

**Investigating The Functions and Use of Code Switching at Undergraduate Level in ESL Classrooms at Shahee Benazir Bhutto University Shaheed Benazirabad**

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**Abstract**

Code switching has remained one of the inevitable source of communication in bilingual and multilingual classrooms. It has its own charm of sharing ideas among teachers and students in educational settings. The current study aims to investigate the use and functions of code switching in undergraduate ESL classrooms at Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Shaheed Benazir Abad. The current study is quantitative in nature to investigate about the uses and functions of code switching in multilingual teaching and learning environment. Researcher collected the data from 105 ESL learners through a closed ended five point's likert scale questionnaire to obtain the exact data for analysis. The data has been analysed through SPSS 20<sup>TH</sup> version software to check the frequency and percentage. Moreover, the study has resulted that code switching performs many positive functions in ESL classrooms along with its excessive use in bilingual and multilingual classroom teaching and learning environment.

**Keywords:** Code switching, multilingual, bilingual, ESL, SBBU SBA.

**Introduction**

The term code switching refers to the shifting of one language into another language during speech at the level of words, phrases or even in sentences, this changing of language occurs in bilingual or multilingual speakers who shares more than one language is known as the code switching (Gumperz, 1982). Pakistan is seen as one of the richest country in the matter of languages where its inhabitants are either bilinguals or multilingual who uses more than one language, they speak their mother tongues at homes, while Urdu which is their national language use in institutes and English at offices as their official language (Rahman, 2010). The switching codes in one language to target language are predicated by the speakers and they know more than the one language and its use in the multilingual environment (Baker, 2006). Wei (2000) and Auer (1998), identify that why code switching takes place it is necessary to know how code switching take place. Code switching is in the center of two languages. It helps or works as inter language to understand both languages or provides meaningful results by using languages along with rules ( Wei, 2000; Auer, 1998).The syntactic structure of code switching is the center around the possessions of the inward sentence structure of bilinguals during the creation of code exchanging and the syntactic limitations on their code exchanging. At the end of the day, structuralism propose a conventional syntax of code-exchanging ( Wei, 2000). The code-trading instrument is the juxtaposition of sentence or sentence's pieces, all of which are inside unsurprising with the morphological and syntactic (and on the other hand, phonological) gauges of its lexifier tongue. Poplack (1995),

introduced three categories of code exchanging. He expresses that the announced language capability of the members is the best indicator of intra-sentential and between sentential and label code exchanging (Poplack, 2000). The location of current study where it has been conducted is the Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Shaheed Benazir Abad. The department of English literature has its multilingual students who are enrolled in Bs. English 4years undergraduate degree program. They are taught English as the second language. Being nonnative speakers of English they face many troubles in learning English language so they switch their language from English to their native languages especially Sindh and Urdu to fulfil their communication gap. Keeping this view of code switching its uses and functions in ESL classrooms the study has been conducted by the researcher to investigate about the code switching scenario in ESL classrooms.

### **Problem Statement**

A problem statement is a summarized statement that defines the context of the whole study ((Wiersma, 1995). In the recent years the teachers of language revealed an overwhelming interest to explore the use of code switching in the academic context. They have focused the functions and contributing factors of code switching and the perceptions of learners and instructors in the use of code switching in ESL classrooms. The employment of code switching in the ESL classroom is extensively investigated in the different research. As explained earlier, the aims of the current study is to explore the uses and functions of code switching in the ESL classrooms at Department of English, SBBU in order to know that how and why the code switching can be helping or vice versa tool to be used to achieve the target goals of English language learning.

### **Research Objectives**

- To investigate the use of code switching in ESL classroom of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Shaheed Benazir Abad (SBBU SBA).
- To identify the functions of code switching in ESL classrooms of SBBU SBA.

### **Research Questions**

- Why does ESL learner code switch during English language learning classroom?
- What are the functions of code switching in ESL classroom?

### **Scope**

Although the various studies have been directed on the usage of switching codes in the academic scenario but this is the first study, particularly, in the context of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University, Shaheed Benazir Abad that is to investigate about the uses and functions of code switching in ESL classrooms of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Shaheed Benazir Abad. In so doing, the intricate linguistic topography of Sindh and its academic institutions, education policies and language policies of the state are also focused in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the academic scenario and significance of code-switching as a language learning strategy.

### **Literature Review**

Wei (2000) and Auer (1998), identify that why code switching takes place it is necessary to know how code switching take place. Code switching is in the center of two languages. It helps or works as inter language to understand both languages or provides meaningful results by using languages along with rules ( Wei, 2000; Auer, 1998).The syntactic structure of code switching is the center around the possessions of the inward sentence structure of bilinguals during the creation of code exchanging and the syntactic limitations on their code exchanging. At the end of the day, structuralists propose a conventional syntax of code-exchanging ( Wei, 2000). The code-trading instrument is the juxtaposition of sentence or sentence's pieces, all of which are inside unsurprising with the morphological and syntactic (and on the other hand, phonological) gauges of its lexifier

tongue. Poplack (1995), introduced three categories of code exchanging. He expresses that the announced language capability of the members is the best indicator of intra-sentential and between sentential and label code exchanging (Poplack, 2000). Grosjean (2010), states psycholinguistic approach of code switching that the bilingual capacity to keep their two dialects independent. The psycholinguistic order considers code-exchanging as an intricate dynamic procedure as contrasted and a monolingual speaker on the grounds that a bilingual first chooses which base language to utilize, and in the subsequent stage takes part in code exchanging ( Grosjean, 2010, p. 276).

According to Kachru (1983) there are three motives that cause the code switching:

- I) For register recognizable proof.
- II) As formal pieces of information for style distinguishing proof.
- III) For explanation and translation (Kachru, 1992).

There are two general classes of code switching etymological and non-semantic:

**Etymological:** Phonetic purposes behind code-exchanging are the absence of an equal in a speaker's L1; explanation; accentuation and support of an order or a solicitation.

**Non-semantic:** Non-semantic reasons are identified with mentality and feelings; cleverness and kinship can make social separation or closeness (Baker, 2006).

Benson (2001) describes ten components of code switching contained within the absence of office (nonattendance of identical); absence of capability (When the speakers don't have fitting fitness in the two dialects, they utilize code-exchanging); semantic centrality (trade of language with the time semantically utilizes significant sign to a significant point); to address a substitute social occasion of individuals; to show character with a get-together; to heighten and emphasis a point; to communicate the perspective of the speaker; progressing explanations; for rational reasons; and to pull in thought. Ritchie and Bhatia date allude to four elements clarifying why code-switching is utilized. The first is member's job and relationship, the second, situational factors which incorporates the conversational issue and discourse parcel, the third, message trademark components, and last, language mentality, matchless quality and security. Benson (2001), investigates that university students had drawn nine causes that generate code switching. They exist, in the midst of others due to lack of linguistic proficiencies with regard to words in addition, proper alike vocabulary, to fill the crack in speaking, stress-free to express in own language, to elude misinterpretation, to transport confidence, so others would not understand (privacy), to add importance and other causes (Benson, 2001).

In addition to the reasons that trigger code switching, the phenomenon becomes habitual due to the positive functions it serves. In this respect, code switching as found by Rose and Dulm (2006) to serve several purposes in advance bargain, supplementary justifications and better understanding as well as substituting briefly unreachable vocabulary. Instructors' significance fashionable by means of code switching though is simply to aid the resolution of showing unrestrained proficiency and to contribution in occurrences where there was no direct transformation of a convinced vocabulary ( Cook , 2001). However, utmost of these former educations were showed in EFL schoolrooms, educations that look at code switching in tertiary level educationists restricted, chiefly inside the framework of learning in Malaysia (Ibid). Overhead all, examination of code switching viewpoints and performs are rare in tertiary level education concentrating in methodological and professional education. It is stimulating to look at views of students learning English for mechanical and particular devotions in positions of their observations in the direction of code switching and their intervention of L2 in EFL schoolrooms. Similarly, the study is essential assumed the multiplicity of societal arrangement, ethnic education. Some instructors were opined that switching codes is a good tool to teach students with it but it should be on the beginning level like primary and elementary level as the level develops it should be removed or limited (Horasan, 2014).

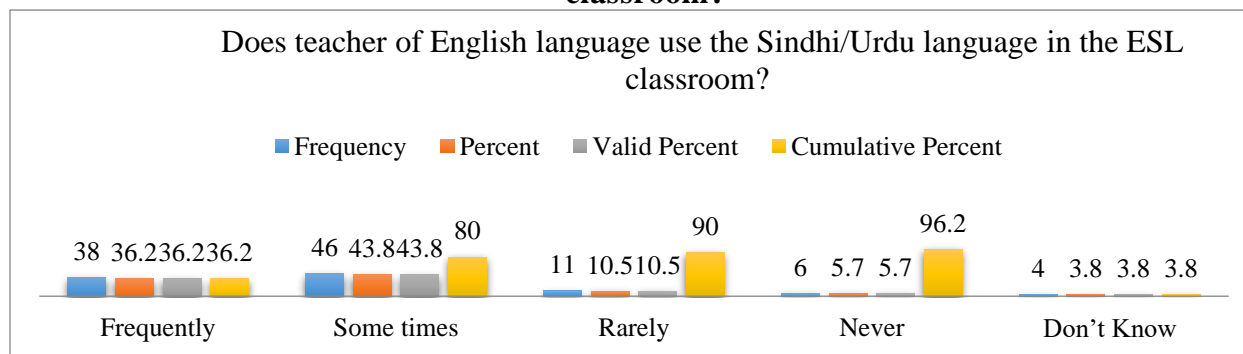
## Methods and procedures

The current research deals with quantitative method used by the researcher to bring data in statistical form for its analysis. The data collection method was structured questionnaires filled by the learners. It is used to collect data from learners` based on demographic individualities. The structured questionnaires were based on 10 close-ended questions with five multiple-choice answers. The instruction was given on the top of the questionnaires. The consideration of the questionnaires was based on five aspects included learner's and teachers' perceptions about the use of code-switching, linguistic competence of English, Sindhi, and Urdu languages, code-switching functions, code-switching reasons, and both facilitators and learners' behavior towards code-switching. The questionnaire is checked for self and expert validity with pilot testing. The chosen setting for data collection is the English department of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Shaheed Benazir Abad. In addition, the data is collected from the first and second year undergraduate 105 male and female students enrolled in the English department of SBBU SBA. Researcher has used simple random sampling technique for data collection. All the participants were informed about the purpose of data collection and their consent was taken and were informed that their personal shared information will be kept confidential. Moreover, 44% were the male participants and 56% female participants participated willingly.

## Data Analysis

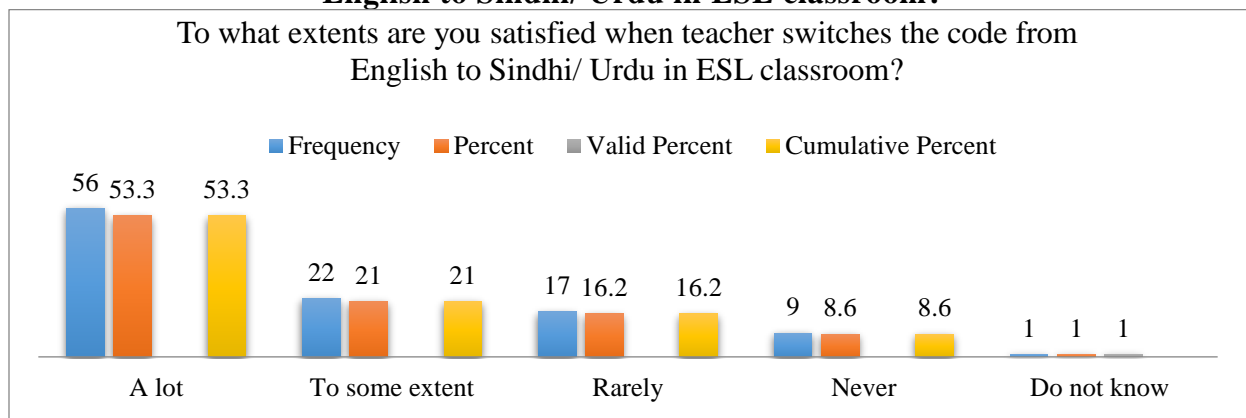
The quantitative obtained data from the participants has been analyzed on the 20<sup>th</sup> version of SPSS software. The analyzed data shows the frequency and percentage of the received data. The analyzed data is displayed through tables and charts which illustrates the individual numbering and ratio of the items. Moreover, in charts the bars are demonstrating the clarity of analyzed items with clarification of numeric by explaining the items with valid and reliable results. The researcher was very much clear, active and conscious during the analysis of the data.

**Table 4. 1Does teacher of English language use the Sindhi/Urdu language in the ESL classroom?**



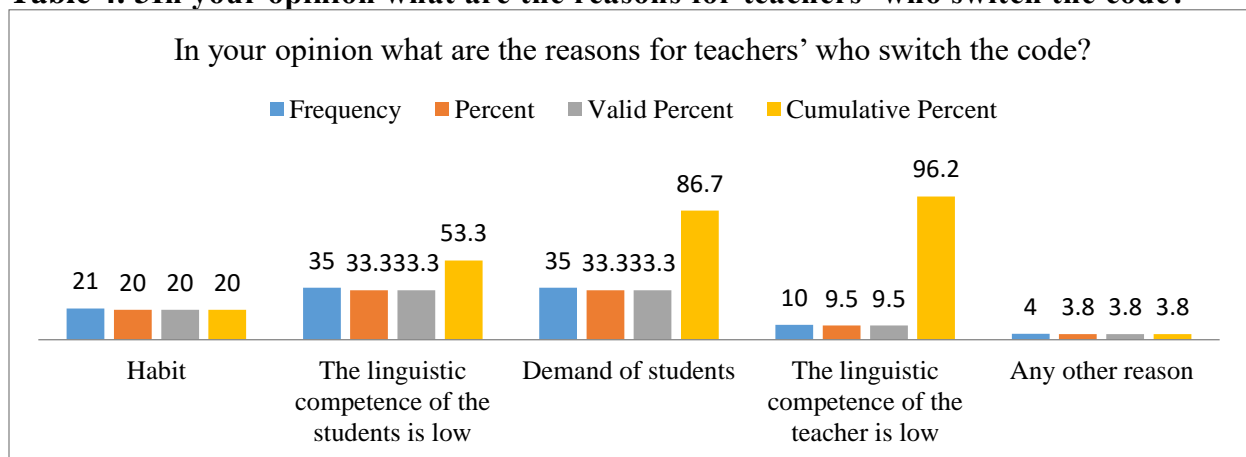
The findings of first question, as indicated in graph, illustrated the majority 43.8% learners affirms that teachers switch the code 'sometimes' in ESL classroom while close to it. Around 36.2% confirmed the frequent use of code-switching in ESL classrooms. On the contrary, a smaller number of learners 10.5 % stated that teachers rarely switch the code in the class while in the same line only 5.7% stated that teachers never apply code-switching strategy. However, 3.8% learners prefer not to reply the question. The result of the first question indicates that teachers of ESL use the CS in the classroom. Similar are the findings of Dar, et. al (2014) and Bhatti (2018) in Pakistan and Islam (2019) in Bangladesh that teachers frequently switch the code in the ESL/ESL classroom. It reveals that the countries, Like Pakistan, where English is not in frequent use in daily interaction the teachers are forced for switching codes from English to local code for numerous motives with comprehensions.

**Table 4. 2** To what extents are you satisfied when teacher switches the code from English to Sindhi/ Urdu in ESL classroom?



The findings of second question, as illustrated in graph above, indicate that the majority 53.3% of learners are satisfied a lot when teacher switches the code whereas 21% confirmed that to some extent they are satisfied when teacher switches the code English to Sindhi/ Urdu in ESL classroom. Less number of learners i.e. 16.2% exhibited that are rarely satisfied and similarly 8.6% learners are never satisfied when teacher switches the code from English to Sindhi/ Urdu in ESL classroom and only 1% learners did not prefer to reply the question. The result of the question indicates that learners are satisfied when teacher switches from English into Sindhi/ Urdu in ESL classroom. Same findings are from the study of Dar, Akhtar and Khalid (2014) who state that code-switching is the need of learners because majority of learners lack the linguistic competency in English; hence, they are satisfied when teachers switch in their L1. It reveals that learners are satisfied due to their lack of language knowledge and competence. Code-switching helps them to understand learning goal and learners demand for code-switching teachers to switch from English to local language, as shown below in Table 4.3.

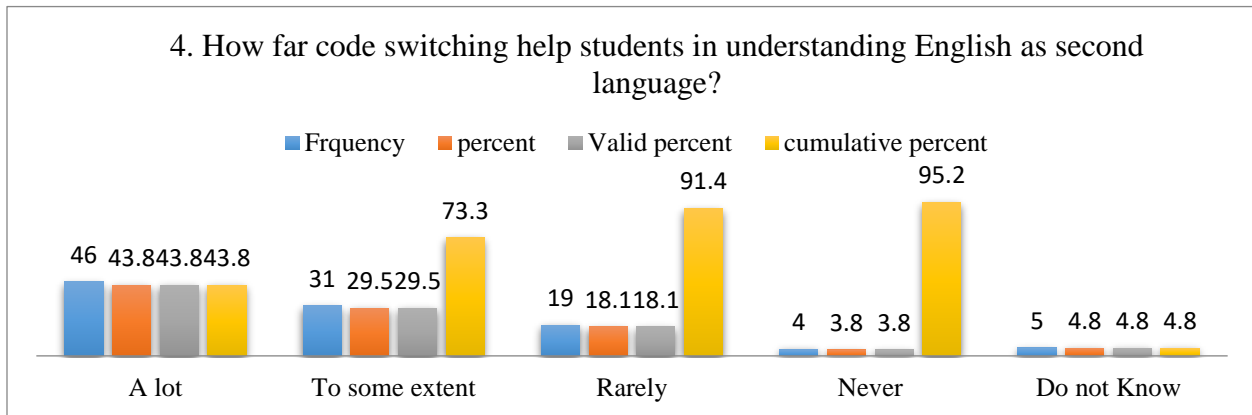
**Table 4. 3** In your opinion what are the reasons for teachers' who switch the code?



The findings of question three (See Figure 3) showed the majority of learners 33.3% confirmed that teachers switch the code due to learners' low linguistic competence in English language. Same ratio of learners 33.3% stated that teachers switch code to accomplish the demand of the students. However, close to it 20% learners confirmed that teachers switch code habitually; opposing to this a less number of learners 9.5% stated teachers divert the code due to low linguistic competence in the target language whereas in the same line 3.8% learners preferred some other reason. The result of third notices, teachers of ESL use the CS in the classroom. Similar findings are seen in the study of Dar, Akhtar and Khalid (2014). It reveals that Southern countries, like Pakistan, where code

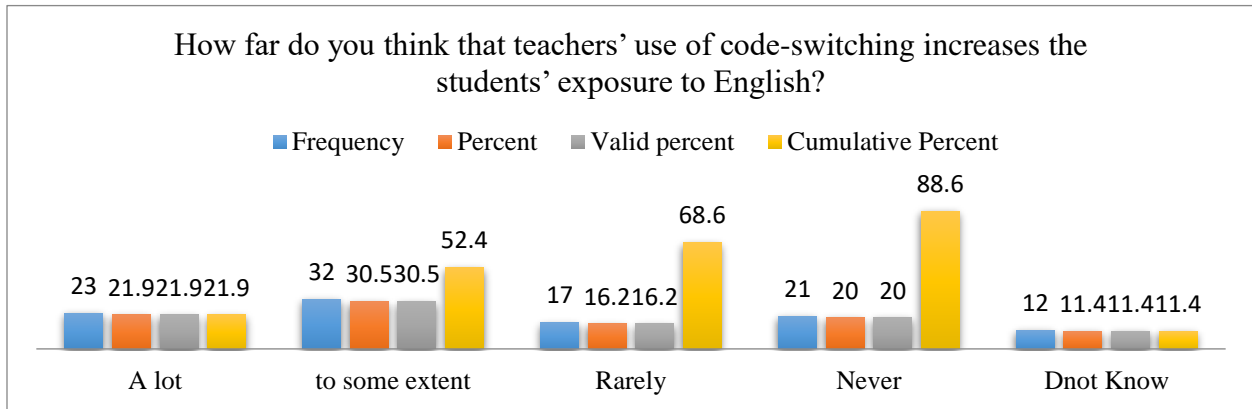
switching is a context governed phenomenon. English language is not used in routine life due to various reasons like teachers' code-switching is contextual, situational, need-based, and objective-based. Teachers switch to local language from the target language for learners' sake, for their teaching context in which they teach, because they have to fulfill course outcomes. Table 4.4: below shows to what extent code switching help students in understanding English as second language?

**Table 4. 4 How far code-switching help students in understanding English as second language?**



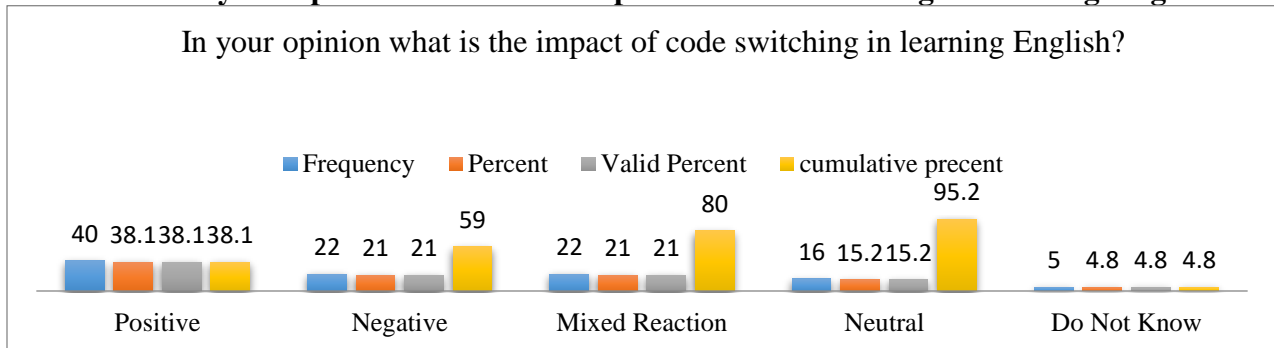
The findings of question four, as highlighted in the graph, indicated that majority of the learners 43.8% state code-switching helps students a lot in understanding English as second language, whereas close to it around 29.5% learners affirmed to some extent code-switching helps students in understanding English as a second language. On the contrary, a smaller number of learners 18.1% emphasized that code-switching rarely helps students, likewise very few learners 3.8% stated code-switching never helps students; however, only 4.8% learners preferred not to reply the question. The results of the question four show that code-switching helps learners in the understanding of English as second language. Similar findings can be seen in the study of Chowdhury (2013) who states that teachers' code-switching is fruitful because they wanted to construct learning atmosphere with their students. Besides, several studies (Dar et. al., 2014; Bhatti, 2018; Islam, 2019) in Pakistan and Bangladesh respectively identified that the lack of linguistic competence in English code-switching helps the learning in understanding the classroom activity. Teachers feel that by using humor they may make classes more interesting. By doing this student overwhelmed an anxiety and burdens in ESL classrooms. In this point of view, code-switching deals with societal and psychological needs for the learners in the second language learning process.

**Table 4. 5 How far do you think that teachers’ use of code-switching increases the students’ exposure to English?**



The findings of question five, illustrated in the graph, indicated that majority 30.5% learners affirmed that to some extent instructors’ code-switching increases the learners’ exposure to English whereas about 21.9% learners declared that teacher’ code-switching increases the students’ exposure top English. Similarly, 16.2% learners affirmed rarely teachers’ use of code-switching increases the students’ exposure to English. Conversely, about 20% learners’ stated teachers’ use of code-switching never increase the students’ exposure to English and about 11.4% learners preferred not to reply. The result of question five showed that code-switching increases the students’ exposure to English in a sense that in the learning process; they understand the whole lecture easily. Now Pakistani ESL classrooms teachers and learners do not have substantial competence to understand and teach English language without code-switching. So the similar outcome of this question can be seen in the study of Ellis (2005) it reveals that as much as code-switching take places in the L1 the exposure of L2 increases that might be helpful to enhance target language competence (Ellis, 2015).

**Table 4. 6 In your opinion what is the impact of code-switching in learning English?**

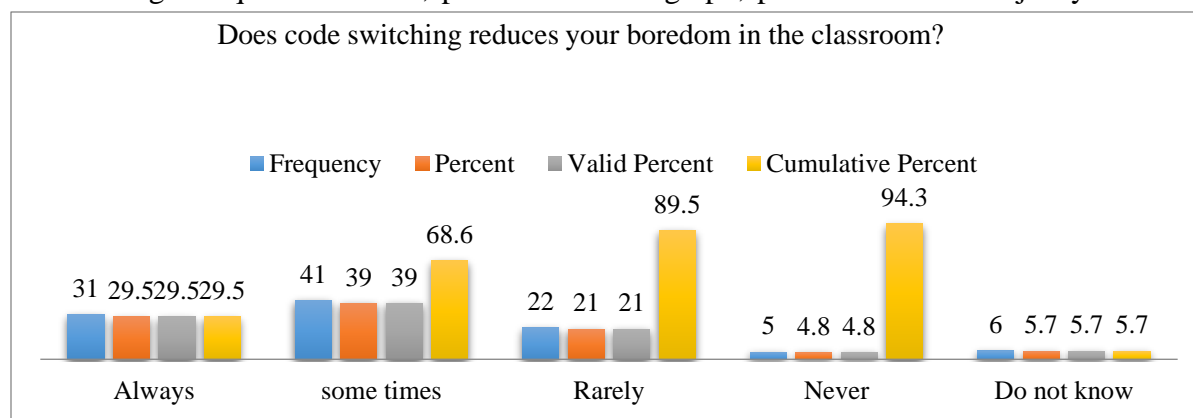


The findings of question six, showed in the graph, indicated that majority 38.1% learners confirmed code-switching has positive impacts in English learning, opposing to it about 21% learners stated code-switching has negative impacts in English learning, however 21% learners show mixed reaction, about 15% learners not preferred to answer by adding themselves as neutral with the statement and only 5% learners not preferred to reply. The results of the question six reveal that switching of the code has positive influence in ESL classroom. Same findings can be seen from the study of Fareed, Humayun and Akhtar (2016).



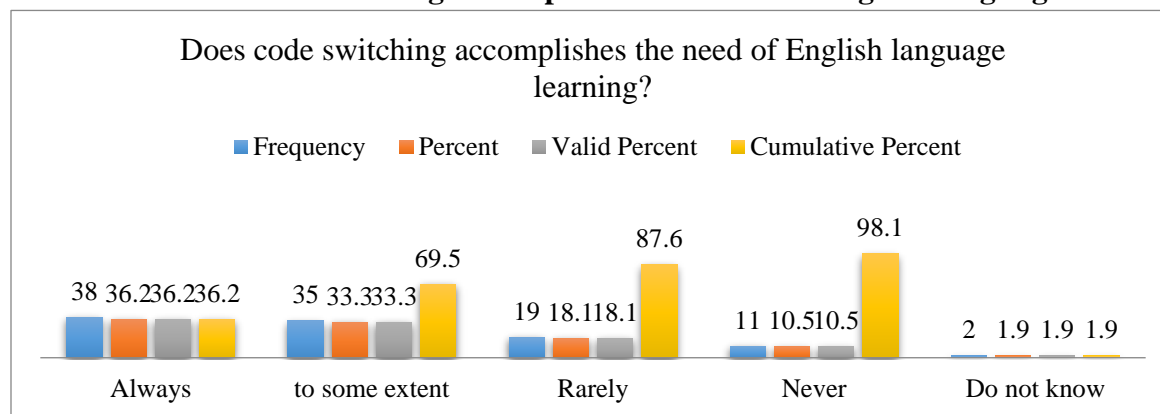
**Table 4. 7 Does code-switching reduces your boredom in the classroom?**

The findings of question seven, presented in the graph, pointed out that majority 39% learners



confirmed code-switching sometimes reduce boredom in the classroom, while close to it around 29.5% learners stated code-switching always reduce boredom in the classroom. However, 21% learners affirmed code-switching rarely reduces boredom in the classroom, opposing to it 4.8% learners stated code-switching never reduces boredom in the classroom. In the same line 5% learners not preferred to reply. The results of the question seven show that code-switching reduces boredom in the classroom. In Pakistani ESL classrooms multilingual learners are learning; however, code-switching in one or two local languages reduce boredom in ESL classrooms. Relative findings can be seen from the study of Ahmed (2009). It reveals that in Pakistani educational setting ESL classrooms fall into the category of bilingual and multilingual phenomenon. Switching codes from one language to another language decreases threats and burden in the second language classrooms (Ahmad, 2009).

**Table 4. 8 Does code-switching accomplishes the need of English language learning?**

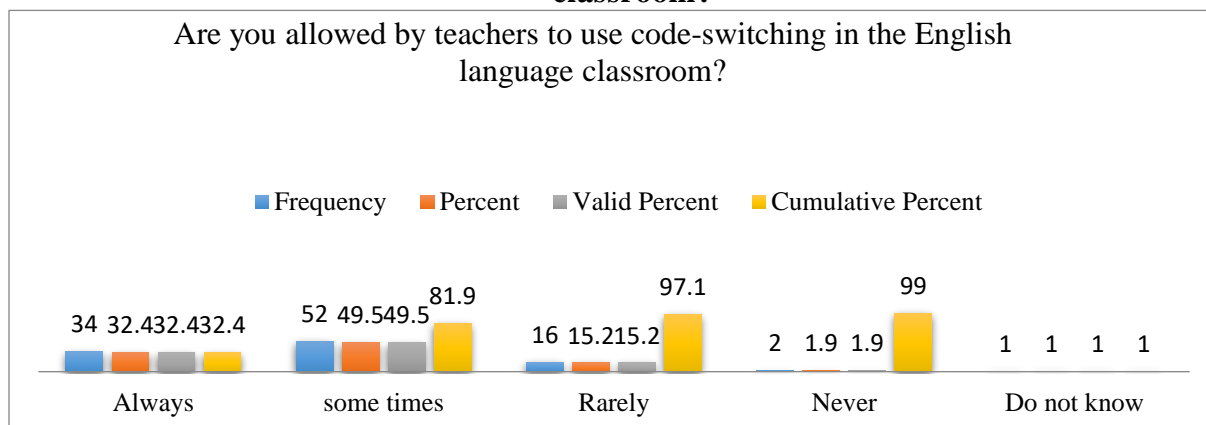


The findings of question eight, as highlighted in the graph, illustrated that majority 36.2% learners affirmed code-switching always accomplishes the need of English language learning, while close to it around 33.3% learners stated to some extent code-switching accomplishes the need of English language learning, although 18.1% learners stated code-switching rarely accomplishes the need of English language learning, On the contrary a less number of learners 10.5% stated code-switching never accomplishes the need of English language learning In the same line 1.9% learners not prefer to reply. The result of question eight show codes switching always accomplishes the need of English language learning in ESL context especially in ESL classrooms. Relative findings can be seen from the study of Gulzar (2010). It reveals that English language teachers faces the conditions when they stuck somewhere at the point which they feel difficult to convey the understanding; resultantly, they start defining or explaining that point, term or thought in the mother tongue or



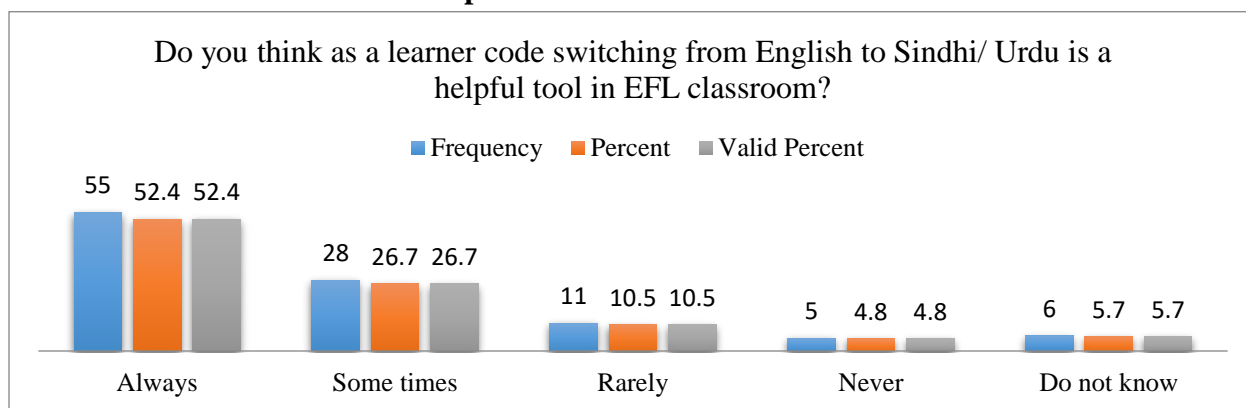
lingua franca. Furthermore, “code switching makes lecture easier to get understanding (Gulzar, 2010, p-37).

**Table 4. 9Are you allowed by teachers to use code-switching in the English language classroom?**



The findings of question nine demonstrated that the majority 49.5% learners affirmed to some extent teachers allow students to switch the code in English language classroom, while 32.4% learners stated always teachers allow the students for code-switching. However, 15.2% learners stated teachers rarely allow students for code-switching in the ESL classroom. On the contrary, a less number of learners 1.9% insisted that teachers never insist and 1% learners do not prefer to answer. The result of question nine shows that teachers always allow the students for code-switching in English language teaching and learning environment. In Pakistani ESL classrooms most of the teachers allow to the student in a sense, all of the students are ESL learners and they don't have enough competence to carry on one language (Fareed & Khalid, 2014).

**Figure 4. 1 Do you think as a learner code switching from English to Sindhi/ Urdu is a helpful tool in ESL classroom?**



The findings of question 10, highlighted in the graph, illustrated that majority 52.4% of learners affirmed switching code always code, English to Sindhi/ Urdu works as assistance tool in English language teaching classroom to understand the communication, while around (26.7%) learners indicated to some extent code-switching from English to Sindhi/ Urdu is a helpful tool in ESL classroom. Although 10.5% learners stated that code-switching is a rarely a helpful source in ESL classroom, opposing to it very less learners 4.8% stated code-switching from English to Sindhi/ Urdu never can be a helpful resource in ESL classroom. In the same line 4.8% learners do not prefer to reply. In conclusion, question ten shows that code-switching from English to Sindhi/ Urdu is a helpful tool in ESL classroom. Similar are the results of the study by Fareed, Humayun and Akhtar

(2016). The study reveals that switching codes helps them understanding the lecture easily. They also believe that it helps them understanding difficult vocabulary, concepts and ideas (p, 6).

## **Discussions**

The learners` participants responded that (37.6%) learners believe that always switching code from English to Sindhi/ Urdu is a supportive tool, it reduced boredom, it accomplished the English language need of learners, and teachers allow them for code-switching in EFL Classroom. (34.2%) learners rely on that some time or some extent, (15.7%) believe that they are rare and (7.5%) learners are never satisfied when teacher switches the code, it reduces their boredom, it helps them in understanding English as a second language, it accomplishes the need of English language learning, it is a helpful tool for them, teachers allow them for code-switching and instructors switch the code from target language/ English language to Sindhi/Urdu language. (4.4%) learners excuse and said they don`t know. (36.2%) learners believe teachers of the English language use the Sindhi/Urdu language in the EFL classroom. (48.5%) learners are of the view that code-switching supports a lot to the students in understanding English as a second language and students are satisfied when the teacher switches the code from English to Sindhi/ Urdu in EFL classroom. While (21.9%) learners said teachers` code-switching reduces the students` exposure to the target language. According to learners participants there multiple reasons for code-switching as (20%) learners said that teachers switch code habitually, (33.3%) learners believed that teachers switch code because learners have low linguistic competence, (33.3%) learners believed that teachers switch code to accomplish the demand of the learners, (9.5%) learners assumed that teachers switch code because of their low competency of language in the target language and (3.8%) said that there is any other reason for it. 38.1% of learners have positive impacts, 21% of learners have negative impacts, 21% of learners show mixed reaction means positive and negative both.

## **Implications and suggestions for Educators and further researches**

It is quite a common factor that can be observed in the language learning classroom. Especially it is noticeable in the EFL classroom where teachers and learners are multilingual. Multilingual environments knowingly or unknowingly give birth to code-switching and code-switching has an ability to fulfill the needs of the classroom. The current study has many insinuations for the teachers, language policymakers, and further researchers in their researches in the same domain. The current research has explored teachers` and learners` perceptions of code-switching in an EFL class. The present study says that code-switching is a useful plan to employ in language learning classrooms. It can bring a positive mode for teachers and learners to convey the essence of teachings and learning. This research has explored that teachers and learners of the department of English at Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Shaheed Benazirabad are using code-switching techniques in the classroom and it has positive impacts on classroom activities. This study suggests policymakers to revise the policy of language to insert the native languages in the syllabus. Moreover, the institution holders must be lenient to allow teachers and learners to express their ideas and feelings during EFL classrooms when they feel the need for it. This action of authorities can bring ease for students to open the gate s for new coming ideas which are not discovered due to the banned on native language use in teaching and learning process. In this regard, teachers and learners will actively participate. Moreover, it sharpens the learners` syntactic strength, clear the mean of teaching, and make learner and teacher-friendly to talk. The concluding comment is that code-switching has many implications in its sense to employ it in the learning and teaching environment as well as in the domain of language policymaking.

## **Conclusion**

The data analysis part of the current research shows that the teachers and learners highly liked the usage of code-switching during the second language learning environment of the classroom. The participants are of the view that it has positive impacts on teaching and learning activities.

Moreover, it creates learning environment and teachers, and learners adopt positive attitudes. The results highlighted that code-switching is not only a helping tool, but it makes teachers and learners cooperative to each other. From the quantitative results it has been recognized that the majority of the teachers and learners' participants are in the favor of code-switching.

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