Code Switching in Ethiopian Primary and Secondary EFL Classrooms: A Comparison of its Extent and Types

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Abstract

This study explores the practice of Code Switching (CS) in Ethiopian EFL classrooms. To this end, two EFL teachers were observed and audio-recorded for 6 sessions (3 sessions for each). Responding to the extent and types of CS used in the EFL classrooms, the analysis of the classroom interaction transcripts revealed that the use of CS was prevalent, and it was recognized that the participant EFL teachers' practiced CS based on the learners' grade levels. Regarding the extent of L1 use in EFL classes, word count was used as a unit of analysis, and from the total teachers' language use, the average percentage of L1 use at the elementary school level was 31.9%; on the other hand, there was 17% L1 use at secondary school level. Similarly, four patterns types of CS were used during the observation in both grade levels: Intra-sentential, inter-sentential, extra-sentential (tag) and intra word CS. Among these, intra-sentential CS was used more frequently (53%) from the total CS patterns at the elementary schools (grade 7) level; in contrast, inter-sentential CS was the main (38.6%) type of CS practiced at the secondary school (grade 9) level. Therefore, with the avoidance of intra-word code switching, it would be appropriate to acknowledge other types of CS as a strategy for teaching English in the EFL classroom discourse like Ethiopia, but its frequency should keep in view of the grade levels of the students.

Key words: Code Switching, L1, extent, types

Introduction

The use of the students' first language (L1) in the instructed second/foreign language learning classroom by both language instructors and learners has always been a problematic question of much debate, controversy, discussion and dispute among linguists, methodologists, language teachers, and learners (Ayaz, 2017; Hall & Cook , 2012). The utilization of learners' L1 in the L2 classroom, which is also called Code-switching (CS), has been defined and studied from different approaches. Among these, the most common are the sociolinguistic approach (Gumperz, 1982), the grammatical approach (Arthur, 1998; Poplack, 1980), the psycholinguistic approach (Giles & Bayren, 1982), or the pragmatic approach. However, all seem to agree that it is the utilization of more than one linguistic code in one conversation or in the same utterance. This study focuses on classroom CS, which is defined as language alternation—the alternating use of more than one linguistic code in the classroom by any of the classroom participants (in this case, EFL teachers) (Lin, 2013). Therefore, this study explores and compares the extent (amount) and types of CS (L1 use) in sample elementary and secondary schools in Bahir Dar town, Ethiopia.

In relation to the places where switches occur within sentences in the L2 teachers' talk in ESL/EFL classrooms, Arthur (1988) and Poplack (1980) have successfully classified CS into three types .These are inter-sentential code-switching, intra-sentential code-switching and extra sentential / tag code-

switching. In addition, Arthur (1998) has added one more type of CS i.e. called Intra-word switching in which a change occurs within a word boundary. Thus, these four types of CS are adopted in this study using an utterance (a clause) as well as a mixed word of EFL teachers' talk as the basic unit of analysis. In some empirical studies concerning the type of CS used in L2 classrooms, the dominant pattern of CS by the majority of L_2 teachers is inter-sentential CS (Jingxia, 2010), which is done at sentence boundaries, but intra-sentential CS (code-mixing) occurs unconsciously as a habit of teachers. However, Iqbal (2011) reveals that most of the teachers use intra-sentential CS (adding a word of L_1 in L2 utterance). Therefore, this study explores and compares the types of CS practiced by the participant elementary and secondary school teachers in their EFL classrooms.

Regarding the amount of L1 use which is enough in the L2 classroom, there were different recommendations and findings by various researchers. Although it is difficult to decide the threshold level of L1 use (extent) in L2 classroom for all contexts, Atkinson (1987) recommends 5% L1 for elementary level learners. Similarly, Shampson et al (1987) suggests 25% L1 use as an acceptable amount for elementary level French learners in Canada (cited in Turnbull, 2001). In line with this, Duff & Polio (1990) find out 67% to 9% TL (or 91%-33% L1) use in the classrooms which is similar with studies by Turnbull (2001) in Canada with 9%-89% TL (or 11%-91% L1) use in EFL classrooms. Among local researchers, Tafesse (1998) discovers EFL teachers' 29% L1 (Amharic) use from the total discourse in grade 5 English classrooms in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Concerning comparative studies on the amount of L1 in different levels of L2 classrooms, researchers like Blackman (2013) , Calman & Daniel (1998), Grim's (2010), Mahil (2014), Parker & Karagaac (2015), Quadumi (2007) as well as Qiang (2010) reveal that TL teachers increases the extent of L1 use when the learners' level of proficiency decreases. For instance, Calman & Daniel (1998) explore the elementary and secondary school teachers' L2 use in Canada, where 95% L2 use is expected by the school. However, the results of the study reveal that only 42% of elementary and 17% of secondary school L2 teachers fulfilled the school rule. Indirectly, the majority of both levels of teachers use L1 more than 5% in their classrooms, but it is found that teachers' dependence on learners' L1 decreases when the students' level increases. On the contrary, recent studies like Sailu (2017) and Krulatz et al (2016) reveal that there is no significant difference among EFL teachers on the use of CS although they had different educational levels.

Edstrom (2006) highlights, although the quantity of the L1 varies considerably within L2 classrooms, the reasons for its use are quite common across various contexts. Accordingly, among teachers related factors that may affect the extent of using L1 (CS) in TL classrooms , teacher's educational level (Blackman, 2013; Qadumi , 2007), teachers' own belief or attitude on teaching/ learning a foreign language (Blackman, 2013; Jingxia, 2010) , teachers' own proficiency level (Hall & Cook, 2012) as well as students' educational level (Atkinson,1987; Blackman, 2013; Grim, 2010; Qiang, 2010) are some of them. In addition, some researchers relate the high amount of L1 use with students' low proficiency (Bateman, 2008; Gregori & Gil, 2007). Even though there are various factors that may increase or decrease the amount of L1 use or CS in the L2 classroom, this study focuses on participant English teachers' educational level and their students' grade level as a reason for comparison.

The problem

The use of CS in the EFL classrooms has been one of the main controversial academic issues for many years. This debates lead to the development of dichotomous views (i.e., monolingual and bilingual approach) in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories, in different language teaching approaches / methods, in English curricula and in EFL/ESL teachers' and students' perceptions and practices. From the researcher's experiences in teaching English at primary, secondary and tertiary levels in Ethiopia, however, CS is very common, especially if the teacher and the students share the same L1. This is also true in other EFL contexts (Amorim , 2012; Horasan , 2013 ; Sert , 2005 ; Wongrak, 2017), and some scholars even claim that the exclusion of learners' L1 in EFL classroom is inappropriate and even impossible in many situations (Al-Nofaie, 2010; Cook, 2001). However, as Elmetawly (2012) indicates, educational policy-makers in a lot of countries seem to have adopted the monolingual approach. This can be easily seen even in EFL textbooks which are prepared for different grade levels of students in Ethiopia, and they do not have any policy/ guide on using or not using learners' L1 in the teaching- learning process for some purposes. This has caused some EFL teachers to use learners' L1 excessively (Abiy & Mohamed, 2012; Tafesse, 1998), and this may lead English learners to lack appropriate exposure to the L2 in their classrooms.

In contrast, according to empirical studies in Ethiopia, most EFL teachers and students have positive attitudes on the use of CS/learners' L1 in their classrooms, and it is a common occurrence in public schools (Dereje & Abiy, 2015; Tafesse, 1998 and so on). However, most of these studies were questionnaire based, and they may not reflect what is really happened in the EFL classrooms. From the researcher's reading, there were no or little comparative studies on the relationship between the EFL teachers' educational levels with their code-switching practices in their classrooms, especially in Ethiopia. Therefore, the main objective of the present study is to bring new empirical evidence to the extent and patterns of CS or L1 use in Ethiopian primary and secondary EFL classes, and the study aims at answering the following research questions.

1. How often do grade 7 and grade 9 EFL teachers use L1/Amharic in their classrooms?

2. Is there any difference on the extent of L1 (Amharic) use between grade 7 and grade 9 EFL teachers?

3. What patterns/types of CS used by grade 7 and grade 9 EFL teachers in their classrooms?

4. Are there any differences on the types of CS they used between grade 7 and grade 9 EFL teachers?

Methodology

This study is qualitative in its nature, and it adopts case study as a research approach. A case study approach provides holistic understanding of a particular phenomenon with real life contexts from the perspective of those who are involved (Lin, 2013). Such kind of study is advantageous due to its richness of the data gathered as it provides an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell, 2013; Dornyei, 2007).

Instruments

The data were collected through a combination of observations and audio record which were supported by note taking. Regarding the observation, the data were gathered through audio recordings (using two recorders: one Sony IC recorder and Samsung Galaxy phone recorder), and participant English teachers were recorded for three sessions (each) in the research setting. Moreover, notes were taken especially when L1 was used in the actual L2 classroom teaching/learning interactions during the teaching hours.

Participants and setting

Since this study aimed to explore the extent and patterns of CS in EFL classes at different grade levels, two teachers who were teaching English to the students at two different grade levels (grade 7 and grade 9) were selected. Moreover, these teachers had to be giving lessons at different times during a week, so that I could arrange observation hours with each of them. The two Ethiopian EFL teachers (Gene and Alem (pseudonyms)), whose mother tongue is Amharic, participated in the study, and their ages were 47 and 49 respectively. Gene taught grade 7 students at Shimbit primary school, and Alem taught grade 9 students at Bahir Dar preparatory school, both in Bahir Dar town, Ethiopia. Gene had more than 24 years of experiences after she graduated from Gonder Teachers Training College with Diploma (12+2) in Ethiopia. Similarly, Alem had 21 years of experience after he graduated from Bahir Dar University with BA Degree (12+4) in English language teaching, in Ethiopia.

Data analysis

Regarding the research questions, focusing on the extent of the L1 use or CS by teachers in the EFL classrooms, the audio recorded data were carefully listened, transcribed and read carefully for several times. Then, all instances of L1 (Amharic) and L2 use in the classrooms were coded according to the coding schemes suggested by Duff & Polio (1990) to rearrange data into categories that facilitate comparison between data in the same categories. Responding to the first research question, the word count processor was used for counting the total number of words spoken during the 6 sessions (3 sessions for an Elementary teacher and another 3 sessions for secondary school teacher) and then the L1 (Amharic) words used in the whole sessions counted. Finally, after doing some mathematical operations, the percentage of L1 used in each L2 session as well as in the total sessions to specify the

amount of Amharic used was reported for both elementary and secondary school teachers and compared to answer the second question . In order to answer the third and the fourth questions on the patterns/types of CS in the classrooms, each participant teacher's discourse was considered based on the four types of CS as indicated by Arthur (1998). Then the types of CS used by grade 7 and grade 9 EFL teachers were compared so as to answer the forth question.

Findings and discussion

The results provided in this section are drawn from a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis of classroom audio recording transcriptions to respond to the research questions looking into the extent and the types of CS used by teachers in the EFL classrooms.

How often do grade 7 and grade 9 EFL teachers use Amharic or CS in their classrooms?

In the observed classes, both elementary (grade 7) and secondary (grade 9) school teachers use CS. The data of the classroom observation on the frequency of Amharic and English language use were summarized below. Table 1 below encapsulates the frequency of Amharic, English and mixed words (like ' በgroupእቻሁ / means " in your group" or 'sentenceእቻ" means 'sentences') use in the lessons taught by the observed teachers. From the same table, we can notice from the words count in the audio transcription that Gene (in grade 7) used L1 from 29.1% up to 36.2% of the total utterance in her classrooms. The average percentage of L1 use for elementary school level is then around 31.9%. Based on the recommendations given by Atkinson (1987), the result was extremely high compared to the suggested 5% L1 for lower level learners.

Compared to grade 7 , as illustrated in Table 1 below, CS to Amharic (L1) was used less frequently by grade 9 EFL teacher. At grade 9 level, from the total utterances (6469 words) in three sessions, Amharic was used from 13% (270 words) up to 20.3% (485 words) in the first and the third sessions in the classroom. Thus, the average percentage of L1 use in grade 9 was 17% from the total utterances. This result is consistent with the findings of Duff & Polio (1990) and Turnbull (2001) that L2 teachers may use Learners' L1 with different extents.

Table1. The extent of Amharic in English classrooms at grade 7 and grade 9 level

Teacher	No. of observation	Duration of recording (Minutes)	Total words	English word (%)	Amharic word (%)	Mixed word	Average use of L1 (%)
Gene (Grade 7)	1	33.50	1281	891 (69.6%)	373 (29.1%)	17 (1.3%)	
	2	38.11	2154	1351 (62.7%)	779 (36.2%)	24 (1.1%)	31.9%
	3	41.17	2239	1566 (70%)	657 (29.3%)	16 (0.7%)	
Total	Three sessions	112.78	5674	3808 (67.1%)	1809 (31.9%)	57 (1%)	
Alem (Grade 9)	1	38'	1986	1635 (82.3%)	348 (17.5%)	3 (0.2%)	
	2	42'	2096	1821 (86.8%)	270 (13%)	5 (0.2%)	17%
	3	42.33'	2387	1902 (79.7%)	485 (20.3%)	0	
Total	Three sessions	122.33	6469	5358 (82.8%)	1103 (17%)	8 (0.2%)	

Is there any difference on the extent of L1 use between grade 7 and grade 9 EFL teachers?

A close look into the table above (Table 1) clearly revealed that each observed lessons involved some usage of Amharic (L1) at both elementary and secondary school levels. To compare the quantity of L1 use at elementary and secondary instructional levels, a word count of both teachers' L1 and L2 episodes was conducted. From the results, we can notice that there was a considerable difference between the two EFL teachers, who had different educational levels and taught two different grade levels. As anyone can see it again, at the elementary school (grade 7) level, the TL (English) was used from 62.7% to 70% of the classroom talk, so the average mean count of the TL in the classroom was close to 67.1%. In line with this, the average extent of Amharic (L1) used by the grade 7 EFL teacher was 31.9% of the total utterance. On the other hand, at the secondary school (grade 9) level, the TL was used from 79.7% up to 86.8% of the total classroom utterances, and the mean word count of the TL (English) at this grade level was found to be 82.8%. As shown on Table 1 above, the average extent of Amharic words used by grade 9 EFL teacher was around 17% of the total utterances within the three sessions.

Therefore, it is important to point out that a considerable difference can be noticed between the participant teachers on their TL use in general and on the frequency of Amharic (L1) use or code switching in their classrooms in particular. In other words, the frequency of words in the participant teachers' language use shows that teachers, regardless of their academic levels as well as the grade levels of their students, they were naturally lean towards the TL (English) more, and switch to the learners' L1 for occasional instances. That means when the teachers' educational levels and the grade level they were teaching increases, the amount of L1 used in the EFL class decreases and the extent of the TL increases. This comparative result is typically consistent with Blackman's (2013) study that elementary school teachers use L1 between 20% to 33% of the lesson, and secondary school teachers used the L1 less frequently which equates about 10% to 22% of the lesson. In addition, results of the study by Calman & Daniel (1998), Grim (2010), Mahil (2014), Parker & Karagaac (2015), Quadumi (2007) as well as Qiang (2011) are consistent with this case study that the amount of learners' L1 use by TL teachers increases when the learners' level of proficiency or the students' grade level decreases. However, it is not congruent with the findings of Krulatz et al (2016) and Sailu (2017) that teachers' educational levels do not affect the extent of TL or L1 use in the EFL classrooms.

What patterns/types of CS used by grade 7 and grade 9 EFL teachers in their classrooms?

In the present study, in order to identify the patterns of English and Amharic CS in EFL classrooms, Arthur's (1998) division of CS, Inter- sentential, Intra-sentential, Extra-sentential (Tag) and Intra-word switching, is adopted. Table 3 below portrays that, although there were differences in frequencies, all the four types of CS were applied in both grade 7 and grade 9 EFL classrooms.

Table 2*: Types of CS practiced at grade 7 and grade 9 levels*

Grade Level	Patterns / Types of CS				Total (%)
	Inter-sentential CS	Intra-sentential CS	Extra-sentential(Tag) CS	Intra-word CS	
Gene (Grade 7)	62(25.5%)	129(53%)	15(6.1%)	57(23.4%)	243 (100%)
Alem (Grade 9)	63(38.6%)	52(31.9%)	20(12.3%)	15(9.2%)	163(100%)

Inter-sentential CS

Based on Arthur's (1998) definitions, inter-sentential CS occurs at a clause or sentence boundary, where each clause or sentence is in one language or another. In this study, a close analysis of the extracts revealed that most of the inter-sentential switches had an explanatory nature by asking questions, giving definition to a word or sentences, giving instructions and giving explanation. As Table 3 above shows, within three sessions of classroom audio records, the frequency of inter-sentential CS seem to be almost equal for both grade 7 (62 instances) and grade 9 (63 instances) classes. However, from the total CS patterns at each grade level, inter-sentential CS was practiced more at grade 9 i.e., from the total 163 CS patterns, 63 (38.6%) of them were inter-sentential CS. On the other hand,

from the total 243 CS patterns at grade 7, about a quarter, 62(25.5%) of the CS patterns were inter-sentential. Look at the inter-sentential CS extracts taken from both grade 7 and grade 9 EFL teachers .(The sentence/clause in italic bold is the translation of the Amharic word/clause /sentence in the examples).

A .ጥያቄ አላቸሁ ለነዚህ ልጆች ? Do you have questions? (***Do you have question to these students?*** Do you have question? (Gene, Grade 7)

B. The third one is 'fantastic'. አስደናቂ ማለት ነው። (The third one is 'fantastic'. ***It means 'fantastic'.***) (Gene, Grade 7)

C. You don't need to write the whole thing. ሁሉንም ነገር መገልበጥ አያስፈልግም። (You don't need to write the whole thing. ***There is no need to copy the whole thing.)*** (Alem, Grade 9)

D. They don't have clear demarcation. የተወሰነ ገደብ የላቸውም። (They don't have clear demarcation. ***They don't have limited demarcation.***) (Alem, grade 9)

Intra-sentential CS

According to Arthur (1998), intra-sentential CS is the second type of switching that occurs within a clause or sentence boundary. In this study, most of the intra-sentential CS sentences base themselves on Amharic language rather than English. In other words, most of the words in the intra-sentential CS were Amharic and an English word/phrase was inserted. As we can see from Table 2 above, intra-sentential CS was more frequently used (129 instances/ 53%) at grade 7 EFL classroom than at grade 9 (52 instances/31.9%). Therefore, from the total 243 instances of CS patterns at grade 7 level, more than half (53%) of it were intra sentential. Participants of this study used intra-sentential CS for pedagogical purposes in general that includes to give definitions and to explain concepts etc. Look at the examples below:

A. እውነት ወይም ውሸት መሆኑን ማረጋገጥ የሚቻል ከሆነ fact ይባላል። ***(If we prove it true or false called*** fact.) (Alem, Grade 9)

B. ስለዚህ the same እኮ ነው።(***So, it is*** the same) (Gene, Grade 7)

C. የማልቀስ አንድ አይነት formula አለው? ***(Has crying the same*** formula?) (Alem, Grade 9)

D. ጥሩ eyesight አላት።(***she has good*** eyesight) (Gene, Grade 7)

Extra-sentential (Tag) CS

Extra-sentential (Tag) switching means inserting a tag in one language to an utterance that is otherwise in another language. This means, while speaking English the teacher can insert Amharic tag to the utterance, or vice versa. Close observation of all the extracts by the two participant EFL teachers revealed that the most commonly used Amharic tags were ('እሽ" ፣ "አዎ"፣ "አይደለ ?' /አይደለም እንዴ ?"፣ "ስለዚህ"፣ "አስኪ"፣ "እረ"፣ "ከዛ"), and these Amharic words are equivalent to the following English words ('ok', 'yes', 'yes?' , 'isn't it?', 'so', 'ok', ' please/no', 'then') respectively . Moreover, participant teachers in this study also used common English tags (like 'ok', 'yea', and 'look') with Amharic utterances. All these tags had almost the same purposes which were to express their concerns for the students' discipline and to ask and to answer questions and to check whether the learners had any difficulty in understanding the concepts being discussed or not. Furthermore, some tags such as 'እሽ' /'ok' and አይደለም እንዴ ?"/'isn't it' were just habits exhibited by teachers.

In relation to the frequency of CS patterns in general, a close observations of extracts and the data on Table 3 above revealed that extra- sentential (tag) switching was the list frequently used pattern of CS at grade 7 level since it was used only 15 times (6.1%) of the total CS occurrences . However, it was used 20 times (12.3%) of the total CS patterns at grade 9 level to express EFL teacher's concern for learners' understanding and discipline. Look at the extracts taken from both teachers on how 'tag' switching used.

Example1.Please, take out your chewing gum from your mouse እሽ. (Please take out your chewing gum from your mouth, ok) (Alem, grade 9)

Example 2. The first one, combine or join sentences, አዶደለ? (The first one, combine or join sentences, yes? (Gene, grade 7)

Example 3. They are clever አይደለም እንዴ ? (They are clever, isn't it ?) (Alem, grade 9)

Example 4. እረ raise your hand . (Please, raise your hand) (Gene, Grade 7)

Intra–word CS

Intra-word code switching, in which a change occurs within a word boundary, is not a common type of CS in empirical researches. According to Arthur (1998), it is one type of CS which is common in a few EFL contexts. Arthur tries to show plural ending (by the end of an English word) and to add preposition/s as a prefix of an English word in Punjabi language in India. Similarly, in the current study, intra-word CS refers to the addition of Amharic sounds at the beginning or at the end of an English word. Intra-word CS was common among both grade 7 and grade 9 EFL teachers in this study to show plural ending, prepositions, ownership and definite article. For example in order to show plural ending, Gene (Grade 7 EFL teacher) used intra-word CS like groupኦች (group*s*), leaderኦች (leader*s*), sentenceኦች (sentence*s*) etc . Similarly, Alem (grade 9 EFL teacher) used vowelኦች (Vowel*s*), dictionaryዎች (dictionaries) as intra word CS to show plural endings. The same kinds of switching at the words level were also seen to add prepositions as well as articles on English words. Therefore, as to the researcher's reading, compared to the previous empirical studies on the types of CS, intra-word CS was found to be more vivid in Ethiopian EFL classrooms than any other previous studies in the field. As anyone can see from Table 3, intra-word CS was found high(57 instances or 23.4%) of the total CS patterns at the lower grade levels (grade 7 in this case) than at the high school (grade 9) EFL classroom level which was (15 times or 9.2%) the lowest type of CS pattern used by Alem.

Are there any differences on the types of CS they used between grade 7 and grade 9 EFL teachers?

Excluding only L2 and L1 explanations in the classroom, a close analysis on the patterns of CS at two grade levels revealed that there were clear differences on the total frequency of CS patterns as well as the dominant type of CS used at grade 7 and 9 levels. As the data on Table 3 above shows, there were 243 instances of CS with different patterns at grade 7 level; on the other hand, there were about 163 instances of CS patterns at grade 9 EFL classrooms. As anyone can see from Table 3 above again, at elementary school level, from the total 243 instances of CS patterns, more than half (129 or 53%) of CS utterances were intra-sentential in type. In contrast, at secondary school level, from the total of 163 instances, Alem frequented inter-sentential CS for 63 (38.6%) of his CS utterances. In addition, intra word CS was used more frequently (for 57 instances) at grade 7 level than at grade 9 level since it was used for only 15 instances/ 9.2% of the total CS patterns at grade 9 level . In contrast, extra sentential (Tag) CS was used more frequently at grade 9 level (20 times or 12.3%) than at grade 7 level (15 instances or 6.1%) of their total CS utterances.

Conclusion and recommendations

The main purpose of this study was to explore the extent and patterns of L1 (Amharic) use or CS in elementary and secondary school EFL classrooms, and to show whether there were similarity or differences in sample primary and secondary schools in Bahir Dar town, Ethiopia. The results of the study revealed that participant EFL teachers treated CS as a language teaching tool. Regarding the extent Amharic in EFL classrooms, the current study revealed that although the L2 (English in this case) took the dominant part in the observed lessons, the higher the grade level of the students, more L2 was produced by EFL teachers. Therefore, CS to Amharic was used more frequently at the lower grade level (grade 7 in this case) than the higher (grade 9) levels. Though the data may not be enough to conclude, this result could also be related with the participant teacher's educational level because Gene (grade 7 teacher) had a Diploma (12+2) in teaching and CS was frequently happened in her classroom than at Alem's (grade 9 teacher who had BA degree /12+4) EFL classrooms. This result is consistent with Thompson's (2006) study which revealed that the higher the grade level/ proficiency of the learners, the more L2 was produced by EFL teachers ; however, it is incongruent with Mahil's (2014) empirical research which revealed that the grade levels of the students did not affect EFL teacher's extent of L2 use.

Regarding the types of CS in the current study, the analysis of the recorded lessons illustrated that there were four types CS (Inter-sentential, intra-sentential, extra-sentential (tag), and intra-word) as mentioned by Arthur (1998) which were practiced at both grade 7 and grade 9 levels with different frequencies. In this study, therefore, the dominant pattern of CS at the elementary school level (grade 7) was intra-sentential CS, but in the secondary school level (grade 9) the overriding type of CS in the observed classrooms was inter-sentential CS. The other unique feature of this study result was the extent of intra-word CS which was used frequently in grade 7 EFL classrooms than in grade 9 classrooms. From the researcher's understanding, intra-word CS was used for neither pedagogical nor social roles, and it was a bad habit of less proficient teachers that should be avoided in the classroom, or this can reflect what Hoff (2013) refers to as 'uncritical' L1 use by the participant teachers.

Based on the findings and the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were forwarded. First, the use of code-switching as a strategy should be introduced for teaching English in the EFL classroom discourse like Ethiopia but keeping in view the grade levels of the students. Second, educators should recognize that L1 has a role in the EFL classroom but considering when, how, and to what degree for different grade levels of students. Third, the Ministry of Education at the national level and the education bureau at the regional level should arrange workshops and seminars to teacher trainees and in-service teachers on how to decide on the proper use of L1 in their EFL classes.

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