

An Analysis of the Code-Switching Strategies of English Teachers

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Abstract—Code-switching is a prevalent linguistic phenomenon in bilingual education, influencing classroom dynamics and student comprehension. This qualitative study examines the code-switching strategies employed by English teachers at Davao del Norte State College, focusing on their functions and implications for language instruction. Through discourse analysis and thematic analysis, data were collected from classroom recordings and structured interviews with five experienced English teachers. Findings reveal three main strategies: intra-sentential (75%), tag-switching (17%), and inter-sentential (8%). Teachers utilized code switching primarily to clarify concepts, engage students, and create a supportive learning environment. While some educators expressed concerns about its impact on language proficiency, the study highlights code-switching as a valuable pedagogical tool that aligns with the multilingual context of instruction. The results suggest that strategic code switching can enhance teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes. Recommendations for educators and policymakers are provided to integrate code-switching into instructional practices while maintaining English as the primary medium of instruction.

Index Terms—Code-switching, English teachers, bilingual education, qualitative study, Davao del Norte, Philippines.

1. Introduction

A. Purpose of the Study

This study investigates the classroom use of code-switching among English teachers at Davao del Norte State College, where bilingualism is a common feature of both instruction and interaction. Code-switching, defined by Johansson (2015) as a linguistic phenomenon that enables bilingual speakers to express ideas more effectively across languages, has become increasingly visible in educational settings. Morrison (2023) further describes it as the fluid shifting between languages within conversational contexts, a practice deeply embedded in bilingual and multilingual communities. While some scholars advocate its use as a strategic tool in teaching, others express concern about its potential to limit learners' full acquisition of the target language. Then (2019), for example, observed in Malaysian classrooms that teachers use code-switching for classroom management and vocabulary development. Akkaya and Aydin (2019) support its role in enhancing learning through the inclusion of students' mother tongue, while Hua (2008) and

Jingxia (2010) argue that it may hinder language fluency and lead to dependency on the first language. Despite this tension, studies such as that of Kasumo Adi and Ambarini (2022) point out that code-switching also fosters student engagement, supports comprehension, and strengthens classroom relationships.

In the Philippine context, Quinto and Kitani (2022) noted that English professors in Baguio viewed code-switching as a necessary and beneficial practice, often using it when Filipino lacked direct equivalents or when students needed support in grasping English concepts. Domede (2023), citing Wang (2022), emphasized that bilingual individuals code-switch intentionally to achieve specific communication goals. Similarly, Santos (2021) found that even in institutions with English-only policies, instructors often used the first language to ensure curriculum access, manage behavior, and build rapport. While Alenezi (2020) reported that students respected and preferred teachers who used code-switching appropriately, Zanoni (2018) found the opposite: students favored instructors who spoke English fluently and exclusively. These conflicting perspectives illustrate the ongoing debate surrounding the pedagogical value of code-switching. Sridhar (1996), Brown (2006), and Jingxia (2010) have expressed concern that excessive reliance on the first language might undermine students' ability to fully acquire English, thus raising questions about the instructional balance needed in bilingual settings.

The purpose of this study is to examine the code-switching strategies employed by English teachers at Davao del Norte State College and to explore their pedagogical functions and instructional implications. By investigating these practices, the study aims to contribute to the ongoing scholarly discourse on bilingual education and language instruction. It seeks to identify how teachers use code-switching in actual classroom contexts and what insights can be drawn from their perspectives, with the ultimate goal of understanding how this linguistic strategy supports or challenges effective English language teaching.

B. Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the common code-switching strategies of English teachers?
2. What insights can be generated from the code

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switching strategies of teachers in light of language teaching?

C. Theoretical Lens

This study was guided by two theoretical frameworks relevant to the phenomenon of code-switching in language instruction. These are Romaine's (1991) classification of code-switching as cited by Dewi (2021), and Ferguson's (2003, 2004) framework on the functions of classroom code-switching.

1) Romaine's Typology of Code-Switching

Romaine's classification, as cited by Dewi (2021), divides code-switching into three types: intra-sentential, inter-sentential, and tag-switching. Intra-sentential code-switching refers to the alternation of languages within a single sentence, while inter-sentential involves switching between sentences. Tag-switching, on the other hand, is the insertion of tags or set phrases from one language into an utterance in another language. This typology provides a systematic lens through which the form and structure of code-switching can be observed and analyzed. It is particularly useful in classroom contexts where such switches occur both spontaneously and strategically. In the context of this study, Romaine's typology was used to identify and classify the code-switching strategies employed by English teachers during instruction. Understanding the type of switch allows researchers to explore the syntactic and functional nuances in how teachers facilitate comprehension and engagement through bilingual practices.

2) Ferguson's Functional Framework of Code-Switching

Ferguson (2003, 2004) proposed a functional view of code-switching in educational settings. According to this framework, code-switching can serve three main purposes: curriculum access, classroom management, and interpersonal relations. Code-switching for curriculum access helps students understand lesson content more clearly, especially when complex ideas are presented. For classroom management, teachers may switch languages to give instructions, maintain discipline, or provide motivation. Lastly, in terms of interpersonal relations, code-switching humanizes classroom interaction by building rapport and recognizing the cultural and linguistic identities of students. Ferguson's framework highlights that code-switching is not merely a fallback strategy but a deliberate pedagogical tool used to shape classroom dynamics. In this study, Ferguson's theory helped categorize the reasons why English teachers at Davao del Norte State College employed code-switching. The framework provided a practical lens for analyzing how bilingual strategies function to support teaching goals, classroom atmosphere, and student understanding. Through this lens, the study examined the ways in which English teachers' code-switching contributes meaningfully to language instruction and learning.

2. Related Literature

A. Code-Switching as a Language Phenomenon

Code-switching is a recognized linguistic phenomenon where speakers alternate between languages within a conversation, often to aid understanding, express ideas more

clearly, or adapt to social contexts. In multilingual societies like the Philippines, it is deeply embedded in everyday communication, including formal settings such as classrooms. Teachers and students frequently shift between English and Filipino (or other local languages) to facilitate learning, especially when English terms lack direct translations or when clarity and engagement are needed (Quinto et al., 2022). In educational contexts, studies like Simasiku (2016) emphasize that code-switching not only helps in delivering complex concepts but also increases student participation and attentiveness.

Poplack (1995, as cited in Wibowo et al., 2017) categorizes code-switching into three types: tag switching (inserting fixed phrases or exclamations from another language), inter-sentential switching (language shift between sentences), and intra-sentential switching (language mixing within a sentence). Research by Mangila (2018) and Afifah et al. (2021) shows that teachers employ these types in varying degrees—some relying heavily on intra-sentential switching, while others prefer occasional tag or inter-sentential use. Additionally, Then (2009, as cited in Memory, 2018) found that teachers use code-switching for classroom management, vocabulary enhancement, and maintaining student attention. Nurhamidah et al. (2018) affirm that both teachers and students see code-switching as an effective strategy to bridge communication gaps during instruction.

However, the frequent use of code-switching also has drawbacks. De Castro et al. (2021) caution that overreliance on it may weaken students' English fluency, as it can reduce their motivation or opportunity to develop full proficiency in the language. While code-switching allows students to express ideas more freely, it may also signal a lack of vocabulary or confidence in the second language. Despite these concerns, most studies, including those by Quinto et al. (2022), have primarily examined individual classroom practices and the short-term benefits, with less focus on long-term learning outcomes. Garcia (2019) underscores the need for more comprehensive research that investigates how code-switching affects language acquisition and academic performance over time. Thus, code-switching continues to be viewed both as a helpful pedagogical tool and a subject of ongoing academic inquiry in bilingual education.

B. Code-Switching Among Teachers

Code-switching, the practice of alternating between the mother tongue (L1) and the target language (L2) during instruction, is a widespread strategy among English teachers in multilingual settings like the Philippines. It serves several functions, including simplifying complex concepts, managing classrooms, building rapport, and reducing student anxiety (Ölmez & Kirkgöz, 2021; Bozorgian & Fallahpour, 2015). While some educators advocate for English-only classrooms to promote full immersion (Burton & Rajendram, 2019), others recognize the instructional value of switching to L1 to clarify lessons and engage learners more effectively (Adder & Bagui, 2020; Sahabir, 2017).

Research shows that strategic use of code-switching can

support student understanding, particularly when explaining grammar or giving activity instructions (Lo, 2015; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003). Teachers are encouraged to balance L1 and L2 use depending on their students' language abilities, classroom dynamics, and lesson goals (Carroll & Mari, 2020). However, overuse of L1 may negatively impact students' English fluency if not carefully managed (Pillay & Shinga, 2021).

Teachers' perceptions of code-switching vary, often shaped by their training and classroom experiences. High-quality teacher education plays a vital role in equipping educators with the skills and confidence to apply code-switching meaningfully (Sener & Korkut, 2017; Zuñiga, 2019). Teachers must also consider institutional policies and societal expectations, which may limit their freedom to use students' home languages even if they find them beneficial (Yuvayapan, 2019; Burton & Rajendram, 2019).

Ultimately, the effective use of code-switching hinges on teachers' awareness of their students' needs, their own language proficiency, and the socio-political context of language education. When used purposefully, code-switching does not hinder second language learning—it enhances it by using L1 as a scaffold for understanding and communication (Hazaymeh, 2022; Puspawati, 2018). Through reflective practice and continued professional development, teachers can integrate code-switching into their teaching strategies to create inclusive and linguistically responsive classrooms.

C. Code-Switching Vis-à-vis Language Teaching

Code-switching, the practice of alternating between two or more languages in conversation, has gained attention in both linguistics and education, particularly for its role in the classroom. Caukill and Wardaugh (2021) found that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers code-switch not only for instructional purposes—such as clarifying ideas and scaffolding learning—but also for social functions like building rapport and connecting with students' cultural backgrounds. Similarly, Gamiao (2022) highlighted how code-switching bridges gaps between students' native language and the target language, helping learners internalize new concepts and feel more at ease in the classroom.

Other studies further confirm its pedagogical relevance. Chen (2017) categorized classroom code-switching as a means of simplifying difficult concepts, ensuring understanding, and maintaining discipline. Bhatti et al. (2018) observed that teachers used all three types of switching—tag, inter-sentential, and intra-sentential—to maintain control, explain lessons, and foster closer teacher-student relationships. These findings underscore the practical use of code-switching in grammar lessons and when re-explaining ideas to students struggling with the target language.

In the Philippine setting, research also affirms this practice. Villanueva and Gamiao (2023) noted that Filipino teachers switch codes both to aid comprehension and to foster a supportive classroom environment. Their 2022 study further showed how code-switching supports multilingual learners by helping them move between languages smoothly, reinforcing

both understanding and classroom inclusion.

Overall, these studies demonstrate that code-switching is more than a casual linguistic behavior—it is a purposeful teaching strategy. Whether simplifying content, managing discourse, or reinforcing student identity, code-switching plays a vital role in language instruction. For educators across different contexts, the key lies in using it thoughtfully to enhance learning while respecting students' linguistic diversity.

3. Methodology

A. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative approach grounded in constructivism to explore the meanings behind teachers' use of code-switching in the classroom. Using discourse analysis, it examined how language functioned in context, focusing on how teachers used code-switching to construct meaning, manage classroom interactions, and express identity. Discourse analysis enabled the researchers to analyze natural classroom speech and identify the functions of code-switching, such as clarifying concepts or expressing emotion. To further enrich the data, thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) method was applied to interview transcripts, revealing patterns in teacher insights and reinforcing the value of code-switching as a classroom strategy.

B. Research Participants

This qualitative study involved English instructors from Davao del Norte State College who were teaching BSEd-English students and had a minimum of three years' experience in the field. The selection included at least five participants to align with the standards of discourse analysis, which typically requires multiple participants to enable a thorough examination. As Fairclough (1992, as cited in Cacoullos et al., 2018) noted, a smaller sample size supports a more detailed and insightful analysis of language patterns. This approach follows examples such as Zaniil et al. (2021), who also worked with five teacher participants and recorded two class sessions for their study on code-switching.

To further explore teacher perspectives, the researchers conducted structured interviews. This format involved preparing questions in advance to ensure consistency and depth in gathering responses (Al Alsaawi, 2015). These interviews offered teachers the opportunity to share their reflections on language use, reasons for code-switching, and how it relates to their teaching practices. Studies like that of Temesgen and Hailu (2022) have used similar methods, finding that structured interviews effectively captured EFL teachers' motivations behind their code-switching decisions.

4. Results and Discussion

This presents the results of the investigation into the code-switching strategies used by English teachers from Davao Del Norte State College.

A. The Common Code-Switching Strategies of English Teachers

Table 1
Frequency of code-switching strategies

Code-switching Strategy	Occurrences	Percentage
Intra-sentential	397	75%
Tag-switching	17	17%
Inter-sentential	8	8%
Total	422	100%

1) Intra-Sentential Code-Switching

Troike's (2018) definition aptly fits participants' behavior: "intra-sentential code-switching happens when the speaker switches languages within the same sentence, and there are no pauses or breaks within the talk," as cited in Schjerve et al (2019). It seems this practice is very common because it represented 75% of the total instances of code-switching and is, without a doubt, the predominant strategy employed.

Based on the result, the English teachers performed lots of intra-sentential code-switching at the sentence level, which appears to counter Lipski's (1985; cited in Zirker 2007) assumption of the scarcity of intra-sentential code-switching. This personal anomaly seems to force the explanation of the claim that 'few speakers use it because of fluency being the main requirement.' English teachers at Davao Del Norte State College have clearly debunked that expectation and have demonstrated a fair volume of that type of code-switching.

For instance, one teacher (T1) demonstrated this strategy when explaining:

We have here a diagram to further navigate what is this flow of communication in structural function *na meron tayo* in a company. T1_C68

Here, the teacher begins in English, transitions to Filipino with "na meron tayo" (which means "that we have"), and then returns to English to complete the sentence. This seamless transition between languages within a single sentence exemplifies intra-sentential codeswitching. Another example comes from T2's instruction:

Then, with that piece *gawan niyo ng* critical analysis base from the definition of what is critical thinking. T2_C11

The teacher inserts the Filipino phrase "gawan niyo ng" (meaning "create a") instead of using the English equivalent. This strategy helps ensure students understand the task better, especially those who are more comfortable with Filipino (Dehrab, 2002, as cited in Temesgen & Hailu, 2022). Similarly, T4 demonstrated intra-sentential code-switching when stating:

We call an action good because it has been recurring, meaning *balik balik sya*. T4_C2

Here, the teacher translates the English term "recurring" into Cebuano "balik balik sya" within the same sentence to clarify its meaning. T4_C2

These results support Cook's (2010, as cited in Temesgen & Hailu, 2022) assertion that the mother tongue should be employed in the teaching of a foreign language. The teachers practice intra-sentential code-switching as a teaching method to clarify, analyze, and highlight key elements within instructions or discussions while retaining English as the primary language used during instruction. This optimal coding method maintains the semantic content together with the form of the sentences (Wang, 2022).

2) Tag-Switching

Tag-switching is the second most popular strategy, with 17% occurrence of code-switching. As highlighted by Poplack (1980, as cited in Martiana 2014), tag switching involves inserting a tag or short reference phrase into a frame that is otherwise monolingual. Tag-switching includes fillers that have no meaning but serve to indicate a temporary pause that allows the speaker to deliberate on the next utterance (Kharismawan, 2017).

In the analysis, tags such as "uhm," "no," and "ha" were frequently used by the teachers. For example, T1 used the tag "no" (a question tag in Bisaya similar to "right?" in English) when asking:

Communication style, its passive, *no?* T1_C40

The tag helps support the teacher's claim and encourages student agreement. Similarly, T4 used the tag "ha" after instructing students:

Especially, please look for examples of the literary texts *din ha?* Like novels, stories. T4_C25

Here, "ha" serves as a gentle reminder and confirmation check with students. Likewise, T1 also used the filler "uhm":

It could be passive communication where you *uhm* tend to ignore your own personal rights and allow others to do so. T1_C42

This tag gives the teacher time to think about the next word without interrupting the flow of the sentence. The results demonstrate that English instructors make use of tags for multiple reasons: to give evidence and justification, check understanding, fill silences, and give hints. Tags, as pointed out by Susanto (2008 as cited in Yunita & Suryani, 2019), offer a unique opportunity for teachers because they can be embedded into utterances without interruption of grammatical rules. Thus, fluent speech can be given while the instructions are still being processed.

3) Inter-Sentential Code-Switching

Inter-sentential code-switching occurred least frequently, representing only 8% of the observed code-switching instances. Musyken (2011) defines inter-sentential switching as the practice of switching languages between two separate sentences or clauses within the same conversation. For example, T2 demonstrated this strategy when instructing students:

I would like you to find a literary piece of your choice. Either a short story, a novel, a poetry. *Kayo na ang bahala*. T2_C10

The teacher begins with English instructions and then shifts to Filipino for the final sentence, which translates to "It's up to you." Similarly, T1 switched languages between sentences when asking:

What type of lead is usually used in news articles? *Ano ba yung kasagarang ginagamit natin?* T1_C203

The teacher first poses the question in English and then rephrases it in a mix of Tagalog and Bisaya. Another example is T1's explanation:

Haptics — study of touch. *Yun lang talaga*. T1_C84

Here, the teacher provides the definition in English and then adds a comment in Filipino, meaning "That's really it." This type of code-switching is frequent among bilingual speakers as noted in The European Journal of English Language Teaching.

Marzeih et al. (2016) and Nur Syazwani and Marlyna (2014) studied this phenomenon where speakers frequently switch between languages to articulate themselves better. In this study, teachers implemented inter-sentential code-switching to grant freedom of choice and elicit responses, engage students, answer questions, spark curiosity, and emphasize key points.

B. Insights Generated from the Code-Switching Strategies into Language Teaching

1) Facilitating Understanding

Code-switching supports comprehension in multilingual classrooms by helping clarify lessons and engage students, especially when they struggle with the target language (Sert, 2015). However, excessive use can hinder English proficiency, emphasizing the need for balanced and intentional application (De Castro et al., 2021).

a. Code-switching to support learner's understanding

Yao (2019) highlights that in EFL classrooms, teachers intentionally use code-switching to clarify complex concepts and reduce cognitive overload. This strategy supports students' understanding by allowing them to draw on their first language, helping them grasp difficult content and build confidence without being hindered by language barriers.

b. Deliberate and Spontaneous Use of Code-Switching

This emphasizes that code-switching may happen both deliberately and spontaneously depending on the immediate needs of students. Teachers adjust their language use based on the situation. Moodley (2018) further affirms that both deliberate and spontaneous code-switching practices improve student engagement and aid in delivering comprehensible instruction.

c. Code-Switching to Give Relatable Examples

Teachers use code-switching to make lessons more relatable by connecting content to students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Zarei and Rad (2017) note that using the home language builds cognitive bridges, while Li and Zhu (2018) show that culturally relevant examples enhance motivation and understanding in bilingual classrooms.

2) Learner-Centered Language Choices

Learner-centered language strategies value students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds to enhance engagement and learning. Sulis (2023) emphasizes the "catalytic effect" of multilingualism, while Pan (2024) highlights how such approaches build autonomy and confidence. Together, they support inclusive, culturally responsive classrooms. However, as Burton and Rajendram (2019) point out, institutional pressures and English-only policies can limit teachers' ability to fully apply these strategies.

a. Code-Switching Driven by Student Preference

Code-switching based on student preference reflects learner-centered language instruction by enhancing comprehension, participation, and comfort. Nawaz (2023) found it helps ESL learners understand lessons and engage more actively. Erdem (2024) reported that both teachers and students view code-switching positively for improving communication and engagement. Raymunde (2022) emphasized its role in supporting fluency and honoring students' linguistic identities.

Together, these findings highlight code-switching as a practical and inclusive learner-centered strategy.

b. Adapting to Student Dialects in the Classroom

Adapting to student dialects means embracing regional or cultural language varieties to promote inclusivity and validate students' identities. Reaser and Wolfram (2023) found that dialect awareness programs improve students' attitudes toward language variation. Teaching sociolinguistic concepts fosters respect and understanding of linguistic diversity.

c. Code-Switching to Bridge Connection

Code-switching in education can enhance communication and rapport by allowing students to express themselves in their preferred language. Gonzales and Tsang (2023) found it bridged linguistic gaps among Hong Kong university students, fostering more inclusive and effective interactions. However, balanced use is key to avoid hindering language proficiency.

d. Consideration of Students' English Capacity

This highlights that teachers consider students' ability to understand the target language. It means that teachers need to be thoughtful and use code-switching in a way that supports students' comprehension. According to García and Kleyn (2021), strategic language use, like code-switching, helps make lessons clearer and supports students in building stronger understanding in bilingual classrooms.

3) Using of Code-Switching Approaches

Code-switching strategies involve intentional shifts between a first language (L1) and a target language (L2) to support multilingual learning. These strategies adapt to instructional goals and learner needs. Sert (2017) describes teacher-initiated code-switching as a scaffold for clarifying complex grammar, while Jogulu (2024) highlights its role in giving instructions and managing classrooms, especially for students with limited L2 skills.

a. Code-switching as Pedagogical Scaffolding

Code-switching as pedagogical scaffolding involves teachers strategically alternating languages to support students' comprehension and language development. Rooted in Vygotsky's concept of scaffolding within the Zone of Proximal Development, this practice helps bridge gaps between learners' current abilities and learning goals.

b. Balancing Policy with Student Needs

García and Wei (2018) highlight that responsive teaching involves flexibility, with code-switching validating students' linguistic identities and supporting cognitive growth. Macaro (2018) notes that teachers use it strategically to scaffold learning while respecting language policies. Pan and Lee (2020) show this balanced approach enhances participation and understanding. Thus, code-switching is both a communication tool and a practical way to align policy with classroom realities.

c. Adaptive Code-switching Strategies

Teachers' use of English through code-switching varies with students' year levels and course demands. Bista (2017) notes that lower-year students receive more L1 support to build foundational skills, while advanced learners are exposed to more English to promote fluency. Also, Tan and Low (2023) add that in content-heavy courses, teachers adjust code-switching based on students' academic maturity, using L1

strategically to clarify complex ideas without limiting English exposure.

d. Controlled Use of Code Switching

In bilingual communities, code-switching is a common strategy to aid comprehension (Fachriyah, 2017). However, overusing native language translations can lead to disengagement, as students may rely on them and ignore English instructions (Sert, 2005, as cited in Fachriyah, 2017). This limits exposure to the target language and hinders learning. Thus, code-switching should clarify, not replace, English.

4) Supportive and Responsive Environment

Code-switching fosters an inclusive learning environment by valuing students' linguistic backgrounds. García and Wei (2015) argue that using home languages alongside the target language promotes belonging, reduces anxiety, and encourages authentic participation, strengthening teacher-student rapport. However, Sakaria and Priyana (2018) caution that excessive code-switching may hinder immersion and fluency, advocating for limited use and consistent exposure to the target language to support language development.

a. Creating a Positive Learning Atmosphere

Strategic code-switching helps create a linguistically safe classroom by validating students' language backgrounds and fostering belonging. Li and Zhao (2023) found that allowing students to move between languages reduces anxiety and boosts confidence. This inclusivity encourages active participation and supports a supportive, judgment-free learning environment.

b. Teacher Sensitivity to Students' Language Anxiety

Encouraging English use without enforcing strict "English-only" rules fosters a supportive classroom where students feel safe to participate. Sholikhah and Isnaini (2024) found that allowing code-switching reduces speaking anxiety and fear of judgment. With this, strategically accepting L1 use helps students feel more understood and confident.

c. Responding to Student Feedback

Teacher responsiveness to student feedback is key to an effective learning environment. By valuing student input, teachers adjust pacing, strategies, and language use to enhance comprehension and engagement. This collaborative approach prioritizes student needs over an authoritative stance.

5. Summary, Conclusions and Implications

A. Summary

The study identified three code-switching strategies: intra-sentential, tag-switching, and inter-sentential. The most dominant strategy was intra-sentential code-switching, which involved switching languages within a single sentence. This type accounted for 75% of all code-switching instances. Tag-switching was the second most common at 17%, while inter-sentential code-switching, which entailed switching languages between sentences, was the least common at 8%.

Additionally, based on the interviews, teachers used code-switching to facilitate understanding by supporting learning through both deliberate and spontaneous language shifts. They provided examples, used code-switching as an alternative to inaccessible translation tools, and responded to non-verbal cues

indicating student misunderstanding. Furthermore, code-switching was learner-centered, driven by student preferences, adapted to their dialects, and used to build connections, maintain learner interest, and accommodate varying levels of English proficiency.

Teachers employed different approaches to code-switching, such as using it as a scaffold for learners, balancing the English-only policy, adapting to students' year levels and courses, and controlling its use during discussions. Code-switching also created a safe environment for language expression by fostering a positive learning atmosphere, where teachers used it sensibly and remained aware of students' language anxiety. Lastly, English was viewed as a valuable tool that prepared students for future careers.

B. Conclusions

Intra-sentential code-switching emerges as the predominant strategy, demonstrating its practical effectiveness in clarifying meaning within sentences and challenging previous assumptions regarding its rarity. Tag-switching and inter-sentential switching, while less frequent, serve important functions in managing discourse flow, checking comprehension, and fostering learner autonomy. These findings highlight that code-switching strategies are inevitable and are actively used in the classroom discussions of teachers, which is both reflective of and responsive to the multilingual context of instruction.

Moreover, code-switching is a strategic, and context-sensitive pedagogical tool that teachers employ to enhance learning outcomes. It is not merely a linguistic convenience but a purposeful practice that responds to students' immediate comprehension needs and classroom dynamics. Teachers use code-switching in varied forms—deliberate and spontaneous shifts—that are carefully adapted to students' language proficiency, dialects, and preferences. This approach enables teachers to maintain instructional clarity and learner engagement while navigating the demands of English-only policies. It contributes to creating a psychologically safe and supportive environment that reduces language anxiety, thus promoting more effective participation. Ultimately, this study highlights the critical role of code-switching as an inclusive instructional strategy that aligns language policy with the multilingual realities of the classroom, preparing students more holistically for academic and future career challenges.

C. Implications

In alignment with Executive Order No. 210, which designates English as the primary medium of instruction, teachers are expected to facilitate learning primarily through English. However, in multilingual and multicultural educational settings, teachers may be encouraged to adopt code-switching as a strategic pedagogical tool to support student comprehension and engagement. Codeswitching, when used appropriately, may assist in clarifying complex concepts, bridging linguistic gaps, and promoting deeper understanding among learners who experience difficulty with English fluency. Its use does not negate the primacy of English in instruction but

rather complements it by addressing the linguistic realities present in many Filipino classrooms.

Additionally, Under Section 6 of Executive Order No. 210, the Commission on Higher Education is authorized to issue appropriate rules and regulations for the effective implementation of English as the medium of instruction in the educational system. In compliance with this mandate, the institute may adhere to the use of English in instruction. However, it may incorporate codeswitching as a supportive strategy to enhance student understanding, particularly for learners who may struggle with English fluency. This approach ensures that while English remains the primary language of instruction, students are not left behind due to language barriers, fostering both academic comprehension and inclusivity in the learning environment. Additionally, the Institute may conduct trainings and seminars for student-teachers of the Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English, explaining the pedagogical value and appropriate use of code-switching in the classroom. These professional development activities should emphasize how code-switching can serve as a bridge to learning, especially in multilingual settings, while still upholding the standards set by the national policy on English proficiency.

Furthermore, the implementation of Executive Order No. 210, particularly Section 2 which encourages institutions of higher education, including State Colleges and Universities (SUCs), to adopt English as the primary medium of instruction at the tertiary level and directs the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to promote this policy, implies that while the use of English is intended to enhance students' international competitiveness, policymakers must also recognize the Philippines' linguistic diversity, where multiple languages and dialects contribute to the common practice of code-switching; thus, although English is emphasized as the primary language of instruction, the use of students' and teachers' native dialects should not be overlooked, as these play a crucial role in supporting learning and instruction—especially when certain English terms lack direct equivalents—and may, in fact, aid in deepening students' understanding and improving their proficiency in English when concepts are clarified using their first language. Therefore, policymakers and educators should promote the use of English while also allowing strategic and purposeful integration of students' native languages in the classroom, develop inclusive language policies that support multilingual practices, and provide teacher training on effective code-switching and language use to ensure that instruction remains both globally relevant and locally meaningful.

Lastly, future researchers may be encouraged to further explore the pedagogical implications and effectiveness of code-switching within the framework of Executive Order No. 210. While existing literature supports its strategic use in multilingual classrooms, more empirical studies are needed to examine its long-term impact on learners' academic performance, language proficiency, and cognitive development. Researchers may also investigate how pre-service and in-service teachers perceive and apply code-switching in relation to institutional language policies and classroom

realities. Comparative studies between regions, educational levels, or language backgrounds may yield insights into best practices for integrating code-switching without undermining the policy goal of English language mastery. Furthermore, future research may contribute to the development of context-sensitive models for multilingual instruction that balance national policy mandates with local linguistic diversity, thereby informing teacher education programs, curriculum design, and language policy reform.

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