



REVIEW ARTICLE

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF TEACHER TALK: CODE-SWITCHING IN THE CLASSROOM AT THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SAMOA

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ABSTRACT

Fluent speakers of multiple languages often switch between them during a single conversation, a practice known in linguistics as code-switching. This adaptation allows speakers to align their language with that of the dominant culture. Code-switching is particularly prevalent in bilingual and multilingual communities, serving as a valuable tool for articulating thoughts and concepts. Research on this phenomenon has revealed positive insights and benefits for learners within educational contexts. These advantages include its effectiveness as a strategy for classroom interaction. This study adopts a qualitative approach, focusing on discourse analysis of teacher communication and employing the Fatugāiti model to investigate the role of code-switching in enhancing teaching and learning at the National University of Samoa. Subject Area: Code-switching / Discourse Analysis

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INTRODUCTION

In bilingual and multilingual societies, mixing languages is common and occurs across all social classes and age groups (Grosjean, 1982). Bilingual speakers often incorporate elements from different languages into a single discourse, a practice known as code-switching (Milroy & Muysken, 1995). The concept has been studied since the early 1900s, starting with Espinosa (1917) in relation to New Mexican speech (Huerta-Macias & Quintero, 2001). Code-switching consists of two components: "code," which refers to any language system used for communication (Wardhaugh, 1986), and "switching," which is moving between these languages. In natural conversations, code-switching occurs when speakers share multiple languages, allowing them to choose the most contextually appropriate one (Macaro, 2005). Although some educators see it as unfavorable in classroom settings, it is recognized as a valuable resource for learning. Advocates believe it should be integrated into classroom practices for effective knowledge transfer (Macaro, 2005; Sert, 2005). As educators and second-language speakers in Samoa, we frequently switch between our mother tongue and English, even though English is encouraged at the National University of Samoa. This study examines the significance of teacher talk and its effect on teaching and learning, with the main question being: Why do teachers code-switch? A sub-question explores

how code-switching enhances classroom learning. This research anticipates that code-switching can be an effective strategy in university teaching and learning in Samoa.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Code-switching, recognized by Haugen (1956) as the alternating use of two languages, often occurs in two consecutive sentences where a second language is used to reiterate or respond. Poplack (1980) further defined it as the alternation of languages within a single discourse or sentence. Recent discussions highlight its benefits in foreign language learning. For instance, Macaro (1997) noted that switching to the first language (L1) can aid in learning the second language (L2), while Littlewood and Yu (2011) emphasized that teachers switch languages to support student comprehension. Sanchez-Garcia identified four main pedagogical goals for code-switching: to construct knowledge, manage the classroom, express emotional meaning, and establish interpersonal relationships. Shibata (2020) found that code-switching occurs even in English-only classes in Japan, enhancing engagement. In the Philippines, code-switching is prevalent, helping students articulate their views more accurately when mixing languages (Castillejo et al., 2018). However, some lecturers hesitate to use it, fearing it may hinder L2 acquisition, while students view it as beneficial for

understanding (Lachmy & Nur, 2018; Zahra et al., 2017). Despite viewing English as essential, many feel a duty to preserve their mother tongues (Rahman, 1999). Using the first language supports students emotionally (Littlewood & Yu, 2011). Atkinson (1987) initially discouraged reliance on the mother tongue but later acknowledged its potential for creating effective, communicative lessons. Attitudes towards code-switching have experienced a notable shift towards positivity; educators now recognize it as an effective tool for promoting understanding and participation among students. Despite the extensive body of research addressing code-switching in multilingual contexts, its application remains insufficiently explored within Samoan classrooms. This study seeks to fill that gap.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, we utilised the 'Fatugātiti,' a Samoan methodological approach aimed at facilitating culturally appropriate discussions that resonate with the values and beliefs of the Samoan community. This method skillfully balances the strengths and weaknesses of various indigenous and Samoan approaches, which is vital for effectively framing arguments (Salanoa, 2020). The Fatugātiti model views participants as co-researchers, fostering a positive working relationship by promoting equality and ensuring that every opinion is valued. The importance of collaboration and mutual understanding among participants was crucial to the study's success, as it incorporated cultural practices of sharing valuable information through a dynamic process of "give and take." The elements of the Fatugātiti model (refer to Figure 1) are *soalaupule* (give and take of opinions), *fa'asoa* (process of sharing or an exchange of views), *talanoaga* (informal conversation/dialogue about anything) and *fa'afaletui* (formal discussion/meeting for a specific purpose).



Figure 1. Fatugātiti Model

Data and Analysis: This study utilizes a qualitative design to investigate the role of code-switching in the teaching and learning process. By recording participants in classroom environments, we gained meaningful insights into the experiences and expectations of both educators and students. We employed a purposeful sampling approach (Creswell, 2009; Sargeant, 2012), selecting eighteen participants from various university departments, all of whom were present on campus during the research. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in both English and Samoan, each lasting

approximately one hour. These interviews encouraged participants to share their perspectives and insights on code-switching as an instructional strategy. The concepts of *fa'asoa* and *talanoaga* played a vital role in fostering dialogue on pertinent topics, enabling us to uncover unexpected insights (Gee & Ullman, 1998). Participants were observed over a two-month period for a total of 3 to 5 hours each, which enhanced our understanding of their experiences in relation to their actual teaching practices. We analysed 74 hours of teacher talk using interactional sociolinguistics, adhering to the framework established by Stubbe et al. (2003).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Code-switching within the classroom environment has been demonstrated to be an effective strategy for enhancing interactive engagement. This approach aids in clarifying meaning and facilitates the more effective dissemination of knowledge to students. Upon thorough analysis of the data, we identified several recurring themes that emerged consistently.

CODE-SWITCHING IS AN IMPORTANT TOOL IN UNDERSTANDING LANGUAGE

Code-switching enhances students' comprehension of concepts. Participant C stated that code-switching is essential in Mathematics and beneficial for students. He asserts that many Samoan-speaking students cannot fully grasp important theories and concepts in Mathematics unless he employs code-switching.

Seiloga lava ua faasamoa ... ko'a kau maua mai le uiga ma le concept o le matou ia mataupu lea o le Numera.

Only when the Samoan language is used can the meaning and concepts of Maths be understood. Participant C highlights the challenges students face when resources are only available in English, which favors English-speaking students. To support those struggling with complex math terminology, the teacher allows communication in Samoan and uses code-switching to enhance understanding. Many Samoan-speaking students prefer to ask questions in their native language, prompting the teacher to respond in kind.

This aligns with findings from Yusob, Nassir, and Tarmuji (2018), which show that 86% of students believe code-switching improves their learning. Razak and Shah (2020) also noted that code-switching increases student engagement and reduces anxiety around unfamiliar words. Participant E mentioned that when he forgets a technical term in Samoan, he switches to English for clarity before returning to Samoan. Participant D employs a similar method throughout her classes, often switching languages while explaining key concepts. Chowdhury (2012) emphasizes that code-switching allows teachers to reinforce lessons and clarify terminology.

Overall, educators frequently utilize code-switching when there aren't enough terms in a second language (L2) to explain complex ideas, as seen with Participant N, who uses his first language (L1) to articulate intricate terms when needed.

Ina ua vaai atu ua le malamalama tamaiti, e le'o manino tamaiti ona switch loa lea ona ole taumafai e fa'amalamalama ai se mataupu.

Table 1. Summary of Data Collection Mechanisms

Participants	Semi-structured Interviews	Hours of Workplace Observations	Hours of Workplace Recordings
Participant A	1	5	4
Participant B	1	5	4
Participant C	1	4	4
Participant D	1	4	5
Participant E	1	5	4
Participant F	1	4	4
Participant G	1	4	5
Participant H	1	5	4
Participant I	1	4	4
Participant J	1	4	4
Participant K	1	3	4
Participant L	1	4	4
Participant M	1	3	4
Participant N	1	4	4
Participant O	1	3	4
Participant P	1	4	4
Participant Q	1	3	4
Participant R	1	4	4
TOTAL HOURS	18 hours	70 hours	74 hours

When I see that the students do not understand and they are not clear with the subject, then I switch for them to understand.

Makulloluwa (2013) asserts that higher-level teachers felt that L1 needs to be used to benefit the less proficient students in their classes. Participant P also uses L1 to connect with his students and to build a safer environment for them to learn and prosper.

I will use English in about 3 to 4 minutes, and if I see that the students are confused about how they react using their facial expressions, I switch.

Trudgill (2000) also notes that speakers switch to manipulate, influence or define the situation as they wish and to convey nuances of meaning and personal intention. This is further supported by Participant N:

E confuse tamaiti pe a le faasamoaina aua e tele lava ina faaperetania le tele o courses ma e tataua lava ona faaaogaina le faaperetania.

Students will be confused if the Samoan language is not used because many courses are in English, so English should be used.

The necessity of code-switching is also highlighted by Mohammadi, Seraj, Ibrahim, and Hadi (2019), especially for learners with lower proficiency levels, facilitating the sharing of information and helps overcome language barriers for both students and teachers. In an interview with Participant J, she emphasized the importance of code-switching for use in a university setting by both teacher and student.

It's one of the important strategies to improve the understanding of tamaiti aoga. It is another way e mafai ona kilokilo iai using codeswitching i le aoga.

It's one of the essential strategies to improve the student's understanding, and it is another way we can look at using code-switching at the university. The findings are consistent with those of Wong and Yoong (2019), stating that code-switching is a communicative strategy used to define and structurespeakers' social relationships. Participant J believes

that code-switching is effective in helping incompetent students understand complex content.

Ona la e iai tamaiti e eseese lakou backgrounds, tele a o tamaiti e slow le learn iga o mea, confuse foi.

Students have different backgrounds, and many are confused and slow learners.

It is proven by Mohammadi *et al.* (2019) that code-switching accommodate slow-proficiency learners and enhances students' understanding of the topics being discussed. Participant L supports this perception and explains the importance of code-switching, especially for students who do not have English as their first language.

Oute manatu ole vaega lea pei na e saunua iai... le faaaogaina ole upu lea. Ia a'u ia, o lea pei e kukusa a ma le bilingual a? ua talafeagai lelei a. I lo'u lava talitonuga fa'afaiaoga ... aua ga'o akugu'u i fafo aua lae papalagi uma kamaiki. O Samoa, o gei lea e iai kamaiki Samoa. Ia ole level fo'i e omai ma kamaiki, ia lea kakou fuafua iai aua kakou ke Blah blah aku lava i luga o handout ma vaega... ia ae iai a kamaiki makuai le malamalama... ma vaega la ga, ia a'u a ia, makuai ou faakauaiga a le faaaogaina o gagana e lua pei e amata ai toe fa'malamalama laia ia ... I lo'u a iloa ai kalu ga ou faiaoga o se mekokia lea ua kalafeagai mo a'u ia mo kamaiki.

Regarding what you have just mentioned about code-switching, personally, because it is like 'bilingual', right? It is beneficial. It is my belief as a teacher because overseas countries have white (English-speaking) students. As for Samoa, students are (mostly) Samoans. So, we need to consider the calibre of these students because we can teach and read handouts (in English), but some students will not understand. For these reasons, I utilise and support using both languages (while teaching) to start and offer explanations. That is my understanding since I have been teaching; this method is essential and effective for my students.

Participant L noted that teaching would be ineffective if instructors explained handouts solely in English. They also emphasized the need to consider the low English proficiency of students in TVET programs learning a trade. Gumperz (1982) states that the language focus of a lesson influences the

choice of the “official” classroom language and any other languages used. The findings indicate that code-switching can effectively help teachers meet their educational goals in classrooms where low proficiency in English may lead to misunderstandings. This study highlights code-switching as a valuable strategy for supporting students with limited language skills.

RAPPORT WITH STUDENTS AND INTERACTIVE LEARNING

According to Abad (2010), as cited in Yusob, Nassir, and Tarmuji (2018), students noted that code-switching helps build rapport with teachers and boosts their confidence to participate in class. This approach enables active participation, bridging the gap between teachers and students and enhancing their confidence (Razak and Shah, 2020). Participant E stated that code-switching promotes interactive learning and believes students should communicate in their mother tongue. He expressed concerns that strict adherence to English in instruction could contribute to high failure rates, raising questions about accountability for student performance.

He noted that this pressure may discourage students from asking questions, as they feel compelled to communicate in English but find it challenging. He emphasized the need for both lecturers and learners to engage in code-switching to foster effective interaction. Participant D also agreed on the benefits of code-switching, stating it aids understanding and classroom management. Chowdhury (2012) supports this, mentioning that teachers may use the mother tongue for discipline and instructions. Overall, code-switching fosters harmony between teachers and students. Participant N believes it helps students grasp specific topics when teachers translate terms into their first language. Participant J also supports code-switching as a valuable teaching method at the university level.

“Aga faapea e faaoga uma gagana e lua throughout the whole University ia ailoga e iai se kamaikiki fail ona e leai se Samoan o faaogaina, kikilo foi la, they are very smart, and they can reverse ma translate ia lea mea ma lea mea, faapenei ua polofesa uma kakou kamaiki pe ana faaoga le code-switching.”

Students would not have failed and become professors if we used both languages in the university. They are bright and can reverse and translate from one language to another.

During the observation of Participant O, the interaction between the teacher and students was positive, fostering a comfortable and safe learning environment. The students were at ease, mainly because the lecturer spoke in their mother tongue, highlighting the importance of code-switching in building solidarity and connection (Makulloluwa, 2013).

Participants noted that code-switching aids classroom management and promotes student participation in tutorials. A study by Polio and Duff (1994) found that teachers in foreign language classrooms used students' first language (L1) for various purposes, including classroom management, demonstrating empathy, aiding comprehension, providing translations, and offering grammar instruction. Before starting her discussion, one participant assured her students that code-switching would be utilised to encourage their participation.

A'o le tatou lesona lea ua i luga, I hope you all have uh... lecture notes... o iai sau lecture note? ”Ia masani lava o le mea lava e masani ai, talanoa atu talanoa mai. A iai fo'i ni fesili, ia fesili mai. O le mea lea e fia... like we always do, we read our PowerPoint lectures in English... I can speak in Samoan so that you can understand what I'm talking about. Okay, o le acute atomy, did anybody look this up? What does it mean by 'acute'? We've talked about this before... (Student response: Severe pain) leotele. Severe pain. Sudden pain...onset. Fa'afefea ona tupu se mea? How does sinus symptoms occur? olea le opposite of le acute? Chronic.

Our lesson is up... I hope you all have uh... lecture notes... do you have a lecture note? So it's usually our classes where I speak, and you say. If you have questions, ask me. What I want... like we always do, is to read our PowerPoint in English. I will talk to Samoan so you can clearly understand what I am discussing. Okay, acute atomy. Did anyone look this up? What does 'acute' mean? We've talked about this before. (Student responds). Speak up. Severe pain. Sudden pain... onset. How does something happen? How does sinus symptoms occur? What is the opposite of acute? (student response – Chronic). Chronic.

Here the speaker code-switched several times to encourage students to ask questions about anything they may not understand or find confusing. By using the students' first language (L1), she creates a comfortable environment that encourages participation during the lecture. This is evident in the students' immediate responses to her questions, which she also praises.

Any questions about the last three bullets? Okay, e taua le vave o lou gaioiga, lou assessment; if you think this person needs to be referred, you must do so as early as possible. Plus, putting in a nil per oral management. E a la na taua le mea lea o le aua nei ai, why? Does anybody know why nil per mouth is vital in this type of person?”

Any questions about the last three bullets? Okay, your responses must be quick when doing your assessment. If you think this person needs to be referred, you must do so as soon as possible. Plus, putting in a nil per oral management. This is important because why? Does anybody know why nil per mouth is important in this type of person?”

Participant I uses code-switching to highlight the importance of patient assessment and engage students by making the material more relatable. After her explanations, she encourages a student to share their thoughts, showing confidence in their understanding. Turnbull and Arnett (2002) note that a teacher's use of first language (L1) for interaction, teaching, and administration varies based on students' language proficiency and teachers' beliefs. Participant A stresses the importance of code-switching for Samoan students, particularly teenagers and younger learners. She suggests that code-switching helps connect with students' interests in current trends and popular media, facilitating rapport by alternating between their first language (L1) and second language (L2).

CODE-SWITCHING ADDRESSES LANGUAGE BARRIERS AND ACCOMMODATES LOW LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

The findings indicate that teachers utilise code-switching to assist students in overcoming language barriers and to

accommodate those with limited language proficiency. Teachers can identify these students through their responses, body language, facial expressions, behaviour, and emotional cues. When students ask questions and respond to Participant C in Samoan, despite him communicating in English, it signals their hope and expectation that he will re-explain what has been said in Samoan for better understanding.

Kusa e start a i le Igilisi, faakoa switch pe a fesili ma koe switch i le faasamoa.

I usually start in English and only switch to Samoan when students ask questions.

Their level of English proficiency is undeniably low, and they are not exposed to everyday conversational English (Chowdhury, 2012). Participant E can recognize when his students do not understand the material through their body language, especially when they appear lost and confused. Participant D shares her observations as well, noting that some of her students are struggling and wish to ask questions, but feel too embarrassed to do so in English.

... keke o kamaiki vaivai ... ao le isi kamaikiki e fia fesili ae ma e gagu.

There are many weak students, and one may want to ask a question but is too embarrassed to do so in English.

According to Razak and Shah (2020), "By using code-switching, teachers and students can discuss any issue without the concerns that may arise due to the students' limited English proficiency." Participant E emphasized that if a teacher cannot fully communicate with students in English, they should use the students' first language to ensure understanding. The findings indicate that students who communicate freely in a bilingual classroom tend to experience fewer problems with language barriers. Habitual code-switching can encourage students to express meaning and understand different concepts more accurately. Participant O often engages in code-switching unconsciously, finding it unavoidable.

"e faaoga a le faasamoa pe a kaumafai e faamakala se kala, so e keke o a kaimi faaoga le igilisi."

I use the Samoan language when trying to explain things, but most of the time, I use English.

"All the students and teachers claim that there is code-switching to Chinese sometimes or occasionally in their classes, and it is used consciously or unconsciously" (Liu, 2010). He claims that code-switching depends on the questions being asked and the content of the topics discussed.

"Ole teaching foi ia e switch e le kumau ia le teaching e base ile attitude, e base foi le ability, ole fesili"

Sometimes, I switch my way of teaching based on the attitudes and abilities of the students and the questions asked.

This phenomenon occurs because language switching is often related to the content being discussed and is not always done consciously. For example, in Participant O's lectures, he

frequently switches languages without realising it, which helps make the material clearer for his students.

HABITUAL CODE-SWITCHING

As indicated by Participant C in his interview, Samoan-speaking students are significantly impacted by the lack of code-switching, whereas fluency in English does not ensure proficiency in Maths.

A leai se codeswitching, e keke le aafiaga o kamaiki Samoa ... e le o le Igilisi e lelei ai se Maths.

If there is no codeswitching, there will be a significant impact on Samoan-speaking students ... English does not guarantee competence in Maths.

He notes that many students find math difficult due to their limited understanding of English used in classrooms. Teachers often switch between languages unknowingly, as seen in Participant C's classes, where he frequently alternates between English and Samoan. Participant B, an English lecturer, also acknowledges this issue in his interview.

... Code-switching is something you cannot avoid; sometimes it just happens, and you don't realise it).

This is further demonstrated when he is observed and recorded during class, subconsciously intertwining the two languages occasionally. For instance,

O lea ua mix ia cultural beliefs ma Christian beliefs a?

There is a mixture of cultural beliefs and Christian beliefs, right?

Participant E often switched between languages during lessons, using Samoan as the primary language of instruction. Even during student presentations, Samoan was dominant. This is noteworthy given that all participants were adult learners, mainly teachers and trainers, where one might expect English to be primarily used. However, habitual code-switching was evident throughout the sessions.

Code-switching can also be triggered by contextualisation, where the lecturer switches to Samoan to explain or discuss a concept or term in the Samoan context to help students grasp and understand the meaning. As Participant B puts it:

... by contextualising, you're not just switching to Samoan, but also using a Samoan example ... e contextualise loa, then students can connect.

... once you contextualise, then students can connect.

As observed, Participant B kept referring to real-life experiences to clarify some terms that needed further explanation and thus switched to Samoan:

E iai kaulaga foi a gae ga fai e ekalesia ... ua pa'u this year a, 'cause ua le maua gi kupe a kagaka ... oga ua le koe faigaluega e maua le kupe e lafo ai.

Some collected church offerings have dropped this year because people do not have money as they are no longer employed.

Switching to Samoan significantly enhances students' learning. A study in Malaysia found that students "positively viewed the use of code-switching in ESL learning as a beneficial tool" (Razak & Shah, 2020). This is evident in Participant B's recording, where he asked questions in English, and the students responded in Samoan, leading him to switch languages automatically. He also used code-switching to give instructions.

Ga fai mai le faiaoga e refer i le Harvard System ga i kokogu o le Course Reader.

The course coordinator said to refer to the Harvard System in the Course Reader.

Some teachers consistently engage in code-switching in a predictable manner. Participants often switched to the second language (L2) to mention and explain concepts without realizing it. This practice is frequently unconscious, and some teachers admitted they were unaware of code-switching but utilized it habitually. This is evident in an interview with Participant A, where she says:

I remember learning about what we were doing right now - code-switching. I think it was one of your researchers that I learned what code-switching was. When I conversed with her, I was like, that's what it's called. Since I started teaching, code-switching is, again, I didn't know that that's what I was doing, but I've always found myself explaining something in English.

Behavior can be either conscious or unconscious, but it always serves essential functions that enhance language learning environments. According to Mattson and Burenhult (1999), these functions include topic switching, affective functions, and repetition. For example, during grammar instruction, a teacher may switch to the students' native language to clarify specific points, helping students focus on new concepts through code-switching.

TECHNICAL TERMS AND COMPLEX EXPLANATIONS

Some people view code-switching as an obstacle to language learning, claiming it prevents fluency in the target language (Chowdhury, 2012). In contrast, others see it as a helpful tool for explaining technical terms and complex concepts. Observations of 18 participants showed that code-switching was often used to clarify difficult vocabulary relevant to their courses. For instance, Participant E noted, "Not every English word has a Samoan translation," emphasizing the challenges of finding appropriate Samoan equivalents. Similarly, Participant D switched to Samoan while explaining how to create an email, still needing to use some English computing terms.

Ua leaga akoo le system leaga akoo ma le hardware.

The whole system and hardware are damaged.

Magakua parts o le email e iai le username and the domain.
Remember that parts of an email include a username and domain.

This difficulty in finding suitable Samoan words for technical English terms is further proven true, especially in maths when

Participant C was observed and recorded. It is evident that a great deal of mathematical terms does not seem to have proper Samoan translations:

Cosine, asymptote of each of the following ... e fia mea ga e su'e?

The cosine asymptote of each of the following ... how many are you looking for?

Kakou amaka la i le hyperbola a ... auā o le trigonometry le mea legā ...

Let's start with hyperbola ... because that is trigonometry

This is also echoed by Participant N, who uses L1 throughout his lesson, but when it comes to technical terms, he switches to L2 because no word in L1 can translate this word, *FAD-fishing aggregating device, it's a fishing method*. Participant N had to say the words in L2 and then had to explain in L1, for example:

"Explain- o le a mafai ona faamatalaina."

Participant J stated the significance of code-switching in her area of profession as it clarifies complex subjects.

"We both use English and Samoan, ae tele a la le faasamoa cause e tele a tagata Samoa e mama'i, e o'o itaimi e o ai tua I asiasiga, e tapena foi le faasamoa e faia le fesagaiga poo se health talk, then I deliver in Samoan ona e tele tina Samoa, and I also try to use English, so that's how it goes and that's why it's imperative le faasamoa."

We use both English and Samoan, but mostly Samoan because many of the patients we see are first language speakers of Samoan. We also have outreach programmes where we visit the communities – all our preparations are done in Samoa, I also try to use English but for the most part, the talks are all in Samoan.

"In topic switch cases, the teacher alters his language according to the topic that is under discussion "Teachers trying to make use of L1 whenever needed, during the conversation they realised that they might get the idea wrong, so they code switch" (Sert, 2005). This pattern is evident in the following run-on sentence by participant I;

E mana'omia le ave e va'ai po'o lea tonu le feso'otaiga o le ma'i fatu lea ma le abdominal distension

There is a need to examine closely the relationship between heart disease and abdominal distension.

It is obvious that translating the highlighted terms in L1 would be a difficult and unseemly task and would also confuse the students. Despite the sentence starting with L1, the participant code-switches to L2 due to a lack of vocabulary or an accurate translation.

... lona uiga la o le endocrine are those glands that secrete the substances straight into the circulation to be carried to where they are wanted. O le a la laga part i le exocrine? Anyone? O le duct la lea, manatua a e tilotilo i le mea lea pei a o se laulaau a. O laga mea lea e i le ogatotonu e na te avea ia nutrients...

This means that the endocrine glands secrete the substances straight into the circulation to carry them to where they are wanted. So, which is part of the exocrine? Anyone? So, remember that this duct looks similar to a leaf. The part in the middle delivers nutrients.

In this excerpt, the participant code-switches several times to explain in L2. Additionally, she lacks specific vocabulary in L1 to translate technical terms, which would explain the constant code-switching when she mentions words like 'endocrine', 'exocrine', 'duct' and 'nutrients'. Participant L also utilises code-switching, as evident below:

O mea kau safety, o faaaogaiga o masigi, hand tools, ole faaaogaiga o kakou power tools, ole safety ah...a e iloa le mea e le kakau ga fai aua le faia, ae a e iloa lae sefe, fai."

Using machinery, hand tools, and power tools are all part of safety. If you know that something should not be done, don't do it. If you see that it is safe, do it.

Ole kakou grinder, ole faaaogaiga ole kakou grinder - aua gei aveesea e seisi le safety guard le mea lea e kava ai kua ole cutting disk po'o le grinding disk. Ole mafuaaga, a o'o ga guki le cutting disk poo le grinding disk, o i lea mafua ai ga fiki I lou magava..."

No one should remove the safety guard covering the back of the cutting or grinding disk when using our grinder. The reason is, that if the cutting disk or the grinding disk breaks, the pieces may injure your core.

In both lessons, the instructor code-switches when discussing technical terms due to the limited vocabulary in the second language (L2). This approach enhances understanding, as evidenced by participants who often rely on their first language (L1) for clarity, even in predominantly English or L2 classes.

Participant A highlighted code-switching's importance for contextualization and its effectiveness as a teaching tool (Ellis, 1994; Cook, 2001). Exposure to the target language is beneficial, but it may not work in every classroom, and English-only settings can lead to frustration if the material is incomprehensible to learners (Lai, 1996; Brice & Roseberry-McKibbin, 2001).

Participant L noted that his weaker L2 students require substantial explanations in L1 to grasp lessons, supporting research that shows code-switching is influenced by learner proficiency. Studies indicate that low-English proficient learners endorse teachers' code-switching, suggesting it is a useful strategy in low and intermediate-level classrooms (Lai, 1996; Critchley, 1999; Schweers, 1999). Participant A, in her interview, stated,

"Ever since I started teaching, I've always found myself explaining something in English, e predominant a, I'll speak in English but then I would then switch to explain it in Samoan to help understand more..."

Not only does she code-switch using fillers, but she also explains the need to code-switch for ease of understanding. Also, she adds to the importance of code-switching as a way of:

...helping the students understand more, especially concepts that are very foreign to their understanding, so it's especially if (an example comes up). It's an example from another setting, pei la o le Sociology; we tend to refer to periods and also systems, like economic systems that are very foreign to us, and the terminologies ia makua, it's very foreign, so when you try to like, bring it to our context, I have no choice but to speak in Samoan a lot of the times to try and explain.

... helps students understand more, especially concepts that are very foreign to their understanding. Especially if an example comes up and it's an example from another setting; as for Sociology, we tend to refer to periods and systems like economic systems that are very foreign to us, even) the terminologies are very, it's very foreign right. So when you try to bring it to our context, I have no choice but to speak in Samoan and try to explain.

CONCLUSION

Through our examination of code-switching in the classroom, it has become clear that this practice occurs even in environments where an English-only policy is supposedly enforced. Code-switching plays a vital pedagogical role by facilitating the explanation of concepts, enhancing classroom participation and relationships, and fostering connections among learners. By mixing and alternating between languages, individuals can often articulate their thoughts more quickly and accurately.

Our data collection and analysis demonstrate that code-switching is an effective tool employed by many educators to improve learning and comprehension. This phenomenon is not exclusive to Samoa; it is observed in bilingual classrooms around the world, from Canada to Singapore, India to Nigeria, and Mexico, among others. Our research, the first of its kind conducted in Samoa, emphasizes that whether code-switching occurs intentionally or unintentionally, it can significantly enhance student learning when used thoughtfully.

Incorporating familiar languages allows teachers to create a more inclusive learning environment. This approach helps build cognitive connections, clarify complex concepts, boost student confidence, and demonstrate cultural sensitivity. Code-switching should not be viewed merely as a casual linguistic behaviour. Instead, it can be recognized as a strategic educational tool that leverages students' linguistic resources to facilitate deeper understanding and learning. By embracing code-switching, teachers can create a more dynamic and effective educational experience that honours the diverse linguistic abilities of their students.

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