

## Students' Perception on the Use of Code-Switching Instructional Activities

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**Abstract:** This study investigates the perceptions of English Language Education Study Program students at Universitas Sintuwu Maroso Poso toward the use of code-switching in English learning. A survey was conducted using a questionnaire distributed via Google Forms to 33 students from the 2023–2024 cohorts. Data were analyzed using the Chi-Square test. The mean analysis revealed an overall score of 75.6% on a 1–4 scale, indicating that students generally hold positive views of code-switching in English learning. The findings conclude that the students expressed a positive view of code-switching in English language learning, perceiving it as a practical strategy that supports comprehension. Accordingly, lecturers are encouraged to incorporate code-switching strategically in their instructional practices.

**Keywords;** *Perception; Code-Switching; Instructional Activities*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Code-switching, the alternation between two or more languages within a single conversation, is a common practice among bilingual and multilingual speakers, with inserted elements adapting to the grammar of the dominant language (Mabule, 2015; Hamers & Blanc, 2013). Once regarded as a sign of language deficiency, it is now recognized as a strategic tool for effective communication (Shin, 2010). In sociolinguistics—the study of the relationship between language and society—code-switching is valued for its communicative, cognitive, and pedagogical benefits. Research shows that in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, it can clarify meaning, bridge language gaps, prevent misunderstandings, and foster student engagement (Ahmad, 2009; Promnath & Tayjasanant, 2016; Masna, 2020). From a cognitive perspective, strategic use of the first language (L1) may reduce learners' cognitive load and enhance comprehension and production in the target language (Macaro, 2014; Butzkamm & Caldwell, 2009).

In educational settings, code-switching serves multiple functions, including curriculum access, classroom management, and building interpersonal rapport (Ferguson, 2003; Kim & Elder, 2008). Studies across different contexts reveal generally positive student attitudes toward instructor code-switching, especially for explaining grammar, translating vocabulary, and clarifying complex concepts (Margana, 2013; Fitriyah et al., 2020; Nordin et al., 2013). However, preferences for maximum target-language exposure remain in some settings (Tsagari & Georgiou, 2016), reflecting ongoing debates on its optimal use. In Indonesia, research consistently shows that both students and teachers perceive code-switching as a useful instructional strategy, although some educators express reservations about relying on it extensively (Zacharias, 2012; Pharamita et al., 2021).

### 2. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional survey design to investigate EFL students' perceptions of code-switching in instructional activities at Sintuwu Maroso University. The design was chosen for its efficiency in collecting data from all participants at a single point in time, providing a clear snapshot of students' attitudes. The population comprised 33 students from the English Language Education Study Program (15 from the 2nd semester and 18 from the 4th semester), all of whom were included using total sampling to ensure representativeness. Data were gathered in through an online questionnaire adapted from Nursanti (2016) and distributed via Google Forms.

The questionnaire contained eight items rated on a four-point Likert scale (*Strongly Agree* to *Strongly Disagree*) and was analyzed using descriptive statistics, chi-square tests for significance, and Cohen's d for effect size, with a 95% confidence interval. Interpretation of mean scores followed Riduwan's

(2007) scale categories. Content validity was established through adaptation from a previously validated instrument (Theresya et al., 2021), and reliability testing yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.600, indicating acceptable internal consistency for measuring perceptions of code-switching in EFL contexts.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The reliability test produced a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.600 for eight items, indicating acceptable internal consistency. The questionnaire therefore considered reliable for assessing EFL students' perceptions of code-switching. The Analysis of responses from 33 participants revealed generally positive perceptions of code-switching, particularly for comprehension and clarity.

**Table 1. Student's Perception of Code Switching used by the English Lecturer in the Classroom**

Statement Number	Question Items	SA	A	DA	SDA	Mean Score
1	The use of Indonesian language by the lecturer in English classroom helps you in learning English.	17	14	2	0	3,45
2	The use of Indonesian language by the lecturer in English classroom makes you easy to understand the material given by the lecturer.	12	20	1	0	3,33
3	The use of Indonesian language by the lecturer in English classroom makes you easy to understand new vocabularies in English.	10	16	6	1	3,06
4	The use of Indonesian language by the lecturer in English classroom helps you to be fluent and accurate on your English speaking skill.	6	12	15	0	2,75
5	The use of Indonesian language by the lecturer in English classroom makes you easy in English writing skill.	4	16	13	0	2,73
6	The use of Indonesian language by the lecturer in English classroom makes you understand toward the meaning of every sentence which is explained by the lecturer.	17	15	1	0	3,48
7	The use of Indonesian language by the lecturer in English classroom makes you understand something faster and it helps your lecturer in managing the time in explaining thing.	8	23	2	0	3,18
8	The use of Indonesian language by the lecturer in English classroom makes you confused to learn English.	1	7	19	6	2,09

The results indicate that EFL students perceive lecturer code-switching positively toward the use of code-switching in English instructional activities. High agreement scores for statements related to understanding material, clarifying meaning, and aiding vocabulary acquisition suggest that code-switching serves as a valuable scaffolding strategy in language instruction.

From the eight questionnaire items analyzed, the overall mean score of 3.00 indicates a positive attitude among students, with several items reflecting strong agreement with the pedagogical utility of code-switching. For instance, Statements 1 and 6, which pertain to comprehension and clarity, received the highest agreement levels, with mean scores of 3.45 and 3.48 respectively. This suggests that learners perceive the alternation between Indonesian and English as beneficial in aiding understanding of lesson content. This finding substantiates the cognitive processing perspective (Macaro, 2014), which posits that the strategic use of L1 reduces cognitive load, thus optimizing comprehension and learning efficiency. Moreover, Statement 7 is regarding the time efficiency and clarity afforded by code-switching, also received high levels of agreement (Mean = 3.18), indicating that students perceive this practice as a practical instructional strategy. These

findings align with Ferguson (2003) and Ahmad (2009), who highlight code-switching's role in bridging language gaps and enhancing learning efficiency.

The lower mean scores found in statements on speaking (4) and writing skills (5) suggest that while code-switching facilitates understanding, its direct impact on productive language skills is less pronounced. This is consistent with Tsagari and Georgiou's (2016) argument that excessive reliance on the first language may limit target-language practice. However, the overwhelmingly low agreement with the statement that code-switching causes confusion supports previous studies in Indonesia (Margana, 2013; Zacharias, 2012), confirming its acceptance as a beneficial teaching practice in local EFL contexts. Besides, Statement 8 reflected the only predominantly negative perception, with a mean score of 2.09, addressing the potential for confusion caused by code-switching. A minority of respondents agreed, indicating that excessive or unstructured use of the L1 could reduce language immersion and hinder second language acquisition. This underscores the importance of adopting a balanced approach, using code-switching selectively and with clear pedagogical purposes rather than as a default practice.

The students' responses indicate that code-switching can foster emotional engagement, reduce anxiety, and provide scaffolding for lower-proficiency learners. These findings align with the psychological and social functions outlined by Kim and Elder (2008), such as lowering affective filters and building rapport in the classroom.

Overall, students expressed a positive view of code-switching in English language learning, perceiving it as a practical strategy that supports comprehension. However, its effectiveness in enhancing productive skills remains contested. Therefore, EFL instructors should employ code-switching selectively and with clear pedagogical intent to maximize its benefits while minimizing potential drawbacks.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that EFL students at Sintuwu Maroso University have a generally positive perception of code-switching, particularly for comprehension and classroom management. However, concerns remain about its impact on productive language skills. Educators are encouraged to use code-switching strategically, ensuring it supports rather than substitutes target language exposure.

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