



People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Dr. Moulay Tahar- University of Saida
Faculty of Letters, Languages and Arts
Department of English Language and Literature

**Code-Switching in EFL Classrooms: A Teaching Resource or a Learning
Obstacle? A Case Study of Third-Year**

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Didactics of English.

Presented by:

Mrs. Fehim Aya Rania

Supervised by:

Dr. Ali Rabah Nouria

Board of examiners

President Dr. M. Kherraz

Supervisor Dr Nouria Ali Rabah

Examiner Dr. L. Sellam

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Declaraction of Originality

I attest that this thesis represents my own original research. It does not include any information previously authored, published, or submitted by another researcher, nor any work submitted for the acquisition of obtaining another academic qualification at any university or institution. All external sources of ideas, citations, or quotations have been appropriately cited and acknowledged. This thesis is submitted solely to Dr. Moulay Tahar University of Saida.

Dedication

By the grace of Allah, Alhamdulillah, this achievement would not have been possible without His guidance and blessings. I dedicate this work with deep gratitude to all those who have loved, supported, and contributed to my academic journey. To my beloved father, the first and most important man in my life, thank you for your unconditional love, endless sacrifices, unwavering support, and constant belief in me. Your guidance and encouragement have been the foundation of every step I have taken and every success I have achieved. To my mother, aunts, and grandmother , thank you for your love, care, strength, and kindness, which have shaped me into the person I am today. I am equally grateful to my uncles, especially my uncle M.Nourdine, for his support and encouragement throughout my journey. To my beloved brothers, Mahmoud and Maher, whom I love dearly, I wish a future filled with success, happiness, and the highest achievements. Finally, to the absent, my beloved grandfather, whose memory will forever remain in my heart.

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Abstract

This thesis explores in depth the phenomenon of code-switching in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms among third-year students at Dr. Moulay Taher University of Saida. It seeks to determine whether code-switching functions as an effective teaching tool that supports learning and enhances comprehension or whether it constitutes an obstacle that limits learners' linguistic development and restricts their opportunities to acquire the target language. Algerian EFL classrooms are characterized by linguistic diversity, with teachers and students switching between English, Arabic, and French during classroom interactions. This study aims to examine the prevalence of code-switching and identify the main factors influencing its use by both teachers and learners. To achieve these objectives, the study adopts a mixed-methods approach, including a questionnaire administered to third-year students and classroom observations. This approach enables a deeper understanding of how code-switching is practiced in EFL classrooms. The findings indicate that code-switching is widely used by both teachers and students. Teachers primarily employ it to clarify challenging vocabulary and ensure learners' understanding, whereas students rely on it because of their limited linguistic proficiency and difficulty expressing themselves in English. The study concludes that code-switching can be considered a practical pedagogical strategy when used appropriately, as it helps balance the need for comprehension with exposure to the target language, making it an effective practice in EFL classrooms.

Key words: Code-switching, Linguistic Factors, Language Proficiency, EFL Classrooms, Pedagogical Strategy.

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List of Acronyms

EFL : English as a Foreign Language

CS : Code-Switching

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General Introduction

The English language has gained global prominence and has become an essential medium of communication in education, science, technology, and international relations. In Algeria, English occupies an increasingly important position in higher education, particularly within university settings where students are expected to achieve advanced levels of linguistic competence. However, despite the emphasis placed on English language learning, classroom communication in Algerian universities often reflects the country's multilingual environment, characterized by the coexistence of Arabic, French, and English.

One of the most common linguistic phenomena observed in EFL classrooms is code-switching, which refers to the alternation between two or more languages during communication. In Algerian EFL classrooms, teachers and students frequently switch between English, Arabic, and French for various communicative and pedagogical purposes. Teachers may use code-switching to simplify difficult concepts, provide explanations, or maintain classroom interaction, whereas students may rely on their native language to compensate for limited vocabulary and linguistic difficulties in English.

The use of code-switching in language classrooms remains a controversial issue among educators and researchers. Supporters argue that it serves as an effective instructional strategy that facilitates comprehension, promotes participation, and reduces learners' anxiety. In contrast, opponents maintain that excessive dependence on code-switching may negatively affect language acquisition by restricting learners' exposure to English and limiting opportunities for authentic language practice.

Accordingly, the present study investigates the role of code-switching in EFL classrooms at Dr. Moulay Tahar University of Saida, focusing specifically on third-year students. The study seeks to determine whether code-switching functions as a pedagogical support that enhances learning and classroom interaction or whether it constitutes a barrier to the development of English language proficiency. More specifically, the research explores the frequency of code-switching practices, the factors motivating its use, and its effects on students' learning experiences. Furthermore, it examines students' perceptions and attitudes toward code-switching within the classroom environment.

To conduct this research, a mixed-methods approach is adopted in order to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. This approach allows for a comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon and provides valuable insights into how code-switching is perceived and practiced in Algerian EFL classrooms.

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent is code-switching used in EFL classrooms among third-year students at Dr. Moulay Tahar University of Saida?
2. What are the main factors motivating teachers and students to use code-switching?
3. Does code-switching positively or negatively affect English language learning?

The study is guided by the following hypotheses:

1. Code-switching facilitates students' understanding of difficult classroom content.
2. Code-switching represents an effective pedagogical strategy in EFL classrooms.
3. The use of code-switching has both positive and negative effects on learners' classroom participation and language learning experience.

CHAPTER ONE : Literature Review

1.1 Introduction

Code-switching is a common phenomenon in multilingual educational settings where teachers and students use more than one language to communicate effectively. In EFL classrooms, it refers to the alternation between English and the learners' first language for various pedagogical and communicative purposes. Teachers may use code-switching to explain difficult concepts, clarify instructions, and facilitate comprehension, while students often rely on it when expressing ideas or overcoming linguistic difficulties.

The use of code-switching in language classrooms has generated considerable debate among scholars and educators. Supporters argue that it enhances comprehension, reduces anxiety, and promotes classroom participation. Critics, however, maintain that excessive reliance on the first language may reduce exposure to English and limit opportunities for language practice. Consequently, understanding the role of code-switching in EFL contexts is essential for determining its effectiveness as a teaching and learning strategy.

This chapter reviews the relevant literature on code-switching in EFL classrooms. It presents key definitions, explores the main reasons and types of code-switching, and discusses its potential benefits and drawbacks in language learning and instruction.

1.2 Key Concepts and Definitions of Code-Switching

Code-switching is commonly understood as the practice of alternating between two or more language varieties within a single communicative situation. It involves shifting from one language to another during conversation, and this shift may occur at different linguistic levels, including words, phrases, clauses, or entire sentences. This phenomenon is particularly common among bilingual and multilingual speakers who have access to more than one linguistic system and can use them flexibly depending on the context. Importantly, code-switching is not random or chaotic; rather, it follows specific grammatical and social rules that make it a structured and meaningful part of communication (García & Li, 2014; Muysken, 2013).

Several scholars have provided influential definitions of code-switching that highlight its linguistic and social dimensions. John J. Gumperz (1982) defines code-switching as the alternation between two or more languages or dialects within the same conversation, particularly in multilingual communities, emphasizing its role in social interaction. Similarly, Carol Myers-Scotton's Matrix Language Frame model explains code-switching as the selection by bilingual or multilingual speakers of linguistic elements from an embedded language within an utterance primarily structured in another matrix language (Myers-Scotton, 1993/2006). This definition highlights the systematic nature of language mixing and the underlying grammatical organization that governs it. Shana

Poplack (1980) also describes code-switching as the alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence, or constituent, demonstrating that fluent speakers can integrate elements from different languages naturally and coherently (Poplack, 1980/2018).

Recent research has expanded these foundational definitions and emphasized the communicative competence and social meaning behind code-switching. For example, Li (2018) argues that code-switching serves as a discourse strategy that reflects interpersonal relationships, social identity, and communicative intent. Baugh (2018) similarly positions code-switching as a pragmatic resource that bilingual speakers use to negotiate meaning, achieve interactional goals, and manage diverse communicative contexts.

These definitions clearly show that code-switching should not be viewed as a sign of linguistic weakness or incompetence. On the contrary, it represents a sophisticated communicative strategy that allows speakers to adapt their language use to different situations and audiences. Bilingual speakers often use code-switching to fill lexical gaps, emphasize particular ideas, express cultural identity, or facilitate understanding. As such, code-switching plays an important role in enhancing communication and maintaining interaction, especially in educational contexts where both teachers and students may benefit from the strategic use of more than one language (García & Wei, 2014; Creese & Blackledge, 2010).

1.3. Types of Code-Switching

Code-switching can be classified into different types depending on how and where the language shift occurs within a conversation. These types help researchers and

educators better understand the structural patterns of code-switching and how it functions in real-life communication. According to Made Iwan Indrawan J. (2012), there are three main types of code-switching, each reflecting a different level of linguistic complexity and integration.

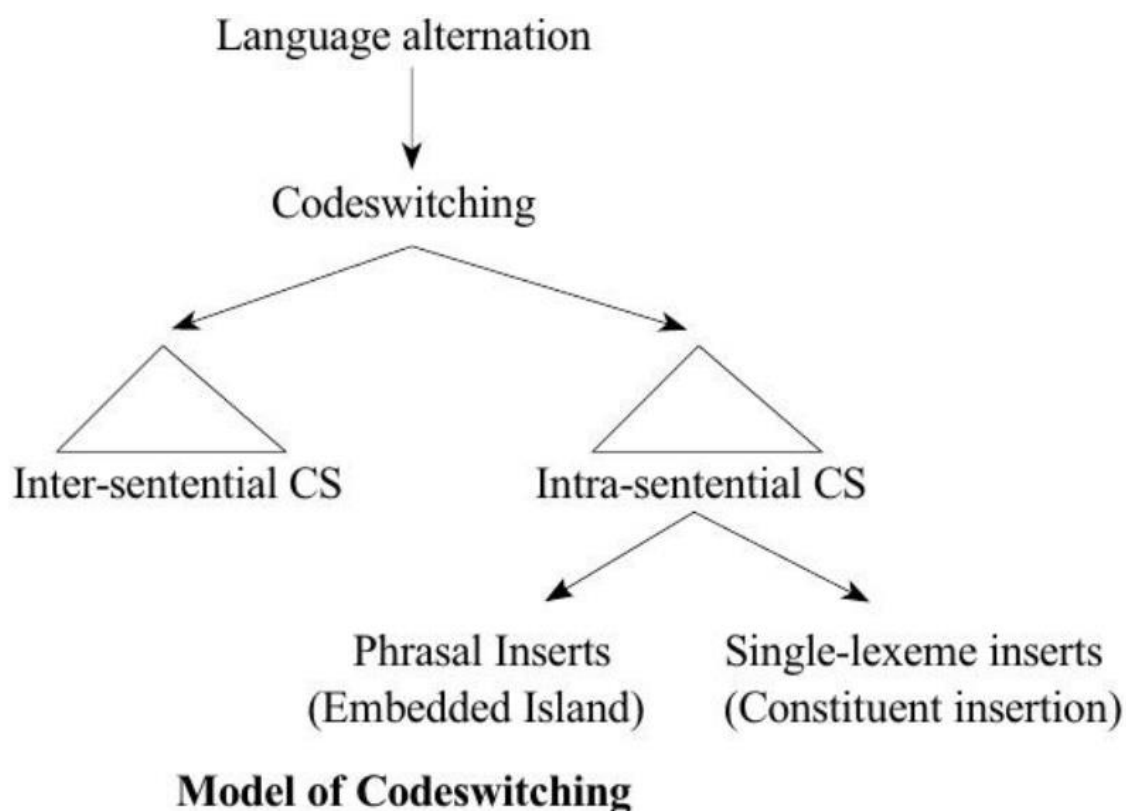


Figure 1.1 Model of Codeswitching showing the breakdown of inter-sentential and intra-sentential types (Adopted from OAK 국가리포지터리 - OA 학술지 - Journal of Cognition, n.d.)

1.3.1 Tag Code-Switching

Tag code-switching, also referred to as extra-sentential switching, involves the insertion of a tag, a fixed phrase, or a single word from one language into an utterance that is otherwise in another language. According to Wei (2000), this type of switching is relatively simple because it does not require complex grammatical integration between the two languages. It often appears at the beginning or the end of a sentence and includes expressions such as “you know,” “okay,” or similar phrases in another language. Tag-switching is commonly used to express emotions, emphasise a statement, or maintain the

flow of conversation. It reflects the speaker's familiarity with both languages and their ability to move between them effortlessly, without affecting the sentence's overall structure. For instance, in a classroom setting, an example might be: "The students were performing a role-play, okay? Le professeur a ajouté quelques remarques." Here, the English tag "okay" is inserted into a mostly French sentence, illustrating tag code-switching.

1.3.2 Inter-sentential Code-Switching

Inter-sentential code-switching occurs when the speaker switches languages between complete sentences or clauses. In this case, one sentence is produced in one language, while the following sentence is expressed in another. According to Mujiono et al. (2013), this type of switching may also occur between speaker turns, meaning that one speaker may use a different language from the previous speaker. This form of code-switching requires a relatively high level of proficiency in both languages, as the speaker must maintain coherence and clarity across language boundaries. It is frequently observed in classroom settings, where teachers may explain a concept in English and then repeat or clarify it in the students' native language to ensure full understanding. For example: "Make sure your essay includes les arguments principaux for each point."

1.3.3 Intra-sentential Code-Switching

Intra-sentential code-switching is considered the most complex and sophisticated type, as it occurs within a single sentence or clause. In this case, the speaker mixes elements from two languages within the same grammatical structure. This type of switching requires a high level of linguistic competence, since the speaker must respect the grammatical rules of both languages simultaneously. It is typically used by fluent bilinguals who can seamlessly integrate words, phrases, or expressions from different languages without causing confusion. Intra-sentential code-switching demonstrates a deep level of language mastery and reflects the speaker's ability to use language in a flexible and creative way, particularly in multilingual environments. For instance, "Revise well for your exams بالتوفيق"

Examples of Code-Switching in EFL Classrooms

Code-switching can be clearly observed in everyday interactions within EFL classrooms, where both teachers and students naturally alternate between English and their native language to maintain effective communication and ensure comprehension. For

instance, a teacher may begin an instruction in English by saying, “Please complete exercise three on page twenty,” and then immediately switch to the students’ mother tongue to reinforce understanding, especially if learners appear confused or hesitant. Similarly, during vocabulary explanation, a teacher might introduce a new word in English and then provide its equivalent in the native language to avoid misunderstanding and save time. Students also frequently engage in code-switching, particularly when they encounter difficulty expressing themselves fully in English. For example, a student might start a sentence in English but insert words or phrases from their first language to complete their idea. Moreover, during pair or group work, learners often switch languages when negotiating meaning, asking for clarification, or discussing complex ideas, as this allows them to interact more fluently and confidently. These classroom practices demonstrate that code-switching is not a random or careless habit but rather a purposeful communicative strategy that helps prevent breakdowns in interaction, supports the flow of discourse, and facilitates the learning process, especially in contexts where students’ proficiency in English is still developing.

1.4 Reasons and Factors Influencing Code-Switching in EFL Classrooms

1.4.1 Reasons for Code-Switching

Code-switching in EFL classrooms occurs for a variety of pedagogical, linguistic, and social reasons, making it a purposeful and meaningful practice rather than a random behavior. One of the primary reasons for code-switching is to facilitate comprehension, especially when students encounter difficult vocabulary, complex grammatical structures, or unfamiliar concepts in the target language. Teachers often switch to the learners’ mother tongue to clarify meaning, provide explanations, or ensure that instructions are fully understood. This is particularly important in beginner or intermediate classrooms, where students may struggle to follow lessons entirely in English.

Another significant reason for code-switching is classroom management. Teachers may use the first language to give clear instructions, maintain discipline, or organize classroom activities more efficiently. In addition, code-switching can serve as an affective tool that helps reduce students’ anxiety and creates a more comfortable and supportive learning

environment. When learners are allowed to use their native language occasionally, they feel more confident and are more willing to participate in classroom interaction.

Furthermore, students themselves engage in code-switching when they lack the necessary vocabulary in English, when they want to express complex ideas, or when they interact with peers who share the same linguistic background. Code-switching may also reflect social and cultural identity. In multilingual classrooms, switching between languages can signal group membership, solidarity, or shared cultural understanding. It can also be used for emphasis, humor, or to make communication more natural and expressive. Therefore, code-switching should be viewed as a strategic and multifunctional practice that supports both communication and learning in EFL contexts.

CODE SWITCHING

Reasons for Code Switching

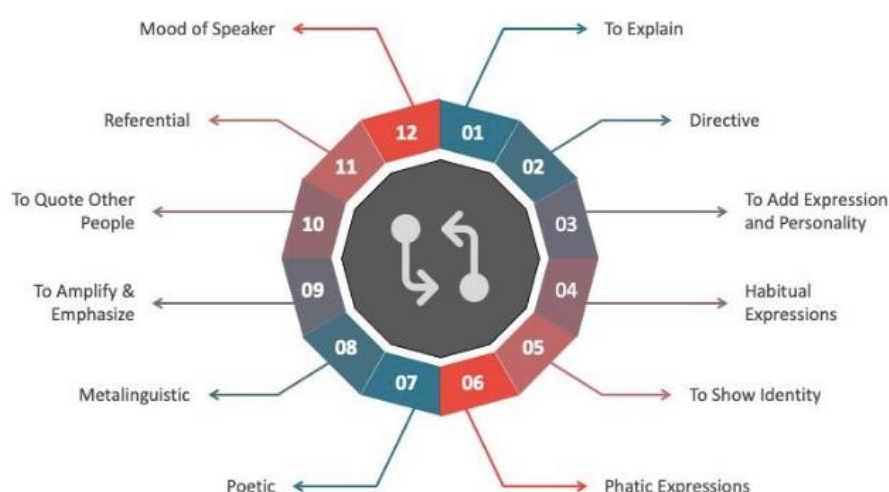


Figure 1.2 Twelve core reasons for code-switching in communication (Adapted from collidu.com, n.d.)

1.4.2 Factors Influencing Code-Switching

The use of code-switching in EFL classrooms is influenced by several factors that relate to both teachers and learners, as well as the learning environment. One of the most important factors is the level of language proficiency. Students with lower proficiency in English are more likely to rely on their first language to understand lessons and express their ideas, while more advanced learners tend to use English more frequently and switch languages less often. Similarly, teachers may adjust their use of code-switching depending

on the level of their students, using more of the native language in beginner classes and less in advanced ones.

Another significant factor is the teaching methodology and the teacher's beliefs about language learning. Some teachers support the use of code-switching as a helpful instructional strategy, while others prefer to avoid it in order to maximize exposure to the target language. Classroom context also plays an important role, including factors such as class size, lesson objectives, and the type of activity being carried out. For example, code-switching may be more frequent during grammar explanations or complex discussions, but less common during speaking activities that aim to develop fluency. In addition, sociocultural factors, such as shared language background and cultural identity, can influence how and why code-switching occurs in classroom interaction.

1.5. Functions of Code-Switching in EFL Classrooms

In EFL classrooms, code-switching is not simply the use of two or more languages; rather, it plays a key role in supporting both the teaching and learning processes. The alternating use of more than one linguistic code by teachers and students in the classroom context is referred to as classroom code-switching (Lin, 2008). According to Shartieli (2016), code-switching is an essential part of Tanzanian teachers' teaching practices. This phenomenon has been widely studied by several scholars.

Studies by John J. Gumperz (1982) show that code-switching serves a range of different functions in EFL classrooms. One of the main functions is reiteration, where teachers repeat an idea or sentence by switching to the learners' mother tongue in order to facilitate understanding and ensure comprehension.

Another function is clarification or message qualification. Mush-taq and Rabbani (2016) state that teachers believe switching into another language is helpful for explaining difficult topics more clearly, providing clarification to students, introducing new vocabulary, and making students feel more comfortable in the EFL classroom (p. 199). In other words, this function refers to clarifying and explaining complex terms and ideas in a simpler way that matches learners' level of comprehension.

Another relevant function is address specification, which refers to the teacher's strategic use of language to shift from the target language (English) to the students' first language (L1) in order to address a specific student individually within a group setting. As stated by Gumperz (1982), this function operates as a local interactional device in which the speaker

directs a message to a particular listener while others are present. Youssef and Badan (2024) further explain that address specification is especially beneficial in EFL classrooms for building interpersonal relationships between teachers and learners, and it also reduces the formal distance that often exists in formal educational settings.

1.6. Advantages and Disadvantages of Code-Switching

The use of code-switching in EFL classrooms has both advantages and disadvantages, which explains why it remains a debated issue among educators and researchers. On the one hand, code-switching offers several pedagogical benefits that can enhance the learning process. It helps improve comprehension by allowing teachers to explain difficult concepts in the students' first language, thus preventing misunderstanding and saving time. It also reduces learners' anxiety, especially for those who feel insecure about their English proficiency, and encourages participation by making the classroom environment more inclusive and less intimidating. Moreover, code-switching can be used as a scaffold that gradually supports learners in developing their language skills, enabling them to move from dependence on the first language to greater independence in using English.

On the other hand, excessive use of code-switching may have negative effects on language learning. One of the main disadvantages is that it can limit students' exposure to the target language, which is essential for developing fluency and communicative competence. If learners rely too much on their mother tongue, they may become less motivated to practice English and may not develop the habit of thinking in the target language. In addition, frequent switching between languages can sometimes lead to confusion, especially for beginners who are still trying to distinguish between different linguistic systems. For this reason, some educators argue that code-switching should be used strategically and in moderation rather than excessively.

1.7. Code-Switching: An Aid or an obstacle to Language Learning

The question of whether code-switching acts as an aid or an obstacle in language learning has been widely discussed in the field of applied linguistics. Supporters of code-switching argue that it is a valuable pedagogical tool that facilitates understanding, supports cognitive processing, and enhances classroom interaction. From this perspective, code-switching is seen as a form of scaffolding that helps learners bridge the gap between their existing knowledge and new linguistic input. It allows teachers to build connections

between the first language and the target language, making learning more meaningful and accessible.

In contrast, opponents of code-switching believe that it may hinder language acquisition by reducing exposure to English and limiting opportunities for practice. They argue that immersion in the target language is essential for developing fluency, and that the use of the first language should be minimized as much as possible. According to this view, overreliance on code-switching may prevent learners from fully engaging with English and developing the necessary skills for effective communication.

However, a more balanced perspective suggests that the effectiveness of code-switching depends on how, when, and why it is used. Rather than being strictly positive or negative, code-switching can function as both an aid and an obstacle depending on the context. When used strategically and moderately, it can support learning and improve comprehension. When overused or used inappropriately, it may indeed limit language development. Therefore, teachers should be aware of its potential benefits and drawbacks and use it in a controlled and purposeful manner.

1.8 Code-Switching, Language Proficiency, and Strategies for Its Effective Use in EFL Classrooms

1.8.1 Code-Switching and Language Proficiency Development

The relationship between code-switching and language proficiency development is complex and has attracted considerable attention in language education research. On the one hand, code-switching can support language development by acting as a bridge between the learners' first language and the target language. It allows students to build connections between what they already know and new linguistic knowledge, making learning more meaningful and accessible. For example, when teachers explain a grammar rule in the native language and then provide examples in English, students are more likely to understand and retain the concept.

On the other hand, there is concern that excessive reliance on code-switching may slow down the development of proficiency in English. If students become too dependent on their first language, they may not develop the ability to think, process, and communicate effectively in English. This can limit their fluency and reduce their confidence when using the target language in real-life situations. Therefore, it is important to strike a balance

between using code-switching as a supportive tool and encouraging maximum use of English.

When used appropriately, code-switching can enhance language learning, but when overused, it may hinder the development of communicative competence.

1.8.2 Strategies for Effective Use of Code-Switching

In order to benefit from code-switching without negatively affecting language learning, teachers need to adopt effective classroom strategies that ensure its appropriate use. One important strategy is to use code-switching selectively and purposefully, rather than relying on it excessively. Teachers should switch to the first language only when necessary, such as when explaining difficult concepts or resolving misunderstandings, and should return to English as soon as possible. This helps maintain a balance between clarity and exposure to the target language.

Another useful strategy is to gradually reduce the use of code-switching as students' proficiency improves. In beginner classes, greater use of the native language may be acceptable, but in higher-level classes, teachers should encourage students to use English as much as possible. Additionally, teachers can involve students in controlled code-switching activities, such as translation exercises or comparative analysis between languages, which can raise learners' awareness of linguistic differences and similarities.

By using code-switching in a planned and strategic way, teachers can maximize its benefits while minimizing its potential drawbacks.

1.9 Research Gap and Implications for Teachers

1.9.1 Research Gap

Even though code-switching is a universal strategy, there are still significant gaps in what is known about how it functions in EFL classrooms. Most research has focused on language alternation in casual conversation or formal written contexts; however, limited empirical data exists on what actually happens during real classroom instruction, especially in multilingual educational settings where students are navigating several languages simultaneously.

Theoretical frameworks distinguish between inter-sentential and intra-sentential code-switching, yet there is little evidence showing how these forms operate in specific classroom activities such as group work, role-plays, or oral presentations. In addition, most studies have concentrated on language pairs such as English–Spanish or English–French,

while less attention has been given to other linguistic contexts, such as Arabic–French–English environments, which have their own sociolinguistic dynamics and interactional norms.

Another limitation in existing research is its tendency to focus on the structural aspects of code-switching rather than its functional role in learning. In other words, there is often more emphasis on how switching occurs than on why it occurs and how it supports learning processes. It is therefore important to further investigate how code-switching helps students understand complex concepts, maintain engagement, and collaborate more effectively in classroom settings.

Overall, there is a need for more classroom-based, context-sensitive research into how teachers and students use code-switching as a pedagogical tool. Such research would not only contribute to academic understanding but would also have practical implications for curriculum design and teaching strategies that better reflect the realities of bilingual and multilingual learners.

1.9.2 Implications for Teachers

The use of code-switching in EFL classrooms carries significant pedagogical implications for teachers, as it requires a careful, conscious, and well-balanced approach rather than spontaneous or excessive use. Teachers need to recognize that code-switching is not merely a compensatory strategy to overcome linguistic difficulties; rather, it is a powerful instructional tool that, when used appropriately, can enhance comprehension, facilitate learning, and create a more inclusive and supportive classroom environment.

Firstly, teachers should understand the strategic role of code-switching. By selectively switching between the target language and the learners' mother tongue, teachers can clarify complex grammar points, explain unfamiliar vocabulary, or provide cultural context that might otherwise be lost in translation. For instance, when introducing abstract concepts in English, a brief explanation in the students' native language can prevent confusion and ensure that learners fully grasp the intended meaning. This is especially crucial in multilingual classrooms, where students' proficiency levels may vary widely.

Secondly, teachers must be aware of the potential benefits of controlled code-switching for student motivation and engagement. Allowing occasional use of the first language can reduce anxiety, build learners' confidence, and encourage participation. Students are more likely to ask questions, share ideas, and engage in discussions when they know they can

rely on their native language to express themselves when necessary. This approach fosters a positive classroom atmosphere and strengthens teacher–student rapport, both of which are essential for effective language learning.

However, teachers must also consider the risks associated with excessive or unplanned code-switching. Over-reliance on the mother tongue can limit students' exposure to English, reduce opportunities for authentic practice, and slow the development of fluency. Therefore, educators must strike a balance between using the first language as a supportive tool and maintaining consistent immersion in the target language. Clear guidelines and thoughtful planning can help prevent code-switching from becoming a crutch rather than a pedagogical aid.

Furthermore, teachers should incorporate reflective practices and professional awareness regarding code-switching. Understanding why, when, and how to switch codes effectively requires both linguistic competence and pedagogical insight. Teachers should regularly assess classroom interactions, monitor students' responses, and adjust their use of code-switching according to learners' needs and learning objectives. Professional development workshops and training in bilingual teaching strategies can provide educators with the necessary skills to integrate code-switching constructively.

Finally, code-switching can serve as a diagnostic and formative tool. Teachers can observe when and why students resort to their mother tongue to identify gaps in vocabulary, comprehension, or confidence. This information can guide lesson planning, allowing teachers to address specific areas of difficulty while gradually encouraging greater use of English. For example, if students frequently switch to their first language during discussions on specific topics, teachers can design targeted exercises to reinforce the corresponding vocabulary and structures in English.

In conclusion, the pedagogical implications of code-switching highlight the need for intentionality, moderation, and strategic planning. Teachers who use code-switching thoughtfully can enhance comprehension, motivate learners, and create an effective, supportive learning environment. Conversely, indiscriminate use may undermine language acquisition. Therefore, a balanced approach combining awareness, reflection, and adaptability is essential for maximizing the benefits of code-switching in EFL classrooms.

10 Conclusion

In conclusion, code-switching emerges as a complex and dynamic phenomenon that plays a significant role in EFL classrooms, reflecting both the linguistic realities of bilingual learners and the practical demands of language teaching. Throughout this chapter, it has been demonstrated that code-switching is not merely a sign of linguistic deficiency or lack of competence, but rather a natural and strategic communicative practice that can support learning when used appropriately. By examining its definitions, types, functions, and underlying reasons, as well as its advantages and disadvantages, this chapter has provided a comprehensive understanding of how code-switching operates in educational contexts.

Furthermore, the discussion has highlighted the ongoing debate among scholars regarding whether code-switching serves as a facilitative tool or a hindrance to language acquisition, ultimately suggesting that its effectiveness depends largely on how it is implemented in the classroom. When used in a controlled and purposeful manner, code-switching can enhance comprehension, reduce learners' anxiety, and promote meaningful interaction; however, when overused, it may limit exposure to the target language and slow the development of communicative competence.

Therefore, it is essential for teachers to adopt a balanced and reflective approach, using code-switching as a supportive strategy while maintaining English as the primary medium of instruction. Such an approach not only acknowledges the realities of multilingual classrooms but also contributes to more effective and inclusive language learning experiences.

In light of the discussion presented in this chapter, several practical recommendations can be proposed to guide the effective use of code-switching in EFL classrooms. First and foremost, teachers should employ code-switching in a deliberate and purposeful manner, ensuring that each instance of switching serves a clear instructional objective, such as explaining a difficult concept, checking comprehension, or facilitating classroom management. Rather than using the native language excessively or automatically, teachers should carefully consider whether switching languages is truly necessary in a given situation.

Secondly, it is important to encourage students to use English as much as possible, particularly during communicative activities that aim to develop speaking and listening

skills; however, limited use of the first language may still be allowed when it helps learners express complex ideas or overcome linguistic difficulties.

Another key recommendation is to gradually reduce the use of code-switching as students' proficiency improves, thereby promoting greater independence and confidence in using English. In addition, teacher training programs should include guidance on the effective and balanced use of code-switching as a pedagogical strategy, helping educators understand its benefits as well as its potential drawbacks.

Finally, further research is needed to explore how code-switching functions in different EFL contexts and how it impacts various aspects of language learning, including comprehension, fluency, and motivation, in order to provide more informed and context-specific teaching practices.

CHAPTER TWO : Methodology and Research Design

2.1 Introduction

A strong methodology is essential, as it represents the framework that guides the research process. It ensures the proper organization of the study and prevents confusion during data collection. By selecting appropriate methods, it guarantees that the data collected are relevant to the research questions.

This chapter outlines the methodology and research design employed in this study, which investigates whether code-switching functions as a teaching aid or an obstacle in EFL classrooms. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. The study focuses on third-year EFL students at Dr. Moulay Tahar University of Saida.

To answer the research questions, two main instruments were used: an online questionnaire to identify students' attitudes and perceptions toward code-switching, and classroom observations to examine how code-switching occurs in real classroom settings. This chapter describes the research methods and data collection tools used to ensure that the findings are reliable and valid.

2.2 Methodology

For this research, a mixed-methods design was chosen to explore the issue of code-switching within the context of EFL classrooms. A mixed-methods design was seen as the best choice due to its ability to integrate both quantitative and qualitative data, which helped to have an overall view of the research problem under discussion. With the help of mixing two kinds of data, the researcher had an opportunity not only to analyze participants' opinions and perceptions but also to observe their practices.

The online questionnaire consisted of quantitative and qualitative questions. Quantitative data provided statistical data in numbers, while qualitative questions generated descriptive answers, thus allowing participants to share their opinions about the topic freely.

Furthermore, classroom observation was another tool used for collecting data. This technique provided an opportunity to observe naturally occurring interactions between the teacher and the students and find patterns of code-switching used by both of the parties.

2.3 Research Tools

Two main research instruments were used in this study: an online questionnaire and classroom observation. These tools were selected to collect both quantitative and qualitative data in order to address the research questions effectively.



Figure 2.1 Research Methods Overview

This figure presents an overview of research methods, illustrating the principal techniques employed by researchers to collect data. These techniques include surveys, experiments, interviews, and observations. Together, they constitute fundamental tools for gathering quantitative and qualitative data, thereby supporting the systematic investigation and analysis of research questions.

2.3.1 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire is among the most frequently employed instruments in educational and social science research. It serves as a structured tool composed of carefully formulated questions designed to collect information from a defined group of participants. Researchers often favor questionnaires because they allow for the efficient gathering of substantial

amounts of data within a short timeframe and with minimal financial or logistical demands. In addition, they provide respondents with a platform to share their opinions, attitudes, and experiences on specific issues.

In this study, the questionnaire was chosen as the primary instrument for exploring students' perceptions of code-switching in EFL classrooms. Since the research focused on learners' attitudes and experiences, obtaining direct input from students was essential. The questionnaire enabled the collection of information from a relatively large number of participants simultaneously and in an organized manner.

The instrument was administered online to third-year EFL students at Dr. Moulay Tahar University of Saida. The digital format was selected for several reasons: it simplified distribution, allowed participants to access the questionnaire from any location, reduced the time and effort required for data collection, and encouraged students to respond at their convenience. This flexibility increased the likelihood of receiving honest and thoughtful answers while also streamlining the organization and analysis of the data.

The questionnaire included both closed-ended and open-ended items. Closed-ended questions required participants to select from predefined options such as "Yes," "No," or multiple-choice alternatives. These generated quantitative data that could be easily categorized, summarized, and analyzed statistically, helping to identify general patterns and trends in students' perceptions.

Open-ended questions, by contrast, allowed respondents to articulate their views freely without being restricted to fixed choices. Through these items, students provided detailed explanations, shared personal experiences, and expressed their opinions on the use of code-switching in language classrooms. The qualitative insights obtained enriched the quantitative findings and offered a deeper understanding of learners' perspectives.

Another strength of the questionnaire was its guarantee of anonymity. Participants were not asked to provide personal details, which encouraged them to respond candidly and without concern for judgment. This anonymity enhanced the reliability of the data and reduced potential bias.

Overall, the questionnaire proved to be an appropriate instrument for this research, as it yielded both quantitative and qualitative information. The data collected helped the researcher gain a clearer picture of students' attitudes toward code-switching and its perceived influence on language learning and classroom interaction.

2.3.2 Classroom Observation

Classroom observation is a well-established qualitative method used to examine teaching and learning processes in their natural context. Unlike questionnaires, which depend on participants' self-reported views, observation allows researchers to directly witness classroom practices and interactions. This approach provides firsthand evidence of behaviors and events as they unfold in real time.

For this study, classroom observation was employed as a complementary instrument to the questionnaire. Its purpose was to document how code-switching was used by both teachers and students during classroom activities. Observing these interactions enabled the researcher to obtain authentic data on language use and communication patterns in EFL settings.

During the observation, particular attention was paid to instances where participants alternated between English and other languages, notably Arabic and French. The researcher recorded examples of code-switching and noted the contexts in which they occurred. For instance, observations focused on whether teachers switched languages when explaining complex concepts, giving instructions, managing classroom behavior, or checking comprehension. Similarly, students' language choices during discussions, questions, and participation were carefully noted.

One of the main advantages of observation is that it captures actual behavior rather than relying on recollection or perception. Participants may not always be fully aware of their language practices when completing questionnaires, but observation reveals spontaneous uses of code-switching that might otherwise remain unnoticed. This contributes to a more accurate understanding of classroom realities.

The observation also highlighted the different functions of code-switching in the EFL classroom. At times, switching to Arabic or French facilitated comprehension and clarified difficult ideas. In other cases, it maintained classroom interaction, provided additional explanations, or ensured effective communication between teachers and learners. These findings offered valuable insights into the pedagogical role of code-switching.

Furthermore, classroom observation served to validate and support the questionnaire results. By comparing students' reported perceptions with actual classroom practices, the researcher obtained a more comprehensive view of the phenomenon. The use of multiple instruments strengthened the reliability and credibility of the study through data triangulation.

In conclusion, classroom observation was an essential component of the methodology. It generated rich qualitative data on the real-life use of code-switching and complemented the information gathered through the questionnaire. Together, these instruments provided a deeper and more balanced analysis of the role of code-switching in EFL classrooms.

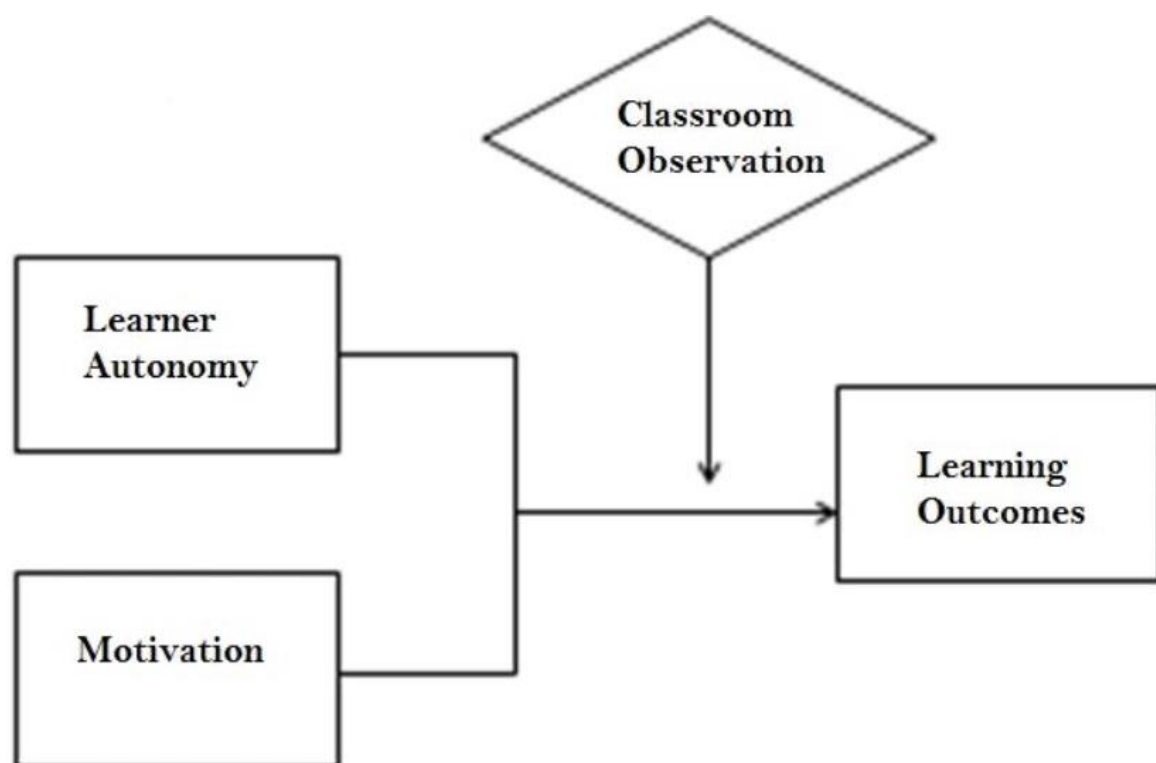


Figure 2.2 View of the moderating influence of classroom observation on learner autonomy, motivation, and learning outcomes (Adopted from archive.aessweb.com, n.d.)

2.4 Sample: Participants

The participants in this study were third-year students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at Dr. Moulay Tahar University in Saida. This group was selected because of their advanced stage in language learning and their sustained exposure to English instruction throughout their university program.

Third-year students were considered the most suitable population for the research. By this stage, they had already completed several language-focused modules and achieved a relatively high level of linguistic competence. Their academic background allowed them to evaluate classroom practices more critically than lower-level students. In addition, they had encountered a variety of teaching approaches and classroom interactions, including the use of code-switching by both instructors and peers.

The choice of this sample was also guided by accessibility and relevance to the study's objectives. Since the research aimed to explore the role and impact of code-switching in EFL classrooms, third-year students were expected to provide informed and meaningful reflections on their learning experiences. Their perceptions were therefore regarded as valuable contributions to achieving the aims of the investigation.

2.5 Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected primarily through an online questionnaire designed to capture both quantitative and qualitative information. The electronic format made participation easier and encouraged higher response rates. Students were invited to complete the questionnaire within a set timeframe and were asked to provide honest and thoughtful answers.

Before distribution, participants received a short explanation of the study's purpose and the importance of their input. Clear instructions were provided to ensure that all respondents understood the questions and procedures. The questionnaire contained closed-ended items that generated numerical data, as well as open-ended items that allowed participants to elaborate on their experiences and opinions.

Alongside the questionnaire, classroom observation was conducted to obtain direct evidence of how code-switching occurred in practice. This method enabled the researcher to examine teaching strategies, student reactions, and overall classroom interaction in a natural setting. Notes taken during observation were later analyzed together with the questionnaire responses, producing a more comprehensive view of the phenomenon.

The collected material was organized and analyzed using appropriate techniques. Quantitative data were summarized through percentages and descriptive statistics, while qualitative responses were examined thematically to identify recurring ideas and perspectives. The integration of these two sources strengthened the validity and reliability of the study.

2.6 Ethical Consideration

Ethical principles were carefully observed throughout the research process to safeguard participants' rights and well-being. Participation was voluntary, and students could withdraw at any point without consequence. Prior to completing the questionnaire, they were informed of the study's objectives and the academic purpose of the data.

Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained. No personal identifiers were requested, and all responses were treated as confidential, used solely for research purposes. Data were stored securely and accessed only for analysis. These measures ensured compliance with established ethical standards in educational research and helped maintain participants' trust.

2.7 Limitations of the Study

Despite efforts to conduct the study rigorously, several limitations were encountered. One limitation stemmed from the use of online questionnaires: while convenient, some students appeared to answer quickly without reflecting deeply, which reduced the richness of certain open-ended responses.

Another limitation was the restricted duration of classroom observation. Time constraints prevented the researcher from observing a wide range of sessions, meaning that some instances of code-switching may not have been recorded.

Finally, the study was confined to a single university and involved only third-year EFL students. As a result, the findings cannot be generalized to all EFL contexts, since institutions may differ in teaching practices, learner profiles, and attitudes toward code-switching. Nevertheless, the study provides valuable insights into classroom language use and contributes to a clearer understanding of the pedagogical implications of code-switching in language education.

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the methodology adopted for the present study. A mixed-methods approach was applied to gain a comprehensive view of the research topic by combining quantitative and qualitative strands of data. To meet the study's objectives, two instruments were employed: an online questionnaire and classroom observation. Together, these tools offered valuable insights into students' perceptions as well as direct evidence of how code-switching functions in EFL classrooms.

The chapter also introduced the participants, explained the procedures for data collection, and detailed the ethical principles observed throughout the research process.

Although certain challenges were encountered—such as limited observation time and uneven levels of student engagement—these did not substantially compromise the overall quality of the investigation. On balance, the chosen methodology proved appropriate for addressing the research questions and for generating relevant findings. The following chapter presents the analysis and discussion of the data obtained.

CHAPTER THREE : Data Analysis and Interpretations

3.1 Introduction :

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the data collected from third-year EFL students at Dr. Moulay Tahar University of Saida. To address the research objectives, data were collected through an online questionnaire and classroom observation. The findings are analyzed and interpreted in relation to the research questions and the relevant literature reviewed in the previous chapters.

3.2 Analysis of the Findings

3.2.1 The Questionnaire

Section A: Background information

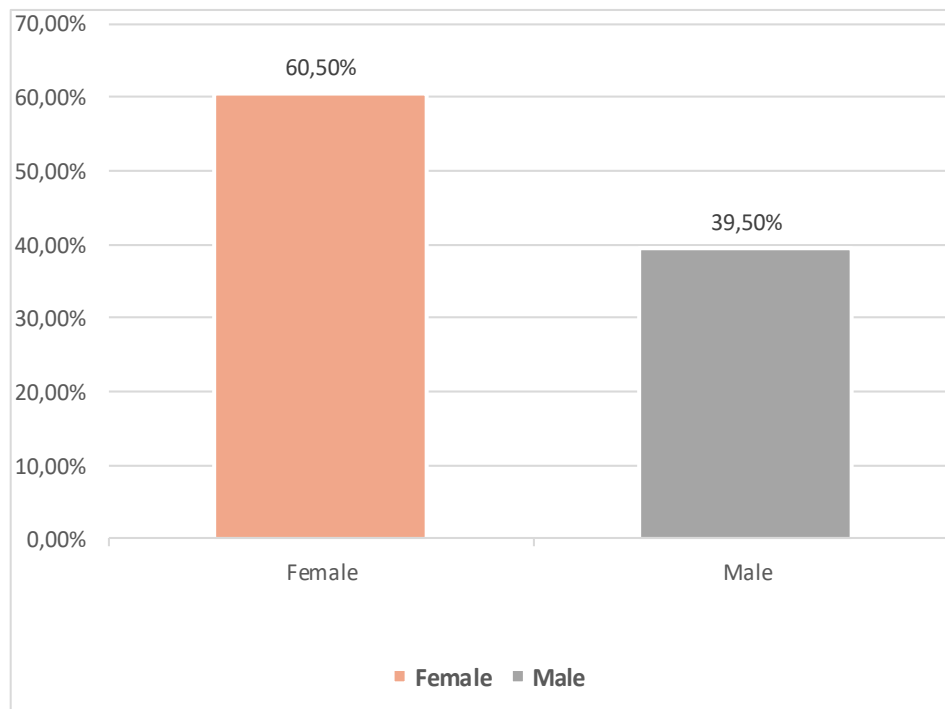


Figure 01: Gender of the Students

The figure reveals that female students represented the majority of the participants (60.5%), while male students accounted for 39.5%. This finding reflects the common trend in EFL departments where female students often outnumber males.

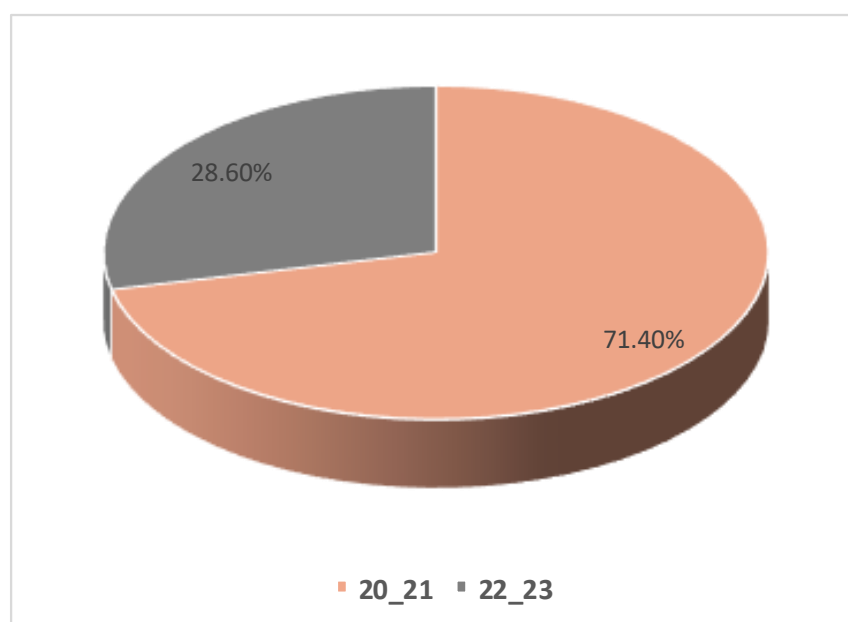


Figure 2: Student's Age

This figure illustrates the age distribution of the study participants. The majority of the students (71.4%) are between 20 and 21 years old, while the remaining 28.6% are between 22 and 23 years old. These results indicate that most participants belong to a relatively young age group within the Department of English. The similarity in age suggests comparable cognitive and linguistic development levels among the students, which may facilitate interaction and communication during English classes. Consequently, students may be more likely to use code-switching as a communicative strategy in EFL classroom settings. Furthermore, the relatively close age range of the participants contributes to the homogeneity of the sample, thereby enhancing the reliability and consistency of the study's findings.

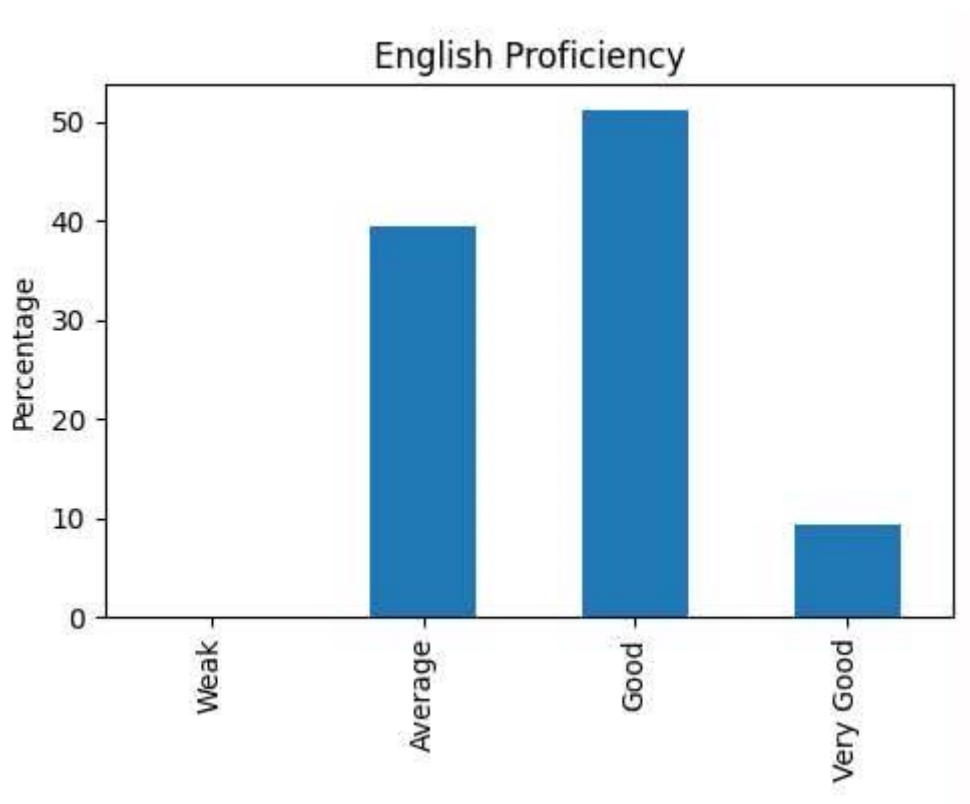


Figure 3: English Proficiency

The majority of the students evaluated their English proficiency as either average or good. This suggests that they possess a satisfactory level of English competence; however, they may still rely on code-switching to compensate for vocabulary limitations and to overcome comprehension difficulties during communication and classroom interactions.

Section B: Use of Arabic and French in English Classes

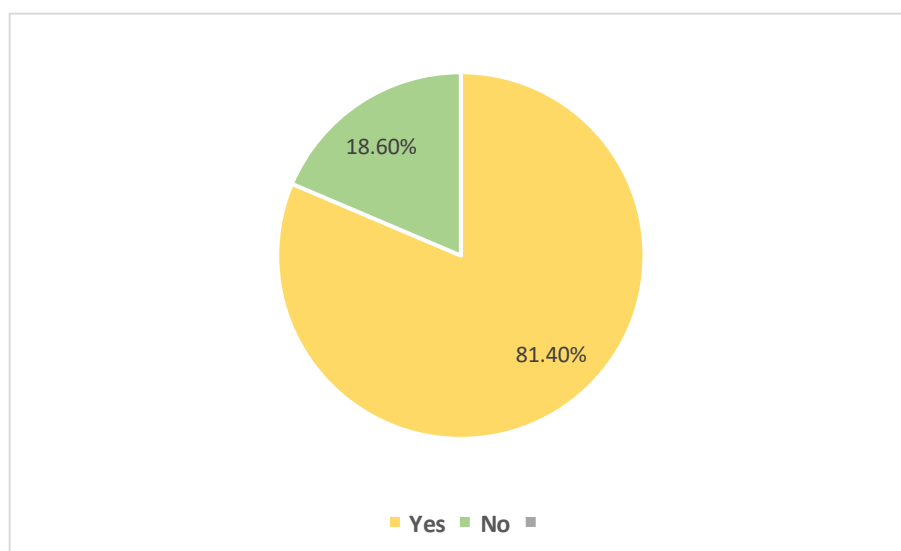


Figure 04: Teachers' Use of Arabic and French in English Classes

According to the students' responses presented in the previous chart, teachers sometimes use Arabic or French in EFL classrooms. The majority of the students (81.4%) answered "Yes," while only 18.6% selected "No." This noticeable difference indicates that the use of Arabic or French is a common practice in EFL classroom settings. The findings suggest that many teachers employ these languages as strategic pedagogical tools to facilitate the teaching and learning process. This practice should not be interpreted as a lack of competence or proficiency on the part of teachers; rather, it reflects their flexibility in adopting effective instructional strategies to enhance students' understanding and participation. For instance, the use of Arabic or French may support classroom communication, strengthen teacher–student interaction, and help explain technical terms, complex concepts, and challenging theories. Consequently, it can reduce students' confusion and anxiety while promoting a more supportive learning environment.

On the other hand, the responses of the minority of students (18.6%) who indicated that their teachers do not use Arabic or French should also be considered. This may suggest that some teachers prefer to adhere to an English-only approach, believing that exclusive

exposure to the target language is sufficient for effective learning. Such teachers may view the use of English as essential for maximizing students' language development and improving their linguistic competence. Therefore, differences in language use among teachers may reflect varying pedagogical beliefs and instructional practices rather than differences in teaching effectiveness.

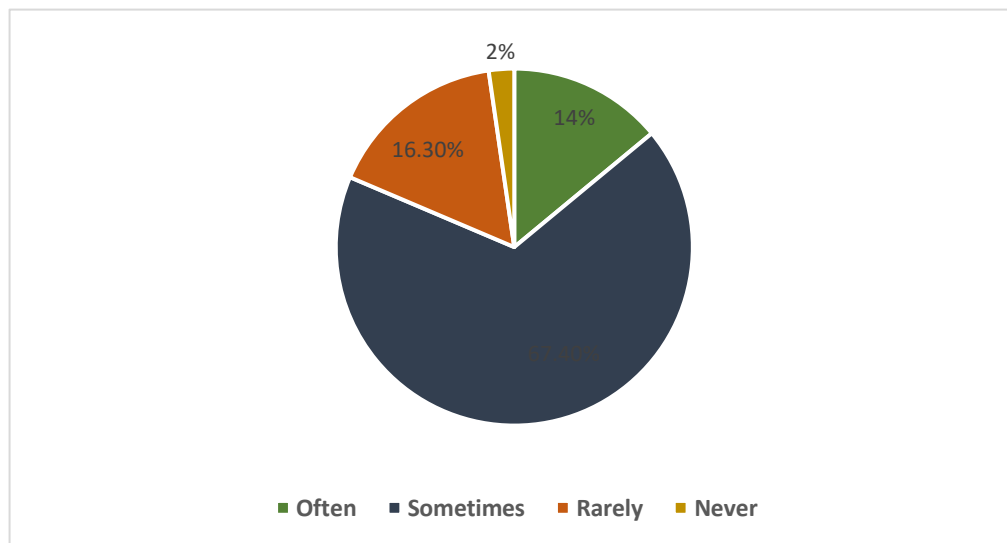


Figure 05: Students' Use of Arabic or French in English classes

The figure reveals that students switch between Arabic and French during English classes. The majority of the respondents (67.4%) reported that they do so “sometimes,” while 16.3% indicated “rarely,” and 14% stated “often.” Only 2.3% reported that they “never” use either Arabic or French in the EFL classroom. These findings suggest that code-switching is a common practice among students, who alternate between languages depending on their level of understanding, the complexity of the subject matter, or the way concepts are explained.

The fact that more than two-thirds of the students selected “sometimes” indicates that code-switching is generally used as a situational strategy rather than a constant habit. Students may resort to Arabic or French when they encounter vocabulary limitations, struggle to comprehend complex concepts, or engage in discussions with their classmates. Similarly, the 14% who reported using these languages “often” may find that their mother tongue enhances their confidence, reduces communication

anxiety, and enables them to express their ideas more effectively. Furthermore, using familiar languages may help them respond quickly in challenging communicative situations.

The 16.3% of students who selected “rarely” appear to use Arabic or French only in specific circumstances, such as when they forget particular English terms or communicate with peers who share the same linguistic background. In contrast, the small percentage of students (2.3%) who reported “never” using these languages may be committed to an English-only approach. Their preference could be motivated by a desire to maximize exposure to English, concerns about the potential negative effects of excessive code-switching on language proficiency, or adherence to classroom policies that discourage the use of languages other than English.

Overall, the findings highlight the widespread use of code-switching among EFL students and demonstrate its role as a practical communicative and learning strategy in the classroom.

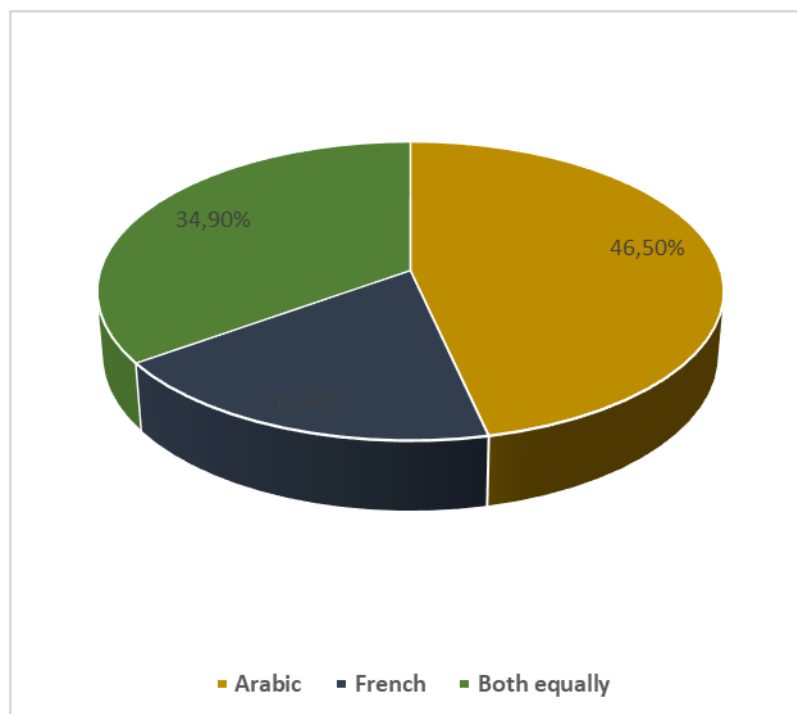


Figure 06: Most Frequently Used Language in Code-Switching

This chart illustrates the dominant language used in code-switching during English class, based on participants' responses. It demonstrates that 46.5% use Arabic, which is not coincidental to EFL learners as most of them have Arabic as their native language. This makes expressing ideas effortless and more efficient specifically when struggling to determine the appropriate expression in the target language. Since Arabic is the most widely spoken language among participants' habitual practices, it naturally appears during conversation. Meanwhile, 18.6% opted for "French" as a second language in Algeria's educational institutions for many years, resulting in some students using it, with their level of proficiency may be higher academically than in Arabic. In Addition, some consider French as an academic and formal language that assists their way and tone of speaking. While others, the pedagogical environment that encourages French use, makes it familiar. 34.9% goes for mixing both languages, reflecting the multilingualism that they experienced in their habitual discourse as a natural occurrence, and insufficient vocabulary knowledge resorts to Arabic and French depending on the context.

Section C: Factors Influencing the Use of Arabic and French in EFL Classes

Q7 : Why do you think teachers switch to Arabic/French?

The findings indicate the reasons why teachers switch from English to Arabic/French. Most participants (81.4%) believe that code-switching enables teachers to ensure enhanced comprehension, emphasis on lesson grasping and synthesis, and encourages effective communication to enable effective student involvement. About 46.5% of participants noted that teachers switch languages to clarify advanced lexical items, dealing with specialized terminology, teachers resort to their mother tongue to provide detailed explanations. A small percentage, 4.7%, stated that teachers code-switch for grammar explanations, which helps students understand the rules with increased efficiency, It serves as a significant aid for weaker students. The rest of the participants (18.6%) mentioned that code-switching is used to improve the proficiency of students with restricted language backgrounds by simplifying information. The present results assert that teachers use code-switching in EFL classes as a practical tool to enhance students' language skills and efficient comprehension.

Q8 : Why do students switch to Arabic/French?

Based on participants' responses, which demonstrate the reasons behind students' code-switching, lexical deficiency is determined as the primary motive, accounting for 71%, as students encounter difficulties in selecting terminologies in the target language (TL). This makes learners switch to their mother tongue or another language. In addition, 31% of students regard code-switching as a habitual practice, and over time, shifting between languages has evolved into part of their practical communication activities. Furthermore, 23.8% of students use code-switching in class as a pedagogical strategy to help their classmates who struggle to understand specific concepts and ideas, this method promotes collaborative efforts. Moreover, a few students (7.1%) view code-switching as a strategy to ask questions when experiencing obstacles in formulating questions in the English language, resorting to their mother tongue or another familiar language for more efficient communication. Fewer students (2.4%), perceive English as a complex linguistic structure, In this case, code-switching acts as an alternative tool that enhances communication despite the complexities of language learning.

Section D: Students' Attitudes toward Code-Switching in Vocabulary Learning

Q9 : Use the following scale: Strongly disagree _ Disagree _ Neutral _ Agree _ Strongly agree

Table 1 Students' Attitudes toward Code-Switching in Vocabulary Learning

Statement	Participants	Percentage
1. Code-switching helps me understand the lesson better.	14	35,9%
2. I feel more comfortable when the teacher uses Arabic/French sometimes	6	15,4%
3. Code-switching makes English classes less stressful	3	7,7%
4. Too much code-switching reduces my exposure to English	7	17,9%
5. When teachers use Arabic/French , rely less on English	0/NR	0%/NR

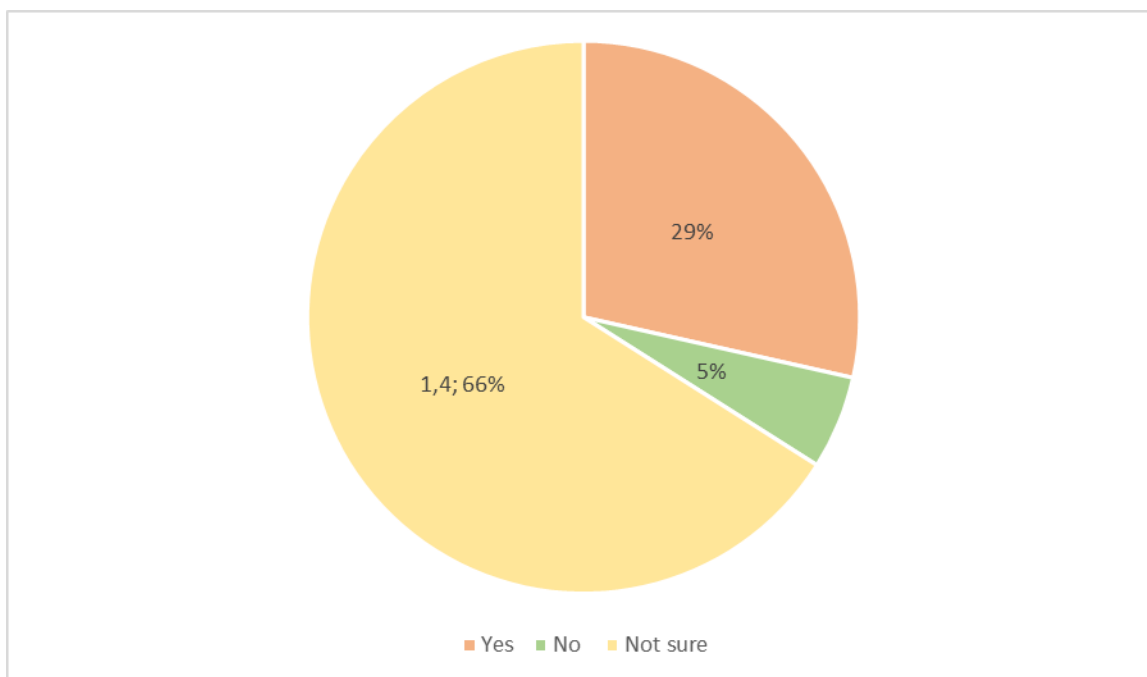
6. Code-switching should be used only when necessary	4	10,3%
7. English classes should be in English only	5	12,8%

Via a Likert scale, the results of this section demonstrate students' attitudes toward code-switching. Extensive positive interpretation is mutual among participants. As illustrated, 14 students (35.9%) strongly agreed that code-switching helps them grasp lessons better because it promotes all aspects of English lessons. Moreover, (15.4%) of participants agreed that code-switching is a mechanism that encourages comprehension. Additionally, teachers shift from English to Arabic/French to help eliminate any lack of clarity and reinforce learning. A minority of three students believe that CS reduces anxiety and stress in EFL classrooms, when the teacher unexpectedly shifts to Arabic or French, students experience a greater sense of safety and confidence. The fear of making mistakes increases gradually. Besides, (17.9%) of participants mentioned that the more they are exposed to code-switching, the lower their level of proficiency tends to be. This can be explained by several factors such as the excessive use of CS by limiting the development of listening skills, vocabulary, and grammatical structures.

A small number of 4 participants (10.3%) perceive CS as not a randomized practice, but as a pedagogical strategy only when it is necessary to use it. Considering code-switching as a supportive means rather than a principal teaching technique. Finally, 12.8% of the participants stated that English classes should be in English only, to encourage students to think in English rather than relying on translation from other languages.

Section E: The Role of Code-Switching in Language Learning

Q10 : Does code-switching help you learn new vocabulary ?



Most participants believed that code-switching supports vocabulary learning. Students reported that switching between languages helps them understand unfamiliar terms and associate English vocabulary with their mother tongue.

Q11 : Does code-switching help you understand grammar better ?

Table 2 Distribution of participants' Responses on the Likert Scale

Yes	57,1%
No	21,4%
Not sure	21,4%

The participant's responses indicate that code-switching supports learning grammar. 57% of respondents answered positively "Yes," believing it facilitates clarifying confused and new rules by switching to another language (Arabic/French), helping students to build a solid grammatical foundation and follow the lesson without difficulties. Conversely, 21% of participants said "No," thinking that employing code-switching would decrease their full immersion in English and increase distractions from understanding grammar in the target language. Meanwhile, another 21% were "Not sure" whether code-switching truly aids learning grammatical rules. For those participants, believing that it might help with some

difficult concepts but is unreliable for understanding grammar overall. Their viewpoints remain uncertain and doubtful.

Section F: Perceptions of the Usefulness and Limitations of Code-Switching in the English Classroom

Q12 : In your opinion , when is code-switching useful in the English classroom ?

Students' Perceptions on Situations in Which Code-Switching Is Useful in the English Classroom

Table 3 Students' Perceptions on Situation in Which Code-Switching Is Useful in the English Classroom

Theme	Description	Frequency
Promoting comprehension of difficult subject matter	Code-switching aids learners in understanding complicated linguistic components such as grammar, vocabulary, and new topics.	10 participant
Minimizing anxiety And increasing students' confidence	It promotes comfort, creates a more relaxed environment, and reduces stress among EFL learners.	08 participants
Enhancing clarity and classroom management	It helps teachers provide a clear orientation, manage time efficiently and ensure comprehension.	06 participants
Pedagogical necessity of code-switching	It becomes beneficial when employed selectively, as a supportive strategy, only in situations where it is applied in a measured and controlled manner, rather than becoming a habitual or unrestricted practice.	04 participants
Critical learner perspectives: perceived ineffectiveness of code-switching in language learning	For few learners, code-switching is offers no meaningful contribution to their educational experience, lacking pedagogical value. Arguing that it neither facilitates comprehension nor supports the acquisition of new linguistic skills.	03 participants
Unclear/neutral response	Ambiguous answer, lack of justification.	01 participant

Based on 32 answers, from EFL learners, the study uncovers essential perceptions of the pedagogical role of code-switching in English language classrooms. The predominant theme highlights the identified advantages of code-switching, which help in grasping complicated grammatical structures, unfamiliar terminology, and newly submitted topics. The second significant theme, which points out the benefits of code-switching from a psychological perspective, reduces anxiety and stress, on the other hand, it enhances EFL

learners' confidence and willingness, which encourages classroom participation. Another view emphasizes that code-switching is a practical means to assist teachers in providing clear knowledge and ensuring understanding for learners with restricted English proficiency. Not all participants share the same perspective, a small group argues that code-switching as unhelpful and unproductive strategy, its effectiveness is neither beneficial nor universal, it depends on a specific application that balances supporting learners with the target language priority.

Q13 : When can code-switching become a problem for learning English?

Table 1.3 Thematic Analysis of Students' Responses on When Code-Switching Becomes a Problematic

Table 4 Thematic Analysis of Students' Responses on When Code-Switching Becomes a Problematic

Theme	Description	Frequency
The excessive use of code-switching in language learning	Excessive use of code-switching becomes problematic, when it is overdone and used outside of educational situations.	18 participants
First language reliance and its impacts on learners' proficiency	Some EFL learners rely more on their first language, which results in hindering the progress of the English language, and it reduces opportunities to develop their communicative skills and grammatical competence fluently.	15 participants
The habitual nature of code-switching in language learning	In some EFL settings, code-switching progressively becomes a routine, almost a habit for both teachers and learners.	07 participants
Reduced exposure to the target language inputs	An overdependence on code-switching reduces learners' full engagement in English, Over time, such limitations impede language development, and prevent learners from achieving an advanced proficiency level.	09 participants

Barriers to effective vocabulary acquisition	Overusing the first language reduces students' exposure to the target language, leading to limited vocabulary, and this results in restricted language growth.	06 participants
Teachers' over-reliance of code-switching in English classes	Teachers employ code-switching as a primary method of communication rather than explaining in English, this practice negatively affects students' linguistic growth and long-term competence.	02 participants
	Learners tend to employ code-switching as an easy strategy, instead of making more efforts to completely engage with the English language.	03 participants
Unclear/No answer	Response unclear	02 participants

3.2.2 Classroom Observation

3.2.2.1 Types of Code-Switching in Third-year English Classes

Table 5 Types of Code-Switching in Third-year English Classes

Types of code-switching	Classroom observation	Participant	Function of code-switching
Inter-sentential code-switching	The explanation of the idea was provided in English. Following that, the teacher shifts to Arabic between sentences to interpret the meaning. This occurs when learners misunderstand the idea, they start showing gestures of confusion and uncertainty.	Teacher	Ensure comprehension Avoid misunderstandings
Inter-sentential code-switching	The student starts responding in English, then switches to French in separate sentences when struggling to give a full expressive answer in English.	Student	Balancing limited linguistic competence Improving communicative competence

Intra-sentential code-switching	The teacher mixes English and French while clarifying the task or complex concepts.	Teacher	Clarify explanations
Intra-sentential code-switching	Students formulate a hybrid sentence by including terms and words in Arabic in an English structure as a result of the insufficiency of vocabulary	Students	Dealing with gaps in vocabulary limitations to foster Proficient communication
Tag code-switching	Students sometimes include cosize expressions in their English speech.	Teacher	Maintain classroom engagement
Tag code-switching	Students include some Arabic expressions within their responses in English, whether to hesitate or as a sign of affirmation.	Students	Encourage natural interection fluency
Inter-sentential + Tag code-switching	In this case, the teacher depends on alternation between Arabic and English in phrasing items, by adding Arabic expressions during explanation to clarify and emphasize.	Teacher	Ensure clarity and strengthen comprehension
Intra-sentential + Tag code-switching	While explaining, the teacher integrates short Arabic terms into English sentences to clarify meanings.	Teacher	Reducing cognitive load Enhance understanding

3.3 Interpretation of the Findings

The statistical results show that 60.5% of the participants were female, compared to 39.5% male. This imbalance highlights a gendered trend in language studies, where female participation tends to be higher. A comparison of responses also indicates that female learners reported slightly higher levels of classroom engagement, which may influence the overall classroom dynamic.

In terms of proficiency, most learners reported an average to good level of English; however, the distribution of responses reveals variation across the sample. A closer examination of the data shows that students with lower proficiency levels reported a higher frequency of code-switching, whereas those with stronger proficiency relied less on other languages. This correlation suggests that code-switching functions as a supportive

mechanism for learners who experience linguistic gaps or difficulties in expressing ideas in English.

Teachers' practices reinforce this pattern. Classroom observation confirms that teachers frequently employ Arabic or French to clarify complex terms and facilitate comprehension. A comparison of teacher and student responses indicates that both groups perceive code-switching as a pedagogical strategy rather than an obstacle. This suggests that code-switching is not a random practice but a systematically employed approach to enhance understanding.

Students' attitudes further illustrate this duality. While 39.5% of respondents agreed that code-switching helps them understand lessons and acquire new vocabulary, 17.9% expressed concern that excessive reliance on other languages may reduce their exposure to English. This contrast highlights a balanced awareness among learners, who recognize both the benefits and potential limitations of code-switching.

Classroom observation provides additional confirmation. The most frequently observed type of code-switching was inter-sentential switching (alternating between sentences), followed by intra-sentential switching (within sentences) and tag-switching. This distribution demonstrates that code-switching is a functional and structured practice in EFL classrooms, serving both communicative and pedagogical purposes.

Taken together, the quantitative results, comparative analyses, and observed patterns indicate that code-switching in Algerian EFL classrooms operates both as a strategic teaching resource and as a learner adaptation tool. However, the variation in proficiency levels and the mixed attitudes toward its use highlight the need for a balanced pedagogical approach that maximizes comprehension while ensuring sufficient exposure to the target language.

3.4 Discussion of the Findings

The current study investigates code-switching as a phenomenon in EFL classrooms at Dr. Moulay Tahar University of Saida, with particular focus on third-year students. It adopts a mixed-methods approach, integrating both questionnaires and classroom observation, with the aim of examining whether code-switching functions as a resource or an obstacle in English language teaching.

The findings from both instruments provide a coherent and comprehensive view of language practices within the classroom. They highlight that code-switching is a prevalent

pedagogical practice in EFL contexts, employed by both teachers and students for various communicative and instructional purposes.

The results further confirm that code-switching constitutes an important component of classroom interaction in English classes. Both questionnaire and observation data reveal the recurrent use of Arabic and French during English lessons, reflecting its functional role in facilitating understanding and supporting communication.

1 Frequency and Nature of Code-Switching

The classroom observation results confirmed that code-switching appears in several systematic forms, as both teachers and students employ the three main types: inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and tag-switching. This indicates that alternating between languages is not random, but rather a structured practice that is embedded within classroom interaction and pedagogical strategies.

2 Code-Switching as a functional and motivational practice

According to the results obtained, code-switching performs several pedagogical and communicative functions in the EFL classroom. Teachers resort to code-switching to facilitate comprehension, explain difficult ideas and grammatical rules, ensure understanding of lecture content, and organize classroom interaction more effectively.

As for students, they rely on code-switching mainly due to limited vocabulary, difficulties in expressing their viewpoints, and the need for clarity in communication. Furthermore, it is occasionally used as a supportive strategy in collaboration with classmates to help them understand instructions or classroom rules.

These findings confirm that code-switching functions as a practical strategy for overcoming communicative barriers and sustaining active classroom engagement.

3 Code-Switching as a Learning Support Mechanism

Students view code-switching as a supportive mechanism for learning, considering it an efficient tool that helps enhance understanding, especially when dealing with complex linguistic or academic content. In addition, students confirm that code-switching assists them in following lessons more easily, clarifying difficult concepts, and reducing comprehension difficulties during classroom interaction.

4 Evidence of the Classroom Observation

Classroom observation illustrates clear consistency with the questionnaire results, by offering a deeper view of the actual behavior within the classroom. It was observed that this switching is not random but it follows a specific functional type.

5 Code-Switching: Teaching Resource or Learning Obstacle?

The findings reveal that code-switching has a dual nature. On the one hand, it is considered a pedagogical resource that reinforces comprehension, supports students with lower proficiency levels, and reduces anxiety in the classroom. On the other hand, it may become a learning obstacle when overused, as excessive code-switching can reduce learners' exposure to English and limit opportunities for language practice.

This apparent contradiction suggests that code-switching should not be classified strictly as either a resource or an obstacle. Rather, it should be viewed as a pedagogical strategy whose effectiveness depends on the context in which it is used.

Based on the foregoing discussion, the findings demonstrate that code-switching constitutes an important communicative and pedagogical strategy in EFL classrooms. Teachers frequently switch to Arabic or French to explain difficult grammatical structures, introduce new vocabulary, and facilitate classroom interaction. Similarly, students rely on code-switching to express ideas, ask questions, and compensate for limited vocabulary knowledge. The results further indicate that code-switching reduces students' anxiety and creates a more comfortable classroom environment, thereby encouraging more active participation. However, excessive use of code-switching may reduce exposure to English and negatively affect fluency development.

Classroom observation confirmed that inter-sentential code-switching was the most frequently used type by both teachers and students. This form of switching appears to be employed strategically rather than randomly. The observational findings also support the questionnaire results, demonstrating consistency between students' perceptions and their actual classroom practices.

3.5 Connection with Previous Studies

The present findings are consistent with several previous studies in the fields of sociolinguistics and EFL teaching. Researchers have argued that code-switching functions as a scaffolding strategy that supports learners' comprehension and participation. Moreover, many studies emphasize that the strategic use of the first language can facilitate language acquisition, particularly for learners at intermediate proficiency levels. However, other scholars caution against excessive reliance on code-switching, as it may limit learners' opportunities to practice the target language. Therefore, the effectiveness of code-switching depends on its balanced and purposeful use within classroom interaction.

3.6 Pedagogical Recommendations

Teachers in EFL classrooms should adopt a balanced and strategic approach to code-switching, ensuring that it is used selectively and only when pedagogically necessary rather than as a habitual teaching practice. While switching between English and learners' first languages, such as Arabic or French, can serve as an effective scaffolding tool, English should remain the dominant language of instruction in order to maximize students' exposure to authentic input and promote natural language acquisition. In this regard, teachers are encouraged to create an English-rich classroom environment in which learners are gradually encouraged to express themselves in English first, before resorting to code-switching as a compensatory strategy when necessary. Such an approach can help students build confidence progressively, expand their vocabulary, and develop communicative competence in meaningful contexts.

Nevertheless, code-switching retains an important pedagogical function when used appropriately, particularly in clarifying complex vocabulary items, explaining abstract grammatical structures, or resolving moments of misunderstanding that may otherwise hinder comprehension and learning progress. At the same time, students should be actively engaged in communicative activities such as pair work, group discussions, role plays, and problem-solving tasks, all of which increase their exposure to English and reduce overreliance on their mother tongue. These interactive practices not only enhance fluency but also foster spontaneous language use and critical thinking in the target language.

Finally, future research is recommended to further investigate the long-term impact of code-switching on learners' oral fluency development, particularly in relation to whether its strategic use supports or limits sustained communicative competence over time in EFL contexts.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has presented and analyzed the main findings obtained from the questionnaire and classroom observation. The results reveal that code-switching is a widespread practice in EFL classrooms, where both teachers and students use it to facilitate communication and enhance comprehension of lesson content.

As demonstrated by the findings, teachers primarily employ code-switching as a pedagogical strategy to support the teaching and learning process, particularly when explaining complex concepts, unfamiliar vocabulary, and grammatical rules. Students, on

the other hand, rely on Arabic and French mainly because of their limited linguistic resources in English, which may restrict their ability to express themselves effectively in the target language.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that learners generally hold positive attitudes toward code-switching, viewing it as a useful tool that helps them understand instructions, participate in classroom activities, and overcome language-related difficulties. At the same time, they recognize that excessive reliance on Arabic or French may reduce their exposure to English and potentially hinder language development. Therefore, they emphasize the importance of maintaining a balance between the use of the target language and the strategic use of other languages.

Moreover, the classroom observation confirms the presence of different types of code-switching during classroom interaction. When used strategically and purposefully, code-switching can serve as an effective pedagogical resource that promotes comprehension, encourages participation, and supports meaningful communication. Nevertheless, sufficient exposure to English remains essential for the development of learners' language proficiency. Overall, the findings suggest that code-switching, when employed appropriately, can contribute positively to the teaching and learning process in EFL classrooms.

General Conclusion

This study explored code-switching as a communicative and pedagogical practice among third-year students in EFL classrooms at Dr. Moulay Tahar University of Saida. It aimed to investigate the linguistic and educational dimensions of this phenomenon in order to determine whether code-switching functions as a supportive learning strategy that facilitates comprehension and enhances the learning process, or whether it constitutes an obstacle that may hinder learners' language development and limit their exposure to the target language. Particular attention was devoted to examining the use of Arabic and French alongside English, the underlying reasons behind this practice, and the various functions it serves within the classroom context.

The findings obtained from both the questionnaire and classroom observation revealed that code-switching is a widespread and recurrent practice among both teachers and students. Teachers frequently resort to Arabic and French to facilitate comprehension,

clarify difficult concepts, and maintain effective classroom communication, which reflects their perception of code-switching as a valuable pedagogical support tool. Similarly, students tend to rely on code-switching when they encounter difficulties expressing themselves in English or when they lack sufficient vocabulary. This demonstrates the role of code-switching in bridging linguistic gaps and reducing communicative barriers in EFL classrooms.

Furthermore, the results indicated that the majority of students hold generally positive attitudes toward code-switching. Many participants considered it a supportive strategy that contributes to better understanding of lectures, promotes classroom interaction, and reduces anxiety during the learning process. Classroom observation also highlighted the frequent occurrence of different types of code-switching, particularly inter-sentential code-switching, which involves shifting between sentences. This practice was found to fulfill important communicative and pedagogical functions, especially in facilitating explanations and reinforcing the clarity of educational content.

Despite these advantages, the study also demonstrated that excessive reliance on Arabic and French may negatively affect students' opportunities for sufficient exposure to English. Overuse of code-switching can reduce opportunities to practice the target language, potentially slowing the development of communicative proficiency and limiting students' ability to immerse themselves effectively in English. Therefore, the study emphasizes the importance of maintaining a balanced and purposeful use of the mother tongue as a supportive tool without diminishing the central role of English in the classroom.

In light of these findings, it can be concluded that code-switching should neither be viewed as an entirely negative practice nor as a complete substitute for the target language. Rather, when employed systematically and in moderation, it can serve as an effective pedagogical resource that supports language learning and classroom interaction. The educational value of code-switching lies in its ability to strike a balance between using the mother tongue as a facilitative mechanism and ensuring sufficient exposure to English for meaningful language acquisition.

Finally, this study contributes to the existing literature on code-switching in EFL contexts by providing deeper insights into its role within Algerian university classrooms. However, the scope of the research remains limited to a specific group of students within a single institutional context, which restricts the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, future research is recommended to investigate code-switching across different academic

contexts, involve larger and more representative samples, and explore teachers' perspectives in greater depth. Such studies would provide a broader and more comprehensive understanding of the pedagogical and communicative functions of code-switching in EFL settings.

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Appendices

Questionnaire

Section A

INTRODUCTION

This questionnaire is conducted as part of an academic research study that aims to investigate the extent to which code-switching occurs in EFL classrooms. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. All responses will remain anonymous and confidential, and the data collected will be used strictly for academic purposes. Please answer all questions honestly. The questionnaire will take approximately five minutes to complete.

1. Section B : Background Information

1.Gender :	
☐	Male
☐	Female
2.Age	
☐	21 - 20
☐	22 - 23
3. How would you rate your level of English ?	
☐	Weak
☐	Average
☐	Good

Section C :

4. Do your teachers sometimes use Arabic or French during English classes ?	
☐	Yes
☐	No

5. Do students use Arabic or French in English classes ?
--

☐	Often
☐	Sometimes
☐	Rarely
☐	Never
6. Which language is used more in code-switching ?	
☐	Arabic
☐	French
☐	Both equally

Section D :

7. Why do you think teachers switch to Arabic/French	
☐	To explain difficult vocabulary
☐	To explain grammar
☐	To make sur students understand
☐	To save time
☐	Students don't understand English well
☐	others
8. Why do students switch to Arabic/French ?	
☐	Lack of vocabulary in English
☐	To help classmates understand
☐	Habit
☐	Because English is difficult
☐	To ask questions

Section E:

10. Use the following scale: Strongly disagree _ Disagree _ Neutral _ Dropdown _ Agree _ Strongly agree	
☐	Code-switching helps me understand the lesson better.
☐	I feel more comfortable when the teacher uses Arabic/French sometimes
☐	Code-switching makes English classes less stressful
☐	Too much code-switching reduces my exposure to English
☐	When teachers use Arabic/French , I rely less on English
☐	Code-switching should be used only when necessary
☐	English classes should be English-only

Section F:

11. Does code-switching help you learn new vocabulary ?	
☐	Yes
☐	No
☐	Not sure
12. Does code-switching help you understand grammar better ?	
☐	Yes
☐	No
☐	No sure

Section G :

13. In your opinion , when is code-switching useful in the English classroom ?

2. **14. When can code-switching become a problem for learning English?**

Glossary

Code-Switching (CS): The practice of switching between two or more languages within a conversation, sentence, or discourse.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL): The teaching and learning of English in countries where English is not the primary language of communication.

Classroom Interaction: The communication and exchanges that occur between teachers and students or among students during classroom activities.

Teaching Resource: Any strategy, method, material, or tool used by teachers to facilitate learning and enhance students' understanding.

Learning Obstacle: A factor that blocks or negatively impacts the learning process and students' academic progress.

First Language (L1): A learner's native language or mother tongue acquired naturally from childhood.

Target Language (TL): The language that learners are studying; in this research, English is the target language.

Language Proficiency: The degree of competence and ability an individual has in using a language effectively.

Comprehension: The ability to understand spoken or written language.

Communicative Competence: The ability to use language appropriately and effectively in different communicative situations.

Pedagogical Strategy: An instructional approach or technique used to reach specific educational goals.

Bilingualism: The ability to use two languages with varying levels of proficiency.

Multilingualism: The ability to communicate in more than two languages.

Language Learning: The process through which individuals acquire knowledge and skills in a language.

Student Participation: The active involvement of students in classroom discussions, activities, and tasks.

Case Study: A research method involving an in-depth examination of a specific group, context, or phenomenon.

Language Exposure: The amount and quality of contact learners have with a language.

Questionnaire: A research tool consisting of a set of questions designed to collect data from respondents.

Classroom Observation: A research method that involves systematically observing and recording teaching practices, student behavior, and classroom interactions in their natural setting to gather data for analysis.

Classroom Management: The strategies and practices teachers use to maintain an effective and organized learning environment.

