

## Code Switching In Classroom Discourse: A Sociolinguistic Study

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**Abstract:** This research attempts to find out the most frequently used type and the function of codeswitching, also the implication of code-switching towards the teaching and learning situation in two classrooms of the fourth semester at English Education Department, University of Mataram. The descriptive qualitative method was adopted in conducting this method. The data collection was done through observation, recording and interview. The results of this study showed that three are types of code-switching are found in 129 utterances which contain code-switching in the classrooms. The most frequently used type was Intra-sentential switching, which appeared in 70,5% of the utterances, followed by tag switching (16,2%) and inter-sentential switching (13,1%). There were two functions of code-switching found in this study, they were translation and communicative function which included motivating, giving feedback, checking comprehension, joking, and expressing state of mind. The implication of code-switching in teaching and learning situation was considered as one of the good strategies to built an efficient and conducive teaching and learning situation in the classrooms, as it is necessary in certain condition and still hard to avoid since it is helpful for material explanation as well as an ice breaker.

**Keywords:** Sociolinguistics, Code-switching, Classroom Discourse

### INTRODUCTION

As a foreign language, teaching English in Indonesia has its own challenge especially for the teacher. It has been known that teacher hold a very important role to encourage the students in using English. Furthermore, the English syllabus in Indonesia obviously states that students should strive towards developing their ability to use English for communication. Moreover students should develop their oral ability to speak and communicate in various environments to express, describe, explain and motivate their own opinions (Jakobsson, 2010: 7). Therefore, lots of strategies have been applied in order to find the best way to transport the English materials to students in Indonesia which mostly speaks only two language (Bahasa Indonesia and their Local language as mothertongue).

As one of the EFL students, the researcher has experienced that the fully use of English in the classroom may confuse the students in comprehending the materials. It is considered takes more time for the student, even for the English Department student in Indonesia which are mostly passive English speakers to slowly translate the teacher speech to Bahasa Indonesia before they can really get the point of the materials. Hence, switching the language between mothertonge and English as the lingua franca in the classroom becomes one of the solution for the teacher in delivering the English materials in EFL classroom. Shortly, the process is called Code Switching.

Akindele and Adegbite (1999: 92) describe codeswitching as a means of communication which involves a speaker alternating between one language and another in communicative events. Since the 1950s, code switching has become an interesting area of discussion in its relation to bilingual or multilingual speech communities. In classroom context, code switching seems to be an essential bridge that provide a way for the teacher to help students to become an effective English communicators through formal teaching and learning process. Some teachers pay an extra attention on code switching since it is believed to be a sign of deficiency in their students. Moreover, some recent studies suggest that code switching plays an important rule in the second language acquisition and its use might be an important competence when used correctly by speakers of several languages (Halmari, 2004: 115).

Regarding to the background of study stated above, three research questions are proposed in this study, they are a) which type of code switching that is frequently used in the two classrooms at English Department, University of Mataram? b) what are the function of code switching practiced in the two classrooms at English Department, University of Mataram? And c) what is the implication of code switching towards the teaching and learning situation in the two classrooms at English Department, University of Mataram?

The purpose of this study is to find out a) the type of code switching that is frequently used in the

two classrooms at English Department, University of Mataram b) the function of code switching practiced in the two classrooms at English Department, University of Mataram And c) the implication of code switching towards the teaching and learning situation in the two classrooms at English Department, University of Mataram?

## **THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Code and Code Switching**

Code can be used to refer to “any kind of system that two or more people employ for communication”. Wardhaugh (2000:86). In addition, Jacobson also proposes the theory about code in early 1950s (Alfarescaccamo, 1998:30-32). He mentioned that different language or different style of language may have different codes. So that, a code as Jacobson defines it is the speaker system of speech that has to be deciphered by listener. Code are usually shaped by variant of language used to communicate real members of a language community.

The next term is switching. It is referred to the alternation or change in language use. When a particular code is decided on, there is no need to stick to it all the time. People can and should shift from one code to another if it is necessary. This situation is called code switching.

There have been various definitions of the term code switching suggested by several expert. Cook (2000:83) mentioned that code switching is the process of “going from one language to the other in midspeech when both speakers know the same languages”. In addition, Lightbown (2001:598) see it is as “the systematic alternating use of two languages or language varieties within a single conversation or utterance”.

From the definitions above, it can be assumed that code switching is the situation when individuals shift from one language to another language within a conversation or utterance. While in the context of foreign language classroom, it can be defined as the alternate use of the students and teachers mother tongue and the target language as the interaction tool in the classroom.

### **Types of Code Switching**

Lots of researcher has suggested various typological frameworks for code switching. This study referred to the theory suggested by Poplack (1980: 593). She identified three different types of code switching. They are tag switching, intersentential switching and intrasentential switching.

Tag switching is the insertion of a tag phrase from one language into an utterance from another language. It seems that the fixed phrases of greeting or parting are quite often involved in switches. Since tags

are subject to minimal syntactic restrictions, they may be inserted easily at a number of points in a monolingual utterance without violating syntactic rules. Example : ” you should pay attention, dong!”.

Intersentential switching occurs at a clause or sentence boundary, where each clause or sentence is in one language or another. Example : “Sometimes I talk in english, *tapi kadang juga pakai bahasa Indonesia*”.

Intrasentential switching takes place within the clause or sentence and is considered to be the most complex form of switching. It seems most frequently found in the utterances, though it involves the greatest syntactic risk since the switching between languages occurs within the clause or sentence boundaries. According to Poplack (1980 : 593), intra sentential switching may be avoided by all but the mostly used by fluent bilinguals. Example : ”If I say stand up *ya berarti kamus harus bangun, berdiri!* How dare you ignoring my order!”

### **The function of code switching in classroom**

Ianzity and Browlie (2002 : 402 - 426) suggested several functions of code switching in classroom. They are translation, metalinguistic use, and communicative uses, which includes managing the class, teachers reaction toward students request, and teacher expressing state of mind. Bellow are the explanation and example drawn by Herlina (2007 : 121 - 124) :

Translation function is considered when the speaker switches the code from one language to another language in order to make input comprehensible. In teaching and learning context, it occurs when teacher uses students first language to give certain order so the student can understand it clearly.

Example : “Early 1970s. What does it mean? Early 1970s? *Awal tujuh puluhan*. What great idea? *Idenya apa?*”

Metalinguistic Function describes the use of code switching when the speaker switch the code from talking in foreign language (FL) to talking in students native language (NL) about the foreign language that are being learnt. Example : “*Perhatikan preposition. Ini udah tertulis, jadi kelihatan gampang sekali. Perhatikan prepositionnya*. Sounds a good idea to me, *bukan* for me, *bukan* with me. *Karena kan seperti itu. Untuk saya itu bagus banget. Untuk diterjemahkan jadi for. Ya, hati hati.*”

Communicative function is considered when the teacher use code switching to communicate with the students or when the student talk to each other. It includes motivating, giving feed back, joking, checking comprehension, and expressing state of mind. Example : *Tidak ada di dalam dunia ini yang tidak mungkin. Kamu harus perhatikan ini. Dalam*

*negosiasi pun seperti itu. Kalau kamu pikir nggak mungkin deh, mana mungkin terjadi. Kalau kamu melakukan itu, harus yakin. Jangan takut, mau awalnya sedikit. Dalam negosiasi juga, pastikan bahwa saya bisa. So you have to have clear thought, positive thinking.”*

#### **Relevant Study**

Lots of empirical studies about code switching in teaching and learning context have been carried out since the 1980s, focusing on observing and analyzing the use and the “grammar” of the TL and L1, either calculating the amount of the native language spoken by teachers or classifying the various functional uses of the native language in teacher talk.

One of the studies about the target language (TL) use in the classroom was conducted by Guthrie (2002). Exploring the question of optimal classroom conditions for second language (L2) acquisition, the researcher investigated the TL use of 6 university with French instructors and found that most instructors used the TL in a great deal of the time. Of the 6 instructors, 5 apparently used the TL 83% to 98% of the time.

Other research is done by Rolin-Ianzity & Brownlie (2002 : 402 - 426). They conducted an analysis of the 5 classes in 4 teachers French class quantitatively and qualitatively and concluded that code-switching mainly involved three main uses: Translation (switching to make input comprehensible); Metalinguistic use (switching from talking in FL to talking in NL about FL); Communicative uses (switching from talking in FL to talking in NL for communicative purpose) which includes managing the class, teachers reaction toward students request, and teacher expressing state of mind. This finding is letter adopted by Clara Herlina (2007 : 121 - 124) in conducting her study. She conducted the research in Bina Nusantara University to find out the correlation between teachers code switching and students English score. The result revealed that the bigger percentage of code switch from Indonesia to English have resulted the lower students scores.

Beside that, another researcher, Liu Jinxia (2010: 10 - 23) also conducted a research in the attitudes of teachers and students toward code switching and find out that most the teachers (80%) and students (66%) hold a positive view on teachers code-switching to the L1.

The studies above have made great contributions to the studies of teachers code switching in FL classroom. However, many of the research is concerned about the situations in English speaking countries where English is the L1. These findings cannot be generalized before more experiments are repeated in other environments in order to account for

classroom code switching, as the discrepancy between these two language systems is much smaller than that between other languages, e.g. Bahasa Indonesia and English, when Bahasa Indonesia is the first language and English is the foreign language in Indonesians context. There may be a different picture due to the greater language and cultural differences. In the next section, the investigation will be conducted to find out the true situation of teachers code switching, from the TL to the students L1 in relevant classrooms in English Department of Mataram University.

#### **METHODS**

The descriptive qualitative method was adopted in conducting the research. The subject of this research are 10 students and 2 lecturers from two different classes at English Department in Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Mataram. The sources of the data in this study were the transcription of classroom recordings and the interview done with students and the lecturers. In collecting the data, some steps are followed. The first was observation. Here, the presence of code switching and all the discourse in the classroom were observed. The second, everything happened during the classroom interaction was written in note-taking activity. The next procedure was recording. In this step, all the classroom discourses are recorded in form of audio recording. In the next step, the classroom recordings were transcribed into the written form to make it easier to analyze. Then, to get the additional information, the interview activity was held with the students and lecturers. Later, this activity was recorded and transcribed as well. The final procedure is documentation. Here, some picture and document taking is done to be considered as the proof if necessary.

The data of this study were analyzed in the form of qualitative data. First, all of the classroom recordings and interview activities were transcribed into the written form. The next step was reducing the data. It is considered important in order to optimize the essential points that related to the issue. Then, the data were classified into the main problems of the research. Finally, to find out the information needed to answer the research questions, the result of data analysis were interpreted.

#### **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

##### **Result**

##### **1. Types of Code Switching**

The first research question in this study was about the most frequently used type of codeswitching. To answer it, a theory about the typological framework of codeswitching suggested by Poplack

(1980 : 581 - 616) was used. In this study all the three types of codeswitching were found. Those were; tag switching, intersentential switching and intrasentential switching.

### **Intersentential Switching**

Example : - T : Any idea? What did you learn. how to say it in English

S3 : eeerrr we learnt about how to develop a material and eeerrr, **apa namanya (3)?**

(ELT conversation No.2)

- T : So, what are the principle of learning and material development? there are some principle such as ...

S3 : **jelasin jelasin kamu(8)**, come on say it.

(ELT conversation

No.5)

### **Intrasentential Switching**

Example : - S6 : liat **textbook** saya ini aja, dia ada disini (27)

T : did you find it? **Ada? Tidak ada? (28)**

S10 : ini dia mungkin ini.

(ELT conversation

No. 12)

- S7 : saya yang **part** ini ya (64)

S6 : up to you **sudah. (65)**

(ELT conversation

No.18)

### **Tag Switching**

Example : - S12 : harus in english ini kita tulis dia? (60)

S9 : **of course, dong. (61)**

(ELT conversation

No.16)

## **2. Functions of Code Switchng**

To answer the second research question the data findings presents in the form of analyzing context of each utterance which contains codeswitching occurred in classroom discourse. This study used Ianzity and Browlie (2002 : 402 - 426) theory of code switching to analyze based on the context. There were three functions that mentioned there, such as; translation, metalinguistic use, and communicative uses, which includes managing the class, teachers' reaction toward students' request, and expressing state of mind. However, the matalinguistic function of code switching is not found in this study. All data are explained more detailed in discussions.

## **3. The Implication of Code Switching in Teaching and Learning Situation**

The data findings presented to answer the third research question in this study comes from the interview done with 10 students and 2 lecturers from

these classes. All the students mentioned that the use of codeswitching in the classroom, especially by the lecturer is considered making the teaching and learning situation became more fun and made the material more understandable. Besides, they also mentioned that the classroom with lower frequency of codeswitching was clumsy and formal.

In the other hand, the two lecturers believed that the presence of codeswitching in the classroom in normal amount (not more than the amount of target language use) was considered fine as long as the target language is still become the main language in the classroom. The further explanation will be elaborated in discussions.

## **Discussion**

### **1. Types of Code Switching**

This study presented some examples of 129 utterances of the students and lecturers that contains code switching. It consists of 17 intersentential switching, 21 tag switching, and the rest 91 were all intrasentential switching.

It was obvious that the most used type of codeswitching in the present study was the intrasentential switching. As it appeared 91 times, or as many as 70,5% . followed by tag switching which appeared 21 times (16,2%) and the least is intersentential switching (13,1%). Detailed of the data transcription was attached in the appendices. Here are some examples of intersentential switching, tag switching and intrasentential switching.

### **Intersentential Switching**

a) T : Any idea? What did you learn. how to say it in English

S3 : eeerrr we learnt about how to develop a material and, eeerrr apa namanya(3)?

(ELT

Conversation No.2)

Here, student 3 (S3) switches the language from talking to indonesia to English. By that utterance, she was talking in English trying to answer a question asked by the lecturer. However at the sentence boundary, she switched the code to Indonesia saying "*apa namanya?*". Therefore, this codeswitching was classified into Intersentential switching.

b) T: Naah. What did you say?

S4 : saya (5), sir? Eeerrrr

T : bukan, bibi mu dirumah, **whan does she cook (6)?**

Class : (laughing)

(ELT

Conversation No.3)

In utterance (6) , the lecturer (T) makes sarcastic joke when he finds his students lost his concentration. At first, he asks about

the material and pointed one student to explain. However, the student does not sure who the lecturer pointed on. So he asked “*saya, sir?*” means “is it me sir?”. Then the lecturer replied in a sarcastic joke saying “*bukan, bibimu di rumah, what does she cook?*” means “ not you. Your aunt at home, what does she cook?”. In this utterance, he switches the code from Indonesia to English. The switch occurs in the sentence boundary. So utterance (6) is included as Intersentential switching.

c) S : We have do that, Sir.

T : But you said to all of you. And you also said at the same time, kayak orang berebutan. (80)

(TEFL

conversation No.4)

In this case, the teacher switches the code to Indonesia in the middle of talking in English. He judge the students by saying “*kayak orang berebutan*” means “like people who fight for something” since they were talking in the same time. This means that uttarance (80) is intersentential switching.

#### Tag Switching

a) T : So, what are the principle of learning and matarial development? there are some principle such as ....

S3 : jelasin jelasin kamu, **come on** (8)

(ELT conversation

No.5)

In this conversation, S3 switch the language from Indonesia to English by saying “*come on*”. This phrase is included as a tag inserted by the speaker. Therefore, this is considered as tag switching.

b) S4 : nah yes. Fourteen, **kan!** (11).

T : ya, there are fourteen item, principles how to develope materials. Anyone can mention one of them?

(ELT conversation

No.7)

In Utterance (11), the language use is switched from English to Indonesia by inserting a tag “*kan!*” as the sign of confirmation. That is why this tterance is included as tag switching.

c) S7 : match.

T : yes, **betul kamu**(15). How to match the textbook with the silabus. So the material in the text book should be the part of the..?

(ELT conversation No.9)

In this utterance, the lecturer inserted a tag in Indonesian phrase “*betul*

kamu” which means “you are right!” before talking in english. This kind of switch is called tag switching.

#### Intrasentential Switching

a) S10 : mana bukumu pinjem saya mau **copy** (58)

S9 : where’s yours?

(ELT conversation

No.16)

In this utterance, s10 spontaneously switches the code from indonesia to english by saying one word in different language (in this course ; English) “*mana bukumu pinjem saya mau copy*” means “where is your book, let me borrow it to be copied”. The word “copy” in this case is inserted without any hasitation or change of the situation. Therefore, this called intrasentential switching.

b) S12 : harus **in english** ini kita tulis dia? (60)

S9 : **of course**, dong. (61)

(ELT conversation

No.16)

These two utterances shows a very random insertion without any change in situation. This indicate that these are the kind of intrasentential switching.

c) S1 : Saya ndak punya **printer**, pak. (123)

L : Yang mengumpulkan lebih awal perlu dihargai.

S2 : Yeeee.. Tambahan **plus plus**. (124)

(TEFL

conversation No.32)

In this conversation, the students change the language or in the other word switch the code unintentionally without any pause or shift. This is included as intrasentential switching

## 2. Functions of Code Switching

After analyzing the types of codeswitching, the finding about the functions of codeswitching are elaborated by using Ianzity and Browlie (2002) theory to answer the second research question. Based on that theory there were three function of codeswitching such as; translation, metalinguistic use, and communicative uses, which includes managing the class, teachers’ reaction toward students’ request, and teacher expressing state of mind. The only function that is not found in this study is the metalinguistic function.

### Translation Function

Translation function is considered when the speaker switches the code from one language to another language in order to make input comprehensible. In teaching and learning context, it occurs when teacher uses students first language to give certain order so the student can understand it



clearly. Here are some examples of utterances that have the translation function.

- misalnya disini, *the tittle*, *judulnyanya* *The Study of Writing* (29)

- Nah sekarang kita lihat *polanya*, *the pattern*, *polanya* (31)

- *realy? Masa kek?* (65)

In this case, translation function is used both by lecturer and the student to emphasize what is they are trying to say.

### **Communicative Function**

#### **a) Motivating**

in classroom discourse, both lecturer and teacher uses codeswitching to give motivation. It might happen when lecturer motivate the student or when the student motivate the other student. Example :

- *You must know it, the connection between silabusnya and textbook*(15). *Jangan sampai di akhir semester ini you have no idea* (16)

- *stop talking, tulis itu cepetan biar cepet selesai* (62)

In utterances (15) and (16) the lecturer motivates his students to learn more about certain material so that by the end of the semester (in the examination) the students can pas the test easily. While in utterance (62) a student is motivating her friend to continue writing so that they can finish the task soon.

#### **b) Giving Feedback**

This means, teacher gives comments on students questions, giving solution or further discussion questions. This can also happen when student give comment to other student. Example :

- *yes, betul kamu*(14)

- *nah iya betul. That's it* (71)

#### **c) Checking Comprehension**

Sometimes teachers can check students comprehension in students first language to encourage them in telling their comprehension. The student can also do this to each other. Example :

- *learning style? How about the others? 1,2,3,4,5, 6, 7. cuma delapan, sembilan yang ingat*(12)? *come on, what else?*

- *did you find it? Ada? Tidak ada?* (27)

- *Oke. Ada yang bertanya lagi tentang problem?* (94) *What is your difficulty?* (95)

#### **d) Joking**

Since jokes are culture bound, it is often used by the teacher as an ice breaker in the classroom. Teachers tend to tell jokes in students native language because it will be

more understandable and the aim of it (as the ice breaker) can be reached. Example :

- *T : naah. What did you say?*

*S4 : saya* (5), *sir? Eeerrrr*

*T : bukan, bibi mu dirumah* (5), *whan does she cook?*

*Class : hahahaha*

#### **e) Expressing the state of mind**

In teaching and learning process, either the lecturer or the student can use codeswitching to express their state of mind. Whether they are angry, confused, sad, or being sarcastic. Here are some expressions that are found in the study :

##### **- Being sarcastic**

*T : Ternyata printer rusak semua di Mataram ya?* (122)

##### **- Showing happiness**

*S : Yeeee.. Tambahan plus plus.* (124)

##### **- Showing anger**

*T : Listen. Hey class Listen. Tania, seminggu ndak cukup ya?* (125)

##### **- Expressing confusion**

*S5 : exploring? Apa Communicating?* (71)

*S6 : eeerr learning, learning apa namanya*(14)?

### **3. The Implication of Codeswitching in Teaching and Learning Situation in the Classroom**

To answer the third research question, an interview is done to 10 students and two lecturers from two different classes. These classes share the same group of student. So, the students in ELT Curriculum Development and TEFL I are the same group of students from the fourth semester at English Department, University of Mataram. The students consider that the two classes which are taught by two different lecturer have a totally different situation. All 10 student said that the situation of the classroom with more language switch within is more fun and enjoyable. The students also find themselves free to explore their English and practice it without being afraid of making mistake.

Along with the others, some students also mentioned that the least amount of codeswitching in the classroom (in which the lecturer tend to use full English) makes the situation becomes more clumsy yet more serious. Since most of the students have a doubt to talk to each other in English because their English is not that good. As the result, most of the students reminds silent most of the time to avoid being asked to talk in English.

In the other hand, the lecturers have the different view in this case. Both lecturer believe that the use of codeswitching during the teaching and learning process might help in some aspect. However,

they still believe that the student need to be more exposed to the target language. Although each of the lecturers has different style in teaching, as lecturer 1 use less codeswitching than lecturer 2. They still have the same idea that the use of students first language in minor amount (less the target language) is still fine. As sometimes, in certain condition the lecturers feel more secure to use student first language. For example to explain certain term which is totally new for the students, or as the ice breaker when they find the class is too tense. However, the lecturers emphasize that the use of codeswitching in major amount (too often or more than the target language) might spoil the students and cause the lack of English comprehension and fluency. Because at the end of the day, the main goal that is set for English Department students at Teacher Training and Education Faculty are to make them able to use English for communication, especially in education setting.

In teaching in learning situation context, the use of code switching to build a conducive teaching and learning situation is depends on how familiar the students with the target language are. Some classes can be managed well with the use of full English, while the other class might be hard to handle without using the codeswitching since the level of their familiarity to English are different.

Muhaimi, et al (2017) suggested that one of the ways of presenting the English materials through codeswitching in classroom discourses is conducting workshops that may be designed to draw insights from sociolinguistic models and incorporate activities of the same kind when developing any language session. In the case of the teaching English materials, special worksheets can be prepared where the use of codeswitching is fore-grounded or where their use is compared when uttered by the characters. Further detailed and focused discussion can be promoted on the writer's style and the way he/she manipulates language to convey various levels of meaning. In short, an integration of language and literary study can be of mutual benefit.

## **CONCLUSION**

There were three types of codeswitching found in this study, they were; tag switching, intersentential switching and intrasentential switching. In this study, the most frequently used type of code switching was the intrasentential switching. Since this type of codeswitching was the most spontaneous and random kind of all, as the lecturer and the student can directly insert word or phrase in different language in the middle of the sentence without any hasitation or pause. Poplack (1980), in her study also said that "It (intrasentential switching) seems most frequently

found in the utterances, though it involves the greatest syntactic risk...". She also mentioned that "Intra sentential switching may be avoided by all but the mostly used by fluent bilinguals.". indeed, this study was done at classrooms in English Department, in which students and lecturers talk in English and Indonesian too, so they were considered fluent bilinguals. So no wonder if intrasentential switching became the most frequently use type of code switching in this study as it appeared in 70,5% of the classroom discourse, followed by tag switching (16,2%) and intersentential switching (13,1%).

Regerding to the function of codeswitching, in this study, two of three function were found; translation and communicative use. The only function that is not found in this study is the metalinguistic function. As Ianzity and Browlie (2002) said in their study that metalinguistic use is considered when the lecturer or teacher use codeswitching to give comment or to explain about one language in another language. This might happened in grammar classroom where the teachers usually have to explain the material (English grammar) in students first language in order to make them understand. However, this study was conducted in the classroom in which there was no necessary to give comment or explanation about the language itself. Since it tend to explain about the content or theory about classroom development in the Teacher Training and Education Faculty.

The third research question was answered by interpreting the interview result which was done to 10 students and two lecturers from the two classrooms which are being studied. All 10 student said that the situation of the classroom with more language switch within is more fun and enjoyable. The sudents also find themselves free to explore their English and practice it without being afraid of making mistake. The material was also found easier to understand when their lecturer often switched the language to Indonesia in explaining the material. Since they do not have to ask their friend once they found difficult word in the explanation or when the lecturer talked too fast and fluent in English.

In the other hand, the lecturers emphasized that the exposure to target language was important for the student. Thought each of them has different style in teaching, as lecturer 1 uses less codeswitching than lecturer 2. However, both of them had the same idea that using codeswitchng in teaching and learning process was fine to build the efficient and conducive learning situations as long as the target language is still become the main language spoken in the classroom.

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