CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

During the last two decades or so, a great deal of research work has been conducted on code-switching. This phenomenon has been viewed from various perspectives by different linguists, sociolinguists, psycholinguists and even anthropologists. Though their emphasis differ, their research work provide significant and interesting findings and often provoke further research for a more comprehensive and integrated theory of code-switching.

Data on code-switching have been analyzed along linguistic and sociolinguistic perspectives. The former tends to focus on the constraints which govern code-switching. This means that the study will be concerned with the structure of the language used in a code-switching discourse. Meanwhile, the latter investigates the functions and motivations for code-switching to take place.

This section provides the reader with a wide spectrum of research done abroad and in Malaysia in linguistics and sociolinguistics perspectives. It also presents the theoretical frameworks utilized for the data analysis namely the Matrix Language Frame (MLF) model proposed by Scotton (1993) and the Conversational Functions presented by Gumperz (1982). The analysis of data will be based on these two frameworks they have been used in almost all researches conducted in investigating the phenomenon of code-switching. Thus, it can be assumed that the frameworks are valid and reliable to be utilized for the present study.

2.1 Code-switching studies in societies based on two different perspectives

2.1.1 Linguistic studies on code-switching

Many studies on the linguistic aspect of code-switching focus on formulating general constraints on switching. Linguists suggest that there must be some form of linguistic regularity if code-switching is meaningful and people should be able to differentiate instances of code-switching which are structurally more acceptable than others. Thus, the study of linguistic constraints in code-switching involves the syntactic characterization of code-switched elements, their grammaticality and their acceptability as the formalization of rules to account for occurrences and non-occurrences of code-switching and switched elements (Dua, 1985). In other words, code-switching phenomenon when analyzed linguistically will look at the patterns of code-switching by determining its grammatical and syntactical features which govern it.

Scotton (1993) suggested several characteristics of code-switching in her Matrix Language Frame model which is commonly used to analyze the linguistic patterns of code-switching. This model has sparked much research in the field and proven to be efficient on the basis of considerable evidence from many different language pairs, such as English/Swahili, Shona/English, Tamil/English, and Hausa/English (Chun, 2001). Scotton's notion is specifically related to intra-sentential and inter-sentential code-switching which is used to investigate the matrix language and embedded varieties in sentence structure. She described the matrix language as the language that plays the dominant role in code switching while the embedded language is another variety that plays lesser role. She also categorized code-switching into two types namely intra-sentential and inter-sentential code-switching. Intra-sentential code-switching involves the use of two languages at word and phrase level within the

sentence whereby inter-sentential code-switching refers to the use of two languages at sentence level or a sentence boundary.

Gumperz (1982) proposed certain syntactic constraints to account for the degree of acceptability of code-switching in Spanish and English languages. He posited the phrasal length constraint as a general rule for accepting meaningful code-switches. This rule states that the acceptability level of code-switching is determined by the length of the contrasting phrase. He explained that the shorter the length of the contrasting phrase, the lower the acceptability level is. He also emphasised on the semantic constraint where a phrase is seen as idiomatic whole and may not be broken up by a switch. This means that code-switching is rare in shorter phrases if compared to the longer ones and switches are also uncommon in phrases.

Lipski (1978), in examining bilinguals who speak Spanish and English suggested that the constraint of code-switching involves a certain form of homology between the superficial syntactic forms of the utterances in the two languages. He stated that while the portion of an utterance that precedes a code-switch may be differ syntactically; those that come after the switch must be syntactically identical (Lipski, 1978:257). In other words, he recommended that the two languages must be grammatically identical in order for the code-switching to occur. A switch at any point before the actual code-switched element would be unacceptable because of the two differing syntactic constructions. He further claimed that the data collected from Spanish and English code-switching strongly support this hypothesis.

However, his view is opposed by few linguists. In fact, Sridhar (1980) considered Lipski's hypothesis unclear and suggested the constraint of dual structure principle to resolve the problem of internal consistency of the switched elements. The principle recommends;

"the internal structure of the guest constituent may not necessarily obey the rules of the host language".

(Sridhar, 1980:407)

This principle suggests that code-switching can occur even though the two languages have different grammatical rules.

Another attempt to formulate general syntactic constraints for the phenomenon of code-switching is the study done by Poplack (1981). She suggested two constraints from her analysis of the Spanish and English code-switching data. The constraints involved the free morpheme constraint, which disallow mixing morphologies within the confines of the word, and the equivalent constraint, which require that the surface word order of the two languages be homologous in the vicinity of the switch point following Lipski's hypothesis (1978). The latter constraint implied that a language switch can take place only at boundaries common to both languages, and switching cannot occur between any two sentences unless they have similar structure. This notion is somewhat similar to the one suggested by Lipski (1978:257).

Basically, linguistic studies that stipulate constraints seem to be those based on European languages especially Spanish and English languages, while those based on Asian languages seem to form fewer constraints, or often following the European constraints. Southworth (1980) for instance, found that there was no obvious pattern of constraints in the code-switched sentences of Indian bilinguals in South India. Most of the code-switched sentences in his data could be generated by rules that allow any constituents, even single lexical item, at any level, to be switched. He further noted that in order to account for the output of bilingual speech, various social, semantic, or other factors which impinged on the speaking process should also be considered.

To note, the present research analyzes the linguistic constraints of code-switching by referring to Scotton's notion of code-switching (1993) which involves the intra-sentential and inter-sentential code-switching discussed in her Matrix Language Frame model. However, as noted by Southworth (1980) the language analyzed which is the Malay language (one of the Asian languages) form fewer constraints compared to the European language which has been studied by Scotton and other researches. Thus, switches could happen at any constituents or levels as being described later in the data analysis section.

In spite of the researches presented earlier, there are limited studies done in Malaysia which take the basis of linguistic approach to study the phenomenon of code-switching. Most of the researchers here tend to conduct their researches on the basis of sociolinguistics particularly the cultural aspect as they believe that this field brings more meaningful and more realistic results compared to the ones from the linguistic perspectives. As noted by Tan (1990:90):

> "Beneath the random and confusing mass of language variation, there is actually some sort of patterning of language behaviour which is guided along sociolinguistic rather than purely linguistic ground"

2.1.2 Sociolinguistic studies on code-switching

The present study chooses to analyse the phenomenon of code-switching not only linguistically but also on the sociolinguistic aspect as this aspect appears to be also relevant and useful to the local situation in Malaysia especially in the English as a second language classroom. In addition, sociologists believe that there are functional or pragmatic reasons, motivations and functions for code-switching and that this phenomenon is to be treated as a discourse feature which cannot be handled satisfactorily in terms of internal structure of sentences or in other word, syntactically

(Romaine, 1989:111). The literature has also revealed that it is possible to identify when code-switching occurs, what factors trigger it, and what it signifies in terms of social meanings rather than linguistic criteria.

2.1.2.1 Studies done abroad

Many bilingual communities have become the focus of studies on code-switching in the past (Weinreich, 1953; Ferguson, 1959; Gumperz, 1967; Steward, 1968; Clyne, 1987 & Hasselmo, 1970). Research on the use of code-switching to accomplish specific functions, as introduced by Gumperz almost two decades ago (e.g Blom and Gumperz, 1972, Gumperz, 1982) has since flourished among students of the school of "interactional sociolinguists" (Poplack, 1988). Since then, the conversational functions which have been suggested by Gumperz have been a basis for analyzing the sociolinguistic functions of code-switching in the society.

An important study on the factors which account for speakers switching between one variety of a language and the other was done by Blom and Gumperz (1972). The study investigated language use in the village of Hemnesberget where all the residents spoke the standard language, Bokmal and the local dialect, Ranamal. In their study, Blom and Gumperz learned two types of code-switching namely conversational code-switching and metaphorical code-switching. The first type of code-switching is used to convey a speaker's attitude toward the topic of the conversation, while the second type is used to convey a speaker's attitude towards his audience.

According to Blom and Gumperz, conversational code-switching involves the use of one language in a certain set of situations and another in an entire different set of situations. The switches are often spontaneous and subconscious during ceremonial or religious functions. In contrast, metaphorical code-switching which is related to a

change in conversation refers to the communicative effect the speaker intends to convey to the listener. As Gumperz (1972:426) put it,

> "Rather than claiming that speakers use language in response to a fixed, predetermined set of prescriptions, it seems more reasonable to assume that they build their own and their audience's abstract understanding of situational norms, to communicate metaphoric information about how they intend their words to be understood".

After close observation and analysis of tape recordings of free speech, they concluded that the use of the local dialect and standard language in that village was determined by the speakers' social backgrounds and the topics discussed. A difference is noted between the studies mentioned above with the present study. Blom and Gumperz investigated code-switching in the use of the local and standard varieties while the researcher's present study is an analysis of a code-switching phenomenon between two different standard languages which are the English and Malay.

Following the research, Gumperz (1982) has conducted another important study regarding code-switching phenomenon. On the basis of his analyses of several speech communities, Gumperz suggested a list of six functions of code-switching which he believed may "hold across language situations", but is "by no means exhaustive" (Gumperz, 1982:50). It means that the list can be applied to all communities and can be added accordingly. The list consists of quotation marking, addressee specification, interjection, reiteration, message qualification, and personalization versus objectivization which acts as common functions of conversational code-switching. These functions are utilized in the present study to explain the teacher's functions of code-switching in the ESL classroom along with the other functions suggested by the teacher herself.

There are several other studies of code-switching which focus on functions and motivations for code-switching (Kachru, 1983; Scotton 1977/83/88; Pakir, 1989, & Kamwangamalu, 1989). The study carried out by Pakir (1989) for instance, provided explanation for the phenomenon of code-switching among the Baba community of Singapore. Pakir noted that code-switching is used to negotiate a collective social identity and to accommodate to fellow speakers and hearers. In other words, the social context and social norms seem to affect specific code employed by an individual.

On the other hand, Kamwangamalu (1989) argued that code-switching is practised by bilinguals to express modernization. The concept of modernization is viewed with respect to how bilinguals perceive themselves and how they often choose to code-switch when interacting with other bilinguals. He quoted an example of code-switching of the English language and the local vernacular in Tanzania to fulfil the purpose of modernization. In Tanzania, speaking English in public is considered as showing off, and speaking the vernacular is seen as being old fashioned. So in order not to be caught in either of these two extremes, and to make English and the vernacular functionally compatible with the community members' attitude toward the use of each, the vernacular-English bilingual tends to code-switch. In doing so, the bilinguals perceive themselves to be modern and at the same time as members of the community.

Kachru (1983) identified four motivations for code-switching. Firstly, code-switching is used for 'register identification' achieved through various types of lexicalization. Each register is realized on the basis of the context in which it functions. For example, code-switching between English and Tamil language is an essential distinguishing feature of administrative, political and technological registers whereas Persian and Tamil language is code-switched as legal register. Secondly, code-switching provides speakers and hearer with formal clues for 'style identification'. The third motivating factor of code-switching is 'elucidation and interpretation'. Generally,

people use two linguistic codes to clarify a concept or a term to avoid vagueness or uncertainty. Finally, code-switching functions as 'neutralization'. People use lexical items which are contextually neutral. By providing sociolinguistic contextual clues, the switched language terms conceal various types of identities. For instance, in Tamil, code-switching to English is used to hide 'the social and regional identity' (Annamalai, 2001).

2.1.2.2 Code-switching studies in Malaysia

Although both multilingualism and code-switching are wide-spread and are relatively common features in Malaysian society, there have been few studies on the phenomenon of code-switching conducted here. Among them are studies done by Noor Azlina (1975) and Farid, Ajid & Ramli (1987). There are also several papers on some aspects of the phenomenon by Pakir (1989), Chin (1993) and Chng-Lee (1995).

Noor Azlina (1975) examined bilingual Malays studying in the University of Hull and the University of Lancaster. Her study focused on the social aspect of code-switching, and was mainly concerned with the motivational factors which initiated variable language use. Among the factors stated were topic, setting, participants and role relationship. An important reason for code-switching among her samples was the degree of friendship and intimacy they shared with the other speakers. In her data, an excellent example of the use of English lexis to reinforce this equalitarian status is the use of the English pronouns 'I' and 'you' in the discourse between bilingual Malays. Apart from the participants and their relationships, speech events also affect code-switching. Malay bilinguals tended to use Malay language for greetings, introductions, invitation, farewell or traditionally-based topics such as cooking and wedding. These reflect matters of ethnic identification as well as personal feelings such as affection,

loyalty, commitment, respect and pride when Malay is used. On the other hand, discussions concerning studies or topics which are directly related to English are most entirely in English. Lastly, setting or locale is another significant determining factor in code-switching among bilingual Malays. The switches occured more in informal settings if being compared to formal settings (Noor Azlina, 1979).

Farid *et. al.* (1987) conducted their study in a small village in the state of Kedah, near the Malaysia-Thai border. The people in this village spoke a variety of Thai dialect apart from their mother tongue, Malay, due to close proximity with Thailand. The study indicated that code-switching is a natural phenomenon among these bilinguals and that there are significant social factors which influenced this phenomenon. The factors include age, sex, education, position in the family and situation of the verbal interaction.

Pakir (1989) studied the Baba community in Malaysia who code-switched between Hokkien dialect and Malay language. She detected some evidence to support Gumperz notion listed in his Conversational Functions of code-switching. These included the functions of quotation, addressee specification, interjection, message qualification and reiteration. Of these, 'reiteration', is the most common function for the speakers in her study. She observes that a message can be repeated by a single individual or built up collectively by several individuals and that the codes used for the purpose of reiteration were not necessarily the same and neither were they exact semantic equivalent. In other words, switched messages may not necessarily be directly translated however should have similar meaning as the original message. Furthermore, she noted that code-switching did not proceed randomly, but instead followed a Hokkien ordering. Thus, Pakir believed that code-switching practiced amongst her subjects was used to "negotiate a collective social identity of the Baba speech community" (Pakir, 1989:382).

Chin (1993) utilised spontaneous conversations of six Malay bilinguals living in and around Kuala Lumpur. Rather than studying the motivations for switching, she also compared the patterns of code-switching when the Malay and the English language are employed as matrix language. Data from the study revealed that apart from code-switching in terms of conversational functions as suggested by Gumperz, her subjects also switched code to mark certain attitudes, change topics and emphasize in order to signify contrast. Switches were also made for role and register identification. Furthermore, a pattern was constructed as she found out that the Malay language is more tolerant of switching than English as more than two thirds of the switches are from Malay into English. On this basis, she concluded that "code-switching is neither random nor whimsical and certainly not the result of individual idiosyncrasies or habit" (Chin 1993:89).

Chng-Lee (1995) investigated the factors which motivate code-switching amongst members of three different generations of a Baba Malacca family. In particular, she studied the social functions that code-switching serves and discovered that code-switching was motivated by at least eleven sociolinguistic functions. Among them are topic, habit, audience and the need to reiterate. Thus, the social functions exerted a strong influence on the code-switching behaviour of the subjects.

Code-switching as a research topic has been thoroughly dealt with in many bilingual communities. Many studies on the phenomenon of code-switching are done by looking at the two aspects of the language which are linguistics and sociolinguistics. However, code-switching studies in educational setting are still relatively new. Thus, this present study aims to provide a deeper insight into the nature of code-switching employed by the language teachers in the English as a second language classroom in Malaysia.

2.2 Code-switching studies in education setting (ESL and EFL classrooms)

There are several studies done on code-switching in the ESL and EFL classrooms worldwide. However, many researches are done outside Malaysia in a broader variety of language environment, from bilingual and multilingual classrooms to second language learning classrooms and recently to foreign language classrooms. Many of the studies do not only focus on the linguistic patterns and functions of teachers' code-switching, but they also look at both teachers' and students' code-switching patterns and functions in the language classrooms. In addition, there are also several research on examining the teachers and students views on the employment of code-switching in the classroom.

2.2.1   Studies done abroad

Guthrie (1984) conducted a comparative study of two teachers, one bilingual and the other monolingual who taught English to Chinese students in the United States. The bilingual teacher constantly used a mixture of her mother tongue and the target language in the process of teaching English. Among the reasons listed for code-switching were for translation, for social purposes, for establishing solidarity, for giving procedures and direction, for clarification and for checking understanding. These findings support the notion that code-switching serves intended purposes when applied in the language classrooms.

Merritt, Cleghorn, Abagi, & Bunyi, (1992) investigated the reasons for teachers' code-switching between English and Swahili in three Kenyan primary schools. They employed ethnographic observation and examined several reasons for the alternation of the languages. They discovered that the teachers code-switched to socialize. Code-switching also reflected the teachers' linguistic incompetence and insecurity.

Cath and McLellan (1993) examined the patterns of classroom interaction in Brunei's language classroom. They focused their study on the classroom discourse in the lower secondary school. In their concluding remarks, they mentioned that the teacher's code-switching acts as one of the strategies to ensure pupils' understanding and to reduce miscommunication during the teaching and learning process.

Flyman & Burenhult (1999) investigated code-switching phenomenon in the French as a foreign language classroom using a qualitative approach. The results are somehow similar to the previous study as the teacher code-switched for linguistic insecurity, topic shift, affective functions, socializing functions and repetitive functions.

Schweers (1999) added to the knowledge of code-switching phenomenon by studying the frequency, the motivations and the teachers and students attitudes towards the use of Spanish in the English classroom. From the data collected, tt was evident that the teacher code-switched between Spanish and English in the class to a certain degree. From the feedback collected in the questionnaires distributed to the samples, Schweers discovered that code-switching acted as a useful tool to facilitate learning and helped to build students confidence to learn English. The findings also implied that both teachers and students posed positive attitudes towards code-switching as it is believed to be beneficial for both parties in the process of teaching and learning the language.

Inspired by Scheweers's research, Tang (2002) conducted a similar study on the practice of code-switching in an EFL classroom. He was determined to investigate the frequency of occurrence, motivations and teachers and students perceptions of code-switching in the Chinese context. The samples involved 100 first-year English major students who were studying in one of the universities in Beijing and also 20 teachers teaching at the same university. The results were similar to Scheweers whereby code-switching was employed by the majority of English teachers in the class even though

there was a difference in terms of the occasions when the teachers code-switched. This was maybe due to the students' second language proficiency. In addition, Tang concluded that code-switching acted as a supporting role in learning the target language. Because of this, the teachers and the students were optimistic on the employment of code-switching in the English lesson.

Another research on code-switching was carried out by Bruden (2001) on the contrasting perceptions between the teachers and the students regarding the employment of code-switching between Japanese and English in the English language classroom. The samples involved the teachers, who are native speakers of English and the Japanese students in several national and private universities in Japan. From the survey conducted using questionnaires as the instrument, Bruden discovered interesting and unexpected results especially on the students' views on their teachers' code-switching behaviours. From the data, it was evident that there were several situations that the students expect their teachers to use only English while teaching such as when explaining grammatical rules, giving instructions, explaining class rules, explaining the reasons for doing activities, checking for understanding and creating human contact (Bruden, 2001:3). These expectations were different from the teachers whereby the teachers believed that they should code-switch in all the situations listed above in order to facilitate a better learning environment and to maintain a better rapport with their students. This study showed that it is important for the teachers to understand the students perceptions and expectations in the class so that there will not be misconception and mismatch between the teachers perception and the students needs which may impede the process of learning the target language.

In conclusion, all the researches mentioned earlier prove that teachers employ code-switching in the language classrooms because of several intended purposes, either pedagogical or social. The studies also suggested that teachers and students have

different views on the usage of code-switching in the class. Thus, a better understanding of the functions and the views on code-switching could help the teachers in improving the teaching and learning strategies in acquiring the target language.

2.2.2 Studies done in Malaysia

It is discovered that there are only a few studies which have been conducted to analyze the code-switching phenomenon in the Malaysian English as a second language classrooms. One of them is the study done by Ong (1990) whose research was basically concerned with identifying the conversational functions of code-switching among bilingual Malay students of a form four secondary school. Her analysis showed that role-relationship, participants, topics, intention and effects, values and personal emotions appear as important factors in initiating code-switching among her subjects, as these functions are employed intentionally for communicative purposes (Ong, 1990). The analysis also showed a contrasting proficiency-related pattern of code-switching behaviour among students. While students with a low degree of English proficiency tended to code-switch to ensure continuity of conversation, and as a community-repair strategy; the other group of students did so as a rhetorical device and also to achieve a certain desired effect (Ong, 1990).

Tam (1992) investigated the teacher's language choice in two English classes. One of the objectives of the study is to describe the teacher's reasons for engaging in code-switching in the English as a second language classroom. A comparison had been made between the code-switching occurrences of both classes. The data showed that the teacher has the tendency to code switch more often in the lower proficiency class. Thus the proficiency level of the students can be one of the determinant factors for the teacher to code-switch in the class.

Another significant study on the aspects of code-switching in an ESL classroom was done by Badrul Hisham & Kamarulzaman (2009). They analyzed the student perceptions on the teachers' code-switching and the impact of the switches to the students learning success. The data was collected using a set of questionnaire distributed to 257 low English proficient learners attending Communication 1 proficiency course in Malaysian public university. From the feedback, they found out that the students viewed code-switching as a positive tool in facilitating the learning process of the target language. In addition, it was discovered that there was a significant relationship between the teachers code-switching and the students' learning success. Teachers' code-switching helped the students to maximize their understanding of the teacher's input hence allowing the students to complete all the tasks given in the class. Thus, this situation promised a better opportunity for the students to acquire the target language successfully

In addition, Paramasivam (2010) conducted a study on analyzing the patterns of code-switching among secondary school students. He did this by analyzing the classroom discourse and questionnaires distributed to 20 students selected from four secondary schools situated in the Klang Valley. Similar to the present study, Paramasivam (2010) took the basis of Scotton's Matrix Language Framework Model (2001) in analyzing the students' code-switching patterns. However, he described the patterns by looking at the matrix and the embedded language that the students employed as he compared the discourse of various ethnic groups. The result indicated that the multiethnic samples used Malay as their matrix language along with English. On the contrary, when those of the same ethnic group converse, the dominant language would be their mother tongue with English and Malay as the embedding languages. He also discovered that frequency of occurrence of code-switching among these secondary

school students were high. He believed that this condition maybe closely related to the students family background.

Most of the studies mentioned earlier are directly relevant to the present study. Similarities can be detected in terms of the aspects being studied which involved patterns, functions and perceptions on the employment of code-switching in a classroom. Also, the setting where the instances of code-switching are recorded in the present study is similar to the studies conducted earlier as they are done in the English as a second language classrooms. In addition, the fluency of the bilinguals of the present study is similar to the previous studies which involved the English and the Malay language.

However, lack of studies done on teachers' code-switching in the Malaysian English as a second language classroom reflect that the phenomenon of code-switching has not yet been taken seriously even though the results obtained might be useful in improving the proficiency of the students and building better teaching and learning strategies in the classroom.

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter presents various researches done abroad and in Malaysia which analyze the phenomenon of code-switching based on the linguistic and sociolinguistic aspects. Some researches are more interested in analyzing this phenomenon socially rather than linguistically as they believe that the code-switching phenomenon is more significant when studied based on the sociolinguistic aspect. In spite of that, the present study chooses to analyze code-switching from both perspectives as the researcher thinks that the findings from the study can be added to the present knowledge on this phenomenon, especially in Malaysian setting.