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The perspectives of pre-service teachers to code-switching in Hong Kong ESL classrooms

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Abstract

Scholars have suggested that teachers should attempt the maximum use of target language in second language classrooms for many years (Turnbull & Arnett, 2002). However, the use of code-switching during the teaching practice of pre-service teachers has caused heated controversy. This study presents findings conducted by a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design combining both quantitative and qualitative methods in an attempt to investigate the challenges encountered by pre-service teachers, the situations in which they used code-switching and their perceptions of the use of code-switching.

1. Introduction & Research objectives

In the era of globalization, the variations in English language teaching and learning are widely witnessed and acknowledged. For example, studies have found a diverse usage (from 0% to 90%) of first language (L1) in the second language (SL) classroom among teachers in similar teaching situations (Littlewood & Yu, 2011). Similar cases have been discovered in Hong Kong. In a multilingual city like Hong Kong, code-switching (CS) that happens between the speaker's L1 (Cantonese) and SL (English) (or target language (TL) designate in the following) is one of the language variations that can be commonly observed. As Pennington (1998) described, CS in Hong Kong consists of a highly variable mixture of Cantonese grammar and English lexis. Despite the ubiquity of CS in Hong Kong, it is generally perceived as a negative language behaviour as 'its alleged role in causing deteriorating language proficiency and ability of communication among Hong Kong students' (Sung, 2010). Theoretically, CS has been strongly disapproved by the Hong Kong government policy. The medium of instruction of English lessons in primary schools and the curriculum in the majority of secondary schools has to be 'pure' English according to the curriculum guideline (Curriculum Development Council, 2018). However, the real classroom situation offers a different picture. The 'mixed-mode' approach of teaching, in which English textbooks are taught with the aid of both spoken Cantonese and English was observed in Hong Kong classrooms (Bolton, 2002). Under this situation, the discrepancy between the theory and practical situation of CS gives rise to the controversial issue in SL teaching and learning. From the perspective of in-service teachers, many factors give rise to the phenomenon of CS in classrooms. For example, Qian (2009)

2

found that two primary-school English teachers switch to L1 due to 'methodological' (e.g. clarifying and translating) and 'social' (e.g. advising and encouraging) factors. In spite of the perspectives raised by scholars and in-service educators in existing researches, few studies have been done on the perspectives of pre-service teachers. The role of pre-service teachers is worthwhile to explore as they have sufficient theoretic knowledge of teaching but insufficient practical experience when compared to in-service teachers. The inexperience in teaching is presumed to be the factor that leads to the arouse of challenges when teaching in 'pure' English and the use of code-switch as a solution to alleviate the difficulties they encountered. However, the topic is relatively under-studied from the role of pre-service teachers. To understand more from the perspectives of pre-service teachers, this study addresses the following three main questions:

1. Do pre-service teachers face any challenges when teaching in 'pure' English without code-switching? If so, what are these challenges?
2. In what situation do pre-service teachers use their first language in English classrooms?
3. What are the pre-service teachers' perceptions of the use of code-switching in English classrooms?

It is believed that studying the perspectives of pre-service teachers is of paramount importance, as the challenges faced by pre-service teachers have been overlooked and underestimated. The current existing researches and guidelines are insufficient for pre-service teachers to prepare themselves with the appropriate teaching pedagogies in real classroom situations. Therefore, this study targets pre-service primary and secondary school teachers in Hong Kong as the participants for investigation. Details of the participants will be provided in Section 3 Methodology.

2. Literature review
2.1 Definition of code-switching
'Code-switching' is generally defined as the alternative use of two or more languages interchangeably at sentence or clause boundaries, while the term 'code-mixing' is preferred when the switch takes place with the same clause (Grosjean, 1982; Li, 1994). In addition to the interchange of languages, code-switching or code-mixing requires both speakers to understand the same two languages, and it usually happens in bilinguals or multilinguals settings (Cook,

2000). Since the term 'code-mixing' tends to associate with negative language behaviours, the definition of 'code-switching' and the term itself will be more suitable to circumscribe terminological problems and designate the linguistic behaviour in researches (Li, 2008). In Hong Kong, the basis of 'biliteracy and trilingualism' is promoted in the language-in-education policy over a decade (Li, 1994). Under the language development in Hong Kong, the situation of CS happens between Cantonese (L1) and English (SL) at both inter- and intra-sentential level is ubiquitous. With reference to Yau (1993), 'an English expression is interspersed into host language Cantonese because the translation equivalent is either non-existent or is considered not sufficiently well-established compared with the English term'. For this reason, CS is hard to avoid in the society, such as spoken and written media, let alone classroom situation.

2.2 The use of target language in classrooms

In order to facilitate language learning, some scholars from worldwide and the Hong Kong government share the same view on the maximal use of TL. The classroom is the main platform for students to acquire the target language with the aid of real communication under a contextualized input (Krashen, 1985). Hence, it is crucial for teachers to immerse students in the TL environment during lesson time (Hawkins, 1987). Being the main linguistic source in the classroom, teachers should maximize the usage of TL as the medium of instruction (MOI) within class time. In this way, students are more likely to perceive the TL as an effective means of communication after they get used to the communication pattern. Students would gradually develop the motivation towards TL since it satisfied their communicative needs during the classroom situation (Littlewood, 1981). For these reasons, scholars proposed the maximal use of TL and minimize other interference from it. Apart from the scholars' point of view, the current situation in Hong Kong education also shows strong disapproval towards the use of CS. The monolingual teaching principle is stated in the guidelines at different levels. For students in primary level, the English Language Curriculum Guide (Primary 1-6) indicates that 'teachers should teach English through English' and 'learners should be taught to understand and follow simple instructions and be supported to take part in learning activities in English effectively' (Curriculum Development Council, 2004). As for secondary students, the Supplement to the English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Secondary 1-3) advises 'the more formal and complex language used in lessons where junior secondary students are given more opportunities to be exposed to and use English' under the diversified medium of instruction arrangements (Curriculum Development Council, 2018).

2.3 The use of code-switching in classrooms

In spite of the recommendations of the scholars and the Hong Kong curriculum guideline, the disapproval of CS might be impractical for bilingual teachers during implementation in a real classroom context. There is a need for the use of CS where CS serves as different purposes in terms of pedagogical communication. In general, the use of CS has the potential to: [1] ensure students' understanding by clarifying difficult concepts, [2] establish rapport with students by reducing social distance and hence enhance students' learning motivation, [3] facilitate classroom management when giving instructions (Li, 2008; Littlewood & Yu, 2011; Nordin, Ali, Zubir & Sadjirin, 2013; Sung, 2010). In order to testify the feasibility of not using CS, Li (2008) conducted an experiment on whether undergraduate students majoring in English are able to express some technical terminologies without code-switching. The results show that the participants face difficulties in avoiding CS since 'the technical terminologies are difficult to avoid when such topics are invoked in conversation or electronic communication' (Li, 2008). Apart from Li's research, Sung (2010) also conducted a similar experiment on speaking 'pure' English in Hong Kong context. He pointed out some difficulties when using 'pure' English for pedagogical communication as 'pure' English failed to achieve the above purposes that carried out by CS. In view of the pedagogical functions served by CS, scholars argue for more flexible use of CS in different contexts instead of strictly against CS.

2.4 The perception of code-switching

Due to the strong debate towards the usage and effect of CS, English teachers in Hong Kong face dilemmas in terms of attitude when teaching. For instance, teachers would induce a sense of guilt when they face the discrepancy between the theoretical guidelines from school and government and the real classroom practice (Li, 2008; Mitchell, 1988). Worse still, some of the teachers feel that they were admitted to the unprofessional conduct when they did not maximize the use of TL in classrooms (Mitchell, 1988). Apart from the psychological feeling, teachers who value the purpose carried out by CS also consider CS as a useful pedagogical resource instead of a disservice from the pedagogical perspectives (Li, 2008). In spite of the research on in-service teachers' attitudes towards CS, there is insufficient information on pre-service teachers' idea of CS. This leads to the questions to be considered in the following investigation.

3. Methodology

The data collection of the research was conducted in a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design. This mixed-methods sequential explanatory design consists of two phases, which are quantitative followed by qualitative. Pre-service teachers, who were studying the Bachelor of Education in English Language and had conducted their field experience from September to December 2019, were invited for data collection. In phase one, quantitative data was collected through questionnaires from a total of fifty participants. To answer the research questions respectively, the questionnaire was divided into four parts: (1) personal information, (2) challenges when teaching in 'pure' English, (3) situations when code-switching and (4) perceptions towards code-switching (refer to Appendix 1). In order to validate and find out further implications from a similar research area but different target participants, some questions in the questionnaire were adopted from Littlewood & Yu's (2011) research. The questionnaires were distributed between September and December 2019. Convenience sampling method was adopted to recruit participants.

Based on the quantitative data collected in phase one, qualitative data was collected through interviews in phase two. A total of six participants, including three pre-service primary school teachers and three pre-service secondary school teachers, were interviewed. The interviews were conducted between January and February 2020. The qualitative data conducted by the interviews helps to explain the quantitative data and have a comprehensive understanding of the participants' opinions. The quantitative analysis below is complemented by the six participants' qualitative responses to the interview questions so that a fuller picture can be obtained.

4. Results of the study

Of the 50 participants, 14 (28%) are male and 26 (72%) are female. Over half (56%) are teaching primary students (Group A) and 22 (44%) are teaching secondary students (Group B) during their teaching practice. All the participants are from the Education University of Hong Kong. In the second, qualitative phase, pre-service teachers' opinions are collected to create a clearer picture of the perceptions of the participants in both psychological and pedagogical aspects (refer to Appendix 2-7). Six pre-service teachers (Percy, Polly and Peggy teaching primary students; Sarah, Sally, Sammi teaching secondary students), who responded that they faced challenges in teaching in 'pure' English and adopted code-switching in English

classrooms during teaching practice in the questionnaire for the first quantitative phase, were invited to participate in the second qualitative phase. The names of the participants are fictitious. Semi-structured interviews with the six participants were conducted after the completion of teaching practice in order to find out their perception. The background of these six participants can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. Background information of participants

Name of participants	Students' grade they taught in	Medium of instruction	Banding of the school
Percy (male)	Junior primary students (P.1 - P.3)	Chinese as Medium Instruction (CMI)	N/A
Polly (female)	Junior primary students (P.1 - P.3)	Chinese as Medium Instruction (CMI)	N/A
Peggy (female)	Senior primary students (P.4 - P.6)	Chinese as Medium Instruction (CMI)	N/A
Sarah (female)	Junior secondary students (S.1 - S.3)	Chinese as Medium Instruction (CMI)	Band 3
Sally (female)	Junior secondary students (S.1 - S.3)	Chinese as Medium Instruction (CMI)	Band 3
Sammi (female)	Senior secondary students (S.4 - S.6)	Chinese as Medium Instruction (CMI)	Band 3

4.1 Challenges in teaching in 'pure' English without code-switching

The first research question of the present study aims to find out whether or not pre-service teachers face challenges when teaching in 'pure' English without CS. If so, what are the challenges? In order to answer this research question, the second part of the questionnaire captures data concerning pre-service teachers' difficulties in using 'pure' English. They were asked to indicate the extent whether they found the following items are challenging in teaching in 'pure' English: (1) checking comprehension; (2) discussing assignments, tests, and quizzes; (3) explaining new words and explaining grammar are related to ensuring students'

understanding, (4) helping students feel more confident and comfortable; (5) giving feedback are related to establishing rapport with students and (6) giving instruction; (7) talking about personal matter and (8) dealing with discipline problem are related to facilitating classroom management. The response categories were scored as follows: 1 = never, 2 = seldom, 3 = sometimes, 4 = always.

In general, pre-service teachers teaching secondary students tend to face more challenges in all the items listed in Table 2. The mean values of Group B are all higher than that of Group A. When having a deeper look in the individual items, both groups consider explaining grammar (mean value for Group A = 3.32; Group B = 3.59), dealing with discipline problem (Group A = 3.29; Group B = 3.50) and explaining new words (Group A = 3.11; Group B = 3.55) in teaching in 'pure English' as the major challenges among all the items listed in the questionnaire. It is suggested that pre-service teachers tended to face more challenges in terms of the function of ensuring students' understanding, explaining grammar and explaining new words fall into the category of ensuring students' understanding according to the research conducted by Littlewood & Yu (2011).

In addition, Group B has a stronger impression on the challenges than Group A in terms of talking about personal matters (mean value for Group A = 2.96; Group B = 3.36), helping students feel more confident and comfortable (Group A = 2.86; Group B = 3.41) as well as checking comprehension (Group A = 2.71; Group B = 3.32). The results among two groups are not statistically significant.

As for items such as discussing assignments, tests, and quizzes, giving instructions and giving feedback, both group rated them as the least challenging tasks when using 'pure' English without code-switching (refer to Table 2). Similarly, the independent sample *t-test* found no significant difference in the overall challenges faced by the two groups.

Table 2. T-test results of the two groups on the challenges when teaching in 'pure' English when teaching

| | Group A | Group B | | |
	Mean	Mean	t-value	p-value
Explaining grammar	3.32	3.59	-0.952	0.346
Dealing with discipline problem e.g. not paying attention	3.29	3.50	-0.609	0.545

Explaining new words	3.11	3.55	-1.561	0.128
Talking about personal matter e.g. a problem	2.96	3.36	-1.114	0.271
Helping students feel more confident and comfortable	2.86	3.41	-1.694	0.097
Checking comprehension	2.71	3.32	-1.989	0.052
Discussing assignments, tests, and quizzes	2.68	2.95	-0.939	0.352
Giving instruction	2.68	2.82	-0.493	0.624
Giving feedback	2.43	2.91	-1.789	0.080

The results collected in the second, qualitative, phase provide more information to support the data collected from the questionnaire as well as the view of Sung (2010), who shared similar experiences in terms of the difficulties in teaching with 'pure' English. Among the six respondents who conducted the interview, Percy and Peggy who taught in primary school as well as Sally who taught in secondary school also agreed that it is difficult to explain difficult concepts or abstract ideas to students in 'pure' English. Percy mentioned one of his lessons during the teaching practice as an example:

> For example, if you want to describe someone as humorous, that means someone is funny, but not literally funny, it's like a good side of funny.

The example of Percy illustrates the difficulty pointed out by Sung (2010), which is to distinguish the subtle semantic differences between two closely-related English words. In addition, Sung added that he actually used some more difficult words in his explanation. In Percy's case, he attempted to tell the difference with the word choice 'literally', which may induce more misunderstanding. Hence, it may not be the best pedagogical approach to explain a new vocabulary in 'pure' English in certain situations.

Another challenge mentioned by Percy, Sammi, Sarah and Sally is related to giving instruction in 'pure' English during teaching. It is interesting to note that there are several reasons for the difficulty in giving instruction. Not only do teachers have to ensure students' understanding, but teachers also have to maintain classroom discipline. They expressed that it was hard for weaker students to understand the teachers' instruction in 'pure' English, which led to further

misunderstanding and off-task behaviour. Percy, who was teaching a primary school, further explained:

> If I have to use 'pure' English, students who may not be good in English, they would have difficulties in understanding my instructions. That's why they may violate some rules. However, they didn't mean to violate them and that is the problem.

This may imply the need for code-switching, which will be discussed in Section 4.2.

Moreover, teaching in 'pure' English would be a challenge in boosting students' confidence in learning the target language. Sammi, who taught in a Band 3 secondary school, encountered students with very low English proficiency and a lack of confidence in learning a foreign language. She said,

> I knew they understood my English because I made it very simple. However, they were not confident enough until they hear me repeat and explain in Cantonese.

The experience of Sammi suggests that teaching in 'pure' English may not be helpful to construct a comfortable learning environment for students with relatively low English proficiency. As Sung (2010) implied, the continued use of English would be counterproductive in building up confidence due to the signal of social distance. Yet, code-switching from English to Cantonese may be a better approach in delivering interpersonal meaning. Sammi's experience shows that code-switching can solve the challenges when teaching in 'pure' English to a certain extent, which leads to a linkage in investigating the situation of code-switching in English classrooms.

To summarize, both primary and secondary pre-service teachers tend to find ensuring students' understanding and facilitating classroom management as the major challenges when teaching in 'pure' English. From the explanation in the qualitative phase, it is suggested that the use of code-switching may be one of the solutions to alleviate the challenges in teaching in 'pure' English. Therefore, the following section will investigate code-switching in different situations (i.e. the second research question).

4.2 The situation of code-switching in English classrooms

This section aims to find answers to the second research question, which is the situation of pre-service teachers use first language in English classrooms. According to Table 3, only 10 (20%) of the respondents reflected that they did not adopt code-switching while teaching in English classrooms. Among the 40 respondents (80%) who adopted code-switching in English classroom, 15 (30%) adopted code-switching for less than 10% of the lesson time, which takes up the largest percentage of respondents among the average time spent, 11 (22%) for 10%-25% of the lesson time, 7 (14%) for 25%-50% of the lesson time and 5 (10%) for 50%-75% of the lesson time. Yet, there is a special phenomenon that two respondents adopted code-switching over 75% of lesson time. The uncommonly high usage of code-switching will be explained by the quantitative data shown in Table 4 as well as the qualitative data in the following.

Table 3. Percentage of lesson time of code-switching in English classrooms

Amount of lesson time of code-switching	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
0% of the lesson time	10	20
Less than 10% of the time	15	30
10%-25% of the time	11	22
25%-50% of the time	7	14
50%-75% of the time	5	10
Over 75% of lesson time	2	4

To obtain a clear picture of the correlations between challenges in using 'pure' English and the situation of code-switching as a way to solve the problem, respondents were asked to indicate whether they would adopt code-switching in the same items as provided in the previous section in a four-point scale. The response categories were scored as follows: 1 = never, 2 = seldom, 3 = sometimes, 4 = always.

Overall, Group B tends to adopt code-switching more than Group A in English classrooms in all the given situations as shown in Table 4. The mean values for all items rated in the questionnaire by Group B are higher than that of Group A. For example, Group B has higher mean value in all aspects from dealing with discipline problem (Group A = 3.04; Group B = 3.53) to checking comprehension (Group A = 2.94; Group B = 2.48).

Yet, Group A and Group B show a different usage in the situations of code-switching. For Group A, they have the highest mean value (3.04) in dealing with discipline problem. As for

Group B, they rated explaining new words and explaining grammar with the highest mean value (3.53). This represents the variations in terms of the most frequent situation of code-switching between Group A and Group B.

Although there is a difference in the most frequent situation of code-switching, both Group A and Group B were less likely to adopt code-switching in situations such as giving instruction and checking comprehension. Both groups have a relatively lower mean value among all the aspects (see Table 4). These results show no significant difference in the overall situations of code-switching by the two groups.

In view of the individual items shown in Table 4, Group B felt significantly more strongly than did Group A in adopting code-switching than Group A when explaining new words ($p = 0.049$), explaining grammar ($p = 0.025$), helping students feel more confident and comfortable ($p = 0.043$), discussing assignments, tests, and quizzes ($p = 0.016$) as well as giving feedback ($p = 0.038$).

Table 4. T-test results of the two groups on the situations of code-switching in English classrooms

	Group A	Group B		
	Mean	Mean	t-value	p-value
Dealing with discipline problem e.g. not paying attention	3.04	3.35	-0.805	0.426
Explaining new words	2.91	3.53	-2.035	**0.049**
Explaining grammar	2.74	3.53	-2.332	**0.025**
Talking about personal matter e.g. a problem	2.78	3.47	-1.952	0.058
Helping students feel more confident and comfortable	2.70	3.47	-2.089	**0.043**
Discussing assignments, tests, and quizzes	2.39	3.18	-2.524	**0.016**
Giving feedback	2.43	3.12	-2.152	**0.038**
Giving instruction	2.61	3.00	-1.144	0.260
Checking comprehension	2.48	2.94	-1.366	0.180

Of the 40 (80%) respondents who adopted code-switching in English classrooms, most of them agreed that code-switching solves the challenges they face when teaching in 'pure' English, with 15 (30%) strongly agreed, 24 (48%) slightly agreed and only 1 (2%) slightly disagreed. From the general picture presented by Table 4, it is observed that the mean value of the items regarding dealing with discipline problems, explaining new words and explaining grammar remains the top three when respondents are required to rate the challenges when teaching in 'pure' English and the situations they adopt code-switching in English lessons. Yet, there is an interesting finding between the results shown in Table 2 and Table 4. The previous section found that pre-service teachers rated 'explaining grammar' as the most challenging items when teaching in 'pure' English. However, according to Table 4, the most frequent situation of adopting code-switching is 'dealing with discipline problem' instead of 'explaining grammar' for primary pre-service teachers. The difference between the mean value in these two aspects suggested that code-switching might not be the only and first solution for pre-service teachers to adopt when they face challenges in using 'pure' English. The result suggests that they may use other pedagogy or aids such as graphical illustrations to solve the challenges they faced when teaching in 'pure' English in the first place. For example, in the interview, Peggy indicated that she would prefer 'google the pictures' in order to strengthen students' memory instead of relying on the direct translation by code-switching. Polly and Sarah also said they would try to use simpler English to explain before code-switching. This explains the difference in terms of the mean value.

Similar to the items explained above, the discrepancy between the mean value can be found in other items. Although items such as 'dealing with discipline problem' is not rated with the highest mean value in terms of challenges when teaching in 'pure' English (Table 2), it has the highest mean value of the situation of code-switching (Table 4). Sally, who taught in a Band 3 secondary school and a class with students who had behavior problems, tended to use Cantonese as the first solution when her target is to stop students' misbehavior. Usually, she would try to speak in English once in the first place when encountering other situations or challenges when teaching in 'pure English'. She explained:

> But in terms of controlling discipline problems, I think code-switching is actually better than using body language or visual aids because they can ignore what you have on the PowerPoint and they can also ignore what your expression is [...] I think the best way is to adopt code-switching to Cantonese because it will translate directly into their brain.

After considering students' level and the need at that moment, code-switching may be treated as the most effective or efficient way of tackling the discipline problem, due to their attachment to their first language as well as their proficiency in understanding the wordings related to demand and regulations in English. Therefore, it is not surprising to observe such phenomenon in both primary and secondary English classrooms. This also explains the special phenomenon shown in Table 2, in which 2 respondents have uncommonly high usage in code-switching.

When comparing the results collected from the pre-service teachers participating in the present study and the data collected by Littlewood & Yu (2011), there is a high similarity in terms of the purposes and the situation of code-switching. In the quantitative data, pre-service teachers tended to agree and rated their likelihood of code-switching in different items. In addition, a higher mean value rated by pre-service teachers is observed in the overall aspects. The reason for having a higher mean value of code-switching by pre-service teachers may due to the lack of experience and skills to handle the challenges in using 'pure' English to conduct a whole English lesson comparing to in-service teachers.

To summarize, most of the respondents have adopted code-switching in different situations. In some of the items such as explaining grammar and helping students feel confident and comfortable, there is a significant difference between the situation in primary and secondary English classrooms. However, the difference between the mean value of challenges in teaching in 'pure' English and the situations of code-switching indicates that code-switching may not be the solution for pre-service teachers to adopted in the first place. It suggests that the attitude of pre-service teachers varies due to different factors inside the classrooms, which will be discussed in follows.

4.3 The perceptions towards the use of CS in English classrooms

From the quantitative data and the further explanation of the respondents from the qualitative phase, a clear picture of challenges in using 'pure' English and the situations of code-switching has been obtained. The results provide us with a better understanding of the similarities and differences between the cases in primary school and secondary school. However, the pre-service teachers' point-of-view of the use of code-switch, which is the third research question, has not been investigated. Therefore, their perceptions in terms of purpose, frequency and flexibility will be investigated.

4.3.1 The purpose of the use of code-switching in English classrooms

Overall, both primary and secondary pre-service teachers have a relatively positive attitude to the effectiveness of code-switching. Respondents were asked to rate the effectiveness with five-point scale, where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = slightly disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = slightly agree, 5 = strongly agree. Table 5 shows that the respondents tended to agree that code-switching was able to ensure students' understanding (mean value for Group A = 3.67, Group B = 3.50), establish rapport with students (Group A = 3.46, Group B = 3.95) and facilitate classroom management (Group A = 3.54, Group B = 3.96). There is no significant difference in the results between group A and group B. The results suggest that code-switching is being valued by the pre-service teacher after having the personal experience of code-switching in teaching.

Table 5. T-test results of the two groups on the perception of the effectiveness of the use of code-switch

	Group A	Group B		
	Mean	Mean	t-value	p-value
Ensuring students' understanding	3.67	3.50	0.834	0.408
Establishing rapport with students	3.46	3.95	-1.722	0.091
Facilitating classroom management	3.54	3.96	-1.913	0.062

Apart from their personal experience during teaching practice, due to their inexperience, their supporting teacher and peers teaching in the same school would be another contributing factor to their views on the purpose of code-switching. As Loughran (2006) indicated, involving mentoring conversations in the process of training as a teacher is essential in shaping pre-service teachers' learning about teaching. Therefore, questions about the effect brought by their supporting teacher and peers were also included in the questionnaire. According to the data from the quantitative phase, 46 (92%) of the respondents experienced code-switching between Cantonese and English in the class observation from their supporting teacher or peers during the field experience. Thus, they rated whether code-switching serves its purpose in their previous experience with a relatively high mean value (3.86) in a five-point scale mentioned above. From the data, it appears to be common and effective for other teachers in schools to adopt code-switching in their teaching.

The experience of the respondents explains more about the results shown in Table 5. All respondents shared their teaching beliefs and the experience from their supporting teacher or peers. Sammi, who was in favor of code-switching, suggested that code-switching should be adopted depending on the needs of students. From her point of view, she believed that 'different approaches should be adopted to different levels of students'. She further explained,

> If my students are bright, I would use pure English because this would help with their learning. And if my students need confidence for better comprehension, I wouldn't mind code-switching if I could help them. So it depends on the students' ability and I think teachers should adopt this approach as well because students are the center of our teaching.

Also, Sammi indicated that her supporting teacher's view on the importance of ensuring understanding. She said,

> My supporting teacher said if they could comprehend what you say, they can work on everything you ask them to do. So I decided to adopt code-switching because of the students' learning style and the advice from my supporting teachers.

Due to the effectiveness of her own teaching experience and her supporting teacher's idea, she valued the purpose of code-switching. As for the case of Polly, she shared a similar view with Sammi that 'code-switching is just a way for students to tackle their problems', which would not make a contrast to her teaching belief. She believed code-switching could be meaningful if it could help her students maintain their interests and learn in a positive learning environment when encountering different learning difficulties.

Meanwhile, Percy believed code-switching could help to achieve his teaching belief, which is to allow students to learn and take something away after attending his lesson. He explained,

> Originally, I insisted a lot on not to adopt code-switching because it would be detrimental to my students' English development. However, I found that it did not have any significant negative effect on my students' English proficiency. My students could learn English even better if I use Chinese because they can understand the difficult concept in a more comprehensive way.

In addition, Percy's supporting teacher mentioned to him that 'Code-switching is not totally a

bad thing when we have a class that most of the students have special needs and less capability'. As a result, the real classroom situation in his class strengthened his perception towards the use of code-switching.

As for Sally, she believed that code-switching is an effective medium for her to achieve her belief, which is to construct an in-depth relationship with students. Having an in-depth relationship would be the prerequisite of controlling classroom discipline and boosting their academic performance as she claimed, 'Once I've built a relationship with them, then they're more willing to be active in class and respond to me and try not to misbehave'.

On the other hand, Sarah shared an opposite view with the above four respondents. Sarah insisted on using 'pure' English instead of involving code-switching during her teaching, as she believed code-switching failed to allow students 'feel the fun of learning English and understand English culture', which contradicted her teaching belief and the ultimate goal in teaching. From her experience, one of her students revealed that 'she enjoyed having my English lessons because she had more chances to speak in English'. Therefore, she believed she could achieve her goal without code-switching. Unlike the respondents who adopted code-switching in their teaching, her teaching belief aligns with the rationale stated in the Curriculum Guide on Junior Secondary School, where 'students are given more opportunities to be exposed to and use English' (Curriculum Development Council, 2018). Although Sarah insisted on the use of 'pure' English in teaching, she observed that her peer had adopted code-switching during the teaching practice. She said:

> So it's not good or bad, it just depends on the banding of the school, whether it is a Band 1 school or a Band 3 school, as well as their students' ability.

She understood the difficulty for her peers to teach in a class with relatively low English proficiency in 'pure' English. Therefore, she believed code-switching had its needs and purpose when dealing with a weaker class, but only with very limited items such as explaining vocabulary.

Similar to Sarah, Peggy believed that code-switching could not allow her to achieve the belief of 'teaching through doing'. She explained:

> Code-switching conflicts with the use of language in teaching English in context, because [...] the teacher doesn't set up a real context or authentic atmosphere for students. I hope my students could apply their knowledge into daily life in which they could apply English in a communicative way and to communicate with foreigners with appropriate grammar and context.

In order to immerse students in an English environment to develop their English proficiency in a communicative context, code-switching would not be the first priority for teachers like Peggy to adopt. Yet, she observed that her supporting teacher adopted code-switching when explaining difficult vocabulary. This leads to a less strict impression of the disapproval in code-switching.

In summary, the purpose of code-switching in English classrooms is being valued by pre-service teachers. Although the situations of code-switching and the teaching belief among respondents are different, the majority of the respondents tend to be affirmative on the effect of code-switching in various purposes based on their personal experience during the teaching practice.

4.3.2 The frequency in the use of code-switching in English classrooms

In order to know more about their view on the appropriate frequency in code-switching, respondents in the quantitative phase were asked to rate whether teachers should adopt code-switching and the corresponding time-spent teacher should use while teaching as a second language. Of 50 respondents, 40 (80%) think that teachers adopted code-switching and a majority of respondents (68%) think that the time of code-switching should be within less than 25% of the lesson time (refer to Table 6).

Table 6. Percentage of lesson time that teachers should adopt code-switching in English classrooms

Amount of lesson time of code-switching	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
0% of the lesson time	10	20
Less than 10% of the time	21	42
10%-25% of the time	13	26
25%-50% of the time	4	8
50%-75% of the time	2	4

Over 75% of lesson time	0	0

Although the respondents valued code-switching to a different extent, they still shared the belief that the frequency of code-switching should be minimized in English classrooms. In order to minimize the time of code-switching, Sarah, Sammi and Polly suggested that teachers could implement other ways to achieve the purposes listed above and take code-switching as the last resort. For instance, Sarah and Sammi suggested the use of simpler English for students' understanding. Polly also suggested that teachers could ask students to check the meaning by themselves beforehand. In addition, Sarah and Polly found it equally important for teachers to discuss and set up a clear guideline on code-switching.

4.3.3 The flexibility of code-switching in English classrooms

As code-switching is usually socially disapproved in English classrooms according to scholars such as Krashen (1985) and Hawkins (1987) who favored in maximal use of target language as well as the curriculum guide, the ideas from the pre-service teachers serve as a rebuttal to their view. With reference to the data in Table 7, the mean value of considering code-switching as unprofessional conduct (Group A = 2.57; Group B = 2.55) is relatively low on a five-point scale. Moreover, it also shows a low mean value (Group A = 2.79; Group B = 2.55) on whether pre-service teachers would induce a sense of guilt when they adopt code-switching in English classrooms. The results do not align with those found by Mitchell (1988), as teachers who participated in Mitchell's research tend to have a negative impression on code-switching (Mitchell, 1988).

Table 7. Psychological perceptions of the use of CS in English classrooms

	Group A	Group B		
	Mean	**Mean**	**t-value**	**p-value**
Consider code-switching as an unprofessional conduct	2.57	2.55	0.076	0.939
Induce a sense of guilt when adopting code-switching in English classrooms	2.79	2.55	0.669	0.506

The respondents from the second qualitative phase provided additional information to support their view. In Sarah's case, she believed 'teachers are still professional even they adopt code-switching in English classroom'. As mentioned above, Sarah noticed the situation of her peer's class and she understood the difficulty for her peer to use 'pure' English to teach in an English

classroom. Therefore, it is understandable and acceptable to perceive code-switching in professional teaching.

As for Sammi and Sally, both of them found that the guideline and expectations from the supervisor in the University do not fit the real classroom situation in local schools. As Sammi explains:

> The level of students was too weak, especially in Band 3 schools. Without Cantonese as the primal medium of instruction, the English class would not be able to go on because they would be off-task.

Sally also emphasized that:

> But the reality is that my school and my supporting teacher did not think that teachers can teach English in 'pure' English. [...] Students would zone out if you talk in 'pure' English without any Cantonese translation. I think all of us were cautious about the situation that the students would not be able to understand if we talk in English, [...] so at first, it would be better to adopt code-switching and reduce it gradually.

The dilemma of Sammi and Sally echoes the view raised by Meijer, de Graaf & Meirink (2011). As they indicated, the disparity between the skills and knowledge acquired in pre-service programs and the realities of workplace practice has been widely discerned. Yet, the current guideline offered by the Curriculum Development Council or the school for teaching practice did not provide a room of flexibility for pre-service teachers. It would be considerably hard for them to perform the professionalism as in-service teachers in a short period of time in teaching practice.

As for Percy's point of view, he believed teachers should be clear about their purpose of code-switching and should neglect the negative opinions on the way of teaching. He further explained:

> If you have to adopt code-switching, then use it, but don't take it for granted and don't assume you have to use it for every lesson. [...] A teacher should not rely on code-switching to deal

20

with all kinds of challenges, but you can definitely use it, don't treat it as a taboo or even forbidden stuff to use in the classroom.

In view of his viewpoint, it is important for teachers to bear in mind that code-switching should not be a cure to all of the challenges encountered when teaching with 'pure' English. However, teachers should not show strong disapproval towards a useful teaching strategy. It would be the responsibility of teachers to control the use of code-switching in order to maintain and construct an English learning environment for students. Similar to the highlight of Peggy and Polly's idea, there is a room of adjustment in terms of the flexibility in code-switching. Students' learning needs and uniqueness should be the priority when considering the needs of code-switching.

To summarize, the views of pre-service teachers suggest that there is a significant contrast between the expectation from authority and the real situation during teaching. Even though pre-service teachers aimed to facilitate students learning, they still face a dilemma that would affect their psychological view on their teaching quality. With more flexible guidelines and more support from the school, the struggle faced by the pre-service teacher will be reduced.

5. Conclusion and Limitations

The study has provided a view from the perspective of pre-service teachers. Through investigating the challenges when teaching in 'pure' English and the corresponding use of code-switching encountered by pre-service teachers, the real classroom situations can be revealed. Additionally, their perceptions towards code-switching in terms of the purpose, frequency and flexibility have been deeply explored. In general, the majority of both primary and secondary pre-service teachers unfolded the value of code-switching in tackling the challenges of teaching in 'pure' English during the teaching practice to a different extent. In spite of the positive findings from the study, one limitation of the study is the insignificant sample size. Although the sample size is enough for the current studies, it does not represent the whole situation of pre-service teachers across all institutes in Hong Kong. However, the findings from the present studies have provided some insights and suggestions to the controversy and dilemma between the scholar's viewpoints and the practical situation. It is hoped that the perspective of pre-service teachers can be taken into account when setting the curriculum guideline. Flexible use in code-switching is suggested to be approved during the

21

short period of teaching practice. In this way, pre-service teachers are able to develop explore the appropriate purpose of code-switching, and the most suitable way of teaching in a relatively less-constraint teaching environment.

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Appendix 1. Questionnaire template

Definition of specific terms:
1. *Code-switching* refers to the switching between Cantonese and English at both inter- and intra-sentential level.

Please "✓" the box or circle the rate scale as appropriate.

Part I   Personal Information

1. What is your name?
_____

2. What is your email address?
_____

3. What is your gender?
☐ Male
☐ Female

4. What grade are you teaching during your field experience?
☐ Junior primary students (P.1 - P.3) (Please move on to Q.6)
☐ Senior primary students (P.4 - P.6) (Please move on to Q.6)
☐ Junior secondary students (S.1 - S.3)
☐ Senior primary students (S.4 - S.6)

5. What is the medium of instruction of your school in field experience?
☐ Chinese as Medium Instruction (CMI)
☐ English as Medium Instruction (EMI)

Part II   Teaching in 'pure' English

6. Have you faced any challenges when you teach in 'pure' English?
☐ Yes
☐ No

7. What are the challenges you face when you teach in 'pure' English? (You can choose more than one answers.)
1 = Never
2 = Rarely

3 = Sometimes

4 = Always

1. Checking comprehension	1	2	3	4
2. Discussing assignments, tests, and quizzes	1	2	3	4
3. Explaining new words	1	2	3	4
4. Explaining grammar	1	2	3	4
5. Helping students feel more confident and comfortable	1	2	3	4
6. Giving feedback	1	2	3	4
7. Giving instruction	1	2	3	4
8. Talking about personal matter e.g. a problem	1	2	3	4
9. Dealing with discipline problem e.g. not paying attention	1	2	3	4
10. Others:	1	2	3	4

8. What will you do if you face challenges when teaching in 'pure' English? (Please put "✓" the box or indicate specific details in the box "Others".)

	A) Use first language (Cantonese or Putonghua)	B) Use body language	C) Use graphical illustrations (e.g. photos, audio, video)	D) Others (Please indicate in the following boxes)	E) N/A
1. Checking comprehension					
2. Discussing assignments, tests, and quizzes					
3. Explaining new words					
4. Explaining grammar					
5. Helping students feel more confident and comfortable					

6. Giving feedback					
7. Giving instruction					
8. Talking about personal matter e.g. a problem					
9. Dealing with discipline problem e.g. not paying attention					
10. Others:					

Part III   Teaching with code-switching

9. Have you ever adopted code-switch while teaching?
☐ Yes
☐ No (Please move on to Q.14)

10. How often do you adopt code-switching while teaching (in one lesson)?
☐ Less than 10% of the time
☐ 10%-25% of the time
☐ 25%-50% of the time
☐ 50%-75% of the time
☐ Over 75% of the time

11. In what situation do you adopt code-switching in English classroom?
1 = Never
2 = Rarely
3 = Sometimes
4 = Always

1. Checking comprehension	1	2	3	4
2. Discussing assignments, tests, and quizzes	1	2	3	4

3. Explaining new words	1	2	3	4
4. Explaining grammar	1	2	3	4
5. Helping students feel more confident and comfortable	1	2	3	4
6. Giving feedback	1	2	3	4
7. Giving instruction	1	2	3	4
8. Talking about personal matter e.g. a problem	1	2	3	4
9. Dealing with discipline problem e.g. not paying attention	1	2	3	4
10. Others:	1	2	3	4

12. To what extend do you think code-switching solves the challenges you face when teaching in 'pure' English?
1= Strongly disagree
2=Slightly disagree
3=Neutral
3=Slightly agree
4=Strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5

Part IV   Perception towards code-switching
13. Have you observed code-switching from your supporting teacher or peers in English classroom during your teaching practice?
☐ Yes
☐ No

14. In what situation do your supporting teacher or peers adopt code-switching in English classroom? (You can choose more than one answers.)
1 = Never
2 = Rarely
3 = Sometimes
4 = Always

1. Checking comprehension	1	2	3	4
2. Discussing assignments, tests, and quizzes	1	2	3	4
3. Explaining new words	1	2	3	4
4. Explaining grammar	1	2	3	4
5. Helping students feel more confident and comfortable	1	2	3	4

6. Giving feedback	1	2	3	4
7. Giving instruction	1	2	3	4
8. Talking about personal matter e.g. a problem	1	2	3	4
9. Dealing with discipline problem e.g. not paying attention	1	2	3	4
10. Others:	1	2	3	4

15. To what extend do you find the use of code-switching serves its purpose in your observation?
1= Strongly disagree
2=Slightly disagree
3=Neutral
4=Slightly agree
5=Strongly agree

1	2	3	4	5

16. Should teachers adopt code-switching while teaching as second language?
☐ Yes
☐ No

17. How often should teachers adopt code-switching in English classroom (in one lesson)?
☐ 0% of the time
☐ Less than 10% of the time
☐ 10%-25% of the time
☐ 25%-50% of the time
☐ 50%-75% of the time
☐ Over 75% of the time

18. To what extend do you think code-switching facilitate students' understanding when learning English?
1= Strongly disagree
2=Slightly disagree
3=Neutral
4=Slightly agree
5=Strongly agree

1. Explaining new words	1	2	3	4	5
2. Explaining grammar	1	2	3	4	5
3. Checking comprehension	1	2	3	4	5
4. Discussing assignments, tests, and quizzes	1	2	3	4	5

19. To what extend do you think code-switching facilitate the establishment of rapport with students?

1= Strongly disagree

2=Slightly disagree

3=Neutral

4=Slightly agree

5=Strongly agree

1. Helping students feel more confident and comfortable	1	2	3	4	5
2. Giving positive feedback	1	2	3	4	5

20. To what extend do you think code-switching facilitate your classroom management?

1= Strongly disagree

2=Slightly disagree

3=Neutral

4=Slightly agree

5=Strongly agree

1. Giving instruction	1	2	3	4	5
2. Talking about personal matter e.g. a problem	1	2	3	4	5
3. Dealing with discipline problem e.g. not paying attention	1	2	3	4	5

21. From your personal perspective, to what extend do you think code-switching can be a useful pedagogic resource that should not be strictly banned?

1= Strongly disagree

2=Slightly disagree

3=Neutral

4=Slightly agree

5=Strongly agree

1	2	3	4	5

22. From the perspective of your field experience school, to what extend do you think code-switching can be a useful pedagogic resource that should not be strictly banned?

1= Strongly disagree

2=Slightly disagree

3=Neutral

4=Slightly agree

5=Strongly agree

1	2	3	4	5

23. To what extend do you consider the rationale of the school contradict to your personal teaching belief in terms of the use of code-switching?
1= Strongly disagree
2=Slightly disagree
3=Neutral
4=Slightly agree
5=Strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5	

24. Overall, to what extend do you think code-switch can facilitate teachers' teaching and students' language learning?
1= Strongly disagree
2=Slightly disagree
3=Neutral
4=Slightly agree
5=Strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5	

-END-

Appendix 2. Transcript of interview with Percy

K: Kristy
P: Percy

K: Hello Percy. Thank you so much for doing the interview. Shall we start now?

P: Yes.

K: Can you elaborate more on the challenges when you have to teach in 'pure' English without code-switching?

P: I can think of two situations. First of all, when I have to explain some difficult concept, some abstract words like happiness or humorous, I can't really explain the concept to my students if I have to use 'pure' English. It's really difficult so I have to spend a long time to explain to them. For example, if you want describe someone as humorous, that means someone is funny, but not literally funny, it's like a good side of funny. So students have to pay extra attention in classes and they also have to use extra understanding to understand the word. Another example is that when I have to conduct dictation or exams, I have to be the monitor of the exams. If I use 'pure' English, students who may not be good in English, they would have difficulties in understanding my instructions. That's why they may violate some rules. However, they didn't mean to violate them and that is the problem. So if I don't adopt code-switching, misunderstanding might happen.

K: So did you adopt code-switching when you encountered the two situations you have mentioned? If yes, can you recount the experience?

P: Yes, I did because the students were not very good in English. When I have to explain the whole concept or maybe some special homework like group work or project, then I have to use Chinese because they might not be able to understand the English instruction. So for the dictations and exams, I have to use Chinese because I have to ensure that no one is violating the rules. I have to speak more Chinese, for example for the time allowed for the exam, the rules, what do they have to write before they have to complete before their exams, the names and the date.

K: Do you think code-switching is the best solutions to solve the challenges you encountered when compared to other possible solutions? Why?

P: I think in certain aspects, code-switching is definitely the best solution because it is very the least time-consuming method I can use in the classroom. I had 35 to 40 minutes for a lesson, and I had to do some body language or aids to assist my language, so that is a very time consuming. For example, for one of my supervision lesson, I have to prepare the aids because I have to explain some difficult concepts regarding the sentence structure and condition of sentence. If I prepare the aids for the lesson, I might need hours or even days to prepare for one

single lesson and it's impossible for teachers to do so. So I think code switching is the most effective while the lease time-consuming way for teachers to conduct English lesson at all, although it might not be the most desirable way.

K: Ok! Can you share your teaching belief?

P: I don't have any special belief for my teaching, but in my lesson I want my students to take something away after attending my lesson, and that is my belief. I don't want to skim through all the pages of the book and told them I have finished my lesson, but I want them to know is that if they can really take over something from my lesson, it is counted as a successful lesson as they have learnt something and they have taken something away.

K: Does code-switching make a contrast to your teaching belief?

P: I don't think that will make a contrast to my teaching belief, because somehow code-switching can actually help building up my lesson and supporting my language teaching. If they don't understand, I have to adopt code-switching to make them understand what I say and make them understand my concept, but I have to ensure that they have to use English as well in my lesson, so that they could really apply the language instead not just learning the language itself.

K: Before having the FE, what do you think about an English teacher adopt code-switching in English classrooms?

P: Before having the FE, I don't think code-switching is a good thing in English classroom. I always project an English Environment that consists of no Chinese at all, but apparently that doesn't meet my students' expectation. My students also tried very hard in understanding my English. It is really ideal to have a full English classroom but that is not realistic at all. Students know they have to speak in English, but students have to understand what do you want to teach them as well. So it's not really realistic but I have a belief and I projected English classroom as well, and I don't think code-switch is a good thing before the FE I guess.

K: Do you have any change in terms of your perception towards code-switching after having the FE?

P: Of course it changes a lot now. I would definitely adopt code-switching in my future classroom if I have to. Originally, I insisted a lot on not code-switching because it would be detrimental to my students' English development. However, I found that it did not have any significant negative effect on my students' English proficiency. My students could learn English even better if I use Chinese because they can understand the difficult concept in a more comprehensive way. So yes, I think it is much better.

K: Are there any other factors that affect your perception towards code-switching during your FE?

P: My supporting teacher supports us to use full English in the classroom, although she also mentioned it is really impossible to understand, especially when we have a class that most of the students have special needs and less capability. And then we have to use code switching, so code switching is not totally a bad thing. Sometimes it also helps your students to understand your lesson.

K: Do you have any suggestions towards the use of code-switching in English classroom?

P: I think if you have to adopt code-switching, then use it, but don't take it for granted and don't assume you have to use it for every lesson. Just make sure that you're having a real English lesson, so when you're at teaching English, try to motivate your students to speak in English, stop them when they are using Cantonese. A teacher should not rely on code-switching to deal with all kinds of challenges, but you can definitely use it, don't treat it as a taboo or even forbidden stuff to use in the classroom.

K: This is the end of the interview. Thank you so much for your help!

Appendix 3. Transcript of interview with Polly

K: Kristy
P: Polly

K: Hello Polly. Thank you so much for doing the interview. Shall we start now?

P: Yes.

K: Can you elaborate more on the challenges when you have to teach in 'pure' English without code-switching?

P: Students in my assigned class were with relatively low ability in different ways. The most typical reason is because quite a number of them have individual special needs, like ADHD, limited IQ, so it is a challenge for me if I need to use a 'pure' English in a 35 minutes lesson. And also, because of their learning characteristics, once they can't understand what I'm talking, they are likely to get themselves distracted by anything in the classroom. So, it is very important for me to use Chinese sometimes to catch their attention when they are having difficulties.

K: Do you remember any real examples that you adopt code-switching in your lessons? If yes, can you recount the experience?

P: Yes, but I don't remember what exactly the vocabulary was. Let say the word "climb". It was a lesson teaching vocabulary. When I taught the vocabulary "climb", I read aloud with students first. Then I showed a GIF that a cartoon character climbing on a tree for students to guess the meaning. Actually, I believed some of students with higher ability could get the meaning of climb, but most of them couldn't. The next step I did was using body language for them to memorize and learn the meaning of this word. I think maybe half of the class understand it. Then finally, I adopted code-switching in Chinese or asked some students to tell the whole class in Chinese for others to clarify or understand the meaning of this word. This is kind of a routine for me to teach this class as the learning diversity is huge and overall, their ability is comparatively low.

K: Do you think code-switching is the best solutions to solve the challenges you encountered when compared to other possible solutions? Why?

P: It really depends on students. Of course, I can say this is the most direct solution to help ESL students to clarify some blurred concepts, but I doubt because of the word "best". For students in my assigned class, as I just mentioned, I'll try to explain some difficult vocabulary by other methods first, then the last solution is code-switching, and this is because of their unique learning characteristics and personal background. However, for those who have high ability and classes that with less learning diversity, I think using pure English is not a barrier,

and actually helping students to enlarge their vocabulary list or allow them to find out the meaning from a context is more meaningful than translating difficult words to L1.

K: Can you share your teaching belief or rationale?

P: I think my belief is to help students learning under a positive learning environment. I believe learning motivation is the best solution when facing difficulties. It is unpreventable for a student to encounter learning difficulties. However, when he or she like that particular subject or knowledge, it is way easier for one to overcome those problems. My character is to help them to find out the best way to learn with interests.

K: Does code-switching make a contrast to your teaching belief?

P: No. It is just one kind of ways for students to tackle their problems. If this makes them improve and help them maintain the interests in learning English, then code-switching can be meaningful.

K: Before having the FE, what do you think about an English teacher adopt code-switching in English classrooms?

P: I think it is quite helpful but not very meaningful. Let me think of some examples… I studied in an EMI secondary school. When a teacher used Chinese to assist their teaching, such as in Biology lessons, the teacher used a little bit Chinese in some…very academic and professional vocabulary, I would think this is quite helpful for me to understand in lessons. But in English lessons, I would say that as a high school student, maybe it would be better for us to check out the meaning from the dictionary instead.

K: Do you have any change in terms of your perception towards code-switching after having the FE?

P: A little bit I'd say. Before FE, I think it would be not too appropriate for me to use L1 that much in an English classroom. But now, if it helps students in learning, then why not using code-switching? Of course it really depends on the specialty of that particular class. Student-centered is the most important concept.

K: Are there any other factors that affect your perception towards code-switching during your FE?

P: Yes of course. The school policy and culture is an important concern. In my assigned school, it stated that the percentage of English language should be used in the classroom, like 70-80%. And also, after observing the supporting teacher, I can see when and how can I use Chinese to help students learning. If it is an English primary school, it's totally inappropriate for me to adopt code-switching in lessons.

K: Do you have any suggestions towards code-switching in English classroom?

P: Yes, I think first of all, the purpose should be student-centered. The purpose must be helping students to learn but not easier for teachers to teach. Before applying code-switching, try to help students to learn in other ways first, step by step, such as body language. I think the frequency depends on the school policy and also teachers should still sometimes ask students to check the meaning by themselves, especially for those who are in senior levels. And for flexibility, again, mainly depends on students' learning needs and uniqueness, maybe also depends on the materials level. Teachers needs to be flexible when they decide to use code-switching.

K: Ok! This is the end of the interview. Thank you so much for your help!

Appendix 4. Transcript of interview with Peggy

K: Kristy
P: Peggy

K: Hello Peggy. Thank you so much for doing the interview. Shall we start now?

P: Sure.

K: Can you elaborate more on the challenges when you have to teach in 'pure' English without code-switching?

P: I find it hard to teach in pure English without code switching when it comes to some abstract idea, even though my students are in intermediate level. I remember one of the student mentioned some difficult vocabulary like those related to space, but for those weaker students, it is very hard to explain by just using English. It is quite in an abstract idea about space and that's why I code switch in my lesson. I think it is particularly difficult to explain to abstract vocabulary to the students. For those weaker students, they might need more support from the teacher.

K: As you have mentioned, you would adopt code-switching when you explain some difficult vocabulary. Can you recount the experience and try to demonstrate them again?

P: As I have mentioned in question one, I did adopt code-switching in my lesson when it comes to explaining those extra ideas. I remember once the student mentioned a vocabulary about space, for example like the examples of planets and the density thing and I find it very hard to explain in pure English, because of the time constraints during the lesson. I did not use visual aids to help in explaining the vocabulary and this is why I did code-switch. I would say 'mars mean 火星' and I did adopt code-switching in my lesson.

K: Do you find other difficulties in using 'pure' English apart from teaching vocabularies?

P: Apart from teaching vocabulary, I think I'm fine in teaching in pure English in class.

K: Do you think code-switching is the best solutions to solve the challenges you encountered when compared to other possible solutions? Why?

P: Even though I adopted code-switching in my lesson, I don't think code switch is the best solution to solve the challenges I encountered, because it's from spontaneous response from the students and it may be hard for me to explain. But even if I have time, I would search for the pictures of it then instead of code-switching in my lesson, because I think learning English does not need the direct translation from the first language. Personally speaking, I don't think direct translation is a useful way for students to learn the vocabulary. If I show them pictures,

I think it can strengthen their memory by matching the pictures and vocabulary and they can really learn them but not to memorize the meaning of first language.

K: Ok! Can you share your teaching belief or rationale?

P: I think my teaching belief is 'teaching through doing'. When the students tried to do something, they can really learn the language and applied it. I hope that the students could apply their knowledge into daily life, like they can really use English to in a communicative way and to communicate with like the foreigners with appropriate grammar and context.

K: Does code-switching make a contrast to your teaching belief?

P: I think code-switching contrasts to my teaching belief because code-switching conflicts with teaching English in context, because in real life situation people won't directly translate the meaning for you in Cantonese. In a real conversation, people may just explain it in 'pure' English and that's why I think teachers should not adopt code-switching very often in the classroom, because the teacher doesn't set up a real context or authentic atmosphere for students.

K: Before having the FE, what do you think about an English teacher adopt code-switching in English classrooms?

P: Before the FE, I think English teacher shouldn't adopt code-switching in English classrooms, because they have to set a real situation or an authentic atmosphere for the students to learn and practice. But in fact, during the real teaching in classroom, I find it very hard not to adopt code-switching because of the time constraints, and sometimes students may give spontaneous responses that are very hard to explain. Therefore, I did change my mind somehow.

K: Do you have any change in terms of your perception towards code-switching after having the FE?

P: I have some changes in terms of my perception towards code-switching after having the FE, because for those weaker students, some abstract ideas and really too difficult for them. Whenever I explain in pure English, they may not be able to understand the ideas. But with direct translation, somehow it helps them. And also in my class, it may be hard for the teacher to use pure English because of the time constrain. Teacher may not have time to really show some pictures or use other illustration method during a short period of time in class because of rushing the schedule.

K: Apart from the concern of your students' level, are there any other factors that affect your perception towards code-switching during your FE?

P: Before having the FE, I think code-switching is strictly banned by the school and the teachers. But after observing of my supporting teacher, she adopted code-switching in the class for those

difficult vocabulary, that's why I have change my perception towards code switching. During the FE, because my supporting teacher sometimes adopted code-switching, and maybe the school is not that strict to the policy of using pure English in classroom.

K: Do you have any suggestions towards code-switching in English classroom?

P: I think code-switching in English classroom greatly depends on the students' level. For those students with advanced level of English, using pure English is definitely fine for them. For those weaker students, I think they may need more direct translation in Cantonese in order to let them really understand some grammar rules or vocabulary and to let them understand some abstract ideas.

K: Ok! This is the end of the interview. Thank you so much for your help!

Appendix 5. Transcript of interview with Sarah

K: Kristy
S: Sarah

K: Hello Sarah. Thank you so much for doing the interview. Shall we start now?

S: Yes.

K: Can you elaborate more on the challenges when you have to teach in 'pure' English without code-switching?

S: Since I taught in a Band 3 secondary school, so I experienced a lot of challenges when I was teaching them, especially I insisted that I should use full English in my English lesson. For example, when I was giving the instruction of the task at the very beginning, my students had no idea what I was talking about, so it was really difficult for me to instruct them in doing some kind of task. As for their behavior, actually part of them are really obedient and quiet, but the other half of the class were very noisy and some of them just gave up learning or misbehave in class. Therefore, it was like a really big challenge for me to use 'pure' English in class.

K: As you have mentioned, you insisted on using 'pure' English during your teaching. Why would you consider using other solutions instead of code-switching even when your students were not engaging in class?

S: I think basically it's because they were the best class in from one and I just want to set a higher standard for them. Actually, I think code switching is not the best solution for teachers to use because students would get used to the teachers' code switching. Students would rely on the way of code switching in learning English and it's not the best way for them to learn more English vocabulary and grammar. Also, they cannot enjoy the fun of learning English. I encouraged them to ask me immediately if they do not understand the word. In this case, I would use simpler vocabulary to explain those more difficult terms and they could comprehend my meaning. So I think it works for them. Although they don't really have good English proficiency, I just want to set a higher standard for them.

K: So do you think setting a higher standard in order to boost your students' performance would be your first priority in teaching? Or in other words, what is your teaching belief/rationale?

S: I think, to me, setting a higher standard is not really for boosting my students' academic performance, because my students did not really care about the exams or academic performance. My first priority in teaching is that, just like what I've mentioned, I want them to feel the fun of learning English and also to understand English culture, because I think that would help them to widen their horizons and to develop a sense that they would know more about others' culture, not just about the Hong Kong's culture. So I think my teaching belief is more about getting them to feel the fun in learning English. And I know it's very challenging

40

for teachers to use 'pure' English and different tasks to help students enjoy learning English because we don't have enough time and it needs extra time and effort to design all those tasks. However, pushing students to learn in 'pure' English has its effectiveness, as I have interviewed my students and one of the students told me that she enjoyed having my English lessons because she had more chances to speak in English through those tasks and discussions with the group mates. As I always ask them to use pure English, my students are also setting a higher standard for herself and to experience the fun of learning English through those games.

K: Does code-switching make a contrast to your teaching belief?

S: Yes, I think actually it's a big contrast, because you know I insisted on using pure English not just for my instruction, but also during the class activity. So if I adopt code-switching during the class activity, it's like I took away the chance for them to immerse in pure English context and to understand the culture more.

K: I see your point that you can tell that you students have the potential to achieve more and explore the fun in learning English under the environment of 'pure' English. However, would you still insist on teaching without code-switching if you are teaching in a very weak school (let say Band 3) and the students are very rebellious that they have zero interest and ability to catch up with the teaching schedule?

S: I think I can imagine the situation because another school mate, who is in the same FE school with me, had the worst class in form3. Actually, he insisted on using pure English in the very beginning, but it turns out that he adopted code-switching after encountering different challenges. Sometimes he even used Cantonese for the entire lesson. Considering all the factors, I think I would probably go for code switch because I could solely focus on boosting their learning interest in English. I have to be more practical in the real classroom situation. I have to catch up with the teaching schedule and it's not just for their interest. I think if that's the case, I would go for code-switching.

K: Before having the FE, what do you think about an English teacher code-switching in English classrooms?

S: Before having the FE, I cannot imagine how difficult it is for an English teacher to use 'pure' English in English classroom. Like a lot of primary schools, I think teachers actually just code switch between Cantonese and English because maybe their students are really too small to understand a word in English, so I completely understand that. After having the FE, I think even in secondary schools we cannot use pure English, because some students can't even speak fluent Cantonese or maybe they're from mainland China. It's just impossible for them to use English in the entire lesson. And I think teachers had to make choices and strike a balance between a lot of things, so it's not good or bad, it just depends on the banding of the school, whether it is a Band one school or a Band three school, as well as their students' ability. So I think teachers are still professional even they use code switching in English classroom.

K: So apart from the concern of your students' level, are there any other factors that affect your perception towards code-switching during your FE?

S: In fact, different parties of the school have shaped my view towards code-switching. Once I observed my supporting teacher's lesson and she used 'pure' English during that class. So I think maybe I had the same idea with her that we just avoid using code switching during teaching. And for my FE peers, just like what I've mentioned, he was like some kind of forced to use code switching because his class was really weak and like most of his students didn't have any interest or motivation in learning English. So I totally understand that and I respect his decision. And for the rationale of the school, I think the school didn't really care much about students' academic performance, or I would say the school did try hard to promote English learning, but it was not really successful. And it didn't have much guidelines for teachers to use pure English during the English lessons, because I think the school probably knows that if all the teachers use pure English in all the classes, most of their students won't come to school. So I think the school is okay with code switching.

K: Do you have any suggestions towards the use of code-switching in English classroom?

S: I'm just not sure if code-switching or code mixing is completely forbidden in English classrooms. I remember that there is a guideline from EDB, it's like no more than 10 minutes Cantonese in English lesson, I'm not sure. For my suggestion, I think there should be some restrictions, like I know it's very challenging but as an English teacher, he or she still has to try his or her best to deliver the knowledge in English. It maybe not in pure English, but the frequency of using Cantonese or code switching must be low. So I think there is a reason for a set of guidelines of the use of code switching, but I don't know how the EDB or the school had to set those guidelines. For the purpose of using code switching, it mainly is for explaining vocabulary, but in my case I would use simple terms to explain some difficult vocabulary, so I don't know if it's still a purpose of using code switching. I think like EDB and schools have to take the students background or the school's background as a factor to consider. For example, in my class there were like more than half or 2/3 of them are from mainland China, so some of them don't really speak Cantonese and that is a great challenge when English teacher use pure English to teach an English lesson. In that sense, I think the flexibility should be higher for those teachers to use code switching, they will also make the teaching and learning. They would think that the school has thought of them and planned for them.

K: Got it! This is the end of the interview. Thank you so much for your help!

Appendix 6. Transcript of interview with Sally

K: Kristy
S: Sally

K: Hello Sally. Thank you so much for doing the interview. Shall we start now?

S: Ok.

K: Can you elaborate more on the challenges when you have to teach in 'pure' English without code-switching?

S: I was doing teaching practice in the school that I think it was at the bottom of Band 2 and the front of Band 3, so the students they don't have really good English proficiency. Some of my students can't even spell café and they just want to play every time when they have English class, because firstly, they don't have confidence in the language, and secondly, they don't think they can understand what I'm saying. So if I speak in 'pure' English, I think some of them or most of them just give up and they started to be inattentive, like playing on their own and just not listening. And my students were quite naughty because some of them would get up on their own or walk out of the classroom without my permission. Some of them would even make paper planes and shoot across the classroom. It was really hard so I have to code-switch between Cantonese and English all the time. When I'm trying to explain an instruction, I will speak in English once and speak it in Cantonese another time. However, my supervisor told me not to tell them the instruction again in Cantonese because the students would just rely on Cantonese translation without listening to the English instruction in the first time. But the most certain thing is that I have to use Cantonese when I have to clarify something or when I want to stop their misbehavior.

K: As you have mentioned, you would adopt code-switching when you give instructions or control your students' discipline. Can you recount the experience and try to demonstrate them again?

S: Giving instruction is quite straightforward, because I just translate what I said into Cantonese. Like if I said, 'Now what you have to do is to complete this matching worksheet.' and it would be followed by '所以你們現在要做的是你們要完成這張配對的工作紙'. As for controlling my students discipline, it would be'不要再講話了' or '我有說你可以出去嗎' something like that.

K: Do you think code-switching is the best solutions to solve the challenges you encountered when compared to other possible solutions? Why?

S: I think it depends. I think if the situation is I was giving instructions then I could possibly use more visual aids or a picture to show them or to demonstrate under the visualizer for them

to see what they have to do. But in terms of controlling discipline problems, I think code-switching is actually better than using body language or visual aids because they can ignore what you have on the PowerPoint and they can also ignore what your expression is or what you are doing, but they cannot not hear you, their ears are never closed, so they must hear what you're saying when they're not looking at you and they're misbehaving. I think the best way is to use code switching to Cantonese because it will translate directly into their brain. Because most of the time, students don't look at us and so I think using code switching is the best way to catch their attention instead of wasting time on body language and visual aids. But back to my first point, if it is teaching, it is still better to let them be immersed more in the English speaking environment.

K: Can you share your teaching belief or rationale?

S: I think essentially my beliefs would be never give up on any students and to build a relationship with the students, as students are appealed to young teachers and especially when we are teachers that looks so young. They would be more likely to make jokes with us and talk with us. So I think we have more advantage over the official teachers to actually build a relationship with them. Not be their friends, but be into their hearts more and I found that once I've built a relationship with them, then they're more willing to be active in class and respond to me and try not to misbehave. I think the relationship did last until I left, so I think they really like me as their English teacher although I wasn't going to stay very long but they really like me. So I think building a relationship and not giving up on the student is very important. Like what I said like earlier, some of them can't even spell café and they don't know easy words like bakery and stuff. But I think we can always find things that they are good at, like I know they are good at drawing, some of them, so it's easier to get them in task. When I have to ask them to do task that involve drawing or expressing their opinion, they would really like it and engage in the class more.

K: So do you think the use of code-switching in your classroom helps or make a contrast to your teaching belief?

S: I definitely think it helps. Because if I don't adopt code-switching and if I use English strictly all the time, then they would feel there is a barrier between us and they would just give up more on the language. They won't want to listen and don't have the motivation to learn English anymore. So I think using Cantonese and code-switching helps in realizing my belief because use Cantonese connects us in a better way. So when I use a language that is a language that they know and is very fluent in, I think they would be more open to try learning a language and try to pay attention.

K: Before having the FE, what do you think about an English teacher adopt code-switching in English classrooms?

S: I think I've never really thought about this question. In my secondary school, we always have our English classes mixed with English and Cantonese, so I didn't really think that was weird or unacceptable.

K: Do you have any change in terms of your perception towards code-switching after having the FE?

S: I think it did change in some ways. I realized that I must cater to my students' level of ability when it comes to the frequency of code-switching, like if I were teaching a Band 1 school obviously I wouldn't adopt code-switching at all. But if I were teaching in a school like I did in last semester, then I would use code-switching. So I think my perception hasn't really changed because I never thought it was strange to code-switch in an English classroom. But I think it has altered in some way that I think it should depend on students' ability.

K: Apart from the concern of your students' level, are there any other factors that affect your perception towards code-switching during your FE?

S: I think the strange thing is that there is a conflict of interest in what EdU expect from us and the reality expect from us. What EdU expect from us is that we should talk and teach entirely in English and no code-switching is allowed strictly. But the reality is that, I think our school and my supporting teacher did not think that teachers can teach 'pure' English, because my supporting teacher once said that she must use Cantonese in every lesson. Students would zone out if you talk in 'pure' English without any Cantonese translation. I think all of us were cautious about the situation that the students would not be able to understand if we talk in English, but I think they are kind of used to teachers' code-switching in the classroom, so at first it would be better to adopt code-switching and reduce it gradually. So in conclusion, I think code-switching is acceptable from my perspective, like no matter what EdU taught us and the theory said, I think code-switching is acceptable, but it shouldn't be widely used unless it is a very bad school or something.

K: Do you have any suggestions towards the use of code-switching in English classroom?

S: I think for frequency, it should not be more than half of the class, or it would be a Cantonese lesson instead of an English lesson. And the purpose, I think code-switching should be used mainly when giving instruction, because that's the important thing and for classroom management of course. I think the others like when you are teaching a word, I think my supervisor has a point not to translate directly in Chinese, but to try to make them like understand the word in terms of visual aid or like movement or body language. In flexibility, I think I've mentioned it earlier for the Band 1 to Band 3 schools.

K: OK! This is the end of the interview. Thank you so much for your help!

Appendix 7. Transcript of interview with Sammi

K: Kristy
S: Sammi

K: Hello Sammi. Thank you so much for doing the interview. Shall we start now?

S: Yes.

K: Can you elaborate more on the challenges when you have to teach in 'pure' English without code-switching?

S: I think it is a really difficult task to teach in pure English as I taught in a Band 3 school during both of my teaching practice. Some of the students' English proficiency is very low. Even though I taught senior form students, I found their English level was comparable to that of Primary school students. Even for some simple instructions, they had to make me repeat in Cantonese so that they could follow and I had to repeat for many times in English sometimes. I knew they understood my English because I made it very simple. However, they were not confident enough until they hear me repeat and explain in Cantonese.

K: Can you recount the experience that you give instruction in both English and Chinese?

S: I remember it was my last teaching practice (my second one). I was teaching a group of form five students writing and it was a DSE past paper task. Students had to write an article a featured article about an Old village. They were provided with three headings and they had to use different tenses when they are writing each headings, so I tried to explain the instruction in pure English with the aid of PowerPoint slides. I don't have to speak in Cantonese and they can look at the symbols. But it turns out that there are more to explain, like there are three headings three paragraphs to write and there was like the contrast between the content of two paragraphs, so they have to think about the relationship between two paragraphs like the changes the old village and the new village, and they cannot get it until I code switch to Cantonese. So this is one of my experience that I have to code switch between English and Chinese.

K: Do you think code-switching is the best solutions to solve the challenges you encountered when compared to other possible solutions? Why?

S: I wouldn't say it was the best solution but I think it's definitely the fastest way to let students to understand what you say, especially for lower-level students which I taught in both teaching practice. Their motivation to learn in English is already really low, if we insist on speaking in the language, which means English, that they think it's actually an alien language, they will not find any fun in it and they will be even more anxious and frustrated. I remember one of my students chatted with me he said he thought the teacher was playing him because they only speak in English in class which he didn't understand at all. And also, for seniors from students

with lower level, I think all they need is confidence to learn and the skill to cope with the examination. I don't think it is necessary to explain the concept only in English because I think it's useless. If you really want them to learn, you have to make them understand, not to make them even more frustrated.

K: So do you think motivating your students to learn a second language is the priority when you teach? Or in other words, what is you teaching belief or rationale?

S: I think different approach should be adopted to different level of students, like for my personal experience, motivation to keep learning is very important to Band 3 students. Many of them told me that they wanted to drop out of school, as they cannot find any help and they are not gifted with the ability to learn well in school. I always tell them to learn English because it's the way to find a decent job in Hong Kong, so this is their motivation to learn English. If code switching can make their learning easier, then I would definitely use it. So I think this is more suitable for them. But for high achievers, although I do not have the opportunity to teach them in my teaching practice, I think we can take the approach of pure English because in this way they can be immerse in the English environment, so they can learn better. Because I was a Band 1 student, so I think using pure English can make me practice more using English in context.

K: Does code-switching make a contrast to your teaching belief?

S: I don't think it contradicts to my teaching belief, because actually my teaching belief is to use different approach on different students. If my students are bright, I would use pure English because this would help with their learning. And if my students need confidence in better comprehension, I wouldn't mind code-switching if I could help them. So it depends on the students' ability and I think teachers should adopt this approach as well because students are the center of our teaching.

K: Before having the FE, what do you think about an English teacher adopt code-switching in English classrooms?

S: I studied in EMI school when I was a secondary school student, so I was used to be taught in pure English. But before the FE, I think it's acceptable for teacher to adopt code-switching during class as long as it doesn't happen much, like you cannot rely on code-switching to explain things to students every time, because likewise they will rely on it too. So every time when you are explaining somethings, the students will ask you to repeat in Cantonese, which is not a good phenomenon and I think NET are the best models for English teachers because they don't need to speak in English well. Students can learn English from them so teachers can use different ways like pictures, PowerPoint slides to explain to students if the level of students is not too low.

K: Do you have any change in terms of your perception towards code-switching after having the FE?

S: Yes, definitely! I think code switching is a very normal thing in an English class in Band 3, because even for some experienced teachers, they told me that it's impossible to have a pure English class in Band 3 schools. I think pure English is a very ideal method to teach English and it is different from what I've learned in EdU, because the University and myself also expect me to teach in pure English, but in reality is not the case. The level of students is really too weak especially in Band 3 schools. Without Cantonese as the primal medium of instruction, the English class would not be able to go on because they would be off-task. So there's really a change because I thought English class should be taught in pure English before FE. I think in my future teaching, I will not consider using pure English even I was received this kind of education in my secondary school.

K: As you have mentioned, some experienced teacher also shared their views on the use of language in teaching. So apart from the concern to your students, are there any other factors that affect your perception towards code-switching during your FE?

S: As I consulted my supporting teacher and observed the lessons before having my teaching practice, I found that the students were actually not stupid. They were weak but they understood things fast. My supporting teacher said if they could comprehend what you say, they can work on everything you ask them to do. So I decided to adopt code-switching because of the students' learning style and the advice from my supporting teachers.

K: Do you have any suggestions towards the use of code-switching in English classroom?

S: I think teachers should be more flexible when using English in classroom. Like when the students are really puzzled and they do not understand what you're saying, then in some case code-switching is necessary because I think some of the concepts of grammar items they are difficult to explain in English, like the conditionals or tenses, they are very abstract. Sometimes you may have to use Cantonese to explain some of the context. So I think apart from flexibility, I think when giving instructions or explaining something, they can use more simple English instead of using difficult English to explain the concepts. So that instead of first language, they can understand the instructions in English.

K: OK! This is the end of the interview. Thank you so much for your help!