Code-Switching in English Language Teaching (ELT): Insights from Educators in Derj Secondary Schools.

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ABSTRACT

This research studies the use of code-switching in English classes at secondary schools in Derj. Code-switching means using Arabic with English during the lesson. Many English teachers face problems when students do not understand explanations given only in English. For this reason, some teachers use Arabic to help students understand the lesson better. The study focuses on teachers' opinions about using code-switching in the classroom. A questionnaire was used to collect data from 32 English teachers. Simple statistical methods were used to check the reliability of the questionnaire and to analyze the results. The findings show that most teachers accept the use of code-switching, but they do not support using it all the time. Teachers mostly use Arabic when explaining difficult vocabulary, grammar rules, or classroom instructions. They also believe that limited use of Arabic makes students feel more comfortable and willing to participate. However, teachers strongly agree that using Arabic too much can reduce students' chances to practice English. For this reason, they prefer to keep English as the main language in class and use Arabic only when it is really necessary.

الملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة استخدام التناوب اللغوي في حصص اللغة الإنجليزية في المدارس الثانوية بمدينة درنة. ويقصد بالتناوب اللغوي استخدام اللغة العربية إلى جانب اللغة الإنجليزية أثناء الدرس. يواجه العديد من معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية صعوبة عندما لا يفهم الطلاب الشرح المقدم باللغة الإنجليزية فقط، ولذلك يلجأ بعض المعلمين إلى استخدام اللغة العربية لمساعدة الطلاب على فهم الدرس بشكل أفضل. تركز الدراسة على آراء معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية حول استخدام التناوب اللغوي داخل الصف. وقد تم استخدام استبانة لجمع البيانات من 32 معلماً ومعلمة للغة الإنجليزية. واستُخدمت طرق إحصائية بسيطة للتحقق من ثبات الأداة وتحليل النتائج. وأظهرت النتائج أن معظم المعلمين لا يرفضون استخدام التناوب اللغوي، لكنهم لا يؤيدون استخدامه بشكل مستمر. كما بينت النتائج أن المعلمين يستخدمون اللغة العربية غالباً عند شرح المفردات الصعبة، والقواعد اللغوية، والتعليمات الصفية. ويعتقد المعلمون أن الاستخدام المحدود للغة العربية يجعل الطلاب أكثر راحة ويشجعهم على المشاركة داخل الصف. وفي المقابل، يتفق المعلمون على أن الإفراط في استخدام اللغة العربية قد يقلل من فرص ممارسة اللغة الإنجليزية. لذلك، يفضل المعلمون أن تبقى اللغة الإنجليزية هي اللغة الأساسية في الصف، مع استخدام اللغة العربية فقط عند الضرورة.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1-Background:

When people are learning a new language, they commonly switch between the two languages during a class or conversation**(Poplack, 1980).** Many individuals have said that this isn't a good idea for schools that teach English as a foreign language (EFL). Many educators believe that when pupils use their original language (L1) during English class, it may indicate insufficient effort or difficulties in speaking English accurately(Willis, 1981; Cummins & Swain, 1986). Willis (1981) and Cummins & Swain (1986) found that speaking in one's own language without help may mean that the lesson is challenging to understand. People that speak more than one language nonetheless swap codes a lot when they chat to each other(Poplack, 1980). People who are learning a language or who already know it well often switch languages to make things clearer or to help them understand difficult situations(Cook, 2001). Studies show that using L1 wisely and in a controlled way could help with learning(Cole, 1998). For example, it can help you learn new vocabulary and understand what's going on in class(Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997). It might also help those who speak more than one language (Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997; Cole, 1998; Cook, 2001). Teachers and students can utilize L1 to explain things, keep conversations going, and help pupils understand without having to learn a new language(Ferguson, 2003). Teachers can also employ code-switching to help their students learn in a sensible way(Jingxia, 2010). Bilingual individuals may be able to follow complex instructions, provide examples, or encourage participation from others(Ahmad & Jusoff, 2009). It can help kids learn better, stay focused, and make the classroom a better place to study if used correctly(Levine, 2011). People are starting to see the benefits of code-switching, but it's still not clear how teachers feel about using it in real classrooms. Most studies have concentrated on general linguistic attitudes or student behavior; however, specific assessments of teachers' utilization of code-switching have not been thoroughly examined. Hussein (1999) investigated university students' views on code-switching between Arabic and English; however, research in secondary schools, particularly in Derj, is scarce(Hussein, 1999). This study seeks to address this gap by investigating the viewpoints of educators in secondary schools in Derj regarding code-switching in English instruction. It examines the timing and rationale behind teachers' language transitions, and the objectives of the lesson. Teachers can employ code-switching more successfully and change how they teach to help students learn a language better if they know how these attitudes work(Macaro, 2001).

.1.2 Research Problem:

Most research on code-switching is about how college students or people in general use language. We don't know how Derj's teachers feel about switching languages in English class. High school students are younger than college students, and they are still learning the basics of English. Their teachers might also teach in methods that are distinct from how professors do. We need to find out how the staff at Derj secondary schools feel about modifying the rules.

1.3 - Aims of the study

1. To find out how teachers at Derj secondary schools use code- switching in their English lessons.

2.To learn when it's best to use code-switching in the classroom.

3. To examine the advantages and disadvantages of code-switching from the perspectives educators.

1.4 Research Questions:-

 How do English language teachers at Derj secondary schools utilize code-switching in their classrooms?

 In what situations do teachers believe code-switching is most appropriate in English language instruction?

 What are the perceived benefits and drawbacks of code-switching in English language classrooms, according teachers.

1.5 Why the Study Is Important

This study is important because it shows how code-switching is used in Derj secondary schools. Teachers can use this information to decide when code-switching is useful for students and when it makes things harder. They can also help schools and anyone else who makes decisions about education identify better ways to teach that work for everyone.

1.6. The Study's Scope

The research is limited to secondary schools in Derj, Libya. The participants include educators of the English language. The study only investigates their viewpoints on code-switching in English language teaching, utilizing questionnaire as the research instrument.

1.7 Study Limitations

The research concentrates on a limited selection of schools in Derj, which may not accurately reflect the entirety of schools throughout Libya. The knowledge comes from what instructors and think, which might not be the same for everyone. The investigation can also be constrained by how much time and money it has.

1.8 Definition of Terms

1-Code-switching

When a teacher switches between English and Arabic (or other languages) during a lesson to help students understand better

2-Attitude

This is about how teachers feel or think about code-switching — whether they see it as helpful, confusing, or something in between.

3-ELT (English Language Teaching)

This is when teachers help people learn English, especially if it's not their first language.

4-EFL (English as a Foreign Language)

This is learning English in a country where English isn't commonly spoken — like learning English in Libya, Egypt, or Mexico.

1.9- Methodology:

This study used a quantitative method based on a questionnaire was distributed to thirty two teachers of English language at secondary schools of Derj , this questionnaire was conducted in English on 6-7-2025 .Each teacher was asked to specify his attitudes towards code switching and the situations do he usually switch to Arabic . After collecting answers, the data were entered into SPSS for analysis, and the instrument was checked for quality before interpreting results: discriminant validity was examined using the Extreme Groups Comparison, while reliability was verified using Cronbach's alpha and the split-half method. The methodology will be discussed further detail in Chapter three

Chapter Two: A Review of the Literature.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter critically examines research on code-switching in English Language Teaching (ELT), emphasizing its objectives, underlying motivations, and effects on learning outcomes (Cook, 2001). Some researchers perceive code-switching as a potential obstacle to language acquisition, while others regard it as a purposeful and beneficial pedagogical strategy (Littlewood & Yu, 2011). There is still not enough research on how to use and understand it in high school classes, especially in Derj. This review integrates prior research to clarify the contemporary understanding of code-switching and to articulate the rationale and significance of the current study (Levine, 2011).

2.2 Code-Switching as an Innate Practice

Researchers agree that people who speak more than one language often use code-switching when they talk to each other (Poplack, 1980). Poplack (1980) showed that language development follows certain patterns instead of happening randomly. Macaro (2001) noted that switching can help teachers keep the classroom in order and make it easier for students to pay attention to their lectures (Macaro, 2

2.3 How teachers switch codes

Many studies have demonstrated that professors often switch languages to help their students learn (Ferguson, 2003). Ferguson (2003) found that teachers use the first language to explain difficult grammar, supply orders, or maintain order. Jingxia (2010) posits that experts argued that code-switching facilitated student learning (Jingxia, 2010). Ahmad and Jusoff (2009) noted in Malaysia that teachers' integration of L1 characteristics could improve student interaction and boost their confidence (Ahmad & Jusoff, 2009).

2.4 What do students consider when learning a new language?

Students may be uncertain about their desire to change languages (Sert, 2005). Sert (2005) noted that many students view challenges in understanding English as advantageous. Hussein (1999) found that students used Arabic to help each other and learn new words (Hussein, 1999). Alenezi (2010) found that Saudi Arabian students liked code-switching but wanted to hear more English (Alenezi, 2010).

2.5 Code-Switching as a Learning Method

Cook (2001) suggested that code-switching could function as a teaching tool (Cook, 2001). When students compare English and Arabic, they can observe how the two languages are alike. Levine (2011) suggested that allowing restricted use of L1 would alleviate classroom tension, thereby enhancing students' confidence in their communicative abilities (Levine, 2011).

2.6 Risks of Code-Switching

Some experts say that kids who switch languages frequently can have a harder time learning English (Littlewood & Yu, 2011). Littlewood and Yu (2011) asserted that educators ought to employ it exclusively when essential.

2.7 A Short Summary of the Literature

In conclusion, several studies demonstrate that switching languages is common and may even be advantageous for people. Teachers use it to help kids learn, discuss things, and provide them guidance. Usually, students agree with that, especially if they are still learning English. But switching languages too often can make it harder to learn English. Teachers need to discover a happy medium.

Chapter three: Methodology;-

3.1- Introduction:

This part talks about how the study was done. It discusses the people who took part, the questionnaire that was used, and how the data were analyzed. The questionnaire was sent to teachers at the secondary schools in Derj as part of a quantitative study. With SPSS, the questionnaire was checked to ensure it was valid and reliable before it was used. The Extreme Groups Comparison was used to assess for validity, and Cornbrash's Alpha and the Split-Half method were used to measure reliability. The tools worked well for the study, as shown by the data. Once all the answers were gathered, they were put into SPSS so that averages and other statistics could be found that would help answer the study questions.

3.2-First: Validity of the Study Instrument (Questionnaire)

The validity of the questionnaire refers to the extent to which its items measure what they are intended to measure. To verify the validity of the questionnaire, two statistical methods were used through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Discriminant Validity (Extreme Groups Comparison), which involves calculating the t-test value to determine the significance of the differences between the mean scores of the lower quartile (the lowest 27% of the scores) and the upper quartile (the highest 27% of the scores) for all study scales. The results for each scale of the study instrument were as follows:

3.3 Results of the T-test for the Extreme Groups Comparison

	27% of the Lower Scores		27% of the Upper Scores		t-value	(p-value)
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation		
Attitudes toward Code-Switching	3.00	0.6667	4.83	0.8887	7.201	0.019

It is evident from Table (1) that the calculated t-value for the comparison between the lower quartile and the upper quartile of the Attitudes toward Code-Switching scale reached (7.201), which is greater than the tabulated t-value of (3.182) at the significance level of (0.05). The corresponding significance level (p = 0.019) is also less than (0.05), which is the significance level adopted in this study.

3.4. Second: Reliability of the Study Instrument

The reliability of the data collection instrument refers to its accuracy and consistency, meaning that it produces the same results if it is used or repeated again under similar conditions.

3.5-Cronbach's Alpha:

Cronbach's Alpha is considered one of the important statistical tests for analyzing questionnaire data. It is a test that indicates the degree of reliability of the questionnaire (Al-Bayati, Mahmoud Mahdi. Statistical Data Analysis Using the SPSS Program, 2005, p. 49, Dar Al-Hamed, Amman).

Table (2) Cronbach's Alpha Test Results

n	Dimensions	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (Reliability)	Square Root of Cronbach's Alpha (Validity)
1	Attitudes toward Code-Switching	6	0.745	86.31%

It is evident from Table (2) that the reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) for the Attitudes toward Code-Switching dimension reached (0.745), which indicates an acceptable level of reliability and internal consistency among the items of the dimension. In addition, the face validity index, represented by the square root of Cronbach's Alpha multiplied by (100), reached (86.31%), which is considered a high percentage reflecting a good level of validity. This confirms the suitability of the measurement instrument for use in the current study.

3.6-Split-Half Reliability:

Table (3) Results of the Split-Half Reliability Test

Scale	Number of Items	Correlation Coefficient	Spearman Reliability Coefficient
Attitudes toward Code-Switching	6	0.720	0.834

The results in Table (3) indicate that the Attitudes toward Code-Switching scale obtained a correlation coefficient of (0.720), while the Spearman–Brown reliability coefficient reached (0.834), this high value demonstrates a good level of internal consistency and adequate reliability for this scale.

3.7-Section A: General Information:

Gender: Table (4) and Figure (1) shows the distribution of respondents according to their gender.

Table (4) shows the frequency distribution of respondents according to gender.

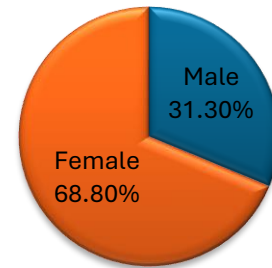| Gender	Number	Percentage%
Male	10	31.3%
Female	22	68.8%
Total	32	100%

Figure (1) illustrates the percentages of the study population by respondents' gender.

The results in Table (4) and Figure (1), it is evident that the highest percentage of the study sample according to gender was within the female category, which accounted for 68.8%, while the male category represented 31.3%.

Years of teaching English: Table (5) and Figure (2) show the distribution of the study sample according to Years of teaching English.

Table (4) shows the frequency distribution according to Years of teaching English.

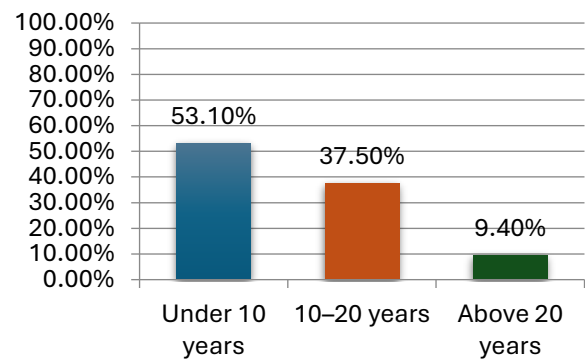| Years of teaching English	Number	Percentage%
Under 10 years	17	53.1%
10—20 years	12	37.5%
Above 20 years	3	9.4%
Total	**32**	100%

Figure No. (2) illustrates the percentages of the study population according to Years of teaching English. It is evident from Table (5) and Figure (2) that the highest percentage of the study sample according to years of teaching English was within the category Under 10 years, which reached 53.1%.

This was followed by the category 10—20 years, which recorded 37.5%, while the category Above 20 years recorded 9.4%.

3.8-Educational qualification:

Table (6) and Figure (3) shows the distribution of respondents according to their educational qualification.

Table (6) shows the frequency distribution of respondents according to educational qualification.

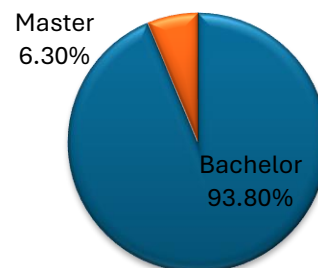| educational qualification	Number	Percentage%
Bachelor	30	93.8%
Master	2	6.3%
Total	32	100%

Figure (3) illustrates the percentages of the study population by respondents' educational qualification.

The results in Table (6) and Figure (3) indicate that the highest percentage of the study sample according to educational qualification was within the Bachelor's category, which accounted for 93.8%, while the Master's category represented 6.3%.

3.9-Section B : Responses to the Study Questions:

To achieve the objectives of the study and analyze the data that were collected, several appropriate statistical methods were used through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). After collecting the distributed questionnaire forms, a numerical coding method was applied to code the responses related to the five-point and three-point Likert scales as shown in Table (7).

Table (7) Distribution of scores for the responses related to the scale items

Response	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Score	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

The arithmetic mean (weighted mean) is then calculated to determine the weights of the statements according to the weighted mean values obtained as a result of analyzing the responses, as shown in Table (7). This is done after coding and entering the data into the computer. To determine the length of the cells of the five-point scale (lower and upper limits) used in the study dimensions, the range was divided by the number of scale cells to obtain the range length ($5-1 = 4$), and then the range was divided into five levels ($4 \div 5 = 0.80$), and this number represents the length of a single category or level. The weights are shown in the following weighted mean table.

Table (8) The Weighted Mean Obtained from the Analysis of Responses

Level	Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
Weighted Mean	From 1 to less than 1.80	From 1.80 to less than 2.60	From 2.60 to less than 3.40	From 3.40 to less than 4.20	From 4.20 to 5

3.10-Section B: Attitudes toward Code-Switching :

To answer the research question, the arithmetic mean, standard deviation, relative weight, and ranking of the variables related to attitudes toward code-switching were used in descending order, and the results were presented in the following table:

Table of Arithmetic Means, Relative Weight, and Ranking of Dimensions

No.	Dimensions	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Relative Weight	Rank	Degree of Agreement
1	I often use Arabic to explain difficult vocabulary in English lessons.	3.56	1.3183	71.25%	5	High
2	Code-switching helps me clarify grammar points for my students.	4.03	1.1773	80.63%	4	High
3	Using Arabic helps me manage classroom discipline and instructions.	3.41	1.3164	68.13%	6	High
4	Code-switching makes students more confident to participate.	4.13	1.0080	82.50%	3	High
5	Too much code-switching may reduce students' exposure to English.	4.66	0.5453	93.13%	1	Very High
6	I believe that limited and strategic use of Arabic is beneficial in teaching English.	4.44	0.8400	88.75%	2	Very High
	Overall Mean	4.04	0.5300	80.73%		High

It is evident from Table (9) that the overall degree of agreement on the statements was high, as the overall arithmetic mean reached (4.04), with a standard deviation of (0.5300), and a relative weight of (80.73%). The statements were ranked in descending order according to the degree of agreement from the perspective of the study sample as follows:

Statement No. (5): "Too much code-switching may reduce students' exposure to English." ranked first in terms of the degree of agreement from the perspective of the study sample with a very high degree of agreement, with an arithmetic mean of (4.66), a standard deviation of (0.5453), and a relative weight of (93.13%).

Statement No. (6): "I believe that limited and strategic use of Arabic is beneficial in teaching English." ranked second in terms of the degree of agreement from the perspective of the study sample with a very high degree of agreement, with an arithmetic mean of (4.44), a standard deviation of (0.8400), and a relative weight of (88.75%).

Statement No. (4): "Code-switching makes students more confident to participate." ranked third in terms of the degree of agreement from the perspective of the study sample with a high degree of agreement, with an arithmetic mean of (4.13), a standard deviation of (1.0080), and a relative weight of (82.50%).

Statement No. (2): "Code-switching helps me clarify grammar points for my students." ranked fourth in terms of the degree of agreement from the perspective of the study sample with a high degree of agreement, with an arithmetic mean of (4.03), a standard deviation of (1.1773), and a relative weight of (80.63%).

Statement No. (1): "I often use Arabic to explain difficult vocabulary in English lessons." ranked fifth in terms of the degree of agreement from the perspective of the study sample with a high degree of agreement, with an arithmetic mean of (3.56), a standard deviation of (1.3183), and a relative weight of (71.25%).

Statement No. (3): "Using Arabic helps me manage classroom discipline and instructions." ranked sixth in terms of the degree of agreement from the perspective of the study sample with a high degree of agreement, with an arithmetic mean of (3.41), a standard deviation of (1.3164), and a relative weight of (68.13%).

3.11-Section C: Situations and Functions:

Table (10) and Figure (4) show the distribution of the study sample according to Situations and Functions.

Table (10) shows the frequency distribution according to Situations and Functions.

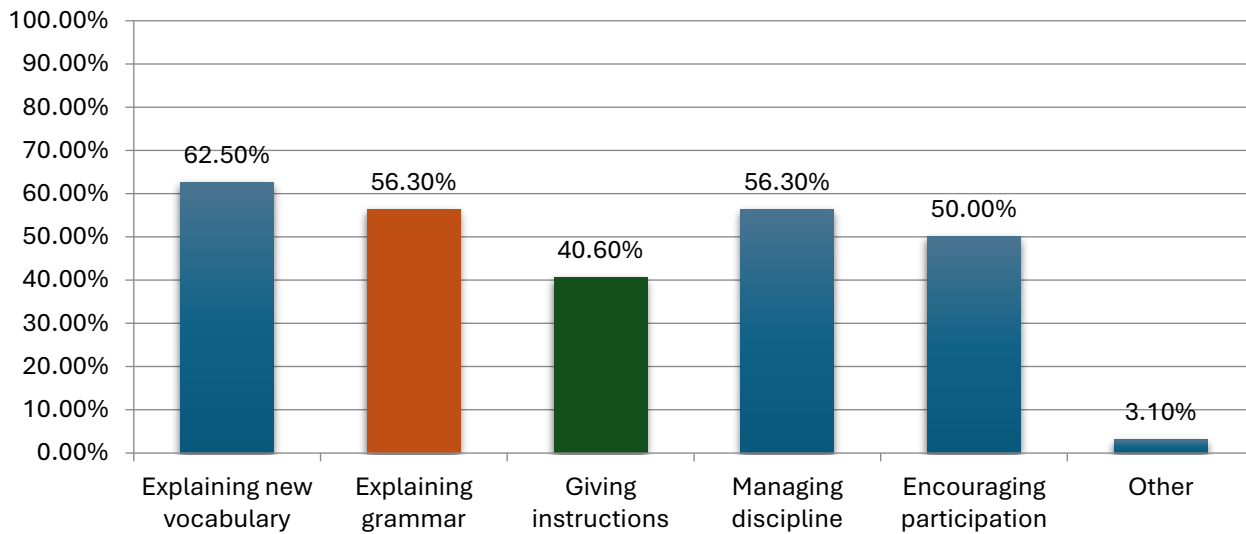| Situations and Functions	Number	Percentage%
Explaining new vocabulary	20	62.5%
Explaining grammar	18	56.3%
Giving instructions	13	40.6%
Managing discipline	18	56.3%
Encouraging participation	16	50.0%
Other	1	3.1%

Figure No. (4) illustrates the percentages of the study population according to Situations and Functions.

It is evident from Table (10) and Figure (4) that the highest percentage of the study sample according to situations and functions of code-switching was explaining new vocabulary, which reached 62.5%. This was followed by explaining grammar and managing discipline, which both recorded 56.3%, then encouraging participation with 50.0%, and giving instructions with 40.6%, while the other category recorded the lowest percentage at 3.1%.

Chapter Four : Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is the last chapter of the research. It explains the main conclusions of the study and gives some recommendations. The study focused on how English teachers in Derj secondary schools use code-switching in their classrooms. It also tried to understand when teachers use Arabic and why they do this. The results of the questionnaire helped in writing this chapter.

4.2 Main Findings of the Study

The results show that most teachers do not refuse code-switching in English classes. In fact, many teachers think it is useful. However, they believe it should not be used all the time.

Many teachers said that using Arabic helps students understand difficult words and grammar. When students do not understand English explanations, teachers feel that Arabic is sometimes necessary. This is especially true for weak students.

At the same time, most teachers clearly said that using Arabic too much is not good. They believe that too much code-switching can reduce students' exposure to English. Because of this, teachers prefer to use Arabic only in limited situations.

The study also showed that teachers mostly use code-switching when explaining new vocabulary, explaining grammar, or controlling the class. These are moments when students need clear explanations.

4.3 Discussion

The findings of this study match what happens in real classrooms. Teachers want their students to understand the lesson. When students do not understand English, teachers feel forced to use Arabic. This does not mean that teachers are against English. It means they want learning to happen.

Teachers also know that English should be used as much as possible. This is why they do not support heavy use of Arabic. They try to find a balance between helping students and encouraging them to practice English.

Another important point is that students feel more comfortable when teachers use some Arabic. This makes students less afraid to participate. When students feel relaxed, they learn better.

4.4 Conclusions

From this study, the following conclusions can be made:

1. Teachers in Derj secondary schools accept the use of code-switching.

2. Code-switching is mainly used to help students understand lessons.

3. Teachers believe Arabic is helpful, but only in small amounts.

4. Too much code-switching can affect students' English negatively.

5. Teachers try to balance between Arabic and English in class.

4.5 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study suggests the following:

1. Teachers should not use Arabic too much in English lessons.

2. English should remain the main language in the classroom.

3. Teachers should use Arabic only when students really need help.

4. Training programs can help teachers learn when to use code-switching.

5. Students should be encouraged to speak English more over time.

4.6 Suggestions for Future Studies

This research was limited to teachers in Derj secondary schools. Future studies can:

1. Include students and not only teachers.

2. Be done in other cities in Libya.

3. Use interviews or classroom observations.

4. Study how code-switching affects students' English level.

5.7 Final Note

To conclude, code-switching can help learning when it is used carefully. Teachers in Derj understand this very well. They want their students to learn English, but they also want them to understand the lesson. Using Arabic in a limited way can help achieve both goals.

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