

Teacher's Insights on Code-Switching Practices in Elementary Schools

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Abstract: This study explores teachers' insights on code-switching practices in elementary English classrooms, emphasizing its dual role as both pedagogical resource and a potential barrier to language development. Findings reveal that teachers perceive code-switching as a balanced and purposeful strategy that enhances comprehension, fosters participation, and builds learner confidence in multilingual context. Teachers employ code-switching deliberately to clarify complex concepts, manage classroom activities, and sustain engagement, identifying its use as instructional and interactive scaffolding. However, challenges arise in balancing English fluency, addressing learners' dependency on local language prompts, monitoring controlled use, managing the mixing of L1 and L2 grammatical structures, and overcoming learners' avoidance of English in favor of easier code-switching. To address these challenges, strategies and responsive approaches were identified, including the integration code switching as responsive approaches were identified, including the integration of code-switching as scaffolding in instruction and interaction. Professional development intervention were proposed, notably the establishment of Professional Learning Communities through Learning Action Cells (LACs) and the implementation of a Training Plan on Strategic Ways of Handling Code-Switching Practices. These initiatives aim to strengthen teachers' competence in applying controlled, monitored, and purposeful code-switching practices. The study underscores the significance of equipping teachers with structured monitoring tools, reflective practice sessions, and collaborative learning opportunities to optimize language use. Also, the research contributes to enhancing teaching effectiveness and improving English language outcomes among learners in multilingual classrooms.

Keywords: Code-Switching, Multilingual Classrooms, Instructional Scaffolding, Interactive Scaffolding, Professional Learning Community, Teachers' Competence.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Language plays a vital role in the teaching and learning process because it serves as the primary medium through which knowledge, ideas, and values are communicated and understood. Through language, teachers explain concepts, give instructions, ask questions, and provide feedbacks, while learners express their thoughts, clarify understanding, and engage in meaningful interaction. Effective use of language helps make abstract ideas more accessible, supports critical thinking, and fosters active participation in the classroom. Moreover, language shapes learners' comprehension, confidence, and sense of inclusion, making it essential in creating a supportive learning environment where understanding is deepened and learning outcomes are achieved.

The importance of language in the teaching and learning process is emphasized in contemporary educational research, which highlights how classroom talk and purposeful use of language which enhance learners' understanding and

engagement. Alexander (2018) explained that meaningful dialogue between teachers and students promotes deeper learning by encouraging explanation, reasoning, and reflection, allowing learners to actively construct knowledge rather than passively receive information. This shows that language is not only a tool for communication but also a central mechanism through which thinking, interaction, and learning are developed in the classroom.

Similarly, code-switching emerges as a meaningful linguistic practice that supports teaching and learning by strategically using more than one language to enhance understanding and participation. In classrooms, teachers and learners may shift between languages to clarify complex concepts, emphasize key ideas, or facilitate interaction, especially in multilingual contexts. This practice aligns with the role of language as a tool for meaning-making, as code-switching allows learners to connect new knowledge with prior linguistic experiences, reduce communication barriers, and engage more confidently in classroom discourse. As such, code-switching does not hinder learning but rather

functions as a pedagogical resource that strengthens comprehension, inclusion, and effective communication within the teaching–learning process.

Code-switching has been widely discussed in recent studies as an effective pedagogical strategy that supports comprehension and classroom interaction, particularly in multilingual learning environments. Rather than being viewed as a barrier, code-switching allows teachers to clarify instructions, explain difficult concepts, and manage classroom discourse more effectively, while enabling learners to express ideas with greater confidence and accuracy. Macaro (2019) emphasized that judicious and purposeful use of learners' first language alongside the target language can enhance understanding, reduce cognitive load, and promote meaningful participation without undermining language learning goals. This suggests that code-switching, when strategically applied, functions as a valuable instructional resource that aligns with the role of language in fostering deeper learning and inclusive classroom engagement.

Code-switching offers significant advantages in the teaching and learning process by improving comprehension and supporting conceptual understanding, particularly for learners in multilingual settings. By strategically alternating between languages, teachers can scaffold learning, explain abstract ideas, and connect new content to students' prior knowledge. Cummins (2021) emphasized that allowing learners to draw on their first language alongside the language of instruction strengthens meaning-making and academic development, as it enables students to engage cognitively with content without being constrained by limited language proficiency. This highlights code-switching as a supportive instructional practice rather than a hindrance to learning.

Another advantage of code-switching lies in its ability to foster learner participation, confidence, and inclusivity in the classroom. When students are permitted to use familiar languages, they are more willing to express ideas, ask questions, and take part in discussions. Lin and He (2020), stated that code-switching creates a supportive learning environment by validating learners' linguistic identities and encouraging active interaction between teachers and students. This inclusive use of language strengthens classroom communication, supports social interaction, and contributes to a more positive and meaningful learning experience.

Despite its pedagogical value, code-switching may present disadvantages in the teaching and learning process when it is overused or applied without clear instructional purpose. One major concern is that excessive reliance on learners' first language may limit opportunities for practicing the target language, potentially slowing language development. García and Li (2021) argued that while strategic code-switching can support comprehension, overuse may reduce meaningful exposure to the target language, leading learners to depend on translation rather than developing independent language skills. This highlights the need for careful balancing to ensure that code-switching supports rather than hinders language learning.

Another disadvantage of code-switching is the possibility of confusion and inconsistency in classroom communication, especially when learners have varying language proficiencies. When teachers switch languages without clear patterns or explanations, some students may struggle to follow lessons or miss important information. Lee and Lin (2019) noted that unplanned or excessive code-switching can blur instructional focus and create inequities among learners who do not share the same linguistic background. This suggests that while code-switching can be beneficial, it requires careful and strategic use to avoid hindering clarity, equity, and effective learning outcomes.

This study on teachers' insights on code-switching practices in elementary schools is therefore conducted because language plays a central role in facilitating comprehension, engagement, and meaningful learning in the classroom. While code-switching has been recognized as a valuable instructional strategy that can support understanding, scaffold learning, and foster participation, research also highlights potential drawbacks, such as reduced exposure to the target language and possible confusion among learners with varying language proficiencies. Understanding teachers' perspectives and experiences provides critical insights into how code-switching is actually implemented in classrooms, whether it is used strategically to enhance learning, or whether it inadvertently hinders language development and classroom interaction.

Furthermore, the conduct of this study addresses the need to identify practical and responsive strategies for optimizing language use in teaching English. By examining the challenges teachers encounter and the approaches they employ to manage code-switching, the study can inform the design of professional development interventions, such as LAC sessions or targeted instructional strategies, that aim to reduce overreliance on code-switching while maintaining learner comprehension and engagement. This makes the research relevant not only for understanding current classroom practices but also for providing evidence-based recommendations that enhance teaching effectiveness, improve English language acquisition, and support inclusive and equitable learning environments.

II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To determine the teachers' insights of code-switching practices in teaching English.
- To identify how the teachers handle code-switching in English class.
- To determine various challenges experienced by teachers in handling code-switching practices.
- To identify different strategic and responsive approaches that can minimize code-switching practices in English class.
- To identify professional development activities or intervention can be to minimize code-switching practices in teaching English.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study on code-switching practices clearly employed a Mixed-Methods Research (MMR) design, as indicated by the file's methodological description: The gathered qualitative data were treated and explored through themed presentations. Moreover, the quantitative data were discussed from a statistical perspective. This approach is characterized by the concurrent use of two distinct data streams. The qualitative stream involved collecting rich, narrative data, the "Teachers' Insights of Code-Switching Practices" to understand the context and purpose of the practice, such as why teachers employ it as a "deliberate effort to guide students". This depth of understanding was then paired with the quantitative stream, which used statistical analysis of the checklist questionnaire.

The participants of this study were 10 teachers teaching grade 4 English using purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique in which individuals are intentionally chosen based on specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives. In this study, the respondents consisted of Grade 4 elementary school teachers teaching English from selected schools in Sta. Magdalena who had experience in teaching English and using code-switching in their classrooms. Purposive sampling was employed to ensure that the participants could provide rich, relevant, and informed insights on the practices, challenges, and strategies related to code-switching.

The instrument used in this study was a Likert scale questionnaire, which allowed the researcher to gather quantitative data on teachers' insights, practices, and challenges regarding code-switching in English classrooms.

IV. RESULTS

This provides the results of this research work. The gathered qualitative data were treated and explored through themed presentations. Moreover, the quantitative data were discussed from a statistical perspective.

A. Teachers' Insights of Code-Switching Practices in Teaching English

The insights of Grade 4 teachers regarding code-switching in teaching English provide an important foundation for understanding how language is used to support learning in multilingual classrooms. Teachers' perceptions reflect their classroom experiences in addressing learners' varying language abilities, comprehension levels, and participation. Exploring these insights helps explain how code-switching is viewed not only as a means of clarifying instruction but also as a practice that must be used thoughtfully to promote effective English language development. The insights of the participants on code-switching practices in teaching English were thematically grouped based on their similarities.

➤ *Code-Witching is an Effective Instructional Tool for Improving Comprehension*

Teachers perceived code-switching as an effective instructional strategy that supports learners' understanding of English lessons, particularly when pupils encounter unfamiliar vocabulary or complex concepts. By shifting briefly to the learners' mother tongue, teachers are able to clarify meanings, reinforce key ideas, and ensure that pupils can follow the lesson. This insight reflects teachers' recognition that comprehension is a prerequisite for meaningful learning, especially at the elementary level where learners are still developing foundational English skills.

Participant 4 stated, "I use code-switching when my pupils cannot understand the English words because it helps them grasp the lesson faster." Participant 2 also shared, "Switching to Filipino helps me explain difficult ideas clearly, especially for pupils who struggle with English."

Participant 5 reinforced these views, saying, "When I switch to the mother tongue, my pupils become more engaged because they immediately understand the lesson. It allows me to connect the English concept to something familiar, which makes learning smoother and less intimidating for them"

The implication of these insights is that code-switching can serve as an effective scaffolding tool in English instruction when used appropriately. Teachers may continue to use it to support comprehension, particularly for struggling learners, while ensuring that it complements rather than replaces English exposure in the classroom.

➤ *The Use of Code-Switching Must be Balanced and Purposeful*

Teachers emphasized that while code-switching is helpful, it should be used in moderation to prevent pupils from becoming overly dependent on the mother tongue. Excessive use may reduce learners' exposure to English and limit opportunities for language practice. Teachers acknowledged the importance of balancing English and Filipino to encourage pupils to think, respond, and communicate more independently in English.

Participant 1 explained, "Code-switching is helpful, but I make sure not to use it all the time so pupils will not rely on Filipino. I limit my code-switching because I want my pupils to become more confident in speaking English." Participant 3 supported this view, stating, "I only switch to Filipino when it is really necessary, because I want my pupils to try expressing themselves in English first. This way, they learn to depend on their own understanding before I provide clarification." Similarly, Participant 6 added, "I control my code-switching because if I use Filipino often, my pupils will stop practicing English. By limiting it, I encourage them to think harder and gain confidence in using English during discussion."

These insights imply that teachers must exercise careful judgment in deciding when and how often to code-switch. Establishing clear guidelines and gradually increasing English use can help pupils develop confidence and competence in the target language while still receiving necessary support.

➤ *Strategic Code-Switching Enhances Learner Participation and Confidence*

Teachers believed that code-switching encourages pupils to participate actively in classroom discussions by reducing anxiety and fear of making mistakes. Allowing limited use of the mother tongue makes learners feel more comfortable expressing their ideas, especially those who struggle with English. This practice helps create a supportive classroom environment where pupils are more willing to engage in learning activities.

Participant 4 shared, “When I allow some code-switching, my pupils become more confident and are more willing to answer questions and participate in class.” In addition, participant 7 added “My pupils are more active in class when they know they can use Filipino if they are not sure of their English. Code-switching gives my pupils confidence to speak because they are not afraid of making mistakes.”

Participant 8 affirmed these insights, saying, “I noticed that when pupils are allowed to use Filipino at certain points, they participate more freely. It helps them share their ideas without hesitation, and later they try to express those some ideas in English with greater confidence.”

The implication of these insights is that strategic code-switching can promote learner confidence and active participation. Teachers may use it as a motivational tool while simultaneously guiding pupils toward increased use of English during classroom interactions.

➤ *Code-Switching is Considered a Natural Classroom Practice in Multilingual Settings*

Teachers considered code-switching a natural and unavoidable practice in multilingual classrooms, particularly in public elementary schools where pupils share the same mother tongue. However, they also stressed the importance of setting boundaries to ensure that English remains the primary medium of instruction. Teachers viewed code-switching as a support rather than a replacement for English teaching.

Participant 3 stated, “Code-switching is natural in our classroom, but I make sure that English is still the main language used during the lesson.” Participant 5 also mentioned “Code-switching happens naturally in my class, but I set rules on when it is allowed. I tell my pupils that English should be used first before switching to Filipino.”

Participant 9 affirmed these views, saying, “In our multilingual setting, code-switching cannot be avoided, but I remind my pupils that English must remain the priority. I use Filipino only to clarify difficult points, then return to English right away.” Similarly, participant 10 added, “Code-

switching is part of everyday classroom interaction, but I established clear boundaries. I encouraged pupils to attempt English first, and only allow Filipino when it is truly necessary to aid comprehension.”

The implication of these insights is that recognizing code-switching as a natural classroom practice allows teachers to use it more consciously and effectively. Clear boundaries and instructional goals can help maintain the balance between supporting comprehension and promoting English language development.

B. *How Teachers Handle Code-Switching in English Class*

Teachers handle code-switching in English classes as a deliberate and strategic instructional practice rather than a spontaneous or uncontrolled response. Their handling of language switching reflects professional judgment aimed at balancing learners’ comprehension and exposure to the English language. The findings indicate that teachers are mindful of when and how to shift between English and the learners’ first language to ensure understanding while still promoting English language development. The claims of the respondents are categorized into 3 major indicators or processes on how they handle code-switching in English Class.

➤ *When Explaining Complex English Concepts*

When explaining complex English concepts, teachers reported using code-switching to scaffold learning and clarify abstract ideas. Difficult vocabulary, unfamiliar sentence structures, and concept-heavy lessons often required brief shifts to the mother tongue to ensure learners’ comprehension. Teachers typically introduced concepts in English first and then used the first language to reinforce meaning, check understanding, or provide examples. This approach helped learners grasp lessons more effectively without completely removing English exposure.

According to Participant 8 “Sometimes when I explain difficult English words or ideas, I switch to the students’ first language so they can understand better. I start in English, then use our language to give examples or check if they really get it.” Participant 1 supported this view, saying, “When I teach difficult topics, I begin in English but use Filipino to simplify the explanation. This helps my pupils connect the new idea to something familiar, making the lesson easier to understand.”

Likewise, Participant 3 added, “I use code-switching when the concept is too complex for my pupils to grasp in English alone. By clarifying in the mother tongue, I make sure they understand the lesson while still keeping English as the main language of instruction.”

The participant’s statement highlights the practical role of code-switching in the classroom as a scaffolding strategy. By shifting between English and the learners’ mother tongue, teachers can clarify complex concepts and ensure comprehension without reducing exposure to English. This practice suggests that strategic use of the first language can enhance learning outcomes, making lessons more accessible

and effective while supporting students' gradual development of English proficiency.

➤ *When Giving Instructions and Managing Activities*

In giving instructions and managing classroom activities, teachers used code-switching to maintain clarity, organization, and classroom control. Instructions for tasks, assessments, or group activities were often delivered in English and followed by clarification in the learners' first language, especially when misunderstanding could disrupt the flow of the lesson. Teachers emphasized that clear instructions are essential to avoid confusion, save time, and ensure that learners can participate correctly in activities.

According to participant 6, "When I give instructions for activities or assessments, I first say it in English, then explain in our language if I see that students are confused. This helps everyone know exactly what to do and keeps the class organized." Participant 2 supported this view, saying, "I usually give directions in English, but when pupils look unsure, I repeat instructions in Filipino. This way, they follow the tasks properly and the lesson continues smoothly." Likewise, Participant 5 added, "During group activities, I clarify instructions in the mother tongue after stating them in English. It prevents confusion and ensures that all pupils can participate actively without saying time."

The participant's statement demonstrates that code-switching serves as a key tool for effective classroom management. By providing instructions in English and clarifying in the mother tongue, teachers prevent misunderstandings that could disrupt the lesson, maintain order, and ensure smooth participation in activities. This practice shows that strategic language use supports both comprehension and classroom efficiency, allowing teachers to manage learning processes while promoting engagement and clarity.

➤ *When Encouraging Participation and Engagement*

Teachers also handled code-switching as a way of encouraging participation and engagement among learners. Allowing limited use of the first language helped pupils feel more confident to answer questions, share ideas, and participate in discussions, particularly those who struggled with English. However, teachers reported encouraging learners to attempt responses in English first before resorting to code-switching, gradually increasing English use as learners became more confident.

Participant 9 mentioned, "I let my students use our language sometimes when answering or sharing ideas, especially if they are shy with English. But I always

encourage them to try in English first, and slowly they get more confident." Participant 4 affirmed this, saying, "When pupils are allowed to use Filipino at certain points, they become more confident to participate. I remind them to try English first, but the option of code-switching makes them less afraid to share their ideas." Participant 7 added, "My pupils are more active when they can use Filipino if they are unsure of their English. I encourage them to attempt English responses, but code-switching helps reduce their fear of mistakes." Similarly, Participant 10 supported these views, stating, "Code-switching gives my pupils a chance to express themselves without hesitation. I guide them to start in English, and when they struggle, I allow Filipino so they can still participate meaningfully."

The participant's statement highlights that code-switching can function as a supportive strategy to boost learner participation and confidence. By permitting limited use of the first language, teachers create a safer space for students to engage in discussions, particularly for those less proficient in English. Gradually encouraging responses in English helps develop their language skills while maintaining active participation, suggesting that code-switching can balance linguistic support with the goal of increasing English proficiency.

The findings show that teachers applied code-switching with intentionality and restraint, using it as a support mechanism rather than a replacement for English instruction. Their handling of code-switching reflects an effort to meet learners' needs while maintaining the instructional goal of developing English proficiency. This highlights the importance of guiding teachers on effective strategies that balance clarity, participation, and language development in multilingual English classrooms.

C. Challenges Encountered by Teachers in Handling Code-Switching Practices

Teachers' use of code-switching in the classroom, while beneficial for comprehension and participation, is not without challenges. Managing when and how to switch between English and the learners' first language requires careful judgment to avoid over-reliance on the mother tongue, maintain lesson flow, and ensure consistent exposure to English. Teachers often face difficulties in balancing clarity, engagement, and language development, particularly in large or diverse classrooms where students' proficiency levels vary. These challenges highlight the complexity of implementing code-switching effectively as part of instructional strategies. Table 1.0 presented the different challenges encountered by teachers in handling code-switching in teaching English.

Table 1. Challenges Encountered by Teachers in Handling Code-Switching Practices

Challenges	Frequency	Rank
Teachers' difficulty in balancing English use for fluency and assuring comprehension by using MT / L1	6	1
Learners are too much dependent on teachers' prompts in the local language instead of building independent comprehension in English	5	2.5
Learners are relying too heavily on MT / L1 code-switching feels easier and more comfortable	5	2.5

Teachers have no proper knowledge in terms of monitoring when and how often code-switching occurs to avoid excessive reliance	4	4.5
Learners mix the grammatical structures from both languages	4	4.5
Learners intentionally avoid English in discussion because code-switching feels easier and more comfortable	3	6

The most prominent challenge reported by teachers is the inherent difficulty in strategically managing the use of two languages. Specifically, Teachers' difficulty in balancing English use for fluency and assuring comprehension by using MT/L1 was cited by 6 respondents, and ranked 1st. This result highlights the core tension teachers face while using the mother tongue (MT/L1) is effective for clarifying concepts and ensuring immediate understanding, its integration must be delicate and purposeful to avoid compromising the learners' necessary exposure to and practice of English, thus requiring constant professional judgment.

This challenge becomes harder because learners come from different language backgrounds, so teachers must adjust their communication. They need to balance quick understanding with the long-term goal of English fluency, which requires careful choices. At the same time, meeting curriculum demands while addressing learners' needs makes language use even more demanding for teachers.

Following that challenges is the problem of learners' over-reliance on their native language. Five respondents reported that learners depend too heavily on MT/L1. This tendency limits their exposure to English and reduces opportunities for practice. When learners consistently fall back on their first language, their progress in building English proficiency and confidence is hindered, making it a significant obstacle to achieving instructional goals.

A challenge of equal frequency, also reported by five respondents, is that learners are overly dependent on teachers' prompts in the local language rather than developing independent comprehension in English. This issue directly stems from the reliance problem, as learners tend to wait for the easier explanation or prompt in the local language instead of internalizing English concepts. Such dependency undermines the instructional goal of developing autonomous English proficiency and critical thinking skills in the target language, requiring teachers to exercise intentional restraint in their use of MT/L1.

Occupying the 4.5 rank were challenges reported with a frequency of four, including the tendency if learners to mix grammatical structures from both languages. This issue reflects a clear case of linguistic interference. When learners frequently switch between codes, they sometimes confuse the syntactic rules of English and their mother tongue, resulting in grammatically mixed or incorrect utterances. Such outcomes highlight the need for clear boundaries and strategic implementation to ensure that code-switching functions as a temporary scaffolding mechanism rather than a source of confusion regarding the distinct structures of each language.

Also included in rank 4.5 was the difficulty teachers face in monitoring the excessive use of code-switching. When left

unchecked, code-switching becomes habitual among learners, and teachers may sometimes overlook these patterns. This lack of regulation reinforces learners' dependence on code-switching, diminishing opportunities to strengthen their English proficiency.

Together, these challenges underscore the complex role of code-switching in language learning. While it can serve as a supportive tool for comprehension, its unregulated use risks fostering dependency and linguistic confusion. Addressing these issues requires deliberate teacher intervention to balance scaffolding with the promotion of independent English language development.

Learners intentionally avoid using English in discussions because code-switching feels easier and more comfortable. This challenge, reported with a frequency of three and ranked fifth, reflects teachers' observations that some learners show a negative attitude toward English, opting instead to rely on code-switching. If not addressed, this tendency becomes detrimental to the development of English proficiency and overall language learning.

This finding highlights the importance of fostering positive learner attitudes toward English. Teachers must encourage consistent practice in the target language while using code-switching only as a supportive tool. By promoting confidence and motivation in English, educators can reduce avoidance behaviors and strengthen learners' long-term proficiency.

D. Strategic and Responsive Approaches to Minimize Code-Switching Practices in Teaching English

Effectively minimizing code-switching in English classrooms requires deliberate strategies that balance language development with learner comprehension. Teachers must adopt approaches that not only reduce reliance on the mother tongue but also support students' confidence and participation in English. This section presents key strategic and responsive approaches that teachers use to manage language use, scaffold learning, and foster greater independence in English communication. These approaches demonstrate how thoughtful planning, differentiation, and confidence-building techniques work together to enhance both teaching effectiveness and learners' language proficiency.

➤ *Strategic Code-Switching When Explaining Complex English Concepts*

The first major strategy involves the deliberate use of code-switching as a scaffolding mechanism when addressing challenging content. This approach is necessitated by the fact that difficult vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and abstract or concept-heavy lessons often pose significant barriers to comprehension for elementary learners. Teachers

apply this strategy by first introducing concepts in English, then briefly shifting to the mother tongue (MT/L1) only as a reinforcement or clarification tool, thereby ensuring learners grasp the material without completely removing their exposure to the target language.

Participant 10 clearly articulated this strategic approach, stating: "Sometimes when I explain difficult English words or ideas, I switch to the students' first language so they can understand better. I start in English, then use our language to give examples or check if they really get it".

Participant 2 affirmed this practice, saying, "Switching to Filipino helps me explain difficult ideas clearly, especially for pupils who struggle with English. I always begin in English, but I use mother tongue to make sure they truly understand the lesson." Likewise, Participant 8 added, "When explaining complex English concepts, I start English and then switch briefly to our language to clarify. This way, pupils grasp the meaning faster while still being exposed to English."

The implication of this practice is that the strategic use of MT/L1 enhances learning outcomes by making lessons more accessible and effective for all students. By using the learners' first language for clarification, teachers successfully bridge the gap between their current English proficiency and the complexity of the lesson content, which functions as a crucial scaffolding strategy in the classroom. This ensures comprehension, which is a prerequisite for meaningful learning, while still supporting the students' gradual and continuous development of English proficiency.

➤ *Code-Switching When Giving Instructions and Managing Activities*

A second critical strategy focuses on using code-switching to ensure clarity, organization, and effective classroom control during procedural phases of the lesson. Teachers found that instructions for tasks, assessments, or group activities are prone to misunderstanding, especially among struggling learners, which can disrupt the overall flow and efficiency of the lesson. Therefore, code-switching is employed judiciously to manage the classroom environment effectively.

Participant 6 described the practical application of this strategy in classroom management: "When I give instructions for activities or assessments, I first say it in English, then explain in our language if I see that students are confused. This helps everyone know exactly what to do and keeps the class organized". Participant 5 supported this claim, stating, "During group activities, I clarify instructions in Filipino after giving them in English. This prevents confusion and ensures that all pupils can follow the directions correctly, which keeps the lesson running smoothly." Likewise, Participant 3 added, "I always begin instructions in English, but when I notice hesitation among pupils, I switch briefly to the mother tongue. This way, they understand the task clearly and the activity proceeds without delays."

The impact of this approach is two-fold: it serves as a key tool for effective classroom management and significantly boosts instructional efficiency. By preventing misunderstandings in procedural tasks, teachers maintain order and ensure smooth participation in activities. This strategic language use supports both comprehension and efficient workflow, allowing learning processes to continue uninterrupted while all students are clear on their roles and expectations, thereby supporting engagement and clarity across the classroom.

➤ *Encouraging Participation and Engagement via Code-Switching*

The third major thematic strategy involves using limited code-switching as a motivational tool to enhance learner participation and confidence. For many learners, especially those with lower proficiency, the fear of making a mistake in English can lead to anxiety and silence, thus preventing active engagement in class discussions. Teachers counteract this by allowing a controlled, limited use of the first language to create a more supportive and "safer" conversational space.

Participant 3 highlighted the delicate balancing act required for this strategy: "I let my students use our language sometimes when answering or sharing ideas, especially if they are shy with English. But I always encourage them to try in English first, and slowly they get more confident". Participant 4 affirmed this perspective, saying, "When I allow some code-switching, my pupils become more confident and are more willing to answer questions and participate in class. It helps them overcome their hesitation and gradually use English more." Participant 7 added, "My pupils are more active when they know they can use Filipino if they are not sure of their English. Code-switching gives them confidence to speak because they are not afraid of making mistakes." Similarly, Participant 9 supported these claims, stating, "I let my students use our language sometimes when answering or sharing ideas, especially if they are shy with English. But I always encourage them to try in English first, and slowly they get more confident."

The implication of this strategic allowance is that it functions as a powerful supportive strategy to boost learner confidence and actively promote classroom participation. By permitting the limited use of the first language, teachers create an environment where students feel less inhibited and more willing to share their ideas, particularly those who struggle with English. Critically, this strategy succeeds because it simultaneously guides pupils toward increased use of English in classroom interactions, successfully balancing linguistic support with the essential goal of developing long-term English-speaking proficiency.

E. Professional Development Interventions that can be Designed to Minimize Code-Switching Practices in Teaching English

Based on the analysis of the data gathered from the teachers' insights, classroom practices, challenges, and strategic approaches, the study identified the need for structured professional development interventions to guide teachers in handling code-switching more effectively. While

teachers recognized code-switching as a natural and useful instructional practice, the findings revealed inconsistencies in its application and a lack of systematic monitoring, which contributed to learners' over-reliance on the mother tongue. In response, two major professional development outputs were proposed: The Learning Action Cell (LAC) Session Plan on Translanguaging and The Training Plan on Strategic Ways in Handling Code-Switching Practices. These interventions were designed to correct misconceptions about code-switching, promote intentional and balanced language use, and strengthen teachers' capacity to support English language development while maintaining learner comprehension.

Proposed LAC session in translanguaging and the training plan on strategic handling of code-switching were developed based on the comprehensive analysis of the study's findings. These professional development interventions aimed to transform code-switching from an unmonitored classroom habit into a deliberate instructional strategy that supports comprehension, participation, and sustained English language development. Through collaborative learning and structured training, teachers were provided with clear frameworks and practical tools to manage language use effectively in English classrooms.

V. CONCLUSION

- Teachers perceive code-switching as a balanced purposeful strategy that enhance comprehension, promotes participation, build confidence, and naturally supports learning in multilingual classrooms.
- Teachers employ code-switching in English classes in a controlled, deliberate, and purposeful manner to clarify complex concepts, manage activities and sustain learner participation and engagement.
- Teachers encounter challenges in handling code-switching, including language prompts and reliance on the mother tongue, monitoring its controlled use, managing the mixing of L1 and L2 grammatical structures, and overcoming learners' avoidance of English in favor of easier code-switching.
- Teachers employ code-switching strategically and responsively in English classes, using as instructional scaffolding to clarify complex concepts and as interactive scaffolding to guide instructions and sustain learner participation and engagement.
- The need of establishing professional learning communities through Learning Action Cells and implementing training plan on strategic code-switching highlights teachers' responsibility to strengthen their competence in applying controlled and monitored practices in English classrooms.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Teachers be encouraged to design classroom activities that integrate controlled code-switching as a scaffold, so learners can gradually build comprehension, confidence, and participation while strengthening their independent use of English.

- Teachers be provided with structured monitoring tools and reflective practice sessions to ensure that their controlled and purposeful use of code-switching in English classes remains consistent, effective and aligned with instructional goals.
- Teachers be supported through targeted workshop and peer-monitoring programs to address challenges in balancing English fluency, reducing learners' dependency on local language prompts, monitoring controlled code-switching, managing grammatical mixing of L1 and L2, and encouraging learners to actively use English rather than relying on easier code-switching.
- Teachers be guided to develop a teaching-learning engagement that integrate code-switching as instructional and interactive scaffolding, ensuring its strategic and responsive use support concept clarification, activity management, and sustained learner engagement but to a limited level only.
- The proposed Professional Learning Community through Learning Action Cells and the Training Plan on Strategic Ways of Handling Code-Switching Practices be adopted to strengthen teachers' competence in applying strategic, controlled, monitored code-switching in English classrooms.

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