



## Teachers' Attitudes and Students' Language Preferences on Code-Switching in English Classrooms: A Mixed-Method Study at Instituto São João de Brito, Timor-Leste

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of code-switching in English language teaching at Instituto São João de Brito, Timor-Leste, a multilingual setting where English is taught as a foreign language. Building on existing research highlighting the importance of code-switching in facilitating teaching and learning, this study explores teachers' attitudes and students' language preferences in classes where code-switching is employed. A mixed-method approach was adopted, involving four teachers and fifty students who participated in questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The findings reveal that teachers recognise the value of code-switching in enhancing student understanding, participation, and teaching methods. Quantitative results show that 60% of students are flexible with code-switching, while 90% prefer increased use of English in class. The study's findings contribute to understanding how code-switching can effectively be utilised in English language teaching practices in multilingual settings, highlighting the need for a balanced approach that promotes linguistic flexibility and English language proficiency. The implications of this study can inform teaching practices and policies in similar multilingual contexts, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of English language instruction.

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### 1. Introduction

Teaching language in a multilingual setting like Timor-Leste is challenging. Timor-Leste has a complex linguistic range based on geography and history (Quinn, 2013). More than 30 spoken dialects are used in the country. It affects language practices in Timorese society. Jose et al. (2020) stated that in a society where the speaker speaks more than one language, it is normal to switch languages in conversation. It helps the speakers explain things more clearly (Nilep, 2006). It is found to be common to switch languages when talking to each other in daily life undertakings, which is known as code-switching.

Moreover, some studies show that people living in multilingual communities typically use their local languages simultaneously during a conversation (Puspawati, 2018; Yusuf & Gapur, 2024). It says that people are used to it when talking to each other. For example, in Timor-Leste, people generally use multiple languages to communicate.

However, Tetun is still the broader verbal communication language throughout the country. As Quinn (2013) stated, Tetun is widely used for communication.

Eventually, code-switching also occurs in teaching and learning activities, especially in English language classes. For instance, it seems familiar for teachers in Timor-Leste to switch languages using local languages like Tetun when explaining certain concepts and thoughts in English class. Furthermore, it is observed that teachers from older generations mostly use the Portuguese language when conversing with the students in the class. While New generations mostly switch from English to Tetun, they often use Indonesian to explain materials in class.

Code-switching is the practice of changing between languages when someone is speaking (Oxford Dictionary). Code-switching discusses the changes in language in a conversation in which the speakers use two or more languages at the same time. As Elias et al. (2022) explained, "Code-switching refers to the change that takes place when a speaker switches from one language to another (p. 158)." It mostly occurs in the conversation where the speaker switches inside the sentence (Bagui, 2014). It happens occasionally because the teachers want to explain the materials more clearly. Johansson (2013) reinforced that to convey the meaning, the teachers applied code-switching. It signifies that switching the language in the class further expresses the sense of a sure thing.

Alsied (2018) defined it as having no adverse effect if the teachers switch the language in English classrooms using the first language. He further explained that using the first language can be a resource for learning a second language. Research also found that most students want their teachers to use their first language in class because it helps them be more active in the s (Abdolaziz et al., 2016).

Nazerei et al. (2020) reported in their study on the motivational determinant of code-switching that the most important motivational tool to check the student's comprehension and explain better in class is to use code-switching. Again, Nazeri et al. (2021) found in their study that it was related to the teachers' and students' attitudes towards code-switching and how effective it is when the teachers use it in English classrooms. The findings revealed that most students had positive attitudes concerning the different aspects of code-switching. The researcher further expected that code-switching would positively enable the students to learn the English language.

Similarly, Bozorgian and Fallahpour (2020) discovered that one of the essential ways to engage students' cognitive teaching methods is to include L1 in the class. It implies that using the first language in the English classroom can enable the students to learn a second language. It is reinforced again by Bozorgian and Fallahpour (2015) that teachers use L1 in their English classrooms to improve teaching and enable students to learn in the class. It signifies that code-switching is a pedagogical tool in coaching language lessons.

The studies above show that using code-switching in the class helps students understand and improve the teacher's teaching methodology. However, in this context, few researchers have researched the students' language preferences in English classes, especially in multilingual settings like Timor-Leste. Moreover, almost none of the intended research topics have been done in Timor-Leste to find out what language the students prefer when their teachers code-switch in the class. Teachers and students need to know the importance of code-switching in multilingual settings. Given the many languages spoken in the country, teachers and schools need to identify which language students prefer to support their learning of a second language, such as English. In addition, the teachers and the students should be aware that the use of code-switching

in L2 classrooms is not something that demotivates the students; it helps them achieve better attainment in the class.

Concerning this, the researcher would like to conduct this research to determine the teachers' attitudes and the students' language preferences towards code-switching in English classrooms in the country, especially in the institute where this study will be held. This study will be beneficial for the students and teachers to know what, when, and how to switch the language in the class.

This study aims to determine teachers' and students' reactions toward code-switching in English classrooms. The researcher also wants to help teachers recognise when, how, and what language to switch to in class. What language do the students prefer the teachers to switch to?

Regarding the objectives mentioned, the researcher aims to find the answers to the students' reactions using the questions as follows:

1. When and why do teachers code-switch in English class?
2. What language do the students prefer when the teachers switch the language?

The study will help the students recognise their reactions to teachers' code-switching in class. It will also raise teachers' awareness of how and when to switch the language in the class. As teachers, it is good to be aware of language teaching because we do not have to switch languages every single time.

## **2. Literature Review**

Puspawati (2018) researched teachers' use of code-switching in EFL classrooms and its functions and found that each one of the participants in this study used Code-Switching in their EFL classrooms. They sometimes switched from the first to the second language and vice versa, and they consciously used CS in their teaching and learning process. The type of switching used by the teachers was inter- and intra-sentential codes in the class. The motives why teachers use CS are to help college students learn, to facilitate students with a low stage of L2 proficiency, and to train correctly.

Grant and Nguyen (2017) researched code-switching in Vietnamese university EFL teachers' Classroom instruction. The findings show that teachers commonly practice code-switching in their English instruction for pedagogical and affective reasons.

Üstünel (2016) used a sociocultural perspective of EFL classroom code-switching and discovered that instructors use codeswitching as a scaffolding technique to create a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). This teaching method allows teachers to ask questions, translate, and give details regarding specific information.

Zainil and Arsyad (2021) researched the teachers' perception of code-switching; the findings revealed that code-switching in the class helps teachers' pedagogical features and affective functions. Qian (2017) also found out in the study of Teachers' Classroom Code-switching that three kinds of code-switching styles have been identified from the respondents. Teachers switched between English and Chinese for pedagogical issues. Code-switching additionally served to regulate the relationships between teachers and students. The research findings show that instructors can utilise codeswitching as a valuable and effective pedagogical and social strategy, which enriches the communicative repertoire and pedagogical resources. Temesgen and Hailu (2022) found that instructors code-switched for educational, managerial, and social functions.

Nurhamidah et al. (2018) researched Code-Switching in EFL classrooms to determine whether the practice of CS is good or bad. The findings revealed that CS in

EFL classrooms was helpful for the teachers in conducting the class with the students. Moreover, this research shows that when considering Code-Switching, contrastive perspectives ought to be taken into consideration rather than barriers that aim to impede the process of accomplishing the learning goals.

The reviewed studies above indicated that code-switching in English classrooms helps teachers improve classroom management and deepen students' understanding. These studies illustrated that students benefited greatly from teachers' code-switching. This implies that code-switching in English classrooms is effective, especially in multilingual settings.

Although numerous types of research have been done related to code-switching, there is a need to conduct more research to find out teachers' perspectives and students' language preferences in class. Therefore, the paper aimed to investigate teachers' perspectives on code-switching in English class and the language the learners prefer for the teachers to use. The findings of this research are essential for the teacher and the learners to consider the importance and the benefits of using code-switching in English courses.

### **3. Method**

The researcher applied a mixed method in this study. Mixed methods include combining or integrating qualitative and quantitative studies in a single study (Creswell, 2014). The researchers used a questionnaire to collect quantitative data and open-ended questions for qualitative data. This research used descriptive statistics to interpret and summarize the findings (Laof & Plonsky, 2015). The data were processed and analyzed using SPSS software.

#### *3.1. Participants*

The respondents for this study were focused on the teachers and students of Instituto São João de Brito (ISJB). ISJB is a Jesuit and Catholic higher institution that provides teacher training for secondary schools. The study involved English department teachers and students. The researcher used purposive sampling to determine the respondents for the research. Nikolopoulou (2022) defined purposive sampling as commonly used in qualitative and mixed-method research. The four teachers consisted of two males and two females. The number of students was fifty, comprised of 27 males and 23 females. The age of the students ranges from 19 to 25 years old. The four teachers were interviewed, and fifty students were asked to fill out the questionnaire, which was an internet-based questionnaire.

#### *Instruments*

The instruments used in this study were adapted from Johansson (2013) about code-switching in the English classroom. The first instrument was a questionnaire. This questionnaire helped the researcher to find out students' reactions towards code-switching in English classrooms, including their language preferences when it comes to teaching and learning processes in the class. The questionnaire comprised 11 items, including information about the student and the classroom atmosphere. The second instrument was the open-ended questions used to interview the teachers. The open-ended questions for the teachers were posted on the Google form. It consisted of 14 open-ended questions that helped the researcher determine teachers' attitudes, motivation factors, and opinions about code-switching in English classrooms.

#### *3.2. Data Collection*

Since the questionnaire was internet-based, the data was collected through a Google form. The researcher sent the link to the students' WhatsApp groups and asked them to complete it. The participants were given a week to complete the form. For the open-ended questions for the teachers, the teachers were informed of the reasons for the study. Then, the researcher sent them the questions, followed by a virtual interview through Google Meet.

### **3.3. Data Analysis**

The data gathered was analysed using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics describe the basic features of a study and help the researcher arrange data summaries from the participants. For quantitative data, the researcher used tables to display the data analysis. Thus, it is descriptive statistics; the researcher described the data using frequency distribution and percentage (Trochim, 2022). The qualitative data gathered from the open-ended questionnaire were presented as a dialogue to display teachers' opinions about code-switching.

## **4. Findings**

The researcher presents the study's findings, analysis, and results in this section. First, the researchers present the results of the teachers' opinions and use of code-switching in English classes. Second, the researchers present the students' language preferences results in the class. The findings are displayed according to the research questions.

Problem 1: When and why do teachers code-switch in English class?

To answer this research question, the researcher presents the results of the open-ended questions gained from four teachers. Four teachers participated in this study. Three of the four were male, and one was female. The objective of including teachers in this study is to find out the teachers' opinions and perspectives on code-switching in English classrooms. The questions further enable the teachers to realise when and why they code-switch in the class.

Four teachers gave their first impression that Tetun is practical and valuable in English classes because it helps the learners grasp the contents, provides a better understanding, and engages the students' participation. Teacher A explained that Tetun can be used sometimes when it comes to class interaction between teachers and students, mainly to clarify things for better understanding in the class. Teacher B further stated that it is helpful to use Tetum to assist and provide students' knowledge in English classrooms; moreover, Tetum is an official language that most of the students understand.

Regarding this, Tetun plays an essential role in learning a second language like English. The teachers explained the reasons why they switched the language during English classes. This means that teachers are more flexible regarding interactions, which helps the students grasp a second language using the first language.

When the teachers were asked when and why they code-switch in the class, they further answered that they switched the language to Tetun to make the students easily grasp the teaching content during the class. It was found that most of the teachers code-switched during classroom explanations. As Teacher A stated, "*I speak Tetum when students do not understand the English explanation. To help them understand better, I use Tetum to clarify complex concepts, whether in literature, texts, or grammar lessons.*" Teacher A emphasized that effective teaching can only occur if students comprehend the material. He further explained, "*I need to ensure that my students understand what*

*I intend to say in class, and I achieve that by using various forms of expression, including the Tetum language."*

All four teachers code-switch in the English classrooms in literature and grammar classes. It means that Tetun is accepted and applied in English classes in general. However, the teachers also highlighted that they do not switch the language in all situations. It depends on the level of English proficiency of the students, so they only code-switch when it is necessary. The advantage of code-switching is that it helps the students gain knowledge. As a teacher said:

*I find some advantages to using bilinguals in teaching English, such as helping students understand the concept quickly and avoiding noise and boredom.*

This implies that some teachers use code-switching to improve their classroom management. Using both English and Tetun can help the students learn faster and stay focused in class. Another teacher reinforced that:

*As Tetun is our national language, it is part of my classroom instruction. As I mentioned earlier, the first language is the foundation for learners to acquire a second language like English.*

Even though some teachers realised that they try harder to speak only in English for the students to practice and master English, some teachers said: *I am not a native speaker; it is obvious that Tetun will occur in some of my approaches in the class.* Code-switching is used spontaneously and planned when teaching a language in a multilingual setting. Therefore, in code-switching in English classes, four teachers stated that there is a purpose for teaching the language to Tetun, but some of it is also unplanned. As they said:

*It depends on which class understands English better than the class below the average experience level. I often choose English for the higher ones, but for the average ones, I choose bilingual.*

The statement emphasises that considering students' levels is essential in teaching language. Code-switching helps teachers and students further understand each other regarding class interactions. As a teacher said, *the benefit for students is that they can express their ideas clearly, and we can genuinely see the point or ideas they attempt to explain.*

Problem 2: What language do the students prefer when the teachers switch?

The researcher presented the data to answer the above research question in this part. The data for this section was gained using a questionnaire. This questionnaire aimed to find out what languages the students prefer when their teachers code-switch in the class during the teaching and learning process. Firstly, the researcher presented the overview of language to verify that the respondents speak English as their first language (see Table 1)

Table 1. My mother tongue is?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Tetun	23	46.0	46.0
	Mambae	8	16.0	16.0
	Makasae	13	26.0	26.0
	Other	6	12.0	12.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0

Table 1 presents the student respondents' mother tongue. The data shows that the students belong to a variety of linguistic ranges. The data shows that almost half of the students speak Tetun (46.0 %). More than one-quarter (26 %) of the students speak Makasae, more than a fifth (16 %) of the students speak Mambae, and more than one in ten (12%) speak other mother tongues. This data implies that the students-respondents speak different mother tongues, and evidently, it represents the regions where they belong.

The data gathered in the table below considers the students' different languages.

Table 2. When my teacher explains grammar, I want him or her to use?

	Frequency	Valid	
		Percent	Percent
Valid			
English	16	32.0	32.0
Tetun	4	8.0	8.0
Combination of both	30	60.0	60.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0

Table 2 illustrates that when the teacher explains grammar, most respondents (60.0 %) wanted their teacher to combine both English and Tetun in explaining English grammar. Just under a third (30 %) of the students preferred the teacher to use English when explaining the grammar in class. At the same time, very few students (8%) wanted the teacher to use Tetun when explaining the grammar. In Table 3, as we can see, once again, Tetun is the least preferred language chosen by the students (see Table 3).

Table 3. When my teacher explains grammar, I want him or her to use?

	Frequency	Valid	
		Percent	Percent
Valid			
English only	25	50.0	50.0
Tetun only	6	12.0	12.0
Combination of both	19	38.0	38.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0

Table 3 shows that half of the students (50%) preferred the teacher to use English only when they informed the students about a test. Over half of the students (38%) wanted the teacher to use a combination of both English and Tetun when informing the students about a test, while very few preferred the teacher to use Tetun only.

Table 4. When I ask a question in Tetun, I want the teacher to answer me in?

	Frequency	Valid	
		Percent	Percent
Valid			
English only	22	44.0	44.0
Tetun only	8	16.0	16.0
Combination of both	20	40.0	40.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0

Table 4 indicates that over two-fifths (44%) of the students wanted the teacher to answer their questions in English only. Two-fifths (40%) preferred that teachers combine English and Tetun when answering the students' questions. However, little over a fifth (16%) of the students wanted the teacher to answer their questions in Tetun.

Table 5. When my teacher gives us instructions, I want them to use?

		Frequency	Valid	
			Percent	Percent
Valid	English only	23	46.0	46.0
	Tetun only	13	26.0	26.0
	Combination of both	14	28.0	28.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0

Table 5 illustrates that almost half of the students (46 %) wanted the teacher to give them instructions using English only. On the other hand, just a little under a third (28%) of the students preferred the teacher to use a combination of both English and Tetun to give them instructions in the class. However, over one-quarter (26%) of the respondents wanted the teacher to use Tetun only to give students instructions.

Table 6. When I do not understand instructions, I...?

		Frequency	Valid	
			Percent	Percent
Valid	I ask my friend in English	4	8.0	8.0
	I ask my friend in Tetun	11	22.0	22.0
	I ask my Teacher in English	18	36.0	36.0
	I ask my Teachers in Tetun	17	34.0	34.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0

Table 6 indicates that more than thirty (36%) of the students who do not understand instructions from the teacher ask the teacher in English. Over a third (34%) of the students ask the teacher in Tetun when they do not understand the instructions. Over a fifth (22%) of the students ask their friends in Tetun, and just under one in ten (8%) of them ask their friends in English.

Table 7. When my teacher speaks Tetun during class, I feel that I...?

		Frequency	Valid	
			Percent	Percent
Valid	understand the most	22	44.0	44.0
	understand better	21	42.0	42.0
	understand	7	14.0	14.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0

Table 7 indicates that over two-fifths (44 %) of students feel they understand the most when the teacher speaks Tetun during class. Over two-fifths (42%) of students understand better when the teacher uses Tetun, and less than a fifth (14%) of students understand the teacher when Tetun is applied in the class. The data imply that using Tetun in English classrooms helps the students learn English better.

Table 8. When my teacher speaks English during class, I feel that I...?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	understand the most	22	44.0	44.0
	understand better	21	42.0	42.0
	understand	7	14.0	14.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0

Table 8 illustrates similarly that when the teacher speaks English during the class, over two-fifths (44%) of the students understand the most, a little over two-fifths (42%) understand better, and less than a fifth (14%) understand.

Table 9. When my teacher and I discuss my grades, I want them to use?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	English	14	28.0	28.0
	Tetun	9	18.0	18.0
	Both are okay	27	54.0	54.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0

Table 9 shows that just over half (54%) of the students wanted the teacher to use both English and Tetun to discuss the students' grades in class. Just a little under a third (28%) of the students preferred the teacher to use English when talking about the grades, and just a little under a fifth (18%) wanted the teacher to use Tetun. This denotes that the students feel flexible when the teacher switches the language in English classes.

Table 10. When my teacher explains something that I do not understand, I want them to?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Repeat the explanation	19	38.0	38.0
	Repeat in English in a different way	28	56.0	56.0
	Repeat the explanation in Tetun	3	6.0	6.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0

Table 10 designates that just a little more than half (56%) of the students preferred the teacher to repeat the explanation when they did not understand. A little under two-fifths (38%) of the students wanted the teacher to repeat the explanation when they did not understand, and very few (6%) wanted the teacher to repeat the explanation in Tetun. It indicates that most students preferred the teacher to repeat the explanation in English and try to use different methods.

Table 11. When I am in English class, I want my teacher to make me?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Speak more English	45	90.0	90.0
	Speak more in Tetun	2	4.0	4.0
	Let me choose on my own	3	6.0	6.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0

Table 11 displays that more than four-fifths (90%) of the student wanted their teacher to make them speak more English in the class. Only a very few (6%) of the students preferred to choose their language to talk in the class, and (4%) of the students wanted to speak in Tetun. This data implies that almost all the students preferred that their teacher create activities to practice speaking English more during the class.

Table 12. My teacher speaks typically?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	English only	5	10.0	10.0
	Speak more English, but sometimes in Tetun	33	66.0	66.0
	Speak more in Tetun, but sometimes in English	11	22.0	22.0
	Tetun only	1	2.0	2.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0

Table 12 indicates a large number (66%) of the students recognise that their teacher usually speaks more in English but sometimes in Tetun. Slightly less than a quarter (22%) of the students said that the teacher usually speaks in Tetun but sometimes in English, and an insignificant number (2%) said that the teacher speaks Tetun only. It specifies that the students acknowledge that their teacher uses more English in the class than Tetun.

## 5. Discussion

The research aimed to determine teachers' reactions and students' language preferences toward code-switching in English classrooms. The qualitative data analysis demonstrated that teachers are aware of using code-switching in English classes. They acknowledge that switching the English language to Tetun helps the learners integrate into learning; however, the teachers emphasised that English is the target language, so they only switch when the students need to understand using the Tetun language. As they said, using L1, like Tetun, can improve classroom management and ease students' understanding of English. This finding links to Alsied's (2018) study, which suggests that using the first language can be a resource for learning a second language. Similarly, Nazeri et al. (2021) reported in their study that the most important motivational tool to check the student's comprehension and give a better explanation in class is to use code-switching. This statement is in line with the findings of this study. A teacher said, "I think it is helpful to use Tetum to assist and provide the students with a better understanding

in English classrooms. I need to ensure that my students get what I intend to say in class by using different forms of speaking, including the Tetun language. “

The overall findings from qualitative data illustrated that teachers' code-switching in English class helps engage students' participation, provide a better understanding, and improve teachers' teaching methods. They code-switch only when they observe that the students need more explanation in Tetun. As a teacher said, “I speak Tetum when students do not understand the point of the English explanation. For them to understand better, I use Tetun to clarify some complex concepts, whether in teaching literature, text, or grammar.” This finding is linked with some previous research. For example, Bozorgian and Fallahpour (2020), Andika (2018), and Bhatti et al. (2018) discovered that code-switching helps engage students cognitively and teachers' methods of teaching by talking about specific topics, clarifying English content, asking questions, and repeating explanations. Again, Bozorgian and Fallahpour (2015) found that using L1 in English classes improves teaching and enables students' learning process in the class. Similarly, Puspawati (2018) researched teachers' code-switching. The findings revealed that teachers consciously use CS in their teaching. They switch to help students learn and, most importantly, facilitate those who are low students. Teklesellassie and Boersma (2018) also supported that if teachers use the first language to help students gain learning content in the class, they can do so.

The quantitative findings revealed that most students (60%) are flexible with teachers' code-switching in the class. Students wanted their teacher to speak English and Tetun when discussing grammar. Nevertheless, half of the students preferred that their teacher speak only English when it came to a test in the class. It implies that even though they are flexible with teachers' code-switching, they still want the teachers to speak mainly in English. As the data showed, over two-fifths (44%) of the students preferred the teachers to answer their questions only in English. Concerning classroom instruction, almost half (46%) of the students preferred their teacher to use English only, while a little under a third (26%) wanted the teacher to combine both languages, English and Tetun. This finding aligns with Ibrahim et al.'s (2013) study, which found that teachers use CS to ensure students' understanding of the instruction in the class. It will likely happen because the students want a more profound understanding when teachers explain. When the students do not understand the instructions, more than half would prefer the teachers to repeat the explanation differently. Moreover, more than four-fifths of the students wanted their teacher to make them speak more English. It signifies that the English language is still the most targeted in learning, even if teachers and students sometimes prefer their first language, like Tetun, to be used in class.

This study is linked to Cook (2010), which suggests that students' first language should be used when teaching a new language, whether they like it or dislike it. Similarly, Tamiru (2013), Alemnew, Woldeyohannes, Gaga (2016), and Minwuyelet (2019) found that L1 was used in English classes. It supports many functions in the class. The study further claimed that using L1 as a reference in second language teaching is possible.

## **6. Conclusion**

This study aimed to discover teachers' opinions and perspectives about using code-switching in English classrooms and students' language preferences in class. To find out the data for the research, the researcher used a semi-structured interview with the teachers and a questionnaire for the students. The semi-structured interview instrument was used to find out when and why teachers code-switch in class. The questionnaire was used to discover students' language preferences in the class since

code-switching seemed to be unavoidable in multilingual settings. The findings from the teachers verified that code-switching in the English class served as an instrument to engage students' participation, assist and provide better understanding for the students, and also enable teachers' and students' interactions in the class, especially asking and clarifying things for better understanding. The teachers also acknowledged that using code-switching in class on some occasions, only when there is a need for the teachers and students to clarify further concepts or grammar.

The results from the students' questionnaire indicated that they are flexible (60%) with both languages, English and Tetun, in class when teachers switch. The students preferred that teachers use both languages in class when teachers explain, clarify, and ask students questions, and vice versa. Nevertheless, they also emphasised that teachers should make them speak more English in class, as the data shows (90%) of the students preferred their teachers to make them speak more English. They allowed teachers' code-switching because teachers can help them achieve second language learning by using their L1. Therefore, the English language is still the target highlighted by the students.

## **7. Limitations of the study**

The findings of this study focused only on the teachers' attitudes toward code-switching and the students' language preferences in class. Therefore, it is recommended that future research be conducted more specifically on the types of code-switching the teachers use to switch the language in the class and why students prefer a particular language to be used in the class.

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