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Research Article

Feedforward through Planned Code-Switching: A Comparative Multi-Sited Ethnography of Teachers' and Students' Perspectives on Speaking Skills Development

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ABSTRACT

In English Language Teaching (ELT), feedforward through planned code-switching remains largely unexplored and has yet to be integrated into both ELT practice and research. In this study, feedforward is conceptualized not merely as anticipatory feedback, but as a proactive scaffolding mechanism that enables learners to plan, reflect, and refine their spoken output. Planned code-switching is framed as a pedagogical strategy that enables teachers and learners to strategically alternate between L1 and L2 to enhance clarity, fluency, and learner confidence. Accordingly, this comparative multi-sited ethnography aimed to explore the relationship between the two concepts of feedforward and planned code-switching in speaking skills. Therefore, two distinct groups of 10 English teachers and 10 university students were selected from two different geographical sites to participate. Both groups were exposed to feedforward and planned to code-switch treatments, including seven instructional sessions for students and two workshop sessions for teachers. All sessions were analytically observed, documented, recorded, and thematically analyzed. The findings revealed positive developments in cognitive-affective, metacognitive, and social skills, contributing to students' independent and critical thinking. Furthermore, the planned use of code-switching enabled teachers to effectively apply feedforward into their

classrooms. Notable improvements in students' fluency, coherence, lexical resources, and pronunciation were also observed in impromptu speech tasks.

Key Words: Planned code-switching, feedforward, comparative multi-sited ethnography, speaking skills.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the global advancement of English Language Teaching (ELT), the communicative approach has increasingly highlighted the importance of corrective feedback, which serves as a crucial indicator across all language skills—particularly speaking. However, learners may sometimes struggle to grasp the nature, purpose, or linguistic focus of corrective feedback when it is delivered solely in the target language. One effective solution to this challenge is the strategic use of planned code-switching, which enables learners to repair their speech with a clearer focus on feedback, while also feeling better understood through the use of their first language (Canals, 2022). As Mushtaq and Rabbani (2016) argue, strategic use of code-switching allows teachers to facilitate understanding without compromising target language exposure. Although this study was initially inspired by translanguaging pedagogy, its practical implementation aligns more closely with planned code-switching, where language alternation occurs purposefully rather than fluidly. Feedback provided through translanguaging fosters greater willingness among students to engage in risk-taking behaviors during the language learning process (Gomez, 2020). This is largely because students exhibit a more positive attitude toward teachers' corrective feedback when it is delivered through multimodal correction (Bayat et al., 2020). Additionally, translanguaging empowers learners to broaden their linguistic competence and unlock their full potential across all four language skills, including speaking (Yüzlü & Dikilitaş, 2021). Supporting this view, Fang et al. (2022) noted that translanguaging helps learners fully utilize their language resources and optimize their linguistic capabilities in educational contexts. Similarly, Ha et al. (2021) emphasized that the use of L1 among language learners contributes to more confident performance during speaking activities. Translanguaging has left a positive imprint on the integration of oral corrective feedback within foreign language pedagogy (Wang & Li, 2022). Echoing this, Uddin (2023) asserted that the combination of translanguaging strategies and oral corrective feedback enables learners to communicate with greater flexibility and effectiveness. While these studies affirm the pedagogical value of translanguaging, they often treat feedback as a retrospective tool. The present study advances the conversation by examining how planned code-switching can be integrated with feedforward to proactively shape learners' speaking development.

In contrast, translanguaging has, to a great extent, either been overlooked in many areas of language education or discussed only by a minority—particularly in relation to feedback and speaking skills. Regarding corrective feedback, it is often noted that delivering feedback in the past tense can come across as judgmental, leading students to perceive it as harsh criticism. This concern underscores the need for a shift toward feedforward, which reframes feedback as a forward-looking, learner-centered process that emphasizes growth rather than correction. This perception may inadvertently guide them toward self-discovery, creativity, and personal growth. However, a fundamental mismatch exists between how feedback is currently administered and how it should ideally influence the learning experience. Speaking, in particular, requires a shift away from viewing feedback as “a linear transfer of information” from teacher to student, toward a more dialogic approach (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). This shift enables a process of negotiation in which students actively engage to reduce confusion and misunderstanding. The dialogic model emphasizes feedback as an ongoing process tailored to the individual needs of students, rather than a simple reaction to each oral error. One effective way to enhance students' performance, engagement, and satisfaction with feedback is to increase the use of ‘feed-forward’ strategies. These strategies aim to accelerate progress rather than hinder it. Gambhir (2015) demonstrated how feed-forward, when used facilitative, enables learners to plan future goals for linguistic improvement. Unlike feedback, feed-forward provides extended time for students to review, refine, and correct their linguistic errors, thereby improving

the quality of previously addressed issues in future language tasks. In such contexts, learners are better positioned to realize their full potential and take proactive steps toward cultivating ownership and responsibility over their academic development in language learning (Sadler et al., 2023).

To achieve this goal, the strategic application of planned code-switching and feedforward within speaking skills can foster innovative assessment practices. However, the number of studies addressing translanguaging, feedforward, and speaking skills remains extremely limited—if not entirely absent. While the concept of feedback in various language skills has received considerable attention alongside translanguaging practices, the integration of planned code-switching with feedforward specifically for speaking proficiency challenges has yet to be explored in depth. In other words, despite growing interest in translanguaging and feedback practices, few studies have examined their intersection within speaking instruction. This study contributes to the field by offering a nuanced exploration of how feedforward and planned code-switching interact to support speaking proficiency. Therefore, the current study aims to address this gap by seeking appropriate answers to the following research questions:

1. How does the use of feedforward through planned code-switching support students during the planning and preparation stages of speaking tasks?
2. How do planned code-switching and feedforward influence students' speaking proficiency in terms of fluency, coherence, lexical resource, and pronunciation?
3. How do teachers and students define the relationship between planned code-switching and feedforward in language teaching and learning?

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In applied linguistics and English Language Teaching (ELT), diverse philosophical frameworks and numerous hypotheses accompanied by emerging theories are continually evolving, with translanguaging standing out as one notable example. Translanguaging is typically perceived as “the act performed by bilinguals who are accessing different linguistic features or various modes of languages in order to maximize communicative potential” (García, 2009, p. 140). García et al. (2016) highlight that translanguaging enables multilinguals to make optimal use of their linguistic backgrounds while engaging in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Furthermore, translanguaging practices can foster an interactive, communicative, and dynamic learning environment for students (Makalela, 2018; Ramadiro, 2022).

In addition, within the field of assessment and with regard to feedback provided for language skills, Sadeghi et al. (2017) declared the significance of assessment on learners' speaking performance, noting that task-based and self-assessment exerted a profound influence. This underscores the important role of assessment and feedback in learners' speaking proficiency. In another study, Asadi et al. (2017) emphasized that students' engagement in collaborative classroom tasks and activities has been effectively enhanced through the implementation of formative assessment and feedback. Not only in speaking skills development, but also in other domains such as writing, feedback has demonstrated outstanding outcomes. For instance, Mirzaee and Tazik (2014) concluded that written feedback accompanied by positive comments could increase learners' motivation toward writing. However, a study by Alqefari (2023) confirmed that despite general satisfaction among learners with receiving feedback on their language proficiency, a small number lacked the confidence to revise their work, as their linguistic limitations were acknowledged. In this regard, feedback—one of the most essential approaches to assessment—has an impact, whether positive or negative, that largely depends on how it is implemented (Panadero & Jonsson, 2020). Therefore, employing effective feedback practices is of great importance. This is why translanguaging has left its imprints and continues to play an increasingly prominent role in the field. At the same time, Baroudi et al. (2023) examined another form of corrective feedback, described as feedforward, and pinpointed that the feedforward procedure enhances teachers' performance in language skills. Accordingly, feedforward is

more conducive to enabling teachers to respond effectively to learners' capabilities, rather than merely evaluating completed tasks (Conaghan & Lockey, 2009). To be more specific, the concept of feedback should result in feedforward to assess students' language development in the future (Orsmond et al., 2013).

Various empirical studies have been conducted on translanguaging tactics. For example, Makarova et al. (2023) found that translanguaging enhances learners' critical thinking, attitudes, and—more significantly—their inspiration toward language learning. In an article by Guo (2023), encouragement from peers or teachers through translanguaging motivated EFL learners in the learning process, as they became more enthusiastic to learn and refine their linguistic errors. Additionally, Liu and Fang (2022) stated that purposeful and confident use of translanguaging empowered language learners to effectively bridge their first-language knowledge with their current communicative experiences, fostering a deeper understanding of their L1 and an appreciation of its linguistic and cultural values. According to findings by Li and Wang (2024), translanguaging and feedback create flourishing motivation toward learners' writing practices, maximizing their learning and comprehension. Furthermore, Galante (2020) explained the role of feedback through translanguaging practices in promoting students' vocabulary knowledge, addressing pronunciation challenges, and enhancing metalinguistic awareness.

As is evident, code-switching pedagogy has received considerable scholarly attention; several studies (Herawati & Fitriani, 2022; Putri et al., 2022) highlight that teachers consciously switch languages to ensure comprehension and maintain engagement; however, several critical aspects still require further investigation and remain unexplored. While corrective feedback through translanguaging and code-switching has been examined across various language skills, the number of studies concerning the impact of feedforward on speaking skills through the planned code-switching lens continues to raise questions. In response, the present study seeks to address this research gap by adopting an in-depth analytical approach to offer substantive contributions toward bridging it.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Design

The current study sought to explore how feedforward practices through planned code-switching contribute to students' speaking skills development. This study followed the approach used by Mujiono (2024), where teachers implemented planned code-switching at specific pedagogical moments to enhance understanding. In this respect, a comparative multi-sited ethnography within qualitative research was adopted, too. As the name suggests, comparative ethnography “explicitly and intentionally builds an argument through the analysis of two or more cases with different perspectives” (Simmons & Smith, 2019). A much less common mode of ethnographic research is multi-sited ethnography, the essence of which is to follow people, connections, and associations across space. According to Antony Falzon (2009), “It is about giving further contextual meaning to particular lives by demonstrating their integration within more inclusive social forms” (p. 5). Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the choice of comparative ethnography was made to explore two different ethnic groups in terms of their educational level (teachers and students), while the multi-sited aspect involved conducting the research at two separate geographical sites: a university and an English institute.

3.2. Participants

Concerning this comparative multi-sited ethnographic study, two distinct yet interconnected groups were selected to participate. The first group comprises 10 undergraduate freshmen majoring in English Translation Studies (aged 18–20) at Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch. The second group encompasses 10 first-year English teachers (aged 20–25) at an English institute in Tehran, Iran. Participants were selected through a purposive sampling strategy, as they were aligned with the research objectives. This purposive sampling ensured that participants had sufficient exposure to both planned code-switching

environments and feedback practices, thereby enhancing the relevance and depth of the data collected.

3.3. Instruments and Materials

To attain in-depth information, triangulation—consisting of observation field notes, focus group discussions with participants, and artifacts (students' and teachers' notes)—served as the foundation for data collection and analysis to better uncover answers inherent in this ethnographic study. Accordingly, the researchers primarily relied on observations and focus group interviews for both groups. Practically, direct observations were conducted to ensure that the researchers' on-site presence enabled access to trustworthy information throughout the procedure. Furthermore, focus group interviews provided an economically viable environment for the researchers to achieve their goals within a short timeframe. In fact, focus group interviews could "create a synergistic environment" that resulted in "a deep and insightful discussion" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 144). Meanwhile, to document positive changes in participants' behaviors as reactions to the activities, discussions, unique procedures, and tasks performed during the sessions, the researchers relied on both memory and audio recordings captured throughout the sessions. An IELTS rubric (IELTS Speaking Band Descriptors) was also utilized to assess students' speaking skills development following the feedforward-planned code-switching treatments. To ensure scoring consistency, two independent raters assessed the speaking samples using the IELTS rubric. Inter-rater reliability was calculated using Cohen's kappa ($\kappa = 0.82$), indicating substantial agreement.

3.4. Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

Concerning the data collection procedure aimed at obtaining optimal findings, a total of seven 90-minute sessions were convened for the Translation students at Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch. These included five sessions of feedforward treatments through planned code-switching, one focus group interview session, and one session dedicated to students' final speaking performances. Additionally, at the English institute, the researchers conducted two 90-minute workshop sessions for the English teachers, which also incorporated a focus group interview.

Throughout the seven sessions of treatment for students, one of the researchers—a Ph.D. holder and a university instructor—employed feedforward via planned code-switching, alternating between English and Persian at key moments to enhance comprehension and self-reflection during students' speaking performances in the "Lecturing and Oral Presentation" course. During both the focus group interview and final sessions, another researcher—an M.A. applicant—joined to directly observe and document noteworthy points emerging from students' discussions and performances. Notably, all of the aforementioned sessions were recorded for further analysis. The researchers maintained reflexive journals throughout the sessions to account for their dual roles as instructors and observers. This practice helped mitigate potential bias and ensured a more balanced interpretation of participant responses.

At the English institute, two of the researchers—both Ph.D. holders and university instructors—conducted two 90-minute workshops for the English teachers. During these workshops, one researcher introduced and presented the two concepts of planned code-switching and feedforward, while the other observed the ongoing process. Throughout the implementation, the teachers engaged in meaningful exchanges, and their concerns, questions, and topic-related ambiguities were adequately clarified and addressed. Since certain behaviors, ideas, and thoughts belonging to the participants could not be elicited during the workshops, the researchers mitigated this limitation through the second dimension of triangulation: interview. Therefore, the English teachers were invited to participate in a 90-minute focus group interview session. Recordings were made of both workshops, consistent with the prior treatment sessions.

For the purpose of the interview, a set of six questions—shown in Table 1—was designed for use in the given settings. To ensure the transferability of the interview questions, two Ph.D. holders in TEFL reviewed and revised them. All participants’ responses during the interview sessions were recorded, transcribed, coded, and analyzed using Braun and Clarke’s (2006) thematic analysis model, complemented by a content analysis of their notes and speaking performances.

Table 1

Interview Questions

1	Can you tell me about a time when you used both Persian and English in Class discussions? How did it feel, and what did it help you express?
2	Are there times in class when you find yourself thinking or explaining things in Persian to understand a concept better? Could you give an example?
3	How does using both Persian and English in your studies affect your participation or confidence in class discussions?
4	What were their thoughts about feedforward in a classroom where the teacher uses both Persian and English with the goal of improving communication in the target language?
5	Do you think using more than one language helps you in understanding your mistakes while talking in English?
6	Do you think that using more than one language as a form of feedback can help create a more dynamic and interactive learning environment?

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

With the aim of fulfilling the objectives outlined in this study, three research questions emerged across the three phases conducted, with each phase corresponding to a specific research question.

4.1 Answer to research question 1

To answer the first research question— “How does the use of feedforward through planned code-switching support students during the planning and preparation stages of speaking tasks?”—addressed in the first phase of the study, the researchers employed feedforward treatments through planned code-switching to support students’ speaking skills during seven sessions in the “Lecturing and Oral Presentation” course. Throughout these seven sessions, the researchers drew upon techniques outlined by Hirsch (2017) to enhance the effectiveness of the intervention.

Table 2

Hirsch’s Feedforward Techniques

<u>Four Lead Technique</u>	<u>PREP Technique</u>
1. What if you use....., what do you think? 2. Have you ever thought of, what do you think? 3. I wonder why you decided to..... 4. You're really working hard today! How might your work go differently if you used....	1. Point: (Ask for feedback permission and very immediately, authentically, and quickly point the problem) 2. Reason: (Clearly give reason for the problem) 3. Explain: (Why it is a problem that needs to be solved) 4. Prompt: (Do you see it yourself? What do you think we can do together to figure out a way forward?)

The implementation of Hirsch’s ‘Four Lead’ and ‘PREP’ techniques provided structured prompts that

encouraged deeper learner reflection. For example, the prompt “Have you ever thought of...?” elicited metacognitive responses, revealing students’ awareness of alternative phrasing and discourse strategies. Similarly, the ‘Prompt’ stage of the PREP technique facilitated collaborative revisions, as learners worked together to refine speech structures and clarify meaning in real time.

The questions in Table 2 were posed spontaneously alongside the main questions to guide the researchers toward the primary aim of this study. These questions helped establish a coherent framework for students’ speaking, serving as a foundation for the next phase, which focused on students’ perspectives regarding feedforward–planned code-switching practices in their classroom. As “feedforward-based self-regulation prompts,” these questions can also be added to the techniques mentioned above to enhance students’ oral communicative competence.

In the initial stages of treatment, feedforward through planned code-switching interventions provided positive reinforcement of cognitive engagement and independent thinking. This independence led to students’ empowerment and ownership of their own beliefs and thoughts throughout the learning process. With regard to students’ higher-order thinking abilities and metacognitive development, feedforward through planned code-switching promoted meaning-making and strategic thinking about how they learn best. As observed, students were able to effectively activate their knowledge and advance self-directed learning within the classroom. These findings, while context-specific, suggest that feedforward through planned code-switching can foster metacognitive awareness and learner autonomy in similar instructional settings.

By the same token, students were able to build strong connections with both their classmates and the teacher. In doing so, they interacted more effectively with peers to construct knowledge collaboratively, while simultaneously strengthening teacher–student rapport. They responded thoughtfully to comments and absorbed the teacher’s feedforward, which stimulated reflective and adaptive learning.

Consistently, the teacher employed planned code-switching during feedforward to facilitate deeper comprehension and emotional expression. This triggered authentic self-expression, identity consciousness, and self-recognition. Substantially, feedforward treatments through planned code-switching positively promoted students’ critical thinking capabilities. Boundaries ensured that code-switching remained pedagogically planned and did not hinder target language immersion. As a result, they listened to their classmates more critically and valued their voices. In addition, feedforward enabled students to reflect on their own linguistic gaps, communication challenges, and problem-consciousness ability. Put differently, the teacher’s permission was the key that opened all those doors. Students’ cognitive, metacognitive, and emotional awareness would not have developed had the teacher not provided feedforward with purposeful planned code-switching manipulations in the classroom.

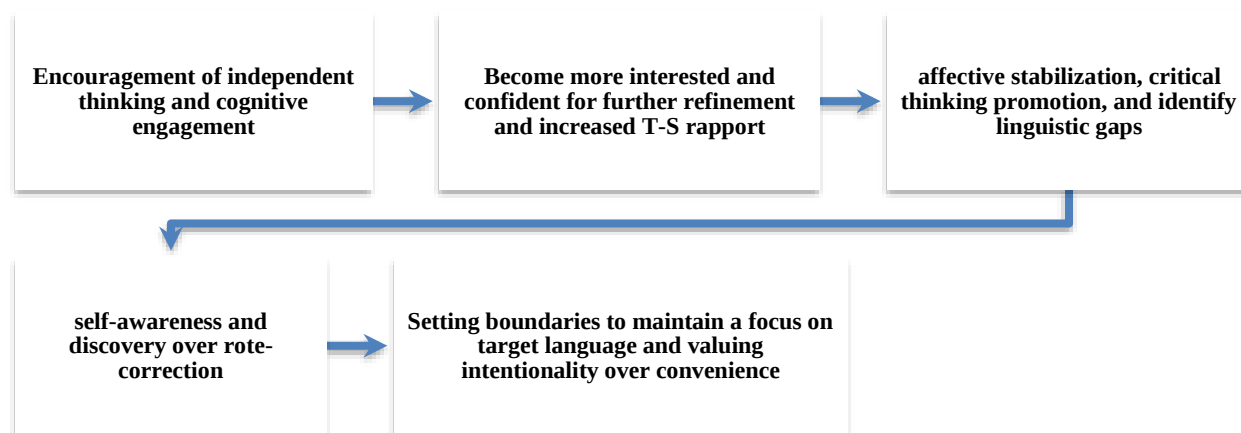
In light of the teacher’s guided inquiry for improvement, students were able to reflect smoothly on how they could enhance their communication. They applied critical listening to their classmates’ utterances and prioritized what they discovered over rote correction. This process helped them become more aware of their thought processes and learning habits through the teacher’s Socratic method, which activated an interactive and constructive teaching approach.

The teacher’s critical feedforward, including constructive recommendations for future revisions, encouraged students’ resilience and confidence in learning from their mistakes and invited them to retrace their thinking and choices. This approach fostered students’ self-awareness rather than directly criticizing them and helped create a supportive environment for more effective learning. Providing students with feedforward using positive language—followed by re-teaching the content in the native language—enhanced clarity compared to immersion and maintaining instruction strictly in the target language.

While the benefits of feedforward through planned code-switching are undeniable, it is essential to maintain a realistic perspective, as excessive reliance on the first language may hinder language immersion. Therefore, the strategic use of L1 and the planned implementation of code-switching are necessary to ensure that the teacher prioritizes intentionality over convenience in language choice. For this reason, boundaries were set during the treatment sessions to maintain a consistent focus on the target language. The following figure presents the hierarchical outcomes regarding the impacts of feedforward through planned code-switching on students' speaking skills during the seven treatment sessions at a glance.

Figure 1

Students' Speaking Skill Development through Feedforward-Planned Code-Switching Treatments



4.2 Answer to research question 2

To analyze students' speaking proficiency results from the planned code-switching intervention and to find a suitable answer to the second research question—"How do planned code-switching and feedforward influence students' speaking proficiency in terms of fluency, coherence, lexical resource, and pronunciation?"—within the second phase, the researchers began by scrutinizing the connection between feedforward, code-switching, and students' choices in speaking genres. As is evident, feedforward involves providing learners with guidance and scaffolding before they complete a task. When all students selected informative or persuasive speech genres for their final presentations, it may have been because feedforward techniques helped them understand how to plan and organize a speech. Moreover, feedforward introduced clear structures that gave them confidence in selecting more complex and purpose-driven speech types such as persuasive and informative. In addition, because planned code-switching allows students to draw on their full linguistic resources—including their first language—for thinking, planning, and expressing ideas, it helped them generate and organize ideas across languages to support the cognitive and rhetorical complexity required in persuasive or informative tasks. It also provided greater expressive freedom and cultural relevance in their speeches.

At the end of the feedforward process, which was implemented through planned code-switching, and for the purpose of examining key elements contributing to students' effective communication, the IELTS Speaking Band Descriptors were used. According to the IELTS Speaking Band Descriptors, students' final performances predominantly fell within Band 6.5 to 7.0. Their fluency was characterized by minimal hesitation and natural pacing, while coherence was maintained through logical sequencing and effective use of discourse markers. Lexical resource was sufficient for topic elaboration, with occasional use of idiomatic expressions. Pronunciation remained intelligible throughout, although some variation in stress and rhythm was observed. Although these results reflect promising trends, they should be interpreted within the scope

of this exploratory ethnographic study. Further research is needed to validate these outcomes across broader populations.

4.3 Answer to research question 3

To address the final research question— “How do teachers and students define the relationship between planned code-switching and feedforward in language teaching and learning?”—the researchers conducted two 90-minute focus group interviews with both English teachers and students during the last phase of the study. These sessions aimed to explore participants’ perspectives on the relationship between planned code-switching and feedforward within the teaching and learning environment.

As an initial step in analyzing the students’ focus group interview data, six themes were thoughtfully elicited:

1. Role of Farsi in Early Language Learning
2. Translation as a Learning Strategy
3. Strategic Use of Farsi in Classroom Interaction
4. Flexibility and Expressive Range
5. Teacher Role and Classroom Management
6. Emotional and Social Dimensions of Feedforward Supported by Planned Code-Switching

According to one of the students, using Farsi in the early stages of language learning is acceptable because students initially lack foundational knowledge of the target language. For this reason, translating sentences helps them grasp what they do not understand in English, thereby fostering fluency. As another student noted, “not using native language makes us not understand the details and it interrupts our communication.” Another added, “when we don’t know something in English, we can ask it in Persian.” They believed that comparing English and Persian grammar helped them better understand the target language, and that when learners lack sufficient English proficiency to capture ideas, using Farsi supports comprehension while enhancing confidence. On the other hand, all participants agreed that planned code-switching would improve their flexibility in expressing what they are trying to tell others.” Interestingly, one student remarked that switching to Farsi is helpful when students do not understand the topic or the feedback; however, shifting to Farsi for the entire class session would not be appropriate. Moreover, they expressed that speaking only in the target language does not make them feel secure enough to participate. The atmosphere and the cold classroom environment felt intimidating, but switching to Persian gave them a sense of ease and allowed them to make errors without hesitation.

Drawing upon the recordings and artifacts collected during the English teachers’ first workshop, which focused on the concept of feedback, seven themes were identified:

1. Correction Should Be Balanced: Direct and Indirect
2. Time Matters
3. Non-intrusive Error Monitoring
4. Written Feedback and Peer Involvement
5. Prioritize Communication Over Perfection
6. Create a Safe Learning Atmosphere
7. Teachers Must Exercise Patience and Sensitivity

In line with teachers’ perspectives on feedback and correction, it was emphasized that these practices should be applied both directly and indirectly. This suggests that the methods teachers choose to correct students vary depending on individual teaching styles and specific classroom contexts. As suggested, writing students’ mistakes on the board enables their classmates to reflect on their own errors and adjust their linguistic knowledge accordingly. When correcting mistakes, one teacher emphasized, “do not

demolish their egos” and “correction should not come with demotivation; it should happen after students’ performances, not on the spot.” Additionally, another teacher remarked, “walking around the groups of students while they’re having conversations and monitoring them could be an effective strategy in correction. Initializing communication before correction and overlooking their mistakes would maintain their confidence to talk.” One teacher further noted, “When students don’t speak, how are they going to understand whether they have problems in accuracy or not? I guess we need to provide an atmosphere in which they can speak first, and then we go for the accuracy.” To achieve this, teachers need to practice greater patience when correcting students’ mistakes, ensuring that their self-esteem is preserved.

Based on the second workshop and the teachers’ focus group interview, six themes emerged reflecting teachers’ interpretations of using feedforward in the language classroom:

1. Feedforward is Constructive, Not Critical
2. Encourages Student Reflection and Autonomy
3. Builds Motivation and Confidence
4. Shifts Responsibility to the Student
5. Avoids On-the-Spot Correction
6. Promotes Critical Thinking

In accordance with the principles of feedforward, teachers should avoid offending students when addressing their mistakes. Instead, they are encouraged to motivate learners and guide them toward improvement. By giving students the opportunity to identify their own errors, teachers foster a sense of responsibility. As one teacher noted, “feedforward makes students think about their own problem and mistake, which promotes their self-reflection and autonomy, leading them not to make it again.” Through this approach, teachers prompt students to reflect on their mistakes rather than pointing them out immediately.

Based on teachers’ views regarding planned code-switching interventions in feedforward, seven additional themes were extracted:

1. Planned code-switching can Support Comprehension and Emotional Comfort
2. Code-switching should be Controlled and Purposeful
3. Planned code-switching should not Replace Target Language Practice
4. Feedforward is an Appropriate Time for Planned code-switching
5. Planned code-switching should be Integrated, Not Fully Switched
6. Risks of Unplanned or Habitual Use
7. Planned code-switching as a Diagnostic Tool

Regarding code-switching, nearly all of the teachers believed that using more than one language for feedback is generally not feasible, as they are expected to speak English at all times. As one teacher explained, “Teachers can only use the L1 to help students feel less stressed and more confident and relaxed in understanding what we are talking about.” However, if code-switching is not implemented under planned and purposeful conditions, it may lead to both teacher and student complacency. Therefore, it should not become habitual, as excessive use of the mother tongue may gradually undermine learners’ confidence. Put differently, planned code-switching can be used “whenever something vague happens.” As clarified by one of the teachers, “planned code-switching is about how to give comments on our students’ performance. To make sure that our students have understood, we can go with a Farsi comment, especially during feedforward time.”

4.4 Interpretation

The findings from all three phases of this multi-sited ethnography reveal that feedforward strategies, when combined with planned code-switching, significantly enhance students' speaking development. Rather than passively receiving corrective input, learners actively engaged with feedback, demonstrated increased metacognitive awareness, and developed greater emotional resilience. This dynamic interaction fostered a classroom environment where students could articulate ideas more confidently, reflect on linguistic gaps, and navigate interpersonal communication with clarity and purpose.

Also, drawing on the goals of this comparative multi-sited ethnographic study, three phases of research were identified to highlight a range of strengths throughout the process. Across these phases, students developed cognitive-affective, metacognitive, and social skills that enhanced their independent thinking and fostered ownership in organizing their thoughts and beliefs within the learning environment. In terms of metacognitive skill development, feedforward supported by planned code-switching enabled students to critically reflect on their linguistic gaps and articulate strategies for more effective learning. In other words, it strengthened their problem-consciousness and self-awareness. Feedforward practices empowered students to take responsibility for their learning and cultivate the autonomy needed to avoid repeating mistakes. Regarding social skill development, students successfully built strong relationships within the classroom. Their critical thinking was activated as they listened attentively to their peers' voices for the purpose of mutual improvement. Flexibility and resilience were also promoted, alongside a heightened sense of security, confidence, and emotional clarity. These affective gains enabled students to express themselves more freely and distinguish between their feelings with greater ease. The feedforward-code-switching approach also enhanced teacher-student rapport, allowing both parties to communicate effectively, express themselves authentically, and be understood without difficulty. By fostering a supportive learning environment, positive feedforward practices helped dissolve the cold and insecure atmosphere that often inhibits student participation. As observed, creating a safe space for students to speak preceded the immediate correction of errors for accuracy. Across the two distinct geographical sites, both interrelated groups—teachers and students—expressed favorable views toward the implementation of feedforward through planned code-switching. Moreover, researchers observed a positive impact on students' speaking skills. Specifically, in terms of fluency, coherence, lexical resource, and pronunciation, students demonstrated greater freedom of expression, flexibility, and the ability to engage in impromptu speech, reflecting a notable degree of creativity in spoken performance.

From an alternative perspective, it is important to acknowledge that excessive use of the first language in the classroom is not only considered unacceptable and inadmissible in English language centers, but also generates dissatisfaction among educators, learners, and their parents. The inappropriate and overuse of code-switching across instructional contexts may lead to pedagogical imbalance and, potentially, complacency among both students and teachers. Moreover, it can disrupt effective communication and hinder immersion in the target language. Therefore, code-switching should be employed strategically and purposefully, with clearly defined boundaries and designated timeframes for the use of L1 in classroom settings. To address this concern, and based on the findings of this study, feedforward timing presents a suitable and pedagogically sound solution for integrating L1 without compromising the integrity of English language instruction.

These outcomes align with sociocultural theories of learning, particularly Vygotsky's concept of mediated cognition, which views language as both a tool for thinking and a scaffold for development. In this context, planned code-switching functions as a cognitive bridge that enables learners to move between conceptual systems and internalize new communicative practices.

4.5 Discussion

The integration of feedforward and planned code-switching challenges traditional dichotomies between corrective feedback and communicative fluency. Rather than treating L1 use as a pedagogical compromise, this study positions code-switching as a strategic resource that enhances learner agency, emotional safety, and linguistic precision. These findings contribute to a growing body of research advocating for plurilingual pedagogies that embrace learners' full linguistic repertoires.

To keep this fact in mind, the primary goal of this comparative multi-sited ethnography was to explore the concept of planned code-switching in relation to feedforward, particularly in addressing challenges in speaking proficiency. To achieve this, multiple research instruments were employed to guide the researchers toward rich, in-depth insights. The findings revealed desirable outcomes, reflecting positive developments in students' cognitive-affective, metacognitive, and social skills. Students' critical thinking was activated as they listened attentively to their peers for the purpose of improvement. This activation was not merely cognitive but also affective, as students demonstrated increased emotional clarity and resilience. These outcomes align with code-switching's role in fostering holistic learner development. Their flexibility and resilience were also encouraged. Furthermore, the process positively impacted students' affective and emotional domains, enhancing their sense of security, confidence, and ability to express themselves clearly and distinguish between emotional states. The implementation of feedforward through code-switching required a strategic and intentional approach to prevent overreliance on the first language, which could otherwise lead to complacency. Given the researchers' dual role as facilitators and analysts, reflexivity was maintained through journaling and peer debriefing. This ensured that instructional decisions were informed by pedagogical intent rather than convenience. When applied purposefully, code-switching fostered effective communication between teachers and students and contributed to a supportive, learner-centered classroom environment.

Considering the merits of this study, a new pathway has emerged in the realm of feedforward and planned code-switching within the teaching and learning context—one that can be further elaborated and shaped by future contributions. The rich, in-depth descriptions derived from observations and interviews have laid a strong foundation for exploring the interconnections between feedforward and planned code-switching, offering fertile ground for continued research in this domain. However, the study is not without limitations. Due to its qualitative framework and design, the conditions necessary to assess a broader population and generalize findings regarding feedforward–planned code-switching relationships in the ELT setting were not available. Future studies may benefit from incorporating mixed methods approaches or larger sample sizes to expand the scope and applicability of these insights.

The findings of this study align with previous research (Makarova et al., 2023; Guo, 2023; Li & Wang, 2024; Makalela, 2018; Ramadiro, 2022), which demonstrated that translanguaging fosters an interactive and dynamic environment for student learning. Within such contexts, students are able to build meaningful connections with both their teacher and classmates, thereby reinforcing teacher–student rapport and contributing to a communicative and supportive learning environment—an outcome also observed in this study. Galante (2020) noted that, aside from pronunciation challenges, metacognitive development enables students to critically reflect on their linguistic gaps and identify strategies for more effective learning. However, this contrasts with the findings of the present study, in which students' pronunciation was generally acceptable, as assessed by the IELTS Speaking Band Descriptors. Consistent with this study's outcomes, Liu and Fang (2022) emphasized the importance of planned and purposeful translanguaging in classroom settings. Their work highlighted the critical role of intentional language use in supporting students' effective learning and communicative competence. Also, consistent with Pamuji et al. (2023), participants reported increased speaking confidence following exposure to planned code-switching.

From a practical standpoint, these findings suggest that teacher education programs should incorporate

code-switching-informed feedforward strategies. Equipping educators with tools to scaffold learner reflection and foster dialogic feedback loops can enhance classroom interaction and learner outcomes. Additionally, curriculum designers may consider embedding planned code-switching checkpoints within speaking tasks to support cognitive transfer, emotional regulation, and sustained language development.

5. CONCLUSION

To explore the two relatively novel phenomena—feedforward and planned code-switching—within the English language teaching and learning context, the present study employed a comparative multi-sited ethnographic research design. It aimed to investigate the relationship between these two pedagogical approaches across two educationally distinct groups: university students and English teachers at an English language institute in Iran. In pursuit of this goal, three phases of inquiry were developed to address the study's three emergent research questions. In the first phase, feedforward through planned code-switching demonstrated positive impacts on students' speaking skills, contributing to three key dimensions: cognitive-affective, metacognitive, and social development. Although the study was initially framed within the translanguaging paradigm, the classroom practices reflected a planned and controlled use of code-switching, indicating that pedagogical alternation between L1 and L2 can function as a practical form of translanguaging in structured ELT contexts. This approach promoted independent thinking, enabling students to organize their thoughts, achieve self-awareness, and express their emotions with greater ease. Metacognitively, it fostered higher-order thinking skills such as self-reflection, critical thinking, and meaning-making. Socially, it facilitated effective interactions among students and between students and teachers, resulting in strengthened teacher–student rapport. The planned and purposeful use of code-switching and L1 also enabled teachers to apply feedforward techniques more effectively in the classroom. In the second phase, students exhibited notable improvements in speaking proficiency, particularly in fluency, coherence, lexical resource, and pronunciation. These developments reflected the pedagogical value of integrating feedforward with planned code-switching. The final phase revealed that planned code-switching helped students grasp concepts they struggled to understand in the target language, while simultaneously boosting their confidence. However, it was also acknowledged that excessive use of L1 in EFL classrooms could disrupt communication. Teachers largely avoided on-the-spot correction, recognizing that immediate error correction could hinder students from initiating meaningful communication—an essential goal of language education. Although teachers were initially resistant to the use of L1 and code-switching due to institutional constraints, their attitudes evolved toward greater openness and adaptability as the study progressed.

Considering the implications of this study, feedforward and planned code-switching interventions have the potential to bring about meaningful change within educational settings. Language learners, educators, English institute administrators, and university faculty stand to gain substantial benefits from the integration of these practices into teaching and learning environments. However, the strategic and purposeful use of code-switching must be carefully considered to avoid unintended consequences in the field. Therefore, In line with Putri et al. (2022), this study suggests that planned code-switching can be an effective pedagogical scaffold in structured EFL contexts.

Further research is recommended to explore feedforward and planned code-switching practices across other areas of language education, including additional language skills, varied instructional methods, and diverse societal groups distinguished by age and socio-cultural background. Expanding the scope to include larger and more varied populations across different geographical regions would offer broader insights and enhance the generalizability of future findings. Future research should explore how feedforward and planned code-switching practices can be adapted for other language skills, such as writing and listening, and across diverse learner populations. Mixed- methods designs may offer richer insights into the nuanced interplay between language choice, feedback timing, and learner agency.

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