

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**CODESWITCHING AS A SCAFFOLDING
TECHNIQUE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING: THE
CASE OF RAFFLES INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE
(RIC)**

SH. FEI'ZIAH SYED MOHD FEISAL ALQUDSY

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Masters in Education

Faculty of Education

30 March 2010

Candidate's Declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the result of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This topic has not been submitted to any academic institution or non-academic institution for any other degree or qualification.

In the event that my thesis be found to violate the conditions mentioned above, I voluntarily waive the right of conferment of my degree and agree to be subjected to the disciplinary rules and regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA.

Name of Candidate	Sharifah Fei'ziah bt Syed Mohd Feisal
Candidate's IC No.	730830-14-5060
Programme	M. Ed. TESL
Faculty	Faculty of Education
Thesis Title	Perspectives of Codeswitching As A Scaffolding Technique in Teaching and Learning: The Case of Raffles International College (RIC).

Signature of Candidate

Date 30 March 2010

ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on the perspectives of teachers and students on codeswitching as a teaching-learning technique outside of classroom contexts in Raffles International College (RIC), a private college in the heart of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Despite having English as its medium of instruction, the teachers and students, especially those with spoken ability in English, Malay and Chinese, often practice codeswitching, which serves many functions in conversations (Auer, 1998; as cited in Riehl, 2005). This paper examines the attitudes of teachers and students to codeswitching in RIC, and the teachers' and students' perceptions of codeswitching as a teaching and learning strategy. Data was collected through non-participant observation, likert-type questionnaire, and short interview sessions. The participants of the study were 28 teachers and 85 students. In addition to that, three teachers were purposively selected for conversation observations and interview sessions. It was found that codeswitching is natural, acceptable and inevitable in the context of RIC, that the teachers and students generally have positive attitudes to codeswitching, and the teachers and students have mixed perception of codeswitching as teaching and learning strategy, as well as a gap of expectation towards the practice of codeswitching in the contexts of the college. From the findings of this research, the researcher identified that codeswitching is used as a technique to scaffold the teaching-learning of teachers and students of RIC. In conclusion, despite previous researches' findings on codeswitching as a speech style, it is still considered as a strategy for the teachers and students of RIC outside of classroom contexts to communicate and achieve their teaching-learning goals.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I believe of all the things that I have gone through in my life, apart from giving birth to my four beautiful children, writing and completing this thesis, is thus far the toughest challenge I have to face and bear. Nonetheless, it is the most rewarding, inspiring, learning, and satisfying experience I have ever had. This completed thesis is a result of many, many months of struggles, sacrifices, and efforts, many, many cries and laughters, and continuous emotional ups and downs. Without the support and encouragement of these people, I would believe that this thesis could never be finished.

First of all, THANK YOU to my dearest supervisor, Prof. Dr. Hazadiah Mohd Dahan, whose patience, wisdom, encouragements, and passion have been tagging me all along and without whom, this study and topic might never be conceived in the first place. I am deeply indebted to you, Prof. I would also like to extend my warmest gratitude to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Faizah Abd. Majid, who believed in me and allowed entrance to the program even at the very last brink.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all the lecturers that have taught me throughout this master program from my enrolment in Dec 2006 to date. They are – Dr. Habibah Shaari, Dr. Parmjit, Dr. Gurnam, Dr, Normah, Dr. Abu Bakar, Dr. Holmes, and Dr. Nabilah. These lecturers were fine examples and I am so grateful to have crossed their paths.

I also wish to thank other fellow classmates of Cohort 7, my master batch, especially Arba, Abg Wan, Didie, Izuan, Cheque Noe, and Eza who gave me continuous support and motivation to keep on going. I would also like to thank other lecturers and staff who might have helped one way or another whenever I needed information on my thesis.

Finally, the most important people in my life, my reasons for surviving this obstacles and beats of my heart – my beloved husband and my four children – who never ceased supporting me and injecting strengths whenever I felt like falling. And also to my parents for the love and “doa” from the day I was born. I believe that without these people, I would never have become the person I am today and would have never reached the peak of this journey.

THANK YOU ALL.....

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Language and society can never fail to be a topic of discussion amongst sociolinguists. The way we talk can reveal our social identity like who we are, where we come from and life experiences we have had. Languages that we use provide us with the different ways of saying the same thing. For a multiracial country like Malaysia, so many languages and dialects are spoken and at times mixed and switched with the English Language.

In all bilingual zones, the act of switching and mixing between two codes are found to be quite common. However, one has to know when it is suitable to do so and when it is inappropriate. Living in a country like Malaysia, a multilingual country where the main races are Malay, Chinese and Indian, interacting effectively with one another is very much needed. Malaysia has a sole official national language which is Bahasa Malaysia, with English as its second language, and a variety of cultural languages like the different Malay dialects, Mandarin, Cantonese, Hokkien, and Tamil (Soo, 1987). In everyday life, especially in a school setting, these races interact with each other continuously. Being linguistically diversified, such societies are “multilingual in a variety of languages or dialects that are functionally differentiated...” (Kuo, 1985; as cited in Soo, 1987).

Although the official language of the country is Bahasa Malaysia (BM), most private tertiary institutions use English as their medium of instruction, as it is a universal language and it prepares the students for the global world as our Prime Minister, Dato' Sri Mohd. Najib bin Tun Abdul Razak stated in the Star newspaper on 7th November 2006, during his closing speech at the Johor UMNO Convention, that if Malaysians do not master the English language, therefore we would just be considered as “jaguh kampung” and do not have a place in the international arena. However, as the majority of the Malaysian population are at least a bilingual, therefore the possibility of codeswitching is much greater (Soo, 1987). It is assumed that when these people enter such institutions, they would also carry their vernacular language with them and later