Indonesian EFL Teachers' Use of Code Mixing in Classroom Interactions

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ABSTRACT

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Code Mixing (CM) is generally a communication strategy that is often used by teachers in the process of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). This study aims to describe the types and categories of CM used by teachers in the context of teaching EFL in Indonesia, as well as investigate the perspectives of teachers and students regarding the use of code mixing in classroom interactions. This research uses case studies with a qualitative approach to analyze data. Data collection was carried out through recorded interviews with three teachers and seven students as well as observing the teaching and learning process during six meetings at one of the senior high schools in Medan, North Sumatera. The results of the study show the teachers use three types of CM, namely Insertion, Alternation and Congruent Lexicalization. There are 177 mixed code data found. There are 188 data classified as insertion type, 49 data classified as alternation type and 10 data classified as congruent lexicalization type. Then from the results of the interviews, the teacher considered that the functions of CM in students were 1) Improving student' comprehension, 2) Encouraging students' independence in learning new vocabulary. Furthermore, students agreed that code mixing was an effective and effective learning strategy in increasing their understanding of English. This happened because 71.5% of students used English most often with some Indonesian language CM and 67.2% said the use of CM can help understand topic discussions in the learning process.

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Introduction

The globalization era has a significant impact on most, if not all, facets of human life, including language education. According to Handayani (2016), the mastery of foreign languages is the most asset for competing in a globalized era. It is indisputable that English is the most popular and indemand foreign language because it is a global language that is utilized in numerous contexts, including business, education, politics, and technology (Fitriana, 2012). In the context of education, for instance, English plays a crucial role in communicating with the global community and accessing knowledge through English language resources. English language proficiency is thus essential for individuals to compete in the labor market in the future (Dusturia, 2014). Therefore, many countries have mandated English language instruction as a compulsory subject in their educational curricula, either as a secondary language or a foreign language. Learning English as a second or a foreign language (ESL/EFL) will promote the mastery of multiple languages, also known as bilingualism or multilingualism (Purnasari et al., 2016). In this case, students can communicate in English, in addition to their native tongue and other languages.

During the process of EFL learning, the occurrence of linguistic phenomena is an inevitable aspect that cannot be avoided. This phenomenon often occurs and is marked by the intertwining of elements of a language with the appearance of other language elements such as code-switching and code-mixing (Fithriani 2021; Rahmat, 2020). The term code mixing (CM) is frequently employed interchangeably with code switching (CS), even though they denote distinct concepts. CM refers to the practice of incorporating elements from two or more languages within the same utterance, whether in spoken or written form. This linguistic phenomenon serves to enhance the stylistic and linguistic diversity of communication, and may involve the inclusion of words, clauses, idioms, greetings, and other linguistic features (Grosjean, 1982; Kridalaksana, 2001). CS refers to the phenomenon of alternating between two languages within a single conversation, across sentence or clause boundaries. Speakers alternate between their native language and the target language learned, using them in different utterances (Herk, 2012). Therefore, while both CM and CS refers to the use of two or more, the distinction lies in the fact that CM operates at the intra-sentential level, whereas CS operates at the inter-sentential level (Wenwen, 2020). Both CS and CM are prevalent in bilingual classrooms, causing a shift in class interaction to bridge linguistic gaps teachers and students (Akhtar et al., 2016). However, the use of the two codes is subject to contextual influence based on their respective functions.

The use of CM in the teaching and learning of foreign languages, particularly EFL, is a global phenomenon. It is a common strategy employed by EFL instructors in their classrooms for a number

of reasons, including enhancing communication efficacy, stimulating student engagement in the learning process, and gaining a more profound insight into their students' comprehension (Wenwen, 2020). According to Guo's (2023) study, many prospective teachers in China believe that the use of CM can facilitate the acquisition of English to a certain degree and does not exert any deleterious impact on the native language. Similarly, EFL teachers in Indonesia employ CM as a means of addressing the persistent challenges that students encounter in acquiring English vocabulary and navigating the complexity of grammar and models that diverge from those of the Indonesian language (Nurhanifah et al., 2012). The phenomenon of code mixing among Indonesian EFL teachers during classroom interactions can be attributed to several factors, including: (1) constraints in language use; (2) the linguistic background of speakers and interlocutors who are habituated to using their native language; (3) the need to clarify concepts that students find difficult to comprehend; (4) the desire to break the monotony of the classroom environment; and (5) the attempt to engage students in the learning process (Novianti et al., 2021; Ira, 2018; Scholastica, 2021). Given the limitations of both teachers and students in learning a second language, the utilization of code-mixing strategies appears to be crucial in the process of teaching English as a foreign language to facilitate comprehension, enhance the assimilation of both languages, and promotes effective communication within the classroom.

Code-mixing has been a topic of discussion in numerous studies, particularly in the context of EFL teaching and learning. Several studies in the literature pertaining to research on CM have primarily centered on linguistic features, as evidenced by the works of Syafrizal and Sari (2017), Astri and Fian (2020), and Salsabila et al. (2021). Subsequently, numerous studies have documented diverse typologies of code mixing employed by teachers during classroom instruction (Rahmat, 2020), the pedagogical benefits of practicing code mixing in class interactions (Helmie et al., 2020), and increased student participation and interaction (Purnamasari et al., 2016). However, the majority of research to date has primarily concentrated on categorizing the various types of CM and linguistic features employed by educators, while ignoring student responses to the use of CM in the classrooms. Therefore, this study aims to fill this void by adding students' perspectives regarding their understanding of teacher code-mixing practices in EFL learning.

Given the complex nature of the process of code-mixing, which involves the incorporation of diverse speaker factors for its successful implementation, it was deemed necessary to investigate the specific reasons for its use. Driven by the empirical gaps, this study aims to investigate the CM practices of Indonesian EFL teachers as an instructional strategy in classroom interaction and student responses regarding the impact of using code mixing on their English comprehension.

Code Mixing as a Linguistic Phenomena

Code mixing (CM) is a linguistic phenomenon characterized by the alteration of two or more codes from one language to another within a single utterance (Muysken, 2000). Siska et al., (2023) code-mixing is a very natural incident for bilinguals. They sometimes do not even notice by themselves that they have switched between their languages, only when their attention is drawn to it by monolingual friends or family members, as it is with interferences. CM is a prevalent occurrence in societies where two or more languages are spoken. Studies in CM enhances our comprehension of the characteristics, mechanisms, and limitations of language (Azuma, 1998; Boeschoten, 1998; Myres-Scotton, 1993), as well as language use and individual values, communication strategies, language attitudes, and socio-cultural contexts (Aurer, 1998; Jacobson, 1998; Ludi, 2023; Myers-Scotton, 1993). Wardhaugh (1992) expounded that CM, especially in spoken discourse, entails the intentional blending of two linguistic components without a corresponding shift in topic. This indicates that CM is executed with remarkable proficiency, resulting in selective modifications to language production. The phenomenon of code mixing transpires in the absence of topic switching and may encompass diverse linguistic levels, including morphology and lexis. This distinct linguistic behavior is frequently observed among foreign language learners (Almelhi, 2020). For instance, in classroom communication, teachers play a crucial role in assisting students to overcome language barriers that prevent the transfer of information; therefore, they practice CM with great awareness. Since CM involves the combination of the grammars of two languages without altering the grammar of the first language, language teachers must have sufficient knowledge of the grammatical systems of the two languages in order to apply rules governing what each system can do in combination. This strategy is known as code-mixing pedagogical approach.

Bhatia and Ritchie (2013) posit that the selection of code-mixing is contingent upon the interlocutor. It only determines when, where, and why the bilingual code was modified. Entering or excluding the interlocutor in one code is more appropriate in this situation. The practice of CM in EFL classrooms is driven by specific motivations and specific assignments. Research conducted in various EFL classrooms has demonstrated that code-mixing facilitates learning. This is due to the fact that many individuals strive to attain proficiency in English as their second language. Numerous nations have implemented educational programs aimed at enhancing the English language proficiency of students within academic institutions. In the context of English classes in Indonesia's EFL setting, there is a tendency to teach L2 (English) and L1 (Indonesian) interchangeably, with the use of the latter dominating the former. In classroom communication, teachers intentionally switch from one language to another and vice versa, both in teacher-led presentations and teacher-student interactions. This becomes the impetus for investigating the rationale behind EFL teachers' practice of CM in their pedagogical approach within the classroom setting.

Previous Studies on the Practice of Code Mixing in English Classroom

In the last decade, numerous studies have investigated the practical aspects of code mixing (CM) in language instruction across different EFL settings. These studies have specifically aimed to highlight the benefits of incorporating L1 in an EFL environment. One could make the argument that empirical evidence discovered in instructional functions and pedagogical benefits supports this claim. To begin with, Purnamasari et al., (2016) conducted a study to examine how EFL instructors utilize in class interaction. Using classroom observation, questionnaires, and interviews as instruments for data collection, the study discovered that speakers (in this case, instructors) employed insertion more frequently during classroom interaction. Similar phenomenon was also observed in student responses when instructors used CM to conduct classroom interactions.

In a more recent study, Rahmat (2020) investigated the use of CM by an English teacher when communicating with students during classroom activities in the school environment. Conducting the study in one classroom in a public vocational school in Makassar, Indonesia, he examined the types of CM that predominantly used by the teacher during classroom interactions. The findings show that the teacher used three types of CM, namely, insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalization. This study also revealed a tendency for the teacher to use L1 more frequently than CM. In terms of pedagogical benefits, Astrid (2015) carried out a qualitative study that aimed to find out the CM that occurs in class interactions. This study collected data from four classes with 120 students and 15 lecturers participating in English classes. The results of this study reveal that during class interactions, lecturers and students use CM in various patterns and considerations. Based on the results of the data obtained, it reflects a positive attitude towards CM in teaching and learning activities in class.

Finally, Helmie et al., (2020) conducted a study to examine the use of CM by college students during class presentation in Intercultural Communication class in terms of the most dominant types of CM used, the reasons of using COM, and the response from the audience. The findings reveal balance use of both Indonesian (L1) and English (L2) in students' presentations. This study also reveals that the use of CM is to make the explanation easier to grasp. In terms of the audience response, the majority of the audience gave a positive response to the presenter's use of CM.

Method

The case study design is used in this investigation, which is considered the most suitable for producing detailed and comprehensive reports about certain special phenomena that occur in real life using various types of data such as observations, interviews, and documentation (Yin, 2009). This type of research was chosen because it allows researchers to get data integration to get more detailed and in-depth information related to the research object. In line with the opinion of Tellis

(1997) who states that the case study approach refers more to the system of actions taken and emphasizes the exploration and description of a phenomenon that is the object of research. This research specifically uses an exploratory case study approach that obtains data from exploration and additional data. So that researchers can investigate how Indonesian EFL teachers present their language knowledge in code-mixing during class interactions for various pedagogical functions as well as additional student responses related to interactions.

This research was conducted at one of the senior high schools in the city of Medan, Indonesia. The researchers selected participants purposively by recruiting three teachers who teach students in class XI (eleven) and have used mixed languages (Indonesian-English) or code-mixing in their instructional practices. The researchers also distributed questionnaires to all students in the three teachers' classes (n = 97) to gain the data regarding students' perception of teacher use of CM. Table 1 provides anonymized demographic information for the three teachers who participated in this research.

nt	Age	Sex	Language Spoken	Education	Teaching
					Experience
1	40	F	Indonesian, Bataknes, English	Bachelor's degree	15 years
1	37	F	Indonesian, Bataknes, English	Bachelor's degree	10 years
1	35	F	Indonesian, Bataknes, English	Bachelor's degree	9 years
	1 1 1	1 40 1 37	1 40 F 1 37 F	1 40 F Indonesian, Bataknes, English 1 37 F Indonesian, Bataknes, English 1 35 F Indonesian,	1 40 F Indonesian, Bachelor's degree Bataknes, English 1 37 F Indonesian, Bachelor's degree Bataknes, English 1 35 F Indonesian, Bachelor's degree

Table 1. The demographics for teacher participants

The data were collected through interviews and classroom observation. The researchers came to the school as non-participant researchers to directly observe the teaching and learning process. The first researcher first asked for the teacher participants' consent for the data collection procedure. After obtaining permission, the researcher recorded the teaching and learning process and took several pictures of the teachers in class while teaching. Due to time constraints, observation and recording of teacher teaching videos was carried out in six meetings within one month, which was considered sufficient to represent the code mixing used by teachers in teaching EFL. A total of six recordings with a duration of about 40 minutes were obtained from the observations. From the data collected, the researchers only used three of the six observations as data to eliminate the 'reactivity effect' with the assumption that the teacher had seen the researcher as a class dynamic during the observation, thus practicing CM as their learning routine. The data from the video recordings during the observation of the lessons were thoroughly analyzed to identify the teacher's use of CM. In this case, data matching codes were listed and classified under

Muysken's (2000) classification framework, namely Insertion, Alternation and Congruent Lexicalization.

The collected data was transcribed, classified, and analyzed based on participants' use of codemixing. After the learning observations were completed, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the seven student participants. The interview lasted 60 minutes with all participants collecting data related to the students' responses to using CM in class interactions. Their responses were recorded with their consent and then transcribed verbatim for thorough understanding. Transcript data were analyzed using thematic content analysis to answer research questions.

Result and Discussion

The analysis of data collected through six observations shows that L2 (English) is often used in the teaching process of EFL students in class. Likewise, the data obtained from the interview results revealed the teacher's tendency to use English as their medium of instruction in class. These findings are discussed in relation to the research objectives; the types of CM used by the teachers, the intended pedagogic function of CM practice, and the responses of students.

Types of Code Mixing

Regarding the typological aspects of teacher use of CM from the framework proposed by Muysken (2000), the result of analysis on the data collected from observations show that there were 177 code mixing items used by English teachers during classroom interactions. As seen in Figure 1, in general the predominantly used CM is Insertion with 118 occurrences, followed by Alternation with 49 occurrences, and Congruent with 10 occurrences.

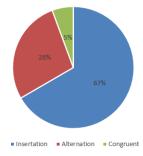


Fig 1: Occurrences of teachers' use of CM

A closer look at the data presented in Table 1 reveals that most of the use of CM by teachers occurs in insertion. This type of CM occurs mostly in one complex sentence where one of the clauses is CM. Based on the results of observations, teacher 1 often uses insertion by starting speech in English and inserting a second language into it. For the alternation, teacher 2 uses the two languages are divided into grammatical structures that are lexically possible by any language element, dividing

the structure of a language L1 and L2. Both are different language structures mixed into a sentence. Even though the sentence is the result of a mixture of two different language structures, namely sentences that have good clarity of meaning. In the Congruent Lexicalization code-mixing teacher 3 uses sentences that are structured at the syntactic level between Indonesian and English. This is because the lexicalization congruence is linear and structural to the L1 and L2 languages in Díaz, & Muysken (2000).

Frequency of CM Used **Participant** Total Alternation Insertion Congruent 22 Teacher 1 40 5 67 Teacher 2 36 18 3 57 Teacher 3 42 9 2 53

Table 1. Occurrences of each teachers' use of CM

As stated previously, Insertion is the most common type of CM used by the three teachers participating in this study. This type of CM is seen mostly occurring in compound and complex sentences where one of the clauses has the language code changed. Based on the data from observation, the three teachers often use the insertion type CM by starting with Indonesian speech, followed by English, and inserting phrases. In Table, three examples of Insertion code mixing are provided. Samola et al., (2023), Insertion type is the process of inserting lexical items or whole components from one language into a structure from another language. This shows that insertion code mixing only happens in language structures smaller than a clause and a sentence. The first example of Insertion code mixing is:

"Nahh, if you do this task, itu bisa improve your skill." (= So, if you do this task, it can improve your skill)

From the example the words *itu bisa* which means "it can." The Indonesian words are inserted within the sentence.

In the second code-mixing, Samola., et al (2023), code mixing in this situation resembles changing code between utterances. The sentence seems to switch to another tongue halfway through 11.

"betul itu, and do come again" (=That's alright then, do come again) there Indonesian sentence *betul itu*, which means which is "that's alright" combined with the English sentence structure. Even though the structure of this language is different, it is able to show the meaning that is understood.

Whereas in Congruent lexicalization sentences, Samola., et al (2023), languages A and B share a common grammatical structure, and words from both languages are added somewhat at random in congruent lexicalization code mixing.

the example:

"Bagus, in other words keceplosan itu let the cat out of the bag" (= Good, in other words, "slip" is let the cat out of the bag)

starting with L1 *bagus* which means good and connected with the word L2, the word *keceplosan* which means "slip" followed by the next sentence namely "let the cat out of the bag" which has the same meaning as the word "silp", shows that structural congruent lexicalization is linear.

These findings support Huang's (2000) argument stating that Insertion is mostly used in code mixing. This finding corroborates the findings of Rahmat (2020), who found that the three types of CM were mostly used in class interactions between instructors and students, with the insertion type being the most widely used type of CM and the congruent lexicalization type being the least used.

Pedagogic Functions of Teachers' CM Practice

The analysis of the data collected through interviews revealed that most of the teachers deliberately practiced CM, especially when using different Insertion types for different pedagogical purposes. Through this thematic analysis, data analysis found two main functions, which are described in the following sub-sections.

Theme 1: Improving students' comprehension.

The first pedagogical function of the use of CM by teachers in this study is to improve students' comprehension. The teachers admit that they often use English sentences and insert several clauses and phrases in other languages to help students understand the message to be conveyed as conveyed below.

Actually, the use of code mixing in class is still quite minimal. This is because the ability of students, who are still minimal and less qualified to use code mixing, is low. Even so, I still try to train them to use code mixing when communicating with students so that they are better trained and improve their understanding skills when communicating in English. (Teacher 1, interview, Excerpt 1).

Teacher 1 explained that in order to help his students understand his teaching well and to avoid unnecessary mistakes due to misunderstandings in teaching, he deliberately combined L1 and L2.

This finding is in accordance with the claims of Purnamasari et al. (2016) about the function of using CM according to the teacher's perspective, through the insertion of phrases and clauses in L2 sentences, which can increase students' comprehension abilities and help understand learning material (p. 4). In Hoffmann's (1991), the use of CM in inserting L1 into L2 sentences to help students understand the message being communicated related in Hoffmann's study (1991) states the intention of clarifying the contents of speech or the interlocutor. sometimes lets people mix from one language to another, hoping that the other person will understand what he or she is talking about. So teachers use CM to convey messages and make it easier for students to catch the point of the material taught by the teacher, and improve students' abilities.

Theme 2: Encouraging students' independence in learning new vocabulary

The next function of teacher practice during teaching is to train students' independence in finding vocabulary. Teachers were observed on several occasions using CM by inserting Indonesian words or phrases into English sentences. This strategy is deliberately done to illuminate new concepts, which many students are not familiar with prior to the CM exercise in the hope that they can bridge meaning from L2 to L1. In addition, with this aim, the teacher tries to introduce new vocabulary found in idioms.

So far, I still have a few problems when using CM as a whole in class, but when using CM, I also often tell students to be sensitive to the new vocabulary that I deliberately mention in order to train their ability to search for new vocabulary and translate it themselves (Teacher 2, Excerpt 2).

Not all students are able to do that, but in every class, there are two to three people who try to be sensitive and find out. (Teacher 3, Excerpt 3)

In the quote above, the teacher shows the function of CM facilities in encouraging student abilities. They mentioned that there were students who responded and tried to find out vocabulary or learned new terms by using dictionaries or sophisticated terminology that they were not familiar with.

The use of CM is able to bridge the students' responsiveness process in finding new vocabulary and terms given by the teacher; this is similar to the findings of Purnamasari et al. (2016) regarding students' motivation in finding out new terms and vocabulary on their own in sentences in L2. This is related to Napitupulu (2010:20), namely that CM can create a relaxed atmosphere in the teaching and learning process. It was because of the students' habit of repeating the sentences used by the teacher. Teachers are also motivated to provide new vocabulary and new terms. Furthermore, the teacher will give jokes or idioms to improve the students' ability to find new terms. In line with

Hoffman (1991) that people sometimes like to use famous expressions or famous figures. Even jokes or idioms come from native English culture, teachers still want to make jokes/idioms familiar to students. So, the teacher tries to relate the idiom or joke to the Indonesian culture to make it seem like it exists in the students' environment and culture.

Students' Perception of Teacher' CM Practice

Regarding students' perception of teachers' use of code mixing (CM), the analysis of the data from students' responses to the questionnaires revealed that ed on a survey distributed to students who were taught code mixing, it was found to be responsive to the use of code mixing by English teachers, as follows:

Table 2. Frequency of CM on Student

Question	Yes	No
English should be most frequently used with some Indonesian CM	71.5%	28.5%
The use of CM helps comprehend the topics of discussion	67.2%	32.8%

Based on the results of the questionnaires distributed to students who were taught using CM, it has been found that students' responses regarding CM were influenced by their English teachers. There were 28.5% of students' responses who preferred to use Indonesian compared to using English in class. This is because they think that using English or CM is more complicated; they cannot know the material or what the teacher is saying. However, 71.5% of students' responses that preferred the use of CM in the ongoing learning process. This happens because there are several reasons that strengthen students' liking for using CM, including: (1) they better understand the content of the material; (2) they can find new vocabulary and sensitivity to new terms; and (3) they improve their English skills, both speaking and listening as well as writing. The first, second, and third reasons are related to Chit Yi (1999), which states that using code mixing makes it easier for students to master English content, vocabulary, and grammar.

Meanwhile, in terms of the benefits of using CM on student comprehension in EFL teaching and learning, code-mixing is very helpful in facilitating students' abilities in several aspects such as English content, vocabulary mastery, and grammar mastery. Code mixing is also able to improve students' discussion skills in critical thinking by inputting the culture of the language being studied. Code mixing is capable of negotiating social rules in several aspects such as making the relationship between teachers and students less formal in the teaching and learning process and increasing communicative interactions between teachers and students.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research is to investigate how three English teachers use CM as part of their teaching strategy when teaching English to their class XI students. In terms of typology, the findings show that the dominant type of CM used by teachers is insertion, followed by alternation and matching lexicalization. This is reflected in the use of 118 types of insertion, and there are 49 types of alternation and 10 types of congruent lexicalization. This finding supports previous findings that the mixed code category is most widely used in the interaction process of learning English students whose insertion is the first level among the others. Produce several sentences that contain codemixed inserts and congruent lexicalization, creative and innovative speakers are needed to produce these sentences.

From a functional perspective, lecturers consciously use CS for activities in different pedagogical cases as well as to help their students better understand the material or their explanations to help students learn foreign concepts and to innovate and involve students in class interactions. These findings can also increase the awareness of EFL teachers regarding the use of their language repertoire, in this case, the L1 and L2 practices that the teaching and learning process becomes more effective. Although an exploratory effort, this study has limitations. This research only recruited three teachers. In the future, further research regarding the use of CM in class interaction can use the type of data collected from various sources with a larger number of participants and is able to involve lecturers and students. Because of this, code-mixing can also be inferred that the phenomena of code-mixing can be a useful alternative method for students to acquire English spontaneously and autonomously through the interaction in the EFL class.

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