

英语课堂语码转换研究

EFL CLASSROOM CODE-SWITCHING

姚明发 著



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PREFACE

Code-switching in secondary EFL classrooms is very common in the Chinese context. The research purpose of this book is to survey the attitudes of teachers and students towards teachers' code-switching and make an exploration of patterns and functions of code-switching in teachers' discourse in their English teaching.

The data used in this book is based on nineteen periods of audio-taped discourse collected in two key secondary schools in a provincial capital city. The teachers' discourse is segmented into units of utterance. Three types of code-switching (intra-unit code-switching, inter-unit code-switching and tag-unit code-switching) and eight different pedagogical and social functions are identified according to the research goal. A detailed analysis is made quantitatively and qualitatively according to the coded transcripts of the discourse.

The teachers and students' attitudes to code-switching (CS) will be first investigated to find out how teachers and learners view teachers' CS with Chinese in EFL classroom and when and why they code-switch and the most frequent use of Chinese for what functions. With regard to teachers' attitudes, the book discusses and analyzes teachers' responses to all the questions of the questionnaire and elicits their attitudes to CS in EFL classrooms. There is no significant difference between participant teachers and non-participant teachers in attitude responses to all the questions in the questionnaire.

According to the theoretical framework (Meyers-Scotton's MLF model and Markedness Model) proposed in the sociolinguistic literature, the book describes and analyzes the structural patterns of code-switching used in teachers' discourse in the data. On the structural equivalence and contrast of word classes in both languages, it is found that English switched word classes

are patterned like the structures of the Chinese counterparts. Given the surface similarities in the word order in both languages, most switches occur at points around which the word order of the two languages corresponds. It has also specifically shown that different syntactic word classes are switched differently in frequency. These results can be explained by the structural equivalence and contrast between the two languages of Chinese and English.

The book has numerically examined the utterance distribution and language choices in the teachers' classes, the number of utterances of teachers and students in each period and by each teacher, frequency counts of the code-switches in terms of three types of switches, the correlation of language distribution and unit types and functions. There are differences between periods and teachers based on some sociolinguistic variables. In addition, it is found that discourse markers often trigger teachers' switches from one language to the other. These switches may be marked or unmarked according to the following utterances.

The book has further identified and analyzed different functions of code-switching used by teachers in EFL classes for pedagogical and social goals. Code-switching was used to be social or communicational when it occurred interpersonally, or pedagogical when it was used to explain the content of the lesson. Three broad categories of functions have been analyzed and discussed. Code-switching in EFL classes can be regarded as a normal phenomenon in EFL classes, instead of deviation. Code-switching, as a strategy used in language teaching, can be exploited by teachers to achieve their teaching goals. The attitudes to code-switching support the teachers' use of code-switching in English language classroom. Further discussions on some social variables are also made to understand how, why and when code-switching functions in EFL classroom.

Contents

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Defining code-switching 1
- 1.2 Rationale of the research 3
- 1.3 Problems and assumptions 9
- 1.4 Organization of this book 11

2 Literature review

- 2.1 Major distinctions in code-switching research 12
 - 2.1.1 Code-switching, borrowing and inter-language 13
 - 2.1.2 Bilingualism and bilinguals 16
 - 2.1.3 Speech community and classroom community 17
- 2.2 Approaches in code-switching research 21
 - 2.2.1 Linguistic approach to code-switching 22
 - 2.2.2 Psycholinguistic approach to code-switching 27
 - 2.2.3 Conversation analytical approach to
code-switching 29
 - 2.2.4 Sociolinguistic approach to code-switching 32
- 2.3 Studies on code-switching in classroom discourse 40
 - 2.3.1 Studies on code-switching in FL/SL classroom 40
 - 2.3.2 Studies on code-switching in bilingual classrooms 47
- 2.4 Summary 49

3 Methods and procedures

- 3.1 Introduction 51
- 3.2 Research questions 52
- 3.3 Research sites and subjects description 53
 - 3.3.1 Introduction 53
 - 3.3.2 Two key schools 55
 - 3.3.3 Sampling classes and subjects 57
- 3.4 Data collection 59

3.4.1	Observing classes.....	59
3.4.2	Recording the classes	61
3.4.3	Interviewing the teachers.....	61
3.4.4	Administering questionnaires	62
3.5	Data analysis	63
3.5.1	Transcribing and coding	64
3.5.2	Quantitative analysis.....	68
3.5.3	Qualitative analysis	73
3.6	Summary.....	74
4	Attitudes to code-switching	
4.1	Introduction.....	76
4.2	Teachers' attitudes to code-switching.....	78
4.2.1	Attitudes to CS in relation to teachers' persona.....	78
4.2.2	Attitudes to CS in relation to subject access	82
4.2.3	Attitudes to CS in relation to classroom management	85
4.2.4	Attitudes to CS in relation to interpersonal relations.....	88
4.3	Participant and non-participant teachers' attitudes.....	92
4.4	Students' attitudes to code-switching.....	98
4.4.1	Attitudes to CS in relation to teachers' persona	100
4.4.2	Attitudes to CS in relation to subject access	101
4.4.3	Attitudes to CS in relation to classroom management.....	101
4.4.4	Attitudes to CS in relation to interpersonal relations	102
4.5	Different attitudes to CS between teachers and students.....	104
4.6	Summary	112
5	Major patterns of code-switching	
5.1	Structural patterns of code-switching	113
5.1.1	Switching at the word (or phrase) level	114

5.1.2	Switching at the clause level.....	118
5.1.3	Structural properties of teachers' code-switching	120
5.1.4	Discussion	124
5.2	Language choices in teacher talk.....	127
5.2.1	Utterances used by teachers and students	127
5.2.2	Teachers' language distribution.....	132
5.2.3	Distribution of function types	137
5.2.4	Three types of code-switching	145
4.2.5	Code-switching types, unit types and function types	157
5.2.6	Discussion	158
5.3	Discourse markers as triggers to language alternation.....	162
5.3.1	Functions of major discourse markers	163
5.3.2	Discussion	173
5.4	Summary	176
6	Major functions of code-switching	
6.1	Code-switching for subject access	178
6.1.1	Code-switching for lexis or grammar explanation.....	179
6.1.2	Code-switching for eliciting responses	184
6.1.3	Code-switching for clarifying the content	187
6.1.4	Code-switching for repetitive.....	190
6.2	Code-switching for classroom management.....	198
6.4	Code-switching as a strategy in communication	210
6.5	Discussion	213
6.6	Summary	223
7	Conclusion	
7.1	Introduction	225
7.2	Summary of the research.....	226
7.3	Contributions of the current research	229
7.4	Limitations of the research	232
7.5	Directions for future studies	233

Bibliography	235
Appendix 1: Survey	253
Appendix 2: Teacher interview.....	258
Appendix 3: Transcription conventions	260
Appendix 4	261
Appendix 5: Attitudes to teachers' CS by percentage	269
Acknowledgements	271

1

Introduction

1.1 Defining code-switching

Code, as a term borrowed from semiotics and communication theory, has been widely used in other fields as in linguistics and literature. In sociolinguistics, code, as a neutral term (i. e. , no social class distinction as other codes in restricted or elaborated codes), refers to the language or variety of language (Mey 1998; Swann et al 2004). This term derives from Bernstein's controversial work (Bernstein 1971, 1973) and also Halliday (1978) stresses codes in his theory of a social semiotic much influenced by Bernstein. These codes are types of meaning or cultural values generated by the social system, which are actualized in language varieties and transmitted by different social groups and in different social situations. Here in this book, code refers to language (or dialect) used in EFL classroom. It is not difficult to determine what constitutes a code in English classroom discourse.

Code-switching, like code, is a widespread phenomenon throughout the world which has generated much discussion and debate. Code-switching has been approached from different perspectives and defined by many scholars (Appel & Muysken 1987; Auer 1984; Bentahila & Davies 1983; Eastman 1992; Gardner-Chloros 1991; Grosjean 1982; Gumperz 1982; Heller 1988; Milroy & Muysken 1995; Muysken 2000; Myers-Scotton 1993a; Poplack 1980). Based on their different research goals and the kind of data they collected, code-switching is defined from different approaches as structural, functional or psycholinguistic approaches. From the structural approaches, for example, Poplack (1980) defines code-switching as the alternation of two

different languages or varieties of a language within a single discourse, or sentence. Also Valdes-Fallis (1976) defines code-switching as the alternating use of two languages or varieties of a language on different linguistic levels as word, clause or sentence within a discourse. Functionally, Auer (1984, 1998, 2005) defines code-switching as local use of two or more languages in an interactional discourse, which puts more emphasis on the roles of different languages or varieties. Similarly, Gumperz (1982) defines code-switching as “the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems” (1982:59), emphasizing the functions of code-switching, that is, language choice itself can carry meaning in addition to the content of the discourse. In psycholinguistic perspective, code-switching refers to “cases where the speaker has a good command of both languages and is thus able, in principle, to convey the relevant information in both languages” (de Bot 1992:21). These three approaches emphasize different aspects of code-switching from their different theoretical or empirical grounds. However, examination of these code-switching definitions indicates that there is at least a broad agreement among researchers as to what it involves, i. e. the alternate use of elements from two different languages or dialects within the same conversation or even the same utterance. In general, a prerequisite for code-switching is a juxtaposition of elements from two codes (Winford 2003). This book follows the definition of code-switching from the functional perspective. That is, code-switching in language classroom refers to any alternate use of two codes or languages either within one utterance or between one utterance and the next in an interactional discourse.

Many researchers have made efforts to explore the types of code-switching from different perspectives of structure or function. Because of different research approaches and their research goals, different researchers have distinguished different types of code-switching. Blom & Gumperz (1972) in their classical paper distinguished two types of code-switching as situational code-switching and metaphorical code-switching. Situational switching refers to a kind of language shift in which changes are involved in

the participants' definition of each other's rights and obligations. While in metaphorical CS, no significant change occurs in definition of participants' mutual rights and obligations.

The most classic and popular classification is made by Poplack (1980) who has successfully differentiated three types of code-switching: inter-sentential code-switching, intra-sentential code-switching and tag code-switching according to where switches occur within sentences. Poplack's categorization has been followed by many researchers in explicating patterns of code-switching in different pairs of languages. Later he developed another distinction between "smooth switching" and "flagged switching" (Poplack 1989). The former, known as skilled or fluent code-switching, means that there is "a smooth transition between L1 and L2 elements, unmarked by false starts, hesitation or lengthy pauses" (Poplack 1989:404), and the latter implies that there isn't such smoothness, and switching may be marked by the above-mentioned attributes.

Auer (1984, 1998), from a functional point of view, introduced two types of code-switching (or language alternation): participant-related code-switching and discourse-related code-switching. While in Muysken (2000), he used code-mixing instead of code-switching and he proposed another differentiation of code-switching types according to the processes at work: insertion, alternation and congruent lexicalization. The details of these three types will be commented in section 2.2.1.

The present study identifies three types of code-switching: intra-unit code-switching, inter-unit code-switching, and tag-unit code-switching, because an utterance (clause) is the basic unit of code-switching analysis (see section 3.3).

1.2 Rationale of the research

Code-switching research can be traced back to the 50s and 60s in the 20th century. However, code-switching as a real linguistic project was studied in the early 1970s. The general reviews of the subject have been given

by several researchers (Eastman 1992, Gumperz 1982, Heller 1988, Jacobson 1998). Some detailed analyses of individual cases of code-switching include those of Blom & Gumperz (1972) who describe the code-switching patterns in Hemnesberget in Norway, Platt & Platt (1975) who deals with the multilingual communities in Singapore, and Hewitt (1986) who discusses code-switching among West Indian youths in England.

As to the purely linguistic study of code-switching, some of the researches including Di Sciullo et al (1986), Meyers-Scotton (1993b), Poplack (1980), Romaine (1989), Sankoff & Poplack (1981), Woolford (1983) and Azuma (1993, 1995) contribute a lot. Poplack suggests two famous structural constraints on code-switching: one is the free morpheme constraint which states that codes may be switched after any constituent in discourse, provided that constituent is not a bound morpheme. And the other is the equivalent constraint. That is, code-switching tends to occur at points in discourse where juxtaposition of two languages does not violate a surface syntactic rule of either language. Meyers-Scotton (1993b) proposes a Matrix Language Frame Model (MLF Model) which is built on the hypothesis that the two languages involved in code-switching do not participate equally. That is, one language is dominant and the other is subordinate and that the word structure of the dominant language determines the outcome in the subordinate language. In socio-cultural linguistics, code-switching has been studied in three broad areas: the social psychological approach of Myers-Scotton's markedness model (Myers-Scotton 1983, 1993a, 1998b, 2001) and related work; studies of identity and code choice and studies of the effect of code-switching on talk in interaction.

Researches on code-switching are more concerned with the natural discourse in bilingual or multilingual communities. The above literature (e.g. Heller 1988) has centered more particularly on the meaning of code-switching in social interaction, and thus highlights its value as a communicative resource in the communities and its value as power and cultural capital.

Within the last three decades, early studies have evolved which focus on the role of code-switching in young children developing their bilingualism

(Fantini 1985; Genishi 1981; Huerta 1978); on the social functions of code-switching (McClure & Wentz 1975; Poplack 1981); on the patterns of code-switching in the home among adults (Huerta 1978) and among children at play and during interviews (Zentella 1978). Also in the 1980s, educators explored code-switching in language classrooms and have found it to be effective as a teaching and communicative strategy which can be used among bilingual students (Aguirre 1988; Hudelson 1983; Olmedo-Williams 1983). In the 1990s, most studies were concerned with code-switching in the classroom across a range of curricular subjects in the bilingual or multilingual communities in post-colonial contexts or European countries (Addendorff 1993, 1996; Camilleri 1996; Lin 1996, etc.).

Recently code-switching has been also studied in such fields as language acquisition, second language acquisition and language learning. The researchers usually describe either bilingual speakers' or language learners' cognitive linguistic abilities, or describe classroom or learner practices involving the use of more than one language (e. g. Romaine 1989, 1995; Cenoz & Genesee 2001). Also in other research fields, many researchers (e. g. Grosjean 1985, 1995, 1997) give much illustration to code-switching of bilinguals in bilingual or multilingual communities.

In foreign language (FL) classrooms as a micro-social community, teachers' major aim is to teach students foreign language while students' aim is to learn foreign language by four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Foreign language is an expected language used in classroom. However, in EFL classrooms are commonly seen many switches from one language (target language) to another language (native language) or vice versa. Teachers and students more or less switch to their native language for some purposes.

The crucial question in language education is that how the individual can be best prepared by formal learning/teaching to be an effective communicator. In recent two decades, code-switching in formal language classroom has particularly attracted the increasing interest. Code-switching, which had long been considered forbidden, has recently gained a reversal

perspective on its role in FL teaching and learning.

The former exclusive use of the target language (TL) in monolingual FL classroom has been the subject of considerable debate. Proponents of TL exclusivity argue that switching to the students' mother tongue or their first language (L1) will undermine the learning process (Chambers 1991; Macdonald 1993), while other researchers oppose to excluding the L1 from the FL classroom. Guthrie (1984) questioned whether the fact that a lesson is conducted entirely in the second language (L2) results in greater intake by learners. Skinner (1985) argued that the exclusive use of the L2 is detrimental to the process of concept development by, at times, providing an obstacle to connecting with thoughts and ideas already developed in the L1. These debates show whether L1 plays some roles in FL classrooms or not. That is, whether using L1, often the students' native language, when teaching an FL, is pedagogically appropriate and effective or not. It is argued that, from classroom observations in primary and secondary EFL classrooms, it is not only impractical to exclude the L1 from the classroom but it is also likely to deprive participants of an important tool for language teaching and learning. Actually there is no empirical evidence to support the notion that restricting the use of mother tongue would necessarily improve teaching/learning efficiency. It is found that the majority of code-switching in the classroom is highly purposive and related to the communicative and pedagogical goals.

The purpose of this study is to explore EFL teachers' code-switching in two key high (secondary) schools. The data of the study is made up of ethnographic notes and audio recordings made while the author observed classes at two high schools. The students were in Junior Two and Senior Two. Classes of ten English teachers (four males and six females) were observed. Nineteen periods (45 minutes in each period) of these teachers were recorded during 2005-2006 school academic year. After observing and recording classes, the author administered interviews and surveys on attitudes to code-switching for an attempt to explain the variability of language use (especially code-switching) in EFL classroom. The following discourse

analysis is based on transcripts of the audio-tape recordings, with special notation, complemented by ethnographic notes and some visual information taken from the observations. As some of the original data are in Chinese, they are translated into English with special notations to the differences in meaning. The original transcripts are presented immediately after each unit for analytical purposes and to facilitate the text for readers. The ethnographic approach of the whole project allowed the author to have helpful information about the classroom context for the interpretation. The qualitative and numerical analysis permitted a detailed study of functions of utterance units to describe the work done at each turn in the discursive construction of classroom interactions (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson 1974)

The academic exploration of teachers' code-switching in EFL classroom is significant in the following aspects: First of all, code-switching is very common at all levels of EFL classroom in China. It seems so ritualized that few teachers realize they alternate languages. They have no awareness how, when and to what extent they actually switch and for what purposes in their English teaching practice. To study teachers' code-switching will demonstrate what patterns there are in teachers' language used in EFL classroom and how teachers' code-switching works or functions for their effective teaching in Chinese context. The book intends to develop the teachers' conscious understanding of the principles underlying foreign language teaching and the practical techniques that teachers can use in different kinds of lessons.

Secondly, code-switching study in EFL classroom may complement the code-switching theories by the researchers. Most researchers are concerned with the natural discourse in bilingual or multilingual speech communities, while only a few are concerned with the institutional discourse in language classroom. FL classroom is regarded as an emerging bilingual speech community (Lisa 2003) or as a bilingual space (Liebscher & Dailey-O'cain 2005). Classrooms do have their own rules of conduct, standards and norms which both teachers and learners share. Researches should approach code-switching in classroom according to the community's own purpose, especially the speakers' own purposes, not with respect to standards in natural

discourse. A systematic description of code-switching in FL classroom will help better understand the mechanism of classroom code-switching. A modified markedness model (Rational model, RC model thereafter) by Myers-Scotton can be used in explaining the purposes of teachers' code-switching, but with some modifications to the model in order to effect explanations in EFL classroom community.

Thirdly, code-switching studies in classroom communities in foreign contexts need to be tested or improved in Chinese context and may provide useful cues for EFL classroom teaching and learning. There are numerous researches in addressing the question of the ideal roles of learners' L1 in bilingual and FL class contexts. Some (e. g. Zentella 1981) focus on the influence of participants' language choice and persona on bilingual classroom code-switching patterns. Some (e. g. Piasecka 1988) focus on the functions performed by different languages. Recently, Arnfast & Jorgensen (2003) have studied code-switching in FL context in Danish. How are these studies conducted effectively in Chinese contexts? Or are there any specific characteristics in FL teaching? The present research is going to pursue these questions and try to raise the awareness of both teachers and students on the issue of code-switching to make our FL teaching/learning effective.

Fourthly, this study will also complement the methodology in data collection, coding technique and analysis in EFL research. The study will observe the classrooms in an ethnographic approach in order to pursue the details in EFL teaching, and analyze the teachers' discourse into different types of communication units. These units will be coded into different functions according to the teachers' use of code-switching, and then be analyzed qualitatively and numerically.

And finally, this research would give guidelines and confidence to the teachers in secondary EFL classrooms, especially to the teachers in rural areas where the major Basic English Teaching will be practiced. It is also hoped that the findings in this research will give educational authorities a reference for language policy development.

As to the reasons and significances mentioned above, code-switching in