



Regular Article

Pedagogical Functions of Code-Switching in EFL College Settings: Perceptions and Perspectives of Students' Attitudes and Motivations

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APA Citation: Mekheimr, M. (2023). Pedagogical Functions of Code-Switching in EFL College Settings: Perceptions and Perspectives of Students' Attitudes and Motivations . *BSU Journal of Pedagogy and Curriculum*; 2(3): 11- 42

Received: 9/9/2022; **Accepted:** 10/10/2022 ; **Published:** 01/01/2023

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to introspect and analyse EFL college students' perceptions and perspectives of the influence of code-switching in improving their attitudes towards and motivations for learning English. The study sought to identify the sociolinguistic functions of code-switching in EFL classrooms, and the correlations between code-switching and students' attitudes towards and motivations for learning English in a college environment. It further sought to investigate differences if any in motivations and attitudes of male and female students possibly resulting from the practice of code-switching in classrooms. Thus, the perspectives and introspections of the students as to the role and impact of code-switching on their language learning were examined through the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. Using a mixed-methods in the collection and analysis of data, a sample of 204 EFL students (N = 123 females and 81 males) were involved in the study. The Gardner's Attitude / Motivation Test Battery (AMI) was adapted for use in collecting quantitatively analysable data and semi-structured interviews were used in the study to introspect the students on their attitudes towards learning English and their motivations being influenced by code-switching. Results revealed no statistically significant differences attributable to gender difference as a result of practicing code-switching in terms of their attitudes and motivations. Furthermore, the students' attitudes and motivations were correlated with code-switching in positive ways. Students' introspections

confirmed and supported the results from the quantitative analyses, concluding that most of the participants have had mostly positive perceptions about the functions of code-switching in their learning. Implications and recommendations for further research and practice were given in the end.

KEYWORDS: *Code-switching; motivations; attitudes; EFL college students; mixed-methods research.*

INTRODUCTION:

Code-switching is a widely shared sociolinguistic phenomenon in foreign language education classes. It takes place in both bilingual and multilingual communities, notably in foreign language classrooms where teachers and learners speak the same native language. However, research interest in code-switching began as a sociolinguistic phenomenon worthy of study in 1972 (Myers-Scotten, 1993). Gardner-Chloros (1991) describes code-switching as where two or more languages are exchangeably practiced synchronously in an utterance or a chunk of discourse. Furthermore, Gumperz (1982a) classifies code-switching into two categories. They are situational code-switching and conversational code-switching. The type of code-switching based on language situations takes place occasionally in various situations in the workplace and school, especially when there are challenges to using the language communicatively in the foreign language context (Al-Seghayer, 2011).

On the other hand, code-switching grounded in conversations happens when interlocutors are motivated by some discourse factors which may influence the flow of speech such as lapse of memory, lack of vocabulary or stress. Conversation code-switching is also practiced when there is a need to explain what is being said in a conversation. Based on Gumperz's taxonomy, classroom code-switching possibly pertains to this type of situational code-switching. A plethora of extant research on code-switching was conducted in various contexts involving many of the world's most used languages to investigate its social impact and sociolinguistic functions (Gumperz, 1982; Woolard, 2004; Holmes, 2000; Abalhassan & Alshalawi, 2000; Auer, 2002; Al-Khatib, 2003; Muthusamy, 2009; Nerghes, 2011; Engku Haliza Engku Ibrahim et al., 2013). Scarce research was conducted to analyse the sociolinguistic functions of code-switching in F.L. classroom contexts and the teachers', parents' or students' attitudes towards code-switching.

Furthermore, almost no study has been implemented to investigate the practice of code-switching by Egyptian EFL teachers and students in public higher education settings. This study investigates the roles and functions of code-switching as practised by a sample of native lecturers and students in an Egyptian public university to examine the students' attitudes towards and motivations for learning English.

Statement of the Problem

In the Egyptian context, with English being the dominant foreign language of learning and teaching, language instruction policies suggest that English should be the sole language of teaching or the medium of instruction (EMI), and therefore, stipulate that teachers should not be allowed to use Arabic as a medium of instruction (AMI). Such policies were stipulated and are widely understood as useful for maximising the exposure to the target language (English in our case) to leverage the students' proficiencies. While this case is fair, the Egyptian context is dominantly Arabic speaking; English is mainly used by teachers and students and is rarely spoken outside the classroom. EFL teachers switch the code between Arabic and English on a daily basis to facilitate their roles in teaching and students' learning, especially when they explain grammatical points or other pedagogical issues in the English language to Egyptian students.

Therefore, this study pursues to identify the rationales behind Egyptian EFL teachers' utilisation of code-switching inside EFL classrooms and their attitudes towards it, their students' motivations for learning English in EFL classes. In such environments where code-switching occurs, the study seeks to identify the pedagogical roles and functions of code-switching from a sociolinguistic viewpoint.

Purposes of the Study:

This study was designed to identify the pedagogical functions of EFL students' code-switching in EFL classrooms. It also investigated why Egyptian EFL college students resort to code-switching EFL classrooms in public universities. In addition, it aimed to explore its role in Egyptian EFL college classrooms and the teachers' actual use of this sociolinguistic practice. Moreover, this study was designed to examine college students' attitudes towards using code-switching from a sociolinguistic viewpoint and explore learners' motivations for learning when code-switching is resorted to. Furthermore, it was carried out to elicit the sociolinguistic and pedagogical implications of using code-switching, either negatively or positively, in Egyptian college EFL learning settings.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant in many ways, as follows:

- 1) It suggests informed implications for foreign language education policy makers regarding whether they should revise their instructions for the use of EMI or AMI or an integrated, balanced mixture of using both Arabic and English as the medium of instruction.
- 2) It informs suggestive insights for the educators and teachers of English as a foreign language in Egyptian public universities concerning students' and lecturers' language preferences and attitudes towards code-switching as well as their motivations influenced by the practice of code-switching.
- 3) It informs the classroom code of teaching subtly adopted by teachers and students to make fair use of code-switching practices in active and interactive participations.

4) It helps engulf the research gap in sociolinguistic research and pedagogy by investigating the motivations for and attitudes towards code-switching in EFL classes and its roles and pedagogical functions.

5) Concerning students' communication skills, this study subtly informs both EFL teachers and students the pedagogical recommendations that would make code-switching an effective approach in teaching and learning English.

Research Questions:

The research questions underlying this study were couched as follows:

1. What are the sociolinguistic functions of EFL teachers-and-students' code-switching in EFL classrooms?
2. What are the correlations between code-switching and students' attitudes towards and motivations for learning EFL?
3. Are there any differences between males and females as to their motivations and attitudes being influenced by code-switching?
4. To what extent does code-switching influence college students' motivations for learning English?
5. To what extent can code-switching be a beneficial sociolinguistic tool in EFL classrooms?
6. What are the perceptions and perspectives of the EFL college students about code-switching in the EFL classroom?

Review of Literature:

Code-switching as a Sociolinguistic Phenomenon

As Milroy and Muysken (1995, p.7) define it, code-switching involves bilinguals of two or more languages by alternating between their known languages in one conversation or discourse exchange. In a similar fashion, code-switching was defined by Poplack (1980, p. 583) as "the alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence, or constituent." In the sociolinguistic literature, code-switching is viewed as a socio-cultural and linguistic phenomenon happening in many multilingual societies or in schooling settings where language users/learners practice their native language(s) with other second or foreign languages they speak to communicate through their daily situations (Mazur, Karolczak, Rzepka and Araki, 2016).

In this vein, Mazur, Karolczak, Rzepka and Araki (2016) theorised that code-switching takes account of two related processes: i.e., code-mixing and code-changing, the former with code-switching taking place at the lexical level in language situations where teachers or students may find no immediate corresponding word or sentence in the target language, whereas the latter case of code-switching, i.e., code-changing, occurs at the semantic level, in case an idea may be better formed in the native language than in the target foreign language.

Code-switching is often practised in multilingual situations and in environments where English is used or learnt as a foreign language, where there is a miscellany of languages and multilingual speakers who switch their languages in a 'conversational episode' to facilitate their understanding of the communicative

messages (Al Masaeed, 2013, p. 13). Thus, code-switching in its own right includes some type of language swapping between languages, or even between dialectal alterations, or stylistic adjustments in the spoken language especially in conversation situations. Likewise, Romaine (1994) defines code-switching as a communication strategy readily at hand to a language learning community much similarly as swapping between linguistic styles or dialects in the case of monolingual speakers.

Furthermore, researchers such as Auer (1995) describe code-switching as a healthy discourse strategy through which language users, basically bilinguals, may switch the code to indicate an explanation of some vague point through comments, topic shifts, or extensions of any other discourse features. Auer (1995) further explains that resorting to the students' mother tongue "provides specific resources not available to monolingual speakers for the constitution of socially meaningful verbal activities" (p. 115).

Simply couched, code-switching is a communicative strategy used by bilinguals or multilinguals to keep "going from one language to the other in mid-speech when both speakers know the same two languages" (Cook, 2008, p. 174).

Based on such oft-cited definitions, it can be adduced that code-switching is viewed as a sociolinguistic common practice consisting of whole language switches; it can also involve variations in dialect, vocabulary use, change of style or even pragmatic alterations and syntactic or structural variances at the lexical, phrasal or even discoursal levels. Therefore, code-switching is a discrete language behaviour of foreign language learners, which denotes a concomitant feature of their communicative process (MacSwan, 2000).

However, various sociolinguistic variables and features of communicative language use affect code-switching (Lipski, 1985; MacSwan, 2004; McClure, 1981; Poplack, 1980). Code-switching is resorted to naturally in bilingual speech and by bilingual or multilingual language users in human language communities. This process is 'socially embedded' in communicative language situations where the fluency of communication is influenced by cognitive challenges such as memory, lapses in communication and easy access to a community of language users who know both the native language and target language (Lanza, 2008, p. 73). To clarify this process, Weinreich (1968) explains that language learners or users may resort to code-switching when a language contact situation entails some obscure socio-cultural situations that need to be further clarified in intelligible discourse (p. 83), indicating that when the target language is used by interlocutors who use the target language but share the same native language, they tend to switch the code naturally to keep on the communication process.

In this context, Thomason and Kaufman (1988) maintain that in social contexts, code-switching is resorted to in real-time language use where 'contact-induced' factors determine language switches in the communicative language situation. Researchers further claim that social situations govern the reasons and mechanisms for code-switching, irrespective of the requirements of the language use situation, especially when the flow of communication or fluency is threatened by

discontinuation. In this vein, case studies show significant differences in codeswitching behaviours in individuals involved in bilingual or multilingual speech communities (Moyer, 1998; Poplack, 1980; Zentella, 1997).

Extant research in bilingualism and emanating theories has tackled the sociolinguistic and socio-cultural features of learners' native language and the target language in real-time communicative language use situations. This research suggests that code-switching plays a role in intercultural communication (e.g., Heller, 1982; Myers-Scotton, 1993a; 1993b; Li Wei, 1994). For example, Angermeyer (2010) summarises research on code-switching from a sociolinguistic perspective as follows:

“It is perhaps no coincidence that these studies rank among the most prominent and influential examples of codeswitching research, as the divergence in speakers' repertoires has allowed researchers to interpret incidents of codeswitching to the participants' language preferences and to the macro-sociolinguistic factors that condition them” (p.469).

At present, foreign language educators have developed their interest in the study of code-switching, especially in situations where EFL is taught in classrooms. Previous research indicated that foreign language learners could use the target language communicatively in their daily conversations with their peers and teachers steadily as a result of the interactions between EFL speakers, language situations, communicative messages, discourse content, or the topics therein (Genesee, 2000, 2002; Genesee, Boivin, & Nicoladis, 1996). These variables cover the mode, theme and topic of all types of human discourse that may necessitate interlocutors to resort to code-switching. In this vein, sociolinguistic research considers code-switching as 'a vehicle for their social play' (Gort, 2012; Reyes, 2001). Therefore, code-switching is best investigated within the realms of sociolinguistics, and especially within the peripheries of bilingualism research (Genesee, 2002; Gort, 2006; Kenner, 2004; Zentella, 1997).

Extant research investigated several types of code-switching (Jingxia, 2010; Blom and Gumperz, 1972; Poplack, 1980; Milroy and Muysken, 1995; Krishna, 2010) from pedagogical, linguistic and sociolinguistic perspectives. The most detailed study on code-switching was conducted by Gumperz (1982) in which the researcher classified code-switching into two types, conversational and situational. Conversational code-switching is “the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems” (Gumperz, 1982, p. 59). Code-switching of this kind is likely to take place subconsciously while non-native speakers of the target language are prompted by some factors when conversing per se in oral discourse.

However, situational code-switching is defined as changes in language choice. These changes are caused by the situation in which the target language is spoken. Situational code-switching may happen at a learning place, a workplace, or any public gathering where the situation requires formality of language use. According to

Gumperz's (1982) taxonomy, classroom code-switching can be considered as a type of situational code-switching.

Merritt et al. (1992) contended that switching the code in EFL classrooms is inevitably more complicated than it can be legislated by language policy that regulates instruction language use in classrooms. Even though English language teachers and learners are recommended to use English only, classroom factors could be more attractive to code-switching for both learners and teachers. Teachers plausibly resort to code-switch to the native language of the students for various functions and reasons. Subsequently, code-switching in this research is the alternative use of English and Arabic in English classes by the teachers.

Code-switching in foreign language classrooms is a common practice, usually resorted to for the facility of using the mother tongue of learners or for ease of helping in the development of the target language (Lai, 1996; Cole, 1998; Critchley, 1999; Schweers, 1999; Burden, 2001; Tang, 2002; Greggio & Gil, 2007). In this regard, Qing (2010) suggests that code-switching is a beneficial tool in serving some sociolinguistic functions that enhance the language-learning environment. Schweers (1999) pointed out that the majority of EFL teachers in Spain are prompted to use code-switching in their classes either by the necessity of wanting to ease the language of instruction or to make teaching some ambiguous grammatical points of explanations of the new lexicon for the learners. Schweers's (1999) study also claims that code-switching is more effective and less time-consuming, especially in teaching grammar points or new vocabulary.

However, Cook (2001; 2002) claims that two conditions should be considered while resourcing code-switching by language teachers. First, code-switching must be averted in the case of multilingual classrooms, as it will be useless and more confusing for most students who do not speak the same language as a native tongue. Secondly, the teachers and students' proficiencies should be highly considered in appropriately defining the circumstances when efficient code-switching could be usefully practiced.

However, code-switching is recommended to be used by students with low English proficiency to clarify the meaning or explain grammar. With high-level students of English proficiency, code-switching should be strictly prohibited. However, in EFL contexts where students are exposed only to English as an EMI, code-switching may be detrimental to developing their communication skills with native speakers in the target language. This argument was supported in many previous studies (See, for example, Eldridge, 1996 and Sert, 2005) whose findings suggested that the practice of code-switching in translation instruction all the time could eventually be conducive to preventing students from autonomous, self-directed learning.

Motivations for Code-switching

Anecdotal evidence from action research and empirical research findings from controlled experimental studies demonstrate that using the first language to alternate the target language is archetypally used as a resource and stratagem in foreign

language learning and communication. As such, code-switching can help language learners acquire the meanings of unknown vocabulary and understand grammar rules (Eldridge, 1996; Grima, 2001; Macaro, 2001; Martin-Jones, 1995). Therefore, code-switching is a characteristically mutual practice of bilinguals and multilinguals and as a typical educational behaviour in EFL learning/teaching settings. Code-switching is thus a unique language phenomenon expressive of the processes involved in communicative language use (MacSwan, 2000). Previous studies have established that code-switching is a complex, rule-governed, and regular communicative strategy naturally utilised by competent bilingual/multilingual language users in any language use situation (Gingràs, 1974; Pfaff, 1979; Timm, 1975).

Previous studies that early explored the phenomenon of code-switching (e.g. Blom and Gumperz, 1972) were partly influenced by the seminal research of Ferguson's (1959) and Fishman's (1965), especially concerning their research on diglossia and register in pedagogical research.

Extant research in the EFL context further showed that English language learners who resort to code-switching with their partners in conversational dyads are still in a developing stage of foreign language learning; the more they resort to code-switching, the less proficiency level they attain (Fantini, 1985; Genesee, 2001; Meisel, 2004; Paradis, Nicoladis, & Genesee, 2000). EFL learners stereotypically and methodically use code-switching as a function of the difficulty of the communicative message and, partially, the topic of conversation (Genesee, 2000, 2002; Genesee, Boivin, & Nicoladis, 1996).

Foreign language learners have been found to resort to code-switching in various ways determined by the roles of interlocutors in contact or conversation dyads (Blom & Gumperz, 1972; 1982b; Valdés-Fallis, 1976). Therefore, the reasons why interlocutors resort to code-switching typically relate to the topic, the mode and the theme of oral or conversational discourse. Some conversational topics are expressed in some languages better and more sufficiently than others. As such, language users resort to code-switching during oral discourse because they feel they can better express themselves in the language they code-switch to. In this sense, Stroud aptly observed that, "speakers who code-switch are seen as appealing to the rights, obligations and identities associated with each language" (Stroud, 1998, p. 322). Therefore, scholars identified some sort of association between language and culture which induces interlocutors to switch the code if it helps them to accentuate their identity more emphatically. In this sense, Cheng (2013) aptly observed,

"multilingual speakers use two or more languages as a way of accomplishing a vast array of functions in interaction, such as identity construction, stance-taking, and the building up of diverse social relations." (p. 870).

Furthermore, code-switching could be influenced by attitudes and motivations. EFL learners generally tend to express their ideas in their native language more frequently and easily than in the target language, primarily when motivated. Topics of discourse, or themes, influence the liability of learners to resort to code-switching.

For example, cultural themes, including customs, traditions and religion, may adduce Arab learners to code-switch to Arabic when they speak English or talk about such topics in English. In such language contact situations, learners openly code-switch to Arabic in conversations to make communication better accessible (Reyes, 2001). Consequently, language users typically use codeswitching as a natural communicative approach to facilitate bilingualism (Genesee, 2002; Gort, 2006; Kenner, 2004; Zentella, 1997).

Researchers and practitioners in the ELT fields suggested that code-switching strategies can be used to develop better attitudes and enhance motivations for learning as well as help in the transfer of learning through maintaining classroom social cohesion and maintaining discipline in classroom management (Creese & Martin, 2003; Ferguson, 2003; Heller and Martin-Jones, 2001). Researchers also investigated the socio-psychological paybacks of deep code-switching, implying that restricting target language use as an instructional strategy in ELT settings could lead to conflicts and tensions in foreign language classrooms (Baker, 2000; Cummins, 1991, 2000; Fishman, 1991; Ma, 2012; Lee, Wei and Martin, 2009). For example, Lee, Wei, and Martin (2009) suggested that restricting the "one language only" policy in foreign language learning environments might produce...

“tensions and conflicts between the dominant language ideologies and policies in the so-called bilingual education programmes on the one hand and the actual practices of teachers and pupils on the other” (Li, Wei & Wu, 2009, p. 208).

The area of code-switching has recently appeared as an emergent research trend in both sociolinguistics and TESOL, thus giving birth to a variety of significant research in foreign language education communities of late. Myers-Scott (1993) stated that interest in code-switching arose in 1972. Gardner-Chloros (2009) referred to code-switching as a sociolinguistic process which entails "using two or more languages in the same conversation or utterance" (p. 97). Gumperz (1982a), a pioneer in code-switching research, categorised code-switching into two classifications: conversational code-switching and situational code-switching. Conversion-based code-switching occurs when interlocutors are motivated by different psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic factors while speaking, while situational code-switching occurs according to the requirements of the context in which conversations occur.

According to Gumperz's classification of code-switching, classroom-based context code-switching relates to situational code-switching. Prior research on code-switching found that attitudes and motivations affect and are affected by code-switching in terms of its social effects and its functions (Abalhassan & Alshalawi, 2000; Auer, 2002; Al-Khatib, 2003; Gumperz, 1982a; Holmes, 2000; Ibrahim et al., 2013; Muthusamy, 2009; Nerghes, 2011; Woolard, 2004). Despite the plethora of research on code-switching in EFL contexts, very few were launched to investigate the role of code-switching in the EFL classroom context in Egypt, and virtually no previous research was conducted to explore the impact of code-switching on

Egyptian EFL university teachers' attitudes towards teaching in English only and the students' motivations for learning English.

Attitudes towards Code-switching

Code-switching is a natural language event that occurs in foreign language classrooms. Prior research suggested that code-switching can be an essential factor in enhancing English language teaching and learning by better impacting teachers' and students' attitudes and motivations (Lai, 1996; Cole, 1998; Critchley, 1999; Schweers, 1999; Burden, 2001; Tang, 2002; Greggio & Gil, 2007). Moreover, Qing (2002), in this sense, advocated that code-switching could be utilised as an innovative strategy to improve teaching and learning in the foreign language-learning milieu. In this vein, too, Schweers (1999) could deduce that many English-Spanish teachers were motivated to use code-switching in their classes, and they liked code-switching as an effective teaching strategy, thereby developing better attitudes towards the strategy. However, in Schweers's study, the participants revealed that code-switching could spare them more time in word explanations to use in additional language use activities.

Nevertheless, in EFL learning/teaching settings, where students receive instruction in English only, code-switching could negatively impact the flow of communication in real-time language contact situations (Al-Mohanna, 2010; Al-Seghayer, 2005; Ospanova, 2017). For example, Ospanova (2017) found that EFL college students perceived code-switching negatively as a marker of professional and linguistic incompetence which "hinders the development of their English language proficiencies" (p. 49). Therefore, some researchers such as Eldridge (1996) and Sert (2005) contended that irrational code-switching through translation to the native language of students could ultimately end up in students refraining from developing fluency in the target language.

The rationale for Code-switching in EFL Teaching Settings

Prior research revealed that teachers and students demonstrated several reasons or pedagogical functions for code-switching (Suleiman, 2000; Holmes, 2000; Auer, 2002; Al-Khatib, 2003; Alsbai, 2010; Abdel Tawwab, 2014). For instance, Abdel Tawwab (2014) found out that language learners tend to code-switch from one language to another to show that they belong to a particular social group, partake in social encounters, or engage in short discussions, influenced by their desire to express certain emotions or show they do not understand specific content. Therefore, code-switching performs the social function of maintaining solidarity in a group of learners. In this meaning, Martin-Jones (1995, p. 98) further indicates that "whenever a bilingual with the same language background switches into shared codes, s/he unfailingly expresses harmony with and support for other peer learners in a classroom environment". Therefore, code-switching is functionally used in more exquisite and diversified ways in EFL classrooms for managing communication. Martin-Jones (1995) further remarks that "Teachers and learners exploit code contrasts to demarcate different types of discourse, negotiate and renegotiate joint frames of reference, and exchange meaning on the spur of the moment" (p. 98).

In this context, Holmes (2000) points out, "a speaker may switch to another language as a signal to group membership and shared ethnicity within the recipient." In a similar way, al-Khatib (2003) found that interlocutors could code-switch in cases where they wanted to show good attitudes towards the target language or indicate that they belong to an elite that speaks the target language. As Alsbey (2010) studied code-switching in Arabic and English as a medium of instruction, the research findings showed that learners were typically inclined to switching the code to English to show that they were classy and highly esteemed.

Teachers tend to practice code-switching to impose discipline and classroom management rules especially when they need to make their rules clear to the students (Nzwanga, 2000). They also tend to code-switch to the native language of students when they want to present, explain, or comment on an excerpt of reading or listening passage presented to the students in the target language. Teachers believe that code-switching can make meanings more accessible, understandable and easier to process on the part of the students.

Prior research has shown that code-switching may work in cases where one word is missing in both languages. Thus, teachers use code exchange to elucidate the meanings of words, sentences, concepts or chunks of discourse that may interfere with listening comprehension (Gumperz, 1982b; Karen, 2003; Tien & Liu, 2006). For example, Qing (2010) revealed that EFL instructors code-switched to the students' native language by translating vague vocabulary and explaining difficult grammar points. Gomperez (1982a) noted that code-switching allows teachers to elucidate the meanings of new complex vocabulary and thus could help enhance learning.

Congruently with his research, Auerbach (1993) acknowledged various justifications why teachers and students in foreign language learning settings resort to code branding, including *inter alia*, classroom management, grammar rule drilling and explanation, and giving directions and checking comprehension, and facilitating cultural impediments. The findings of Walt's research (2008) on the role of code-switching in English language learning classes showed that teachers code-switched to Afrikaans to give instructions and check the students' comprehension.

Research Methodology:

Sampling

A sample of EFL college students (N=204) in the Faculty of Education, Beni Suef University, Egypt. The 204 students included 123 females and 81 males for the survey study, while 15 of them were randomly selected for semi-structured interviews. These participants were selected purposefully to participate in this study. They participated in interviews, questionnaires and teaching observation to determine the reasons for code-switching, its sociolinguistic functions, their attitudes towards learning English and motivations for learning in EFL learning situations where code-switching repeatedly occurred. Differences between males and females on the role of code-switching in influencing students' motivations and attitudes were further investigated.

Research Method and Design

The mixed-methods approach was adopted for this study to support a post-assessment design for data collection and analysis to cut down on the flaws of adopting either quantitative or qualitative data analysis. The reason for using the mixed-methods approach is to attempt to reach conclusions with more confidence and to provide valid results and outcomes (Cresswell, 2009). Cohen et al. (2007) believe that “[t]he usage of a mixture of research approaches helps in collecting more comprehensive and vigorous data and helps to make the researcher more confident that his findings are valid” (p.233).

This study was designed to include a descriptive survey method to examine the attitudes of EFL teachers towards code-switching and its sociolinguistic functions in EFL classes. Participant students in the study were observed for two hours a week over the course of an entire semester while learning English in their classrooms as field notes were taken by the researcher for their use of code-switching in Listening/Speaking class classroom activities. After classroom observations, participants were surveyed to explore their attitudes towards code-switching, the reasons for using it while teaching English in their classrooms, and the role of code-switching in driving their motivations.

Data collection and instrumentation:

A motivations/attitudes survey was developed to collect details about the participants’ attitudes and motivations. Attitudes and motivations in this study were explored through a 5-point Likert Scale based on the original 7-point Likert Scale format of Gardner’s Attitude / Motivation Test Battery (AMI), with the sub-scales ranging from ‘Strongly Agree’ to ‘Strongly Disagree’. (Gardner, 1960, Revised version 2004). There are 45 questions in the motivation questionnaire. The motivation questionnaire consists of two main parts: integrative motivation (items 1-45) and instrumental motivation (items 1-12). Further semi-structured interviews were manipulated to collect the qualitative data for this study. The interview questions introspected the participants about how they perceive the positive functions of code-switching in EFL classrooms, how they perceive the negative influences of this practice, how they relate it to proficiency levels and communication circumstances. The interview also questioned the sub-sample on their views of code-switching as a tool for obtaining clarifications and explanations of vague language points and the psychological barriers that stimulate the practice of code-switching.

Results

1. Quantitative data analysis

A Pearson’s correlation coefficient was run to demonstrate the relationships between practising code-switching and students' motivations and attitudes towards learning English. Table 1 below shows these correlations:

Table 1

Pearson’s correlation matrix between code-switching, motivations and attitudes

variables		Code-switching	Motivations	Attitudes
Code-switching	Pearson	1	.938 ^{**}	.974 ^{**}

	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	204	204	204
Motivations	Pearson Correlation	.938**	1	.896**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	204	204	204
Attitudes	Pearson Correlation	.974**	.896**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	204	204	204

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 above shows that code-switching is strongly correlated with motivations ($\gamma = .938, p \geq 0.01$) and with attitudes ($\gamma = .974, p \geq 0.01$).

A t-test for independent samples was computed for males and females to determine if there were any differences between both genders in their motivations and attitudes being influenced by code-switching. Table 2 below sums up the t-test results:

Table 2

Results of t-test for the mean differences between males and females on motivations and attitudes

Variables	Sub-sample	Sample size	Means	SD	Mean Differences	t-value	Sig.
code switching	Males	81	36.66	8.131	0.8049	0.731	.466
	Females	123	37.47	7.402			
Motivations	Males	81	85.93	22.88	2.2812	0.707	.480
	Females	123	88.22	22.30			
Attitudes	Males	81	138.93	25.65	2.3869	0.700	.484
	Females	123	141.32	22.52			

Table 2 above shows no statistically differences between males and females as to their motivations and attitudes being influenced by code-switching.

A simple linear regression analysis was further run to recognise the effect of code-switching as an independent variable on the dependent variables (students' motivations for and attitudes towards learning English). The coefficient of determination or R squared (R^2) was calculated to identify the explanatory ability of code-switching in determining the relationship between code-switching and students' motivations for and their attitudes towards learning English, as is shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3

The Coefficient of Determination (R Squared) of Simple Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Squared	Adjusted Square	RStd. Error of the Estimate
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1	.938 ^a	.880	.880	7.8100
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Table 2 above shows that the coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.880, which means that code-switching explains 88% of any changes occurring in students' motivations, while 12% of these changes may be attributed to other factors such as random errors. To make sure this simple regression analysis fit, an ANOVA was run, the results of which are shown in Table 4 below:

Table 4
Model Fit: ANOVA Results for the Effect of Code-switching on Motivations

Model	Sum Squares	of df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	90522.656	1	90522.656	1484.066	.000
1 Residual	12321.266	202	60.996		
Total	102843.922	203			

ANOVA results show the significance of the effect of code-switching on students' motivations ($F=1484.06$, $p \geq 0.01$), which indicates that this simple regression model is fit for describing the relationship between code-switching and students' motivations for learning English. To test the significance of regression coefficients, Table 5 below summarises the results:

Table 5
Testing regression coefficients

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	-14.699	2.704		-5.436	.000
1 Codeswitching	2.746	.071	.938	38.524	.000

Table 4 above shows that the regression coefficient is 2.746 ($t = -5.436$, $p \geq 0.01$), indicating that the regression coefficient in the model is statistically significant ($\beta = -14.699$, $t = 38.524$, $p \geq 0.01$), which eventually proves that the independent variable (code-switching) is a statistically significant constant. Using the simple regression analysis equation ($Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X$), where Y refers to the dependent variable (motivations), β_0 refers to the constant (the distance between the intersection of the straight line with the Y-axis and the original point), β_1 refers to the slope and X refers to the independent variable (code-switching). The following equation could predict any changes in motivations attributable to code-switching:

$$\text{Motivations} = -14.699 + 2.746 \text{ codeswitching}$$

Thus, one change in motivations results from practising code-switching to the amount of 2.746.

As for the effect of code-switching on students' attitudes towards learning English, Table 6 below shows the Adjusted R Squared or the coefficient of determination.

Table 6

Adjusted R Squared for the effect of code-switching on attitudes

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	RStd. Error of the Estimate
1	.974 ^a	.949	.949	5.3892

The adjusted R squared value ($R^2=0.880$) indicates that code-switching explains 95% of changes occurring to students' attitudes towards learning English when it is practised, while the other 5% may be attributed to other factors, including random error.

Table 7

Model Fit: ANOVA Results for the Effect of Code-switching on attitudes

Model	Sum Squares	of df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	108967.101	1	108967.101	3751.828	.000 ^b
	Residual	5866.835	202	29.044		
	Total	114833.936	203			

As Table 7 above shows, ANOVA results show the significance of the effect of code-switching on students' motivations ($F=3751.828$, $p \geq 0.01$), which indicates that this simple regression model is fit for describing the relationship between code-switching and students' attitudes towards learning English. To test the significance of regression coefficients, Table 8 below summarises the results:

Table 8

Testing regression coefficients

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.	
1	(Constant)	28.453	1.866		15.250	.000
	Codeswitching	3.013	.049	.974	61.252	.000

Table 7 above shows that the regression coefficient is 3.013 ($t=-15.250$, $p \geq 0.01$), indicating that the regression coefficient in the model is statistically significant ($\beta=-28.453$, $t=61.252$, $p \geq 0.01$), eventually demonstrating that the independent variable (code-switching) is a statistically significant constant. Using the simple regression analysis, it could be predicted that any changes in attitudes are attributable to code-switching according to the following formula:

$$attitudes = 28.453 + 3.013 \text{ codeswitching}$$

Therefore, one change in attitudes results from practising code-switching to the amount of 3.013.

2. Qualitative data analysis

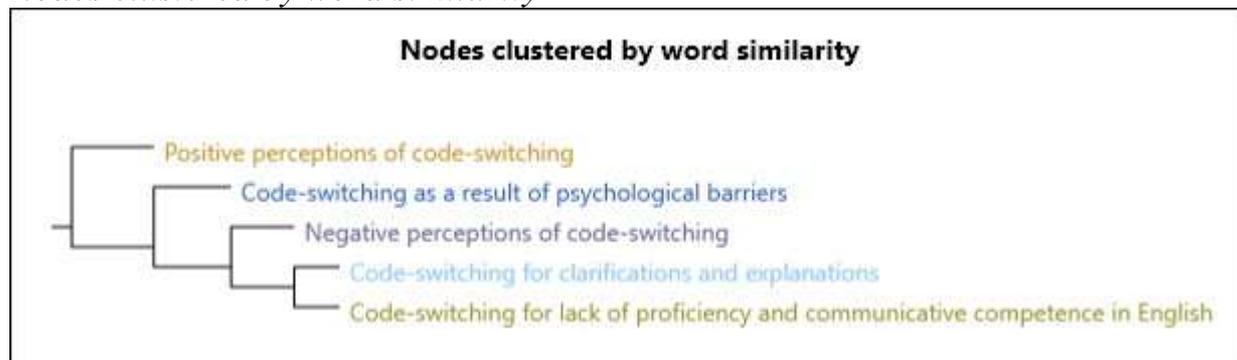
This section presents the analysis of the qualitative data collected through representatively selected semi-structured interviews with the university students who participated in this study to introspect into their experiences with and perceptions of code-switching in the EFL learning classroom. The purpose of data collection at this phase was to gain more in-depth into the issues with which this study is concerned, as well as to provide support for the quantitative findings discussed in the previous section.

Towards this aim, the researcher gathered the participants' perceptions and perspectives about their attitudes and motivations for learning English when code-switching is practiced extensively in the classroom to identify the influence and functions of code-switching on students' motivations for and attitudes towards learning English. A total of fifteen interview scripts were collected from the students' interviews and transcribed for analysis via NVivo (Vers. 10) by the end of the semester.

Via NVivo, the interviewees scripts were resourced and coded to identify the main themes or nodes that describe the major contributions of the participants. This part of data analysis integrates and supports the quantitative findings of this study in order to explore and query the participants' perceptions and perspectives of code-switching in their college level specialised programme. By analysing available data from the sources in interviews, the researcher was able to extract five nodes or themes clustered in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1

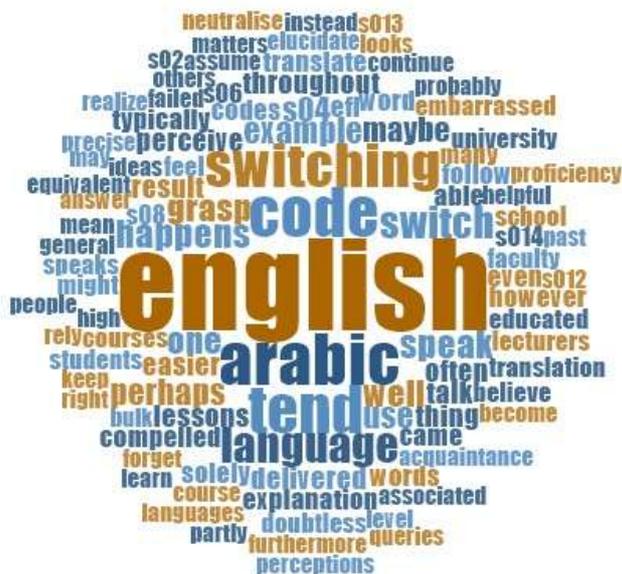
Nodes clustered by word similarity



In addition, Figure 2 below provides a word cloud that summarises the interview responses of the research group after the interviews. The dominant, prominent word that appears bigger and bolder in the text of the interviews is English, followed by Arabic, then switching code, then language; these words appeared to be more often mentioned in the interview texts, and they seem to be more important. Other words of relevance in word size and colour are tend, switch, code, explanation, perceptions, etc.

Figure 2

Word Cloud for the Interview Responses of the Research Group after the Intervention



In interviews, the participants selected (N=15) were presented with five questions in an attempt to elicit their responses regarding their experience with code-switching in terms of its pros and cons. Thus, the codes created corresponded to the following interview questions:

1. How do interviewees perceive code-switching in terms of its positive functions?
2. How do interviewees perceive code-switching in terms of its negative influences?
3. How do interviewees experience code-switching as a function of proficiency level and communicative competence?
4. How do interviewees view code-switching as a tool for clarifications and explanations of vague points in lessons and classroom communication?
5. How do interviewees view code-switching as a result of psychological barriers?

Positive functions of code-switching

Even though the students perceived code-switching as a positive practice in terms of facilitating communication in the classroom community, some still have negative perspectives of the practice due to the distractions it imposes on the learning process and the nature of communicative language learning pedagogy; however, the majority of the students suggested that code-switching occurs subconsciously or involuntarily due to pitfalls in communication among peers or among the professors and the students.

Some scholars defined code-switching as a subconscious process that occurs involuntarily, especially when students are unable to understand new lexicon or complicated structures in oral discourse. Code-switching, therefore, becomes an automatic, subconscious practice in the EFL classroom: two examples were clearly observed in the interviews as below:

“Anyway, we tend to speak Arabic although the topic or lecture is presented in English. It [code-switching] happens unconsciously; our

professors tend to speak English throughout, but we sometimes stop for asking for rewording or repeating. We do this in Arabic, and we expect that the clarification is given in Arabic. This happens unintentionally unnoticed.” (S014)

“When unknown vocabulary, phrases or sentences appear, I tend to elicit explanations in Arabic, and this happens naturally unnoticed. Honestly, we want to learn English in and through English, but code-switching happens naturally. If we come across incomprehensible chunks of speech, we seek translation or you have to translate yourself in a natural process.” (S09)

“It looks to me as well as to other students, in several cases, we tend to code-switch after we are finished with translation tasks, and above all, when we discuss our written translations” (S08).

“If I should translate an item or a piece of work swiftly, I instantly tend to resort to translating. this can be once code-switching occurs” (S04).

Given this subconscious practice of code-switching, practically two thirds of the interviewees viewed code-switching as a beneficial process for enriching their vocabulary, enhancing their comprehension and keeping up with the topic of the lecture. The following excerpts from some participants’ interview scripts highlight this observation:

“Yes, when code-switching happens by switching the code to Arabic, there are benefits since we are inclined to translating from Arabic into English. English is harder than Arabic when it comes to descriptive linguistics and structure. Therefore, we tend to follow and, probably, progress in improving our English language” (S015).

“They may perceive that we cannot understand all the words in English, and typically we tend to say in Arabic what we cannot specifically understand in English. Then, our professors will facilitate the process to translate what we tend not to understand or learn well, and say “Here, this can be a right thing to do” (S04).

“It [Code-switching] is beneficial in the end. you continue to have to be compelled to higher justify a word. Hence, code-switching takes place exclusively in such occurrences” (S02).

Some interviewees explained that they resorted to code-switching because sometimes, they forgot the right words or phrases or when their comprehension falls down; others expressed that they worried about their English and about their responses if said in bad English, so they resorted to code-switching to provide precise responses in Arabic. Others explained that switching the code for Arabic is beneficial to maintain effective communication, especially with the professors or when their language proficiency/competency fails them to express their thoughts. The following excerpts give sense to this argument:

“Most of my colleagues and professors, too, often follow code-switching. Probably, as a result of being compelled to make sure our answers are correctly said or when we need to get across the meanings we need to convey to peers or the professors; we think in English once it's attainable for us, but we respond in Arabic to make our answers precise. Language level doubtless matters as well” (S08).

“Maybe, they believe that we cannot understand all their English, and typically we are able to say in Arabic what we cannot translate or say in English” (S05).

“If a word or phrase or whole sentence evades your memory [in English] or someone begins to speak Arabic, then you may pursue the communication in English or Arabic as you wish which is accepted by peers and teachers as well” (S06).

“Maybe code-switching may well be helpful for effective communication with my professors, particularly once we discuss new topics during which my vocabulary vary is restricted.” (S014)

“Most of my colleagues and professors, too, often follow code-switching. Probably, as a result of being compelled to make sure our answers are correctly said or when we need to get across the meanings we need to convey to peers or the professors; we think in English once it's attainable for us, but we respond in Arabic to make our answers precise. Language level doubtless matters as well” (S08).

As for the influence of code-switching on students' motivations for and attitudes towards learning English, many respondents concurred that the practice of code-switching is exciting and is, in many cases, useful for enhancing students' motivations and attitudes:

“I feel excited about speaking English. However, I don't realize it would be bizarre once everyone speaks English, and one speaks Arabic out of the blue, notwithstanding the cases when one forgets what to say, it's doable to use a less complicated corresponding meaning in the language I feel it more easy for me, generally my native language, Arabic; code-switching motivates us to seek for clarifications, explanations and even to look for alternative vocabulary and grammar structures easy to use when one fails to use intricate structures and diction” (S02)

“I am a lot of motivated to talk English at school, however code-switching practiced by academics and a few different students turns me off!” (S03)

“I like it when professors explain literature, drama or novel in English, but follow it with Arabic translations. I like code-switching

because it ensures that we understand every point the teacher wants to get across us."

However, despite the many benefits of code-switching in the English classroom, many of them believed that using English as the language of instruction should be held as the medium of pedagogy. Some expressed the idea that Arabic could be prohibited to improve their listening and speaking skills in English:

"Well, I could generally say it looks to me more appealing if firm rules are regulated to prevent code-switching. If we, for example, were banned to talk in Arabic when we took our lectures in English, this would force us to be ready to speak English, to raise queries in English. But now, I believe my colleagues are somehow stress-free to switch the code if this is easy for them." (S011).

"As before, if a course is wholly taught in English, each student and lecturer ought to use the English language solely. If we tend to all switch between many instances of Arabic and English, what language can we tend to master, then? but, if my groupmates realize this follow helpful, I doubtless won't argue. It doesn't hassle me, but to get our ideas across all students, maybe we can switch the code" (S04).

I feel excited to talk English at school and that I hate it once others speak Arabic instead of English!" (S013)

Negative influences of code-switching

Despite the many benefits of code-switching between English and Arabic, there are some noticeable perils and negative perceptions identified by the students. Some students (23.79% of the sample) perceived code-switching as an impediment to developing their English language skills. The excerpts from the interviews with some participants emphasise this argument:

"Well, I don't get any benefit of code-switching in real learning. I simply believe, in fact, if a course is meant to be taught in English, then it ought to be strictly presented in English, and not the native language of the students. I mean, I might better not use other languages than English if I really want to advance my level in this language." (S03)

"I like better to speak English instead of resort to code-switching as a result of I prefer to observe the English language at school because it is that the solely whereabouts to use the language in my community" (S012)

"I have an acquaintance, a new colleague who came to this college a year past. She came from a nearby university, where they had all the courses taught and learned in English. Her background made me think that it's easier for her to speak and write English whereas, for us, it's not. Our lectures are taught partly in English, and mostly in Arabic, which is not a good opportunity for many of us. However, we

tend to not learn the language fully or more perfectly if Arabic is used as the language of instruction.” (S05).

To be honest, I failed to rely on it [Code-switching], it happens naturally without arrangements. And, if there's a necessity for translation, you start to translate right away. this can be a second nature to the students” (S014).

Approximately less than a third of the respondents were against code-switching, given its negative influence on language development or on interference and interlanguage errors. The following response excerpts support this argument in their own words:

“Well, I can't see many advantages in code-switching between Arabic and English. If a course is to be taught in English, then it should be completely taught in this language. Inserting Arabic is not good to our English language skills development. I would better learn English through English outright!” (S08)

“As before, if a course is wholly taught in English, each student and lecturer ought to use the English language solely. If we tend to all switch between many instances of Arabic and English, what language can we tend to master, then? but, if my groupmates realize this follow helpful, I doubtless won't argue. It doesn't hassle me, but to get our ideas across all students, maybe we can switch the code” (S04).

Code-switching for lack of proficiency and communicative competence in English

Approximately 67.22% of the respondents agreed that code-switching is practiced due to lack of communicative competence or lower proficiency levels:

“Perhaps code-switching may well be helpful for effective communication with my professors, particularly once we discuss new topics during which my vocabulary vary is restricted. But many of us resort to code-switching due to one's bad English or weak communication skills” (S014)

“Perhaps, our faculty lecturers perceive that we tend to cannot grasp all the words, for example, in English, and usually we are able to say in Arabic what we tend to use Arabic, too” (S04).

“Maybe our professors have realised that we cannot know all the words and sentences they utter in English, so they allow us and allow themselves to speak Arabic to help us understand what they say. (S02)

Therefore, two thirds of the sample interviewed perceive code-switching takes place involuntarily as a result of lacking the sufficient competence in English. Curiously, the researcher believes that when students realise their language proficiency is low, they feel it lawful to resort to codeswitching. However, the informants also concurred that being fluent in English does not mean that students may switch the code if it suits them.

Code-switching for clarifications and explanations

About 42.21% of the sample concurred that code-switching is typically practiced for seeking clarifications and explanations.

“Maybe they perceive that we tend to cannot grasp all the words, as an example, in English, and typically we tend to say in Arabic what we tend not to understand specifically in English. Then, our professors will facilitate the process to translate what we tend not to understand or learn well, and say “Here, this can be a right thing to do” (S04).

“Because typically you can't specify the meaning of one thing in English associated with the ongoing lesson, you've got to change to Arabic for an explanation” (S04).

“Code-switching could be beneficial in the end. you continue to have to be compelled to higher justify what to say if our English fails us. Therefore, code-switching happens as a necessity in such conditions” (S02).

“Some of our lecturers switch the codes after they wish to elucidate to us the way to do associate exercise, etc.” (S09).

“Yes, they go for code-switching. But, again and again, they are doing it so as to make communication clearer for all, after they (EFL faculty teachers) see that we don't usually understand what they say, they switch. However, this rarely happens” (S08)

Code-switching for the purposes of clarification or explanation indicates that this sociolinguistic practice happens subconsciously when students and teachers are blocked from understanding each other, and hence, they reticently believe they should allow for the students' first language to be partially used as a medium of instruction. Therefore, observing this study cohorts and their perspectives in the interviews while resorting to code-switching plausibly justifies the many instances the teachers and the students switched the code when there was a dire need for clarification of explanation of intricate lessons.

Code-switching as a result of psychological barriers

About 12.98% of the interviewees' responses indicated that code-switching is sometimes due to psychological barriers such as worries, shyness, anxiety, presenting some degree of distraction. Some participants said,

“Well, codeswitching is often a kind of barrier [to understanding] somehow, such switch is also a distraction. That is, once someone speaks English associated suddenly inserts an Arabic word or maybe a phrase. It implies that others ought to switch [the languages] in their heads. Yea, I failed to rely on it at all” (S010).

“Sometimes I'm afraid to be wrong, frequently. I believe that I will be able to give a wrong answer. Sometimes, my colleagues in the EFL classroom keep to talk in English, and while I don't understand what they say or the explanation of their sometimes unclear pieces of speech. In general, we tend to stay silent due to this” (S012).

“Maybe we tend to all have an equivalent reason [for code-switching]. we tend to simply fail to recall words or phrases that help us express our thoughts or ideas, or even once code-switching occurs impromptu. As an example, I’ll become uncomfortably nervous or too shy to speak up my mind; then and there, my colleagues conjointly get as embarrassed as I am. Perhaps this can be the explanation for many people having to code-switch between English and Arabic. even supposing they understand everything while they do not. After they get embarrassed, they can’t keep in mind what they need to say, so they significantly replace it with synchronic translations. Well, throughout discussions furthermore. Our lecturers too code-switch however maybe they often draw our attention to not use Arabic after we speak or answer a matter in English” (S013).

Some others expressed some sort of sympathy with the less able students who fail to express themselves adequately in English; they believe code-switching could be beneficial for these students at least psychologically as a motive for helping them develop their language proficiency through switching the code or help them get over their worries and jitters:

Perhaps many of us have a good reason to switch the code when we forget what to say in English or when the right word or words evade our memories. For example, I myself get embarrassed as my colleague also are embarrassed if they say something wrong in English. Even though we may know the correct response, our English may not help us express our ideas plainly and correctly, especially in literature classes or in translation classes or even during discussions as in novel lectures. (S09).

These perceptions and perspectives of the students in the interviews delineate their practices and awareness of code-switching in real life. The students' perceptions and perspectives are not wholly against code-switching but many of them have realised it to be an impediment to effective aural/oral skills development. However, the benefits of code-switching outweigh those of inhibiting or prohibiting this practice in the EFL classroom as students naturally and unconsciously resort to code-switching for seeking clarifications, asking for explanations or overcoming downfalls of communication in the language learning community. The practice of code-switching, however, hinges upon the teachers' management skills in the classroom, their communicative competences and those of the students and on balancing the benefits and perils of code-switching to foreign language learning or the detrimental influences of interlanguage and interference.

In addition, most of the participants' perceptions indicate that code-switching is a mixed blessing, but their entire perspectives cannot be predominantly positive or negative; however, a balanced practice of code-switching is preferred and could be motivating for learning the English.

Consequently, yet, interviewees indicated their preferences for switching the code to Arabic in cases when communication in English was down or when it would better induce enhanced attitudes towards learning English or motivating students to learn more. Therefore, positive perceptions were more observed to support and help the EFL learners to develop their sociolinguistic competences, and above all, the practice is involuntarily unconscious and cannot be prohibited.

Discussion

This study was conducted to investigate EFL college students' perceptions and perspectives about code-switching and the effect of the latter's practice on their motivations and attitudes. Using a mixed-methods research approach for gleaning and evaluating quantitative and qualitative data from 204 students (123 females and 81 males), it was found out that the students' perceptions were more positive than being negative and the functions of code-switching outweigh the disadvantages, even though some students viewed the subtle perils of code-switching as being detrimental to the growth of their communicative language competence.

As such, the results of this study are somewhat congruent with the findings from some extant research which suggested that applying a balanced use of code-switching could be conducive to improvements in attitudes and motivations (See for example, Creese & Martin, 2003; Ferguson, 2003; Heller and Martin-Jones, 2001). Perceptions of code-switching as a favourable language learning strategy for improving linguistic comprehension, listening comprehension and speaking skills were also emphasised in the quantitative and qualitative findings of the present research, which is also consistent with findings of prior research (Burden, 2001; Cole, 1998; Critchley, 1999; Greggio & Gil, 2007; Lai, 1996; Qing, 2002; Schweers, 1999; Tang, 2002). Therefore, the findings of this study advocate the utilisation of code-switching as an innovative strategy to improve teaching and learning in the foreign language-learning milieu. Students' perceptions and introspections about the influence of code-switching were detected in this study as having a significant influence on students' motivations and attitudes only if it were used in a balanced way (See for example, Schweers, 1999).

In addition, extant research, in congruence with the findings from the present study, showed that EFL professors and students have a variety of reasons for resorting to code-switching; in this study, five major reasons were identified in the qualitative data analysis, namely including psychological barriers such as worries, anxiety, speech jitters and shyness, seeking for clarifications, lack of proficiency and communicative competence in English, using it for improving comprehension, for developing vocabulary and for translation. These reasons for using code-switching as a pedagogical tool has its positive functions determined in this study and is supported by extant research findings (See for example, Abdel Tawwab, 2014; Al-Khatib, 2003; Alsbai, 2010; Auer, 2002; Holmes, 2000; Suleiman, 2000). There are also psychological functions that code-switching could play a positive role in: e.g., creating harmony and support among the members of a foreign language learning

community, which is also supported by research evidence identified in pertinent literature (e.g., Martin-Jones, 1995).

However, over-use of code-switching in the EFL college classroom could be detrimental to the students' learning. Participants in the interviews have suggested that too much switching the code is to the disadvantage of developing second language linguistic competence. This finding is consistent with Bailey's study (2011) and Ma's study (2014) who concluded that over-code-switching could negatively influence students' linguistic competence, which in turn, might negatively affect their future professionalism.

Nevertheless, the findings of this study are incongruent with those in the study of Ospanova (2017) which concluded that EFL college students' code-switching perceptions were almost negative to their language skills and future professionalism.

In addition, qualitative data analysis suggests that EFL college learners' proficiency levels is an important factor in impacting code-switching, but is yet considered as a driving motive for urging students to boost up their aural/oral skills. Students in this study viewed code-switching as beneficial and should not be neither inhibited nor prohibited in the EFL classroom as students naturally and unconsciously resort to code-switching for seeking clarifications, asking for explanations or overcoming downfalls of communication in the language learning community. This result is also in harmony with prior research by several authors (e.g., Alsbey, 2010; Holmes, 2000; Ma, 2012; Lee et al., 2009). This study compatibly complements and supports prior research findings which showed that the practice of code-switching should be encouraged as a teaching/learning strategy to elucidate the meanings of words, sentences, concepts or chunks of discourse that may interfere with listening comprehension (Auerbach, 1993; Gumperz, 1982b; Karen, 2003; Tien & Liu, 2006).

In conclusion, this study showed that most participants have had positive perceptions and perspectives about the pedagogical significance of code-switching in the EFL classroom, and it should be utilised in a balanced fashion within the English programme both as a medium of instruction and as a strategy to improve not only the language of the students but also the management of the classroom environment. Although no statistically significant differences between male and female cohorts were identified, the findings, almost from qualitative analysis, suggested that the participants were worried about their English proficiency, thus indicating that the practice of code-switching is unconscious, involuntary and occasional, which implies the need for raising students' and professors' awareness of this practice, its benefits and its perils for learning and teaching.

Limitations and Implications

This study is esoteric to the region it was conducted in and the participants who were involved, making the generalization of the findings quite impractical for other regions in the country or worldwide; however, the design and mixed-methods approach helped glean the students' perceptions, introspections and perspectives based on their real experiences could help explore the research questions further. The

students' quantitative responses on the survey could prove that code-switching was perceived to be of relevance and of impact on the students' attitudes towards and motivations for learning English in a positive fashion. In addition, the students viewed their peers and teachers as responsible for the practice of code-switching, let alone their own personal, cognitive and affective reasons that motivate them to practice code-switching.

Therefore, given the constraints and delimitations of this study, it's advisable to propose pedagogical implications for prospective research and analysis. First, prospective research founded on this study questions could be enhanced by conducting a similar study on a bigger sample including representative universities from Lower and Upper Egypt, Sinai region and the western regions. Still, a mixed-methods approach should be applied for collecting and analysing quantitative and qualitative data so as to obtain representative findings (Creswell, 2014). Secondly, additional analysis could involve extended, hierarchical samples of students and instructors in the English department where similar research instruments and research practices may be applied to explore the sociolinguistic and pedagogical functions of code-switching from numerous perspectives and from different students/teachers' perspectives.

The findings of the present study propose a potential blueprint for language curriculum designers and language educators to consider code-switching as a useful teaching/learning strategy rather than a detrimental practice in the context of EFL college learning and teaching in Egypt and, therefore, integrate it in the target language medium of instruction.

First, the methods and approaches in which academics deliver their linguistics and literature courses through English should be considered beforehand so as to help professors and students develop their awareness of the potential issues students might need to enhance their attitudes and motivations as well as improve their language communication skills even though code-switching is practised. Additionally, individual variations between students of different socio-econo-educational status and linguistic backgrounds as well as genders should be considered in prospective research on code-switching. Second, as students are involved in the practice of code-switching, their English proficiency, which may be rightly integrated in their future learning, should be further investigated in more longitudinal research projects. Such needed research would be necessary to look into the role of linguistic competence in accepting or rejecting code-switching in the classroom. Third, given the fact that the practice of code-switching is inevitable in EFL settings, academics should be aware of the advantages and perils of code-switching as a teaching approach. In this line, EFL college instructors might utilize the students' L1 consciously, and therefore, the students may not feel jittery regarding their EFL proficiency.

Thus, this study explained university students' perceptions of and perspectives grounded in their practice of and experience with code-switching in a programme with English-medium instruction. In conjunction with purpose, this study revealed the potential advantages and disadvantages that mandate EFL educators' attention at

the educational and policy-making and curriculum planning levels concerning the employment of code-switching as a pedagogical strategy for delivering EFL college courses through English as a medium of instruction. The results of the study, and prospective analyses, could shed further light on implementation of code-switching integrated in English-medium instruction as a potentially effective teaching/learning tool within the context of university teaching and learning of TEFL in Egypt.

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