



Teachers' Code-Switching in EFL Classes: Deficiency or Asset?

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رمزگردانی در کلاس‌های زبان انگلیسی در ایران

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Abstract

چکیده

Following the previous research studies, the present study intends to investigate the positive function that code-switching to L1 (Farsi) performs in the EFL classes of three English institutes in Iran. The case study focuses on revealing the attitudes of teachers and learners towards the patterns, functions and factors of switching to L1 in EFL classes in the context of Iran. In this study, quantitative research method is employed in order to analyze code-switching to Farsi through questionnaires. The analysis of the collected data revealed that code-switching to L1 is a prevalent strategy used by most EFL teachers in English institutes of Iran. It was also concluded that code-switching to L1 plays a positive role in teaching and learning of the English language.

Key Words: Teachers' code-switching to L1, attitudes, functions

هدف از مطالعه‌ی حاضر بررسی کارکرد مثبت رمزگردانی به زبان اول (فارسی) در کلاس‌های آموزش زبان انگلیسی در ایران می‌باشد. این مطالعه‌ی موردی بر آشکارسازی نگرش معلمان و زبان آموزان نسبت به الگوها، کارکردها و عوامل رمزگردانی به زبان اول در کلاس‌های زبان انگلیسی در کشور ایران تأکید دارد. روش تحقیق مطالعه‌ی حاضر از نوع کمی است و هدف از آن تجزیه و تحلیل رمزگردانی به زبان فارسی به وسیله‌ی پرسشنامه می‌باشد. تجزیه و تحلیل داده‌ها نشان می‌دهد که رمزگردانی به زبان اول راهبرد غالب و شایعی میان بیشتر معلمان زبان انگلیسی در موسسه‌های زبان ایران است. همچنین نتایج نشان داده است که رمزگردانی به موقع به زبان اول نقش مثبتی در تدریس و یادگیری زبان انگلیسی ایفا می‌کند.

کلید واژه‌ها: رمزگردانی، نگرش، کارکرد، زبان اول

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1. Introduction

The term code-switching refers to the alternation between two or more languages, dialects, or language registers in the course of discourse between people who have more than one language in common. It is an unavoidable consequence of communication between different language varieties and has long been observed in multilingual communities. This bilingual speech behavior has attracted a variety of investigations over the last couple of decades. It was in 1980s that code-switching was studied as a definite strategy employed by EFL/ESL teachers in their classes. Since then, two opposing views have been adopted by teachers and researchers regarding teachers' code-switching to L1 in foreign language classes: the first view advocates the intra-lingual teaching strategy and the second one supports a cross-lingual teaching strategy. The proponents of the first view (Ellis, 1984; Chaudron, 1988; Lightbown, 2001, etc.) believe that teachers must not code-switch to L1 as it will cause negative transfer in foreign language learning; the advocates of the second view (Levine, 2003, etc.) contend that code-switching to L1 results in some improvement in foreign language learning.

Considering these two contravening attitudes, the current paper supports the second view, i.e. L1 use in foreign language classes promotes foreign language learning. To corroborate this claim, empirical evidence regarding the positive effect of L1 use by the EFL teachers in three English institutes is collected and attempts have been made to substantiate the positive function that code-switching serves in teaching EFL.

2. Literature Review

The term "code-switching" have been defined differently by various researchers and scholars: Haugen (1956) defines it as a phenomenon that "occurs when a bilingual introduces a completely unassimilated word from another language into his speech" (p. 40). Gumperz (1982) defines code-switching as "the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems" (p. 59). Myers-Scotton (1993) refers to code-switching as "the selection by bilinguals or multilinguals of forms from an embedded variety (or varieties) in utterances of a matrix variety during the same conversation" (p. 3). As defined by Baker (1995), code-switching refers to "moving from one language to another, inside a sentence or across sentences" (p. 231). In short, code-switching is the alternation between two or more languages among people who have more than one language in common. In EFL classroom context, code-switching refers to a purposeful shift between the first and the target language by teachers and learners.

Types and Functions of Code-switching

Poplack (1980) identified three different types of code-switching: intra-sentential code-switching, where switches of different types occur within the clause boundary, including within the word boundary; inter-sentential code-switching, or switch at clause/sentence boundary, one clause being in one language, the other clause in the other; and tag-switching which is also called extra-sentential code-switching by Milroy and Muysken (1995). In this type of switching a tag, e.g., 'you know', 'I mean', is inserted from one language into an utterance which is entirely in another language (Hamers & Blanc, 2004, pp. 256 & 260; Appel & Muysken, 2005, p. 118; Wei, 2000, p. 237).

Other frameworks have also been proposed aiming at classifying different types of code-switching. For example, Gumperz' (1982) and Auer's (1998). Auer is considered as a forerunner in analyzing code-switching as an interactional phenomenon (Bailey, 2000, p. 168). He has based his analysis of code-switching on conversation analysis. His method of code-switching analysis is unique in that he has a sequential approach to it. He argues that "any theory of conversational code-alternation is bound to fail if it does not take into account that the meaning of code-alternation depends in essential ways on its 'sequential environment'" (Auer, 1995, p. 116). What this quotation implies is that code-switching can only be interpreted in relation to the preceding and ensuing utterances. As part of his sequential approach, he proposed two functions of code-switching: discourse-related and participant-related. He defines discourse-related code-switching as "the use of code-switching to organize the conversation by contributing to the interactional meaning of a particular utterance" (Auer, 1998, p. 4). Participant-related code-switching is different in that it takes the hearer's linguistic performances or competences into account (Martin-Jones, 1995, p. 99). Therefore, it can be concluded that the former type of code-switching is speaker-oriented while the latter is hearer-oriented (Martin-Jones, 1995, p. 99).

Gumperz (1982) studies code-switching from a sociolinguistic perspective and focuses on the conversational use of code-switching. From his viewpoint, code-switching is something that happens in a conversation. He discovers and enlists the following functions for code-switching: quotation, addressee specification, interjections, reiteration, message qualification and personalization versus objectivization (pp. 78-84). He also classifies code-switching as situational and metaphorical. The former involving a shift in participants and the latter a change in topical emphasis.

Baker (1995) believes that if code-switches are used appropriately, they will have some interactional advantages. When both or all interlocutors understand both languages,

coalescing has a purpose. It's almost as if a third language is ushered in. Below, some examples of the major uses of switching between languages will be introduced:

Code switches may be used to emphasize a particular point in a conversation.

If people do not know a word or a phrase in a language, they may substitute a word in another language.

Code switching may be used to express more adequately an idea.

Code switching may be used to repeat a phrase or a command. Some teachers in classrooms elaborate on a concept in one language, and then will explain it once more in another language believing that repeating improves understanding.

Code switching may be used to communicate friendship.

In relating a conversation held previously, the person may report the conversation in the language or languages used.

Code switching is sometimes used as a way of interjecting into a conversation. A person attempting to break into a conversation politely may use a different language to that occurring.

Code switching may be used to ease tension and inject humor into a conversation.

Code switching often relates to social distance. For example, when two people meet, they may use the common majority language. As the conversation unravels, roles, status and tribal identity are revealed, a change to a regional language may indicate that boundaries are being broken down, there is less social distance, with expressions of solidarity and growing rapport indicated by the switch.

Code switching can also be used for more Machiavellian purposes. It can be used to exclude people from a conversation.

Code switching may be used to indicate a change of attitude during the conversation. For example greetings may be expressed in the home, minority language. But when one person asks to borrow money or asks a favor of the other, the moneylender may change to the majority language (pp. 64 & 65).

Using the functional framework of Jakobson (1960) and Halliday et al. (1964), switching can be said to have the following functions (Appel & Muysken, 2005, pp. 119 & 120):

Switching can serve the referential function because it often involves lack of knowledge of one language or lack of facility in that language on a certain subject. Certain subjects may be more appropriately discussed in one language, and the introduction of such a subject can lead to a switch.

Switching often serves a directive function in that it involves the hearer directly. This being directed at the hearer can take many forms. One is to exclude certain persons present from a portion of the conversation. The opposite is to include a person more by using her or his language.

Poplack (1980) in particular has stressed the expressive function of code switching. Speakers emphasize a mixed identity through the use of two languages in the same discourse.

Often switching serves to indicate a change in tone of the conversation, and hence a phatic function. This type has been called metaphorical switching by Gumperz and Hernandez-Chavez (1975). Think of the stand-up comedian who tells the whole joke in a standard variety, but brings the punch line in a vernacular type of speech, e.g. an urban dialect.

The metalinguistic function of code switching comes into play when it is used to comment directly or indirectly on the languages involved. One example of this function is when speakers switch between different codes to impress the other participants with a show of linguistic skills (Scotton, 1979).

Bilingual language usage involving switched puns, jokes, etc. can be said to serve the poetic function of language.

As observed, Auer and Gumperz' classifications do not make a clear-cut distinction between types and functions of code-switching. Baker (1995) and Appel & Muysken (2005) just focus on the functions and do not propose any typological classifications; therefore, the current study prefers to adopt Poplack's (1980) classification as its framework to investigate the process of code-switching in Iranian EFL classroom context.

Teachers' Code-switching in EFL Classroom

Since EFL institutes in Iran are institutional settings and their aim is teaching pupils a foreign language, i.e. English, studying code-switching in such a setting is intrinsically different from its study elsewhere. Lörcher (1986) believes that since in an institutional setting, such as a classroom, the teacher is in charge, as opposed to a casual conversation where the participants enjoy equality, the communication and its patterns, including that of code-switching, will be significantly affected. Furthermore, Simon (2001) supports Lörcher's idea by adding that interactional patterns are also affected by the asymmetry in the language skills between the teacher and the pupils as the teacher is proficient in the language being taught but pupils do not know it well.

As mentioned earlier, there are two opposing views on the use of L1 in a foreign language context: exclusive use of the L2 and the opposite. Some researchers believe that only the target language (L2) must be used as the medium of instruction whereas some other researchers argue that mother tongue can be used as an important tool in foreign language learning (Macaro, 2001, pp. 531 & 532).

Proponents of the first view (Halliwell & Jones, 1991; Macdonald, 1993, etc.) believe that if target language teaching is exclusively done through target language, the process of the learning is substantially improved. They believe that the exclusive use of L2 in the class makes the language real and this in turn leads to the development of the learner's in-built system. This view maintains that second and foreign language teachers must do their utmost to expose learners to as many language functions as possible. Ellis (1984), for example, argues that the use of L1 by second or foreign language teachers will deprive learners of valuable L2 input. Wang-Fillmore (1985) contend that if learners get used to hearing L1 from their teacher, they will have a tendency to ignore the L2 spoken by the teacher and as a result do not benefit from the L2 input provided by the teacher.

In contrast to the previous view, some researchers (Stern, 1992; Polio & Duff, 1994; Cook, 2000 & 2001, etc.) argue that a place must be assigned to students' L1 in foreign language classes. Cook (2001) argues that teachers' ability to use both L1 and L2 creates an authentic learning environment. He also believes that to let students use their mother tongue is a humanistic approach, because it allows them to express what they really intend to. Stern (1992) suggested that the parallel use of both L1 and L2 in the classroom needs to be reconsidered, though in theory the exclusive use of the L2 is now highly favored.

Regarding code-switching, Cook (2001) argues that it is a natural phenomenon in any settings where the participants have at least two languages in common, so it is neither logical nor fair to discourage code-switching in the classroom. He proposes some positive ways of using L1 in the classroom. First, teachers can resort to L1 to convey meaning of words and sentences, to explain grammar and to organize the classroom. Second, L1 can be used by the learners as a learning activity (e.g., translating) or a classroom activity (e.g., explaining an exercise, an activity or a task to a classmate). Polio and Duff (1994) carried out a study on the use of mother tongue by some foreign language teachers and came to somewhat the same findings. However, despite the strong empirical support for the use of L1 in EFL/ESL teaching context, it must not be overused. Castellotti and Moore (as cited in Turnbull and Arnett, 2002, p. 207) believe that teachers must make a conscious decision about when to speak L1 in the classroom because code-switching is beneficiary to the learners if it is used advertently. Cook (2001) suggests that teachers can resort to L1 if

they get to know that using target language would cause problems for the learners. He believes that teachers should use the L1 when “the cost of the target language is too great” (p. 418); that is, when it takes too much time and energy for the students to understand the target language. All in all, it can be suggested that L1 can and must be used as a helpful tool in language teaching and learning; however, due caution must be exercised in L1 employment in an EFL/ESL classroom. It is to say that, despite the aforementioned research studies in support of the positive role L1 plays in target language teaching, one cannot simply generalize these findings unless further experiments are repeated in other environments. In the following section, an investigation is conducted to figure out what role teachers’ code-switching to L1 plays in EFL classrooms in the context of Iran.

3. Research Design

The current research aims at investigating the positive role that teachers’ code-switching to L1 plays in EFL classes of Iranian EFL institutes. In order to prove this, the research questions are formulated as follows:

What are the attitudes of teachers and learners towards teachers code-switching to L1?

What factors make teachers code-switch to L1?

What functions or purposes do teachers’ code-switches to L1 serve in practice?

Subjects

The subjects, both the teachers and learners, were chosen from three different English institutes: Jihad Daneshgahi, Aram and Zaban Sara. The subjects have different linguistic backgrounds but they all use Farsi as the language of education at school.

Altogether 120 learners from three institutes were studied. They are from different cities and town in Iran and characterize different families, and study backgrounds. For detailed information about the students subjects, please look at table 1.

Table 2 shows that 12 teachers were involved in the study. They graduated from different universities with a bachelor or master’s degree in TEFL. Their teaching experience ranged from 3 to 15 years. They taught students of different proficiency levels. Hence, they are representatives of the majority of foreign language teachers in English institutes of Iran. For detailed information about the teachers subjects, please look at table 2.

Methods and Instruments

In order to have an objective and reliable understanding of teachers' code-switching in classroom, quantitative research method was employed, consisting of two questionnaires: one for the students and one for the teachers.

Questionnaires

The two questionnaires were given to the students and teachers separately, and they were both employed for gathering quantitative data on the study of code-switching to L1.

Both of the questionnaires were designed according to the studies of Duff and Polio (1990), Macaro (1997) and Levine (2003). Both questionnaires have three sections: personal background, definition and questions. In the first section, the subjects were required to provide their personal information. In the second section, to avoid misunderstanding, the definition of code-switching is provided. The last section, which is the main part of the questionnaire, provided the most vital information upon which data analysis was done. It was used to investigate the frequency of Farsi code used in English classes, the attitude towards teachers' code-switching to Farsi, and the view on the main functions, factors and influence of teachers' code-switching to Farsi in practice.

Data Collection

With the help of some colleagues, both of the questionnaires were administrated to the subject students (120) and subject teachers (12) of the three institutes in December, 2011. Uniform instructions were given to all participants on how to complete the questionnaires. Before completing the questionnaires, they learned that (a) the study was not a test; (b) there were no right or wrong answers; (c) the responses would be handled with absolute confidentiality. All the copies were returned. 12 copies of teachers' questionnaire and 120 copies of students' questionnaire were all found valid.

Procedures of Data Analysis

In this research study, quantitative analysis is primarily employed. The answers from the questionnaires were counted and the percentage of each option was calculated, and then the results were used in analyzing teachers' code-switching to L1 (Farsi) in the classroom.

4. Results and Analysis

In this section the results of the quantitative data analysis is presented. Quantitative analysis of the responses to the questionnaires shows the participants' feedbacks on teachers' code-switching to Farsi in class.

The Results and Analysis of the Questionnaires

1. Frequency of Code-switching to Farsi

Both of the questionnaires reveal that teachers' code-switching to Farsi occurs in almost all English classes of the institutes where this study was carried out.

Table 3 presents the ideas of the teachers and students on the frequency of code-switching to Farsi in English classes. As it is evident, both teachers and students hold somewhat similar attitudes towards the frequency of code-switching to Farsi.

2. Consciousness of the Use of Farsi Code

Table 4 indicates that most of the teachers (82.1%) are sometimes or occasionally conscious of code-switching to Farsi. This implies that English teachers do not always make conscious use of Farsi code in their classes. Instead, most of the time, code-switching to Farsi occurs unconsciously. Unlike the teachers, more students (93.3%) are conscious of code-switching to Farsi. It implies that the students notice the switching from English to Farsi, thus they are aware of the situations in which the teachers make use of code-switching.

3. Attitudes towards Code-switching to Farsi

According to Table 5, the teachers and students have almost the same attitudes towards code-switching to Farsi. A high percentage (75%) of the teachers agrees with the use of Farsi, while the percentage in the students (66%) is relatively lower. At the same time, 16.6% of the teachers and 26.6% of the students have a neutral attitude. Only a small percent of teachers (8.3%) and students (7.2%) disagree with the use of Farsi. As it can be seen, most of the teachers and students hold a positive attitude towards code-switching to Farsi. This result is consistent with the study of Macaro (1997), and Jingxia (2010).

4. Ideal Frequency of Code-switching to Farsi

Table 6 shows that most of the students (about 94%) prefer their teachers to use Farsi sometimes or occasionally. This indicates that the students really want to receive as much English exposure as possible. However, they think it is also important for their teachers to switch to Farsi sometimes or occasionally.

5. Influence of Code-switching to Farsi

Table 7 shows that the majority of the teachers (83.3%) and students (75.8%) believe that code-switching to Farsi is beneficial to EFL classes. Only 8.3% of teachers and 14.1% of students are neutral in this respect. On the other hand, the same percentage of teachers (8.3%) and a lower percentage of students (10%) regard code-switching to Farsi as harmful.

As manifested in Table 8, the overwhelming majority of the teachers (91.6%) and students (89.1%) consider code-switching to Farsi as a good strategy of efficiency in EFL classes.

6. Dominant Pattern of Code-switching to Farsi

As it is shown in Table 9, the dominant pattern employed by the majority of the teachers is inter-sentential code-switching.

7. Situations of Code-switching to Farsi

In Table 10, it can be seen that the students have different choices regarding code-switching to L1 (Farsi). The results are in the following order: “to give grammar instruction”, “to translate unknown vocabulary items”, “to manage class”, “to introduce background information”, and “to check comprehension”. The students’ view on the situations of code-switching to Farsi reflects the functional categories of code-switching in Iranian EFL classrooms.

8. Factors that Spark Code-switching to Farsi

The result in Table 11 indicates that “students’ English proficiency” and “the distance between Farsi and English” are the most significant factors influencing code-switching to Farsi. As the table reveals, 91.6% of the teachers maintained that “students’ English proficiency” is the first factor making them code-switch from English to Farsi, and 75% of the teachers considered “the distance between the languages” as the second significant factor. In addition, “pedagogical materials”, “lesson contents and objectives”, and “teachers’ English proficiency” also lead to code-switching to Farsi.

9. Functions of code-switching to Farsi

Table 12 displays the teachers’ views on the functions of code-switching to Farsi. As it can be seen, teachers believe that code-switching to Farsi serves the important functions as “to translate unknown vocabulary items”, “to explain grammar” and “to manage classes”. The teachers employed Farsi mostly in vocabulary explanation, grammar instruction and class management. 41.6% of the teachers thought that “to help students when they have difficulty in understanding” and “to index a stance of empathy or solidarity towards students” are the other two possible functions of code-switching to Farsi.

5. Findings and Conclusion

The analysis of the data collected through the two questionnaires rendered the following results:

Teachers' code-switching to Farsi is a common phenomenon in EFL classrooms in the context of Iranian EFL institutes, though the main medium of instruction is English. All the teacher and student subjects asserted that conscious or unconscious code-switching to Farsi occurs sometimes or occasionally in their EFL classes. Besides, a high percentage of teachers (75%) and students (66%) have a positive attitude towards teachers' code-switching to Farsi. This finding is consistent with that of Macaro (1997) and Jingxia (2010).

All the three patterns of code-switching, introduced by Poplack (1980), are used by the EFL teachers in their classes. The dominant pattern, however, seems to be the inter-sentential code-switching.

The data from the questionnaires revealed that students' English proficiency is the most important factor leading the teachers to use code-switching to Farsi.

It is also found that code-switching to Farsi serves different functions such as translating vocabulary items, explaining grammar, managing classes and building intimate relations with learners.

Code-switching to Farsi is a good strategy of efficiency and is beneficial to EFL classes. The current research attempted to investigate the role of code-switching to L1 (Farsi) in Iranian EFL classes. It found that code-switching to L1 (Farsi) is a common phenomenon in EFL classes in Iranian EFL institutes and that it performs a significant function in the process of EFL teaching and learning.

Table (1): The Proportional Distribution of Student Subjects

Distribution of the Subjects	Number	Percentage
Jahad Daneshgahi	37	30.8%
Aram	39	32.5%
Zaban Sara	44	36.6%
Total	120	100%
Distribution of the Subjects by their Proficiency Level		
Elementary	38	31.6%
Intermediate	32	26.6%
Upper-Intermediate	27	22.5%
Advanced	23	19.1%
Total	120	100%

Table (2): The Description of the Teacher Subjects

Educational Background	Number	Percentage
M.A.	4	33.3%
B.A.	8	66.6%
Gender		
Male	6	50%
Female	6	50%
Years of Teaching		
3 – 5	5	41.6%
5 – 10	4	33.3%
10 – 15	3	25%
Total	12	100%

Table (3): Feedback on Frequency of Code-switching to Farsi

Frequency of Code-switching to Farsi	Teachers' Responses		Students' Responses	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
always	0	0%	0	0%
sometimes	8	66.6%	82	68.3%
occasionally	4	33.3%	38	31.6%
never	0	0%	0	0%
total	12	100%	120	100%

Table (4): Feedback on Consciousness of Code-switching to Farsi

Consciousness of Code-switching to Farsi	Teachers' Responses		Students' Responses	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Yes, always	1	8.3%	39	32.5%
Yes, sometimes	5	41.6%	49	40.8%
Yes, occasionally	5	41.6%	24	20%
No, never	1	8.3%	8	6.6%
Total	12	100%	120	100%

Table (5): Feedback on Attitudes towards Code-switching to Farsi

Attitudes towards Code-switching to Farsi	Teachers' Responses		Students' Responses	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Extremely Agree	1	8.3%	6	5%
Agree	8	66.6%	73	60.8%
Do not Care	2	16.6%	32	26.6%
Disagree	1	8.3%	9	7.2%
Total	12	100%	120	100%

Table (6): Student's Feedback on Ideal Frequency of Code-switching to Farsi

Ideal Frequency of Code-switching to Farsi	Always	Sometimes	Occasionally	Never	Total
Number	5	55	58	2	120
Percentage	4.1%	45.8%	48.3%	1.6%	100%

Table (7): Feedback on Code-switching to Farsi

Influence of Code-switching to Farsi	Teachers' Responses		Students' Responses	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Greatly beneficial	3	25%	30	25%
Beneficial	7	58.3%	61	50.8%
No influence	1	8.3%	17	14.1%
Harmful	1	8.3%	12	10%
Total	12	100%	120	100%

Table (8): Feedback on Whether Code-switching to Farsi is a Good Strategy of Efficiency

Whether Code-switching to Farsi is a Good Strategy of Efficiency in EFL class	Teachers' Responses		Students' Responses	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Yes	11	91.6%	107	89.1%
No	1	8.3%	13	10.8%
Total	12	100%	120	100%

Table (9): Teachers' Feedback on Dominant Pattern of Code-switching to Farsi

Pattern	Inter-Sentential Code-switching	Intra-Sentential Code-switching	Tag Code-switching	Total
Number & Percentage				
Number	7	3	2	12
Percentage	58.3%	25%	16.6%	100%

Table (10): Students' Feedback on Situations of Code-switching to Farsi

Situations	To Manage Class	To Translate Unknown Vocabulary Items	To Introduce Background Information	To Check Comprehension	To Give Grammar Instruction
Number & Percentage					
Number	69	74	61	29	98
Percentage	57.5%	61.6%	50.8%	24.1%	81.6%

Table (11): Teachers' Feedback on Factors to Spark Code-switching to Farsi

Factors Number & Percentage	Students' English Proficiency	Teachers' English Proficiency	The Distance between Farsi and English	Pedagogical Materials	Lesson Contents and Objectives
Number	11	6	9	7	6
Percentage	91.6%	50%	75%	58.3%	50%

Table (12): Teachers' Feedback on Functions of Code-switching to Farsi

Functions Number & Percentage	To Explain Grammar	To Manage Class	To Index a Stance of Empathy or Solidarity towards Students	To Translate Unknown Vocabulary Items	To Help Students when they Have Difficulty in Understanding
Number	9	8	5	10	5
Percentage	75%	66.6%	41.6%	83.3%	41.6%

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Appendix 1

Students' Questionnaire

I. Personal Background

Proficiency Level:

- Elementary Intermediate Upper-Intermediate
 Advanced

Gender:

- Male Female

II. Definition

In foreign language classes, sometimes teachers may shift from one language to another (e.g. from English to Farsi) in their teaching. This phenomenon is called code-switching (CS) which refers to the alternate use of the first language and the target language.

III. Questions

1. How often does your teacher use Farsi in EFL classes?

- A. always B. sometimes C. occasionally
D. never

2. Are you conscious of teacher's CS to Farsi in EFL classes?

- A. Yes, always. B. Yes, sometimes. C. Yes, occasionally.
D. No, never.

3. What's your attitude towards the use of Farsi in EFL classes?

- A. extremely agree B. agree C. do not care
D. disagree

4. What's the ideal frequency of teachers' use of Farsi in EFL classes?

- A. always B. sometimes C. occasionally
D. never

5. Do you think CS to Farsi is an efficient strategy of English learning and teaching?

- A. Yes. B. No.

6. How does CS to Farsi influence EFL classes?

- A. greatly beneficial B. beneficial C. no influence D. harmful

7. In what situations does your teacher switch to Farsi? (You may choose more than one option.)

- A. to manage class
B. to translate unknown vocabulary items
C. to introduce background information

- D. to check comprehension
- E. to give grammar instruction
- F. others

E. lesson contents and objectives

F. others

8. What are the functions of CS to Farsi in EFL classes? (You may choose more than one option.)

A. to explain grammar

B. to manage class

C. to index a stance of empathy or solidarity towards students

D. to translate unknown vocabulary items

E. to help students when they have difficulty in understanding

F. others

