CODE-SWITCHING IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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Abstract

CODE-SWITCHING IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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In the past, immersion-teaching methods have been advocated abroad. At the same time, teaching methods such as the communicative approach also encourage teachers to speak in the target language to create a foreign language atmosphere in the classroom. In the last few decades, code-switching has become a research hotspot along with the application of second language teaching theory in foreign language classrooms. Some scholars believe that the correct use of mother tongue can promote foreign language input. Others believe that code-switching deprives the classroom of valuable input of the target language. Therefore, whether or not code-switching should be used in foreign language classrooms still needs further investigation. This paper explores the situation of classroom code-switching in foreign language teaching, the factors that influence teachers' choice of code-switching, and the principle of promoting students' target language.

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Chapter I Introduction

With the development and globalization of the world society, language acquisition in most countries is trending toward emerging bilingual or multilingual nations. In this globalized world, using different languages to communicate, or switching from one language to another, is a common phenomenon. Since the 1960s, code-switching research has attracted the attention of psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics and pragmatics in Western countries.

In the past, immersion-teaching methods within foreign language classrooms have been advocated abroad. At the same time, teaching methods such as communicative approaches encourage teachers to speak in the target language to create a foreign language atmosphere in the classroom. As a result, the mother tongue is considered a taboo and should be used as little as possible.

Until the last thirty years, code-switching has become a research hotspot with the application of second language teaching theory in foreign language classroom. Language teachers use code-switching methods to stimulate students' interest in learning, translate sentences, and help students solve learning problems. The application of code-switching in foreign language classroom has attracted the attention of scholars, but the question of whether teachers should use code-switching in the classroom remains a hotly debated topic. Some scholars believe that the correct use of mother tongue can promote foreign language input. Others believe that code-switching deprives the classroom of valuable input of the target language. I used to be an English teacher who need to face three to four years old children every day. All the teachers there needed to speak English only. In concequence, it cost me a lot of time to make students know what I am talking about and in every case I can explain something in Chinese, it would get better teaching efficiency to some extent. But the school was not allowed

teachers to do that. Therefore, whether code-switching should be used by teachers in foreign language classroom needs further investigation and research.

Statement of the Problem

Code-switching is widely used in foreign language classrooms. However, the phenomenon of non-standard and even the abuse of code-switching is also very common（Song Jinyan , 2005). The improper use of code-switching, such as Because of limited foreign language skills, teachers have to use code-switching randomly and may appear the excessive use of mother tongue, not only fails to improve the efficiency of teaching, but also fails to promote students' understanding of knowledge(Chen Liping , 2004). In addition, excessive use of code-switching can also lead to poor English learning environments Therefore, this paper will study the following questions to discuss should code switching be used by teachers in foreign language classrooms.

    1. What is code-switching?

    2. When can code switching be used in the foreign language classroom?

    3. What factors may come into play in a teacher's choice of using code switching in the EFzL classroom?

    4. How can the use of code switching enhance students learning of the target language?

Definition of Terms

    1.Code-switching refers to the language alternation of people in the same communication or utterance (Myers-Scotton, 1993).

    2.   Mother tongue(Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson, 1989) can mean the following:

i) The language learned from the mother.

ii) The first language (L1) learned, irrespective of "from whom."

iii) The stronger language at any time of life.

iv) The mother tongue of the area or country (e.g., Byelorussian in Byelorussia).

v) The language most used by a person.

vi) The language to which a person has the more positive attitude and affection

3. Natural Approach is that a second language is learned in much the same way as the mother tongue (Krashen,S.D.& Terrell,T.D., 1983).

4. The MT (Mother Tongue) is a person's native language, the first language, which is acquired naturally during infancy and childhood. It is helpful and lays sold foundation for English learning.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to show when and how code-switching can be used effectively in a foreign language classroom, discuss the factors which may come into play in a teacher's choice of using code switching, and how code-switching promotes students' target language acquisition.

Significance of the Study

Given the code conversion is a common phenomenon in foreign language classrooms, the research of this paper will further attract the attention of scholars of code-switching. The positive effects of classroom code-switching on students' target language acquisition will be considered. On the basis of the existing research, more empirical studies will need to be conducted to supplement and enrich the methods and connotation of code-switching in the classroom. At the

same time, foreign language teachers will be able to have a intuitive understanding of the use of code-switching in the classroom. Code-switching is not a simple or random switch between students' mother tongue and the target language, but is affected by many factors, which would help them reflect on their use of code-switching and improve it. In addition, the research will help teachers realize how code switching promotes students' target language acquisition, and encourage their willingness to explore and actively use this teaching strategy.

Delimitation

The research scope of Delimitation is aimed at all foreign language classes, and most of the examples selected are from Chinese English classes. Whether code-switching is applicable to other foreign languages and different regions in different countries remains to be further Studied.

Methodology

I will find examples of classroom code-switching and the latest achievements by collecting, reading and organizing relevant literature with the library literature research method. I will search for usage of code-switching, namely, when teachers will use code-switching in foreign language classroom and the factors influencing the use of code-switching by foreign language teachers. Finally, I will analyze how code-switching promotes students' target language acquisition.

Chapter II Review of Literature

Definitions of Code and Code-Switching

The definition of code was put forward first by Haugh. He claimed that code is a kind of language, dialect, a language form or a register. Code is a neutral word in language variation--it is a language or dialect (Romanine 1995:121). They will use the code while people want to emphasis a kind of language in a particular way. It is well known that Haugen put forward the definition of code-switching first. It is used to explain the language phenomenon, namely people would switch the language depending on different situations. Code-switching refers to the language alternation of people in the same communication or utterance (Myers-Scotton, 1993).

Verschueren (1999) argued that code-switching is a common social phenomenon, is also a kind of widely accepted communicative strategy. Gumperz believed that Code-switching is two different parallel grammatical systems or subsystems of paragraphs belonging to the same discourse in the same discourse exchange. Oxford (1990) pointed out that code-switching refers to the rapid change between the native language and the target language when scholars are studying a new language or target language.

As one can see, the definition of code-switching,varies depending on context.   For the purposes of this study, I will define code-swithcing as the alternating use of two or more languages in the same utterance or conversation. Furthermore, based on scholars' research and various definitions of code and code-switching, I will   define "teacher code-switching" in this seminar paper as a common phenomenon, namely language teachers can use two languages alternatively in the foreign language class, one is the students' native language, the other is the target language.

The Timing of Code-Switching

Although teachers will unconsciously carry out code-switching in some teaching environments, these unconscious and spontaneous code-switches, such as topic changing, emotional communication, repetition and emphasis, can promote foreign language teaching to a certain extent (Mattson, Burenhult,1999). Dai Weihua (2007) divided the functions of code-switching into teaching functions, metalinguistics functions, and communicative functions. Based on previous research results, Lu Cuicui classified the functions of teachers' classroom code-switching from a new perspective by analyzing the recording materials of six teachers' lectures in a university in Shandong Province. According to the research results, the functions of code-switching in English classroom mainly involve teaching, management, and emotion.

Social function involves

Explanatory function of teaching is the most important function of code-switching in foreign language classroom (Huang Feifei,2012). Explaining abstract grammar rules can cause obstacles for students to understand.   As a result, teachers will usually switch from English code to Chinese code, and build a bridge from target language to mother tongue in the process of conveying new information, so as to make the explanation more simple and understandable.

According to Huang Feifei（2012), the function of classroom code-switching is mainly divided into teaching function and social function. She divided the teaching function into clarifying information, improving efficiency and emphasizing key points, and the social function into praising, criticizing and encouraging students. It means that because classroom code-switching has both teaching and social functions, it will appear when teachers aim to clarify information, improve efficiency, emphasize key points, praise and criticize, and encourage students in class.

From the point of view of teaching function, Huang Feifei（2012）claims that to clarify information is mainly for better explaining the main content that the teacher wants to express. For English teachers in China, in order to help students have a better understanding of the English explanation , the teacher may directly provide a Chinese translation, or provide supplementary information.

For example, when the teacher needs to explain a hot potato, he may say a hot potato, what does it mean? We can say "many students believe his a hot potato" It means he is hard to do with. 许多学生都认为他难对付（It means many students think he is hard to deal with），他是一个 It means he is a ）hot potato. From the cultural point of view, students are difficult to understand that hot potatoes are difficult people. At this time, the teacher will explain them in Chinese to promote students' understanding.

As for improving efficiency, Feifei Huang believes that code-switching improves the efficiency of teacher-student communication and ensures that teachers make full use of their limited time to communicate effectively with students.

For example,

T：Have you ever read or heard of The novel The Sieged City？

S：Sorry I don't know.

T：Here, sieged means to be surrounded.

S：But I still…

T：It is a Chinese novel.

That is to say, when teachers see that students cannot understand the name of the English translation, they should directly tell them what the correct translation is so as to save time and

facilitate students' understanding and later discussion. Because it is more important to discuss the content of the novel than to introduce the name of the novel. There is no need to waste time on the translation name

As for the emphasis function of code-switching, Huang Feifei believes that code-switching can draw students' attention to the key words in the teaching content. For example, when reading the following sentence, "An ambassador is an honest man who lies abroad for the good of his country," the teacher would say an honest man lies? Notice this is a figure of speech called pun, 双关．

In this case, the function of code-switching is to emphasize the key points to attract students' attention.

These are the functions of code-switching in teaching, but code-switching also has social functions.

From the point of view of social function, when an English teacher needs to praise a student, he will sometimes turn to Chinese to express his feelings. For example,

T：The prefix "in-"means negative or positive？

Ss：negative.

T：很好！you've got it.

When an English teacher needs to criticize a classmate who is late, she will say："Go to your seat.Remember，no next time." At this time, teachers express their dissatisfaction with students' lateness in English, which is a more polite and gentle way to ease the conflict.

When students are asked questions, because of nervousness or learning difficulties, they tend to be silent or answer incorrectly. At this time, students especially need teachers' positive encouragement to help them build up self-confidence.

T：What's the function of "sleeping"in the phrase"sleeping child"？

Ss：Used for "gerund".

T：No.Try it again！再想一想！(It means try it again）

S：Used for "The present participle".

T：Right! Very good！

3. Factors Affecting Teachers' Use of Code-Switching

The factors affecting teachers' use of code-switching are when teachers need to achieve the purposes of classroom teaching and classroom organization and management(Dang Lingling, 2013). At this time, code-switching will be used. If teachers use it promptly and accurately, it will improve the effect of classroom teaching, such as active classroom atmosphere, stimulate students' interest in learning, to establish harmonious relationship between teachers and students.

She claims that language reality is the objective external factor that causes teachers' code-switching. Adapting to linguistic reality refers to the teachers' code-switching in class caused purely by linguistic factors. The Eastern and Western societies are different in culture, politics, religion, thought pattern, ideology and other aspects. Language is the carrier of culture, which is reflected at the language level. There are also significant differences between English and Chinese in syntax, discourse, style and other aspects. Some words only exist in one language, but there is no semantic equivalent in the other language, that is, the cultural gap causes the vocabulary gap. In classroom teaching, the teacher to express accurately, avoid fuzzy or semantic ambiguity, teacher will consciously choose the right words to fill another language vocabulary

vacancy, it is particularly in terms of traditional culture, such as culture-loaded vocabulary of Chinese traditional culture characteristics, relationships, cowherd, Yin, Yang, kang.

When confronted with a vocabulary vacancy, teachers will consciously change the grammar they are using and choose another code to express themselves. In English classes in China, teachers are likely to give up the English they are using and turn to Chinese codes to fill in the missing vocabulary of English language, so as to reduce the inaccuracy and possible ambiguity of information expressed in English in order to achieve accurate expression, which is also conducive to the cultivation of correct English cognition and thinking of students.

Dang Lingling (2013) believes that in order to increase students' input of target language, teachers should try their best to teach in pure foreign language to create a favorable foreign language communication environment and give play to the advantages of situational teaching. However, in the real classroom context, teachers will comprehensively consider the students' foreign language acceptance level, the difficulty of explaining content, students' understanding ability and other objective classroom situation factors to choose appropriate language codes to improve the teaching effect. The motivations are as follows: first, interpreting unfamiliar words or original language knowledge in Chinese and translating difficult sentences. Second, the emphasis is only to focus on attracting students' attention. Third, ask questions or quote other people's language.

The Principle of Code-Switching to Promote Students' Target Language Learning

Teaching function

Lv Cuicui (2013) divided the teaching function of code-switching into the following sub-functions: explanation, clarification, questioning, discrimination, emphasis and discourse

marking, and proved the promoting effect of code-switching on students' purpose and learning through some examples.

T：What's the function of "sleeping" in the phrase "sleeping child"?

Ss：Used for "gerund".

T：No.Try it again！再想一想！(It means try it again)

S：Used for "The present participle".

T：Right! Very good！

In this example, the teacher used "think again" in Chinese to make the students feel that their attempts have been recognized by the teacher. At the same time, the students felt the teacher's friendly attitude and were encouraged by this, and they would continue to actively participate in class activities.

In addition to the dialogue structure between teachers and students, dialogues will be initiated between students, between groups of students, and between students and teachers. Sometimes, students can improve the tension, activate the classroom atmosphere and attract attention through creative code-switching. For example, a teacher is angry and asks a sleeping student what are you doing? Another student said "睡□（It means sleeping) ing," and the whole class burst out laughing. The new word-formation method of mother tongue plus target morpheme improves students' creativity. In appreciating this creative spirit, students forget the unhappiness brought by the behavior of sleeping in class.

T：The word "trick" means the best solution.

Well, class, what is the meaning of "trick" in the sentence?

S：（silence）

T：The trick means"最好的解决方案" "the best solution", ok?

In this example, the teacher explained the meaning of the new word, and then when asked if the student understood the meaning of the word, the students did not give a positive response, the teacher regarded the students' silence as a matter of ignoring the solution, and switching the words to Chinese in time, and saving the classroom time and improving the efficiency of teaching

The author found that the use of Chinese codes is very common in the process of teachers' questioning

T：So in order to protect ourselves, what can we do? 为了保护我们自己，我们可以做些什么？Please think over this question. What can we do in ourdaily life? Who can have a try? Please.

In the above example, the teacher mainly hopes that the students can fully understand the content of the question when using the Chinese code, so as to avoid the ambiguous understanding affecting the answers of the students, and at the same time actively trigger the students' thinking and improve their concentration, so as to make the most appropriate and accurate reply.

In class, most teachers provide corresponding Chinese translation, or clarification, to avoid students' understanding deviation. For example:

T：Since AIDS is the mutual enemy of all human beings, this is a battle, this is a war and this is an undeclared war. Undeclared, This is an undeclared campaign (in Chinese)，right, and this is a war between AIDS and AIDS patients.

When it came to undeclared new words, the teacher predicted in time that the word might cause comprehension barriers of students and directly switched to Chinese code for clarification, saving class time and deepening the understanding of students.

Here is another example of clarification being used in the classroom.

T：The students in the class ,for the most part，are diligent and well-behaved. 这个地方, for the most part 不能翻译成"大多数情况"，而应翻译成"大多数同学"。班里大多数同学非常勤奋、非常有礼貌。(It means you cannot translate as "most of the cases", but as "most of the students". Most of my classmates are very diligent and polite.)

In Example 5, if teachers continue to use English codes, they cannot attract students' attention and further clarify common understanding mistakes, while using Chinese codes can clarify students' understanding and effectively avoid students' internalization of mistakes.

When explaining words, especially when discriminating synonyms, in order to distinguish easily confused words, teachers will conduct English-Chinese code-switching to improve students' awareness of distinguishing and discriminating words, so as to better understand the use of different words in different contexts, as shown in Example 6

T：She is, for the most part, a well -behaved girl. In Chinese, the sentence means: 在大多数情况下，在大部分时间是一个举止优雅的女孩。大家要注意，这个地方，词组(It means in most cases, in most of the time is an elegant girl. Notice, this place, the phrase for the most part)，并不是"大部分"通常的意思。(It means not the usual meaning of "most".)

In the above example, if the teacher uses English to distinguish two phrases, even if the students understand the meaning, it cannot arouse their deeper attention.Teachers moderately switch to Chinese code, the purpose is to deepen the understanding of students at the same time to arouse the attention of students to avoid repeated mistakes.

In classroom teaching, important knowledge points or information can be highlighted in the form of word code transformation.(Lv Cuicui, 2013). Here is another example of clarification being used in the classroom.

T：There is nothing to make a fuss about. Very simple example, and pay more attention to"about". Don't forget the preposition! Don't forget the preposition！不要忘了这个介词,ok?

In the above example, the teacher used the English code twice repeatedly to emphasize the importance of the preposition, and then used the Chinese code again to emphasize it. While improving students' attention, it also plays a prominent role in the strong tone.

Liu Runqing (2006) pointed out that discourse markers such as Okay Well Right in foreign language class can convey important signals, such as the beginning of new teaching content and the transition of teaching content, which can usually attract students' attention.Cui Lulu found that although most of the discourse markers are familiar expressions to students, teachers often turn to the discourse markers of Chinese codes in order to further arouse students' attention, as shown in Example 7

T：If you say"yes", you'll get one score and if you say"no", you will get"0". 好，接下来我们来看第三题(It means OK, now we're on problem number three)：Do you frequently get too little rest? Yes or no?

Teachers use Chinese code to quickly transition from the second question to the third question，so that students will not pay too much attention to the first question, and effectively improve the efficiency of classroom teaching.

Code-switching in classroom teaching can also serve the purpose of managing students' behavior, so as to make classroom instructions clear and improve the efficiency of classroom teaching

T: Who'd like to be the volunteers?（Many students raise their hands）

T: 我想给男同学一次机会(It means that I want to give the boys a chance), because you are so silent in the class.（Three boys raise their hands）

T: Ok, well, you three, please?

In the last example, the teacher wanted the students to speak actively and the students' response was very positive. However, most of the men were kept silent in class, in order to arouse the attention of the male classmates, and also to the urge to act, the teacher transferred the English to the Chinese language in time, using "I want to give the male classmate a chance", aroused the boy's attention, mobilized the motivation of the answer, and eventually inspired more boys to answer the question voluntarily.

These are the principles of code-switching in teaching, but code-switching also has social emotional principles.

Emotional function

It is well known that classroom teaching requires the interaction of teachers and students to complete. Brooks & Donato (1992) believes that as a normal psychological process, the use of the mother tongue can promote the output of the two words and maintain the smooth progress of the communication of teachers and students. Cook (2001) points out that teachers in foreign language classroom teaching can use their native speakers and students to make more natural and smooth communication. The language of teaching and emotional communication can be used in the context of teaching and emotional communication, so that both teachers and students can perform their own roles better and ensure that the communication of teachers and students is smoothly carried out. The author finds that the Chinese language code in the classroom can be

suggested to inspire, create harmonious teachers and students, arouse students' attention, active classroom atmosphere, encouragement and criticism, etc.

T：Have you ever seen this design? （幻灯片上呈现红丝带的图片）Have you ever seen this design? What is it? Yes, it is a ribbon, red ribbon. Because it is red, right? It is red ribbon. Where did you see it before?

S：silence.

T：Where did you see it before? 大家好好想想，你 们 都 在 哪 见 过 啊 ？ Maybe from TV, from newspapers or from magazines.

In the last example, the teacher asked the student "where he once saw the red ribbon", but the teacher didn't get the expected response because the students thought about the limited time. After the teacher USES English code to repeat the question, it is not because the students ignore the meaning of the English language, but instead to create a more relaxed classroom atmosphere for the students through the Chinese language code, and motivate the students to do everything they can to think positively about the questions proposed.

- Psychologists such as Giles (1997) based on experimental observation and analysis found that in the process of communication, the speaker was able to adjust his accent, speed, hand gestures, and the style of the other person's style as much as possible. He put forward "the function of teacher code transformation in English class and the interpretation of the revelation (Giles ,1997)" to explain the convergence or deviation of the speaker in the corpus. In the course of English teaching, the teacher's dominant classroom has led to the role of teachers in the relationship between teachers and students, in order to better motivate the students' enthusiasm, to establish the same Commonality
with the students, and to reduce the communication barriers that may be encountered in the communication process of the teachers and students, and the teachers tend to choose to close their own code to the students' code, such as the example of 10

T：Well, what are the reasons of iron deficiency? Can you make a list of the reasons?

S：(negotiate with their partners)

T：We can say the first reason is ignorance. Right? What is ignorance? Can you explain the word "ignorance"?

S：无知的。

T：对，无知的。They are not aware of the importance of iron reserves.

In the student-teacher conversation in Example 10, the teacher expected the students to interpret it in English. When the teacher discovered that the students are unable to interpret in English but chose to use a Chinese code, the teacher didn't not force the students to change the code to keep it in line with their own code. Instead, he chose to keep the same with the language code of the students. He used the Chinese language code to repeat the answers of the students, and then converted the language code into the English language code in time to interpret the words, which relieved the psychological pressure of the students and narrowed the emotional distance with the students.

Chapter III Conclusions and Recommendations

Since the advent of natural approach, many teachers have advocated avoiding the use of the mother tongue in English classes and maximizing the use of the target language. In fact, due to the limited language level of students, appropriate use of mother tongue in some cases can help students master more abstract grammatical patterns and other knowledge points, save classroom time, reduce students' emotional anxiety, enhance the relationship between teachers and students, and thus have a positive role in promoting foreign language teaching.

Despite the benefits of using a student's mother tongue in the classroom, teachers' excessive use of mother tongue may cause students to ignore the expression of the target language and rely too much on the mother tongue, which is not conducive to the normal progress of foreign language learning and ultimately is not conducive to the improvement of students' listening and speaking ability. In FLL classroom, the teacher should adhere to the principle of giving priority to with the target language, and the target language as the preferred language input in class. Only when learners' language competence is beyond their capablitiy will they

consider appropriate use of their mother tongue for explanation and clarification, and transfer the code to the target language in a timely manner after resolving communication and understanding barriers.

In addition, the frequency of code-switching in class is also subject to the nature of the course and the language level of students. Therefore, in the process of teaching, teachers can analyze the needs of students, understand the overall level of students through questions, feedback, tests and other methods, and consciously and flexibly switch between Chinese and English codes according to the language level of students. In short, only when teachers master the skills of code-switching, can they consciously and flexibly switch in English-Chinese code-switching, so as to enhance the communication between teachers and students, reduce students' emotional anxiety, improve the quality and quantity of students' target language input, and finally improve the efficiency of classroom teaching.

Code-switching is not arbitrary. Aimless activities are an effective teaching strategy adopted by teachers in foreign language classroom to promote teacher-student interaction and improve classroom efficiency. Therefore, teachers need to carry out code-switching in a timely and appropriate manner so as to better teach language knowledge. Code-switching can help make up for a lack of students' language knowledge understanding and ease emotional anxiety by adjusting the active classroom atmosphere, thus stimulating students' learning motivation while at the same time to strengthening communication and exchanges between teachers and students. The construction of a harmonious relationship between teachers and students promote the interaction between teachers and students is of great significance. Therefore, the teacher in the teaching process according to the difficulty level of knowledge teaching goal.

In addition, teachers should constantly reflect on their own teaching process and

classroom discourse, and carry out code-switching according to specific teaching tasks and degree of difficulty. In addition, teachers should constantly reflect on their teaching process and classroom discourse, and code switching according to the specific teaching tasks and difficulties. During the teaching process, the maximum target language input should be ensured. Students' psychological needs should to be adapted through code-switching to ensure students' understandable language input. Teachers should stimulate students to try to use the target language expression to enhance their motivation, so as to enhance students' self-confidence, reduce students' emotional anxiety, and coordinate the teacher-student relationship. It should be pointed out that too much native language coding is not conducive to the improvement of the communicative competence of the target language. It should be pointed out that too many mother language codes are not conducive to the improvement of the communicative competence of the target language.

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