

## English-Kurdish Code Switching of Teachers in Iraqi Primary Schools

**Yuen Chee Keong**

School of Language Studies and Linguistics  
Faculty of Social Science and Humanities  
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Selangor, Malaysia

**Saka Sally Sardar**

School of Language Studies and Linguistics  
Faculty of Social Science and Humanities  
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Selangor, Malaysia

**Alsamrayee Ahmad Ali Mahdi**

School of Language Studies and Linguistics  
Faculty of Social Science and Humanities  
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Selangor, Malaysia

**Ibrahim Mohammed Husham**

School of Language Studies and Linguistics  
Faculty of Social Science and Humanities  
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Selangor, Malaysia

### Abstract

Code switching (CS) as a phenomenon of switching between two or more languages in the same utterance or conversation is a widely observed topic in bilingual contexts and English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms that is employed by both students and teachers. However, there are conflicting opinions about the application of CS and its advantages and disadvantages in teaching and learning. This study, therefore, examines teachers' perceptions about the use of CS and its functions in the context of primary schools in the Kurdish region of Iraq where English is the medium of instruction and Kurdish is L1. In order to obtain a genuine reflection of teachers' CS in the classroom, a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods was employed, involving a questionnaire and interviews with the teachers. The findings of the study reveal that teachers generally have positive attitudes about the use of CS and consider it as an influential factor in facilitating teaching. Therefore, they employ all three main functional categories of CS: curriculum access, building interpersonal relationship and managing their classrooms. However, they believe that teachers should not over rely on the CS strategy as it affects the learning process and has drawbacks for the learners.

**Keywords:** Affective state, functional uses, Kurdish, learning success, teacher's code-switching to L1, teaching strategy

**Cite as:** Keong, Y. C., Sardar, S. S., Mahdi, A. A.A., & Husham, I. M. (2016). English-Kurdish Code Switching of Teachers in Iraqi Primary Schools. *Arab World English Journal*, 7 (2). DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol7no2.32>