 36-49. https://doi.org/10.1108/jarhe-07-2018-0113

Barac, R., & Bialystok, E. (2012). Bilingual effects on cognitive and linguistic development: Role of language, cultural background, and education. Child Development, 83, 413–422.

Beatty-Martinez, A., Valdes Kroff, J., & Dussias, P. (2018). From the Field to the Lab: A Converging Methods Approach to the Study of Codeswitching. *Languages*, *3*(2), 19. https://doi.org/10.3390/languages3020019

Bhatti, A., Shamsudin, S., & Said, S. (2018). Code-switching: A useful foreign language teaching tool in EFl classrooms. *English Language Teaching*, *11*(6), 93. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v11n6p93

Bürkner, P., Schulte, N., & Holling, H. (2019). On the statistical and practical limitations of Thurstonian IRT models. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, *79*(5), 827-854. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164419832063

Caparaz, P., & Gustilo, L. (2017). Communicative aspects of multilingual code switching in computer-mediated communication. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *7*(2), 111. https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v7i2.8137

Chen, Y., & Kraklow, D. (2014). Taiwanese college students' motivation and engagement for English learning in the context of internationalization at home. *Journal Of Studies in International Education*, *19*(1), 46-64. https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315314533607

Chyung, S., Roberts, K., Swanson, I., & Hankinson, A. (2017). Evidence-based survey design: The use of a midpoint on the Likert scale. *Performance Improvement*, *56*(10), 15-23. https://doi.org/10.1002/pfi.21727

Cook, V. (2001). Using the first language in the classroom. Canadian Modern Language Review, 57(3), 402-423. https://doi.org/10.3138/cmlr.57.3.402

De Costa, P., Green-Eneix, C., & Li, W. (2021). Problematizing language policy and practice in EMI and transnational higher education. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, *44*(2), 115-128. https://doi.org/10.1075/aral.00036.edi

Dykhanova, A. (2015). Functions of code-switching and attitudes toward them: A case study. Unpublished Master's dissertation. Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU)-Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi (DAÜ), Turkey.

El-Fiki, H. A. (1999). Code-mixing of Arabic and English in a university science-teaching context: Frequency, grammatical categories and attitudes. Master Thesis. Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Eriksen, B. A., & Eriksen, C. W. (1974). Effects of noise letters upon the identification of a target letter in a nonsearch task. Perception and Psychophysics, 16, 143–149.

Kang, C., & Lust, B. (2019). Code-switching does not predict Executive Function performance in proficient bilingual children: Bilingualism does. Bilingualism: *Language and Cognition*, *22*(2), 366-382. doi:10.1017/S1366728918000299

Kelkoula, N., & Djailed, F. (2018). Functions and reasons for code switching to Arabic in EFL classes: A case study of ENSC students. *In Translation,* Vol. 6, no. 1, pp.213-223. https://search.emarefa.net/detail/BIM-921575

Koban, D. (2013). Intra-sentential and Inter-sentential Code-switching in Turkish-English Bilinguals in New York City, U.S. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *70*, 1174-1179. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.01.173

Kootstra, G. J. (2015). A psycholinguistic perspective on code-switching: Lexical, structural, and socio-interactive processes. In G. Stell & K. Yakpo (Eds.), Code-switching between structural and sociolinguistic perspectives (pp. 39–64). Berlin: De Gruyter.

Maghfiroh, Lailatul. (2018). An Analysis on Form, Function and Reason of CodeSwitching and Code-Mixing Used in Vlog of Shirin Al Athrus. A Graduating Paper. English Education Department of State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) Salatiga.

Yunus, M., & Sukri, I. A. S. (2017). The use of English in teaching mathematics and science: The PPSMI policy vis-à-vis the DLP. *Advances In Language and Literary Studies*, 8(1), 133. https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.alls.v.8n.1p.133

Siong, N. T., & Min, H. L. (2017). Socio-Environmental Factors Impacting on Teachers' Attitudes Towards Code-Switching in ESL Classrooms in a Rural District in Malaysia. *Kajian Malaysia*, 35(2), 105-125. https://doi.org/10.21315/km2017.35.2.6

Nunan, D., & Carter, R. (2013). *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages*. Cambridge University Press.

Paramesvaran, M., & Lim, J. (2018). Code-switching practices in a Malaysian multilingual primary classroom from teacher's and students' perspectives. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 8(2). https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v8i2.13273

Poarch, G. J., & Van Hell, J. G. (2012). Executive functions and inhibitory control in multilingual children: Evidence from second language learners, bilinguals, and trilinguals. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 113, 535–551.

Poplack, S. (1980). Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish y termino en Espanola: Toward a typology of code-switching1. *Linguistics, 18* (7–8), 581–618.

Rao, P. S. (2019). The role of English as a global language. *Research Journal of English, 4*(1), 65-79.

Shartiely, N. E. (2016). Code-switching in university classroom interaction: A case study of the University of Dar es Salaam. *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics Plus, 49, 215-231. doi:10.5842/49-0-663*

Suliman, A., Nor, M., & Yunus, M. (2021). Dual language programme in Malaysian secondary schools: Expounding students' acceptance. *International Conference on Business Studies and Education. 4* (61-69).

Sun, H., Yussof, N., Vijayakumar, P., Lai, G., O'brien, B., & Ong, Q. (2019). Teacher's code-switching and bilingual children's heritage language learning and cognitive switching flexibility. *Journal of Child Language*, 47(2), 309-336. https://doi.org/10.1017/s030500091900059x

Sun, T., Zhang, B., Phan, W. M., Drasgow, F., & Roberts, B. (2019). "Meh!": Examining midpoint endorsement habitude (MEH) in survey research. *Academy of Management Proceedings*, 2019(1), 16421. https://doi.org/10.5465/ambpp.2019.227

Taherdoost, H. (2019). What is the best response scale for survey and questionnaire design; Review of different lengths of rating scale/attitude, scale/Likert scale, *International Journal of Academic Research in Management*, 8(1), 1–10., Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=3588604

Tati, J., Doring, L., & Narasuman, S. (2020). analysis of types of code switching among community college students in Sabah Malaysia. *Journal of Social Science Advanced Research*, 1(2), 97-109

Yim, O., & Bialystok, E. (2012). Degree of conversational codeswitching enhances verbal task switching in Cantonese-English bilinguals. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 15, 873–883.

Yow, W., Tan, J., & Flynn, S. (2018). Code-switching as a marker of linguistic competence in bilingual children. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition, 21*(5), 1075-1090. doi:10.1017/S1366728917000335

Yow, W. Q., & Li, X. (2015). Balanced bilingualism and early age of second language acquisition as the underlying mechanisms of a bilingual executive control advantage: Why variations in bilingual experiences matter. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 6, 164.

Wan, C., & Sirat, M. (2018). The development of Malaysian higher education. *Asian Education and Development Studies*, *7*(2), 144-156. https://doi.org/10.1108/aeds-07-2017-0068

Wu, Y. (2021). Whether Codeswitching can Project Identity? —Relationship between Codeswitching and Identity among Malaysian Chinese University Students. *Advances In Literary Study*, *09*(02), 91-103. https://doi.org/10.4236/als.2021.92011