

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

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Abstract:

Bilingual cultures use code-switching to improve communication clarity. Accordingly, university lecturers and learners use code-switching daily in English classes. Thus, this paper examines the situations, reasons, advantages, and disadvantages of code-switching as a foreign language teaching method by Iraqi and Iranian university EFL lecturers and how much students prefer it in different classroom situations. This is achieved via two sorts of questionnaires designed as Google forms; one of them was sent to 12 Iraqi and Iranian EFL university lecturers who teach English as EFL instruction. The second sort of questionnaire was sent to 30 undergraduate students (second stage) as native speakers of Iraqi-Arabic and Persian from Tehran and Kufa universities. The data obtained from questioners' responses of EFL lecturers as well as those of students are analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively, respectively, to make a comparison between the use of code-switching in two countries. The finding of this study indicates that Iraqi teachers and students coded more than Iranians. However, both groups agreed that code-switching is increasing learners' grasp of complicated instructions, confusing explanations, difficult and abstract language, and inner-classroom instructions on particular topics. Moreover, almost all teachers agree that code-switching is advantageous because it saves time and helps students who need to improve their language understanding. On the other hand, CS has the drawback of having a negative impact on their future performance. EFL students who speak their mother tongue in class feel more comfortable since their first language is better than their second. Code-switching helps EFL students organize, improve, and deepen their target language speech. Finally, it is indicated that teachers and students agreed that utilizing the native language in restricted instances is advantageous in an English classroom. The research ends with some recommendations for further research.

Key words: code-switching, EFL teaching, university lecturers, students' preferences.

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**ممارسة تبديل اللغات في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من قبل أساتذة الجامعات
العراقيين والإيرانيين (دراسة مقارنة)**

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الملخص:

تستخدم الثقافات ثنائية اللغة تبادل اللغات لتحسين التواصل، وبناءً على ذلك يستخدم المحاضرون والمتعلمون الجامعيون تبديل اللغات يوميًا في دروس اللغة الإنجليزية لتحسين الاداء. اذا يجد هذا البحث مواقف وأسباب ومزايا وعيوب التبادل اللغوي كطريقة لتدريس اللغة الأجنبية من قبل محاضري اللغة الإنجليزية في الجامعات العراقية والإيرانية ومدى تفضيل الطلاب لها في مواقف الفصول الدراسية المختلفة، ويتم تحقيق ذلك من خلال نوعين من الاستبيانات المصممة على هيئة نماذج جوجل؛ تم إرسال أحدهم إلى ١٢ محاضرًا جامعيًا عراقيًا وإيرانيًا في مجال اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية والذين يقومون بتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. و تم إرسال النوع الثاني من الاستبيان إلى ٣٠ طالبًا جامعيًا (المرحلة الثانية) باعتبارهم متحدثين أصليين للغة العربية العراقية واللغة الفارسية من جامعتي طهران والكوفة. يتم تحليل البيانات التي تم الحصول عليها من إجابات لمحاضري اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية وكذلك إجابات الطلاب نوعيًا وكما، على التوالي، لإجراء مقارنة بين استخدام تبديل اللغات في البلدين، تشير نتائج هذه الدراسة إلى أن المعلمين والطلاب العراقيين يبرمجون أكثر من الإيرانيات، ومع ذلك اتفقت المجموعتان على أن تبديل اللغات يزيد من فهم المتعلمين للمعومات الصعبة والمعقدة، والتفسيرات المربكة، واللغة الصعبة، والتعليمات داخل الفصل الدراسي حول موضوعات معينة، علاوة على ذلك يتفق جميع المعلمين تقريبًا على أن التبديل بين اللغات مفيد لأنه يوفر الوقت ويساعد الطلاب الذين يحتاجون إلى تحسين فهمهم للغة، من ناحية أخرى لتبادل اللغات عيب يتمثل في وجود تأثير سلبي على أدائها المستقبلي، يشعر الطلاب الذين يتحدثون لغتهم الأم في الفصل براحة أكبر من اللغة الأجنبية لأن لغتهم الأولى أفضل من الثانية، يساعد تبديل اللغات لطلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية على تنظيم وتحسين وتعميق خطاب اللغة المستهدفة، أخيرًا تمت الإشارة إلى أن المعلمين والطلاب اتفقوا على أن استخدام اللغة الأم في الحالات المعقدة مفيد في فصل اللغة الإنجليزية، وينتهي البحث ببعض التوصيات لمزيد من البحث.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تبادل اللغات، تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، المحاضرين الجامعيين، تفضيل الطلاب في اختيار اللغة

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

1. Introduction

Code-switching is a prevalent and cross-cultural phenomenon characterized by the juxtaposition of linguistic components derived from two or more languages. Code-switching is a well-known attribute in speech patterns that refers to a speaker or group of speakers shifting from one language or language variety to another. In practice, code-switching (henceforth, CS) is not a recent phenomenon; rather, it has been used for a long time by speakers of various communities around the globe and has now gained global acceptance. Iraqi-English interaction in Iraq dates from the first decades of twentieth century. In fact, Turkish was taught in Iraqi schools as a main foreign language, whereas in 1918, English teaching was introduced into the Iraqi school's curriculum. Accordingly, Iraqi-English CS became a common phenomenon among Iraqi people because of increasing the facilities of English learning and, especially for those who received higher education in English-speaking countries such as Britain, Canada, and even those who were living in those countries.

Moreover, this phenomenon exists due to the existence of modern sciences and medical education in English, so that both teachers and students need to switch from Iraqi-Arabic to English and vice versa (Abu-Haidar, 1988: 45). Regarding Persian-English interaction; it takes place when Iranians, in large numbers, immigrate to the U.S. in the early 1980s. Multiple Iranian television channels were established and transmitted from California and New York within the United States. These channels were operated by Iranians who were American residents. Their programs include commercials, jewelry sales, fashion, physical fitness news, and even teaching Persian so that the audience has access to these channels throughout the world. Therefore, this phenomenon made the juxtaposition of Persian and English conducive to the development of CS between the two languages (Najafi, 2015, pp.161-162). In fact, CS is widely taught in English-medium classrooms in countries where English is a foreign language. Thus, this paper concentrates on data collected from Iraqi and Iranian university instructors in English departments who are proficient in both English and their native languages (Iraqi and Persian). These lecturers have always employed code-switching and code-mixing when instructing their students. Additionally, students who are less proficient in English than a foreign language are given a questionnaire to find out what they think about codeswitching. This is because these students may need to learn more about the target language, including its proper lexicon and structure, or they may need to remember it when it comes to academic considerations.

Although CS has been investigated in previous studies, scholars have yet to focus on a comparative study between university lecturers' practice in two different countries with different cultures. The present paper aims to compare

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

when and why CS is practiced by Iraqi and Iranian university lecturers in the classroom and whether their CS patterns and thoughts agree with the students' preferences or not. In order to reach this objective, the study questions below are put forward:

Q1. In which country do the lecturers practice CS more?

Q2. What are the differences between Iraqi and Iranian lecturers' practice of CS?

Q3. Which language do the students in each country prefer in the English Classroom?

Q4. To what extent is there agreement between the lecturers' patterns of CS and the students' preferences?

2. Background

Code-switching means using terms from multiple languages or dialects of the same language in one or more sentences. Since the 1950s, scholars have paid close attention to CS, and since the 1990s, it has been extensively studied in ESL and EFL. Scholars have studied code-switching from several viewpoints, including its roles, motivations, educational impacts, and attitudes towards it in nations such as China, Turkey, India, African countries, Spain, and others. CS is a contentious topic in the classroom. Almost all English language teaching techniques have certain guidelines for both instructors and students to follow while using classroom language. Some techniques advocate for the use of the mother tongue, while others advocate for its prohibition since it leads the learners to lose out on input in the target language (Dykanova, 2015, p. 3).

To sum up, practically all lecturers see CS as a sign of a poor level of linguistic ability, which leads many instructors to refrain from using such an approach in class. On the other hand, when learners have difficulty communicating in English, CS may be a useful learning tool. For a better understanding, more details about CS will be discussed in the following subsections.

2.1. The Concept of Code-switching

A lot of researchers have tried to explain what CS means, but there are only a few agreed-upon explanations. Generally, it can be defined as the phenomenon of moving back and forth between two languages, which exists in bilingual societies where bilinguals mix two or more languages in their communications or code-switch using their languages as resources to overcome problems of conveying meaning. The term "code" in conversations refers to a rule that modifies a portion of a datum (letters, words, or phrases, for example) to another aspect or representation; encoding is the process by which a source (object) participates in this information shift into data, which is subsequently transmitted to a recipient (listener), such as a data processing system (Mesthrie, 2001, p. 55). Further, code

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

is referred to as "a set of conventions for converting one signaling system into another." Hence, the utilization of two languages interchangeably in a singular discourse, sentence, or element is commonly denoted as CS. A term frequently employed by sociolinguists, wherein it is designated as an apathetic designation for any language-related communication system.

Additionally, CS is "the transfer of linguistic elements from one language into another: a sentence begins in one language, then makes use of words or grammatical features belonging to another" (Crystal, 2008, pp. 82-83). CS is defined as "the utilization of multiple languages during a single communicative episode." The phenomenon of language switching can occur inside a conversation, often within the same turn and even within the same phrase of that turn (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995, p. 73). It is evident from these definitions that CS in classrooms is a prevalent occurrence in societies that are bilingual or multilingual.

Scholars employ different names to classify various types of CS. According to most scholars (Gumpers, 1982; Lipski, 1985; Poplack, 2000), there are four common classifications of CS: intra-sentential, intra-word, and tag-switching. The language change occurs unconsciously at sentence bounds in inter-sentential CS, which is most common among fluent bilingual speakers. This is known as "mechanical" or "extra sentential" language switching.

Intra-sentential CS takes place without any interruptions, hesitations, or pauses that indicate the transition occurring in the middle of the sentence. This always happens consciously, intentionally, and fluently in shifting from one language to another. This type of CS is called "code-changing," which is motivated by stylistic and positional factors, and the aware nature of the conversion between two languages is asserted.

Intra-word switching is a linguistic phenomenon that arises when a confined morpheme, which is not a derived element, is appended to a root (a free morpheme) in another language. Such switching happens informally, and its manifestations are practically unlimited.

Another sort of CS is tag-switching, which refers to the language shift of a tag phrase, a word, or both. This necessitates the interpolation of a tag or a short statement in one language, such as discourse markers or fillers (e.g., 'you know' or 'I mean'), into an utterance in the other language. Such interpolation is simple to implement and does not violate the matrix language's syntactic structure (as cited by Rau'uf, 2017, p. 476).

2.2. The Functions and Reasons of Code-switching

Several scholars from several linguistic domains have examined the functions and explanations for CS. The following are some of the conversational functions

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

of CS that are discussed: discourse marker, question shift, insistence (non-command), emphasis, clarification or persuasion, turn accommodation, subject shift, and topic shift. Researchers in a variety of linguistics fields have examined the purposes and motivations of CS (Reyes, 2004, p. 84). Furthermore, CS serves three functions: intra-group identity, poetic creation, and modernity expression (Ayeomoni, 2006, p. 91). Gumperz (1982) observes that CS can serve as an indicator of ethnic identity, Hall (1989) challenges the concept of a universally applicable fundamental form of a language, and Bailey (2000) discovers that speakers employ CS to delineate the boundaries of their ethnic communities. Consequently, this method can reveal whether a particular sociolinguistic group a speaker belongs to (as cited in Ra'uf, 2017, p. 477).

Furthermore, CS is employed to achieve specific discursive goals, convey ethnic identity, and bridge linguistic divides. The sociolinguistic approach and the grammatical approach are the two main categories into which all these different functions can be categorized. The sociolinguistic approach to CS concentrates on elements including the setting, the participants, and the topic of conversation. Furthermore, the grammatical function concentrates on the grammatical functions of CS, such as intra-sentential CS (i.e., the switch occurs within phrases or words) and intersentential CS (i.e., the switch happens at clause or sentence boundaries) (Hamers & Blanc 2000:260,266, 267).

There are three possible reasons for using CS provided by Crystal (1987). First, a speaker may need help to express oneself in one language and turn to the other to make up for the shortfall. This is precisely what happens when English language learners attempt to speak the language. As a result, the speaker can be temporarily prompted to talk in the other language. This kind frequently occurs when there is a lack of verbal ability or when the speaker is in some way agitated, exhausted, or distracted. Second, CS typically happens when a person wants to show support for a specific social group. A speaker-listener relationship will be established when the listener responds similarly. This kind is used to exclude non-native second-language speakers from conversations. The third factor is alternation, which the speaker uses to show his or her attitude. Bilinguals can do so through CS, just like monolinguals can with formality (cited in Skiba, 1997, p.1).

One of the primary rationales for CS, according to Gumperz (1982), is that the components of the target language more precisely elucidate the significance of the intended concept. Speakers employ CS for a variety of reasons, according to Crystal (1997), including inadequacy, solidarity, and attitude transmission (cited in Ra'uf, 2017, pp. 476-477). Reyes (2004) claims that speakers who are unfamiliar with a word in the target language switch codes, which is one of the main causes of CS (p. 84).

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

Consequently, a communicative approach to education can be used in a variety of activities to teach second languages. To acquire one other's language, students can form two-person groups and purposefully alternate between languages during conversations. Furthermore, instructors may commence a lesson in one language and subsequently transition to another, with the intention of verifying that the students understand both (Skiba, 1977, p. 4).

2.3. Advantages and Disadvantages of Code-Switching

Concerning the advantages of CS, it provides speech continuity rather than offering a linguistic inference. As a result, CS should be viewed as a linguistic benefit rather than a hindrance to communication since it allows a speaker to communicate attitude and other emotions in a way that only bilingual people can. CS functions is similar to how underlining or bolding in a text document emphasizes particular points. Similarly, speaking a second language helps people make their words more powerful and use them more effective. CS has the potential to facilitate language development by offering suitable language samples. The reason for this is that language development occurs when suitable language samples are presented, and CS could potentially indicate the need for such samples. As a result, the listener will be able to provide translation into the second language, facilitating learning and development. Furthermore, this phenomenon has the potential to be used as a teaching approach for second languages (Skiba, 1997, pp.2-3)

Regarding the disadvantages and weaknesses of CS, lots of multilingual CS arise in their classrooms, and many bilingual teachers try hard to counteract it since it is an indication of language weakness or inadequacy (Palmer, 2009, p. 42). It should be mentioned that CS is a casual use of language that is viewed as a devaluation of the speaker's home tongue and a sign of a language deficit (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995, pp. 73-74).

2.4. Code-switching in Teaching and Learning

It is crucial to acquire certain parts of a second language and use them consistently via conversing, reading, writing, or listening in the language of instruction in order to acquire a language. Basically, preventing students from using their first language is not only an important issue but they should be encouraged to utilize the target language as much as possible, finding out the reasons and the situations where CS should occur. It is added that if CS is allowed, the classroom interaction will be more natural, and the teaching process will be more efficient since the students understand faster and more thoroughly (Cook, 2001, pp. 404-414)

It is asserted that the use of CS is demanded since it is regarded as most

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

appropriate and acceptable in particular situations. It is used in the classroom by both instructors and students to adjust language in a way that respects each other's intentions and fosters positive relationships. Both conscious and unconscious usage of CS occurs. e.i., When speakers are aware of the social ramifications of their actions, engaging in computer-supported conversation (CS) is a conscious choice. In other cases, when speakers are uninformed of the aims and outcomes of the CS process, it may be seen as an automatic and unconscious behavior (Metila, 2009, p. 46).

On the other hand, some contend that speakers have a wide range of options and do not choose haphazardly whatever language form to employ in a certain circumstance. The speaker desires for each form to have a corresponding communication role that is appropriate to both teachers and students in the classroom. In certain CS situations, the teachers shift their language due to the topic they are discussing. Likewise, the student's attention, in these cases, is directed to the new knowledge by utilizing the CS phenomenon and making use of their mother tongue (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995, p. 81). According to Metila (2009), classroom CS in teaching and learning contexts is used for pedagogical and communicative functions. However, it is recommended that CS should be bound to informal classroom activities (p. 44).

To sum up, CS allows teachers and students to connect informally to prevent misunderstandings due to language barriers, making the teacher-student relationship more suitable. Thus, to simplify foreign language acquisition, the sociolinguistic approach, which focuses on conversation topics, participants, and settings, and the grammatical approach, which emphasizes intersentential and intrasentential CS, can be used.

3. Methodology

A comparative analysis was conducted to examine the extent to which lecturers in Iraq and Iran utilize CS, switch codes in the classroom, and students' attitudes toward it. In order to accomplish this objective, consultations were conducted with students and teachers from both countries; Iran and Iraq. The following parts will go into how the data in this study is gathered, who the participants are, and how the data is analyzed.

3.1. Participants

This study's core data came from EFL university teachers and university students in Iraq and Iran. The study will include two groups of participants: the first is made up of six Iraqi and six Iranian EFL university instructors, each from three local Iraqi and Iranian institutions where they taught English as EFL instruction. The teachers have either master's or doctorate degrees in the fields of English

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

Literature or English Linguistics from diverse universities, and all underwent training in English education. They have all taught students at various educational levels and have experience teaching English as an EFL lesson. Their academic title varies from professor to lecturer, asking about the usage of CS in their lectures in order to expose their reasons for utilizing this method as well as its benefits and drawbacks, determining whether they are using it knowingly or not. Moreover, the transcripts and main themes were analyzed to answer the study objectives.

The second group consists of Iraqi and Iranian native speakers who are in the time of the study enrolled in colleges and universities in Iraq and Iran. Fifteen Iraqi and fifteen Iranian undergraduates (second-stage students) were chosen randomly, each from the three local universities in Iraq and Iran representing different families, study contexts, cognitive styles, and experiences. The data from their responses are explained, showing which language the students prefer inside the classroom and to which extent students' preferences agree with lecturers' patterns of CS.

3.2. The Instruments of the Study

Two different questionnaires were designed as Google Forms and specialized for gathering data in the current investigation. The first questionnaire which was of ten questions¹ was sent to the lecturers, and their answers to the questions are regarded as the data for the current investigation. The lecturers, on the one hand, expressed their points of view on employing CS through their teaching and their reasons for which they or their students switch to their mother language in certain cases. Lecturers are constrained to respond to the questions posed without offering further elaboration, as doing so would generate an excessive amount of material that might undermine the discourse. The second questionnaire was in the form of multiple-choice² was sent to the students to compare the lecturers' CS behavior and investigate students' viewpoints towards CS in various classroom situations for different reasons.

3.3. The Validity of the Instruments

The instrument's validity refers to how the test seems to a group of specialists, examinees, test administrators, educators, and others. To ensure the instrument's validity, the questionnaires were distributed to a jury of EFL and linguistic specialists (see Appendix), whose participation was necessary to examine the substance of the questionnaire's validity. They were asked to evaluate the

¹<https://forms.gle/KqXktZD8XWNiWstx6>, <https://forms.gle/A3qM72XBzWqLqWXXK7>

²<https://forms.gle/3yKrcfdCFdGpx4Az9>, <https://forms.gle/gp8sew4iwRfTa8fz5>

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

appropriateness and coherence of the questionnaire items from their perspective. The jurors provide specific comments and recommendations regarding the adequacy of the questions included in the questionnaire. The jury agreed that the items were sufficient for the aim of the study after making minor changes, such as altering certain wording and phrases.

3.4.Data Analysis

In the present study, two questionnaires were structured for gathering data. The data obtained from teachers were analyzed qualitatively to find out lecturers' points of view on CS, their reasons for CS practice, the situations in which CS is necessary, and the advantages and disadvantages of using CS in EFL instruction in the lecture. Similarly, the data collected from the students' questionnaires is quantitatively analyzed by considering the descriptive statistics of frequencies and percentages of the replies to the study questions.

3.5. Results

3.5.1. The Iraqi and Iranian Lecturers' General Viewpoints on Code-Switching

It is generally accepted that CS occurs when a speaker inadvertently transitions from one language to another. It is necessary to research to determine what broad principles regulate this procedure in general and in the education domain in particular. According to the teachers' responses from the northern countries to the questionnaire, the following main findings are revealed:

3.5.1.1. Avoiding Code-switching in the classroom

Concerning the Iraqi teachers' opinions in forbidding code-switching through the lectures, it is shown that *Arabic should not be spoken in the English classroom!* Almost all of the Iraqi teachers indicated that using the mother tongue in an English classroom is not preferable. Some of the instructors A', 'B', and 'F' speeches are shown below: The lecturer 'F' stated that:

A: *"Code-switching is unsupportive."*

B: *"It is not a good strategy in an English classroom."*

F: *"I do not recommend it. However, if it happens, it should be kept to the minimum."*

'F' was the only instructor who emphasized that code switching should be unusual in the classroom. As a result, students must hear and speak English as frequently as possible. Regarding the Irani teachers, they expressed a preference

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

for their students to utilize English as the primary language of instruction in their lectures and prevent using Persian. 'B,' who is highly hopeful about code-switching, avoided giving a direct answer about her overall stance on code-switching, where he stated:

B: "Although English is our second language, it should be prioritized in class time."

Thus, while some students may find it challenging, they must be reminded that they have limited opportunities to speak English and thus should take advantage of these chances. It is necessary to remind them that speaking Persian is permitted during all class periods, including vacations. The authors suggested that in instances where students have difficulties in comprehension, educators should persist in providing explanations until the students achieve understanding. The students have the opportunity to acquire knowledge from this approach and comprehend the existence of several linguistic expressions, which may be advantageous while engaging in English communication.

3.5.1.2. Employing Code-switching as a Beneficial Teaching Method

In an English lecture, CS is done by teachers to translate or illuminate vital messages while clarifying new vocabulary or grammatical topics. Certain participants expressed that code-switching is a beneficial method of instructing English in their setting due to the fact that it facilitates students' comprehension and requires the shortest and most straightforward explanation possible. Referring to Iraqi teachers, 'D' said:

*D: "The students definitely find it hard if everything is explained using the target language since **their** native language controls them. Thus, they hesitate when they try to hear and speak English in English all of the time."*

Although the utilization of CS may prove advantageous in improving comprehension, Iranian instructors have voiced their opposition to its implementation in an English classroom. This observation suggests that the use of CS may be contingent upon certain conditions, whereas individuals generally strive to minimize its occurrence. The teacher 'B' stated:

B: "We can explain our intentions with fewer words when we utilize our mother tongue, especially for low level students, because using English alone will take too much time."

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

When teaching a foreign language, CS is a useful technique that allows teachers to cover much material in a short amount of time. To put it another way, not only they will they save them a great deal of time, but they will also meet the syllabus's time constraints. Therefore, they will take up time and make the lecture uninteresting by utilizing only English terms.

3.5.1.3. The Situations to Emphasize Code-switching (Advantages)

CS allows the instructor to communicate proper information, which aids learning, so code-switching is advantageous in teaching area. Both Iraqi and Iranian lecturers specified certain situations and material in which code-switching is necessary. Two of the Iraqi participants share the same idea that CS encourages students to endeavor comprehension. As a consequence, comprehension motivates them to learn more. This is a rotation in which those who comprehend a subject participate more actively, resulting in superior outcomes. They are more motivated to achieve success by doing so. The Iraqi teachers preferred CS through teaching grammatical subjects. Let us see what some of the teachers say:

A: "Code-switching is advantageous to give students information they do not understand."

C: "It is good when you try to go with the student's level and try to make him understand better."

F: "I prefer code-switching when I explain English Grammar and spelling."

All other participants, B, D, and E explained that the greatest benefit of using code-switching in An English classroom is saving time and effort. As 'F' stated:

F: "It saves time and effort by making the instruction clear and accessible to all students, including the low achievers."

To sum up, the difference between the teacher and the students is eliminated by CS. Switching to the student's native language during class clears the air because they provide vocabulary that English lacks, i.e., English lacks similar terms with identical meanings. In contrast to a foreigner who is unable to speak their language, the teacher shows his or her understanding of the student's language

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

and, consequently, his or her familiarity with their culture by code-switching to the learners' language. It creates a friendly atmosphere in the classroom, which encourages cooperation and kindness. Concerning the Iranian viewpoints, codeswitching is also beneficial in some circumstances, especially in teaching grammatical structure. As 'A' and 'E' stated:

A: "Persian is the language of teaching grammar in the lecture."

E: "Because Persian and English are completely separate languages with completely different grammatical systems, simply using English cannot ensure the knowledge of grammar rules."

They proposed that CS is an appropriate strategy as understanding Persian language structure can help with learning English structures. When teaching grammar in English, students may face several difficulties, one of which might be learning a new vocabulary of ambiguous phrases. Furthermore, they emphasized the need to use the first language while teaching grammar to help students comprehend difficult grammatical subjects such as tenses, subject-verb agreement, sentence patterns, type of sentences, pronouns, and so on. Participants 'C' and 'D' mainly agreed that code-switching improves students' self-esteem. Students report feeling more supported and connected to their professors. They are more willing to breach the confidence barriers that prevent them from learning a new language since they know their teacher would understand them if they spoke Persian instead of English.

3.5.1.4. The Situations to Prevent Code-switching (Disadvantages)

Despite the obvious advantages that code-switching provides for classroom practice, participants in both nations noted significant disadvantages. Iraqi teachers, especially 'A' and 'C', asserted that code switching is beneficial only for students with low levels. It needs to demonstrate significant efficacy for advanced learners, as they already possess the requisite proficiency to comprehend basic English structures. The following shows the other reasons for the disadvantages of code-switching:

B: " The students need to learn English step by step. They are going to learn how to speak English most of the time, and using code-switching will confuse them."

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

D: "Students who make use of codeswitching regularly will get dependent on it, and as a result, they will not progress to higher levels."

E: "Code-switching not only promotes students' extensive use of Arabic but also fosters a sense of sloth among them by discouraging them from seeking definitions of words they do not know from their instructors."

F: "The learner will need more confidence and guts to speak English, and he will undoubtedly lose any vocabulary he has acquired."

Students who code in their native language, therefore, achieve subpar academic results due to their inadequate participation in the discourse of the target language. Put differently, students in a language classroom anticipate that their teacher will use a different tone and vocabulary for every scenario and lesson. This phenomenon may lead to the presence of learners who are reliant on the teacher's code-switching in order to comprehend explanations.

According to the code-switching disadvantages, the Iranian participants, on the other hand, emphasized that code-switching should be restricted to teaching grammar, not language skills, to ensure that the learners understand the basic rules of the target language and they can apply them correctly through communications. In addition, they mentioned that the learners will not be presented with clear grammatical structures by the students, which means that there is no cause to move between the two codes. When it comes to gaining language skills, listening and speaking would be given the highest importance. Moreover, the participants revealed that it is better to be prevented in an English classroom since it will negatively affect their performance in the future. As 'E' stated:

E: "Once students used to practice code-switching, they look forward to it constantly."

It signifies that the students believe their instructor should always communicate in their original language. As a result, they require the instructor to code-switch all of the time and for everything that is taught. This could make students dependent on teachers who need to switch to their first language for more explanation. Consequently, all the Iranian teachers shared the same idea that

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

code-switching should occur for minor purposes as well as restricted circumstances.

3.6. Responses of Iraqi and Iranian Students to Language Preference in EFL Class

In responding to question 1, 33% of the students preferred using only English, and Iraqi-Arabic was the least preferred language to be used as a means to explain the main topics in their lectures, which is 7%. Moreover, 60% of the Iraqi EFL students prefer using both Iraqi-Arabic and English languages when their teachers explain the main topic of the lecture. Concerning the Irani EFL learners, 73% of them show their preference for using only English when the main topics are discussed in the lecture. No one prefers the use of Persian for clarifying the topic of the lecture in their classrooms 0%; however, 27% of the students prefer their EFL language mixed with their mother tongue-Persian. (See Figure. 1)

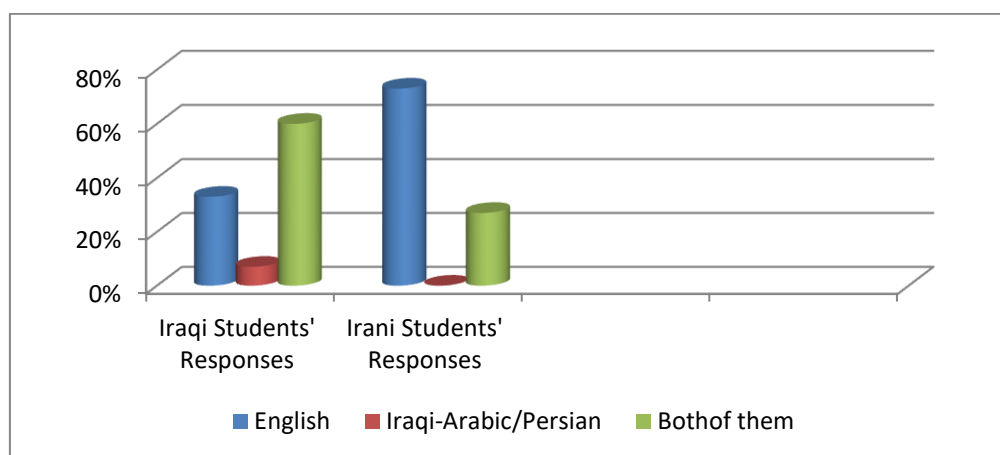


Figure 1: Schematic Representation of the Iraqi and Iranian Students' Responses to the Questions 1

Expressing the results of question no. 2 of the questionnaire, over 27% of students that said they would rather have their professors give instructions in English when it comes to tests, notifications about material preparation, and other similar situations. Iraqi-Arabic was the least favored language for delivering instructions, accounting for 20%, whereas a mix of English and Iraqi-Arabic was picked as the language for instructions, accounting for 53%. Iranian students, on the other hand, in responding to the same question, show that 73% of them prefer their teachers to speak English while supplying instructions. The least preferred language for instructions was Persian (0%), with about 13% of respondents

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

choosing a mix of Persian and English. (See Figure 2)

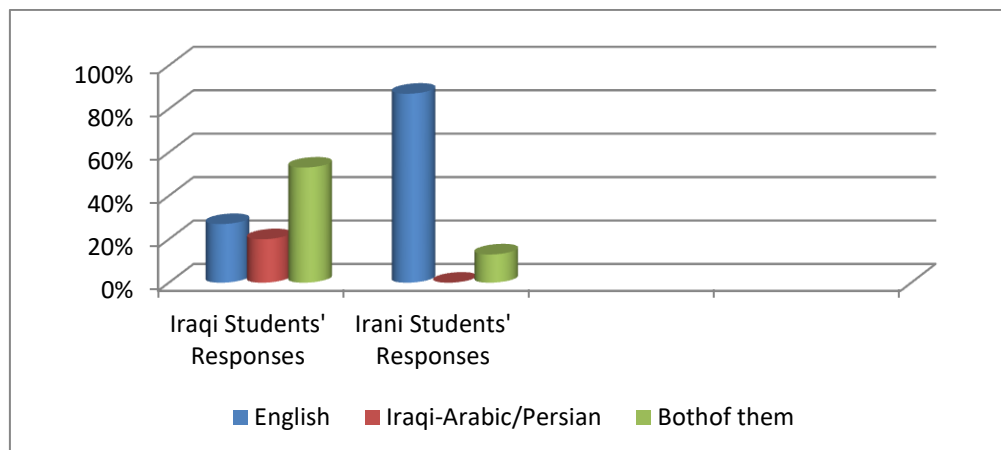


Figure 2: Schematic Representation of the Iraqi and Iranian Students' Responses to the Questions 2

In response to questionnaire question no. 3, 13% of Iraqi students overall require their lecturers to use English exclusively whenever they need to be notified about an exam. 53% of the participants indicate their preference for using their native language, while 33% opt for a combination of the two. Based on the responses of Iranian students, the majority of EFL students 60% requested that their instructors refer to the English language whenever they required information regarding their upcoming exams. The last language that was chosen was the student's native language; 7% and 27% of those who participated chose to blend the two languages. (See Figure 3)

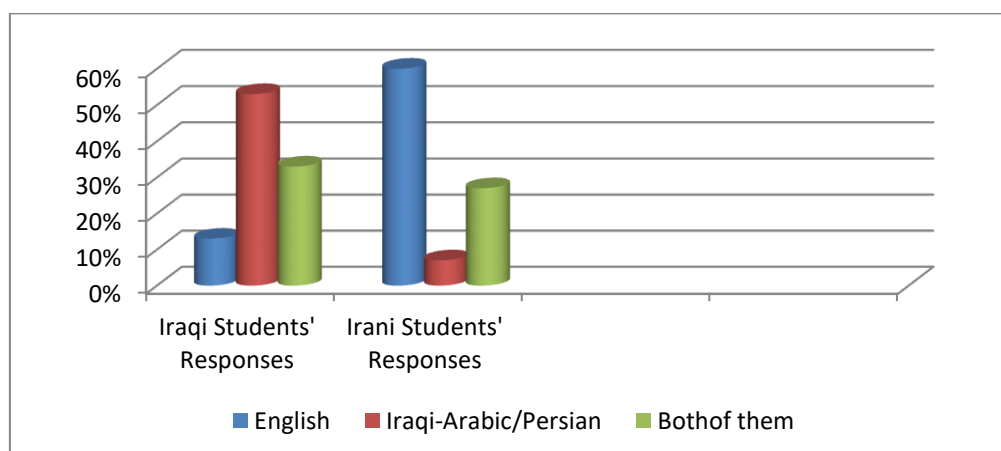


Figure 3: Schematic Representation of the Iraqi and Iranian Students' Responses

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

to the Questions 3

In response to questionn no.4 about discussing the subjects, just one of the Iraqi participants, 7%, prefers his/her lecturers to discuss in English. The majority of participants, 66%, decided to use Iraqi-Arabic, while 27% favored a blend of both languages. In response to the same question, 93% of Irani participants requested their lecturers to convert into English in order to discuss their topic during the lecture. No one prefers using Persian, and 17% prefer code-switching between the two languages. (See Figure 4)

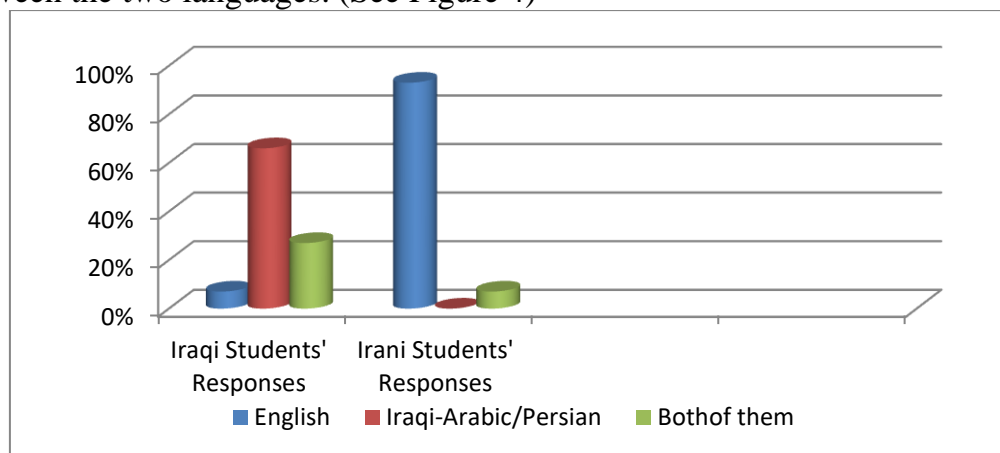


Figure 4: Schematic Representation of the Iraqi and Irani Students' Responses to the Questions 4

With regard to question no.5, which inquires about the preferable language or languages of the applicants in order to facilitate responses to students' inquiries in their mother tongue, it is important to note that only Iraqi students express a desire to receive responses in a foreign language. Iraqi-Arabic was the most chosen language for this purpose, with 53%, and the combination of both languages was ranked second with 47%. According to the Irani respondents, it is shown that 20% of them chose the English language. However, using the mother tongue and a combination of both languages records the same result, 40%. (See Figure 5)

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

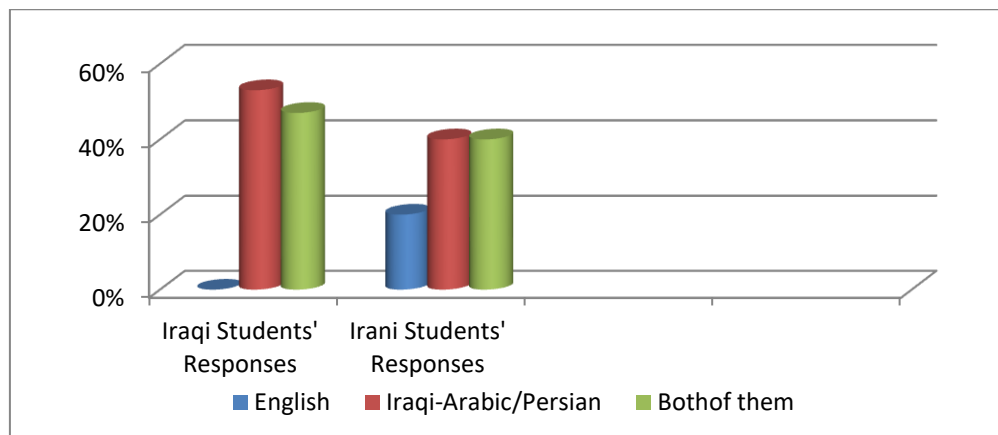


Figure 5: Schematic Representation of the Iraqi and Iranian Students' Responses to the Questions 5

When delivering new lectures, subjects, concepts, and directions to pupils, 53% of Iraqis used repetition, reformulation, explanation, exemplification, and so on to explain unclear points in Iraqi-Arabic. However, no one preferred to ask in English. 34% asked their teachers to clarify by switching codes from English to Arabic, and 13% preferred their teachers to use English. On the other hand, 20% of Irani participants preferred asking their peers to clarify the ambiguous aspects in Persian, while 13% preferred asking a classmate in English. Furthermore, 13% of students preferred that their teachers respond in their first language, although the majority preferred that their lecturers respond in English, 47%. (See Figure 6)

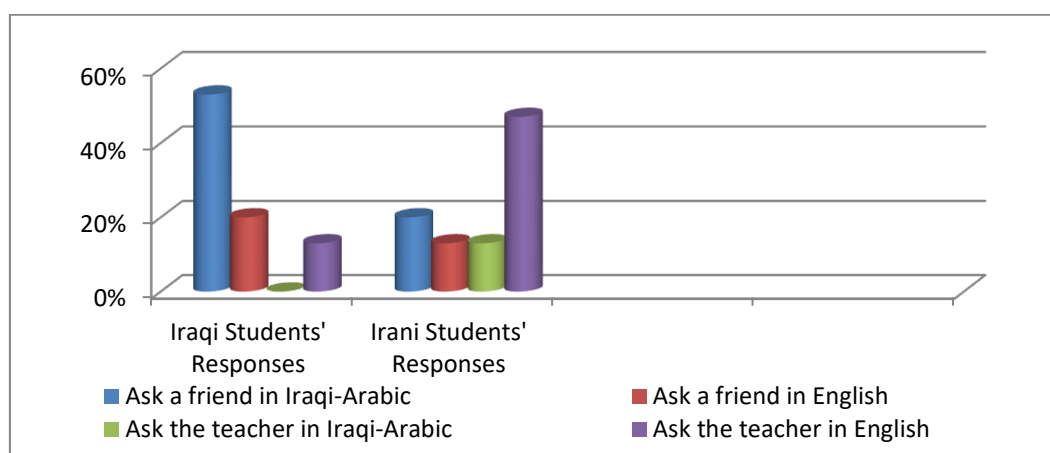


Figure 6: Schematic Representation of the Iraqi and Iranian Students' Responses to the Questions 6

Question no.7 inquired how well the students understood the instructors when

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

they spoke to them in their tongue. Sixty percent of the Iraqi students said they understood better when they were talked in their language, while forty percent said they understood equally well when spoke in English. Most of the Irani participants, 73%, on the other hand, showed their preference for understanding as well as the teachers speaking in English. In contrast, 27% of them reported higher comprehension since the words were spoken in their native tongue. Of course, no one in both groups showed that they understood less while the teachers used their native language.(See Figure 7)

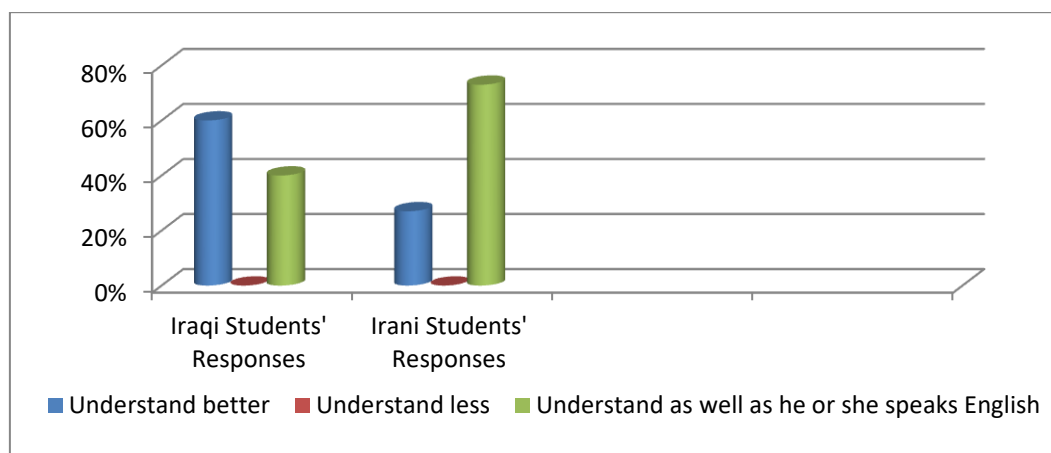


Figure 7: Schematic Representation of the Iraqi and Iranian Students' Responses to the Questions 7

Question no.8 said, "When your teacher explains something that you do not understand, you want him/her to" so 27% of Iraqi participants answered that they preferred their teacher to repeat the unclear instructions in English. The majority of respondents, comprising 53% of the sample, expressed a preference for rephrasing ambiguous instructions in English using a different approach. Conversely, 20% of the participants showed a preference for clarifying unclear instructions in their native language. In Addition, it was found that 13% of the participants from Iran expressed a need for their instructor to provide further clarification by reiterating the explanation. Moreover, most 80% also preferred that it is useful to explain the same information differently, but only one participant, 7%, wanted the repetition to be in Persian.(See Figure 8)

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

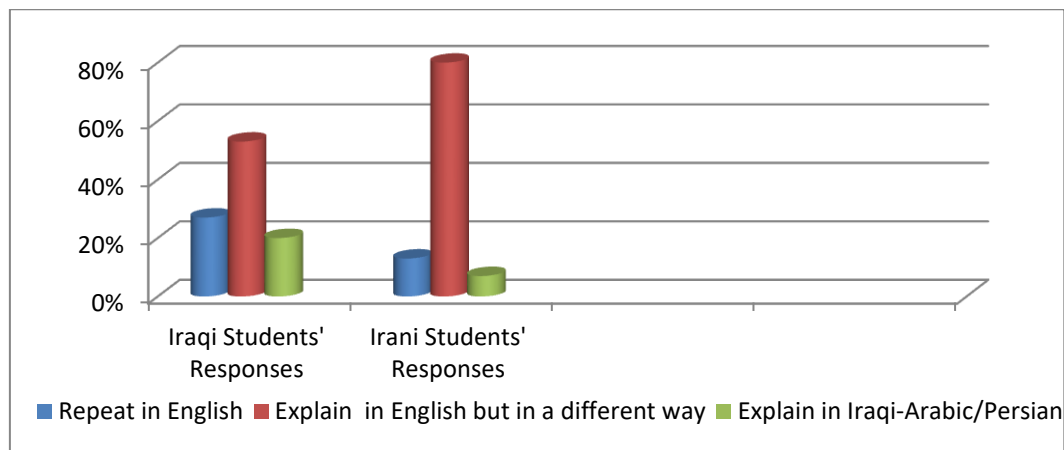


Figure 8: Schematic Representation of the Iraqi and Iranian Students' Responses to Questions 8

Question no.9 asked the participants to specify which language (s) they wanted their instructor to enable them to speak in the classroom. In this concern, 93% of the Iraqi learners preferred that they need to speak more English in an English classroom, whereas only one of them, 7%, preferred using the first language. Additionally, all the Irani students 100% confirmed using English when they were involved in an EFL classroom. (See Figure 9)

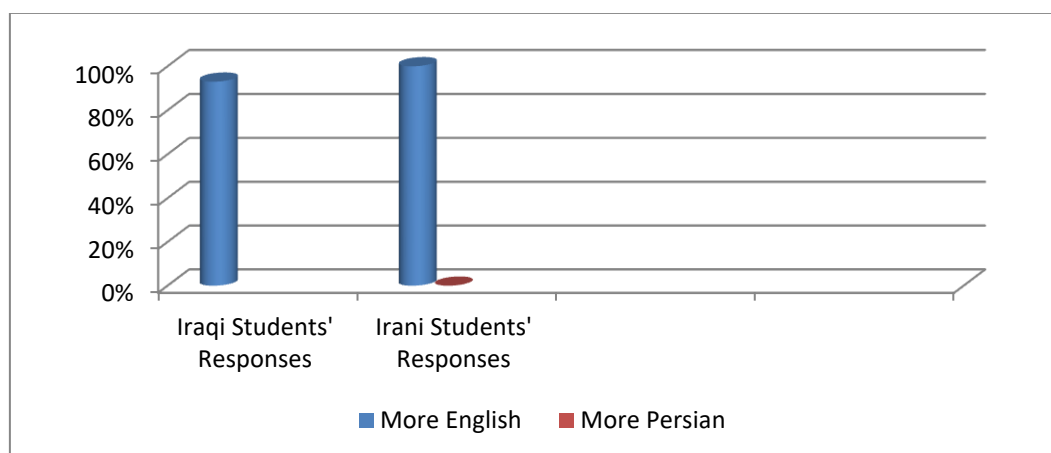


Figure 9: Schematic Representation of the Iraqi and Iranian Students' Responses to the Questions 9

To obtain the learners' opinions regarding that the language or languages that their instructor typically preferred for instruction and interaction, they were presented with four response options: (1)Only Iraqi-Arabic/ Persian, (2) Mainly

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

Iraqi-Arabic/ Persian but sometimes English, (3) Mainly English but sometimes Iraqi-Arabic/ Persian, (4) Only English. All of the Students 100% in both Iraqi and Arabic groups confirmed that their teachers use a combination of mostly English and sometimes Iraqi-Arabic for Iraqi Students and a combination of mostly English and Persian for Irani participants. None of them (0%) were in favor of instructors speaking mostly in their mother tongue or occasionally in the target language. Consequently, code-switching is a crucial tool and a very successful teaching strategy in EFL classes. (See Figure 10)

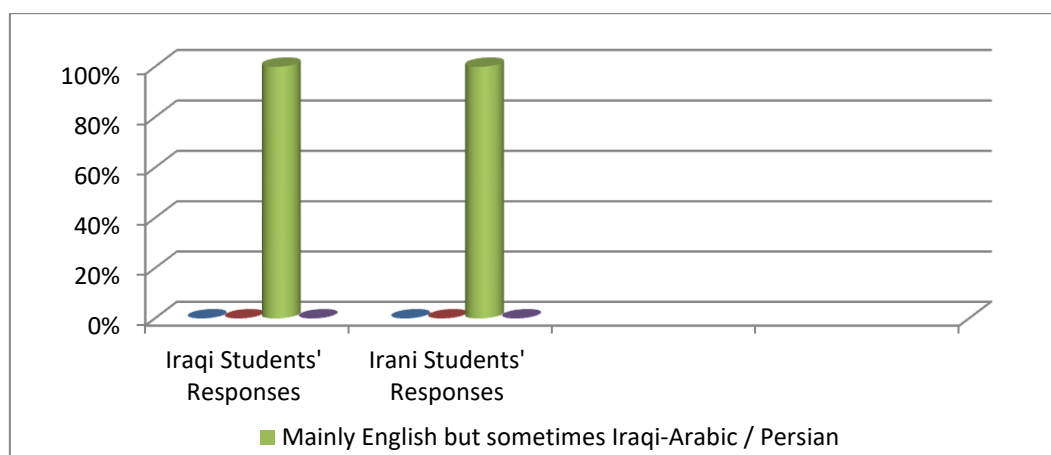


Figure 10: Schematic Representation of the Iraqi and Iranian Students' Responses to the Questions 10

In conclusion, The results revealed that the majority of their Iraqi students, 57%, preferred using both languages (code-switching), and 32% of them preferred using their first language. However, using only the foreign language inside the classroom received 11%. In contrast, Iranian students preferred using only the target language more than the other options, which represented 64%, then came using both languages (code-switching) 24%, and finally used Persian 12%. Many of the students favored using a mix of their native language and English in a variety of situations, such as grammar instructions and difficult topics. Their instructors make every effort to minimize code-switching, and their perception of themselves as predominantly English speakers appears to align with the student's viewpoint. The students would like to be encouraged to use English rather than reverting to their mother tongue, even if many of them may have selected their native language in some of the questionnaire's items.

4. Discussions

The current investigation attempts to study the situations, reasons, advantages,

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

and disadvantages of CS as a foreign language teaching method by Iraqi and Iranian EFL lecturers and learners in universities. To achieve this objective, the research questions are answered. The study's findings, which were gathered from two different sources of questionnaires, given to non-native English teachers and the other to English majors at Iranian and Iraqi universities, showed that teachers' use of CS during class instruction was beneficial to EFL students for additional interaction. When the two countries' CS practices were compared to asking the first question, "In which country do the lecturers practice CS more?" it seemed that Iraqi teachers and students coded more than Iranians. Nonetheless, participants in both groups felt that introducing CS helped students in general and aided their grasp of some topics when instructions were particularly complicated, confusing, or laden with abstract language or jargon. Such a result may reflect that Iraqi students' level of using a foreign language is low; thus, they could not use it more. Another reason is that the Iraqi students prefer to be closer to their teachers. That is why they try to code to their mother language.

Scanning the teacher's responses the second question, "What are the differences between Iraqi and Iranian lecturers' practice of CS?" four out of six Iraqi instructors and two out of six Iranian teachers stated that they did not think CS had a place or purpose in the English classroom. It was shown later that they frequently practice code-switching because they realized that it allowed them to express meanings and concepts more clearly. One of the main reasons they adopted CS was to encourage directness in communication and, consequently, interact with the students more efficiently. Respondents strongly agreed on the usefulness of this phenomenon in understanding difficult languages. When instructors use strategies such as repetition, reformulation, elucidation, exemplification, and so forth, they may transfer codes from English to their native tongue, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Because English is a foreign language and the students are unfamiliar with its grammatical norms, which differ from those of their native language, both groups emphasized that code-switching occurs while teaching grammatical structures. Consequently, almost all teachers share the same idea that the advantage of code-switching is that subjects help low-level students to understand better, and it saves time. At the same time, it has the disadvantage that it will negatively affect their performance in the future.

Concerning the students' responses to the question "Which language do the

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

students in each country prefer in the English Classroom?", it is indicated that although many of the students in both countries preferred to use a blend of their native language and English in various circumstances, there are several similarities and differences. The results revealed that the majority of their Iraqi students, 57%, preferred using both languages (code-switching). However, Iranian students preferred using only the target language more than the other options, which represented 64%. The highest number of Iraqi students, 53% of Iraqi students, would rather ask their peers in their first language to clarify things in Iraqi Arabic when there are new lessons, topics, ideas, and directions. On the other hand, 47% of those students would rather have their teachers answer in English. Moreover, most of the Iraqi students 60% replied that they seemed to understand better if their teacher spoke to them in their native language, but most of the Iranian participants 73% preference understanding, as well as the teachers speaking in English. When the students were asked, "When your teacher explains something that you do not understand, you want him/her to", the majority of Iraqi students, 53%, and 80% of Iranian participants preferred that it is useful to explain the same information differently.

In addition, 93% of Iraqi students and 100% of Iranian students verified that their English usage increased while in an EFL classroom. In conclusion, one hundred percent of students in both the Arabic and Iraqi groups affirmed that their instructors use a combination of English and Iraqi-Arabic occasionally for Iraqi students and English and Persian predominantly for Iranian participants. Thus, it is obvious that CS of one word, one phrase, or even one sentence is very prevalent among English in English institutions. As a result, the EFL students who use their mother language in the classroom feel more at ease since their first language competency is higher than their second language competence. For EFL students, CS is a useful compensatory method that allows them to organize better, develop, and enrich their speech in the target language.

Regarding the last research question, "To what extent is there agreement between the lecturers' patterns of CS and the students' opinions?", both the teachers and the students agreed on what areas CS is needed, i.e., it is obvious for both that using native language in limited situations is helpful in an English classroom. It will help them to save effort and time and improve the student's learning level. One interesting thing, though, is that none of the teachers asked their students about the language they prefer to use in different situations. Teachers benefit much from their years of expertise, but they may also learn a great deal about their students' preferences and attitudes toward CS by asking them.

5. Conclusions

The findings of the current investigation revealed that using CS in English

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

classes is required. The research discussed previously demonstrated a positive correlation between CS and teaching EFL. The practicality of CS emerged in relation to its efficacy in elucidating unfamiliar terms and expressions and its utility in elucidating concepts, which help students better understand concepts that require more explanation and enhance their performance in specific learning contexts. Moreover, CS can serve as a beneficial strategy to demonstrate solidarity between teachers and their students. Thus, the instructor purposefully switches codes to shape interpersonal interactions, get close to their students, and positively impact their emotive domain.

The research recommended that the area of CS in other departments or colleges, especially scientific ones where English is used as a foreign language for teaching in lectures, such as medical and engineering colleges, can be researched further. Additionally, it would be intriguing to investigate whether and how native English speakers who teach English code-switch, which may be done through interviews and classroom observations. It would be interesting to explore the amount of inadvertent CS among English instructors in the classroom by eliciting code switched patterns and thoroughly examining them to determine the extent to which their code switching activities are planned.

The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers (A Comparative Study)

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**The Practise of Code-Switching in English Foreign Language
Instruction by Iraqi and Iranian EFL University Lecturers
(A Comparative Study)**

Appendix

Panel of Specialists

Number	Name	Rank	Specialization	Place of Work
1.	Dr. Mayssa Rashid Abdul-Majeed	Assistant Prof.	Linguistics	University of Baghdad
2.	Dr. Rana Abdul-Sattar Abed	Assistant Prof.	Linguistics	University of Basrah
3.	Dr. Ryadh Sharhan Jaboue	Lecturer	Literature	University of Kufa