

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to describe the linguistic patterns of the teacher's code-switching, to learn the functions of the teacher's code-switching and to investigate the students' perceptions towards the teacher's code-switching behaviour in the English as a second language classroom. In doing so, one English teacher teaching a form four class was selected. The researcher examined only one English teacher as she only tried to describe the linguistic patterns and functions of the teacher's code-switching. Even though the data was gathered from only one teacher, the audio recordings done in the classroom were sufficient to answer the research questions. The instruments used for the collection of data were audio recordings of the teacher's classroom discourse, questionnaires for the students and an interview with the teacher. To control the linguistic variables, this school was intentionally selected as 95% of the students and teachers are ethnically Malays. In addition, this should ensure that the teacher would only code-switch between the English and the Malay language during the English lesson.

The study specifically aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the linguistic patterns of the teacher's code-switching in the English as a second language classroom?
2. What are the functions of the teacher's code-switching in the classroom?
3. What are the student perceptions toward the teacher's code-switching behaviour in the classroom?

3.1 Population and Sampling

The target population was one English teacher and a group of form four students from a secondary school in Kedah. The school is located in a semi-urban area. It is about 50 kilometres away from Alor Setar, the capital of Kedah and has a population of about 5 thousand people. The selection of the teacher for this study is based on several factors:

- a) The teacher uses only Malay and English as medium of instructions in the class and
- b) The teacher gave permission for her discourse while teaching to be recorded. This is important as other teachers showed their reluctance to be recorded.

The class chosen for the study was Class A which is the best class in the entire form four cohort of the school. The students' proficiency levels were based on the PMR examination performance. The audio recordings were done during two double-period English lessons. Each lesson took up 80 minutes, so the whole recorded discourse was 160 minutes. Questionnaires were also distributed to the students upon the completion of the whole recordings followed by an interview with the teacher.

3.1.1 Background Information on Subject

The subject, given codename N, is a Malay, female teacher aged 47. She is a teacher at the selected school and has taught English for 25 years in several secondary schools. Her mother tongue is Malay and she is also proficient in English as she is a qualified English teacher. She obtained a degree in TESL from University Putra Malaysia.

The subject was chosen as the sample of the research because of several important reasons. First, N was the only teacher who was willing to participate in the study as the other teachers refused as soon as the researcher explained that the research

was on code-switching. This was because the teachers assumed that the researcher was trying to analyze the effectiveness of their teaching as they admitted that most of the time they use Malay in English classes.

In addition, the researcher had done some observations in several English classes. It was evident that all English teachers in that school code-switched in their classes to a certain degree. N was chosen because based on the researcher's judgement, N code-switched moderately when compared to other teachers in the school who tend to code-switch frequently in the classroom while teaching English. If the researcher had chosen a teacher who did not code-switched at all during the English class, there would be no data for code-switching to be analyzed. And if she analyzed the discourse of a teacher who code-switched too much during the lesson, it would be as if she was studying the Malay language, not English.

3.1.2 Background information on the English as a second language classroom

The class encoded as Class A consisted of academically "good" students as this is the best class of the entire cohort. This assumption is also made based on the students' PMR results from the previous year. The students' demographic information and academic background are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Students' Information

Items	Information
Age	16
Race	23 Malays and 3 Indians
Form	4
Average PMR grade in English	A/B
No of students	26
Lesson Observed	English Literature Component (Poem and Short Story)

3.2 Instrumentation

The researcher used observation technique in order to obtain sufficient data to describe the linguistic patterns of the teacher's code-switching in the classroom. This technique involved audio taping the teacher's discourse during the teaching process. Other instruments used were an interview conducted with the teacher and questionnaires which were distributed to the students upon the completion of the recordings.

The audio recordings were done during two double-period lessons. Each lessons took about 80 minutes, thus the whole recorded classroom discourse was 160 minutes. Appendix A and B present orthographic transcriptions transcribed from the classroom discourse recorded during the lessons. All the recordings were carried out in October 2009. The transcribed discourse was then analyzed by categorizing the switches into

two main categories; intra-sentential and inter-sentential code-switching as suggested by Scotton (1993). The former category was further described in two levels; word level and phrase level whereby the latter category involved sentence level. Each level was then broken into more specific units. Code-switching at word level is discussed according to the word class such as noun, verb, adjective, adverb and function words. Code-switching at phrase level is illustrated using types of phrases such as noun phrase, verb phrase, adjective phrase, adverbial phrase and prepositional phrase. Code-switching at sentence level is explained according to various structures of sentences; simple sentence, compound sentence and complex sentence. A more in-depth analysis of the data is also done by presenting the proportion of occurrence of the different types of code-switching.

The study also utilized the data gathered from an interview with the teacher. The interview was carried out immediately after the completion of the recordings. The teacher was asked several questions regarding code-switching in the English language classroom. The questions asked evolved around the teacher's awareness of the phenomenon in the classroom, the amount of code-switching that the teacher employs and the reasons or functions of code-switching in the English lesson. The feedback gathered from the interviews was added to the conversational functions listed by Gumperz (1982). All of the functions of code-switching identified will then be supported by instances of the teacher's code-switching extracted from the recorded discourses gathered earlier.

Questionnaires were also distributed to the students upon the completion of the interview. The questionnaires were adapted from Schweers (1999:6), Burden (2001:4) and Tang (2002:40) studies on teachers and students perception on code switching in the classroom. Among the questions that the researchers used in their researches were, 'How often do you think Spanish should be used in the English classroom?', 'If you

prefer the Spanish in your class, why?’, ‘Should the teacher use students’ mother tongue in the English class?’, and ‘Do you like your teacher to use Chinese in your English class?’. The questionnaire was modified to include 10 closed-ended questions following the Likert-scale choices of answers in preference to a Yes-No answer type. This scale allowed finer scale value for statistical analysis purposes. The options for answers ranged from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’. These questionnaires are utilized to elicit the student views towards their teacher’s usage of the Malay and the English language when teaching the English language in the class.

3.3 Procedures for data collection

The data is collected from three sources; audio recordings, interview and questionnaires. The audio recordings were gathered from the teacher’s discourse in Class A during the English lesson, the interview was conducted by the researcher with the teacher and the questionnaires were distributed to the students in the class.

Audio recording was the primary resource of data for this study. A tape recorder was placed on the teacher’s table in front of the classroom. All the recordings were carried out in October 2009. The researcher managed to get 160 minutes of recordings and it was sufficient due to the richness of the data. The recorded discourse was then transcribed using ordinary orthographic transcriptions and was used to describe the linguistic patterns of the teacher’s code-switching in the English lesson.

In addition, an interview was done with the same teacher upon the completion of the recordings of the classroom discourse. Several questions were asked regarding the teacher’s opinion and perception towards the practice of code-switching in classroom. The questions posed are provided in Appendix C in the appendix section. The teacher was free to give her own opinion as long as the opinion is related to the subject discussed, which is code-switching.

Furthermore, questionnaires were used to elicit feedback from the students regarding their perceptions towards the teacher's code-switching behaviour during the English class. The questionnaires were made up of ten (10) questions asking about the students' experience and opinion regarding their teacher's usage of the Malay and the English language to teach English in the class.

3.4 Procedures for data analysis

The following steps were taken in carrying out the analysis;

3.4.1 Describing the linguistic patterns of the teacher's code-switching in the English as a second language classroom

The teacher's recorded discourse was analysed and transcribed using ordinary orthographic transcription. A specific convention was used to analyze the discoursed more effectively and clearly. The table below illustrates the conventions used in the orthographic transcription which was introduced by Schenkein (1978) known as transcription conventions used to analyze the conversational turns in English conversation. These conventions were also utilized by Sashi Kumar (2005) in his dissertation on code-switching.

Table 2

Transcription Conventions and Interpretations

Conventions	Interpretations
/	Pause
//	Stop
(())	Laughter

The transcribed discourse was then described using types of code-switching as suggested by Scotton in her Matrix Language Frame model (1993). The two types of code-switching are intra-sentential and inter-sentential code-switching. Intra-sentential code-switching occurs when the teacher code-switches at two levels; word level and phrase level. Contrastingly, inter-sentential code-switching is employed when the teacher code-switches at a sentence level or boundary. In addition, occurrence patterns of the various switches were also illustrated in a table. Through these in-depth analyses, we can clearly see the linguistic patterns of the teacher's code-switching which exist in the teacher's discourse.

3.4.2 Learning the functions of teacher's code-switching in the classroom

The analysis is based on the concept of conversational functions developed by Gumperz (1982). These functions form the main frame for analyzing the data. Gumperz offered six conversational functions to account for the functions of code-switching which involve quotation, addressee specification, repetitions, personalization versus objectivization, interjection and message qualification. From the teacher's audio recorded discourse, the researcher selected out several instances of code-switching which fit into the six functions of code-switching suggested by Gumperz. The teacher's interview was also analyzed to add to Gumperz functions of code-switching. The functions added would also be supported by instances of the teacher's code-switching in the lesson. From these detailed and supported analysis, we can crystallize the functions of the teacher's code-switching in the English classroom.

3.4.3 Investigating students' perception towards teacher's code-switching behaviour in the classroom

The answers from the questionnaires are tabulated to investigate student perceptions toward the teacher's code-switching behaviour in the English classroom. The questionnaires are accompanied by choices of answers in the form of a Likert-scale. There are four scales involved which range from positive to negative feedbacks. These questions could yield student views and opinion toward their teacher's usage of the Malay and the English language when teaching English. After examining the responses gathered from the questionnaires, the researcher should be able to make some conclusions on the student perceptions towards the code-switching phenomenon in the English classroom.

3.5 Theoretical Framework used to analyze the data

3.5.1 Matrix Language Frame model by Carol Myers-Scotton

The Matrix Language Frame (MLF) model proposed by Scotton (1993) was used to describe the linguistic patterns of the teacher's code-switching during the English lesson. 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. In the present study, the English language is the matrix language and the Malay language acts as the embedded language.

In this framework, she 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 level and phrase level within the sentence whereby

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

3.5.2 The Conversational Functions by Gumperz

The conversational functions of code-switching by Gumperz (1982) were used as a framework to learn the functions of the teacher's code-switching. From the teacher's audio recorded discourse, the researcher picked out several instances of code-switching which fit into the six functions of code-switching suggested by Gumperz. There are six functions all together (Gumperz, 1982:75-81).

1. Quotation

This switching is reflected in direct quotations or reported speeches. The switch is meant to preserve the authenticity of the original message and to sound more believable to the speaker.

2. Addressee specification

This function serves to direct the message to one of several possible addressees. The switch enables the speaker to draw the intended listener's attention.

3. Interjections

This function serves to indicate an interjection or sentence filler. Interjections are often used for better expression, clarification or better understanding of the speech.

4. Reiteration

Reiteration means repeating the message in another code. This can be performed either literally or in a modified form. Reiteration can serve to clarify, emphasis or promote a better understanding of the speech.

5. Message qualification

This function serves to qualify a previous statement. This can be performed through sentences, phrases or clauses. By switching to the other code, a speaker believes that the message is better understood.

6. Personalization versus objectivation.

This function serves to indicate the differences between facts and opinion. It is used to reflect the speaker's personal opinion, feeling or knowledge about something.

Besides the six functions of code-switching suggested by Gumperz, the researcher feels that there could be some other functions or reasons for the teacher's code-switching for instance to elicit answers from students or to verify understanding and knowledge of the students regarding certain topics. Therefore, this research will also include those functions elicited from the teacher's feedback during the interview done earlier.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter provides background information regarding the samples of the research, the instruments used for data collection and the methods utilized for data analysis. The instruments which involve audio recordings, interview and questionnaires are commonly used in collecting the data for the purpose of analyzing classroom

discourse in almost all researches done in similar field. The chapter also explains the theoretical frameworks utilized in analyzing the data gathered in the present study. The two frameworks; the Matrix Language Frame model by Scotton (1993) and the Conversational Functions by Gumperz (1982) are referred as they have been extensively utilised to investigate code-switching phenomenon. Thus, it is hoped that these frameworks could provide a more significant and clearer picture towards the issues investigated in the present study regarding the linguistic patterns and the functions of the teacher's code-switching in the English as a second language classroom.