



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Students Perceptions towards Code-Switching in EFL Classroom**

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**ABSTRACT**

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Code-switching is a linguistic phenomenon that occurs in multilingual academic societies around the globe. In Pakistan both (Urdu and English) languages are used in government departments, corporate sectors, and education. People switch or mix languages while interacting and communicating with each other. Aimed of the present study was to explore the perceptions of EFL College level learners towards code-switching. The researcher selected 562 students (from both genders) enrolled in the intermediate secondary year at Degree colleges located in Quetta, the capital city of Balochistan. These respondents were selected through simple random sampling. A pretested and valid close-ended questionnaire was used for data collection from the students. The students feel confident ( $M=4.14$ ) and motivated ( $M=4.21$ ) to learn. Some students also believed that using code-switching by the teachers encourages them to participate in classroom activities ( $M=3.98$ ). The EFL 1st years learners had a better attitude toward code-switching than 2nd years EFL learners.

**Introduction**

Pakistan is a multilingual country with many different languages spoken throughout. It contains six official languages and more over sixty regional languages (Zaib, 2020). Mahboob and Barrat (2014) claim that Pakistan is the only country that can be regarded a multilingual state in both its basic and linguistic definitions, and that speakers encounter a variety of challenging yet fascinating circumstances. They have to cope with a variety of languages at the same time. Speakers in Pakistan must acquire a variety of languages in order to tackle the obstacles of everyday life, with Urdu and English being the most important.

In Pakistan, both (Urdu and English) languages are utilized in educational institutes media and government offices. The official language of Pakistan was changed from English to Urdu in 1973, according to the country's 1973 constitution. The English language, on the other hand, is recognized as official language. That is why a speaker in Pakistan must be fluent in English in order to communicate effectively. Younas et al. (2020) further highlighted that Urdu is utilized as a national

language, while English is used as an official language and as a language of education in the United States.

It is extremely difficult to teach all topics in English in Pakistan's educational system because of the country's limited English language proficiency. There are a variety of elements that influence instructors' decisions about which languages to use as a medium of instruction in the classroom. Students in Pakistani classrooms come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. They are even unable to communicate effectively in the national language, Urdu. Students from remote or tribal areas can only communicate and be understood in their native tongue, which may be Pashto, Baloch, Brahvi, Sindhi, Punjabi, or Kashmiri, among other languages. It is extremely difficult for professors to instruct students solely in the English or Urdu languages. As a result, they employ code flipping to go from English to Urdu, and at times, they enlist the assistance of their mother tongue.

It is unfortunate that not only pupils, but also teachers, do not have the necessary qualifications to instruct in English as a foreign language. Teachers in Indonesian Language institutes, according to (Novianti & Said, 2021), first teach grammatical principles in Indonesian Language, which is the students' first language, and then have them apply those grammatical rules in the target language, which is English. It occurs because the professors themselves do not have a strong command of the English language. According to the findings of Tahir, Fatima, and Abuzar (2016), teachers in Pakistan regularly use code switching in classrooms because it allows them to more easily transmit their point of view to students. Some subjects are so difficult to explain to children that even teachers find it difficult to do so without the assistance of an L1 specialist.

Balochistan is Pakistan's biggest province having diversified and rich cultural heritage. It is a bilingual community in which different tribes live side by side. Balochistan is home to people who speak more than ten different languages. Pashto, Barahvi, Sindhi, Balochi, and Sirakai are the primary languages spoken in Balochistan province. In addition to their mother tongue at home, people of Balochistan speak Urdu, Balochi, and Pashto as a language of communication or trade, with English being the language of instruction and government in educational and government institutions.

The private educational system and the government educational system are the two types of educational systems available in Balochistan, respectively. The language of instruction in the private educational system is English, whereas the language of instruction in the public educational system is Urdu. It has been noted that lectures and other forms of discussion in both private and public institutions are conducted using code switching. Teachers and students in private schools code switch between English and Urdu, whereas code switching between Urdu and local languages is employed in government schools.

### **Literature Review**

The history of code switching in "sociocultural linguistics" may be traced back to Blom and Gumperz's (1972) "social meaning in language systems" (Benson, 2001). Code switching has been animatedly utilized in second language acquisition and

language learning to demonstrate bilingual language learners' "cognitive linguistic capacities" and classroom activities (Cenoz & Genesee, 2001; Fotos, 2001). Code-switching is widely used in ESL/EFL classroom instruction, particularly in non-native English speaking nations where instructors' and students' language ability is low. According to research, students have varied feelings (good and negative) regarding instructors' use of code switching in classroom instruction (Abdolaziz & Shahla, 2015).

A study conducted by Lantz-Andersson et al. (2013) examined the procedures students use to organise their communication on social networking sites (SNS) inside schools, as well as how this aids linguistic and educational activities. Instead of focusing on sociocultural perception, the research employs the conceptual advantages of frame analysis in a systematic manner. Using a Facebook group in English-oriented lessons, ethnographic data were gathered from 60 students ranging in age from 13 to 16 years and hailing from a variety of countries, including Finland, Colombia and Sweden.

Andriana (2020) studied the students' perception of code-switching in teaching reading course at Muhammadiyah University Of Makassar. The results show that the students demonstrate their positive and negative perceptions about the use of the code switching in class has been proved by 10% of the choosing of the code switching in class with 10% that allowed them to understand easily, helped them improve their new words of danger and understood easily the material given in English, helped them learn English more quickly, helped them understand each sentence in English easily, helped them to take the lead from the study, helped them avoid confusion, and made them comfortable and confident in learning English. It may be concluded that the result of the study on students' perception of code switching has a positive perception, almost all the students say are very enthusiastic in following the learning process using code-switching because it is so helpful to them in the learning process.

Indonesian students continue to struggle with English, according to Hakim et al. (2019), who state that the topic has been taught in junior high school, senior high school, an English course as well as other educational institutions in the country. As a result, code-switching is used in a large number of English learning and teaching activities in Indonesia. Code-switching is the process of changing the language used in communication from one language to another. In this context, code-switching is switching from Indonesian to English or from English to Indonesian. The purpose of this study was to investigate students' perceptions of code-switching use in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. Using the survey research approach, the investigators conducted this study, with the tools consisting of a questionnaire and an interview session. Thirty students participated in the questionnaire filling process, and nine students participated in both the questionnaire and the interview. (1) The majority of students agree that code-switching should be used in learning and teaching activities (2) they believe that code-switching helps them improve their listening skills (3) they have greater respect for teachers who use codeswitching when they teach (4) they believe that code-switching increases their chances of passing examination and (5) they feel more comfortable and confident when they study English.

## Material and Methods

**Research Design:** To conduct the present study, the researchers are using quantitative data gathering methods and techniques. Currently, the focus of this study is on figuring out how code-switching may be used in the classroom to teach a foreign language like English. Scrutiny and other sources are used to analyze such a case study, Creswell says (2007). When doing quantitative research, the data is often collated and evaluated using different statistical procedures in accordance with a predetermined set of parameters. A large number of individuals may be analyzed using quantitative methods (Johnson and Christensen, 2012). Quantitative analysis has also been used in the present study to confirm the accuracy of the findings. Percentages have been employed by the researcher to determine the differences between the individuals.

### population

Participants in this research include boys and girls from Intermediate level institutions in the city of Quetta in the province of Balochistan.

### Sampling Technique and sample size

The researcher chose 562 students (of both sexes) who were enrolled in the intermediate secondary year in Degree colleges in Quetta, the capital city of Balochistan at the time of the study.

However, 562 questionnaires were returned/valid/correct for data processing, resulting in a total of 562. As a result, the researcher picked the data of 562 pupils for further investigation. The sample size is described in further detail below.

Name of institutes	F	%
Govt Science College Quetta	87	15.5
Intermediate Colleges Of Quetta City	88	15.7
Islamia Girls College Quetta	90	16.0
Islamia Boys College Quetta	98	17.4
Sunderland Higher Secondary School	99	17.6
Govt. Girls Degree College Quetta	100	17.8
Total	562	100.0

### Tools

A close-ended questionnaire that had been pretested and deemed valid was utilized to gather data from the pupils.

According to the presented questions, students' perceptions of code-switching have been categorized into eight fundamental groups based on the multidimensional implications of Code-mixing in the classroom:

1. Motivation and confidence
2. Teacher usage of code-switching

3. Learning new vocabulary
4. Class interaction with friends and peers
5. Learning Writing and Grammar
6. Listening Comprehension
7. Reading comprehension
8. Speaking proficiency

### Analysis of Data

Data analysis approaches such as descriptive (frequency, mean) and inferential (t-test and Pearson correlation) statistics were utilised to analyse the data.

### Results and Discussion

**Table 1**  
**Background information of the students**

<b>Gender</b>	<i>F</i>	%
Male	371	66.0
Female	191	34.0
Total	562	100.0
<b>Age groups (in years)</b>	<i>F</i>	%
Up to 15	42	7.5
16-17	277	49.3
18-19	221	39.3
20 and above	22	3.9
Total	562	100.0
	Mean age = 17.16	S.D. = 1.83
<b>Course</b>	<i>F</i>	%
1st year	258	45.9
2nd year	304	54.1
Total	562	100.0
<b>Duration (in years)</b>	<i>F</i>	%
1 to 3 Years	290	51.6
Above 3 Years	272	48.4
Total	562	100.0

**Gender:** Table 1 indicates that a large proportion (66.0%) of the participants were male, and around one-third (34.0%) were females.

**Age:** Table 1 reflects that only 7.5 percent of sampled students had up to 15 years of age. However, around half (49.3%) of the participants had 16-17 years of age, 39.3 percent had 18-19 years of age and the remaining almost 4 percent had 20 or above years of age.

**Course:** Less than a half (45.9%) of the study population was studying in 1<sup>st</sup>-year class, and a large part (54.1%) of the sampled students were studying in 2<sup>nd</sup>-year class (Table 1).

**Duration (in years):** Table 1 further shows that almost half (51.6%) of the participants had one to three years duration of learning English. However, 48.4 percent had above 3 years duration of learning English.

**Table 2**  
**Students' motivation and confidence**

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
Teacher's use of code-switching helps them to enjoy the lesson	357	162	9	30	4	4.41
The use of code-switching by the teacher motivates me to actively engage in the activities in the classroom.	183	255	66	43	15	3.98

**Table 3**  
**Teacher usage of code-switching**

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
The use of code-switching by the teacher assists the students in better understanding the lesson	354	156	27	18	7	4.48
I would like that the instructor refrain from using code-switching during classes and refrain from speaking in my native language	85	68	71	168	170	2.52

**Table 4**  
**Learning New vocabulary**

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
The use of code-switching by the teacher allows me to concentrate on the lecture instead of worrying about new words and phrases.	131	188	60	154	29	3.42
I understand new vocabulary only when the teacher translates it into Urdu	212	203	60	51	36	3.90

**Table 5**  
**Class interaction with friends and peers**

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
When I'm explaining complex words and phrases to my classmates, I use code-switching techniques.	213	247	38	51	13	4.06
Students should be allowed to use L1 when doing pair works	100	142	74	137	109	2.98

**Table 6**  
**Learning Writing and Grammar**

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
English Grammar should be taught in the Urdu language	65	69	109	116	203	2.43
I think code-switching works for improving students' English writing skills	130	112	60	105	155	2.92

**Table 7**  
**Listening Comprehension**

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
Teachers should use L1 for listening comprehension	72	127	122	150	91	2.89
I think code-switching works for improving students' English listening skills	192	169	88	73	40	3.71

**Table 8**  
**Reading Comprehension**

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
Teacher & students can use L1 to check reading comprehension	102	159	73	146	82	3.09
I think code-switching works for improving students' English reading skills	133	170	64	142	53	3.33

**Table 9**  
**Speaking proficiency**

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
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I could become more proficient in English if the teacher - speaks entirely in English	214	154	83	52	59	3.73
I could become more proficient in English if the teacher switches code	101	182	55	164	60	3.18

**Table 10**  
Compare the gender-wise perception of EFL College level learners towards code-switching

	Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	T-value	P-value
Perceptions of EFL College level learners towards code-switching	Male	371	3.54	.45	3.28	.001**
	Female	191	3.42	.41		

**Table 11**  
Compare between the years of study of EFL College level learners and their perception towards code-switching

	Year of study	N	Mean	S.D.	T-value	P-value
Perceptions of EFL College level learners towards code-switching	1st year	258	3.61	.45	5.65	.000**
	2nd year	304	3.40	.41		

**Table 12**  
Compare between the duration of English learning of EFL College level learners and their perception towards code-switching

	Duration of English learning	N	Mean	S.D.	T-value	P-value
Perceptions of EFL College level learners towards code-switching	1 to 3 Years	290	3.54	.44	1.998	.046*
	Above 3 Years	272	3.46	.44		

## Discussion

This research was conducted to the college level learner at Degree colleges located in Quetta, the capital city of Balochistan. According to the result of the conducted questionnaire and interview above, the majority of the students had a positive perception and agreed on the use of code switching in EFL classroom that it could give them more confidence and motivation to study English. The students also believed that using code-switching by the teachers encourages them to participate in classroom activities. Many of them agreed that the teachers' use of code-switching helps them to understand the lesson. Students also preferred the teachers to use code-switching during lessons. Many students thought that the 'New English language words should be translated into Urdu'. It is also concluded that students used code-switching when they explained difficult words and sentences during communication with their peers who share the same language. Most of the students thought that code-switching works for improving students' English listening skills. It can be concluded that male students had more favourable thoughts that code-switching helps them to understand difficult materials when the teaching-learning process goes on compared to female students. The EFL 1<sup>st</sup> years learners had a better attitude toward code-switching than 2<sup>nd</sup> years EFL learners. The students also benefited from the use of code-switching in a variety of ways, including making it easier for them to learn



English, improving their grammar and vocabulary, improving their listening skills, assisting them in understanding difficult materials, ensuring that there is no miscommunication between the teacher and students, encouraging them to speak English, eliminating confusion during learning activities, and boosting their confidence in learning English.

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