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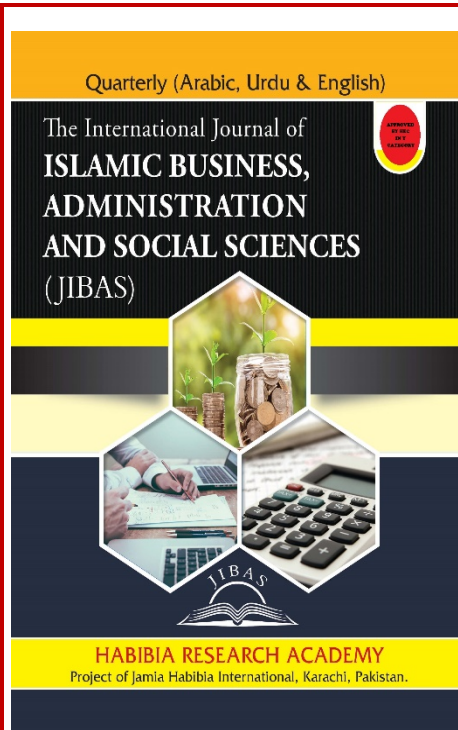
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**TOPIC:**

**THE IMPACT OF TEACHERS' CODE-SWITCHING ON STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN SPEAKING ENGLISH AT B.S. LEVEL AT DERA GHAZI KHAN**

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**THE IMPACT OF TEACHERS' CODE-SWITCHING ON STUDENTS'  
ACHIEVEMENT IN SPEAKING ENGLISH AT B.S. LEVEL  
AT DERA GHAZI KHAN**

Muhammad Asif,      Sobia Hameed,      Riaz Hussain,

**ABSTRACT:**

*The current research has tried to find out the connection between teachers' code-switching and learners' achievement in speaking English at B.S level at Dera Ghazi Khan, a city of Southern Region of Punjab, Pakistan. For this purpose, an experimental research design was used to measure the effect of independent variable (Teachers' code-switching) on dependent variable (Students' achievement in speaking English). Students were placed in experimental and control groups on the basis of their CGPA. Control group was taught according to traditional method (without any code-switching). The experimental group was taught by using code-switching method for three months. After the treatment, a speaking test was conducted among the learners of both the groups to determine relationship between teachers' code-switching and learners' achievement in speaking English. The findings revealed that teachers' code-switching has positive impact on learners' achievement in speaking English. Furthermore, to investigate English learners' attitudes towards teachers' code switching and to know about role of teachers' code-switching in language learning at Dera Ghazi Khan, two questionnaires were used. A sample of 70 teachers and 150 students was taken for collecting the desired data. The findings revealed that majority of the students of Dera Ghazi Khan preferred that lectures should be explained both in Urdu and English languages. 59% students claimed that code-switching is 91% to 100% effective in classrooms and 86% students agreed that code-switching attracts their attention more than the teaching without code-switching. Meanwhile, results of teachers' questionnaire indicated that teachers switch codes to boost students' learning in second language and to maintain affinity and interactive relationships with students.*

**KEYWORDS:** Code, Code Switching, ESL

**INTRODUCTION:** Code is neutral term that refers to language or varieties of language. The term code was first introduced by Bernstein who argues that code as a language refers to a system in which people agree to communicate with each other. It refers to some languages used by members of a bilingual or multilingual society (as cited in Jingxia 2010)<sup>1</sup>. Bilinguals during their daily communication do not confine themselves to one code only rather they move from one code or language to another and this process of moving from one language to another language is known as code-switching that depends on conversational setting and social context. The term was first used by Uriel Weinreich in his article "language contacts of Hans Vogt" (as cited in Akhtar et al., 2016, p.32)<sup>2</sup>. Bullock & Toribio (2009)<sup>3</sup> define it as "the ability on part of bilinguals to alternate easily between their two languages" (p.1). It is an effective tool for communication among people and it is the characteristic of the bilingual speakers. Baker (2006)<sup>4</sup> argues that "a bilingual person can use two different languages, but one of them is often dominant. And some bilinguals are active in both languages while some are passive and their skills in one or both languages are less developed" (p.3). Apart from usual communication in different social settings, code-switching is also a common communicative device that is found in classrooms.

Teacher switches codes in class for the purpose of socializing. For example, teacher switches to Urdu for interpersonal communication and to build good mutual understanding with pupils. When dealing with unfamiliar vocabulary or expressions, teachers switch codes because they want to get meaning conveyed and understood by their students and any communication gap created because of unfamiliar meaning can be bridged easily. Setati & Adler<sup>5</sup> argue that “code-switching in classroom usually refers to bilingual or multilingual settings and entails switching by the teacher and/or learners between the language of learning and teaching (LOLT) and the learners’ main language” (as cited in Dar et al.,2014, p.109)<sup>6</sup>. In short, code-switching is regarded as most important characteristics of bilingual settings where it is employed for the sake of communicative ease and developing strong interactions. When learners or teachers switch between codes, they are actually maintaining mother tongue. Maintenance of mother tongue is beneficial for metalinguistic abilities of bilinguals and for their cognitive development. With this realization of importance of code-switching in society and in teaching settings, the researchers aimed at finding out the effects of code-switching in developing the oral skills of the second language learners. The following objectives were in the mind of researchers when they undertook the research:

#### **Objectives of Study**

Main objectives of this research were:

1. To know about role of teachers’ code switching in language learning.
2. To investigate English language learners’ attitudes towards teachers’ code switching.
3. To determine relationship between teachers’ code switching and learners’ achievement in speaking English at B.S level.

#### **Research Questions**

1. Why do teachers use code switching in EFL Classrooms at Dera Ghazi Khan?
2. What are attitudes of the English Language learners towards teachers’ code switching?
3. What is the relationship between teachers’ code switching and learners’ achievement in Speaking English at Dera Ghazi Khan?

#### **Hypothesis of Study:**

The following hypothesis was tested in current study:

**Ha:** There is a significant relationship between learners’ achievement and teachers’ code switching in speaking English at B.S level at Dera Ghazi Khan.

**Ho:** There is no significant relationship between learners’ achievement and teachers’ code switching in speaking English at B.S level at Dera Ghazi Khan.

**Significance of Study:** The present study is significant due to pedagogical emphasis as it enlightens about the attitudes of English language learners towards their teachers’ code switching. Thus, it provides insights which may affect teachers’ decision about code switching. This research gives information about the role of teachers’ code switching. This

study is also important because it presents an overview of relationship between teachers' code switching and learners' achievement.

### **Rationale of Study**

English is taught as a compulsory subject from primary stages to tertiary stage of education. It is, perhaps, the most widely used language throughout the world. In Pakistan, Urdu is used as a medium of instructions in classrooms. Code switching occurs frequently in English Foreign Language classrooms in Pakistan. Teachers who switch codes claim that it is often necessary to assist instructions. So, code switching is a debatable issue in EFL classrooms at Pakistan. The English language teachers switch codes for various purposes. For example, they switch codes to help students comprehend lessons easily. Man & LU explored that in schools of Hong Kong both students' and teachers' reasons for switching codes were that there was no direct translation between Cantonese and English language. They also assert that teachers use code switching to reduce pressure and to insert wit in conversation (as cited in Alenezi,2010)<sup>7</sup>. So, the present study sets out to investigate the impact of teachers' code switching on learners' achievement in speaking English at B.S level at Dera Ghazi Khan.

### **Literature Review**

Code switching gives less proficient learners opportunities to communicate easily and understand better. Iqbal (2011)<sup>8</sup> in a study on relationship of code switching and learners' achievement describes it as a creative, unconventional, and natural method for communication between bilingual teachers of Pakistan. He argues that code switching is used in classrooms as a strategy for facilitating learners. However, while emphasizing the importance of code-switching in classrooms he cautiously suggests that "in order to avoid the blind use of code switching, the teachers should look for multiple approaches and strategies to utilize this significant tool along with its limitations" (p.193). Cipriani (2001)<sup>9</sup> conducted a study on oral participation techniques in a beginner and discovered that use of code alternating was a suitable process for fostering oral contribution between learners and teachers. She also explored that teachers use code switching for clarifying words, communicative tasks and for making a better environment among learners for speaking English.

Ahmad and Jusoff (2009)<sup>10</sup> conducted a study on students of low English proficiency, in their study they observed that students support code-switching basically for understanding instructions of their teachers, improving vocabulary, and learning English. Ahmad and Jusoff asserted, "the more teachers switch codes, the stronger is the affective state of learners" (p.51). Wei & Martin<sup>11</sup> find out that code-switching is more relevant in social settings than in classroom settings, they explain, "code switching in educational context is often seen as unsuitable and wrong, while code switching in social settings is seen as something natural and a part bilingual speech" (2009, p.117). Neghes (2011) argues that code switching is an effective technique for conveying important information. Code switching performs various functions in teaching learning process. According to Reyes

(2004), “code switching performs different functions such as speech representation, imitate quotation, turn accommodation, topic shift, situation shift, Insistence, giving an emphasis, as a discourse marker, Question shift, Person’s specifications and clarification or persuasion” (as cited in Fachriyah E. 2017, p.150)<sup>12</sup>.

**Methodology, Population, Sample and Sampling Technique**

Quantitative research paradigm has been used to achieve the goals of present study. The present study explored the impact of teachers’ code switching on learners’ achievements in speaking English at B.S level. An experimental research design has been used in present study. Students of B.S level and teachers from different universities and colleges constituted the population of study. Purposive sampling technique was used. Purposive sampling centers on the units that are explored grounded on the researcher’s judgment. First, students were placed at experimental and control group on the basis of their previous CGPA, and experimental group was taught with code switching method for three months, then a speaking test was taken to measure difference between two groups. Two questionnaires were also used to collect data. For testing hypothesis, the relevant data was analyzed through statistical package for social sciences (version 22). In the following , we describe analysis of data.

**Data Analysis**

**RQ1: What is relationship between teachers’ code-switching and learners’ achievements in speaking English at B.S Level at Dera Ghazi Khan?**

In order to determine the relationship between teachers’ code-switching and learners’ achievement in speaking English at B.S level, an experimental research paradigm was used and a sample of 60 students was taken. First of all, students were placed in Controlled and Experimental Groups on the basis of their previous CGPA.

**Analysis of Students’ Previous scores:**

*Table 4.1 Independent Samples Test*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
<b>CGPA of Students</b>	Equal variances assumed	1.095	.300	.314	58	.755	.03333	.10616	-.17916	.24583
	Equal variances not assumed			.314	54.957	.755	.03333	.10616	-.17941	.24608

In table 4.1 the results indicate that value of sig(2-tailed) is .755. Scientifically, if the value of sig(2-tailed) is less than .05, there is a significant difference between means of two groups, and if the value of sig(2-tailed) is greater than .05, there is no significant difference between mean of two groups. As, in table 4.1 the value of sig(2-tailed) is .755 which is greater than .05, this thing ensures that there is no significant difference between mean scores of CGPA of two groups. Students of both the groups have almost equal marks. To determine the relationship between teacher's code-switching and learners' achievement in speaking English, experimental group was taught by using code-switching method and control group was taught according to traditional method (not by using code-switching method) for three months. Then, after the treatment, a speaking test was developed for measuring the difference between two groups and then scores of both groups were analyzed in t-test.

**Analysis of Students' Speaking Test**

*Table 4.2: Independent Sample Test for Speaking Scores*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
<b>Speaking Scores</b>	Equal variances assumed	2.875	.095	17.028	58	.000	4.533	.266	4.000	5.066
	Equal variances not assumed			17.028	51.939	.000	4.533	.266	3.999	5.068

The results given in table 4.2 show that value of sig(2-tailed) is (.000). If the value of sig(2-tailed) is less than .05, then we may conclude that statistically there is a significant difference between two groups. As the value of sig(2-tailed) is .000, which is less than .05. This indicates that statistically there is a significant difference between means of speaking scores of experimental and controlled groups. This ensures that code-switching has positive

impact on learners' achievement in speaking English and there is an important association between teachers' code-switching and learners' achievement.

**Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire**

*Table 4.3 Why do Teachers use code switching in EFL Classrooms at Dera Ghazi Khan?*

1.Purpose of Code-Switching	For Emphasis	Social Belonging	Compensating for Language Limitation
	35.7%	47.1%	17.1%
2.Attitudes Towards Code-Switching	Positive	Negative	Neutral
	67.1%	5.7%	27.1%
3.Factors of Code-Switching	Linguistics Elements	Social Identity	Situational Factors
	21.4%	31.4%	47.1%

4.Code-switching for Structuring Comments & Questions	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	68.6%	17.1%	11.4%	1.4%	1.4%
5. Code-Switching for learners' easiness to acquire Knowledge	54.3%	30%	11.4%	2.9%	1.4%
6. Code-Switching for Social & Academic Interaction	57.1%	31.4%	8.6%	2.9%	
7. Code-Switching for Building a Bond from Known to Unknown	57.1%	24.3%	12.9%	4.3%	1.4%
8. Code-Switching for maintaining affinity & interactive relationships	62.9%	12.9%	17.1%	5.7%	1.4%
9. Code-Switching for enhancing ability to understand lesson	61.4%	25.7%	7.1%	2.9%	2.9%
10. Code-Switching as a central feature to learn a language	37.1%	27.1%	22.9%	11.4%	1.4%
11. Code-Switching for making students confident	47.1%	37.1%	11.4%	4.3%	
12. Code-Switching for reducing barriers in learning English	47.1%	37.1%	12.9%	2.9%	
13.Teachers switch codes due to complexity of certain words	50%	30%	17.1%	2.9%	
14.Teachers' preference for delivering lectures alternating between English & Urdu	47.1%	40%	10%	2.9%	

15.Code-Switching for making lesson interesting	52.9%	22.9%	17.1%	2.9%	4.3%
16.Code-Switching to enhance mental ability of Students	40%	27.1%	20%	10%	2.9%
17.Code-Switching for Speaking Well in English class	45.7%	28.6%	17.1%	8.6%	
18.Code-Switching for conveying new words	50%	24.3%	14.3%	11.4%	
19.Code-Switching to enhance communication skills with students	44.3%	30%	8.6%	2.9%	14.3%
20.Code-Switching to boost Students' learning in second language	41.4%	18.6%	27.1%	2.9%	10%
21.Code-Switching to avoid misunderstanding	50%	22.9%	20%	2.9%	4.3%
22.Code-Switching to feel comfortable	41.4%	20%	21.4%	7.1%	10%

### Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

Table 4.4 What are attitudes of English Language Learners towards teachers' code-switching at B.S Level at Dera Ghazi Khan?

	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.Teachers' Code-Switching assist to comprehend better.	55.3%	32.7%	5.3%	5.3%	1.3%
2.Students' preference to explain lecture in different codes.	38.7%	40%	12.7%	7.3%	1.3%
3.Teachers'code switching enhance students' communication skills.	51.3%	30%	13.3%	4.7%	75
4.Students switch to Urdu for showing their Pakistani culture.	25.3%	48%	11.3%	13.3%	2%
5.Teachers'code-switching help students comprehend task instructions better.	50.7%	22.7%	13.3%	3.3%	10%
6.Teachers'code-switching give confidence for participating in classrooms.	43.3%	37.3%	10%	7.3%	2%
7.Teachers'code-switching motivate students to work in their subjects.	50%	30%	11.3%	6.7%	2%

8. Teachers' code-switching facilitate process of learning.	48%	36.7%	8%	6.7%	.7%
9. Teachers' code-switching create confusion.	10.7%	7.3%	3.3%	51.3%	27.3%
10. Teachers' code-switching save time & efforts in learning English.	53.3%	20%	14.7%	8%	4%
11. Teachers' code-switching weaken your English.	11.3%	7.3%	8%	52%	21.3%
12. Teachers' code-switching make learning atmosphere more interactive.	52%	23.3%	13.3%	10%	1.3%
13. Students are able to concentrate on lectures when teachers switch codes from English to Urdu.	16%	6%	4.7%	45.3%	28%
14. Teachers violate rules of English when switch towards Urdu.	12.7%	18.7%	6.7%	44.7%	30%
15. Teachers' code-switching attract students' attention.	57.3%	17.3%	14.7%	7.3%	3.3%
16. Students feel teachers are not proficient in English when switch towards Urdu.	12%	8%	3.3%	49.3%	27.3%
17. Teachers should not use Urdu in EFL Classrooms.	12%	8%	9.3%	41.3%	29.3%
18. Teachers' code-switching provide many words of encouragement.	56%	28%	11.3%	2%	2.7%
19. Teachers should use mother tongue for teaching second language.	36%	36%	12.7%	11.3%	4%
20. Teachers' code-switching assist in comprehending difficult and new vocabulary.	48.7%	33.3%	7.3%	8%	2.7%
21. How Much Effective is Code-Switching in Classrooms?	Below 30%	31%-50%	51%-70%	71%-90%	91%-100%
	4%	12%	36%	39%	59%

### Summary of Findings

Following findings emerged as a result of data analysis:

- ❖ Teachers' Code switching has positive impact on students' achievement in speaking English.
- ❖ Teachers switch codes for many purposes such as for emphasis, social belonging and compensating language limitation.
- ❖ Teachers have shown positive attitude towards switching between two languages in a discussion.
- ❖ Teachers alternate their codes to express their social identity, due to situational factors and for some linguistic advantages.
- ❖ Students prefer that lectures should be explained in different codes.
- ❖ Students switch to Urdu for showing their Pakistani culture.
- ❖ Teachers' code-switching help students comprehend task instructions better.
- ❖ Teachers' code switching facilitates process of learning and attract students' attention.
- ❖ Teachers' code switching makes learning atmosphere more interactive.
- ❖ Teachers should use Urdu in EFL classrooms.
- ❖ Teachers' code switching is 91-100% effective in classrooms.

### Discussion:

The results given in table 4.2 indicate that there is statistically a significant difference between speaking scores of these two groups. This rejects the null hypothesis of present study which states that there is no significant relationship between learners' achievement and teachers' code-switching in Speaking English at B.S level at Dera Ghazi Khan. McKay claims that "it is beneficial to encourage code-switching in EFL classrooms as it gives equal status to the students' languages and allows students to use their L1 to develop their English proficiency" (as cited in Torvaldsdotter, 2020, p.10)<sup>13</sup>. Simasiku et al. also argued that "code-switching in the classroom helps students to learn a second language more successfully. It is because learners are more active in the classroom if they are allowed to use their first language, notably when they experience problems in speaking English in classroom interaction" (2015, p. 75)<sup>14</sup>.

The results given in table 4.3 show that teachers switch codes for many purposes such as for emphasis, social belonging and compensating language limitation. Mostly teachers in Dera Ghazi Khan use code-switching to clarify and to stress on certain aspects. Taha (2008)<sup>15</sup> conducted a study in Arabic context and found that "Arab teachers teaching English tend to make statements in English and repeat them in Arabic in order to emphasize the point of statement or to make the students understand what the teachers are talking about" (p.341). While majority of Pakistani teachers alternate their language from English to Urdu to show their feelings of belongings and connectedness to their Pakistani society. This relates with the results of Masrahi's<sup>16</sup> study in which 34.48% participants agreed and 13.79% strongly agreed that they use code-alternating to express their belongingness and

unity towards specific community. Moreover, minority of teachers in Dera Ghazi Khan use code-switching for compensation of language limitation. The findings of a study conducted by Chick showed that “code-switching is a comfortable excuse to hide the incompetent bilingual speaker’s poor command of English and his inadequate mastery of the subject matter, and to make it appear that effective learning is taking place” (as cited in Masrahi, 2016, p.26). The results also revealed that majority of teachers have shown their positive attitude towards switching between two languages in a discussion. The positive attitude is also supported by some other scholars such as Swain and Larkin (2000) who argued that “L1 may facilitate L2 classroom activities, particularly for low-proficiency students and on complex tasks” (as cited in Abdulasoul,2019, p.55)<sup>17</sup>. The results showed that in Dera Ghazi Khan mostly teachers alternate their codes to express their social identity. Holmes (2013) observed in his research that “social factors and social dimensions too are the determinant elements for the choice of a particular code rather than another. They are useful and also the basic mechanisms in recounting and examining utterances of all types of social interaction” (as cited in Inuwa et al.,2014, p.44)<sup>18</sup>. While majority teachers in Dera Ghazi Khan alternate their language due to situational factors and minority of teachers do code alternation because of some linguistic advantages. Myers-Scotton (1993)<sup>19</sup> shared same views that “the speakers face an awareness of markedness when it comes to the linguistic choice for various situations or discourse types, and according to their relationship to the situation and its participants they get to choose the language they will use” (p. 106).

The results given in table 4.4 show that majority of students in Dera Ghazi Khan stated that teachers’ code-switching assist them to comprehend better. A study conducted by Kim<sup>20</sup> in university of Korean showed that code-alternation assists for promoting efficient learning in such conditions where ESL is used. Tien & Liu also claimed that “low-proficiency students considered code-switching in their ESL classes as helpful towards gaining better comprehension especially when providing equivalent comprehension” (as cited in Ahmad,2009, p.50). However, minority of students in Dera Ghazi Khan said that teachers’ code-switching does not assist in comprehending better. The results revealed that majority students of Dera Ghazi Khan stated that they prefer that lectures should be explained in different codes. Rukh (2014)<sup>21</sup> also found that “students of commerce wanted their EFL teachers more to use L1 in English classrooms and they showed somewhat positive attitude towards it” (as cited in Tahir et al.,2016, p.88)<sup>22</sup>. Also, in study of Macaro<sup>23</sup>, students stated that “they expected their teachers to speak the L1 sometimes to facilitate their understanding”. The results also have shown that majority of students in Dera Ghazi Khan said that teachers’ code-switching save their time & efforts in learning English. Bateman (2008)<sup>24</sup> also found that “code-switching is beneficial when it comes to time-saving, and it is stated that pupils perhaps do not understand complex ideas if they are being explained in TL” (p.27).

The results also showed that maximum number of students 39.3% of Dera Ghazi Khan claims that code-switching is 91-100% effective and 26% students considered it 71%-90%

effective in classrooms. While 24% and 8% students of Dera Ghazi Khan described it as 51%-70% and 31%-50% effective in classrooms, respectively. Only 2.7% students of Dera Ghazi Khan considered it effective below 30%. As, in the study of Gulzar (2013)<sup>25</sup> conducted in Bahawalpur, majority of students 39% and 28% teachers claimed that code-switching is 41%-60% effective in ESL classrooms. Schweer also found that "Spanish students mostly preferred their teachers to understand their first language. And 88.7% students favored the use of Spanish in class as it helped them to learn the second language better" (as cited in Debreli & Oyman, 2016, p.149)<sup>26</sup>.

### **Conclusion:**

The results show that teachers' code-switching has positive impact on students' achievement in speaking English. They also reveal that teachers have shown positive attitude towards code-switching, and they switch codes to express their social identity and for learners' easiness to acquire knowledge. Teachers prefer to deliver their lectures by switching their language from English to Urdu. It was also found out that teachers' code-switching attracts students' attention and saves time and efforts in learning English. Students prefer that teachers should use Urdu in EFL classrooms. The current study establishes a strong relationship between teacher's code-switching and learners' achievement in speaking English at B.S Level at Dera Ghazi Khan. So, it can be concluded that teachers should use code-switching while teaching English Language to Pakistani EFL learners.

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