LLT Journal, e-ISSN 2579-9533, p-ISSN 1410-7201, Vol. 25, No. 2, October 2022, pp. 555-571

LLT Journal: A Journal on Language and Language Teaching
http://e-journal.usd.ac.id/index.php/LLT
Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS CODE-SWITCHING IN ETHIOPIAN EFL CLASSROOMS

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https://doi.org/10.24071/llt.v25i2.4954
received 31 July 2022; accepted 6 October 2022

Abstract
Code-switching or the use of L1 in teaching English is a pervasive and inevitable phenomenon in Ethiopia where teachers and students who own the same first language. Nevertheless, researches carried out on the teachers' attitudes to pedagogical code-switching in Ethiopian context are scarce. This study, therefore, was designed to explore the attitudes of EFL teachers towards code-switching and seek their views on why code-switching should be used in English classrooms. This study employed a qualitative case study design where data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with five English teachers who were purposely selected from two secondary schools. The results revealed that the four teachers supported code-switching whereas one of the teachers had a different stance. All five teachers believed that code-switching should be used in a limited, selective, and purposeful way only when necessary. Furthermore, the results generally indicated that teachers had positive attitudes towards code-switching regarding academic, classroom management and socializing purposes although they had different stands on the specific functions of code-switching. Based on the results, it is possible to suggest that as code-switching is part and parcel of classroom discourse, teacher training programs should incorporate it as an effective instructional strategy.

Keywords: attitude, code-switching, foreign language, first language, target language

Introduction
In bilingual and multilingual communities, it is often the case that people often code-switch from one language to another in their daily conversations. For this reason, linguists (Gardner-Chloros 2009; Wardhaugh & Janet, 2015) consider code-switching as a common and inevitable phenomenon in bilingual and multilingual communities. Similarly, Kamwangamalu (2010) states that code-switching can occur both in a formal or informal context; its occurrence in both domains is determined by the context of the situation and the communication needs of the interlocutors. The findings of most studies that investigate the alternation of language in teaching

English indicated that code-switching is a prevalent circumstance in both bilingual and multilingual educational contexts (Üstünel, 2016).

Although code-switching is a common worldwide phenomenon, most of the early researches which emphasized code-switching, aimed to explore the purposes of code-switching in the United States in multilingual social settings. Early investigations regarding code-switching were largely quantitative and centred on bilingual education programs for minority students alone (Martin-Jones, 1995). In other words, prior studies on code-switching focused on situations outside of the EFL classroom or deals with speakers whose proficiency is better than that found in the EFL classrooms conducted in the United States. Furthermore, the pioneering research on code-switching mostly focused on the sociolinguistic, psychological and syntactic aspects of language in social contexts (Blom & Gumperz, 1972). Similarly, Poplack (2001) argued that code-switching, which is a feature of bilingual communities worldwide, has only begun to receive the attention of scholars in the last few decades. It was only after the 1980s that researchers started to conduct studies on code-switching in a natural setting (Auer, 1998). Similarly, after the mid-1990s, researchers have begun to examine several issues related to teachers' use of code-switching or L1 use in bilingual or multilingual educational contexts around the world (Greggio & Gil, 2007).

However, code-switching or first language use in L2 classrooms remains a contested and unresolved issue among researchers, teachers and students. On one side, proponents of English-only argue that code-switching is detrimental to students' learning, and should be avoided at all costs. This ideology of banning L1 was tied with the Grammar-Translation Method (Shin et al., 2019) In this regard, Macaro (2001) argues that an ideal language learning and teaching environment is created in the target language, and L1 should be used minimally if not completely excluded. Some researchers believe that code-switching reflects teachers' lack of proficiency in L2 or the target language (Boztepe, 2003; Probyn, 2009).

On the other side, proponents of code-switching or bilingual approach have questioned and challenged this monolingual assumption on the ground that L2 is better learned and taught through L2 itself. In this regard, a new language should be taught with the help of students' first language since it is inevitable whether permitted or not (Cook, 2010). The proponents of code-switching have argued that the exclusion of a first language in educational settings is not supported by empirical evidence in cases where the teacher and the student have a shared tongue (Medgyes, 1994). This suggests that avoidance of teachers' use of L1 in L2 classrooms is a futile attempt. Similarly, the realities of the classroom situations have made various researchers do new studies and reexamine the role of L1 in EFL classrooms (Yavuz, 2012). As a result, Polio and Duff (1994) argue that a good EFL classroom may not necessarily involve the sole use of L2 only, but also the incorporation of L1 if it is justifiable. This implies that the use of L1 in a classroom setting becomes a bane rather than a boon if it is used appropriately.

As the controversy surrounding the use of code-switching in L2 classrooms has gained attention, many researchers have conducted different studies on the issue of

classroom code-switching in varied contexts. These researchers have investigated the types, amount, functions, effects, factors, and attitudes of code-switching in a wide range of contexts. However, there is still little research on code-switching in Ethiopian EFL classrooms, especially at the secondary school level despite a plethora of studies on classroom code-switching in EFL classrooms internationally. So far, studies investigating code-switching in L2 classrooms have been only a few and used questionnaires as the main instrument to find out the teachers' views on classroom code-switching (Andualem, 2019; Wondinum, 2019; Yinager & Boersma, 2018). The common denominator of these studies was that all of them were conducted with content subjects. Moreover, they were conducted at the tertiary level. Interestingly, these researchers suggested that in-depth interviews should be undertaken to know the perspectives of the teachers regarding this subject. To our knowledge, there is no detailed qualitative inquiry that investigated teachers' perceptions of their code-switching practices. Given such research lacunas, this study aimed to explore the attitudes of EFL teachers towards their code-switching practices. Therefore, with this aim in mind, we tried to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the attitudes of English language teachers towards the use of code-switching in EFL classrooms?
2. What are the teachers' perspectives on the purposes for which code-switching should be used in EFL classrooms?

Literature Review

The views of teachers on L1 use in foreign language classrooms have been studied extensively over the years in different contexts. One such study on teachers' attitudes towards L1 use in L2 classrooms was a research project carried out by Macaro (2001). Having conducted surveys and interviews with teachers, Macaro (2001) concluded that teachers held three positions towards classroom code-switching: the "virtual position" in which the teacher believes that L2 should be the only medium of instruction. In other words, L1 has no place in the classroom and should be banished from the classroom as it has no pedagogical value.; the "maximal position" argues that as there are no perfect teaching and learning conditions, and sole use of L2 is unattainable, teachers should mad use of little L1 with regret as the last resort for different pedagogical purposes. Finally, those who are in favour of the "optimal position" assert that L1 use in L2 classrooms has some pedagogical benefits, but teachers are cognizant of the advantages and disadvantages of using code-switching in the classrooms, and they use it with no remorse.

Another seminal study on both teachers' and students' beliefs was an internet-based questionnaire survey conducted by Levine (2003). The survey aimed to give an account of what was going on in foreign classrooms in terms of the distribution of L2 and L1 use. This was a Likert scale questionnaire which was completed by 600 learners and 163 teachers from the USA and Canada. The responses of the teachers were compared to those of the students on each question. In terms of the quantity of L1 use in EFL classes, although the rates of the teachers differed from those of the

students, the overall results suggested that the first language was used in the EFL classrooms extensively.

A research study carried out by Al-Nofaie (2010) in Saudi Arabia revealed that the teachers had, overall, positive attitudes toward code-switching. Furthermore, the results revealed that teachers chose to use code-switching in certain situations and for specific purposes. Though the teachers underscored the pros of code-switching in EFL classrooms, they argued that "the excessive use of Arabic may hinder learning English" (Al-Nofaie, 2010, p.73). In the same way, other researchers (Adriosh & Razi, 2019; Copland & Neokleous, 2011; Jogulu & Radzi, 2018; Mahmud, 2018) argued that teachers endorsed the use of code-switching in L2 classrooms. For example, Mahmud (2018) explored teachers' perceptions toward code-switching in Bangladesh. He discovered that teachers were positive about L1 use in the classroom as long as it is used prudently. He also noted that the use of L1 cannot be avoided in cases where either the learners are competent in English or not, or either L1 is permitted or prohibited in an English classroom. However, excessive use of L1 may hamper students' language learning.

A study by Ngoc and Yen (2018) revealed that the teachers code-switched in their classrooms and they tended to codeswitch in different circumstances including "grammar explanations, vocabulary explanations, giving instructions, management, improving relationship with students, cross-cultural explanations and humour" (p.25). Moreover, all teachers admitted the important roles of using L1 in EFL classrooms, and nearly all of them claimed that they preferred to speak more English in the classroom as they believed that the use of English only during the lessons can enhance their students' learning. Debreli {2016) also found that EFL teachers were in favour of code-switching in classrooms. However, these teachers were not able to use code-switching in foreign language classrooms when the students were proficient in L2 use. This may imply that the use of teachers' code-switching varies according to the situation. Similar results were also reported by (Acar, 2020; Inal & Turhanlı, 2019; Nguyen &Vu, 2019; Tan & Low, 2017).

Research findings have also shown that teachers hold negative attitudes towards classroom code-switching despite its extensive use. Copland and Neokleous (2011) found that most teachers were anti-L1 use and described L1 use as a barrier that interferes with foreign language learning rather than an important pedagogical asset or tool for making language learning more effective so that it should be avoided and limited as far as possible. Cheng (2013) also investigated the perceptions of teachers toward code-switching in EFL classrooms. The results of the study revealed that teachers were against the usage of code-switching as they thought that the rules of school would be breached if they code-switched. Moreover, teachers objected to the use of code-switching as code-switching is indicative of and associated with teachers' language incompetence or deficit. In this regard, Inbar-Lourie, (2010) states that those who support complete avoidance of L1 consider code-switching as language interference. Mahdi and Almalki (2019) reported that most of the teachers had not advocated using L1 in the EFL classroom. Moreover, they revealed that the major motive for teachers to be reluctant to the application of code-switching was there was

little or limited chance for students to practice the target language. In contrast to teachers' contrastive views regarding the use of code-switching in a classroom setting, a study by Burat and Çavuşoğlu (2020) demonstrated that most of the teachers had a neutral attitude towards using code-switching in EFL classrooms; they chose to use code-switching when the need arose. Similarly, Song (2009) found that teachers had generally a neutral attitude towards code-switching although there were teachers who held positive to negative attitudes.

As the foregoing discussion shows teachers had divergent views towards code-switching. For instance, Polio and Duff (1994) indicated that there was no consensus on teachers' attitudes toward the use of Ll. Regarding teachers' attitudes towards Ll and L2 use, the results varied considerably as to why they did or did not use the L2 more often. Those who favoured the use of the L2 did so for different reasons. Two of them believed that such use was effective, and another two had theoretical convictions for conducting classes rich in L2. However, the other six teachers were ambivalent about the use of code-switching in their foreign language classrooms. On the other hand, Macaro (2005) stated that there is a near consensus among teachers of all levels that L2 should be the main language for L2 classroom instruction. Thus, it is possible to say that code-switching or L1 use as a teaching strategy has been either praised or discouraged although the merits of L1 inclusion in EFL classes outweighed the demerits (Kaymakamoğlu & Yıltanlılar, 2019).

Method

Research Design

To investigate the teachers' perceptions of code-switching in detail, a qualitative case study was selected to answer the research questions posed for the following reasons. Firstly, the aim was on a specific phenomenon, which was code-switching in EFL classrooms. We intended to understand this phenomenon in-depth within its natural environment without any manipulation of behaviour. Secondly, this study did not aim to generalize its findings so that we would not require to recruit a large sample size. Thus, a qualitative case study was deemed to fit for this study to obtain an intensive, holistic description and analysis from the teachers on their perceptions of code-switching (Yin, 2018).

Context of the Study

In doing any research, the choice of the site is one of the key steps as it is going to be the source of the data to be gathered for the intended study. Furthermore, it could affect the "research design, for example, the type of data that can be collected and the degree to which we can generalize our findings" (Lanza, 2008, p.75). For this reason, two secondary schools found in the South Wollo Zone of the Amhara Region were selected purposefully for the following reasons. Firstly, we were familiar with the selected area in general and the schools in particular. This helped us to get access and develop relationships with students, teachers and administrators of the schools. Secondly, the site was close to us. This was very important to get easy and frequent

access to the school's understudy. Thirdly, there was not any research work conducted in the schools in general and the present kind of research in particular.

Participants

The research participants of the current qualitative case study were five English language teachers from two public secondary schools located in the South Wollo Zone of the Amhara Region. Accordingly, a total of five English teachers, three male teachers from Sayint Secondary School and two (one male and one female) teachers from Ewa Secondary School were purposely selected and referred to by the pseudonyms Alemu, Belay, Dereje, Tigist and Habtamu as the main aim of the research was to get teachers who could give rich information about classroom code-switching to maximize what can be learned (Dörnyei, 2007). Furthermore, the determinant factor in non-random sampling is the researcher's judgment as to who can provide the best information to achieve the intended objectives of the study so that researchers can choose participants who may have the relevant information and who have the willingness to share it with them. For these reasons, the selection of five teachers was done in consideration of the following parameters. Firstly, the teachers should have either a B.A Degree or above in English language teaching and they should have at least five years of working experience. Fortunately, the four teachers except for Dereje were MA holders. Secondly, they had the interest and willingness in cooperating with us. Thirdly, teachers should teach at schools where code-switching was rampant.

Data Collection

According to Richards (2009), interviews are valuable to research participants since they can give insights into people's experiences, beliefs, perceptions, and motivations which cannot be done with surveys. Likewise, Codó (2008) mentioned that the interview is a flexible technique for collecting data from research participants about their views, values, and attitudes to their language use. Since the objective of this study was to determine the opinions of EFL teachers on language use, and code-switching, in EFL classrooms, a semi-structured interview, which is versatile, was employed to obtain detailed responses from teachers and allow the researchers to address the research questions (Bryman, 2012). Thus, a semi-structured interview was conducted with the five participating teachers to probe into their perspectives on classroom code-switching. We conducted the semi-structured interviews in English, audio recorded and transcribed. We also took notes as a supplement to audio recordings. Although it was considered that the use of Amharic would forestall any problems in terms of clarity of communication, the teachers preferred to be interviewed in English as they were professionals in the field. Hence, the research employed this method as it was deemed to be appropriate for the present investigation.

Data Analysis

Bryman (2012) states that clear-cut rules have not been developed on how to analyze qualitative data. The research aims and the type of data collected play an important role in deciding the types of methods to be employed. As researchers, we had to be aware and choose an appropriate method which fits the type of data and research objectives. Thus, given the nature of the study, we chose thematic analysis for analyzing the gathered data. For Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis is a way of identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns across a data set. Similarly, Marshall and Rossman (2016) state that thematic analysis includes "organizing the data, immersing oneself in the data by reading and re-reading it, generating categories and themes, coding the data, offering interpretations, searching for alternative understandings, and then presenting the findings" (p.403). Researchers may follow different steps in the analysis of qualitative data. Therefore, in analyzing the data, we tried to take into consideration the steps put forward by Marshall and Rossman (2016). However, we did not exactly follow their steps as thematic analysis is not a linear method but rather a recursive one where the analysts move back and forth when necessary throughout the stages of research.

Findings and Discussion

The objective of this study was to examine EFL teachers' attitudes regarding the use of code-switching in EFL classrooms. With this objective in mind, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the teachers who took part in this study to get their perspectives on their code-switching practices and to elicit their views on classroom code-switching. Accordingly, in what follows, the results obtained regarding research questions 1 and 2 are explained in detail.

Four of the teachers who partook in this study welcomed the utilization of code-switching in EFL classrooms. According to them, code-switching is an inevitable linguistic phenomenon in English classrooms where teachers share the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds. However, all of them believed that English should not replace Amharic, and Amharic should not be used at the expense of English. In other words, the use of L2, in this case, English, should be maximized. This suggests that the use and non-use of code-switching depend on several factors. In this regard, Alemu stated:

> *Switching from English to Amharic is an effective teaching strategy to help students of varying English proficiency levels easily understand English lessons. In my classroom some students have varied proficiency levels in English and using English only is not realistic because low-achiever students might not understand English.*

From the above excerpt, we can safely deduce that code-switching plays a crucial role in the teaching-learning process, especially since it is a valuable tool for students whose English level is not good, but its use depends on the student's level of English proficiency and the desired learning objectives of the lesson. Similarly, Belay

thought that when teachers and students have the same L1 in common and with students who have a rudimentary knowledge of English, code-switching should be used provided that it is used systematically, selectively and judiciously. In other words, Belay was the view that code-switching may hinder the students' language learning and development if used excessively and unwisely.

Similar to Alemu and Belay, Dereje had generally positive attitudes towards classroom code-switching. He was of the view that it is acceptable for English teachers to code-switch when there was a need. Besides, he reported that it is unfeasible to dismiss from English class where students have a different level of English proficiency except with well-versed students. This was what he said:

> *Some teachers avoid code-switching while teaching since they believe that avoiding code-switching makes language learning better. For me this is unacceptable. As an English teacher, who has nine years of experience, I use it when students encountered difficulties in understanding English. Thus, I do believe that code-switching is more important.*

However, the female teacher, Tigist, had mixed perceptions/feelings towards teachers' use of code-switching. She favoured as well as opposed code-switching. She said that Amharic is not allowed to be used in all cases; therefore, she mentioned circumstances in which it can be used. She contended:

> *Code-switching has its own merits and demerits as there are two sides to every coin. To me, code-switching should not be used in some situations, particularly in speaking lessons, but we can use it in giving directions and managing misbehaved students.*

Tigist was the view that code-switching should not be used whenever one wants. Although Tigist had mixed feelings about code-switching, she was in favour of code-switching especially for giving instructions and reprimanding students. This shows that her perception of code-switching varies according to the specific functions of code-switching. Thus, teachers should know when and why they use code-switching.

Despite the pros and cons of code-switching, it is still an undecided issue in its use in L2 classrooms. In this regard, Habtamu held a negative attitude towards code-switching even though he used Amharic in English classrooms. He believed that the language classroom is the main place where students can have exposure to English, and if code-switching is used in classrooms, students cannot have a good model for learning English. He expressed his concerns as follows:

> *In my class, I do not want to use code-switching in teaching English because if I use it, the students will always expect me to use it so students will heavily depend on my code-switching. Therefore, I use gestures and*

pictures to help students understand English. I use Amharic when I am hundred per cent certain that it is helpful.

From the above quote we can conclude that, unlike other teachers, Habtamu believed that code-switching in English classrooms should not be used. If it is used, it should be the last option when other strategies failed especially in teaching English to students whose level of English proficiency is below the standard as the use of code-switching will make students dependent on their teacher. The teacher further explained that Amharic is counterproductive for proficient students, English should be maximized and students should be exposed to English so that they would develop their language skills. In short, this teacher had the strong belief that English lessons should be conducted only in English, and a mixture of English and Amharic should not be employed in delivering English lessons.

While the four teachers in their interviews cautioned that code-switching should not be used excessively, they also highlighted specific purposes for which the code-switching should be used to enhance English learning. When asked when, and for what purposes, they used code-switching in their classrooms, the participants had various reasons and perspectives towards using or avoiding code-switching in their English classrooms. The four teachers believed that code-switching had to be used for three major functions academic, managerial and social functions. However, Habtamu believed that code-switching should not be used for these functions except for explaining abstract and difficult English words. In the following extract, we will present the stances of each teacher. To begin with Alemu, he maintained that in a context in which teachers and students have the same first language and cultural background, like the present study, a code-switching is an important tool. Alemu further said, "I use Amharic for giving instructions, expressing sympathy, explaining difficult vocabularies, expressing humour, giving praise, and talking about off-topic tasks which are not directly related to the lesson."

Although Alemu used code-switching for three major functions, he believed that code-switching should be mainly used for academic reasons, especially to explain complicated vocabulary and grammar. For Alemu, it was impossible to use English exclusively when there were students below the mediocre as they could not understand him. He thought that the language ability of his students was a decisive factor that determine his use or non-use of code-switching. Therefore, it was tenable to say that Alemu was pessimistic about using English exclusively to accomplish the teaching and learning process, especially when he had to teach new words and difficult expressions to his students because he believed that students became content when he explained the lessons in Amharic. He also added that his code-switching in the classroom was culturally-bounded. Sometimes there were no right words in English to explain a concept, so code-switching to Amharic was the only viable option.

Like Alemu, Belay believed Amharic had to be used in the EFL classroom when it is necessary within limits. He believed that code-switching had to be used to explain abstract concepts, check comprehension, discipline students, praise students,

and explain grammar and vocabulary. Belay strongly believed that code-switching had to be used as a means of socialization. In short, Belay was the view that code-switching had to be used in EFL classrooms for many purposes, especially with less able students. In other words, Belay was Pro-L1 if it was used systematically. This suggests that banning the use of L1 can discourage students from language learning and learning would not take place if Amharic was not permissible, especially with students who were weak at English. The teacher's responses seemed to confirm that code-switching is an integral part of a foreign classroom.

Similar to Alemu and Belay, Dereje believed that code-switching had to be used in English classrooms. He stated that there would be more benefits compared to drawbacks if the L1 is used systematically and judiciously. Although he was positive about using Amharic to facilitate and enhance the student's comprehension, he was concerned about not relying too much on Amharic, as this may have negative effects on the teaching and learning of English. This implies that code-switching is beneficial only if given in small amounts. If used frequently, it would not result better. Rather, it could upset the English language instruction. When we asked Dereje he told us that he used code-switching for, especially thought that the use of code-switching was more effective for classroom management. As Dereje noted:

> *I use code-switching when the need arises especially when there is a problem with classroom management. I believe that Amharic is more effective than English to deal with classroom management problems. In addition, I usually use code-switching for giving classroom instructions. If students misunderstand instructions, they may not understand the entire lesson. In such a situation, it is wrong not to resort to Amharic.*

Therefore, from the above extract, it is possible to say that the use of code-switching in one situation is more important than the other situation. That was the reason why the teacher chose Amharic when it came to giving classroom instruction and disciplining students. Dereje further explained that when students face problems in understanding the lesson, the use of code-switching is very indispensable, especially with rural students who have not had little opportunity to learn English outside the classroom. Moreover, the principle of using English only in EFL classrooms often places the teachers in a difficult position. Using English only in a classroom, in theory, is possible, but in practice, the reality is quite different. Whether one likes it or not, code-switching is a pervasive reality that cannot be avoided in Ethiopia where English does not have official status.

It was evident from the interviews that not all the teachers were pro-L1. In this study, Habtamu argued that code-switching should not be used in classrooms except explain difficult vocabulary. He seemed to hold a belief in what Macaro (2005) calls a maximal position which posits that the target language should be used as much as possible in teaching a foreign language. In the interview we held with him, he claimed that English teachers should be role model for content subject teachers and their students. He said:

> *Students might not pay attention to English, and they may depend on my help in classroom activities and wait until I codeswitch. They cannot practice English in the classroom as it is the main place where they can have exposure to English. I believe L1 should be banned from the classroom*.

From the above quote, we can infer that the teacher was not in favour of Amharic use in English classrooms because the classroom is the primary place in which students get enough input. Besides as students rely on his code-switching, Amharic should be prohibited from English classrooms. The teacher's insistence on English only may be shaped by the belief that allowing learners to use Amharic would deprive learners of opportunities to learn English which is needed to access other subjects. Although Habtamu had unfavourable attitudes towards using code-switching, he did not deny the fact that there may be justifiable pedagogical reasons for code-switching between English and Amharic especially in explaining vocabulary.

Like Habtamu, Tigist was unhappy and strict as regards the application of code-switching during English lessons. What made her different from Habtamu was that she partially admitted that code-switching is important for disciplining students and explaining vocabulary. Although this teacher tended that English lessons should be conducted in English, a blend of Amharic and English should be avoided. She went on to say that the lack of an English-speaking environment, the inability to use English out of school and the fact that the presence of more than fifty students made the application of code-switching as a teaching strategy inexorable and necessary to help her low-achieving students. Thus, the teacher felt guilty for using Amharic when she was supposed to use English only as English was the legitimate language in the classroom.

In summary, the two teachers mentioned in the interview that it was best to use English only in the classrooms. Besides, they viewed educational code-switching as undesirable as these teachers felt that it would result in undesirable language use amongst students; yet the crux of the matter was that they had to codeswitch to Amharic in teaching English. Therefore, to them, it was not reasonable to dismiss the L1 entirely from the classroom if the topic was too difficult despite their negative attitudes to code-switching. They acknowledged the importance of conducting lessons in English only while teaching but realized that it was not practical to do so throughout because using English only would hinder students' access to the content taught. Teachers, therefore, code-switched to enhance students' understanding of concepts but stated that they were careful not to overuse Amharic as they were concerned that learners need to be able to express themselves adequately in English.

Discussion

As stated earlier, the main objective of this study was to determine EFL teachers' attitudes regarding the use of code-switching in EFL classrooms. With this

in mind, we tried to provide a comprehensive picture of EFL teachers' perceptions of L1 use in L2 classrooms. Concerning the first question, almost all the teachers generally agreed that code-switching should be used wisely and judiciously in EFL classrooms in believing that it facilitates students' target language learning. Similar to the present study, different researchers (Adriosh & Razi, 2019; Copland & Neokleous, 2011; Jogulu & Radzi, 2018; Kaymakamoğlu & Yıltanlılar, 2019; Schweers, 1999) reported that teachers had positive attitudes towards code-switching, and it should be allowed in classrooms as it is a beneficial strategy in facilitating the learning process. Moreover, the five teachers unanimously approved that the target language, in our case English, should be the main language although they contended that code-switching is inevitable in classrooms with teachers and students who have a first language in common. This is in line with Levine (2011) who contended that total rejection of L1 use in L2 classrooms is undesirable, unrealistic, and untenable.

Although the four teachers were generally in favour of code-switching, one teacher, named Habtamu had a different stand. He believed that code-switching should not be used except in the teaching of vocabulary as it inhibits the target language acquisition. Habtamu objected to the use of students' mother tongue as he believed that the use of English only increases the chance of exposure to the target language. He felt guilt for his use of code-switching. This is compatible with the views of the researchers who advocate a monolingual approach and L2-only use. Cheng (2013) indicated that teachers had negative perceptions of code-switching as they equated it with linguistic incompetence. Most of the teachers thought that sometimes the use of L1 should be minimized even in situations where it might scaffold learning since code-switching decreases the practice of the target language in the class. Thus, we can conclude that teachers either opposed or favoured code-switching as a teaching strategy provided their reasons and both were right in their way. However, both thought that it is hard to avoid L1 use in a context where teachers and students share the same tongue.

As regards the second research question, teachers believed that code-switching should be used in different situations for various reasons. The four teachers accepted the fact that code-switching should be used for three major functions: academic, classroom management and social functions. Studies carried out by (Acar, 2020; Debreli, 2016; Inal & Turhanlı, 2019; Kaymakamoğlu & Yıltanlılar, 2019; Ngoc & Yen, 2018; Nguyen & Vu, 2019) disclose similar results. For instance, Ngoc and Yen (2018) found that teachers tended to code-switch when they explain grammar and vocabulary, give instructions, discipline students and inject humour. By the same token, Acar (2020) found that teachers had the propensity to use L1 for cracking jokes, building social bondage, greeting students, solving classroom management issues and discipline problems, applying a contrastive approach to support students' understanding, delivering instructions or making announcements, attracting students' attention and letting students ask questions. Moreover, Nguyen and Vu (2019) discovered that teachers believed that code-switching should be used for "explaining grammar points, clarifying difficult concepts, checking students' comprehension, and

dealing with students' misbehaviours, saving time, motivating students, and accommodating students' low English proficiency levels" (p.66)

Analysis of the data demonstrated that the participant teachers were predisposed to use L1 in their English lessons for various purposes and reasons. However, one had to note that there were differences in the teachers' attitudes towards specific functions of code-switching. For instance, Alemu believed that code-switching should be primarily used for academic purposes, especially in explaining complicated language items. This is consistent with Tan and Low (2017) who reported that teachers had primarily positive attitudes toward code-switching for academic purposes than other functions. On the other hand, Belay had a strong tendency to use Amharic as a means of socialization. Still the other teacher, Dereje prioritized the use of code-switching for giving classroom instruction and disciplining students. Dereje thought that the use of code-switching was more effective in main the order of the class. Habtamu also only found it beneficial when he practised code-switching for elucidating difficult vocabularies. Overall, the results of this study align with studies conducted by other researchers. For instance, Yıldız & Yeşilyurt (2017) indicated that teachers had the belief that the use of the first language is more important especially to explain a new vocabulary and grammatical points. Furthermore, they claimed that L1 plays a pivotal role in managing the classroom and building friendly relationships with students.

Conclusion

Although extensive studies have been conducted in different contexts, the use of code-switching in EFL classrooms remains a controversial issue in which there has not been a consensus among researchers, teachers, and students. Accordingly, the present study determined teachers' attitudes towards the use of classroom code-switching in English classes in Ethiopia and sought their views concerning the purposes for which code-switching should be done in English classrooms. The results overall indicated that teachers were in favour of code-switching. However, one of the teachers baulked to apply code-switching and objected to the use of code-switching other than explaining vocabulary. All in all, despite differences in their views towards code-switching, all of them asserted that it is hard to avoid the employment of code-switching in classrooms with students who have the same linguistic background as their teachers and struggle to understand English, but its use depends on the student's level of proficiency in English and the needs of students. Moreover, all teachers agreed on the limited, judicious, and systematic use of Amharic for varied purposes in EFL classrooms though what is judicious is questionable and elusive. The study indicated that teachers favoured classroom code-switching mainly for three main functions: academic, classroom management and socializing functions. However, the attitudes of teachers varied according to the specific functions for which code-switching should be used.

The results of this indicated occasions during which teachers deemed the use of code-switching helpful. However, the current study is not free from limitations. First, as is common with most qualitative case studies, we do not claim that the findings of this study can be generalized to all EFL teachers in Ethiopia due to the small sample

size. To generate a more adequate picture of teachers' attitudes towards code-switching, more extensive research on the topic should be conducted with wider sample sizes and teachers who have different social, linguistic and cultural backgrounds in different schools. Thus, researchers should conduct a study on the attitudes of students so that the results from the eyes of students can be compared with that of teachers for deciding to code-switch or not to code-switch. Third, since the study was solely confined to interviews and qualitative data, a questionnaire could have been used for better triangulation of data. Finally, the reasons why teachers had positive and negative attitudes towards code-switching were not thoroughly investigated. Further research is needed to address this issue which may eliminate teachers' concerns regarding the drawbacks of classroom code-switching.

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