

## **CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the nature of the present study, which explore classroom codeswitching in an EFL college class. It consists of seven sections: (1.1) background of the study, (1.2) research questions, (1.3) objectives of the study, (1.4) significances of the study, (1.5) scope of the study, (1.6) clarifications of key terms and (1.7) the organization of the thesis.

### **1.1. Background of Study**

Being the second most used language in the world (Zhu, 2001), English is spoken by approximately a quarter of the world's population (Crystal, 2002 in Floris, 2002). Thus, as an international language, English has an important place in the language learning. Therefore, the need to master English has been increasing; the increasing needs of mastering English are also recognized by the Indonesian government. It is evidenced in the teaching of English, which ranges from pre-school to college (Manara, 2009).

According to Littlewood (1984), it is best for language learners to learn in natural learning mechanisms, which can be activated when they are involved in the communicative activity. Littlewood, further explains that to acquire said natural learning mechanisms, learners should be given access to conditions in which the language is naturally used as a means of communication. Therefore, it is important to efficiently use the time allocated for English subject to expose the students with as much English as possible. One of the ways to expose the students with English in the classroom is through lecturer's language. The lecturer can use as much English as possible in giving instructions to the students during the lesson and limit the use of Indonesian.

However, in the real situation in some schools or colleges, the use of Indonesian in an English language classroom is still unavoidable. In Indonesia, as a multilingual society, it is common to use two or more languages in communication. It is in line with Margana (2012) who states:

... the use of two or more languages in communication practices becomes a common phenomenon because the participants are familiar with more than one language, for example, regional languages (Javanese, Sundanese, Maduranese, and the like), first language (Indonesian language), and foreign language (English) (Margana, 2012).

Using two or more languages within an utterance, or what linguists call codeswitching, is fairly common, especially in multilingual countries, such as Indonesia, where English as well as other foreign languages are mixed in an utterance, in English as a Foreign Language (EFL), codeswitching comes into use either in the lecturers' or the students' discourse (Mujiono, 2010, p. 22).

Codeswitching, one of the unavoidable consequences of communication between different language varieties has long existed as a result of language contact widely observed, especially in multilingual and multicultural communities (Cook, 2000). Over the past decades, increasing interest in codeswitching has triggered a variety of investigations and theoretical discussions (Gumperz, 1982), which have shed light on our understanding of bilingual speech behavior. Codeswitching as a specific phenomenon and strategy of foreign language lecturers, received attention in the 1980s, from then on, there has been the heated debate between different views on whether it is helpful or impeding to switch back and forth between the target language and the native language in the foreign language learning classroom (Jingxia, 2010).

In several situations, codeswitching gives the benefit for both lecturer and the students. Like Skiba in Mujiono (2010) states that codeswitching can be practiced by a lecturer by integrating it into the activities which are used to teach a second language. By will students get in pairs and switch languages at pre-determined points in conversation; the lecturer helps them to learn each other's language. The

lecturer can also begin a lesson in one language, then switch to another language, forcing the students to listen carefully and comprehend both languages. By switching the language from one to another at the beginning of the lesson, the lecturer has helped the students in the teaching and learning process. Like many researchers (Lai, 1996; Cole, 1998; Critchley, 1999; Schweers, 1999; Burden, 2001; Tang, 2002; Greggio & Gil, 2007) as reported by Bensen (2013), have argued that codeswitching can be an important element in contributing to the English language teaching and learning process.

Further, some see codeswitching as an opportunity for language development as it allows the effective transfer of information from the senders to the receivers (Skiba, 1997). Tien and Liu (2006) put forth that low proficiency students considered codeswitching in their EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classes as a beneficial to gain better comprehension, especially when providing equivalent comprehension, as well as giving classroom procedures. In other words, it can be exploited as a teaching method for teaching second languages, or it can ease language development as a means for providing language samples (Cook, 1989; 1991). Although language development is seen to be minimal and slow, codeswitching is still perceived as a positive indication of the learning progress.

Like has been stated before that codeswitching is as a positive indication of the learning progress which helps the lecturer and the students understand the language each other. Gumperz (1983) in Mujiono (2010) believes that codeswitching could be seen as a real, specific discourse strategy for bilinguals. He calls codeswitching as code alternation. It can occur in the form of the quotation when the speaker directly uses a piece of reported speech in the language which is produced. It means that to make each other understand the language used, they have to switch from one language to another language. It happens as well in the teaching and learning process of an English subject; the English lecturers often have difficulties; in this case, they have to switch the language when the students do not understand what they are conveying and the

students also have to switch their language when they are difficult to explain something to their lecturer and friends.

The case, where the students or the lecturer codeswitch their utterance, it is due to English is a foreign language and not used in everyday communication, the chance for the students to use English is limited only in the classroom. It is still uncommon in Indonesia to use English as a means of communication in daily activity. (Floris, 2002 in Octora, 2014) explains in her study that:

... in Indonesia, English is regarded as a Foreign Language. It is not a Second Language or an official language, so it is not widely used in the community. The exposure of English, even in the English-medium-institutions, happens only in classrooms. The atmosphere outside the classrooms provides more exposure to Bahasa Indonesia and local languages. So when the students and the lecturers leave the classrooms, they will be more exposed to their native languages and fewer opportunities to use English. Generally, the students (and the lecturers) use English only for 5-7 hours per day (Floris, 2002, p.15).

Based on the above statements, it can be explained that switching from one language to another language is effective in continuously establishing EFL classroom communication. The use of code switching is to serve better in English immersion setting where they provide clarification when a word or phrase is not known. The code exchange occurrences are welcomed in the class and may increase English competency if the frequency is not excessive (Bista, 2010) in (Octora, 2014). In addition, code switching can be a useful strategy in classroom interaction if the aim is to make the meaning clear and to transfer the knowledge to students in an efficient way. In short, the application of code switching is believed to be beneficial, particularly in order to motivate students to learn more, to engage and maintain students' attention, to provide a classroom atmosphere more conducive to language acquisition. This issue appears an interesting topic to explore.

Furthermore, in recent years, codeswitching in the language classroom has come into focus as an area of specific interest and investigation. Foreign language

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classroom has become one of the specific codeswitching contexts (Jacobson, 2010). Some researchers have done some studies and empirical investigation on codeswitching which occurred in the teaching of foreign language. They also come up with different functions and factors that cause lecturers to switch their language in the teaching of foreign language.

Codeswitching practiced by the English lecturers will be beneficial for the students because it helps them understand what their lecturers are explaining about. This is like (Cook, 2001) in Lee, 2010) explains that lecturers may use the first language in order to explain activities so that the activities would be beneficial to the learners.

From the explanation that has been revealed above can be concluded that there are two reasons for doing codeswitching in the classroom. First, lecturer or students may not have transferred the exact meaning in the target language. In short, the student or lecturer may think that it is more appropriate to code switch in order to indicate that the message is clearly understood. Second, codeswitching situation happens in order to avoid gaps in communication which are the result of the lack of fluency in the target language, so that the communication between lecturer and the students in the class can run well.

Based on the overview above, this study is intended to find out lecturer's and students' codeswitching especially in types and functions of codeswitching in the EFL classroom and also the students' perception toward classroom codeswitching. These issues are conducted with the assumption that the result not only to examine and answer about codeswitching phenomenon but also it can significantly broaden the understanding of the current process of the language spoken. Furthermore, this research will help raise awareness on the issue of codeswitching in the EFL classroom context.

## 1.2 Research Questions

The problems of this study are formulated in the following research questions:

1. What types of codeswitching are found in an EFL college class?
2. What are the functions of codeswitching used by the lecturer and students in an EFL college class?
3. What is the students' perception toward classroom codeswitching in an EFL college class?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are:

1. to identify the types of codeswitching which are found in an EFL college class.
2. to find out the functions of College students and the English Lecturer do codeswitching in an EFL class.
3. to find out the students' perception toward classroom codeswitching in an EFL college class.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This research has potential to give implication to the theory, educational practice and professional practice.

Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich the literature on language learning, specifically regarding the types and functions of codeswitching. This is also expected to have a contribution as guiding information for linguistic students who are interested in the study of codeswitching.

Practically, this study might provide useful information about the types and function of codeswitching for evaluating the development of the student's English proficiency and the lecturer's English performance in the classroom, so that, Code switching can be a useful media for the teaching and learning process.

Professionally this result helps other researchers to conduct further research concerned with the use of codeswitching, particularly, the social and pedagogical functions of codeswitching in EFL classroom.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

This research is limited to the language used in teaching English by an EFL lecturer and third-semester students in an EFL college class in Lampung. This research focuses on the types, functions and students' perception of codeswitching which occurs in an EFL class at the one of college in Lampung.

### **1.6 Clarifications of Key Terms**

To avoid possible confusion from the use of some terminology used in this study, this section will provide the definition of the terms.

**1.6.1 Codeswitching** *is defined as the* alternate use of two or more languages in the same utterance or conversation (Grosjean, 1982). Myers-Scotton(1988) describes codeswitching as the use of two or more languages in the same conversation without a noticeable phonological assimilation from one variety to the other. In general, one can say that a prerequisite for codeswitching is a juxtaposition of elements from two codes (Winford, 2003).

**1.6.2 Types of Codeswitching** in this study consist of three types, they are codeswitching can be either intersentential, tagswitching or intrasentential switching (Poplack, 1980). Intersentential switching, it takes place between sentences, i.e. the switch occurs at a clause or a sentence boundary where each clause or sentence is in a different language. Tagswitching involves inserting a tag in one language to an utterance which is otherwise in another language Romaine (1995). The third type of codeswitching is intrasentential codeswitching which requires a lot of integration and is

usually associated with the most fluent bilinguals (Poplack, 1980).  
Intrasentential switching occurs within a sentence.

**1.6.3 An EFL Classroom** refers to the classroom in which English is taught and learned as a foreign language or English language by non-native speakers in countries where English is generally not a local medium of communication. (<http://grammar.about.com/od/e/g/English-As-A-Foreign-Language-Efl.htm>)

## 1.7 Thesis Organization

Chapter 1 comprises the background of the study, the research questions, the purposes of the study, and the significances of the study. This chapter also shows the definition of the key terms used and the organization of the whole thesis.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature related. It involves classroom codeswitching in ELT, codeswitching in Indonesian classroom context, the definition of codeswitching, types of codeswitching, functions of codeswitching, perception about codeswitching and the previous study on codeswitching in the language classroom.

Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology that the researcher used in this study. It consists of some main parts: research design, research site and participants, data collection technique, data analysis techniques, this chapter will be closed with concluding remarks.

The analysis of the data taken from the field is elaborated in chapter four. The sequence of discussion of each part of chapter four is based on the research questions. The explanations of data in one part may be repeated in another part. A plausible explanation for this is that the answers to one research questions are interrelated to the others.

The last chapter is chapter five, will discuss the theoretical and implications of the findings on the teaching activities. The chapter ends with suggestions for the future research.



## 1.8 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has discussed the introductory part of the study. It provided the background of the study, the research questions, the purposes, the significances, and the definition of key terms appeared in this study, as well as the thesis organization.

The following chapter will review the relevant literature of the study, which involves: classroom codeswitching in ELT, codeswitching in Indonesian classroom context, definition of codeswitching, types of codeswitching, functions of codeswitching, perception about codeswitching and previous study on codeswitching in the language classroom.