

English - Algerian Arabic Code-switching in EFL Classroom: Case of EFL Teachers and Students in the Department of English at Tlemcen University, Algeria

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Abstract

The main aim of the present paper is to provide an in-depth look at the relationship between English and Algerian Arabic (L1) in an EFL classroom in the department of English at Tlemcen University, Algeria. In this regard, the researchers try to determine the reasons and functions behind the use of Code-Switching among EFL teachers and students of English to Algerian Arabic. To conduct this research work, the researchers collected data through an interview that was conducted with 16 teachers of Comprehension and Oral Expression, Literature, and Civilization in the Department of English at Tlemcen University in Algeria, and supported by a classroom observation of students with the same teachers. Findings revealed that the use of Algerian Arabic is inevitable. Teachers' responses exhibit negative attitudes towards English-Algerian Arabic code-switching in class, but they do not deny its integration as a pedagogical necessity to explain difficult words and expressions that are hard to be grasped in the target language. The results also showed that teachers peacefully attempt to get their students accustomed to lectures delivered in English solely by avoiding translation and applying the direct method of TEFL. Furthermore, they declare that infrequent use of AA is beneficial to foster students' academic achievements and language skills development.

Keywords: Algerian Arabic, attitudes, Code-switching, English, functions of code-switching, Tlemcen EFL classroom

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Introduction

Nowadays, the use of more than one code in one conversation has become a usual practice among bi/multilingual communities worldwide. People tend to use different linguistic varieties alternatively in their daily life conversations to transmit messages when interacting with others. Code-switching (henceforth CS) has then become a common linguistic phenomenon among interlocutors as it allows speakers to maintain the flow of their conversation comfortably. It became an integral part of the regular, informal face to face interactions, and in formal settings as well. CS nowadays takes place in classrooms such as EFL sessions where teachers are supposed to deliver their whole lectures in English only. Nowadays, teachers and students do not stick to the target language, but they often switch from English to Algerian Arabic and /or French. Therefore, their use of CS is either an intended, conscious linguistic behavior according to someone's communicative reasons and functions or an unconscious linguistic habit. Algerian EFL classroom is an interesting area to explore this phenomenon since it is a multilingual setting where CS is noticeable among both teachers and students having a rich verbal repertoire, including Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), Algerian Arabic (AA), French, and English, that lead them to switch between these codes in class.

The present paper is set out to determine the reasons and functions behind the use of CS among EFL teachers and students in the Department of English, at Tlemcen University, Algeria. Therefore, the focal point behind undertaking this investigation is to identify the languages used by teachers and students in CS during lectures besides English. It also endeavors to unveil the reasons and functions behind teachers' and students' CS. This study, thus, tries to diagnose whether students' use of CS is an intended, conscious linguistic behavior according to their communicative reasons and functions in the EFL classroom, or it is rather an unconscious linguistic habit that they are accustomed to. At last, it attempts to uncover what attitudes teachers have towards this behavior in EFL classrooms. For these purposes, the following questions have been formulated:

1. To what code(s) do EFL teachers and students switch in the classroom?
2. Why do they switch to other codes in their class, where they are supposed to speak in English only?
3. What attitudes do teachers have towards CS in the classroom?

In an attempt to find out answers to these questions, the following hypotheses have been put forward:

1. EFL teachers and students usually code-switch between L1 (AA) and English when interacting with each other.
2. Their switches are attributed to a lack of facility to fill a linguistic gap, and the function of their CS is pedagogical.
3. Teachers display negative attitudes towards their students' CS.

To test the validity of the former hypotheses, data are collected using an interview conducted with teachers, and classroom observation of students' linguistic behavior with teachers.

This paper is divided into three sections. Section one deals with the literature review of language contact and its outcomes including bilingualism and diglossia, with a focus on CS. It also sheds light on CS among Algerians providing an overview of the linguistic varieties used in

Algeria as well as the codes used by EFL teachers and students. The second one is the practical part which is mainly concerned with the research design and methodology. It depicts the sample population of this investigation and the research tools used for gathering data. Finally, the third section exposes the main results; analyzed and interpreted.

Literature Review

Language Contact

Language contact refers to the linguistic situation where two or more languages come into contact. When defining this phenomenon Weinreich (1953) has pointed out that “two or more languages are said to be in contact if they are used alternatively by the same persons” (p. 1). Language contact may arise out of social, political, and economic conditions as a result of the occupation, conquests, migration, globalization, urbanization, trade... etc, (Sorenson 1967, Sankoff 1980, as cited in Chambers, Trudgill, & Schilling-Estes, 2008). Due to their constant interaction, speakers of those languages in contact mutually influence each other in different ways. In Algeria, for instance, French and AA or French and Berber in some scattered Berberophone areas have come into contact due to the long occupation by the French (1832-1962) leading to several sociolinguistic phenomena which usually overlap, namely bi/multilingualism, diglossia, borrowing, CS, ...etc. These phenomena are the outcomes of language contact.

Outcomes of Language Contact

Bilingual speakers are those speakers that show an ability to use two languages in daily life communication whenever a social setting requires the alternate use of languages, (Weinreich, 1986, as cited in Jorda, 2005). Thus, being bilingual is equal to being capable of speaking, mastering, and having a “native-like control of two languages” (Bloomfield, 1935, p.56). For Bloomfield, a bilingual person must control and master two languages as native speakers do at one hand. On the other hand, other sociolinguists refuse the idea of a perfect mastery of the two languages and go to assert that a bilingual person can have just “a minimal competence in only one of the four languages skills, listening comprehension, speaking, reading and writing in a language other than his mother tongue”, (Macnamara, 1967a, as cited in Hamers & Blanc, 2000, p.6). Describing CS in multilingual societies, Mazur, Karolczak, Rzepka and Araki (2016) define it as a phenomenon “...where people use more than one language to communicate daily, such as Singapore, the Philippines, India, the USA, Spain, and China... [or] the alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence or constituent” (p. 55).

Diglossic communities, either having the features of Classical Fergusonian diglossia (1959a) or Fishman’s Extended diglossia (1967), are characterized by the functional distribution of both High (H) and Low (L) varieties which are used in distinct situations and for different purposes. For instance, the H is used in education, media, administration, and politics. The L variety, however, is used with family members and friends in informal settings. In this study, the EFL classroom is regarded as a diglossic community, where AA as a L variety, is used besides English as (H). Its use takes the form of CS; a phenomenon that has been described by Gumperz (1982) as “the juxtaposition of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems, within the same exchange” (p.59), or briefly as the “alternation between two linguistic systems in the course of speaking”, (Poplack, 2000, p. 264) as cited in Al-Rowais, 2012, p.13). In other words, CS refers to the ability to alternate effortlessly between two or more

languages in the same conversational episode. Milroy and Muysken (1995, p. 7) define CS as “the alternative use by bilinguals of two or more languages in the same conversation”.

From another angle, Auer (1995) regards CS as a discourse strategy where instances of CS among skilled bilinguals indicate a change of participant and topic, or parenthetical comments, in addition to other discourse features or functions. For him, access to L2 “provides specific resources not available to monolingual speakers for the constitution of socially meaningful verbal activities” (p. 115). In the same respect, Cook (2001) views the phenomenon of CS as the process in which bi-multilinguals keep flowing their speech “going from one language to the other in mid-speech when both speakers know the same two languages” (p. 174). Bullock & Toribio (2009), Blom & Gumperz (1972), Grosjean (1982), and other sociolinguists studied CS from a pragmatic viewpoint and regarded it as a discourse strategy or speech style. In this vein, Grosjean (1998) considers CS as “a complete shift from one language to the other, either from a word, a phrase or a whole sentence” (as cited in Contone, 2007, p. 55). That is, the shift is from one language to another, and it may take place between sentences, or even within the same sentence. From the above definitions, CS as a sociolinguistic phenomenon refers to the alternation between languages or dialects, and pragmatic and stylistic alterations at word boundaries, phrase, or sentence levels.

Code-Switching in Algeria

CS in Algeria mainly takes place between the country's first language; Arabic having two forms: MSA or AA, and French as the second language due to some historical factors such as colonization and the previous cultures that invaded the country throughout its long history. The coexistence of Arabic and French has led to the emergence of language phenomena such as bilingualism with its various outcomes (borrowing, CS, code-mixing).

In the Algerian context, CS tends to occur in all situations and can be found in all places; within sentences, clauses, or phrases. Algerian CS is mostly characterized by an Arabic-French mixture as the French language is spoken by the majority of educated, bilingual Algerians as a result of the long French colonization. Monolinguals who are normally uneducated also widely use a few French words in their day-to-day life. Here are some examples that the researchers have noted from their surroundings:

/sbaħt ʕajaana w not retard ljuum/ (I felt tired, and I woke up late today).

/rani mafja l'hospital/ (I am going to the hospital).

/Climat raha mliiħa ljuum/ (The weather is good today).

/rani naqra mel PC parceque l'imprimante bʕatha la réparateur/(I am reading from the PC because I took the printing machine to the repairer). }

/mazal rendez-vous taʕak/ /ħata le douze septembre w ru:ħ ʕand médecin/(your appointment will be on September 12th to go to the doctor).

From the above examples, it can be observed that CS in Algeria is found in all positions: at the beginning, middle, and the end of the sentence. AA is a mixture of Arabic and French words that coexist together with varying degrees as in many other bilingual societies. Among bilingual Algerians, CS is found with three types (Inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and tag switching).

Types of Code-switching

CS has three types. First, Blom and Gumperz (1972) divided CS into two types. The first is situational CS, and the second is metaphorical CS. Then, Gumperz (1982) introduced another type that is named conversational code-switching. Situational CS refers to the switch according to the situation. In this type of CS, the speakers switch when their interlocutors do not understand their linguistic variety. “the notion of situational switching assumes a direct relationship between language and social situation” as Blom and Gumperz (1972, p. 425) state, which means that an individual may switch from one code to another according to the setting, social situation, and even his/her interlocutor. The second is metaphorical CS, which implies that the speaker switches from one code to another to create an effect such as a joke, to put an emphasis on an idea or something when speaking. The third type is conversational CS; it has a communicative purpose and serves to quote a citation by using the same language of the author or to restate someone’s saying for emphasis, ...etc.

Moreover, CS is also classified into three forms such as inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and tag switching or extra-sentential CS, (Poplack (1980). Most Algerians, if not all, even children and uneducated people switch back and forth from AA to French in their speech. It may be nearly impossible to hear a complete conversation without French items (words/expressions) where the three types of CS distinguished by Poplack (1980) can be heard as it is shown in the following examples (French words are italicized). In inter-sentential CS, the shift takes place within the sentence, i.e., a sentence is said in one language and another one in another language by the same speaker. For instance, one may hear:

Je vais t’expliquer la façon comment ça marche. ʔadi dʒik sahla lxadma. (I will explain to you how it works. It will be easy to work with).

Intra-sentential CS means that the switch occurs at the sentence and/or clause boundary. This switch seems to occur more by educated people in comparison with the extra-sentential one as it depends on the fluency in both languages. Consider the following example:

hadɪ saʔtajən wana mʔa *la révision et enfin je n’ai compris rien que le titre.* (It is more than two hours I am revising, and I have understood nothing only the title). (Bagui, 2014, p.90).

In Poplack’s (1980) division, intra-sentential switching occurs within the same sentence or sentence fragment. It includes switching within the clause or sentence boundary as in:

ranɪ maʔja la *mairie* nxarradʒ *les papiers* bach n *inscri*, meaning (I am going to the town hall to get some papers to enroll). (Bagui, 2014, p.90).

Extra-sentential CS refers to the insertion of a tag or a ready-made expression like in the examples below:

1/ *Je crois* had ʔrig ra mballʔa (*French/ AA*) meaning (I think that this road is closed).

2/ ʔI hadI *c'est déjà beaucoup* (*French/AA*) meaning (Just this, it is enough).]

In both examples, the French expressions can be inserted in any utterance without changing the syntactic rules of both languages. On the other hand, since Algeria is characterized by diglossic features, “internal CS”, which happens between two varieties of the same language (between H and L varieties), is also a common characteristic in Algerians’ speech. That is, many individuals, tend to switch from AA to MSA or vice versa, creating what is called the middle variety.

What is eye-catching is the use of AA in a situation where Ferguson claims that only H is appropriate (as education, media, administration, and so on) is that EFL students, for instance, switch to AA during a classroom interaction, where only English is supposed to be used. Most students switch from English to AA, a linguistic behavior, which is according to teachers, should be banned in class. The reasons behind EFL teachers’ and students’ CS and its functions will be analyzed in the practical part of this research paper. Light will be also thrown on teachers’ attitudes towards this kind of CS during courses.

Language Contact in Algeria

The sociolinguistic situation in Algeria is intricate and diverse. Its diversity reveals the coexistence of different languages and varieties of languages that can be attributed to historical, socio-cultural, economic, and geographical factors. MSA, which is used in formal settings, is the official language of the country, whereas Dialectal Arabic is the mother tongue of almost all Algerians except for Berberophones who speak different Berber varieties. French is the offspring of the long French colonization (1830-1962) that has deeply affected the linguistic and cultural features of the whole country. The contact between Arabic, Berber, and French has engendered a complex multilingual situation. In Algeria, MSA is taught in schools and is used in formal contexts such as administration, media, education, etc. French, too, is the second official language and it is associated with prestige, modernity, and technological progress (Benrabah, 2014). In everyday conversations, most Algerians code-switch between Algerian Arabic (L1) and French (L2).

In present-day Algeria, and according to the results of a recent survey, it has been demonstrated that Algerians display positive attitudes towards French, and they do not favor such monolingualism that has been imposed through the Arabicization policy since “literary Arabic alone does not ensure social mobility, which is considered possible mainly through the mastery of Arabic-French bilingualism” (Benrabah, 2007a, p. 243). French has become the language of social mobility, and a medium of access to many modern fields of interest (domains of education, administration, and mass media). It is one of the most important foreign languages taught in Algeria besides English, Spanish, ...etc. It is considered as the heritage of colonialism, yet it has gained high prestige and is regarded today as a language of modernity and advancement by most Algerians. Hence, people of different ages who have positive attitudes towards French show more motivation and willingness to learn and use it in day-to-day interactions. Nonetheless, the same survey (Benrabah 2007a) illustrated that its respondents favored the French language rather than English. These informants were offered English as an alternative to French, so they chose this

latter as they “seem to reject policies that seek to displace French in favor of English” (Benrabah, 2007a, p. 245). English is the second foreign language (L3) that is learned besides MSA and French at different levels through the Algerian educational system. Given the importance of a world language, and as technological progress requires an understanding of English, Algeria tends to adjust its language policies and governmental system to cope with the world’s speedy political, economic, and technological developments. In the educational system, the teaching of English begins with first-year Middle School pupils and is taught till the end of the Secondary School, then in universities, it is either taught as an ‘additional module’ in various peripheral institutes such as Medicine, Economics, faculties of Sciences, and faculties of Letters, Human and Social Sciences or as a “main subject” in the English departments.

Code-Switching in an EFL Classroom

The practice of CS in the EFL classroom is currently highly debatable among ELT educators and policymakers. Even though monolingual education policies still insist on the use of the target language solely in an EFL classroom (Cummins, 2007), and hence, L1 should not be used, CS among teachers and students is a common habit and they display a positive attitude towards its use. For example, in his journal articles concerning Code-Switching in the Teaching of English as a Second Language to Secondary School Students, Lee (2010) found that the majority of the Malaysian ESL teachers, in his study, exhibit positive attitudes towards CS use in classrooms, for they believe it aids students to learn English. Yet, they simultaneously view that it should only be employed when necessary, thus; those teachers suggest minimizing CS use.

Recently, in April 2016 in Malaysia, in their study on checking the opinions of 299 ESL students towards their teachers’ use of CS in classes, Ja’afar & Maarof (2016) found that in this study, Ja’afar & Maarof show that most participants asserted that teachers’ switches were purposive; “the findings show that code switching is mainly used to facilitate teaching and learning such as to explain difficult words and meaning, to guide in making interpretations, to illustrate grammar rules, in editing content and in organizing and managing the classroom. In general, the teachers believe that code switching is advantageous for second language learning, especially when both teachers and students share a common L1” (p.212). During this investigation, it was also observed that teachers’ CS influenced their students’ affective states. This was deduced from the responses of the students who indicated that their teachers’ switch helps them to feel more comfortable and less anxious during lessons as they were able to comprehend the L2 input (p. 214).

Besides, Qing (2010) proposed that CS is beneficial as it serves functions that help students learn in a good language-learning environment. In Schweers’ (1999) study of Spanish students in EFL classes, the majority of teachers encouraged the use of CS. The participants also stated that CS is time-consuming, and thus, offers more time to practice English and do many activities.

Though it has been proved that CS plays a positive role in EFL classes, it harms the development of the teaching and learning processes. The switch back and forth to the mother tongue is a signal for the teacher’s inability to express himself. In this vein, Modupeola (2013) claims that “Other reasons may be the inability of a speaker to express himself/herself in one language so switches to the other to compensate for the deficiency” (p.93). That is to say, teachers’

switches to L1 reflect their incompetence in L2, therefore, they found themselves in a situation where CS is a necessity to carry on speech. Modupeola (2013) goes further asserting that when the learners get used to the teacher's CS strategy of explaining in the mother tongue, they will not take seriously what is being taught leading to the slowing down of the rate of learning the target language (p. 94). So, he ends up saying that "in the English language learning environment, the application of the code switching strategy should be minimal to ensure that teaching and learning of the target language - English language is given the prominence it requires" (p.94). In the same line of thought, in the FL context where learners are constantly exposed to English, CS is thought to have a negative effect on their communication with native speakers. This claim was supported by Eldridge (1996) and Sert (2005), who state that teachers' constant use of CS harms students' autonomy. Although these researchers and others insist that English teachers should use English solely in teaching or less L1 in classes, teachers might code-switch to their L1 for various reasons and functions. Thus, the phenomenon CS in the present study refers to teachers' alternative use of English and Arabic within English courses.

Functions of Code-Switching in an EFL Classroom

Various studies have identified several functions of CS [Suleiman, (2000), 45, 11, 6, 7, Abdel Tawwab, 2014). For instance, Abdel Tawwab (2014) opines that interlocutors may switch to discuss a topic, to persuade their audience, or to show solidarity with a certain social group. As Holmes (2000) mentioned in her book: *An introduction to sociolinguistics*, "A speaker may switch to another language as a signal of group membership and shared ethnicity within an addressee" (p.35). At the formal level in classrooms, CS can be utilized to introduce a new concept (Gumperz, 1982a; Karen, 2003; Tien & Liu, 2006), explain unclear meanings, comment on something, because students' mother tongue is more accessible and easier to get instructions into. In his work, Ibrahim et al. (2013) found that the teachers in his sample switched the topic from English (target language) to Malay (students' L1) to explain grammar rules. Furthermore, EFL teachers resort to CS for achieving affective functions, repetitive functions, topic shift, and presenting a new topic or clarifying instructions (Moodley, 2007); Mattson and Burenhults Mattson 1999). Teachers often tend to express a variety of emotions in their L1 (Al-Khatib, 2003). According to Gumperz (1982b), teachers use CS as a supportive tool to share emotions, to create a good atmosphere, or narrow the teacher-learner gap (Auebach, 1993; Cook, 2001; Hughes, et al., 2006). Other studies have revealed that code-switching may be employed to fill in a linguistic gap; lack of one word in the target language. In her study, Qing (2010) found that teachers translated many words while explaining new vocabulary.

Research Design and Methodology

Sampling

An appropriate sampling paradigm should be chosen since the present research aims at describing and explaining a sociolinguistic phenomenon (CS) in a particular speech community, which is an EFL classroom. Therefore, a purposive sample is employed in the sense that the sample is selected according to the researchers' purpose. In the current study, the purpose is to show the reasons that lead both teachers and students of English to shift to their mother tongue, unveil the functions of CS, and exhibit both teachers' and learners' attitudes towards this linguistic behavior. The sample involves a total number of 16 teachers; some of them are teachers of Comprehension and Oral Expression, and others teach Civilization and Literature. They are teachers of these

selected content modules in which teachers and students are in daily contact with each other in an EFL classroom in the department of English at Tlemcen University, Algeria. This sample is composed of four males and 12 females. They are all permanent teachers in the Department of English. They are holders of a Magister degree or Ph.D. in English. Their teaching experience ranges between 2 and 38 years.

Research Tools: Description and Aims

The first research instrument was the classroom observation relying on teachers' daily observation of their learners. It was intended to observe first-year students' behavior to check to which code(s) students and teachers switch. The researchers selected teachers of Comprehension and Oral Expression, Literature, and Civilization. The three modules were purposively chosen as content and productive skill modules, where lectures are delivered with abundant teacher-student interaction and debates. This research tool can be described as a structured, uncontrolled observation with a non-participant researcher. The non-participant observation has been opted for because of the closure of the university due to the spread of COVID-19. This procedure also helps to avoid the influence of the researchers' presence on the participants' speech. Teachers' daily practices in the EFL classroom are thought to be a useful source to capture spontaneous linguistic behavior. The questions vary between multiple-choice questions following a Lickert scale, close-ended questions, and open-ended ones. They aim at measuring the frequency of using AA among students, and their performance level in English, determining when they code-switch between codes and for what functions, and checking whether learners need explanations in MSA or AA during lectures.

After checking the answers in the teachers' classroom observation. This latter was supported by a structured interview involving both close-ended questions, open-ended question interview, and multiple-choice ones. It aims at identifying to what extent English and L1 are used in EFL teaching and learning processes with first-year students in the English department, and to uncover the reasons behind the use of AA in English classes where students and teachers are supposed to interact exclusively in the target language. The interview also seeks to identify teachers' attitudes towards this behavior.

Data Presentation and Analysis

In this section, the results are systematically exposed. They are treated both quantitatively and qualitatively to validate or reject the research hypotheses.

Teachers' Classroom Observation

After the analysis of the teachers' classroom observation, the following data have been obtained :

Q1. To what code(s) do students switch?

AA MSA FR

Table 1. *The codes used by students in the classroom*

	AA	MSA	FR
AF	16	0	0
RF	100	0	0

All teachers answered that their learners usually code-switch to AA.

Q2. How often do your students answer in AA/MSA/FR?**Rarely Sometimes Usually**

This question seeks to measure the frequency of students' answers in class using another code instead of English. The scores, in table 2, show that learners answer in their L1 instead of the target language:

Table 2. *The percentages of the frequency of students' answers using AA*

	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually
AF	5	11	0
RF	31.25	68.75	0

These percentages are represented in the following bar-graph:

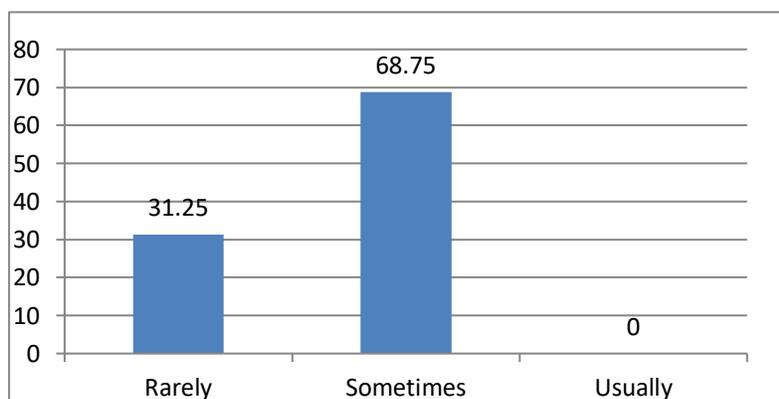


Figure 1. The percentages of the frequency of students' answers using AA

Q3- When do students switch between codes more?

- a. During the teachers' explanation
- b. When raising questions
- c. When responding to teachers' questions
- d. When asking for clarifications at the end of the session.

The third question, which is multiple-choice in type, attempts to identify the context where EFL students code-switch between codes more. The results demonstrate that learners mostly code-switch when raising questions in class or when responding to their teachers' questions, or sometimes when asking for clarification at the end of the course. (See table three)

Table 3. *Contexts where students code-switch more between codes*

	During the teachers' explanation	When raising questions	When responding to teachers' questions	When asking for clarifications at the end of the session
AF	1	6	6	3
RF	6.25	37.5	37.5	18.75

These scores are displayed in the following bar-graph:

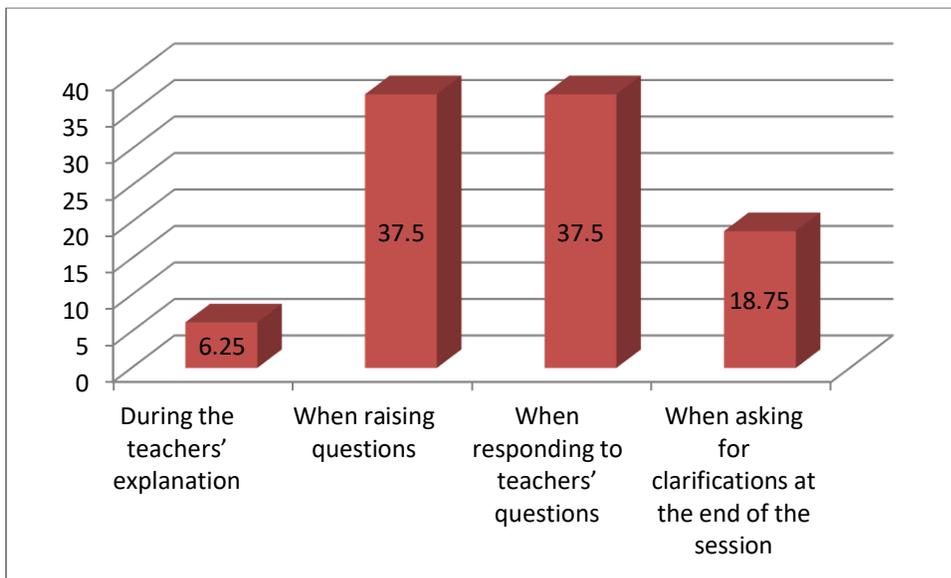


Figure 2. Contexts where students code-switch more between codes

Q4- How do you evaluate your learners' performance in English?

Bad Average Good

This question attempts to measure the level of students' performance in English. The percentages, in table 4, reveal that first-year learners have an average level in the target language:

Table 4. *The scores of the students' performance in English*

	Bad	Average	Good
AF	00	14	2
RF	00	87.5	12.5

These percentages are represented in the following pie-chart

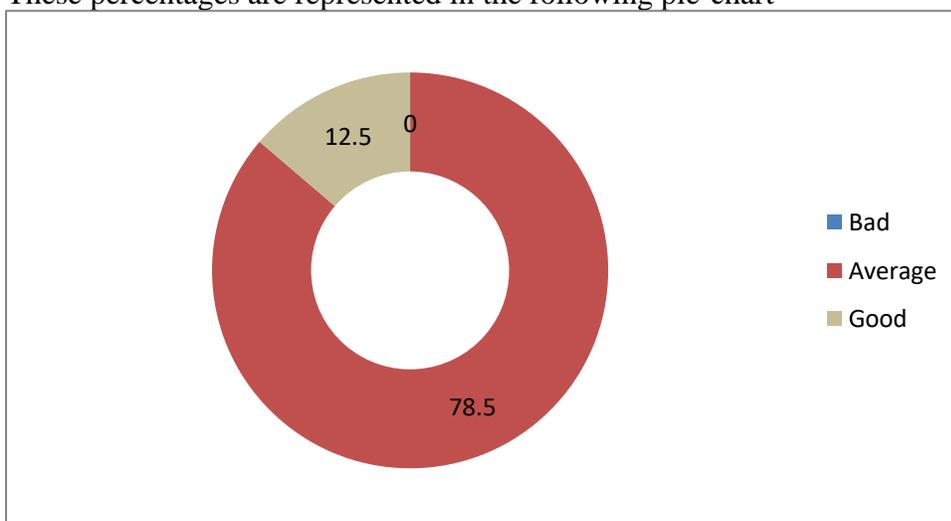


Figure 3. The scores of the students' performance in English

Q5- Relying on your professional experience, do learners need explanations of ideas in MSA/AA?

Yes No Sometimes

Question five is asked to know whether learners need further explanation in another language/code in addition to the target language in class or not. The researchers suggested both the H and L varieties of Arabic as the switch may take both forms English-MSA/English-AA regarding the multilingual situation of Algerian speakers. The data collected reveal that the majority of teachers answered that their students occasionally need further explanations in another code, be it MSA or AA. Few teachers (02) claim that students do not.

Q6- How often do students switch to AA/MSA/FR in class?

Never sometimes always

This sixth question seeks to measure the frequency of students' CS to AA in class. The scores obtained from this question show that all learners (100%) *sometimes* code-switch to their L1 instead of the target language.

Q7- Which functions of these students' CS most fulfill?

a. Referential b. Expressive c. Phatic
b. Directive e. Poetic d. Metalinguistic

This question aims at finding out the functions of CS used by first-year EFL students. The majority of instructors, mainly those teaching Comprehension and Oral Expression, claim that students generally code-switch to L1 for referential, directive, and phatic functions. That is, their learners tend to code-switch whenever they do not find certain vocabulary words to fill in a linguistic gap when they want to include or exclude someone in communication during debates and classroom free talk, and to emphasize an important point or idea in conversation respectively. Then, the expressive function is also noticeable since they code-switch to AA to express feelings in communication and debates. Teachers of Literature witnessed during their lectures a tendency towards CS whenever the students want to entertain (for jokes) or add a sense of humour to their atmosphere; the aim of their switches is, then, poetic. However, the metalinguistic function, as all teachers claim, is the least noticed by teachers.

Interview: Reasons behind the Use of AA in English Classes**Q1-When do you feel the need to switch from English to your L1?**

When teachers were asked whether they feel the need to switch from English to their mother tongue, the majority of them (68.75%) agree on the fact that L1 is only used to ease the burden of comprehension. Here are some instances of teachers' answers:

- Generally, when I notice that students go blank and need support. I also switch sometimes when I come across a term, and give the equivalent in Arabic.
- In many situations, when feeling the subject is so difficult and students cannot grasp well different ideas. Hence, AA is used to enhance students' assimilation, and due to their weak linguistic proficiency in English.

- To facilitate comprehension, substitute long explanations in English, and for specific abstract concepts.
- When learners fail to understand or do a task, I usually provide them with examples and explanations. But, when there is no other way out, and to avoid the waste of time, I switch to AA, but it is very rare when I do this.

Four teachers (25 %) claimed that they use AA to gain time and effort when explaining ideas or concepts that are difficult for the students to understand, and make ideas clear.

Only one teacher (06.25%) stated that teaching oral skills requires no or limited code-switching especially at first-year level, and our ultimate goal is to help learners speak and express themselves in English avoiding L1 use. Therefore, she is against the use of L1 in class.

Q2-Do you base your lessons more on cognitive or linguistic goals?

- All teachers base their lessons on both cognitive and linguistic goals claiming that:
- Both goals should be targeted because of their mutual link.
- Both goals because we are in a bilingual context.
- Both, depending on course objective

Q3-When using L1, do you think that it helps students to grasp ideas/explanations?

(81.25%) of teachers believe that using L1 helps students to grasp ideas or explanations and only three teachers (18.75%) answered 'No'. The following pie-chart better exposes the results:

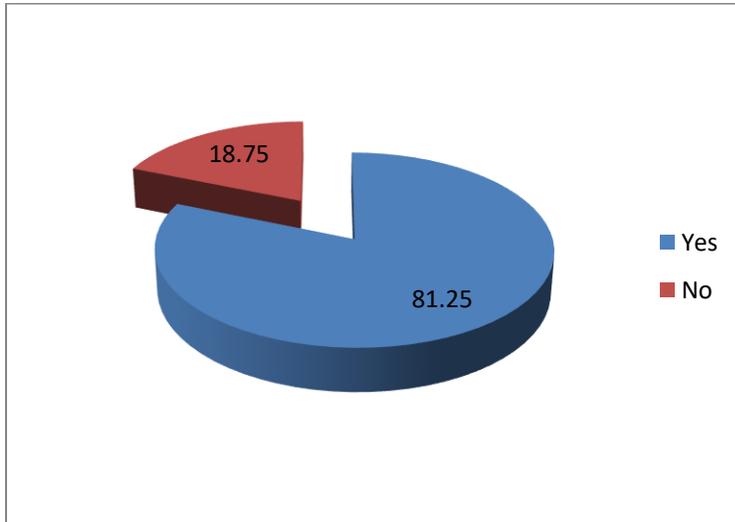


Figure 4. Teachers' Opinion

Q4. How often do your students speak in L1 in class?

Very often, often, sometimes, rarely, never

This question was raised to measure the frequency of learners' L1 use in class. The scores obtained show that learners *rarely* speak in the mother tongue.

Table 5. Scores of Learners' Frequency of English-AA CS

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
AF	00	02	03	11	00
RF (%)	00	12.5	18.75	68.75	00

The scores of table five are highlighted in the following bar-graph:

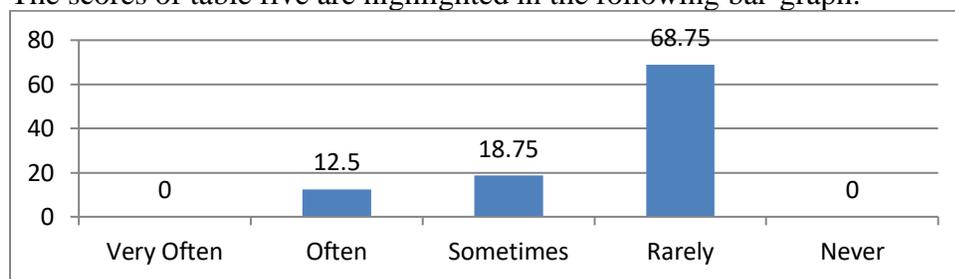


Figure 5. Learners' Frequency of English -AA CS

Q5. How does the use of L1 affect students' educational achievements?

40 % of responses (six teachers) to this question demonstrate that teachers consider that the overuse of AA in class may have negative effects on the level of students in English or their academic achievements such as laziness, dependence on translation, leading, of course, to problems of vocabulary building. One teacher claimed that "I think if learners get used to using L1, they will never make effort because they feel at ease and more comfortable whereas if they challenge themselves, they can improve their speaking skills". In the same line of thought, another teacher added "an overuse of AA makes it a handicap because they will learn to switch each time they find a difficulty instead of thinking in English which is their target language. Learners should know from their first-year that they must use the target language solely". However, the other 60 % of responses reveals that teachers confess that L1 may help EFL students to understand things that are difficult to be understood when using just English. L1 also helps to grasp some essential matters based on students' previously acquired knowledge. Very rare use of AA is regarded as beneficial because learners will get the opportunity to compare the languages they have in their linguistic repertoire when interacting in the classroom as (seven teachers) asserted. Moreover, two teachers claimed that there will be no negative impact if well used without exaggeration and wisely.

Q6. Do you allow your students to speak in their mother tongue instead of English?

When teachers were asked if they permit their learners to use their L1 instead of English or not, the majority of them (nine teachers; i.e., (56.25%)) answered 'no', and 6 teachers (37.5%) answered 'yes'. Besides, only one teacher did not answer this question. Table six exposes the scores obtained from question six:

Table 6. The percentages of allowing learners to use L1

	Yes	No	No answer
AF	6	9	1
RF	37.5	56.25	6.25

Figure six highlights the percentages of table six:

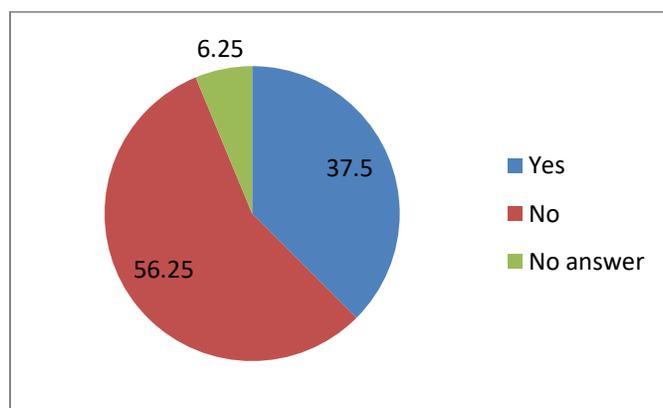


Figure 6. The percentages of allowing learners to use L1

After question six, teachers were asked to say why to allow students to use L1 or not. One of the three teachers who claimed that they allow their students to use mother tongue justified that she rarely does as the last solution when her students find difficulties in understanding. The other one did not provide an answer to the question ‘why?’. The third one lets her students speak in L1 when the matter discussed is conceptual and technical, and if it helps them to express themselves for cognitive goals. Then, one teacher from those who answered ‘No’ justifies his refusal by saying: ‘because they are learning English’, but he confesses that “sometimes L1 may assure the flow of the conversation among students”. Another teacher also refused, answering: “No, simply because they are EFL students, they need to learn in the target language solely”. The other **five** teachers did not claim why they do not permit their learners to speak in AA during their lectures.

Q7- Why do students code-switch to AA in class?

This question is purposively asked to find out the reasons behind students ‘CS. Teachers of the sample noticed the following ones:

➤ **Lack of facility:** The results show that teachers think that the overwhelming majority of students code-switch due to the lack of facility and their moderate level in English. for instance, they switch to L1 when they are unable to find adequate, appropriate words for certain topics to continue the flow of the conversation.

➤ **Lack of register competence:** When they do not find the right concept or term, they shift to the code where the missing concept or term is available.

➤ **Habitual expressions and words:** Teachers observed that students utter words and expressions (unconsciously), which are part and parcel of their habitual dialectal expressions in class.

➤ **The mood of students:** for humor, jokes, or because of being nervous or upset

➤ **To attract attention:** Their switch is often to attract the attention of classmates or teachers to them or a certain idea.

➤ **Semantic significance:** Students sometimes switch to AA to convey important or particular meanings that are better conveyed in their mother tongue rather than English.

➤ **To ask for clarification:** At the end of the sessions, students tend to speak in L1 to ask for clarification about certain topics, exams, evaluation tests, projects,...etc.

Discussion of the Obtained Results

After analyzing the data collected from both research tools, the researchers have gathered a significant amount of the findings of EFL students' English – AA CS. Regarding the first research question, which codes are used by EFL students and teachers, the results show that though they possess three languages (MSA, French, and English) in addition to AA in their speech repertoire, first-year students sometimes tend to switch between English and AA in classroom interaction. Teachers claim that they use AA occasionally to highlight the difficulties of words, concepts, or terms that students find difficult. Therefore, the first hypothesis, which suggests that EFL students and teachers code-switch between L1 and English, is confirmed.

Concerning the second hypothesis which stipulates that the reasons behind students' CS are lack of facility to fill in linguistic gaps and the main function of CS is pedagogical, the obtained results from the classroom observation first and the structured interview second (see question seven) exhibit that the lack of facility is the major reason of almost all students' CS to AA. Thus, this hypothesis has been validated. Furthermore, the findings show that students also code-switch due to the lack of register competence; when they do not find the right concept or term, they shift to the code where the missing concept or term is present. Teachers generally observed that students utter some AA words and expressions, which are part of their habitual dialectal expressions. The mood of students also leads to the phenomenon of CS. Additionally, their switch is often done purposively to attract the attention of classmates or teachers to them or certain ideas. The analysis of question seven in the interview also reveals that learners switch for semantic significance, or to ask for clarification about certain important topics such as exams, evaluation tests, projects,...etc at the end of lectures. Moreover, teachers claim that students sometimes use some explanations in AA/MSA as a necessary pedagogical strategy to ease the burden of comprehension. Hence, these results all answer the researchers' second research question.

Regarding the third hypothesis which suggests that teachers have negative attitudes towards CS, the data collected from the interview (see question five and six) demonstrate that teachers have negative attitudes since they believe that L1 may help sometimes in explaining lectures, yet its overuse would harm most of the time the progress of students and handicap the process of learning a foreign language with much reliance on mother tongue. Thus, teachers believe in teaching English through the direct method to promote students' linguistic and knowledge building development. Hence, these results also validate the third hypothesis.

Interpretation of the Findings

Teachers' or students' use of CS has always been a theme of controversy. It is not always automatic and unconscious behavior. Indeed, in this study, findings have proved that CS performs many pedagogical functions. Teachers opt for such strategic CS as a means to provide their learners with an easy flow of classroom instruction and to enhance their understanding. It further aids to facilitate the explanation and clarification of difficult terms or concepts. To sum it up, referential, expressive, and phatic functions are important in the expression of emotion, building a strong relationship between the teacher and the student, and easing the comprehension burden.

Previous research also demonstrated that a massive number of EFL learners or bilinguals in general resort to CS for the aforementioned functions and studies show that participants exhibit positive attitudes towards CS use in classrooms, because they believe it helps students to learn English at one hand (Lee, 2010; Qing, 2010; Ja'afar & Maarof, 2016). On the other hand, teachers who participated in this research work exhibited negative attitudes towards this linguistic behaviour in their classrooms, a claim that is witnessed in previous case studies tackled by many researchers Eldridge (1996) and Sert (2005). At last, even though some researchers insist that English teachers must use the target language only, teachers and students might code-switch to their mother tongue for several reasons and functions.

Limitations of the Study

At the end of this investigation, it should be noted that the researchers encountered many difficulties and challenges during the realization of this work. The first and major difficulty was the closure of the university due to the pandemic of Corona (COVID-19) which prevented the researchers from meeting students and conducting a questionnaire with first-year EFL students at the Department of English, Tlemcen. The researchers could have even conducted a larger number of teachers' interviews as only a few have been met during these specific conditions of confinement. In addition to this, it was difficult to determine the reasons and functions of students' CS relying on classroom observation solely. More accurate data would be reached about what types of CS students make use of, using other adequate research tools with both teachers and students in future researches.

Conclusion

This paper tackled English-AA CS in EFL classrooms in an attempt to determine the reasons that lead both teachers and students of English to code-switch to AA, unveil the functions of shifting to L1 in class, and display both teachers' and learners' attitudes towards this phenomenon. The findings revealed that EFL first-year students sometimes code-switch in lectures where English should be the sole language. They also revealed that their shift to AA is mainly used to serve referential, expressive, and phatic functions and particularly due to their average level of proficiency in English, lack of facility, lack of register competence, and use of habitual expressions. 68.75% of teachers declared that they sometimes use AA to ease the comprehension burden. At last, most teachers displayed negative attitudes towards the use of the mother tongue, for it may help sometimes and may harm most of the time. Consequently, the careful use of L1 can help EFL students highlight the difficulties they may encounter whereas, the overuse of L1 may harm and handicap the process of learning a foreign language with much reliance on L1. Therefore, teachers peacefully attempt to get their students accustomed to lectures delivered in English solely by applying the direct method in teaching English to foster students' language skills development.

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