**Perceptions of South African Secondary School English Language Teachers On Code Switching Approach Towards Language Development**

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Abstract

This paper explores how code-switching can be meaningfully used as an empowerment approach towards improving learners’ performance in English language. In cultures with people using more than one language as a way of communication, code-switching exists. Bilinguals as speakers of more than one language, code-switch, thereby using their languages resourcefully at conveying meaning in a variety of ways. Code-switching occurs every day during the processes of teaching and learning as most subjects in the curriculum are offered in English language. Teaching and learning English language in South Africa is characterised by serious challenges because the government is advocating for the use of home languages for all subjects of the lower grades in primary schools. However, teachers still encounter challenges when they use English as a medium of instruction in the preceding grades because learners fail to comprehend challenging English concepts and terminologies presented to them in a language which is not their home language. Qualitative research methods were used to collect data and the findings reveal that using code-switching can be a worthwhile approach to be used in bilingual classrooms. A possible recommendation is that English language teachers should utilize code-switching as an approach to assist language development as learners in the schools investigated emanate from diverse cultures, underpinned by different linguistic backgrounds and linguistic constituencies.

**Keywords:** code-switching, second language learning, language acquisition, bilingual.