

A PRELIMINARY STUDY OF TEACHER CODE-SWITCHING IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION INSTRUCTIONS

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a preliminary case study of a contemporary Islamic discourse in the form of a *madrasah* weekend holiday camp in Singapore. Although the students are Malay, the camp was conducted predominantly in English as mandated by the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (*MUIS – Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura*). This in turn had an empowering effect on the students as it was aligned with the medium of instruction in the mainstream educational system. In this regard, the study looks at the instructional implications as a result of the intersection between the use of English as a medium of instruction and the sacred literacy that is situated in the social and cultural domains. More specifically, it investigates the nature of code-switching in lesson instructions from English as the medium of instructions to Malay, its possible motivations and potential implications on the students. The findings of the study point to the strategic use of code-switching from English to Malay as a tool to enhance sacred literacy processes and instructions by capitalizing on the common mother tongue shared by the students and the teacher as it serves both facilitative and affective functions.

Introduction

Code-switching is an area that has been well researched in many studies with subjects from different backgrounds and in diverse contexts such as among siblings, among classmates, between parents and children, and between teachers and students. More specifically, some studies examine the use of code-switching in teachers' classroom discourse and instructions at different levels from pre-school to primary, secondary and tertiary. These studies are situated across mainstream curricula in various academic subjects, the chief of which are languages such as English and content-based subjects such as science and geography. This, in turn, has generated a wealth of findings depending on the context and the interlocutors' mother tongue. Despite the diverse backgrounds and contexts of these studies, the findings are relatively consistent with regard to the motivations, functions and implications of code-switching by teachers, some of which will be elucidated in this study.

However, to the writers' knowledge, there has been a dearth of research on code-switching by teachers in the context of peripheral or non-mainstream religious classes. As such, the researchers have undertaken this study to focus on a weekend madrasah (Islamic) class to fill the knowledge gap and to better understand to what extent the findings corroborate the predominant patterns of other studies in terms of the forms of code-switching, its motivations, functions and implications.

Background to the Study

Pivoting on the study of forms, functions and implications of code-switching, this paper presents a preliminary case study of a contemporary Islamic discourse in the form of a madrasah weekend holiday camp in Singapore. A madrasah in the Singapore context refers to a school where the Islamic faith is taught by an *ustaz* (a qualified male Islamic teacher) or an *ustazah* (a qualified female Islamic teacher).

Although the students are Malay, one of the three main ethnic groups in Singapore, the other two of which are Chinese and Indian, the camp was conducted predominantly in English, which in turn had an empowering effect on the students, as it was aligned with the medium of instruction in the mainstream educational system. In this regard, the study looks at the instructional implications resulting from the intersection between the use of English as a medium of instruction and the sacred literacy that is situated in the social and cultural domains. More specifically, it investigates the nature of code-switching in lesson instructions, its motivations and potential implications for students.

The findings of the study point to the strategic use of code-switching from English to Malay as a tool to enhance sacred literacy processes and the students' comprehension by capitalizing on the common mother tongue shared by the students and the teacher.

Defining Code-switching

Gumperz (1982) highlights a discourse function of code-switching i.e. the construction of *we code* to create conversational effect. As such, code-switching is seen as a strategy employed by the interlocutor to achieve certain purpose or outcome. Gumperz (1982) postulates that conversational code-switching involves a speaker switching codes at word level in a sentence or at sentence level in an utterance.

The *we code* Gumperz alludes to resonate with the relational and referential functions of a language and Halliday's (1975) interpersonal function. In other words, it sets out the roles between the interlocutors and how such roles are negotiated in a given context.

As to what codes entail, Kow (2003) elucidates code-switching as "the use of two or more linguistic varieties in the same conversation inclusive of dialect changes and style changes" (p. 60). From here, we can see that her definition extends beyond languages to encompass different styles of speaking such as the degree of formality.

In this study, we will look at code-switching involving two languages i.e. English and Malay. The former was used predominantly as it is the medium of instruction for the Islamic education class whereas the latter is the common language shared by the Islamic education teacher and his students. Apart from these two languages, there were no other instances involving the use of a third language.

Bilingual Code-switching as a Communicative Resource

There has been a number of research showing that code-switching in a speaker's utterances is not necessarily indicative of the speaker's lack of competence or language proficiency. On the contrary, it can be viewed as a skillful and innovative way of enhancing effective communication (Grosjean 1982; Gumperz 1982; Hansen 2003; Li 2000; Milroy & Muysken 1995; Romaine 1995; Shin 2005). In this regard, Gumperz's (1982) pioneering work shows that code-switching is a strategy that a bilingual systematically employs to express social and rhetorical meanings.

Building on Gumperz's (1982) work on code-switching as an interactional resource, Myers-Scotton (2000) formulates her markedness theory of language choice in which she postulates that bilingual speakers are aware of social consequences of codes selection in different social contexts. This follows that speakers make marked (i.e. unexpected) choices in specific contexts in response to conditions that trigger them. To better illuminate the motivations behind code-switching, Auer (1995) makes a distinction between participant-related switching and discourse-related switching. The former is predicated on the participants' language preferences or competences whereas the latter sets out to achieve a purpose or function such as reiteration of an utterance for emphasis or better comprehension in a different language.

Main Functions of Code-switching by Teachers

As teachers are trained to teach in the official medium of instruction, many occurrences of code-switching in teacher classroom instructions can be viewed as discourse-related switching as they serve a multiplicity of functions which are frequently intertwined.

However, for ease of explication, they are listed separately below under two broad categories which subsume other subordinate functions. The following list is by no means exhaustive but it adequately reflects the convergence of findings from various studies (Ahmad & Jusoff , 2009; Brice & Roseberry-McKibbin, 2001; Burden, 2001; Chi, 2000; Chick & McKay, 1999; Cole, 1998; Cook, 2001; Critchley, 1999; Dash, 2002; Ellis, 1994; Januleviciene & Kavaliauskiene, 2002; Kow, 2003; Lai, 1996; Mahadhir & Then, 2007; Martin, 1999; Mattioli, 2004; Mwinsheikhe, 2003; Probyn, 2005; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Schweers, 1999; Sert 2005; Skiba, 1997; Tang, 2002; Widdowson, 2003; Zabrodskaja, 2007) that are situated in contexts in which L2 refers to the English language and L1, the students' mother tongue such as Malay and Chinese. These studies will be further elucidated in the subsequent section.

A. Facilitative functions

- To facilitate and enhance students' learning
- To compensate for students' limited vocabulary / low proficiency
- To save time and effort explaining new and difficult concepts in L2 i.e. English
- To emphasise certain points
- To better clarify misunderstanding
- To compensate for the lack of exact equivalents in L2 i.e. English
- To serve as a resource / strategy / tool instead of an impediment to students' learning
- To reflect teachers' resourcefulness and not lack of proficiency
- To provide comprehensible input for students with poor grasp of English
- To free a considerable cognitive load for low English proficiency students to process the meaning
- To cue students to different sections of explanation with signposting in L1, hence mitigating students' cognitive load

B. Affective functions

- To provide affective support
- To lower students' affective filter and to ease students into the lessons

- To enhance solidarity between teacher and students
- To provide a conducive and non-threatening learning environment
- To facilitate communication and student participation
- To identify with the audience
- To close the status gap and asymmetrical power relations
- To establish goodwill and support.
- To enhance learning success
- To provide students with a positive affective state to engage with the learning process

Past Studies on Code-switching Involving Teachers

Although code-switching in the classroom has been traditionally considered to be an impediment to students' academic progress, more recently, researchers have considered the phenomena as systematic, skilled and socially meaningful (Woolard, 2004).

This section comprises a discussion of code-switching by teachers with reference to findings of past studies that involve subjects from pre-school to higher institution of learning. For the purpose of presentation, the discourse and social functions identified are presented under different sub-headings despite their inter-connection.

Expressing Difficult Concepts

Drawing from her observation of the use of loan words by Malaysian pre-school children in their conversation in English, Kow (2003) posits that code-switching here is used "to compensate for a limited vocabulary, to express a concept that is uniquely Malaysian, to overcome the problem of explaining the meaning of a term in the second language" (p. 68).

Kow (2003) further listed the motivations for interlocutors' use of code-switching, the chief of which are lack of a single word in L2 i.e. English, ease of explication of certain concepts in L1 i.e. mother tongue, creation of certain communication effect and emphasis on certain points. These motivations are closely linked to the social functions served by code-switching.

Decreasing Low Proficiency Students' Cognitive Load

Code-switching by teachers is made even more relevant to students with low English proficiency as code-switching frees a considerable cognitive load for these learners to process the meaning. Such observation is reiterated in findings that validated the successful use of this strategy with low proficiency students

and intermediate level students, hence providing them with comprehensible input (Critchley, 1999; Januleviciene & Kavaliauskiene, 2002; Tang, 2002).

On the importance of transfer of comprehensible input, Cook (2001), Ellis (1994), Richards and Rodgers (2001) and Widdowson (2003) posit that although the argument for exposure to the target language is well received, it may not necessarily benefit every classroom. This is because 'English Only' classroom would only result in frustration if the input is not comprehensible to the learners. (Brice & Roseberry-McKibbin, 2001; Lai, 1996; Widdowson, 2003). As such, teachers should make some allowance for the use of code-switching with some learners, especially those with poor grasp of the target language in specific situations (Burden, 2001; Chick & McKay, 1999; Dash, 2002; Schweers, 1999; Tang, 2002). This is made even more relevant and sensible when the learners share the same common language such as the national language or mother tongue.

Facilitating Student Understanding and Building Vocabulary in Content Subjects

To further validate the use of code-switching, studies revealed that teachers relied on code-switching as a strategy in teaching content subjects such as linguistics (Zabrodska, 2007) and science (Martin, 1999; Mwinsheikhe, 2003; Probyn, 2005).

In a study by Martin (1996) conducted on primary classes in Brunei, code-switching by teachers is found to be a common practice in history, science, geography and mathematics lessons, in descending order of use and frequency.

A study (Mahadhir & Then, 2007) on nine pre-service English teachers in Malaysia showed that code-switching by these teachers served the functions of facilitating student understanding and building vocabulary knowledge. As such, code-switching is considered a resource and strategy that these teachers capitalized on.

Decreasing Learner Anxiety

Ahmad and Jusoff (2009) conducted a survey by means of a questionnaire on 299 undergraduate students in a public university in Malaysia to gauge their perception of their lecturer's code-switching in their English Communication course. As his respondents comprised undergraduates with low English proficiency, his study sought to explore if the lecturer's use of code-switching posed a resource or impediment to his students' learning. Overall, the respondents related positively to code-switching between Malay (L1) and

English (L2) in terms of serving various facilitative functions in the classrooms, boosting their affective support and enhancing their learning success.

As regards to the learners' affective support, the use of code-switching resonated with many of the respondents as it eased them into the lesson by creating a conducive and non-threatening learning environment. They felt less tensed, less lost during the lesson and more comfortable, all of which contributed to a positive affective learning state that primed them for engaging with the lesson and learning process. Such positive mind set was also attributed to the fact that with more comprehensible input (through code-switching), the learners felt less stressed and more receptive to the lesson of the day.

Other findings have corroborated the observation that a stress-free and conducive learning environment facilitates student participation and engagement in classroom practice and activities (Burden, 2001; Chi, 2000; Lai, 1996; Schweers, 1999). Teachers can create such environment through the use of many strategies, one of which is code-switching. In this regard, it is further postulated that the systematic use of code-switching should be encouraged at the early stages of learning to better prepare students to succeed in their learning later (Chi, 2000; Cole, 1998; Lai, 1996; Mattioli, 2004; Schweers, 1999).

Closely related to this is the creation of group solidarity (Kow, 2003) as one of the social functions of code-switching, especially if the teacher and students share certain commonalities such as mother tongue, religion and / or culture.

According to Kow (2003), among the social functions in which linguistics resources are manipulated through code-switching are to appeal to the audience's educational background, to maintain the exact meaning of words, to attract attention, to identify with the audience, to close the status gap and to establish goodwill and support.

Kow (2003) also noted the prevalent use of the pragmatic particle '*lah*' among her subjects as in "...nothing *lah*..." and 'No *lah*' for emphasis. It is also employed as a tool of persuasion by means of softening the directive force of an order and turning it into a persuasive act as in "Tell me your favourite story. Tell *lah*" (p. 69).

These past research findings have provided us with clear testimony to the advantages of code-switching as a resource in the teaching process. In this regard, the teacher's use of code-switching should not necessarily be seen as a reflection of his/her deficiency but as a tool and strategy that promotes the

learning process as it achieves the ultimate goal of transfer of meaning as intended by the teacher (Cook, 2001; Sert 2005; Skiba, 1997).

Research Questions

This study aims to uncover the forms and functions of code-switching from English to Malay by a teacher in an Islamic education class. The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What does code-switching look like by a teacher in an Islamic education class?
2. Why does the teacher employ code-switching in his class?
3. How can code-switching enhance the teacher's instructions?

Methodology

The site of this study is the weekend madrasah in Singapore. These weekend madrasah lessons are conducted on part-time basis outside school hours, usually on Saturday and Sunday for several hours each week. Muslim parents usually send their children to attend such classes for an average of three hours per week, and for an average of six years. These lessons are traditionally delivered in Malay or Arabic but more recently, English has also been used as the medium of instruction (MUIS, 2007).

The holiday camp in this study was part of the Islamic education programmes run by the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS). With a view to making Muslims in Singapore firmly rooted in their Islamic traditions and values, Muis conducts a number of Islamic education programmes such as "Kids aL.I.V.E.", "Tweens aL.I.V.E.", "Teen aL.I.V.E." and "Youth aL.I.V.E." (Learning Islamic Values Everyday) for 5-8 years old, 9- 12 years old, 13-16 years old and 17-24 years old respectively.

This preliminary study is part of a three-year ethnographic, discourse-analytic research project that includes videotaped classroom observations, and participant observations at home and school. Throughout the research period, the researcher consciously made an effort to better understand the Malay-Muslim community by joining them in excursions, among other activities.

The data used in this paper is sourced from the transcript of a video recording of one of the many classes surveyed under the project. Due to space constraint, we focus on one of the observed classes for primary school students which we had observed under the aL.I.V.E. programmes. MUIS had granted us the permission to carry out our study with the classes and express consent was also obtained from the students' parents to include their children in the study by asking them to

fill in a parent consent form in which the purpose and details of the study were stated.

The class in this study was conducted by an *ustaz*, a male religious teacher, as part of a holiday camp which started with a morning prayer at nine and ended with a closing prayer at six in the evening. With the aid of PowerPoint slides and a microphone, he conducted the lesson for more than an hour, expounding on such values and virtues as truthfulness, sincerity and trustworthiness with references to Islamic Holy Scriptures to illustrate these principles.

The teacher delivered the lesson mainly in English with frequent instances of code-switching in Malay. He made attempts to engage the audience by eliciting their responses to his questions occasionally. However, the prevalent mode of knowledge transmission was in the form of teacher talk and instructions. As the lesson was part of a holiday camp, collaborative activities were reserved for other parts of the programme such as beach games and football. The students listened attentively to the teacher's instructions and responded well to the teachers' lesson. For example, they answered questions posed by the teacher and they also made occasional comments relevant to the class discussion.

The audience comprises two hundred and one primary school boys aged between ten to twelve years old. Normally in the weekend classes, there would be girls as well, but in this camp, only the boys were there. As such, we will not comment on the gender split as that is the subject of another paper and this paper concerns itself with code-switching. They were not segregated into language levels but grouped altogether and treated as a whole. The audience is homogeneous by virtue of certain commonalities that they share such as the Malay language, culture and tradition. They were casually dressed and seated on the floor on the open-air verandah of a small idyllic rural mosque.

The recording is subsequently transcribed in its entirety to identify instances of code-switching by the teacher. Each line is numbered and instances of code-switching are then translated from Malay into English for the benefit of readers who are not well versed in Malay. From these code switches, patterns are identified and separated into categories and themes for ease of reference and explication.

For the purpose of presentation, utterances in Malay are underlined and their English explanations are placed in parentheses and underlined next to them. Additional contextual information is also placed in parentheses. Due to space constraint, only utterances where code-switching occurs are reproduced to flesh out the immediate context. Ellipses (...) are used to indicate the continuation of

the utterances. A discussion of their possible discourse functions precedes these utterances.

Analysis and Discussion

Categorisation of Malay Expressions Used in Code-switching

The theoretical framework that informs the analysis of our data is Gumperz's (1982) semantic model in which the following discourse functions are identified (Table 1).

Table 1: Code-switching Functions as Identified by Gumperz (1982, pp. 75-81)

Functions	Description
Quotation	Serves as direct quotations or reported speech.
Addressee specification	Serves to direct message to one of several addressees.
Interjections	Serves to mark an interjection or sentence filler.
Reiteration	Serves to repeat a message from one code to another code either literally or in somewhat modified form.
Message qualification	Serves to qualify constructions such as sentence and verb complements or predicates following a copula.
Personalization or objectivization	Serves to distinguish between talk about action and talk as action, the degree of speaker involvement in, or distance from a message, whether a statement reflects personal opinion or knowledge, whether it refers to specific instances or has the authority of generally known fact.
Situational code-switching	Code-switching resulting from a change in social setting; topic, setting or participants.

Taking into account the context and audience of the research site, this model has been expanded and modified to account for a multiplicity of other functions relevant to the situation. In this regard, we also draw on the main functions of

code-switching by teachers identified in other studies as discussed in the previous sections.

As it is the purpose of this study to provide a qualitative account of the analysis, we exemplify the possible functions of code-switching with several utterances sourced from the transcript of the recording. More often than not, these code switches serve several functions at the same time but for the purpose of explication, they are separated into categories in the discussion below.

Utterances Related to Islam

As this is a religious discourse in the form of a lesson on Islam delivered by an *ustaz* (religious teacher) in a madrasah, it is only appropriate that we expect religious terms to punctuate the lesson to lend an air of seriousness and to mark it out from other secular discourses. This is not unlike the use of code-switching as a strategy in teaching content subjects as noted in the findings of other studies (Martin, 1999; Mwinsheikhe, 2003; Probyn, 2005; Zabrodska, 2007) mentioned in the previous section.

These Malay words can also be considered as instances of quotations under Gumperz's (1982) semantic model as they are taken from the holy scriptures in their original forms. These terms serve to illustrate certain concepts in Islam whose purpose will not be better served if they are translated into English. These terms are underlined together with their English expressions in the excerpts below (Table 2).

Table 2: Utterances Related to Islam

Utterances

1. ... he wanted to go to the mosque to pray subuh (morning prayer)... (line 3)
 2. ...when the prophet wanted to go to bersolat subuh (perform the morning prayer).... (line 9)
 3. The prophet went for solat subuh (morning prayer). (line 14)
 4. There is an ayat (verse) ... there is an ayat (verse). (line 55)
 5. Janna, janna, dalam syurga (Heaven, heaven, in heaven). (line 57)
 6. ... the firman (decree) of Allah (line 95)
 7. So, let's take a look at the ayat, Surah (verse, Chapter) ... (line 151)
 8. That's why the word you hear – dakwah. (line 163)
 9. You reach out or in other meaning, dakwah (proselytization) is invitation. (line 164)
-

Adding Comments to a Story

The teacher used the word *sabar* (*patient*) to make explicit the virtue of the prophet, hence drawing students' attention to the prophet's quality. It helps to

serve the function of emphasizing certain points (Kow, 2003) in the teacher's narration of the story.

As *sabar* (*patience*) is part and parcel of the Asian culture in general and the Malay culture in particular, the concept here is cast in Malay to make it familiar to his students even though the context of the story is foreign to his audience. By making explicit the virtue of the prophet, the teacher's use of code-switching here is an instance of message qualification (Gumperz, 1982).

The teacher uttered *manalah tahu* in the middle of the story and it can be considered as a form of interjection (Gumperz, 1982) that serves a signposting function which helps to focus students' attention and facilitate their comprehension (Then & Ting, 2009). The following examples show instances of the teacher's utterances punctuated with comments in Malay (Table 3).

Table 3: Utterances with Comments to a Story

Utterances

1. *And the prophet would just keep quiet ... he did not do that (showed action of throwing). Sabar (Be patient). (line 9)*
 2. *then she wasn't there... manalah tahu (who knew where she was)? The prophet went to the mosque and the lady wasn't there. He got to know the lady was sick. (line 11)*
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Repeating Answers from Students

The teacher repeated answers verbatim from the students in Malay to show that he was open to answers in Malay. This would help to encourage student participation as language is not a barrier in communication. This could indirectly help to decrease learner anxiety as noted in numerous studies mentioned before, which in turn creates a conducive learning environment that facilitates student participation and engagement (Burden, 2001; Chi, 2000; Lai, 1996; Schweers, 1999).

This would be an example of addressee specification (Gumperz, 1982) as it is related to what a particular student had said. The following utterance elucidates how this was done by the teacher (Table 4).

Table 4: Utterance Showing the Teacher Repeating an Answer from a Student

Utterance

He visited ... ya melawat (visited) (repeating answer from one of the students)... dia melawat nenek tua tadi tu. (line 16)

Relational Terms

When referring to communal relationships, we noted that the teacher codeswitched to Malay with words such as *sahabat* and *abang*. This is perhaps because these terms help to enhance the solidarity between him and his students as they share the same language. This in turn adds personal involvement in delivering his lesson. Such instances resonate with what Gumperz’s (1982) calls personalization according to his semantic model.

This is also prompted by the fact that his audience are homogeneous i.e. Malays and that in Singapore, Islam is their religion by default. As noted by Kow (2003), goodwill and rapport between the teacher and students help to decrease learner anxiety, hence creating a conducive and non-threatening environment for learning. The following three utterances exemplify the teacher’s use of relational terms in Malay (Table 5).

Table 5: Utterances with Relational Terms

Utterances
1. <i>He came back with two of his <u>sahabat (friends)</u>. (line 14)</i>
2. <i>.... when you see <u>Abang (Brother) Ridzwan</u> ... keep smiling. (line 37)</i>
3. <i>the <u>sahabat (friend)</u> by the name of Abdullah (line 97)</i>

Relating the Part of a Story with Implied / Express Moral

The teacher explained the moral of the story in Malay, perhaps because he wanted to highlight this to his students, making sure that the students did not miss the wood for the trees.

In this regard, Kow (2003) noted that code-switching can be used as a strategy to add emphasis on certain points. Also, such explanation of the moral of the story in Malay can be considered as a form of message qualification (Gumperz, 1982) in clarifying an important point in the story. The following expression illustrates this function with an extended code-switching in Malay (Table 6).

Table 6: Utterance Showing the Teacher Relating a Story

Utterance
<i><u>Dia melawat nenek tua tadi tu. Nenek tua yang buat macam tadi Nenek berbepluk masuk Islam di situ juga (... he visited the old lady, the old lady who did all these things The old lady immediately converted to Islam)</u></i> (line 17)

Interacting with Class

The teacher used a multiplicity of interaction strategies, the chief of which were questioning, eliciting answers, prompting and instructing. These strategies were mostly done in Malay and they have the effect of what Gumperz (1982) termed as personalization. Perhaps, the teacher was trying to narrow the relational and communication distance with his students, hence encouraging and inviting the desired responses he wanted from his students.

Using code-switching as a strategy to serve the social function of enhancing group solidarity is especially effective if the teacher and students share certain commonalities (Kow, 2003), as in this case where the audience was homogeneous i.e. Malay boys and the teacher himself also shared the same identity and background with the audience. The following utterances exemplify how these interaction or scaffolding techniques were expressed mainly in Malay (Table 7).

Table 7: Utterances with Scaffolding Techniques

Utterances
1. ... <u><i>bentangkan senyuman kamu (show us your smile).</i></u> (line 38)
2. <u><i>Susah sangatkah senyum? Tak. Senyum.... (Is it so difficult to smile? No. Smile ...)</i></u> (line 40)
3. <u><i>Siapa kat sini tak pernah cakap bohong? (Is there anyone here who has not told a lie before?)</i></u> (line 48)
4. ... <u><i>Siapa kat sini P5? Ada P5 ke? (...Who is in P5 here? Anyone here in P5?)</i></u> (line 133)
5. <u><i>But how would you feel if you are in his place dan semua orang memalukannya di depan orang? Sukake? Tak sukakan? Dan nampaknya dia (pointing to a student) pun tahu, tak suka. Tak da orang suka. Tak suka. Itu memalukan kita saja ... (inaudible) (and everyone embarrassed him in front of everyone? Do you like that? No, right? And it seems that he also knows, don't like. Nobody likes that. Don't like. It only embarrasses us ...)</i></u> (line 143)
6. <u><i>Kalau kita nak suruh orang sembahyang, boleh paksa tak? (If we want to ask people to pray, can we force them?)</i></u> (line 173)
7. <u><i>Don't talk back. Be nice to everyone. Lagi (More). Respect.</i></u> (line 188)
8. <u><i>Kalau orang tengok kita ... orang tak seronok, orang pun pulang.... Kita suka tak? Tak happy kan? (When people look at us and they don't like us, they will leave ... do we like that? Not happy right?)</i></u> (line 201)
9. <u><i>Today ... siapa yang tak pernah main Lego (who has not played Lego before) ...</i></u> (line 226)

Rephrasing / Reframing / Recasting

Rephrasing, reframing or reiteration (Gumperz, 1982) are used as a teaching strategy to serve a plethora of functions such as to emphasise a point and to clarify a concept stated in English. All these work towards disambiguating expressions that may be problematic and foreign to the students.

Instead of making lengthy explanation, reiteration of certain terms using code-switching as a strategy helps to express difficult concepts (Kow, 2003). Perhaps, the teacher had in mind to literally translate these difficult expressions as a scaffolding technique to elucidate the meaning for the students. What follows are some examples of rephrasing employed by the *ustaz* (Table 8).

Table 8: Utterances Showing the Teacher Rephrasing Certain Expressions

Utterances

1. *Your smile is the most sort after ... yang paling disukai (the most welcome). (line 39)*
2. *...your janna (heaven), your heaven. And your janna (heaven). (line 62)*
3. *What is no compulsion? Compulsion apa (what)? Compulsion apa (what)? Compulsory, yes (repeating a student's answer). Tak ada paksaan (there is no force). Not really compulsory. Compulsion is paksaan – force. (line 154)*
4. *and when already it is in the hereafter ... di akhirat ... (in the hereafter) (line 218)*

Instructing / Delivering Values Explicitly

There was high frequency in which the values were delivered in Malay in the teacher's lesson. Here, we noted that the teacher elaborated on values in Malay, a home language of his audience.

By doing this, the teacher may perhaps hope to relate the values in his lessons to the values the students learn at home from their parents, hence highlighting the importance of family as a social institution in which religious values are inculcated and more importantly practised and thrive. Perhaps, it is with this that the teacher wished to see his students apply these values in the family domain. As the saying goes, charity begins at home.

These elaborations on values in Malay are similar to Gumperz's (1982) message qualification in which the speaker clarifies his earlier message in another language.

Another possible explanation is to soften the prescriptive force that comes with such didactic discourse, hence rendering the teachings more readily acceptable to the students. All these are illustrated in the utterances in Table 9.

Table 9: Utterances Showing the Teacher Delivering Values Explicitly

Utterances
1. <i>We all sometimes do tell lies but we must try ... we must try our best ...<u> jangan suka cakap bohong (don't make it into a habit telling lies).</u> (line 52)</i>
2. <i><u>Sekali cakap bohong, tak pa... orang boleh terima. Dua kali cakap bohong... eh ini tak kenalah ni.</u>(If you lie once, it is all right ... <u>People can accept it. If you do it the second time ... something must be wrong).</u> The third time, ok <u>pasallah (no one will take you seriously)</u>... no one will trust you. (line 72)</i>
3. <i><u>Cakap bohong dengan kawan-kawan (Lying to friends) is one story. When you cakap bohong dengan your parents (lie to your parents)</u> (inaudible) (line 111)</i>
4. <i><u>Islam tu, tak boleh paksa. Kalau dia nak masuk Islam (There is no force in Islam. If people want to become Muslim), we open our arms.</u> (line 161)</i>
5. <i><u>Tak boleh (Cannot) force. You cannot force. Orang tak nak masuk Islam (if people don't want to become Muslim).... we cannot force him.</u> (line 169)</i>
6. <i>Whatever there is in the Koran, you learn it The thing is ... <u>kita tak nampak sekarang (we don't see it now) because the reward will be in the hereafter and when already it is in the hereafter ... di akhirat ... baru tak mahu caka pbohong... (in the hereafter ... then only we want to stop telling lies) by then it is already too late. Ok?</u> (line 216)</i>

Using Simple / Common Words

One of the few examples shows the use of the mundane word *datang* in Malay instead of *rushed* and other more precise verbs. Such strategy, to a large extent, may help students to focus on the meaning and message instead of having their understanding impeded by difficult words.

As noted in the previous section, code-switching helps to decrease low proficiency students' cognitive load so that they can better process the meaning with comprehensible input (Critchley, 1999; Januleviciene & Kavaliauskiene, 2002; Tang, 2002).The following utterance illustrates its use in a story narrated by the *ustaz* (Table 10).

Table 10: Utterance Showing the Use of a Common Word

Utterance

Everyone datang (instead of rushed) to save the sheep (line 67)

Relating a Fairy Tale to Illustrate a Value

By relating a fairy tale in Malay, the teacher perhaps hoped to relive his students' early childhood memory in which it was common for adults to recount fairy tales and folk tales to children in their mother tongue, i.e. Malay.

Such strategy straddles two functions under Gumperz' (1982) semantic model i.e. personalization and message qualification as the story serves as a specific instance that elaborates a point.

By interspersing religious discourse with a story told partly in Malay, this may help to rekindle the audience' happy childhood memory of being read to, hence, creating the right mood in preparing his audience to accept the teachings of the religion as shown in the excerpt in Table 11.

Table 11: Utterance with a Fairy Tale

Utterance

Then, Nampak tak da wolf (didn't see any wolf). He said wolf. Semua datang lagi (Everyone rushed to him again). (line 68)

Relating Personal Experience to Illustrate a Point

When touching on the topic of dishonesty, the teacher qualified his point with instances from his personal experience. Here, we have again examples of Gumperz's (1982) personalization and message qualification as the teacher illustrated a point with specific instances.

One possible effect of such strategy is to enhance the teacher's personal involvement, student engagement and rapport (Kow, 2003). The following utterances illustrate how the teacher related his personal experience in Malay (Table 12).

Table 12: Utterances Showing the Teacher Relating his Personal Experience

Utterances

1. *Dia suka sangat cakap bohong (He likes to tell lies very much)... (line 77)*
2. *And I tell you, it actually happened to one of my friends. He likes to tell lies ... when I was youngerlah (-lah is used as a pragmatic particle here)... no one wants to be friend with him. He becomes very unpopular ...dia suka cakap bohong (He likes to tell lies). (line 107)*

Elaborating on a Point

We also noted a number of instances in which elaboration was done in Malay. Such strategy resonates with Gumperz's (1982) message qualification in which the teacher clarified his main points with simple and mundane examples. This may help his students to better understand and relate to the points, hence forestalling any confusion. What follows are several utterances that contain examples of elaboration in Malay (Table 13).

Table 13: Utterances Showing Elaboration of Points

Utterances

1. *the garden of janna (heaven), the garden you tak payah bersihkan (do not need to clean up), it is always clean. Tak da lipas, tak da lalang.... Semua tak da (there is no cockroach, no weed ... there is nothing). (line 80)*
2. *You must have the reputation. Ok, you must have the reputation. Yang tengok orang tu saja, orang tahu ini muka boleh caya... Allah, ini muka tak boleh percayalah Orang sudah jauhkanlah.(When we look at a person's face, we know that he is trustworthy ... Allah , this face doesn't inspire trustworthiness People will avoid him). You cannot ... or you won't be a reliable person.*
- 3.

Use of the Pragmatic Particle 'lah'

'lah' is a ubiquitous pragmatic particle in Singapore English and it owes its origin to the Malay language. It serves various functions such as for persuasion or emphasis (Kow, 2003). Used in the following context, it seems to emphasise the age of the speaker i.e. when the teacher was younger (Table 14).

Table14: Utterance with the Pragmatic Particle ‘lah’

Utterance

... when I was youngerlah... no one wants to be friend with him. (line 107)

Conclusion and Implications

The findings of this study are closely aligned with those of other studies on code-switching situated in different contexts and with different audiences with regard to its functions and implications.

As part of a course run by the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS), the study noted that the holiday camp was conducted in English as the base language i.e. the medium of instruction. We also noted that there are occurrences of code-switching in another language i.e. Malay and no other languages as Malay is the common mother tongue shared by the teacher and his students.

Despite such commonality, we found that these codeswitches are not indicative of the speaker’s lack of competence or language proficiency. This means that they are not participant-related switching (Auer 1995) that may reflect the speaker’s lack of competence. In fact, they are discourse-related switching (Auer, 1995) that serves certain purposes and discourse functions such as those identified by Gumperz (1982) and other facilitative and affective functions. This shows that code-switching is strategically employed here as a resource in an Islamic education class as it was the case in other contexts based on findings of other studies, one of which is by Ahmad and Jusoff (2009). It is by no means an impediment to effective communication.

As regards the discourse functions of such codeswitches (Gumperz, 1982), we noted a number of instances of message qualification and personalization with one or two examples of reiteration, addressee specification, interjections and quotations each.

The high frequency of message qualification could be related to the fact that Islamic education can be considered a content subject where code-switching is used as a strategy to clarify certain concepts and points. This resonates with findings of other studies in which code-switching is found to be a common practice in content subjects such as linguistics (Zabrodska, 2007) and science (Martin, 1999; Mwinsheikhe, 2003; Probyn, 2005) as well as history, geography and mathematics (Martin, 1996).

In addition, instances of personalization function are found in the use of certain relational terms, the teacher's interaction with his students and elaboration with specific examples. In practical terms, these take the form of utterances related to the teacher's personal experience, anecdotes / stories and comments on stories, among others. This may reflect greater involvement of the teacher (Gumperz, 1982) and his attempt to narrow the communication distance between him and his students.

These code switches also serve pedagogical or facilitative functions as they are part and parcel of the teacher's repertoire of strategies to scaffold the students' learning. This is evidenced in a preponderance of questioning techniques articulated in Malay, the common mother tongue shared by the teacher and his students.

Despite its facilitative functions, the overarching aim of the use of code-switching is more likely to serve the affective function of enhancing solidarity between the teacher and students. As both the teacher and his students share the common language i.e. Malay, culture and tradition, some of the possible reasons for the teacher's switch to Malay are to decrease learner anxiety, to establish good will, to encourage student participation and to create a conducive learning environment as noted in other studies (Ahmad & Jusoff, 2009; Burden, 2001; Chi, 2000; Kow, 2003; Lai, 1996; Schweers, 1999). The creation of a more non-threatening and conducive environment provides students with a positive affective state to engage with the learning process.

Such affective function is in line with the purpose of the class as part of a holiday camp meant to be enjoyed by the students. Within the codeswitches in Malay, there is a proliferation of utterances in non-standard Malay which may further add to the conversational and informal tone of the teacher's instructions. As religion belongs to the social and family domains, these Malay code switches in general and the use of non-standard Malay expressions in particular may help the students see the inter-connectedness of the Islamic religious lesson and family.

As this is a preliminary study involving the observation of a class and a lesson, future research can be replicated to include more classes and lessons to determine the extent to which the findings of this study are generalisable to other Islamic education classes. Also, it would be instructive to conduct surveys, self-reports and interviews with teachers and students to identify points of convergence and divergence in terms of perspectives.

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