Switching between Two Foreign Languages in English for Medical Purposes Course: Impact on Medical Terminology and Vocabulary Comprehension

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ABSTRACT: *Code-switching (CS) between the mother tongue (L1) and the foreign language (FL) is an embedded practice in the Algerian multilingual society, as it is highly noticed in pedagogical settings like school and university. Yet, switching between two foreign languages seems to gain popularity, mainly, in the English for medical purposes (EMP) course. In the latter, EMP teachers tend to switch between English and French to serve certain pedagogical and non-pedagogical aims. Furthermore, this practice is used as a time-saving strategy and as an instructional tool to enhance students' skills like; listening and vocabulary comprehension. In an attempt to flesh out an explanatory framework, this study explores the attitudes of students towards their teachers' use of CS, in addition to their perspective about the reasons behind teachers' switching between two foreign languages in a medical course. Furthermore, this research reveals the different perceptions of learners about the implementation of English/French CS to enhance their vocabulary comprehension and to promote their medical terminology. To this end, 162 second year pharmacy students, from the faculty of medicine at the university of Sétif 1, formed the participants of the enquiry. Based on a triangulation (quantitative and qualitative) research design, a questionnaire and a focus group discussion (FGD) were used to collect the related data. The findings revealed that teachers switch from English to French to perform different pedagogical functions such as explaining new concepts and difficult expressions, reinforcing and emphasizing a message or an information. Through CS, instructors may create a friendly and a dynamic learning atmosphere by using it as a stopgap to students' loss of communication and hence to support the learning and teaching process. Moreover, CS is used to boost the learning of medical terminology and to facilitate the comprehension of medical context especially the new and complex vocabulary for learners. Overall CS is regarded as an effective pedagogical strategy, and is recommended in the EMP course, yet it should be used with moderation and in situations where necessary.*

KEYWORDS: Code-Switching, EMP Course, Foreign Languages, Attitudes, Vocabulary Comprehension, Medical Terminology.

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Introduction

The recognition of English as the language of science and research, and the acknowledgement of its status as an important and an indispensable tool to cope with the international academic and professional systems, put Algeria in a pressing need to integrate the teaching of this language in many domains. At a tertiary level, an English for specific purposes (ESP) course has been implemented in different fields and specialties, e.g. English for Business Purposes (EBP), English for Science and Technology (EST) and English for Medical Purposes (EMP). However, teaching an English course has always been a challenging task, mainly in the medical fields (medicine, pharmacy, dentistry. etc.).

In the Algerian universities, most EMP courses depend on the teacher s' professional knowledge, personal effort and pedagogical competence, which is highly challenging when there is no syllabus, guidance, training or even a policy to regulate and ensure a successful pedagogical performance. Moreover, neither the educational policy nor the ministry of higher education imposes a medium of instruction in teaching and learning. For this reason, teachers resort to their own beliefs, thoughts and understanding of the situation, depending on which their choice of the language of instruction is triggered. For instance, the majority of the teachers of specialty in medical fields tend to use French, which is a foreign language, as a medium of instruction, while others prefer to switch between the mother tongue (Algerian Arabic) and French to meet their students' needs. Still, few teachers may even include English to the balance of Algerian Arabic/French CS, as a step towards the recognition of its crucial importance in the medical field.

In an EMP course, the situation is more complicated. Many English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers depend on another foreign language (French) in their teaching process, while others prefer to teach a medical course in a monolingual style using only the target language. However, a small category may resort to both; their mother tongue (Algerian Arabic) and French. This kind of switching, between two or three languages, may affect not only teachers but also the performance of students; as the latter's feedback concerning this practice is often disregarded. Though, decisions related to language policy and the medium of instruction in higher education is still debatable, the step of teaching an EMP course using English/French CS may be further problematic. Therefore, the urge of investigating the use of English/French CS, as a pedagogical and a learning tool by teachers and students, becomes more evident, especially in the Algerian context. For this reason, the present study aims at establishing the first steps towards a larger and a more extensive research, by looking at the issue of CS from the students' perspective. Moreover, and since English/French CS is used mainly for pedagogical reasons such as enhancing students' vocabulary comprehension, increasing the acquired medical terminology and improving its understanding, it is quite important to examine how learners perceive such a use. to fulfil this aim, the following research questions were addressed in this paper:

1. What are the students' attitudes toward the use of English/French code-switching in the EMP course?
2. How do students perceive the use of English/French code-switching as a pedagogical strategy to enhance their vocabulary comprehension?
3. How do students perceive the use of English/French code-switching as a pedagogical strategy to improve their medical terminology?

2. Literature Review

Although English/French CS constructs a large part of EMP teachers' discourse, it is also noticed in the learners' talk and interaction. This practice seems to be inevitable in the Algerian multilingual society where language contact phenomena; like CS, are deeply engrained. However, the status of French, the first foreign

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language in Algeria, is highly controversial notably in the pedagogical setting. Considered as a leftover of the French colonization, this language, though present in the every-day speech of Algerians, is not welcomed and cherished by all and mainly Algerian students. Accordingly, a brief review of the language education policy, the status of languages and the language planning in Algerian higher education should be discussed in the following section.

2.1 Language Education Policy in Algeria

In any community, language policy refers to a set of laws and decisions that are based on religious ethnic and political grounds. These laws, established by a specialized political and linguistic authority, are set to regulate and to control the linguistic change and the language use in the different establishments like the educational system (Baldauf, 2006). Whereas Language Planning is to execute these laws and decisions through a set of strategies and actions (ibid).

In Algeria, the existence of a myriad of languages and dialects alongside the diverse ethnicities, contributed in the formation of a conglomerate multilingual speech community (Djennane, 2016). In the latter, Arabic is the official language since the Algerian independence (1962) alongside Berber language which gained the status of the second official language in 2016. Moreover, French, considered by some as a heritage and by others as a leftover of the French colonization, has the status of the first foreign language. However, on a linguistic basis, French is considered as a second language due to its major usages in the different institutions, notably its adoption as a medium of instruction in many fields in higher education like science and medicine. In addition to languages, there is a wide variety of Algerian dialects (Dialectal Arabic and Berber[1] dialects) existing and differing according to each region of the country. Those dialects are typically used in informal situations and in every-day communication between Algerians.

The coexistence of three languages (Arabic, Berber and French), in addition to the diverse Algerian and Berber dialects, did not prevent Algeria from embracing English as a language of science and technology. This is why efforts were made to integrate it in different academic and professional settings. With the rising awareness of its important role, English has been easily adopted by the new generation of learners, mainly at the tertiary level. Gaining the status of the second foreign language and the recognition as the worldwide tool for communication and development, makes of it a competing language against French. The latter, in spite of its solid status and indispensable uses in the Algerian university, is taking a step backwards. according to a large number of learners and in terms of priority, there should be a significant focus on the integration and the learning of English instead of French.

The integration of English at the university level with the already existed languages (Algerian Arabic and French are the most used ones in and outside university), created a natural language contact phenomenon called Code-Switching. Despite the fact that Algerian Arabic/French CS is a common practice in the Algerian society and university alike, a further step of switching between English and French; two foreign languages which are not fully acquired or mastered, is highly challenging. Therefore, a significant focus on CS with the different views regarding its use in pedagogical setting; taking the medical field as a representative case in this paper where CS is apparently used by both teachers and students, traces the lines of this enquiry. For this reason, a brief introduction to CS will be presented in the following section.

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[1] Berber is a common term used mainly in writings and western literature, however Algerian researchers tend to use the term 'Tamazight' to refer to the language of the indigenous Berber people living in Alegria. throughout this paper the choice is inclined towards the term 'Berber'.

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2.2 Code-Switching

In multilingual speech communities, the contact that happens between several languages may triggers the use of more than one language in one's speech or in conversation with others. The phenomenon that Poplack (1980: 583) defined as "the alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence or constituent" and referred to as Code-Switching is "perhaps the central issue in bilingualism and multilingualism research" (Milroy & Muysken, 1995: 7). CS may occur in various situations according to which a bilingual or a multilingual speaker may, consciously or unconsciously and due to some reasons, shift from one speech variety to another or from one language to another. Valdés-Fallis (1978: 6) describes the phenomenon as "the alternating use of two languages on the word, phrase, clause or sentence level". whereas Gumperz (1982: 59) refers to CS as "the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems". CS, as the name suggests, is characterized by employing two different codes, or two different varieties of the same language in a particular context with particular interlocutors and according to particular circumstances.

Many researchers (e.g. McClure, 1978; Bokamba, 1989; Kachru, 1992) differentiate between the term CS and other terms like borrowings, loanwords and code-mixing. Yet, the difference between the latter and CS has always been controversial. McClure (1978: 7) defines code-mixing as: "The individual's use of opposite language elements which cannot be considered to be borrowed by the community. It occurs when a person is momentarily unable to access a term for a concept in the language which he is using but access it in another code or when he lacks a term in the code he is using which exactly expresses the concept he wishes to convey". Moreover, Bokamba (1989) explains that code-mixing is demonstrated by the integration of small language units such as affixes, words and phrases in another language within the same sentence. Which means that code-mixing happens at the intra-sentential level whereas CS exceeds the sentence and occurs at the inter-sentential level. Therefore, on this premise, CS and code-mixing are different.

Even though a significant effort was made to separate the two concepts (CS and code-mixing) in terms of meaning and implementation, many researchers (e.g. Gumperz, 1982; Myers-Scotton, 1993; Blanc and Hamers, 2000) deny this separation, arguing that both terms convey the same linguistic and social functions. Hence, the terms are considered as interchangeable. This study embraces the latter view and uses CS as an umbrella term to cover similar concepts like code-mixing, code-alternation and borrowings. Therefore, CS is considered as any, small or large, oral occurrence of the units of one language in another language, within the sentence or exceeding the sentence' level.

2.3 Code-Switching in Pedagogical Settings

Through time, research on CS has covered many aspects; moving from a linguistic investigation, that attempted to explore this phenomenon within the boundaries of language itself (e.g., Milroy and Muysken, 1995; Ariffin & Rafik Galea, 2009) , to an expanded and a diverged investigation in other approaches like the sociolinguistic, the psycholinguistic, the neurolinguistic and even the discourse-related approach (e.g., Sridhar & Sridhar, 1980; Gumperz, 1982 ; Myers-Scotton, 1989 ; Üstünel & Seedhouse, 2005; Boztepe, 2003). Yet, in recent studies, investigations have shifted their interest towards the pedagogical field which forms a fertile ground for language alternation notably the EFL classroom.

In the latter, CS has always been a debatable point of research. Whether practiced deliberately or unconsciously, views and opinions about its use and integration in the classroom differ widely. However, a great deal of research proved its usefulness as a pedagogical tool and provided arguments in favour of its adoption in the mentioned setting. Nation (2003), one of plenty of researchers who advocate the use of CS as a pedagogical and a communicative strategy, claims that the use of L1 in the classroom makes students

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comfortable and help them overcome intimidation issues that are related to the lack of proficiency in L2 or FL. Sert (2007) embraces the same view as his fellows, arguing that CS, if used appropriately, can be a bridge to learn the unknown from the target language and thus it can be a significant successful factor in the process of teaching. Alenezi & Kebble (2018), in their study on monolingual Arabic speakers in the medical field, revealed that medical students at university inclined towards the use of CS in the course. According to students, CS provides a better content comprehensibility and therefore, the monolingual language policy should be reconsidered to let both lecturers and students benefit from the advantages of CS. Moreover, students have a specified appreciation and respect towards the teacher who adopts CS as a teaching style.

As mentioned earlier, several studies have been interested to investigate CS from different angles, and a large number of researchers have attempted to explore CS in pedagogical settings, notably the practices and the attitudes of both teachers and students. For instance, Patmasari, Agussatriana and Kamaruddin (2022) investigated the reasons behind CS in the EFL classroom, and revealed that teachers switch mainly to help students overcome learning problems like the difficulty to understand new and/or abstract words. Even though the focus should be on the learning of English which is the target language, teachers recommend the use of CS to develop students' English proficiency. They, further, assume that CS can be a good communicative strategy between the teacher and students. Moreover, students showed positive attitudes towards the use of CS claiming that the latter has a positive influence on their learning. (ibid)

2.4 Code-Switching in Algerian Pedagogical settings

Like many other countries, Algeria offers a fertile ground for CS research. In fact, the presence of several languages and varieties within its soil, in addition to its cultural diversity makes Algeria one of its kind in terms of multilingualism, and hence a nurturing and a supportive environment for CS investigations. Yet, only few studies were interested in CS and were conducted in this respect.

One of the studies on CS in the Algerian pedagogical context investigated the attitudes of Algerian university students towards the use of CS between three languages Arabic, French and English in Facebook discourse. The study showed that students had positive attitudes towards the use of CS and indicated that they resort to CS, not only for communicative reasons or for social connectivity but also for academic reasons (Zitouni& Saaid, 2019). Another study conducted in the university of Biskra, was interested in the reasons behind the occurrence of CS among undergraduate students, in addition to determining the communicative functions of English-Arabic CS in students' interaction. Results revealed that CS can be an effective pedagogical and communicative strategy to improve the speaking competence of students. Furthermore, students used CS to perform certain communicative functions like reiteration, holing the floor and maintain the flow of conversation (Saou & Hoadjli, 2022).

When talking about CS, it should be noted that almost all investigations about language alternation, whether in a pedagogical context or other, in Algeria or outside, take into consideration the duality of mother tongue (or L1) and Foreign language (or L2). However, in this investigation CS happens between two foreign languages; French, the first foreign language and the medium of instruction in medical studies, and English the second foreign language in Algeria.

3. The Study

The primary focus of this study is to obtain data regarding the integration of English/French CS as a pedagogical tool in an EMP course and to examine the different attitudes of medical students so as to reveal their perceptions about the use of CS as a strategy to improve their vocabulary retainment and vocabulary

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comprehension. As a result, the present research work opted for a case study approach in a way to explore and explain the students' perceptions and attitudes in relation to their teachers' use of CS as a pedagogical practice. For this reason, second year pharmacy students were chosen from the university of Sétif 1 to be the case of investigation.

3.1 Participants

As far as the university of Sétif 1 is concerned, Medicine and dentistry majors in the faculty of medicine have the EMP course as a lecture of ninety minutes per week, i.e., all students are supposed to attend together the English course, which takes place in the Amphitheatre. However, the presence of students in a lecture is not compulsory. Pharmacy field is the only medical field which has English sessions of two hours per week, in which students are divided into small groups and each group has his individual session of English in a small classroom with the same or a different teacher from the other groups. In addition, the attendance of the English session is compulsory. Therefore, it was more adequate to choose a sample population from second year pharmacy students. Henceforth, and based on a random sampling selection, 162 pharmacy students were involved in this inquiry.

3.2 Data Collection Instruments

This research focuses on a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative methods in gathering the necessary information about the target population. The choice of a multi-method approach is for purpose to present a thorough representation and an overall picture of the situation under investigation. For this reason and to achieve the research objectives, two different research instruments were used; a students' questionnaire and a focus group discussion (FGD).

3.2.1 Questionnaire

For the quantitative aspect of the present study, a students' questionnaire was designed and pilot tested to collect numerical data about the case under investigation. The main objective of this tool was to examine the students' attitudes towards the teachers' use of CS in the EMP course, and their perceptions about its impact on vocabulary comprehension, in addition to determining their language proficiency and learning difficulties. Therefore, the questionnaire was formed in different sections among which a Likert scale format with five options from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

3.2.2 Focus Group Discussion

As a complementary instrument, the focus group discussion was chosen to collect qualitative data from a number of 10 students with the presence of two EMP teachers. The choice of the students to participate in the FGD was based on the recommendation of their teachers. Therefore, students were selected from different sessions according to their interest to the EMP course and their extrovert ability to speak and express their ideas. However, the choice of students was not based on their perceptions about CS or on their own use and dependence on it, since their teachers ignore their opinions concerning this topic. Hence, a random selection was made here and students with all kinds of views were included in the discussion. Finally, the 10 students were gently asked by the researcher and their teachers to take part in this meeting and they responded positively.

3.3 Procedure

Before administering the questionnaire to students, a brief meeting was organized at the end of the English session between the researcher and a number of students to explain the purpose of the research and clarify

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any ambiguous questions or concepts about the topic. Therefore, a pilot study was regarded as necessary. So, the first distribution was provided to ten students to collect their feedback on the form and the content of the questionnaire, in addition to the language used, since the questionnaire was in full English. Hence, to establish the validity and reliability criteria, some questions were modified and others completely dropped from the questionnaire. However, as far as the language of the questionnaire was concerned, the researcher found no need to provide a translated version, but students were given the opportunity to choose to respond in any language they want and feel themselves better in (whether Arabic, French or English). Accordingly, a brief explanation about the confidentiality of information and guaranteed anonymity of participants was provided, and the final version was administered to 162 students in each session of English. After the collection of the questionnaires, the researcher and the teacher informed the concerned students about the FGD time and location in addition to the procedure to follow during the discussion. the latter took place with the presence of four male and four female students in addition to their teacher of English. The latter was requested to take part in the discussion and to clarify or to comment on any questions. The students were interviewed with the guided questions and the discussion, which took about 60 minutes, was recorded.

3.4 Data Analysis

The researcher used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 to analyse the quantitative data elicited from the students' questionnaire. Descriptive statistics were used to explore the data presented depending on the different statistical variations like the mean and the frequency. As far as the graphs were concerned, the researcher used the software Origin Pro version 8. For the qualitative part of the study, the data was audio-recorded by the HD audio-recorder of the researcher's cell phone, then transferred to the online software otter.ai for the transcription from the oral to the written form. The latter was manually analysed and interpreted.

4. Findings

The sample population that was under investigation includes 34 male and 128 female participants which form the total of 162 second year pharmacy students taking part in this study. Before presenting the results concerning the attitudes of these participants towards the English/French CS in the medical course, a required general placement test has been conducted by the researcher to reveal the estimated level of students in English. She also examined their French proficiency level through the questionnaire.

4.1 Current language proficiency level of students

The following figure demonstrates the English proficiency level of students, according to the results of the online placement test conducted by the researcher, and in French, confirmed by the results of the students' questionnaire.
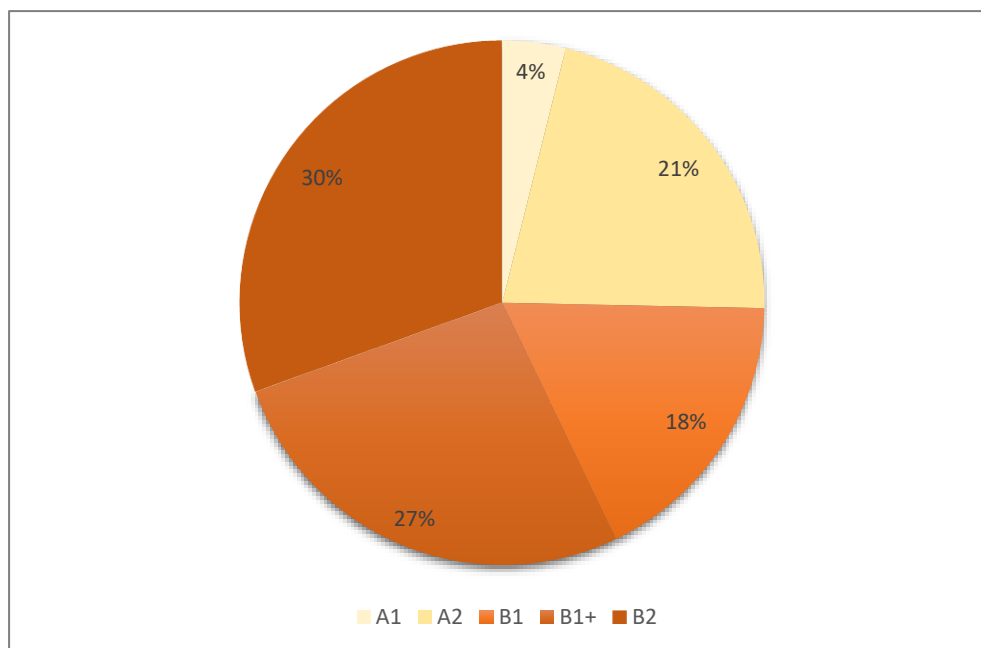
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Figure 1. Students' English Proficiency Level

The placement test reveals that students can be categorized in two main levels; 25% of them hold an elementary level while the rest (75%) are intermediate. The test shows that the groups of students who took part in this investigation are homogeneous in terms of their English proficiency level.

	Listening		Speaking		Reading		Writing		Grammar			
Beginner	8	4,9	23	14,2	9	5,6	16	9,9	31	19,1	Frequency	Percent %
Intermediate	77	47,5	104	64,2	75	46,3	94	58,0	97	59,9		
Advanced	77	47,5	35	21,6	78	48,1	52	32,1	34	21,0		
Total											162	100

Table 1. Students' French Proficiency Level

The questionnaire on the other hand, shows that students have a better level in French, since more than 80% are between intermediate and advanced in the competences mentioned in the table above. In addition, less than 5% of students have beginner level in listening while only 14% hold the same level in speaking. Therefore, the students' level in both English and French justify their perceptions about the use of En/Fr CS and their tendency and dependence on French in the EMP course.

4.2 Languages used in the EMP course

To reveal the students' attitudes towards their teachers' En/Fr CS, the researcher should have concrete data about the languages used in the EMP course; if CS is present in both teachers and students' speech and what languages are mostly employed. All of which is going to be expressed in the following table and figures.

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	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
English	46	28,4	28,4	28,4
English and French	94	58,0	58,0	86,4
English, French and Arabic	22	13,6	13,6	100,0
Total	**162**	**100,0**	**100,0**	

Table 2. Language of instruction in EMP course

The students who took part in this investigation were taught by different teachers. They were divided into six groups and each two groups had a different EMP teacher. Therefore, the EMP course is identical in content, but the language of instruction is different from one teacher to another. From the table above, two categories are deduced; about 72% of students who are exposed to En/Fr CS (within which 13,6% are taught via a combination of English, French and Arabic) form the larger category. However, about 28% are taught only in a monolingual style, since their teacher is against the use of CS in the classroom.
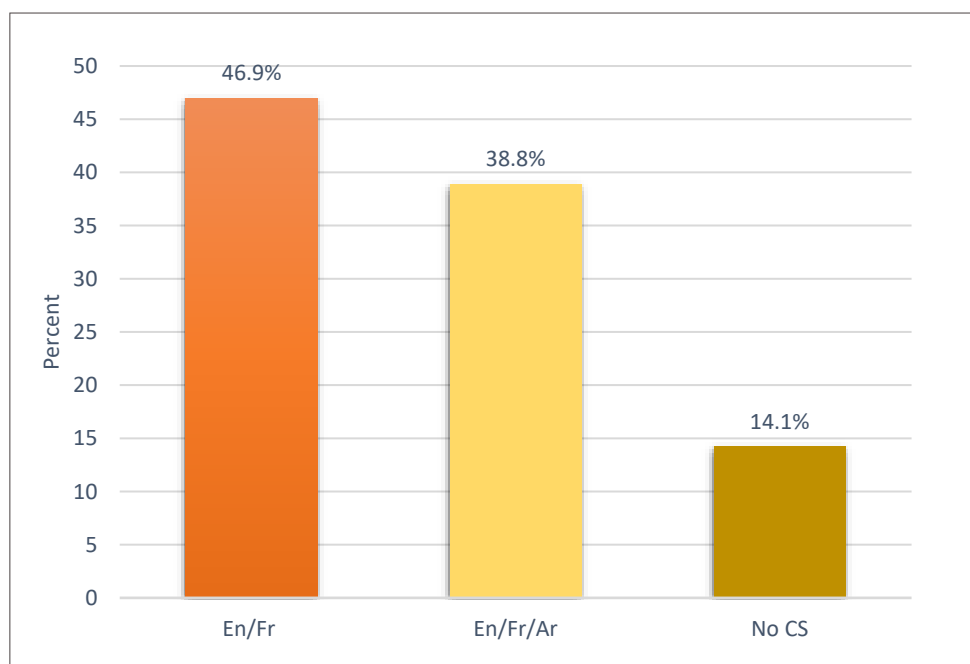

Figure 2. Students' CS in EMP course

In the learning process, almost 86% of students tend to depend on another language rather than English. 47% switch from English to French in their speech or interaction with others (teacher-student and student-student interactions), while about 39% extend En/Fr CS to the use of their mother tongue (dialectal Arabic) and sometimes Standard Arabic. Therefore, they switch between three languages. On the other side, only 14% of students are monolingual in the classroom, due to their teacher's restriction about the use of CS or their own preference.

4.3 Students attitudes towards teachers En/Fr CS

The following data is divided into three Likert scales, the first one presented in table 4 represents the students' attitudes towards the positive impact of teachers En/Fr CS on learning English. The second Likert

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scale, shown in table 5, reveals the students' attitudes towards the negative impact of teachers' En/Fr CS on the process of learning. While the third one highlighted in table 6, is about the students' attitudes vis-à-vis the suggested implementation of teachers' En/Fr CS.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Teacher En/Fr CS provides a better explanation of English and facilitates the understanding.	162	3,9012	1,08181
Teacher En/Fr CS enhances the vocabulary comprehension of students.	162	3,5370	1,00396
Teacher En/Fr CS improves the vocabulary amount (number) of students.	162	3,4444	,99689
Teacher En/Fr CS helps students to easily learn and retain medical terminology especially through French equivalents.	162	3,8395	1,13068
Teacher En/Fr CS is a time-saving and an effective strategy to boost the general and the medical vocabulary.	162	3,4815	,99827

Table 4. Students' attitudes towards the positive impact of Teacher's En/Fr CS

When counting the overall mean of the five items about the positive impact of En/Fr CS mentioned in the table above, the researcher found that the result is 3,64. Hence, this means that the majority of participants agree that teacher's En/Fr CS has a positive impact on their learning of English in general, and their vocabulary comprehension and the learning of medical terminology in particular. For instance; when participants were asked whether teacher's En/Fr CS helps them to easily learn and retain medical terminology, the majority (mean is 3,83) showed their agreement. The latter was also expressed by the majority of participants (mean is 3,90), when they were asked about whether teacher's En/Fr CS improves their learning of English in general, and facilitates their understanding in the classroom.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
En/Fr CS may lead students to use the wrong vocabulary (false friends)	162	2,6481	,95535
En/Fr CS hinders students' potential of learning authentic English	162	3,0247	1,18453
En/Fr CS makes students confused and overwhelmed by vocabulary parallels	162	3,2160	1,04388
Students' reliance on Fr/En CS may weaken their ability to be fluent in English	162	2,8827	1,11670
En/Fr CS may demotivate students through reducing the opportunity to have a course in full English	162	3,0123	1,10329

Table 5. Students' attitudes towards the negative impact of teacher's En/Fr CS

To interpret the results of the table above, the researcher has calculated the overall mean of the five items concerning the negative impact of En/Fr CS. The mean is 2,95 which indicates that the majority of participants are neutral as to whether En/Fr CS is a language barrier and may hinder their process of learning. Precisely, participants, when asked if teacher En/Fr CS hinders their potential of learning English and weakens their ability to be fluent, expressed their neutrality. Furthermore, participants were asked about the negative impact of the false friends that exist in both languages and may lead to confusion or to the

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wrong vocabulary choice (e.g. the word sensible in French which has a different meaning in English) and once more they were neutral.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Teachers should reduce the use of En/Fr CS in the classroom to give more opportunities to students to learn authentic English.	162	3,7099	1,07300
En/Fr CS should be used only to teach medical terminology	162	3,3580	1,27380

Table 6. Students' attitudes towards the suggested implementation of En/Fr CS

Table 6 reveals that the attitudes of participants were positive concerning two points; first En/Fr CS should be used in moderation, which means that teachers should limit the use of En/Fr CS and should focus on a monolingual style to give the chance to students to listen and to produce English. Secondly; the majority of participants agreed that En/Fr CS should be restricted to the teaching of medical terminology
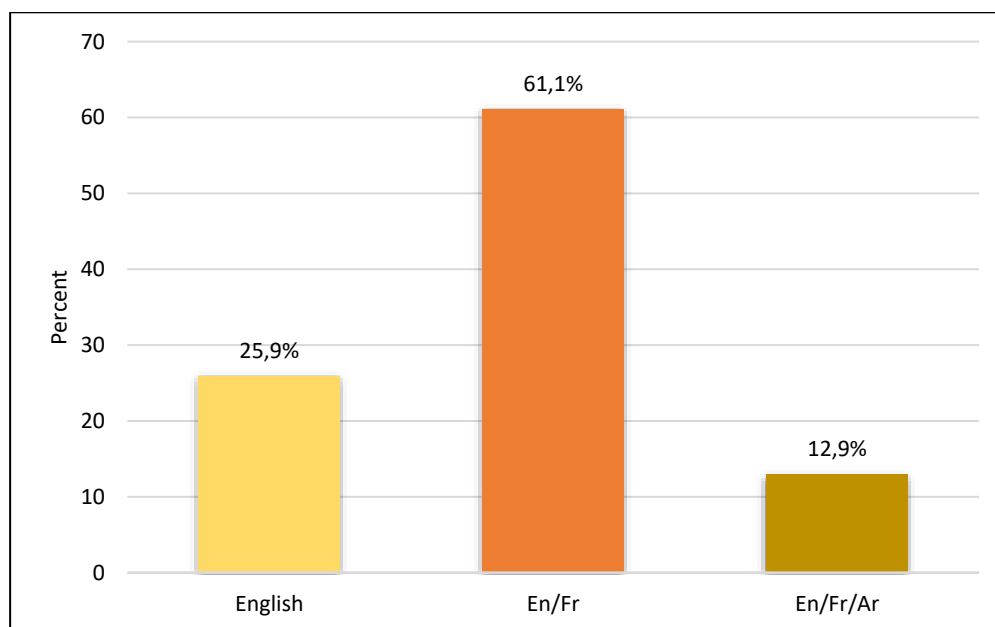

Figure 3. Students Preference for the Language of the English Course

At the end of the questionnaire, participants were asked about which language of instruction they prefer their teachers to use in the classroom, and whether they prefer CS over a monolingual style of instruction. The answers reveal that 61% prefer a course in En/Fr CS whereas almost 13% chose CS between the target language (En), French and their mother tongue (dialectal Arabic). However, about 26% preferred the monolingual style.

4.4 Students perceptions about the use of En/Fr CS

To gather in depth insights on the attitudes of students towards En/Fr CS and to complement the quantitative data analysis, the researcher analysed and interpreted the qualitative data of the focus group discussion. in the latter, a remarkable use of En/Fr CS by both; the teacher and the participants, was clearly noticed. The use of CS in their talk and interaction with each other, made participants comfortable and at ease to express and share their thoughts with the researcher. In addition, the use of CS maintained the flow of discussion, since participants who had a poor vocabulary storage could compensate their lack by filling the gap with

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French items and expressions. Henceforth, students were not shy or intimidated by their low proficiency level in English and were willing and motivated to express themselves freely. However, two participants used a monolingual style, in which they depended completely on English. The teacher, on the other hand, tried to maintain the flow of discussion and used En/Fr CS to explain to participants her ideas, or to highlight certain points that seemed ambiguous.

When the researcher asked participants how do they perceive the use of En/Fr CS in the EMP course, participant 1 said:

> *Pourquoi pas, on est des étudiants de pharmacie on connait bien cette langue, puisque on est habitué à étudier en français, we can use it to learn English as well[2]. (P1)*

> Why not, as pharmacy students we know very well this language and we are habituated to learn in French...

Another participant added:

> *Je suis de son avis aussi, EMP is a new course for us, quand l'enseignant utilise le français ça nous motive à surmonter certains blocages ou bien difficulties like we say in english. (P4)*

> I agree with him… when the teacher uses French, it motivates us to overcome certain obstacles in the medical course....

While another participant claimed:

> *Oui parfois nous économisons le temps, the teacher sometimes takes a long time to explain a word ou bien une phrase en anglais. C'est plus facile de donner le synonyme en français. (P5)*

> Yes, sometimes we gain time…or a sentence in English. It is easier to provide the synonym in French

However, one participant had a different opinion from his fellows, claiming that the teacher switches to French, not for pedagogical reasons, but to show his mastery of the French language, which has a prestigious role in the field of medicine. He said:

> *À mon avis, il ne le fait pas pour nous, c'est juste pour nous montrer qu'il sait parler en français, you know le prestige hh [laughing] ! (P7)*

> for me, he doesn't do it for us, but to show he is capable of speaking French…the prestige!

The researcher, then, asked the participants what do they think about teachers who switch between English and French when teaching the EMP course and the responses were as follows:

> *Generally, the teacher [repeat][3] [the] information in French to check if we understood. (P2)*

> *When she [speak] English very fast we are lost, she [use] French to make [we] understand and to attract attention. (P3)*

> *Notre enseignant parle en français pour éviter la répitition, for time I mean. (P8)*

> Our teacher speaks in French to avoid repitition….

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[2] Italics is used to indicate the reported speed of participants, mostly in French language. in the same respect, a translation of the French speech into English is provided under each part.
[3] Brackets [ ] are used for two reasons; to indicate the language mistakes or to demonstrate the participants gestures and sound expressions like laughter, irony, sarcasm, etc.

Vous savez ! des fois notre enseignante nous raconte des blagues en français, elle dit peut-être qu'on est nuls in English et on ne va pas comprendre hhhhh[laughing] (P5)

You know! sometimes our teacher tells us jokes in French, she maybe thinks that we are weak in English so we cannot understand.

On est très limités en Anglais, surtout au niveau de l'écoute et l'orale, on ne sait pas parler en Anglais, je pense que l'enseignant l'a constaté c'est pour ça elle utilise beaucoup le français pour compenser le manque de compréhension et puis au départ ça aide beaucoup les étudiants de médecine qui ont généralement une bonne base en français. (P6)

We are very limited in English, especially in listening and in oral skills, we cannot speak English, I think that the teacher noticed that, this is why she depends a lot on French to compensate the lack of comprehension and as a starting point French helps a lot, since generally speaking students in the medical field have a good level in French.

The researcher further elaborates about the pedagogical functions of teacher En/Fr CS. She asked participants about what they think of using the latter as a device to help students in the process of learning and mainly in vocabulary comprehension and medical terminology. Six participants agree that the teacher uses En/Fr CS to perform certain pedagogical functions like giving instructions, checking the comprehension of students and emphasising the information when necessary. They also agree that their teacher uses CS as a communicative strategy to maintain the flow of interaction or to fill in the gap when the teacher or the students lack the appropriate vocabulary. Furthermore, five participants agree that En/Fr CS is an effective time-management strategy. In the same respect, the responses of some of the participants were as follows:

We are limited in English, we need French to understand, surtout quand on ne comprend pas le discours déjà on perd la concentration, c'est pour ça que je suis pour que l'enseignant utilise le français pour bien expliquer surtout le vocabulaire. Je pense que ça nous permet de gagner énormément de temps quand le prof se dirige directement vers le synonyme. (p7)

… especially when we don't understand the discourse, we lose concentration, this is why I'm with the use of French for a better explanation especially vocabulary. I think that we gain much more time When the teacher uses directly equivalents.

A ma connaissance, le vocabulaire médical est commun puisque ça vient du Latin, donc y a beaucoup de ressemblance entre les deux langues, par contre ce qui rend ces mots incompréhensibles c'est bien la prononciation en anglais. Par exemple on parlait du système circulatoire et on a entendu [ayota = aorta] personne n'a compris le mot et quand on a demandé elle nous a dit que c'est l'aorte. You see the difference; I think French facilitate la comprehension! You get me! (P6)

To my knowledge, the medical terminology is common since it comes from Latin origins, so there are many similarities between the two languages, but what makes the terminology incomprehensible in English is the pronunciation. For example, we were talking about the circulatory system and suddenly we heard [ayota= aorta] and we could not understand the word until we asked and the teacher pronounced the word in French….

Participant 3 emphasises the idea of his classmate saying:

True, what [make] English difficult is the pronunciation, sometimes words are easy but in English we cannot know them we need French to [simple] the pronunciation of words and also medical terms. (P3)

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To conclude with, participants were asked about their perceptions towards the negative impact of teacher's En/Fr CS, and whether the latter is a language barrier that hinders the process of learning. They could not agree nor disagree on this point, however, they expressed different views.

Participant 2 stated:

> *we study two hours of English, if teacher [use] half the time switching, she [reduce] time to speak English and to let students speak English this is negative to learn English.*

Another participant argued:

> *Ça m'est arrivée, j'ai demandé au teacher can I assist the session, mais elle ne m'a pas corrigée, j'ai cru que le mot assister has the same meaning, après j'ai su qu'assister veut dire attend in English. I think teacher should be careful in this point. (P4)*

> It happened to me, I asked the teacher can I [assist]the session, but she didn't correct the mistake for me, I thought assist has the same meaning in both languages, only later that I knew that the correct word is to attend…

One of the participants shed light on another important point saying:

> *C'est vrai que le français nous aide beaucoup durant le cours mais on a tellement l'habitude de parler en français puisque on étudie aussi la pharmacie en français que ça n'a plus de limites, regardez même ici on s'exprime en français malgré quand est dans un débat qui doit être en anglais. Ce que je veux dire We should not forget we are in an English session, si on entend plus de français que l'Anglais c'est quoi donc l'intérêt d'apprendre l'Anglais ! (P7)*

> It is true that French helps us a lot during the course, but we use it too much since we study pharmacy in French so its use has no limits, look we are in a debate that should happen in English but we are expressing our ideas in French…if we hear more French than English then what is the point of learning English!.

Participant 2 interacts with the previous student and emphasises his idea saying:

> *We have to do effort to learn English and the teacher [have to] help us, when she speaks too much French we lose motivation, it is boring, we are in an English class we want to learn and to hear English, we don't need teacher to say bonjour comment allez vous? She has to encourage us to speak English.*

While the last participant concluded:

> *En/Fr CS [have] positive and negative [application], but I think if the teacher [know] when and how to use it will help students and make learning [simple]. (P3)*

5. Discussion

The results generated from the students' questionnaire and the FGD revealed that, both teachers and pharmacy students tend to use En/Fr CS in the classroom. the mother tongue (dialectal Arabic), though very limited, is also present in the talk and interaction of the teacher and the students. Both, the questionnaire and the FGD revealed positive attitudes towards the teacher's use of En/Fr CS to support the teaching-learning of English for medical purposes. Besides, they recognised that En/Fr CS is inevitable in the EMP course, due to the fact that French is the dominant language and the MI in the field of medicine. So, French maintains its prestigious status, even though considered as a foreign language. they also admit that they depend on French in learning English, even if they have a limited level and sometimes make mistakes. So,

the use of French, for them, became a habit and a must and for this reason they do not mind if their teacher of English uses French in the classroom, and further recommend its use.

With regard to the attitudes towards the positive impact of En/Fr CS in the EMP course, the findings showed that the majority of participants agree that it is an effective pedagogical strategy, since, it facilitates the understanding and makes learning easier. they also agree that it is an effective way to manage time and classroom. in addition, a great number of participants believe that En/Fr CS has a positive impact on their learning in general and on improving their vocabulary comprehension and increasing their vocabulary size in particular.

Concerning the students' attitudes towards the negative impact of En/Fr CS in the EMP course, the results revealed that most students are neutral about whether teacher's CS may become a language barrier and hinders their process of learning. Participants expressed their neutrality vis -à-vis their dependence on En/Fr CS, which may weaken their ability to be fluent in English or demotivate them to learn at all. They also showed their neutrality, when they were asked about the false friends in English and French which may cause a serious confusion or may lead to the use of the wrong vocabulary. All in all, participants neither agree nor disagree about the fact that En/Fr CS may hinder their potential to learn English. However, participants confirm their agreement that En/Fr CS should be limited and used only when necessary, to give more opportunities to students to practise English. Besides, it should be preserved to the teaching of medical terminology.

The findings of the FGD shed light on the teacher's use of En/Fr CS which, according to participants, should be moderate and logical. That is, the teacher and the students should not forget that the ultimate aim of the EMP course is to learn English and to be able to use it in oral and written forms. Participants are afraid that the excessive use of En/Fr CS may disorientate the teacher and the students from the real objectives of the EMP course. Besides, there is no real environment where students can practise English, except for the classroom boundaries, and by using CS the time dedicated to learn and practise English is reduced. Therefore, depending on En/Fr CS may prevent teachers from realising the objectives of the course and may hinder students from developing certain competences like speaking and listening.

Conclusion

CS is a wide-spread phenomenon inside and outside Algeria. It consists of alternating between two or more languages in a single conversation (Poplack, 1980). However, and in most cases, it includes the native language (L1) and the target language. in this study, a case in which CS happens between two foreign languages, the investigation should be considered in two ways. From one hand, does CS between two Foreign languages have the same implications as CS between the mother tongue or L1 and the target language. from the other hand, is it an effective pedagogical strategy or does it inhibit the learning of the target language.

This study, therefore, was conducted to explore the use of En/Fr CS in EMP course, mainly to reveal the students' attitudes towards the teacher's CS, the reasons behind his/her CS and the impact of CS on learning in general and on vocabulary comprehension and medical terminology in particular. the data of this work was triggered from students' questionnaire and FGD and the results were set to provide answers to the research questions.

The findings reveal that teachers use CS between two foreign languages to perform a number of pedagogical functions, which aim to help students better understand the difficult aspects in the EMP course. Results also show that students have positive attitudes towards their teacher's use of CS, claiming that CS could be used as a pedagogical strategy to support their learning process as it can be used as an effective

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communicative strategy. The study also reveals that, CS between two foreign languages can be used as method to enhance the vocabulary comprehension and to improve the learning of medical terminology.

To conclude with, the intentions of CS between two foreign languages as well as its impact and implications fall within the same respect as CS between the mother tongue (L1) and the target language that was highlighted in many studies like Patmasari, Agussatriana & Kamaruddin (2022); Abdolaziz & Shahla (2016); Alenezi (2010, 2018), Makoshi, (2014), etc.

Last but not least, it should be noted that the results of this research cannot be generalised since it is a case study. The number of the sample population is small and the investigation is conducted in one subject field (pharmacy). Therefore, further research is recommended on larger populations and in other fields of study like medicine and dentistry. Other investigations are necessary to complement this study. Experimental research will be needed to test the impact of En/Fr CS on vocabulary comprehension as well as its impact on other skills.

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