

CODE-SWITCHING AND ITS APPLICATION  
IN BILINGUAL TEACHING

Approved: Raymond Spoto Date: May 1, 2013

Suggested content descriptor keywords:

Code-switching

Bilingual teaching

*This paper presents a template for typing a seminar paper. It is based on the most recent version of the APA Publication Manual (2010 version). This template is properly formatted as to title page, other required pages, and margins. Students are advised to look for elements highlighted in yellow, which indicate where to type or where to make changes. The expectation is that a student would be able to type his or her paper directly into this template. Students are recommended to save drafts by date to avoid confusion.*

***Last Update: January 9, 2013***

CODE-SWITCHING AND ITS APPLICATION

IN BILINGUAL TEACHING

A Seminar Paper

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty

University of Wisconsin-Platteville

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirement for the Degree

Master of Science in Education

English Education

By

Yang Jing

2013

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At the point of finishing this paper, I'd like to express my sincere thanks to all those who have lent me hands in the course of my writing this paper. First of all, I'd like to take this opportunity to show my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr.Spoto, who has given me so much useful advices on my writing, and has tried her best to improve my paper. Secondly, I'd like to express my gratitude to my classmates who offered me references and information on time. Last but not the least, I'd like to thank those leaders, teachers and working staff especially those in the School of Foreign Languages. Without their help, it would be much harder for me to finish my study and this paper.

## Abstract

### CODE-SWITCHING AND ITS APPLICATION IN BILINGUAL TEACHING

Yang Jing

Under the supervision of Raymond Spoto, Ph.D

Code-switching is ubiquitous in bilingual teaching. Numan and Carter simply defined as the phenomenon that the same cultural context causes it change from one language into another language. In the bilingual classroom, teachers or students will use code-switching; we should understand the function and why it exist. This understanding will help teacher become aware of the use of code-switching in the classroom. And try to reduce or control the use of it in order to get a better teaching result. The converted language should be to a student's mother tongue and a foreign language that they are learning. When the purpose is to make the meaning clearer and in a more effective way to convey knowledge. Code-switching is not always a language barrier or a defect, but a useful classroom communication strategy.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
APPROVAL PAGE.....	i
TITLE PAGE.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Introduction	
Statement of the problem	
Definition of Terms	
Delimitations	
CHAPTER II . REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	4
About code-switching	
Code-switching in bilingual classroom	
Theoretical basis of classroom code-switching	
Is the application of code-switching to bilingual teaching conducive to the progress of English and other subjects?	
Functional characteristics of code-switching	
The advantages and risks of using code-switching in bilingual teaching	
CHAPTER III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	25
REFERENCES.....	31

## Chapter I Introduction

Code-switching refers to the phenomenon of selection, switching and application of a language or a dialect in the communication process, reflecting the language application policy, strategy and function. Code-switching is an extremely common phenomenon in verbal communication and an important topic of sociolinguistic study. Many scholars are dedicated to code-switching research and they have made considerable progress since the 1970s. When the United States issued “Bilingual Education Law” in 1968, various kinds of bilingual educational modes come into being, and the study of code-switching began to receive careful attention. After the 1980s, the study of classroom code-switching starts to develop in Canada, South America, Europe, Africa, and Southeast Asia. In China, children start to learn English from primary school on, and the application of code-switching is quite universal among teachers and students.

Bilingual acquisition researchers absorbed the research achievements of code-switching in the field of sociolinguistics and adopted code-switching to refer to using the classroom two or more languages (Hancock, 1997). Many researchers found that classroom code-switching is a complicated language phenomenon. It is similar to bilingual code-switching in many societies, but it also has a unique mode. Code-switching builds cognitive flexibility, a skill that plays a significant role in successful literacy learning, but in the circles of applied linguistics and language teaching there are always different opinions towards the influence of the mother tongue in the bilingual classroom. So the advantages and the risks of using code-switching in the bilingual classroom have a very far-reaching significance in

teaching. To identify the rules and the functions of language selection in a bilingual classroom is a topic worth exploration.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The problem expressed as a question is, “What is code-switching and its application in the bilingual classroom?”

1. What is code-switching?
2. What are the attitudes to the code-switching in a bilingual class according to bilingual acquisition researchers? Immersion programs and code-switching?
3. What is the function of code-switching in bilingual classroom, from teachers’ perspective and from students’ perspective?
4. What are reasonable conclusions? What are the advantages and risks of using code-switching in bilingual classroom?
5. How can teachers use code-switching to improve a student’s ability to learn?

### **Definition of Terms**

**Code-switching.** “It is the use of more than one linguistic variety in a manner consistent with the syntax and phonology of each variety. In popular usage code-switching is sometimes used to refer to relatively stable informal mixtures of two languages, such as ‘Spanglish’ or ‘Franponais’” (Zentella, 1997).

**Language alternation** is a normal, common, and important aspect of bilingualism.

**Linguistic repertoire.** “This is the totality of language varieties (dialects, styles, registers, or languages) available to members of a speech community.” (Gumperz,

1972:20)

**SLP.** Speech-Language Pathologist

**ESL.** Abbreviation for the term English as a Second Language

**Bilingual Education.** The U.S. Office of Education defines bilingual education as "the use of two languages, one of which is English, as medium of instruction...for the same student population, in a well-organized program which encompasses part or all of the curriculum, plus study of the history and culture associated with a student's mother tongue"(Gaarder,1970:64).

### **Delimitations of the Research**

The research will be conducted in and through the Karmann Library at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville, over ninety (90) days. Primary searches will be conducted via the Internet through EBSCO host with ERIC, Academic Search Elite and Google/Google Scholar as the primary sources. Key search topics will include "code-switching", "bilingual education", and "classroom".

## **Chapter II Review of Related Literature**

Code-switching is an extremely common phenomenon in verbal communication and an important topic of the sociolinguistic study. Many scholars have been dedicated to code-switching research and have made considerable progress since the 1970s. Code-switching refers to the phenomenon of selection, switching and application of a language or a dialect in the communication process, reflecting the language application policy, strategy and function. (Gumperz, 1982)

The review of literature is a narration of relevant theories and contents of the study of code-switching, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of bilingual teaching.

### **About Code-switching**

There is both a broad and a narrow sense of code-switching. Code-switching in the broad sense refers to the selection, switching and application of a language or a dialect, such as socio-linguistic behavior. It can be to study language specification and application in bilingual or multilingual community, as is evident in the research of Appel, R. and Muysken, P. (1987), Scotton (1993, 1998), Luke (1998), Cheshire, J. and Gardner-Chloros, P. (1998), as well as others not reviewed here. The authors of the studies explore the social psychology of code-switching at the macro level, attaching importance to the relationship between language and what is correct, It also involves language policy, language planning and social conventions through relevant social variables. Code-switching in the narrow sense refers to the selection, switching and application of a language or a dialect of individual, which puts emphasis on a verbal communication process as the object of observation and research. From the

development process, the code-switching phenomenon began to receive attention roughly in the 1950s. Weinreich & Haugen (1953) proposed the concept of “code-switching” for the first time, and introduced code-switching to the linguistics research area as a language phenomenon, which laid a framework for the language contact theory (Haugen, 1956) . During the 1970s, it gained rapid development and mainly studied the code-switching phenomenon in the narrow sense.

From the scope of research development, it involved bilingualism and bilingual education only. Later, it gradually entered the field of social linguistics and applied linguistics. The direction of the researchers focuses on the strategy and method of language application and further correlates with language structure, research and the social property of code-switching participants, which becomes an important topic in the study of social linguistics.

There have generally been three stages of study of the function, structure and incentive for the research area. In view of the depth of research, the start is the investigation and description of a case or a part, and gradually improves to the theoretical discussion and creation. These are absolutely from the mainstream and direction of study. Study of different contents and relationship between theory and practice are somewhat interlinked and appropriate.

So far as research methodology is concerned, the researchers include linguists, sociologists, anthropologists and psychologists, and the work draws on sociology, pragmatics, psychology, neurology, and anthropology in addition to linguistics, thus realizing the interdisciplinary study of communication.

### **Study of function.**

The study of function mainly refers to the role and significance of code-switching in language application. The major representative is Gumperz (1972). The scholar discovered the grammar rule of local residents in the code-switching between the standard language and the dialect, and made predictions of some features through his research in Hermesberget (a small town in Northern Norway). Gumperz divided code-switching into two types from the viewpoint of strategy: metaphorical code-switching and situational code-switching. Situational code-switching refers to applying different language codes according to the change in the communicative situations. In other words, one code is used in a certain situation, and another code is used in different situation. The topic stays the same, and the speakers adopt different language codes according to the change in the situation. Code-switching is directly related to situations, such as the language variation that is used on occasions dealing with to ceremonies or religious activities. Metaphorical code switching refers to the required switching of language code resulting from the change in discussion topics. This is the kind of code-switching that the speaker applies in order to change the tone, the emphasis or the role of relationship. Metaphorical code-switching involves the communicative effect that speakers hope to achieve. According to Gumperz: Code-switching is a kind of communicative strategy that conveys the implicit meaning. The proposition of a “contextualization prompt concept” explains code-switching as a way to figure out the speaker’s intentions. The establishment of the dynamic code-switching research mode, with the core of personal choice, has laid the basis for the study of the functions of code-switching. Later, Gumperz (1982) also

raises six major textual functions which give a valid explanation of the code-switching phenomenon. We can observe it with the specific speakers who add inserted words, restatements, information restrictions, personalization and objectification.

### **Study of structure.**

The study of structure mainly refers to the study of a grammar unit, a grammar attribute, a grammar pattern, a structure restriction, a form characteristic, a universal restriction rule, and reliability of the grammar restriction supposition of code-switching from the perspective of syntax. The numerous western theories of syntax could be roughly divided into two directions: structural grammar and generative grammar.

A scholar who study code-switching from the perspective of structural grammar is Poplack. He proposes theories of free morpheme and equivalence constraint, believing that the switching of internal sentence fragments should comply with the syntax and the morphology rules of two languages. He divides code-switching into three structural levels of inter-sentential switching, intra-sentential switching and tag-switching (Xu, 2006). Poplack proposes her theory based on the code-switching phenomenon of Spanish and English. She believes free morpheme constraint and equivalence constraint to be universal. However, before Poplack, Gumperz had already concluded some syntactic constraint rules of code-switching in *Discourse Strategies* (1982). Some examples are comparison of length and stress, discontinuous sequence that cannot be converted, semantic and pragmatic integrity, pronoun and the

verb sequences are more stable and more inseparable than noun and verb sequences.

Gumpers and other scholars challenged Poplack's theory, and some scholars' study of Arabic/French, Australian English/German, and Dutch/English proves that Poplack's grammar constraint rule is not universal. Poplack has not given adequate attention to the difference of the degree of participation of every language, and that code-switching is asymmetric in essence.

Representative scholars that study code-switching from the perspective of generative grammar are DiSciullo & Muysken (1986). They propose the Binding Constraint Theory from the perspective of governance and the binding theory of generative grammar. They conclude that the binding and constraint method of code-switching is trying to explore a universally applicable structural constraint and the rule of code-switching. They believe, for example, that two elements with a binding relationship could have code-switching (Muysken, 1995). Muysken (1995) divides code-switching into three types: code replacement, code insertion and vocabulary equivalence. This classification takes into overall account the structural factors (classified language structure), psychological factors (taking into account the activation of two languages), and the social factors (taking into account the bilingual's language strategy). (He,2003) She proposes the four structural conditions constraining code-switching: When the relationship between two elements is not close enough or there is no governance, code-switching or parallel composition. In the case of vocabulary equivalence, when the switching component form is compressed and does not constitute a conflict with functional components of the main language, and when

the switching word belongs to two languages at the same time, code-switching may occur, such as the phenomenon of variants of homonym (the word *in* is the vocabulary in English, German and Dutch). This kind of grammatical rule takes the universal grammar of code-switching as a target and bilingual juxtaposition as the independent grammatical rule to judge and explain the phenomenon of code-switching with monolingual grammar rule, which is of universal significance. The deficiency is the insufficient general rules, the limited universality, and the neglect of the role of a social linguistic environment in the code-switching function and the influence of social variables.

### **Study of incentive.**

The study of incentive mainly refers to the reasons and constraining conditions of code-switching, and the exploration of the causal relations of code-switching. There are three types of incentive: the psychological incentive, functional incentive and structural incentive. From the research direction, psychological incentive is the mainstream. Below is an introduction from the three aspects.

### ***Psychological incentive.***

The accommodation Theory raised by Giles and Smith in studying the psychological incentive of code-switching is most well-known. According to this theory, code-switching is divided into convergence and divergence. In the former, the speaker adapts to others in language in pursuit of recognition of mutual consistency; in the latter, by contrast, the speaker intends to highlight the difference between others.

### ***Functional incentive.***

Functional incentive explores the switching incentive from the meaning and role of code-switching, which is utilitarian. The Mark Model Theory, proposed by Scotton (1993), has this purpose. Scotton explains that social and psychological motivations of code-switching and closely combines macro and micro studies through the cognitive perspective, believing that code-switching to be a means for the negotiation of mutual rights and obligations by the speaker. A language selection in communication results from the interaction of social factors and dynamic thought of individuals. According to this theory, the speaker is the rational actor, and code-switching is divided into marked switching and unmarked switching. The selection of marked code-switching implies that the speaker breaks the unmarked principle in conventional communication and tries to negotiate a new set of rights and obligations (similar to metaphorical switching). The selection of unmarked code-switching implies that the speaker is negotiating the compliance of the social norms to maintain the current status of their respective rights and obligations (similar to situational switching). Whatever selection it is, it is the speaker's planned behavior to obtain the greatest profits with lowest cost (Li, 2004).

### ***Structural incentive.***

The discourse analysis mode, as explained by Auer, is a study of the code-switching incentive that combines functional incentive and structural incentive. They believe the meaning of code-switching to be relevant to the position of the ongoing conversation sequence, rather than being determined by the macro context.

Meanwhile, they believe that code-switching provides the listeners hearers with the function of context prompts, and thus require the researchers to pay attention to the progress of the communication sequence, as the meaning of the context prompts develops along with communication (Shin& Milroy, 2000). This is the premise of their study of structural incentive. Proponents of this theory call it the appearance of two languages in discourse switching, which could be further divided into shifting and code-switching. The former attaches importance to the grammatical unit of dialogue insertion, while the latter attaches importance to the position of the switching of two languages in the discourse. (Auer, 1995) Related alternation includes two variables: discourse-related alternation and participant-related alternation. The former means the relevance between the switching and the whole discourse structure, while the latter refers to the participants' language ability and language preference. In this way, code-switching becomes closely related to text insertion. Auer (1995) reveals the causal relationship between code-switching and discourse.

### **Code-switching in Bilingual Classroom**

The word “bilingual” mainly has two levels of meaning: skilled and the appropriate use of two languages in order to facilitate students who have mastered their mother tongue to learn another language (Richards, 2002). It could be understood in this way: bilingual teaching, in essence, is the use of a foreign language to instruct a new-language knowledge subjects. Therefore, “bilingual teaching” is not the simple teaching of the mother tongue and the second language. Instead, it aims to cultivate a

student's comprehensive abilities in the second language from listening, speaking, reading and writing and to train their capability of thinking about and solving problems in the second language.

When the United States issued the "Bilingual Education Law" in 1968, all kinds of bilingual educational modes came into being, and the study of code-switching (García, 1997) started to become involved in language classroom. After the 1980s, the study of classroom code-switching developed in Canada, South America, Europe, Africa, and Southeast Asia (Martin-Jones, 1995). In China, children started to learn English in primary school, and today the application of code-switching is quite universal among teachers and students.

Bilingual acquisition researchers absorb the research achievements of code-switching in the field of sociolinguistics and adopt code-switching to refer to the use of classroom language in two or more languages. Most researchers find that classroom code-switching is a universal language phenomenon, believing that the reason why teachers and students speak the first language in the classroom is not only because of language defects, but for the understanding of teaching content, group cooperation, syntax explanation or classroom management.

### **Theoretical basis of classroom code-switching.**

The circles of applied linguistics and language teaching have always held different opinions towards the influence of the mother tongue on second-language learning. In the 1960s, behaviorist learning theory was very popular. This theory believes that the old habits will hinder the formation of new habits. Language learners

learn the second language(L2) and form the language habits of L2 in the L2 acquisition process through the continuous receiving of the stimulus-response of L2. However, “knowledge of grammatical structure of the mother tongue in the mind of learners interferes with the acquisition of the grammatical knowledge of L2” (Bright & McGregor, 1970).. The difference between the mother tongue and L2 will produce interference or negative transfer, which leads to the learning difficulty and mistake by learners. Therefore, in the teaching practice, comparative analysis and other methods could be used to predict or explain errors and consciously instruct the result of comparative analysis to students. On the other hand, the L2 acquisition environment could be created for students to enable students to receive the input of a large amount of the target language, repeatedly receive, simulate and strengthen language stimulus and response behavior, and that improve learning. In this way, the role of the mother tongue in language teaching has been ignored. In fact, from the direct teaching method of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the use of the mother tongue in the L2 classrooms has always been forbidden (Cook, 2001). Some scholars, like Ellis (1984) believe that the use of the mother tongue to organize the classroom teaching or instruct language knowledge deprives students from the opportunity of receiving target language input. Moreover, students may pay more attention to the content of teachers who use mother tongue and thus ignore the target language input. The gradual decrease of the grammar translation teaching method reduces the role of the mother tongue in teaching. The latest listening-speaking teaching method and communicative teaching method avoid the use of the mother tongue to a certain degree.

In the 1970s, with the criticism of Chomsky of the behaviorist learning theory, the assumption of comparative analysis also suffers from doubts. It is because the comparative analysis assumption fails to take into consideration the various factors for errors, such as an evasive strategy adopted by learners in similar and confusing language projects of the mother tongue and L2. The development of cognitive psychology gradually replaces the behaviorist theory and becomes the mainstream thought of the study of foreign-language teaching. However, the linguistic circle does not exclude the role of imitation and habit while emphasizing the important role of cognition in foreign-language acquisition and starts to reevaluate the role of the mother tongue and the learner, especially in L2 acquisition. Corder (1978) redefines “interference” as “intercession”. In other words, learners fail to grasp enough knowledge of L2 and adopt this kind of communicative strategy. It explains why L2 learners depend more on the mother tongue in the initial learning period. Meanwhile, psychologists believe that it is the “acquisition mechanism” that plays a role in the first language (L1) acquisition; L2 acquisition is a process of development and “creative construction”. As the degree of proficiency of L2 acquisition learners improves, the role of L1, the mother tongue, weakens correspondingly. It provides a theoretical basis for teachers and students to speak in a time and in an adequate manner the mother tongue in the classroom, or have code-switching. Cook (1991) believes that teachers use L1 to start the lesson, and then convert to L2, and then return to L1. This kind of code-switching could effectively promote L2 teaching and maximize the classroom communicative function. Auerbach (1993) and Atkinson

(1993) also point out that the appropriate use of the mother tongue at the time could enable students to be more willing to express their ideas in English (L2) and improve a student's English level.

Summing up the attitudes of researchers above towards code switching in bilingual learning, there are generally three teaching principles.

***Principle of single target language use.***

Researchers holding this viewpoint believe it unfavorable for teachers to use the learner's mother tongue in the classroom, which is not conducive to student learning of the target language. The classroom environment is similar to the country of the target language, and teachers should create a learning environment for just the target language. All classroom languages should be carried out in the target language, which could maximally provide learners with target language input.

***Principle of maximum use of the target language.***

Although the principle of a single target-language use makes sense, a great many difficulties exist in a practical classroom operation. This mode is not suitable for the majority of target language learning in foreign language classrooms, as many foreign language lessons are not instructed by teachers with the target language as the mother tongue. The target language level and other factors of teachers will influence their selection of the classroom language. Prohibiting the use of the mother tongue in the classroom is not only unrealistic, but also potentially depriving foreign language learners of an important learning tool. The target language should be taken as the main language in classroom instruction, but the maximum use of the target language

does not mean the elimination of the mother tongue. The mother tongue has a place in foreign language classes.

***Principle of appropriate use of mother tongue.***

The use of the mother tongue in bilingual class contributes to teaching in some aspects. Code-switching is suitable for the beginners and learners on a low level. If students know little or nothing about the target language, teachers can use the mother tongue to introduce the main differences between the mother tongue and the target language, as well as the main grammatical features of the target language. It helps learners to remove doubts (Cole, 1998).

**The application of code-switching in bilingual teaching.**

It still remains controversial about whether the mother tongue could be used in teaching. Different people have different opinions about the superiority of code-switching and immersion language teaching.

***The Ramirez research.***

This is an eight-year longitudinal study of bilingual teaching with an investment of 4-5 million dollars, passed by the U.S. Congress. This research that compares bilingual teaching and immersion English teaching is called the plan of early deviation and late deviation from bilingual teaching (Ramirez,1992). This comparison plan takes language acquisition skill of English as a guiding objective, so as to enable children with minority languages to successfully enter the mainstream of teaching in English.

Ramirez and Mailinuo selected 2300 students who speak Spanish from 554

kindergartens to grade-six students in New York, New Jersey, California, Florida, and Texas in 1990. He examined their learning process in the bilingual classroom:

1. English immersion is almost 100% of English.
2. Two thirds of students with an early deviation from transitional bilingual teaching speak English and 1/3 speaks Spanish.
3. Three fourths of students with a late deviation from transitional bilingual teaching speak Spanish in Grade one, and 1/2 in Grade two.

To sum it up, these three different kinds of bilingual teaching render different results. Until the end of Grade three, there is no difference in mathematics, language and English reading skill among these three plans. Until Grade 6, students with a late deviation from transitional bilingual teaching have a higher achievement in mathematics, English and English reading than the other two types of students. Moreover, parents play a vital role in this kind of a plan.

Ramirez arrived at a conclusion in 1991; he believed that students with the mother tongue of Spanish to had a class with the guidance of a lot of the mother tongue without obstructing the second language acquisition and reading skill enhancement (Willig, 1985). Minority language students' use of mother tongue to guide learning will not interfere with or impede the acquisition of English language skills. On the contrary, it helps them to catch up with their English-speaking classmates in language courses, English reading, and mathematics. In contrast, if full English instruction is applied to teach these students with limited English abilities, it fails to accelerate the acquisition speed of English, reading or mathematics. Achievement data

of Grade-6 students indicate that instruction in English only will make them lag far behind their classmates with English as the mother tongue. The data also indicates that it requires for six years or more to learn a second language. (Ramirez, 1991)

***Willig's meta-analysis.***

Willig examined bilingual teaching with data displacement analysis in 1985. The researcher selected 23 studies for review and comments made by Baker and DeKante in 1983, all of which involved American bilingual teaching evaluation. Willig arrived at the conclusion that in the plan supporting minority language, bilingual teaching plan is better than other forms of teaching plans, and the bilingual teaching plan makes students achieve the highest score among all tests in the curriculum. When the second language (English) is applied to testing, all students who receive bilingual teaching have achievement advantages in reading, language skills, mathematics, and other subjects; when non-English testing is carried out on these students, the advantages of achievement are also found in these subjects, as well as in listening, writing and communication(Ramirez, 1992).

***The united states department of education research.***

The U.S. Department of Education made a four-year research project about teachers' use of language in the teaching process. The survey showed that for the children whose the mother tongue is not English, the highest proportion for teachers to use mother tongue should be 25% of all teaching languages if their development of the English level is not to be impeded ("Editorial bilingual prison," 1995). Research has shown that the more a teacher uses students' mother tongue in a bilingual course,

the less skilled his students in English learning will be. The key reason for low effectiveness of bilingual teaching is the failure to speak English in bilingual courses (Guthrie, 1997).

### **Functional characteristics of code-switching.**

#### *From the perspective of teachers.*

Code-switching in class is mainly to enable students to understand the instructional content. However, the function of code-switching is not confined to only this. Merritt has concluded the four major functions of classroom code-switching through the analysis of a great many cases of code-switching in primary school classroom.

Repeat and restore. Teachers say a few words in class in one language and use another language (the mother tongue or dialect generally) for translation. This kind of code switching does not include any new information or direction. Gumperz (1982) points out that on some occasions, repetition is to illustrate more clearly the uttered words. On most occasions, however, repetition is generally to elaborate in detail or emphasize some information.

A change a topic or to arouse attention: This kind of code switching contains some new information. Teachers sometimes convert the use of the mother tongue to arouse students' attention. Once the students' attention focuses on the teacher, they will continue to use the language before conversion. In the bilingual class, for example, teachers generally convert to the target language and say "please turn to next page" when they finish the content of one page. This kind of code-switching indicates

that the teaching is going to instruct new content, which at the same time arouses student's attention to the new learning content.

***To explain certain vocabulary in the target language before repeating it in the mother tongue in order to deepen students' understanding.***

In a bilingual class, teachers generally convert to the mother tongue for translation and explanation while explaining certain vocabulary or new knowledge. So far as the individual experience of the author is concerned, learners of rather low target-language levels are especially in need of the mother tongue to explain special vocabulary, so as to deepen their understanding.

In order to promote classroom teaching and management, code-switching includes some communicative morphemes to be taken as a means of communication to promote classroom teaching and management. According to the viewpoint of Merritt, for example, some cordial addresses such as "young people" and some encouraging words like "try" in mother tongue could play this kind of role.

It eases the classroom atmosphere and makes the classroom more humane. Sometimes teachers will convert to the first language in the classroom to encourage students or ease the classroom atmosphere. The use of mother tongue could shorten the distance between students and teachers.

***From the perspective of students.***

Learners unconsciously adopt some supporting strategies to enable learning and communication to be carried out smoothly in the target language output. Code switching is a kind of learning strategy and communication strategy which has already

been approved by many linguists. The current classroom observation indicates that students have the following purposes for using code-switching.

We need to make an equivalent replacement to fill the foreign language gap. It is the substitution of the corresponding part in the target language with vocabulary or other elements in the mother tongue. The reason why students generally use this code switching is that they are not clear about how to use the target language to express this vocabulary. Code-switching, which is driven by this motivation, could help students to express themselves better. Meanwhile, they could learn the correct expressions after consulting with teachers.

The mother-tongue buffer according to Eldridge is the speed for the brain to extract a certain part of the target language. It is slower than the mother tongue in a certain period when the target language learners are speaking. Students tend to substitute the target language with the mother tongue. This kind of code switching could be regarded as a pause, and students explore the corresponding vocabulary in the target language in their mind at the same time.

***Improve language accuracy.***

Students tend to feel a lack of confidence about their language ability while answering questions in a bilingual class. They worry that the excellent points involving logic and mathematics could not be expressed thoroughly and clearly in the target language, and thus adopt a more safe way to express smoothly in the mother tongue. It sometimes makes students lose the opportunity to express their viewpoint with the target language, but it allows the information to be expressed more accurately

and perfectly. Therefore, it is a kind of language strategy of transitional bilingual teaching.

The three major basic elements of student participation in communication, and communication topics, restrict code-switching, and these elements also influence each other. In classroom teaching and the learning environment, students as participants in communication generally adopt appropriate code switching in the process of dialogue with teachers or classmates, so as to adapt to the other side of the communication situation and communication topic.

### **The advantages and risks of using code-switching in bilingual teaching.**

#### ***The advantages of using code-switching in bilingual teaching.***

Although the code-switching phenomenon is common in the classroom, the advantages and risks of code-switching are still topics worth exploration. According to some scholars, in L2 teaching, we should restrict and carefully use L1. This kind of viewpoint has also been applied to the use of code-switching. Artkinson (1987) argues that the use of code-switching is a kind of learning strategy that learners prefer. Del Mar (1982) also admits the important role of this strategy for beginners. To allow students to use L1 in the classroom actually looks more humanistic. There is also another viewpoint which further states that the use of L1 is a great strategy to save time in the process of the L2 teaching process. If teachers use the mother tongue to explain some grammar and syntax, it will be easier for students to comprehend it. Swain & Lapkin (2000) believe that the mother tongue could help students to better accomplish learning tasks. Brooks, Donato & McGlone (1997) (See ustunel and

Seedhouse 2005) also agree on this viewpoint. Meanwhile, according to Harbord (1992), the use of L1 could promote the mutual understanding between the teachers and students in the classroom. The use of L1 to talk with students before class could reduce student anxiety, in order to make the relation of teacher and students closer. However, although the use of the mother tongue has the above advantages, Harbord also points out that few teachers apply this strategy. Nowadays, L2 teaching has more and better strategies, and the advantage of using L1 is covered by its potential crisis.

To sum up, in consideration of the function of code-switching in classroom teaching and the advantages of using the mother tongue in the process of L2 teaching, the advantages of code-switching in classroom teaching could be summarized into the following four points:

- Code-switching could help students to better understand classroom teaching. For beginners, especially, they have no ability of understanding the complicated L2 input. Meanwhile, the use of L1 could help teachers to analyze and explain complicated sentence patterns.
- Code-switching could save classroom time and avoid the waste of classroom time due to repeated explanation of the use of L2 and the failure of student understanding.
- Code-switching could mark classroom topics and help students to convert from teaching content to extracurricular content (Ferguson 2003), which attracts the attention of students.
- Code-switching could promote the relationship between teachers and

students. Ferguson(2003) points out that the use of L2 represents a formal —relation between teachers and students, while the mother tongue (dialect) represents a more intimate and private relationship. Code-switching could help to create a relaxing classroom teaching atmosphere and to encourage student participation in classroom teaching activities.

***The risks of using code-switching in bilingual teaching.***

On the other hand, many scholars go against the use of code-switching and the mother tongue in the process of L2 teaching, especially according to Kharma & Hajjaj (1989), Duff & Pilio (1990), and Polio & Duff (1994). They are strongly against the use of the mother tongue in L2 classroom teaching. They believe in the use of the mother tongue in the L2 classroom to reduce the amount of L2 that students receive. According to the study of these scholars, a complete use of teaching in L2 could enable students to experience more L2 input and develop their own L2 system (Stfinel & Seedhouse, 2005). Meanwhile, some scholars also propose “the two switching mechanism” theory according to Macnamara & Kushnirf (1971), who believe that code-switching to be a waste of time. In dialogue, if the audio signal we receive is English, the English system in the mind of learners will be “opened”, while the system of the mother tongue will be “closed”. When audio signals are converted, learners need to spend more time to “close” the English system first and to “open” the mother tongue system to process information.

### **Chapter III Conclusions and Recommendations**

The narrative in this paper begins with the introduction of code-switching. Through its study of function, structure and motivation, this vocabulary is defined in detail. Research achievements in code-switching during the recent years it introduce the functional structure of code-switching, people's use of code-switching context in daily dialogue, and the purpose to be realized. It could thus be seen that contemporary globalization is increasingly evident, and multi-cultural collision is increasingly fierce. As a carrier of culture, language gradually shows a mixing phenomenon. The efficiency of code-switching in both teaching and daily life is increasingly higher, especially in multi-ethnic countries like America and China. The importance of code-switching is self-evident.

There is a key elaboration of the function and application of code-switching in bilingual teaching. Based on what is stated above, the function of code-switching in bilingual classroom could be summed up and classified into the following two types:

#### **Teaching function**

- Clarification: teachers provide the student with translation or complementary information in order to help them better understand the former target language instruction.
- Efficiency: code-switching could guarantee that teachers could make full use of time to have highly effective communication with students. This type of code-switching is not to clarify the former instruction (excessive instruction will only waste time and result in low efficiency), but to express new and

independent viewpoints; and

- Emphasis: code-switching could arouse student attention to key words in the instruction contents.

### **Social function**

The reason why code-switching could complete social function is that while transferring knowledge. The use of code-switching is conducive to the emotional exchange of teachers and students, which does not exist in immersion teaching.

- Approval: while appraising a student, teachers could express their sincere emotions through mother tongue conversion;
- Disagreement: when teachers disagree with a student, they could use target language conversion. This kind of conflict solution is more polite and moderate; and
- Apology: the same as expressing disagreement, the strong emotion of apology could become more moderate through the process of converting to the target language; and
- Encouragement: encouragement is the major social function of code-switching used by teachers. When students are asked to answer questions, especially when their answers are incorrect, students' anxiety will be so serious that it influences the students' effective expression. Hearing the mother tongue will ease student pressure, making them more willing to participate in classroom activities.

Code-switching is like a double-edged sword. In terms of practical bilingual

classroom teaching, it is a topic worthy of research about whether the mother tongue should be used, how much the mother tongue could be used, and when and how to use code-switching between the target language and the mother tongue. This essay expresses the author's position and viewpoint on the effects of immersion teaching and code-switching on the target language and the learning of other subjects through the introduction of it is experiment and the conclusion of Ramirez and Willig. It could be seen from the experiment of Ramirez that the target language and subject mastery of students using code-switching may lag behind students of immersion or the mother tongue from the earlier period. From the later period, however, the growth of students using code-switching is absolutely greater than the growth of students using the other two teaching methods. It could thus be seen that code-switching plays a critical role for students to grasp the target language, to learn course knowledge, and to maintain the learning of the mother tongue. The author also believes it to be the only method that could "render three favorable results".

Although the advantage of code-switching in the bilingual classroom is quite obvious, it is still worth our attention that, when classroom instruction time is limited, excessive reliance on the mother tongue can sometimes cause a waste of time and reduce a student's learning enthusiasm. Teachers could adopt the mother tongue to alleviate the tension of students, but the excessive use of the mother tongue on other occasions will make the purpose of the foreign language classroom become unclear and destroy the overall classroom activities.

Bilingual teaching in non-language courses should take subject knowledge

instruction and improvement of a student's foreign language application ability as a basis, and emphasize the objective that both sides deviate from the bilingual teaching of the subject. Therefore, the way to teach students in accordance with their aptitudes and different teaching objects, and to apply this favorable teaching strategy of code-switching in bilingual teaching, are of great importance. It involves too many uncertainties, including the level of teachers, the student's acceptance ability, and the teaching atmosphere, etc. The maximum use of code-switching to guarantee teaching quality and improve efficiency is our ultimate goal.

Foreign researchers generally believe it impractical to forbid code-switching in foreign language classroom. However, it is also not feasible to teach with the learners' mother tongue only. Code-switching could promote foreign language learning to a certain extent, but teachers should select classroom language according to specific conditions. While taking the learners' level of the target language into account, they should also fully understand the teaching contents and objectives. Code-switching is mainly used for illustrating the target language grammar, abstract concept, and different cultural atmospheres, and creating a friendly classroom atmosphere. In view of study of code-switching in the classroom of a bilingual environment, since the issuance of the American Bilingual Education Act, it has already been developed maturely now. Many excellent scholars have done demonstration experiments, such as Guthrie (1983). Through the reorganization of relevant information, it is believed that there are still a few points worthy of further exploration. First, the case study is relatively partial, the language involved is not wide, and the conclusion generally

lacks universality. Second, the constructed theory has strong direction and influences explanative power. Third, according to the explanation of theories of generative grammar, the prerequisite is a priori in nature, which does not conform completely to language facts. Fourth, it usually lacks the deep exploration of the social properties of code-switching. Fifth, the focus on the conversion of intra-sentential structure lacks integrity. All these problems require the attention of scholars and to do more researche. On the other hand, there are few studies in foreign countries targeted at the code-switching phenomenon in the educational environment in China. The purpose of the bilingual classroom in China is different from that in other foreign countries. Besides satisfying the learning of other subjects, the mastery of the target language also has higher requirements. Generally, in order to improve the foreign language level, minority students are encouraged in speaking mandarin in ethnic minority areas.

Bilingual teaching in China is not common, and teachers are mainly Chinese. The bilingual level of this large group is also uneven, and the insufficient level of the target language can also affect their classroom effectiveness. Therefore, foreign research conclusions do not fully adapt to classrooms in China. Some domestic scholars have done studies of code-switching in English classrooms in China, such as Chen Liping (2004). There are also scholars who have made thorough study of bilingual education in China, such as Hu Zhuanglin. However, there are few scholars who combine these two kinds of studies. In China, the research direction of classroom code-switching is confined to the analysis of function only. The research direction is mainly classification and quantification, and the research focus is mainly on the

individual behavior of teachers, rather than the communication and coordination between teachers and students. Obviously, domestic researchers have just started the research in this field, which is immature. In the future, there could be further studies of the social function of code-switching, tracking of change of the code-switching concept and the practices of teachers and students, as well the reasons for changes on the basis of improved discourse analysis. It is necessary to further discuss the practicality of bilingual classroom code-switching and the way to fully play the role of classroom code-switching. Finally, we need to conclude that foreign language teachers in China are divided into two types: university foreign language teachers and professional teachers of foreign language. With different foreign language levels of students and different teaching purposes, the difference between classroom code-switching of these two kinds of teachers will also become some future research topics.

## References

- Aguirre, A.J. (1988). Code-switching and intuitive knowledge in the bilingual classroom. In D. Bixler-Marquez and J. Ornstein-Galicia(eds.) *Chicano Speech in the Bilingual Classroom*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Aichuns, L.(n.d.) Teacher Code switching between English and Chinese in English as a Foreign Language. Retrieved on March 28, 2007, from the World Wide Web: [http:// www.google.com](http://www.google.com). Or liumarie 712@Yahoo.com.
- Andrews, J. (2010, March). *Using sign language to support reading comprehension*. Invited paper presented at the Tainan School for the Hearing Impaired and the Kaohsiung School for the Hearing Impaired, Taiwan.
- Andrews, J., & Dionne, V (2008, July). *How signs support deaf children with cochlear implants*. Paper presented at the Texas Statewide Conference for Teachers for the Deaf, Galveston.
- Andrews,J.F. , &Rusher,M.(2010). Codeswitching techniques: evidence-based instructional practices for the ASL/English bilingual classroom. *Am Ann Deaf* .155 (4).
- Appel, R. & Muysken, P. *Language contact and bilingualism*. London: Edward Arnold, 1987.
- Auer, P. (1995). The pragmatics of code-switching: A sequential approach. In L. Milroy & P. Muysken(Eds.), *One speaker, two languages: Cross-disciplinary perspectives on code-switching* (pp. 115-135). Cambridge,UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Baker, C. (1993). *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

- Beghetto, R. (2007). Ideational code-switching: Walking the talk about supporting student creativity in the classroom. *Creativity in Teaching*, 29(4).
- Bhatt, R. M. (1997). Codeswitching, constraints, and optimal grammars. *Lingua*, 102(4), 223-251.
- Camilleri, A. (1996). Language values and identities: Code switching in secondary classrooms in Malta. *Linguistics and Education*, 5(1), 85-103.
- Cantone, K. F., & Muller, N. (2005). Code-switching at the interface of language-specific lexicons and the computational system. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 9, 205-225.
- Chen, J. P. (2006). Structural dimensions of code-switching research. *Journal of the University of Foreign Languages*, (3), 11-15.
- Chen, J. P. (2011). Bilingual teaching— — A way to improve English courses learning. *Journal of Guangdong Baiyun University*, 18(1).
- DeLana, M., Gentry, M., & Andrews, J. (2007). The efficacy of ASL/English bilingual education: Investigating public schools. *American Annals of the Deaf* 152(1), 73-87.
- Desimone, L. (2009). Improving impact studies of teachers' professional development: Toward better conceptualizations and measures. *Educational Researcher*, 38(3), 181-199.
- Duran, L. "Toward a Better Understanding of Code Switching and Interlanguage in Bilinguality: Implications for Bilingual Instruction." *Journal of Educational Issues of Language Minority Students*, 14. <http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/miscpubs/jeilms/vol14/duran.htm>.
- Fennema-Bloom, J. R. (2008). *Pedagogic code-switching: A case study of the*

- language practices of three bilingual content teachers*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City, NY.
- Ferguson, G. (2003). Classroom code-switching in post-colonial contexts: Functions, attitudes and policies. *AILA Review*, 16(1), 38-51.
- Ferguson, G. (2009). 'What next? Towards an agenda for classroom code-switching research. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 12(2), 231 –241.
- Garcia, O. (2009). *Bilingual education in the twenty-first century: A global perspective*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Greggio, S., & Gil, G. (2007). Teacher's and learners' use of code switching in the English as a foreign language classroom: A qualitative study. *Linguagem & Ensino*, 10(2), 371-393
- Gulzar, M. A. (2010). Code-switching: Awareness about its utility in bilingual classrooms. *Bulletin of Education and Research*, 32(2), 23-24.
- Gumperz, J.J. (1982). *Language and Social Identity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Gutierrez-Clellen, V.F., Simon-Cerejido, G., & Wagner, C. (2008). Bilingual children with language impairment: A comparison with monolingual and second language learners. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 29, 1–17.
- Hancock, M. (1997). Behind classroom code-switching: Layering and language choice in L2 learner interaction. *TESOL Quarterly*, 31, 217-235.
- Hancock, M. "Categories of Classroom Code Switching: Language Classroom as Bilingual Community" <http://www.les.aston.ac.uk/lisu/1sub8mh.html>.

- He, Z. R., & Yu, G. D. (2001). Review of research on code - switching. *Modern Foreign Language*, (3), 85- 95.
- Hughes, C. E., Shaunessy, E. S., Brice, A. R., Ratliff, M. A., & Mchatton, P. A. (2006). Code-switching among bilingual and limited English proficient students: Possible indicators of giftedness. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 30(1), 7–28.
- Humphries, J., & Allen, B. (2008). Reorganizing teacher preparation in deaf education, *Sign Language Studies*, 8(2), 160-180.
- Li, W., & Milroy, L. (1995). Conversational code- switching in a Chinese community in Britain: A sequential analysis. In L. Milroy and P. Muysken (eds.) *One Speaker, Two Languages: Cross- Disciplinary Perspectives on Code-Switching*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Li Wei, & Martin, P. (2009). Conflicts and tensions in classroom code-switching: An introduction. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 12(2), 117 – 122.
- Li Wei, & Wu, C. (2009). Polite Chinese children revisited: Creativity and the use of code-switching in the Chinese complementary school classroom. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 12(2), 193-211.
- Li, J. W. (2004). Multidimensional study of code-switching. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, (5), 337- 344.
- Liebscher, G., & Dailey-O'cain, J. (2005). Learner code-switching in the content-based foreign language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, 89(2), 235-247.
- Lin, A., & P. Martin (Eds.). (2005). *Decolonization, globalization:*

- Language-in-education. Policy and practice.* Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Martin, P. (2003). Bilingual encounters in the classroom. In J. M. Dewaele, A. Housen, & W. Li (Eds.), *Bilingualism: Beyond basic principles* (pp. 67-87). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Martin, P. (2008). Educational discourses and literacy in Brunei Darussalam. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 11(2), 206-225.
- Martin-Jones, M. (1995). Code-switching in the classroom: Two decades of research. In L. Milroy and P. Muysken (eds.) *One Speaker, Two Languages: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives on Code-Switching*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (2002). *Contact linguistics: Bilingual encounters and grammatical outcomes*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ramirez, J. D. (1992). executive summary. *Bilingual Research*, 16
- Richards, J. (2002). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics*. Beijing: FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS.
- Rowan, B., & Correnti, R. (2009). Studying reading instruction with teacher logs: Lessons from the study of instructional improvement. *Educational Researcher*, 38, 120-131.
- Rusher, M. (2010). *ASL/English bilingual education: Contemporary definition and review of the research*. Unpublished manuscript, Lamar University, Beaumont, TX.
- Saxena, M. (2009). Construction & deconstruction of linguistic otherness: Conflict & cooperative. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 8(2), 167-187.

- Seidlitz, L. M. (2003). Functions of code-switching in classes of German as a foreign language. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Texas, Austin.
- Setati, M., Adler, J., Reed, Y., & Bapoo, A. (2002). Incomplete Journeys: Code-switching and other language practices in mathematics, science and English language classrooms in South Africa. *Language and Education*, 16(2), 128-149.
- Sweetland, J. (2006). *Teaching writing in the African American classroom: A sociolinguistic approach*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Stanford University
- Tan, D. L. (2000). Code-switching psycholinguistic analysis. *Foreign Language Research*, (2), 75- 79.
- Then, D.C., & Ting, S.H. (2009). Demystifying the notion of teacher code-switching for student comprehension. *English As An International Language Journal*. 5.
- Villegas, A. M., & Lucas, T. (2007). The culturally responsive teacher. *Educational Leadership*, 64(6), 28-33.
- Wang, C. A., & Xu, M. Y. (2005). An analysis of socio-psychological factors of code-switching. *Journal of Guangdong University of Foreign Studies*, 16(2), 24-29.
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Wheeler, R., & Swords, R. (2006). *Code-switching: Teaching Standard English in urban classrooms*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Wong, J. & Waring, H. (2010). *Conversation analysis and second language pedagogy: A guide for ESL/EFL teachers*. New York, NY: Rutledge.