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Effects of Using Code-Switching for Teaching and Learning of English as a Second Language in a Multilingual Environment

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Abstract

The influence of code-switching on ESL teachers and students in a multilingual setting is regarded as one of the causes of poor learning and grammatical errors in English in Nigeria. This study investigated the effect of code-switching on English language instruction and learning in a multilingual region of Northern Nigeria. The primary objective of this study was to investigate the impact of code-switching on the instruction and learning of English by the ESL students in a multilingual region of Northern Nigeria. Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model theory and quantitative technique were utilized. A questionnaire was used for data collection, and descriptive statistics were employed to analyse the demographic and questionnaire items using frequency distributions, means, and tables. Responses were expressed in percentages. The students from the Nigerian Certificate in Education programme participated in the study. The findings showed that the teachers and students employed code-switching in the classroom, and it had both positive and negative consequences. The results revealed that code-switching facilitated comprehension of lessons for the students with limited English abilities and eased the workload of the teachers, among other benefits. However, it had adverse effects on the students' use of English at the tertiary level of education, as it affected their reading and writing abilities and proficiency. The study suggests that ESL teachers, policymakers, and researchers tailor their instructional approaches by considering students' linguistic abilities, cultural backgrounds, and educational outcomes, which encourages the students' use of the English language to improve their proficiency.

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Keywords: Code-switching, education, English as a second language, multilingual, standard English.

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the features of bilingual and multilingual communities is code-switching. This feature is one of the significant challenges for multilingual students of English as a second language, and Nigeria, as a multilingual country, is no exception, as noted by various scholars (Adebola, 2011, Ifechelobi, 2015). In multilingual situations, code-switching has a substantial negative impact on English language learning and usage, often resulting in poor language acquisition and grammatical errors. Adetuyi and Jegede (2016) stated that code-switching contributed to the emergence of pidgin English in Nigeria and that it is gradually eroding, having a profound impact on English language use in the country.

It is an apparent fact that Nigeria is a multilingual society with a complex communication network comprising numerous languages, similar to other countries such as Malaysia, Ghana, New Zealand, and South Africa. According to Igudia (2023), Nigeria has over 500 languages and approximately 250 ethnic groups, with three regional languages: Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba. Others include Fulani, Tiv, Nupe, Efik, Ibibio, Fulfude, Bini, Kanuri, Igala, Ijaw, Chamba, Idoma, and Gwari/Gbagyi as some of the major languages, as shown in the map of Figure 1. The English language is likely the most significant legacy that the British left in Nigeria at the end of colonial rule.

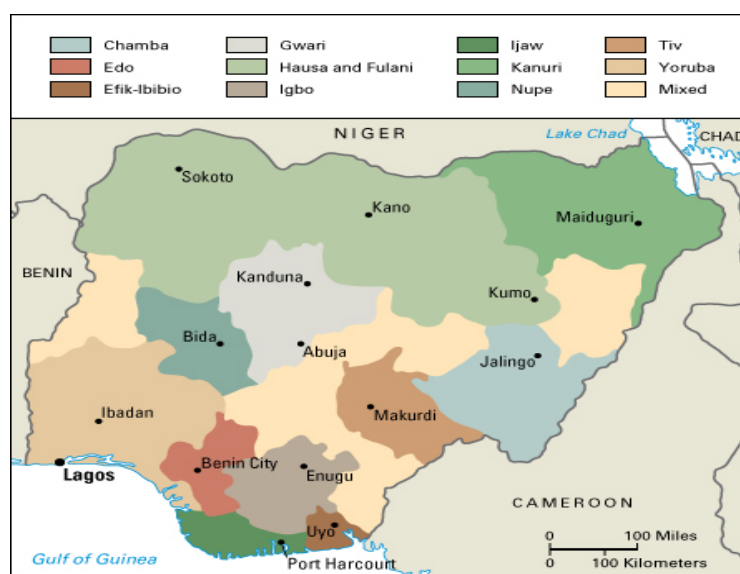


Figure 1. Map of major and foremost Nigerian languages (Blench, 2012, p. 17).

In Nigeria, English is widely used for both internal and external communication in the government, business, literature, education, and the media sectors. English is a compulsory subject at both primary and secondary education. This language is the primary teaching medium at all educational levels in Nigeria. Muhammad et al. (2018) emphasized that the English language provides Nigerian children with ready access to the world's general quest for knowledge and experiences, as recorded in books. English is also the medium of instruction at all levels of education in Nigeria. Therefore, for a child to be well educated in the Western sense of the word, proficiency in the language is a necessity. Consequently, it is essential to invest in the efficient teaching and acquisition of English in the country.

The growing interest in the effects of code-switching on English language instruction and learning in Nigeria is highlighted by Inuwa (2014) and Adetuyi et al. (2017). As a result, Nigerian English, sometimes known as 'Niglish', has emerged and is now being used in classrooms

alongside the standard English. Despite several studies on code-switching in Nigeria, there is a lack of research on how code-switching affects the teaching and learning of English as a second language in the Northern region of Nigeria. Therefore, there is a need to further research code-switching so that it can be understood and utilized effectively when necessary in the context of English language teaching and learning, especially in multilingual settings such as Northern Nigeria. Hence, this study focuses on code-switching in a classroom setting during the teaching and learning of English as a second language in a multilingual Northern Nigerian environment to investigate how it impacts and affects the teaching and learning outcomes of the standard English. Therefore, the following research questions would guide the study:

1. What are the positive impacts of code-switching on the teaching/learning of English as a second language in a multilingual environment?
2. What are the negative effects of code-switching on the teaching and learning of English among students of English as a second language in a multilingual environment?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Sociolinguistic Functions of Code-Switching

According to Memory et al. (2018), code-switching is a linguistic technique that enhances the impact and coherence of communication in a multilingual setting. Code-switching, as defined by Chukueggu (2010), refers to the use of multiple languages in a conversation and is indicative of language contact. It can occur between sentences (intersentential) or within a single sentence (intrasentential), as noted by Memory et al. (2018), Sabty et al. (2021), and Nor and Shangeetha (2023). Olson (2019) postulated that code-switching is now considered a normal and natural product of the interaction between the two languages of the bilingual (or multilingual) speaker. Myers-Scotton (1993a) further argued that code-switching can be distinguished from other language contact phenomena such as loan translation (calques), borrowing, pidgins and creoles, and transfer or interference. In this context, Myers-Scotton (1993a) explained that not only do contextual factors play a role in code choice but also factors such as social identity and educational background influence the speaker's choice of code.

Furthermore, Myers-Scotton (1993b) stated that code-switching is common wherever more than one language is spoken and therefore represents a form of linguistic development and adaptation. In Nigeria, code-switching is indeed a widespread phenomenon and a preferred tactic, especially in conversations. It can serve a variety of purposes. Similarly, Adetuyi and Jegede (2016), while focusing on the Nigerian classroom, emphasized that code-switching is one of the resources available to speakers and addressees to create meaning internationally and negotiate mutual investment in the linguistic context. This is because languages and codes are associated with particular places, groups, activities, or functions. Code-switching offers a variety of uses, such as highlighting specific points, showing students empathy and solidarity, and promoting knowledge by using quotes from other people (Gulzar, 2010). In a study involving bilingual speakers in Malaysia during a conversation session, Bhatti et al. (2018) demonstrated that the practice of switching between or combining two languages is not only widespread but also serves as a communication technique. Ahmad and Barner-Rasmussen (2019) emphasized that code-switching facilitates knowledge sharing by supporting the development and maintenance of key technical vocabulary, enhancing inclusion in knowledge-sharing interactions, and facilitating the contextualization of knowledge. For instance, Inuwa (2014, p. 24) stressed that in Nigerian classrooms, code-switching is used as a communication technique, as exemplified in the extract:

Teacher : *Ina muka tsaya* last week in our lecture? (Where did we stop last week in our lecture?).
 Student : We stopped at sounds, *sauti makongoro* (glottal sound), etc.
 Teacher : Right, that is correct. What is a glottal sound, *sauti makongoro*?
 Student : Glottal sound is a sound produced by the help of the glottis organ. *Kamar* /h/.
 Teacher : Good, *nagode* (thanks)....

Source: Inuwa (2014, p. 24)

From the extract, code-switching is used to facilitate communication between the teachers and the students. Code-switching is a widespread occurrence and a favoured strategy, especially in oral discourse. It also serves many different functions in Nigerian classroom communication (Adebola, 2011). In the same vein, Chukueggu (2010) postulated that in Nigerian classrooms, code-switching can be an effective teaching and learning technique since it can boost students' engagement, help them grasp complex subjects, and enhance their language skills. Similarly, Adetuyi and Jegede (2016) claimed that it can enhance students' comprehension of concepts and promote their cultural identity.

However, Macaro (2005) argued that code-switching in the classroom does not have the positive image of being an asset and a valuable addition to their array of communicative strategies. This argument is supported by Littlewood and Yu (2011), who assumed that code-switching crowds out the target language and therefore has unfavourable effects on the learning process. Thus, educators often do not desire to engage in code-switching in the classroom. Furthermore, Fanani and Ma'u (2018) summarized the arguments against code-switching in the FL classroom under five aspects:

To code-switch in the classroom means a recourse to L1 which is not desirable because the L2 classroom should aim at maximizing L2 input, avoidance of code-switching warrants the absence of negative interference, avoidance of code-switching impedes a return to unfashionable methods (i.e. grammar translation method, a method in which the target language is crowded out and L2 is taught without regard to language use in the 'real world'), and finally, avoidance of code switching is regarded as an indicator for 'good teaching', i.e. has a control function. (Fanani & Ma'u, 2018, p. 71)

Consequently, code-switching hinders students from building high proficiency in standard English, thereby creating a loss of confidence in their spoken and written expressions at the tertiary level. Therefore, there is a need for adequate knowledge of vocabulary to speak and write in the English language to resolve the teething problem of interference. Apart from that, code-switching results in spelling error interference. Babarinde and Ahamefula (2020) emphasized that most students made numerous spelling errors due to problems with mother tongue interference and code-switching issues. For example, the students wrote *peagean* instead of 'pidgin', *corminicate* instead of 'communicate', *concious* instead of 'conscious', *perfect* instead of 'perfect', *maririal* instead of 'malarial', and etc. Their findings aligned with those of some scholars who argued that spelling mistakes can be due to code-switching or mother tongue interference (Adetuyi & Jegede, 2016).

2.2 Role of English in Nigerian Education

English is the unifying language among Nigerians from different geopolitical zones and ethnic groups (Muhammad et al., 2018). The role of English in Nigeria cannot be overstated, as it is a valuable tool for national development and the country's official language. According to Taiwo (2009), English is widely used in most spheres of life in Nigeria, employed in the court, science, technology, education, and the media. Njoku (2017) noted that given Nigeria's multilingualism, English serves as a second language under the country's language policy. The official language of instruction in the Nigerian education system is English. It serves as both the language of instruction and a compulsory subject, as well as a yardstick for assessing students' academic achievement.

Similarly, Nwabudike et al. (2014) and Tamunobelem (2015) stated that for any meaningful teaching/learning process to prosper in a multilingual classroom like Nigeria, the English language must be employed as a medium of interaction between a teacher and student. That is the main reason why the English language is crucial to education in Nigeria. However, it can also make communication more challenging, particularly for individuals who are not familiar with both languages (Olagunju, 2013). Additionally, the possible drawbacks of code-switching,

which may result in a misunderstanding of course materials and difficulties in expressing complex ideas clearly and concisely, can negatively affect academic performance (Chukueggu, 2010).

2.3 Code Switching in a Bi/Multilingual Environment

According to Adebola (2011), where there are no functional distinctions or limitations between the two languages in contact, code-switching can become an essential part of multilingual speech. Adebola also emphasized that when languages in contact are important in the socioeconomic context, code-switching can result in the creation of a 'new' language, such as Nigerian English (Niglish), Singlish, Franglais (Frenglish), Hinglish, etc. However, when one of the languages holds a stronger place in the sociopolitical-economic system, people tend to move from a less 'significant' language to a dominating socioeconomically viable language (Adebola, 2011). Similarly, according to Muysken (2007), grammatical structures are exchanged in an utterance when the grammatical structure of a sentence differs from that of the preceding sentence, which also refers to code-switching, meaning that certain lexical items are specific to one language, but the grammatical structure is found in another language. Students' papers often contain subtle cases of code-switching, such as unusual compositions that are literal translations of native languages or serve no other purpose. According to Ifechelobi (2015), this results in many proficient speakers of English not noticing deviant sentences and pronunciations. For example, in the Nigerian English repertoire, a lecturer might pronounce the word 'vulcanizer' as *fokaniza*, which is how most people in the city say it. Therefore, most second language students of English acquire models of English that are peppered with deviations.

In Nigeria, code-switching is a sign of bilingualism/multilingualism in transition and could be a sign that English is replacing traditional languages (Ifechelobi, 2015), unlike Hinglish, Franglais, Irish in Ireland, and Manglish in Malaysia, where code-switching promotes the 'preservation' of an endangered language (Kamal & Ramly, 2022). In Nigeria, people who are bilingual or multilingual frequently switch between different languages (Ezeh et al., 2022). They further explained that the circumstance depends on the relationship and topic of discussion. Sabty et al. (2021) emphasized that code-switching can be exemplified by multilingual speakers switching between standard and regional forms of English or between professional and domestic varieties. Code-switching is a common feature in bilingual and multilingual environments. Students and teachers employ code-switching in and outside the classroom to facilitate clarification and ease communication (Ezeh et al., 2022). These scholars agreed that multilinguals frequently code-switch between languages when speaking or writing. However, Olagunju (2013) stated that code-switching in classes that do not share the same mother tongue, as is often the case in most Nigerian classroom situations, may create problems, as some students may not be fully engaged in the teaching process. Though some students view code-switching as a sign of low language proficiency or as a hindrance to language acquisition, others view it as a creative and natural language practice (Olagunju, 2013). Teachers and institutions must take these attitudes into account and address them to create a positive learning environment that values linguistic diversity and fosters effective communication.

3. METHODS

3.1 Research Design

A quantitative research methodology was employed to gain a deeper understanding of how code-switching influences the teaching and learning of English in a multilingual Northern Nigerian environment, as well as to examine its effects. To achieve this, Myers-Scotton's (1989, 1993a) Markedness Model theory was adopted, which assumes that the speaker or listener has the option of making choices that could be viewed as marked to transmit messages and negotiate the meanings of intentionality.

3.2 Research Sample

A descriptive survey research method was employed for the study, allowing for the examination of a small sample of people before extrapolating the results to the entire community (Deckert & Wilson, 2023). Purposive random sampling technique was used for the study. The population consisted of 35 students from Level 200 (Year 2) of the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) programme, comprising 11 males and 24 females, with an average age of 19 years.

3.3 Data Collection

A questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. The questionnaire had two sections, A and B. The first section presents the demographic profile of the respondents, and the second section examines language usage in classroom settings. The questionnaire contained a total of 18 structured items. The questions on 'Language Dominance' were adapted from Azlan and Narasuman (2013). A pilot test of the instruments was conducted to cross-check the validity and reliability of the data for the study, and the 5-point Likert scale grading system was exchanged with that of a 4-point grading system (strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree).

3.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis is a process that allows the researcher to make sense or meaning out of data, which involves merging and interpreting what he/she has seen and read and what the participants have said (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). That the aim of data analysis is to find answers to the research questions that guide the study. The responses to the questionnaires were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions, percentages, and means, as shown in tables, to facilitate clear interpretation of the data.

4. RESULTS

This paper examines respondents' opinions on the effects of code switching on the use of standard English in a multilingual context. Multilingual speakers often code-switch during conversations by shifting between languages. The trends in the data were analysed to gain insight into positive and negative implications. Consequently, the findings from the data suggest code-switching is prevalent in the multilingual region of Northern Nigeria. The theme and sub-categories that emerged from the data are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of theme and sub-categories on code-switching effects.

Theme	Category	Definition
Code-switching effects	Positive effects	These are respondents' attitudes and practices that reflect vital consequences that improve communications in a multilingual community.
	Adverse consequence	These are respondents' attitudes and practices that reflect the negative consequences of the use of code switching in a multilingual community.

4.1 Respondents' Demographic Data

Table 2 shows the respondents' most fluently spoken native language. Most respondents spoke Hausa as their native language, with 40.0% (N=14), followed by Nupe with 31.4% (N=11), and Gwari with 17.1% (N=6). Yoruba and Igbo each accounted for 5.7% (N=2) of the respondents. The majority of respondents spoke Hausa as their most fluent native language. Thus, according to the Nigerian Language Policy on Education (Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council, 2014), which allowed the use of immediate environmental language (IEL) in teaching and learning in the schools at the early stage and gradual transition to English at the

mid-basic level, Hausa language was the Immediate Environmental Language in the studied environment.

Table 2. Respondents' most fluently spoken native language.

Native language	Number	%
Hausa	14	40%
Igbo	2	5.7%
Yoruba	2	5.7%
Gwari	6	17.1%
Nupe	11	31.4%
Total	35	100%

4.2 Language Use in the Classroom

From Table 3, it is observed that 80.0% (N=28) of the respondents spoke English most fluently, 97.1% (N=34) used English as the language of instruction in the classroom, and 82.9% (N=29) of the respondents used English as the most frequently used language of communication among their classmates. Additionally, 65.7% (N=23) used English as their second most frequent language to communicate with their classmates in class. The language used by the lecturers during lectures was English, with 100% (N=35), and the language the students used most of the time when talking with their lecturers was also English, with 100% (N=35). It is therefore concluded that English was dominantly used amongst students of English as a second language in a multilingual environment.

Even though learning the target language is beneficial for society, the students alone would determine whether or not they wish to do so, based on their personal opinions regarding its use, as opined by Myers-Scotton's (1989, 1993a) Markedness Model theory. However, based on the comparison of percentages in Table 3, it can be determined that English was the most frequently used language among the respondents in most classroom situations when lessons were being taught. Code-switching was therefore expected to have little or no effect on the teaching and learning of English as a second language in a multilingual Northern Nigeria.

Table 3. Language use in a multilingual classroom environment.

S/N	Items	English		Native	
		Number	%	Number	%
1	What is the language that you speak most fluently in class?	28	80%	7	20%
2	What is the language of instruction in your classes?	34	97.1%	1	2.9%
3	What is the language you most frequently use to communicate with your classmates in class?	29	82.9%	6	17.1%
4	What is the second most frequent language that you use to communicate with your classmates in class?	23	65.7%	12	34.3%
5	What is the language that your lecturer uses most of the time in class?	35	100%	0	0%
6	What is the language you use most of the time when talking to your lecturer in class?	35	100%	0	0%

Table 4 shows that the majority of the respondents, 94.3% (N=33) spoke more than one language with a Mean score of 3.63. In Myers-Scotton's (1989, 1993a) Markedness Model theory, speakers used more than one language and made rational code choices to establish their social positions. Most respondents, 85.7% (N=30) agreed that they code-switched unconsciously, with a mean score of 2.89. A good number of the respondents, 60% (N=21), agreed that they often code-switched to their native language when speaking English, with a mean score of 2.69. It is also discovered that 54.2% (N=19) of the respondents agreed that the lecturers code-switched during lectures, with a mean score of 2.66. According to Myers-Scotton's (1989, 1993a) Markedness Model theory, speakers index sets of rights and obligations via language choices. As a result, the speaker considers the significance of their options as determined by the prevailing social pressures while selecting a code.

Furthermore, 54.3% (N=19) of the respondents agreed that code-switching aided their English language proficiency, with a mean score of 2.57, and 74.3% (N=26) of the respondents agreed that code-switching enhanced and enriched their language experience and offered them opportunities for the development of cognitive skills with a mean score of 2.89. The Markedness Model theory posits that in a multilingual setting, the motivation to code-switch is socio-psychologically driven. Based on this analysis, the researchers conclude that code-switching had an impact on the use of standard English among students of English in a multilingual context, with a grand mean of 2.89, which is above the landmark of 2.5.

Table 4. Impact of code-switching on the teaching/learning of English as a second language in a multilingual environment.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean
1	I speak more than one language	25 (71.4%)	8 (22.9%)	1 (2.9%)	1 (2.9%)	35	3.63
2	I code-switch unconsciously when speaking to others	3 (8.6%)	27 (77.1%)	3 (8.6%)	2 (5.7%)	35	2.89
3	I often code-switch to my native language when speaking English	7 (20%)	14 (40%)	10 (28.6%)	4 (11.4%)	35	2.69
4	Lecturers code-switch during their lectures	6 (17.1%)	13 (37.2%)	14 (40%)	2 (5.7%)	35	2.66
5	Code-switching aids my English language proficiency	5 (14.3%)	14 (40%)	12 (34.3%)	4 (11.4%)	35	2.57
6	Code-switching enhances and enriches my language experience and offers opportunities for the development of cognitive skills	10 (28.6%)	16 (45.7%)	4 (11.4%)	5 (14.3%)	35	2.89

Note. SA = strongly agree; A = agree; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree; N = number.

Table 5 shows that 57.2% (N=20) of the respondents with a mean score of 2.63 agreed that they often code-switch in formal conversations, while 51.4% (N=18) of the respondents with a mean score of 2.54 agreed that they code-switched because of their low proficiency in English and 60.3% (N=21) of the respondents with a mean score of 2.20 also disagreed that code-switching affected their reading and writing ability. The speakers alternated between two languages, the matrix language and the embedded language, according to the Markedness Model theory. This code-switching is thought to be controlled by the speakers' relationships and aspirations concerning their social positions. Similarly, 68.5% (N=24) of the respondents with a mean score of 2.91 agreed that the language policy on education that allowed the use of native language at primary level had affected their English Language, while 62.8% (N=22) of the respondents with a mean score of 2.66 agreed that code-switching affects the teaching and learning process, and 60% (N=21) of the respondents with a mean score of 2.74 agreed that code-switching affect their English usage at tertiary level. The researchers, therefore, concluded that code-switching affected the use of standard English among students of English in a multilingual context, with a grand mean of 2.61, which is slightly above the landmark of 2.50.

Table 5. Effects of code-switching on the teaching/learning of English as a second language in a multilingual environment.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean
1	I often code-switch in formal conversations	8 (22.9%)	12 (34.3%)	9 (25.7%)	6 (17.1%)	35	2.63
2	I code-switch because of my low proficiency in the English language	6 (17.1%)	12 (34.3%)	12 (34.3%)	5 (14.3%)	35	2.54
3	Code-switching helps my reading and writing ability	4 (11.4%)	10 (28.9%)	10 (28.9%)	11 (31.4%)	35	2.20
4	The language policy on education that allows the use of native language at primary level has affected my English language	11 (31.4%)	13 (37.1%)	8 (22.9%)	3 (8.6%)	35	2.91

Table 5 continued...

5	Code-switching helps the teaching and learning process	9 (25.7%)	13 (37.1%)	5 (14.3%)	8 (22.9%)	35	2.66
6	Code-switching affects my English language usage in tertiary level	11 (31.4%)	10 (28.6%)	8 (22.9%)	6 (17.1%)	35	2.74

5. DISCUSSION

The discussion of the results is based on achieving the main objective of the research. That is, the influence and effect of code-switching on the teaching and learning of English as a second language in a multilingual Northern Nigerian environment. To establish the influence and impact of code-switching on the teaching and learning of English in a multilingual Northern Nigerian environment, the research first established the dominant language used in the classroom for teaching and learning. The responses in Table 3 revealed that English was the medium of instruction in the classes and the language of general interactions in the schools in Northern Nigeria. This aligns with the Nigerian Language Policy on Education (Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council, 2014), which states that the English language should be the language of instruction from Mid-Basic Education through tertiary education. The finding is also in line with the work of Azlan and Narasuman (2013), who asserted that the language-learning environment affected the dominance of the target language. Similarly, Yarahmadi (2016) argued that language dominance played a vital role in code-switching.

Furthermore, Ezech et al. (2022) hypothesized that the speakers frequently achieved significantly greater status when conversing in the target language as opposed to speaking their native language. Hence, communicating in the target language is advantageous in a multilingual classroom, as it is not possible to have all students from the same language background. However, the results showed that, as bilingual or multilingual, the most active language determined which vocabulary (mental dictionary) was accessed faster for use without a break in communication. However, Yarahmadi (2016) further emphasized that the bilinguals or multilinguals often relied on their first language when communicating in their second language to facilitate continuous communication. Similarly, the outputs in Table 2 also revealed that Hausa language was the most used indigenous language with which the English language code-switched. Therefore, in the Northern Nigerian context of this study, the majority of code-switching in the classroom during lectures incorporated both Hausa and English.

Code-switching employed by the lecturers can enhance teaching and learning, aligning with Inuwa's (2014) argument, which posited that code-switching was used as a conversational strategy by Hausa/English bilinguals to convey social and communicative significance efficiently. Inuwa (2014) further stressed that Hausa/English bilinguals alternated between the two languages to quote a speech made by someone without losing the intended meaning, used code-switching strategies to address different audiences within the same utterance, and sometimes made an objective contribution to the discourse. Whenever the bilinguals (discussants) lacked a linguistic element in one language, they had the possibility of using its equivalent in the other language. Bilinguals sometimes used code-switching to avoid message ambiguity by uttering the same statement in another language to clarify the message to the intended listeners.

5.1 The Positive Impacts of Code-Switching on the Teaching and Learning of English as A Second Language in A Multilingual Environment

The research findings on the influence of code-switching on the teaching and learning of English as a second language in a multilingual environment, as shown in Table 4, indicate that 94.2% of the respondents spoke more than one language and 85.7% agreed that most students unconsciously and sometimes intentionally used code-switching. Similarly, Table 3 revealed that the lecturers also utilised code-switching to enhance the students' comprehension. These results align with the earlier findings of Adebola (2011), Ifechelobi (2015), Memory et al. (2018), and

Ahmad and Barner-Rasmussen (2019), which indicate that the students and teachers employed code-switching in the classroom for clarification and emphasis purposes. The finding also agrees with Myers-Scotton's (1989, 1993a) Markedness Model theory, which is speaker-oriented, as speakers try to negotiate their positions in conversational contexts.

Additionally, the study found that some students engaged in code-switching due to their limited proficiency in English. These results are in line with the findings of Adebola (2011) and Ifechelobi (2015), who postulated that code-switching helped the students improve their English language proficiency. The outputs also showed that code-switching enhanced their proficiency in the English language and boosted their confidence in expressing themselves, learning freely, and improving in the target language, despite their linguistic inadequacies. Table 4 also revealed that code-switching provided the students with opportunities to develop their cognitive skills, and about 74.3% agreed that it enhanced and enriched their English language experiences. The findings aligned with the argument of Myers-Scotton's (1989, 1993a) Markedness Model theory, which assumes that speakers or listeners can make choices that can be considered marked to convey messages and negotiate meanings of intentionality.

The results discussed above suggest that code-switching had a positive influence on the teaching and learning of English as a second language in a multilingual setting, such as Northern Nigeria. It is consistent with the findings of previous researchers who postulated that code-switching in ESL and EFL classes had positive influence on the students and teachers. They argued that code-switching provided students with opportunities to communicate and improve their comprehension, facilitated teachers' work, helped the students with low English proficiency, and thereby reduced the stress of not understanding what was being taught (Adebola, 2011; Ahmed & Barner-Rasmussen, 2019; Ataş & Sağın-Şimşek, 2021; Ifechelobi, 2015; Memory et al., 2018). To support the positive findings, Olagunju (2013) and Ahmad and Barner-Rasmussen (2019) emphasized that the absence of code-switching in an English as a second language classroom setting would require extra effort to grasp the meaning and understanding of certain concepts.

Hence, code-switching is beneficial and should be allowed to prevail in English as a second language teaching and learning environments, despite its effect on standard English usage. In the same vein, Inuwa (2014) specified that code-switching amongst bilingual or multilingual individuals, such as Nigerians, must be regarded as a normal linguistic phenomenon within the communities where more than one language or various dialects were spoken. However, Azlan and Narasuman (2013) warned that despite the linguistic potential and value of classroom code-switching, the L2 students required a requisite amount of input and practice in the target language if they were to develop their fluency and competency in the language to the level acceptable for an English language teacher. Azlan and Narasuman (2013) further concluded that using code-switching was effective for the students with low proficiency, but it must not be allowed to overshadow the teaching and learning in the classroom.

5.2 The Effect of Code-Switching on the Teaching and Learning of English as A Second Language in A Multilingual Environment

Although code-switching is largely viewed favourably by the respondents, its potential drawbacks cannot be disregard. Code-switching is just like a sword with double edges. It has both positive and negative effects on the learning and teaching of English in a multilingual environment. The positive aspects have already been highlighted as they support the teaching and learning process, though with emphatic cautions. The assumption that the Markedness Model is motivated by the fact that speakers make their choices primarily to reinforce their position and to communicate their perceptions (Myers-Scotton, 1993b) was reassured in this study as revealed in Tables 4 and 5. The teachers and students who code-switched in formal conversations to meet their communication needs showed the incompetency of the teachers and their students in the use of standard English in English as a second language environment.

Consequently, Table 5 revealed that code-switching hindered the students from achieving high proficiency in standard English, thereby eroding their confidence in their written expressions

at the tertiary level. Similarly, the Nigeria Education Language Policy (Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council, 2014) which allows the use of immediate environmental language (IEL) at the lower primary level and a transition to the use of English at the middle primary level shown to have implications for the teaching and learning of English as a second language in Northern Nigeria as it is a multilingual environment. Further analysis of the data revealed that code-switching has serious negative effects on students' use of standard English, especially at the tertiary level of education, as the respondents agreed that it affects their reading abilities. This finding aligns with the observations of Ifechelobi (2015), who noted that code-switching can lead to internal confusion and hinder the ability to distinguish between two languages. However, the result is in agreement with Macaro (2005) whose arguments are against code-switching in the FL and ESL classrooms as earlier summarized and stated in this study. This finding is also in harmony with the arguments by Olagunju (2013) and Inuwa (2014), who acknowledged that code-switching in classes that do not share the same mother tongue as in the case of most Northern Nigerian classroom situations as revealed in Table 1 may create problems as some students would not be carried along in the teaching process.

Finally, Table 5 revealed that code-switching also had negative effects on the teaching and learning of English among students of English as a second language in a multilingual Northern Nigerian environment and this may pose a fundamental problem to students who were less familiar with the native language (Hausa) used because it is not possible to have the same native language background as in the case of Northern Nigeria as revealed in the study.

5.3 Implications

Since English is the most essential language in the students' future field of employment after graduation, there is a great expectation for them to be able to communicate well in the language. Most of these students will almost certainly become language teachers. As a result, they must enhance their language proficiency and receive training to teach English confidently. Teachers who allow code-switching or engage in code-switching themselves can give students the wrong impression about the importance of perfection in standard English.

Even though code-switching in the classroom has linguistic potential and benefits, English as a second language students still need to practise and get input in the target language to reach the level of fluency and competency required by an English language teacher. Nevertheless, when teachers encounter students with low competency, code-switching is recommended since it may be a successful learning strategy. However, in the classroom, it must not be permitted to replace the target language, English.

6. CONCLUSION

According to the study, teaching and learning English in multilingual Northern Nigeria can be affected by code-switching in the classroom in both positive and negative ways. Code-switching was a learning technique employed by both educators and students, leading to engaging and fruitful learning experiences. The study also revealed that code-switching was beneficial in teaching and learning English in the multilingual Northern Nigerian environment, as it helped reinforce and clarify messages not understood in English without disrupting the flow of thought and conversation in the English as a second language classroom setting. Ultimately, viewing the new status or position of code-switching in the field of sociolinguistics now, one may have no option but to recommend that it be allowed to prevail in multilingual classroom settings, though with a serious caution on its application, most especially by teachers.

However, code-switching should be viewed and regarded as an indispensable language learning strategy in a second language situation, which cannot be avoided, as it aided the teaching and learning of English as a second language in multilingual environments, especially where the teachers and students shared the same mother tongue. However, despite the linguistic potential and value of classroom code-switching, the second language students required a sufficient amount

of input and practice in the target language, English, if they were to develop their fluency and competency in the language. Hence, the teachers should be mindful of the classroom composition in a multilingual environment so that not all students might understand the switched code. The students should be warned about the inherent dangers associated with frequent code-switching. Students in a multilingual environment should be encouraged to speak English frequently to increase their level of proficiency, and they should also be encouraged to participate in activities conducted in English. Consequently, it is advised that the educators used code-switching with caution, especially in English language classes where students came from different language backgrounds. Code-switching was a valuable technique, but it should be applied sparingly to prevent impeding language learning, especially in a multilingual class.

Conclusively, the study had limitations. The study was conducted with the NCE year-two students at Niger State College of Education, Minna, Nigeria. The NCE year-three students were on teaching practice, while the year-one students were resuming on campus at that time. Hence, the study's findings lack the quality of being generalizable. Due to the limitations related to sample size, demographic specificity, and potential bias in self-reported data, the researchers acknowledge that the study's results may not apply to a broader context. There should be larger-scale studies across different regions of Nigeria or longitudinal studies to observe the long-term effects of code-switching on English proficiency. Future research should also focus on the effects of code-switching on students' written compositions.

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