Code-switching practices in a Malaysian multilingual primary classroom from teacher and student perspectives

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ABSTRACT
This study investigates a teacher's and three students' perspectives on shared instances of code-switching practices in a Malaysian multilingual primary classroom. It seeks to explore and compare whether students perceive the same benefit of code-switching as the teacher does. This bridges the gap of previous studies, which mostly either focused on teachers' or students' perspectives on code-switching. Three 11-year-old multilingual students with different levels of English proficiencies and a multilingual teacher were selected as participants for this study. Four hours of English lessons were audio-recorded, and field notes were taken occasionally throughout classroom observations. An individual interview session was conducted with the teacher, and a group interview was conducted with the student participants. The findings showed that the teacher's code-switching practices helped clear the students' doubts, reinforced their learning, and encouraged student participation in English lessons. One participant shared the same perspective of code-switching as the teacher did. The other two participants, however, only found it beneficial when the teacher practised code-switching for explanations, especially when constructing simple sentences. Both of these students reported that too much repetition of some words bore them as these were previously learned words. The study concludes that not all the students rely on code-switching to assist them during English lessons.

Keywords: Code-switching; comprehensible input; language proficiencies; multilingual; teacher's and students' perspectives

INTRODUCTION
Code-switching is "going from one language to the other in mid-speech when both speakers know the same two languages" (Cook, 2008, p. 5). Students with diverse linguistic backgrounds move back and forth between two or more languages to suit various discourse functions and conversational contexts (Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2005; Khubchandani, 1997; Wei & Martin, 2009; Willans, 2011). Switching from English to Malay is a common social practice among students in Malaysian classrooms as they are familiar with Malay, the national language of Malaysia (Lee, 2010). Then and Ting (2009) also echoed the importance of code-

switching as a teaching tool to facilitate learning in Malaysian classrooms, especially in making input comprehensible for students with lower proficiency in English. Based on findings from previous studies, there are several reasons that lead to code-switching practices in Malaysian classrooms, which include clarification, repetition, and emphasising important points to students (Birnie-Smith, 2016; Choudhury, 2005; Hobbs, Matsuo & Payne, 2010; Qian, Tian & Wang, 2009; Reyes, 2004; Ziegler, 2013).

The first reason for code-switching practices is clarification. Clarification is an academic reason for teachers to practise code-switching in classrooms

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(Mora, 2015). Based on a quantitative study conducted by Gulzar (2010) in Pakistan, clarification appeared to be the highest reason for teachers to practise code-switching in the classroom. 276 teachers (68.0 %) strongly agreed that students were able to clarify their doubts when teachers were able to translate unfamiliar words from English to Pakistani. Likewise, in some of the primary and secondary schools in Malaysia, teachers were able to make input comprehensible to students by translating key words and phrases from English to Malay, a language that students were familiar with (Husni Abu Bakar, 2009; Siti Rohani Md. Zain, 2007; Then & Ting, 2009). In these studies, students were able to participate actively during classroom lessons as they understood the input being conveyed by the teacher.

The second reason for code-switching practices is repetition. In the study by Henkin (2016), it was demonstrated that multilingual students in Arab were able to receive instructions given in both languages easily compared to monolingual students. This is because the instructions provided in two languages enabled these multilingual students to further make sense of the meaning being conveyed; thus, ensuring the clarity of input to these students. Lee (2010) also confirmed the similar finding in a study conducted in Labuan, Malaysia when repetition was given in the Malay language. Input that was repeated to students through code-switching carries the similar meaning as the previously uttered sentence but restated in a language that is familiar to students. This reduces comprehension burden at the same time allows students to gain access to the message being conveyed to them during English lessons.

The third reason for code-switching practices is emphasising important points to students. Emphasising significant points in their first language or a language that is familiar to students enables teachers to attract their attention and keep them focused during language lessons (Trudell, 2014; Wyngaerd, 2017). This is illustrated in the study by Then and Ting (2009) confirming that secondary school second language students found it most helpful when the teacher emphasised "grammar rules and specialised vocabulary in Bahasa Malaysia" (pp. 10-12). The research study proved that the use of a familiar language, in this case Malay, by the teacher kept students engaged and enabled them to easily comprehend the input given during English lessons.

Apart from the advantages of code-switching practices, code-switching practices also have its disadvantages. Specifically, code-switching practices distract students from lesson content as some direct translations from English to Malay may not be applicable for all English vocabulary (Husni Abu Bakar, 2009; Palmer, 2009; White, 2011). For instance, the word 'table' is '*meja*' when translated into Malay. However, the same translation may not be applicable for 'multiplication table' or 'timetable' (p. 29). This situation could provide misleading information to some students as these students may directly translate

vocabulary that they encounter from English to Malay without taking into account the various expressions and definitions for certain words. Similarly, code-switching practices may also provide limited chances for students to improve their target language (Mafela, 2009; Miettinen, 2009; Saxena, 2009). This is because when code-switching exists in a lesson, students tend to speak their first language or language that is familiar to them; hence, reducing their opportunities to improve their speaking skills in the target language. Due to this, students may be excessively dependent on translations and will be less exposed to speaking the target language.

Gaps in the literature

Although several studies outlined the advantages and disadvantages of code-switching during English lessons, these findings mainly covered perspectives from the teachers only (Gilead, 2016; Kharkhurin, 2015; Li, 2008; Miesel, 2011). As students and teachers are involved in a learning environment, especially during English lessons, it is crucial to take into consideration students' voices and perspectives on how their teacher's code-switching practices assist or hinder their learning during English lessons. Hence, the inclusion of both student and teacher on shared instances of code-switching is crucial because teachers and students may or may not share similar perspectives in those moments (Hall, 2015). In keeping with that, this study was able to obtain more holistic data on the effectiveness of code-switching as a teaching tool to teach English in a multilingual classroom by synthesising perspectives from teachers and students.

Furthermore, there is a lack of code-switching studies on young students in Malaysia. A study by Lee (2010) and Then and Ting (2009) focused on secondary school students' perspectives on code-switching practices, so their findings may not be applicable to students of a younger age group. The differences in age should be taken into consideration as code-switching practices vary due to cognitive abilities. As primary education is the foundation where young students acquire their basic knowledge, their voices should be taken into consideration in deciding on suitable teaching practices. This is supported by Qian, Tian, and Wang (2009) because "code-switching practices among young students are under-explored" (p. 720) which adds weight to this article that explores young students' perspectives on their teacher's code-switching practices in a Malaysian primary classroom. Taking into consideration the various findings and gaps of knowledge from previous studies, this article explores a teacher's and students' perspectives on shared instances of code-switching practices during English lessons in a Malaysian multilingual primary classroom. To achieve the aim and objectives of this study, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What are the teacher's reasons for practising code-switching during English lessons in a Malaysian multilingual primary classroom?

2. What are the students' perspectives on their teacher's code-switching practices during English lessons in a Malaysian multilingual primary classroom?

METHOD
Research design and site
A qualitative case study was adopted to obtain "an intensive, holistic description and analysis" from the teacher and students on code-switching practices in a multilingual classroom (Nunan & Bailey, 2009, p. 161; Yin, 2003). Hence, this study was able to analyse whether the teacher's reasons for practising code-switching during English lessons are similar to how students perceive their teacher's code-switching practices.

The context of this study is a multilingual classroom, named Year 5 Bestari, which is situated in a rural national school in Malaysia. A national school in this context refers to schools that use Malay as their main medium of instruction (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2012). Year 5 Bestari is an average-performing class, with students who are able to converse in English with their teacher and peers using simple sentences. Some of the students face difficulties in speaking fluently and do not have a good grasp on the English vocabulary. Most of the students in this school come from a low to average socio-economic status, with their parents working as farmers, fishermen, and drivers. A handful of students have an average to high socio-economic background with their parents working as teachers, mainly teachers from the same school and nearby schools.

Participants of the study
The participants in this study were chosen via purposeful sampling to provide opportunities to analyse in-depth perspectives from participants regarding code-switching practices during English lessons (Creswell, 2012). Purposeful sampling is commonly used to explore a wide range of perspectives on a selected phenomenon, which is referred to as "information-rich cases" by Patton (2002, p. 230). An English language teacher and three 11-year-old multilingual students were chosen as participants for this study. The names of all the participants were replaced with pseudonyms to protect their identities. The English teacher, Miss Amira, has seven years of teaching experience. Miss Amira is a multilingual and is able to speak and write in three languages fluently; namely Malay, Arabic and English. Among the 29 students in this classroom, with 18 girls and 11 boys, three multilingual students, with knowledge of Malay, Arabic, and English were purposefully chosen as participants in this study to represent the students' voices. They were selected in relation to their English proficiency. Their names are Aza, Batrisya and Chafiq. Aza is one of the best students in this class and is able to understand and respond accordingly in English. Batrisya and Chafiq

have average proficiency in English and prefer to use two languages, Malay and English, while conversing with their teachers and peers. However, Chafiq is less confident in speaking English due to his limited knowledge of the English vocabulary.

Data collection and analysis
Four hours of English lessons were audio-recorded. Selected classroom interactions where code-switching was apparent were transcribed at the end of each lesson. Throughout the classroom observations, field-notes regarding the students' responses when their teacher practised code-switching were occasionally taken. The field-notes included interpretive comments on classroom situations as well as points for further clarification when situations were unclear (Iphofen, 2011).

An interview session lasting one hour was conducted with Miss Amira using a set of open-ended interview questions after the four classroom observations were conducted. Specific classroom events from the observations were used as prompts for some of the questions. The purpose of this interview session was to take note of her reasons for practising code-switching during English lessons and also the important details that would be less apparent during classroom observations (Seidman, 2006; Walford, 2001). A group interview was carried out with the three student participants to elicit their views on Miss Amira's code-switching practices during English lessons. In addition, documents such as the students' work, portfolios, and English scores were also used as references to further explore whether Miss Amira's code-switching practices assisted or hindered the students' learning.

Perspectives obtained from Miss Amira and the three students through a range of data gathering instruments were compared and analysed to see if students perceive the same benefit of code-switching as teachers did. Firstly, data was collected and organised into three categories: observations, interview sessions, and documents. The credibility of the data was validated through triangulation to reduce biasness (Creswell, 2012). This includes classroom observations, the interviews with the teacher and students, and documents. The data were transcribed as they enabled the authors to make links from one source of data with another source of data. Next, the data were coded inductively to make sense of them. Overlapping codes were identified and then narrowed down into various reasons behind the teacher's and students' perspectives on code-switching practices in a Malaysian multilingual primary classroom.

FINDINGS
Based on the findings, I found that Miss Amira often code-switched for keyword translations, repetitions, and explanations. Specific classroom excerpts where code-switching was apparent are illustrated in this section. These excerpts were chosen as they portray the various

reasons behind Miss Amira's code-switching practices and students' views in assisting them during English lessons. Most of the excerpts presented have several spoken Malay words; hence, these Malay words are italicised. Translations from Malay to English of these words and phrases are provided below each excerpt to aid readers.

Teacher's perspectives on code-switching for keyword translations
Excerpt 1

Miss Amira	: Famous, popular, well-known…
	Okay. These are synonyms…
	Okay. *Kalau dia punya* antonyms?
	(Okay. How about the antonyms?)
Aza	: Unpopular…
Miss Amira	: Okay. *Tak* popular….
	(Okay. Unpopular)

Classroom Observation

In Excerpt 1, Miss Amira provided the exact translation for the word 'unpopular' in Malay, which is '*tak popular'*. Coincidentally, 'popular' is also found in the Malay vocabulary. However, the English prefix 'un' could be unfamiliar to some students; thus, Miss Amira translated 'unpopular' into '*tak popular'*. Miss Amira considered this as a translation as she translated the prefix 'un' to '*tak'*. She believed that this translation was able to accommodate individual student needs as not all the students had the same level of proficiency in English. Hence, with the presence of translation, Miss Amira hoped that students with lower language proficiency would be able to have a better understanding of the content being taught. At the same time, students with higher language proficiency would be able to confirm their understanding of the word taught in the lesson.

However, it was noted that Miss Amira did not provide any confirmation for Aza's answer 'unpopular' in Excerpt 1 even though the answer was correct. Instead, Miss Amira translated the word into Malay and repeated the same answer provided by Aza, 'unpopular.' Aza is a student with good English proficiency. However, Miss Amira did not acknowledge Aza's answer which implies that although Miss Amira claimed that she wanted to cater to individual student needs, she could have overlooked accommodating students with good proficiency who already knew the meaning of the word taught.

Students' perspectives on code-switching for translations
In reference to Excerpt 1, Chafiq personally felt that if not for the translation in Malay, he would not have been able to understand the word 'unpopular.' Hence, the translation assisted him in understanding the input given by Miss Amira. Based on Chafiq's sample exercises, it was noted that Miss Amira occasionally provided translations of keywords for students to construct sentences with (see Figure 2). Chafiq perceives that the translations of the keywords in Malay assisted him in coming up with semantically correct sentences. However, not all students shared the same view. Although Aza and Batrisya understood that there is a need for Miss Amira to code-switch, both these students felt that too many translations could cause boredom among students.
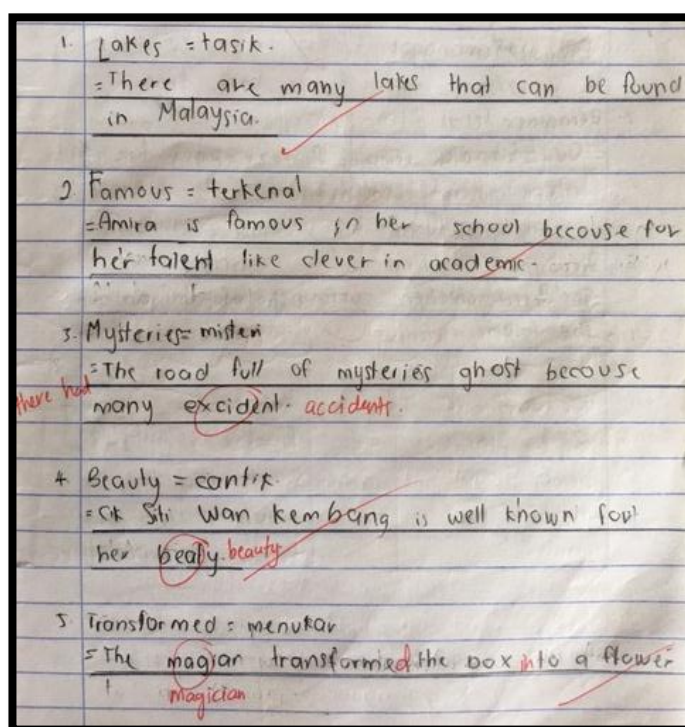

Figure 2. Sample of Chafiq's Exercises

Therefore, it was noted that Miss Amira practised code-switching for translating keywords to provide the meaning of certain words and to accommodate individual student needs. Chafiq found that Miss Amira's code-switching practices assisted him in learning English. However, Aza and Batrisya felt otherwise.

Teacher's perspectives on code-switching for repetition
Excerpt 2

Miss Amira	: *Apa maksud* leaning?
Aza	: *Bersandar.*
Miss Amira	: Yes. *Bersandar…*
	Kan kita dah lukis gambar.
	(We drew the picture…)
	This is your wall…
	Ini adalah dinding...
	Bila ada tangga, sandar pada dinding….
	(When there's a ladder leaning against the wall…)
	Itu kita panggil leaning against the wall…
	(We refer it as leaning against the wall…)
Students	: Oh… (Students nod their heads)

Classroom Observation

Miss Amira provided repetition for statements, instructions, and questions in two languages: Malay and English. Specifically, one of the significant instances of repetition is in Excerpt 2 when Miss Amira repeated the statement 'This is your wall' in Malay; '*Ini adalah dinding...*'.Miss Amira explained that the reason behind her repetition of the same statement in Malay was to encourage participation among students. To illustrate, Miss Amira believed that through repetition, she was able to check students' understanding regarding the content being taught. This was evident as most of the students responded 'Oh…' accompanied with nods assuring their understanding of the input that was delivered by Miss Amira. Similar responses from students occurred in most of the classroom situations when Miss Amira repeated her questions and instructions in Malay, as illustrated in the excerpt below:

Excerpt 3

Miss Amira	: How do you feel?
	Macam mana awak rasa?
Chafiq	: *Gayat….*
	(feeling of fear of heights)

Classroom Observations

In this classroom situation, Miss Amira perceived that she was able to encourage Chafiq to share his feelings on the Taming Sari Tower in Malacca. Evidently, Chafiq responded with the word '*gayat*' which means the feeling of the fear of heights. Although

Chafiq's response was in Malay and was only a single word response, his participation indicated that he understood the requirement of the question posed by Miss Amira.

Students' perspectives on code-switching for repetition
Excerpt 4

Researcher	: How about you?
	Is it necessary for your Teacher to use two languages?
Batrisya	: One only…
Researcher	: One? Why?
	When you say one…what language is that?
Batrisya	: English…
Researcher	: Why?
Batrisya	: *Sebab mungkin semua orang tahu* 'wall' *itu apa…*
	(Because everyone would probably know what 'wall' means…)
Researcher	: Okay…you feel 'wall' *itu semua orang dah tahu…*
	(Okay…you feel everyone knows the meaning of the word 'wall'…)
Batrisya	: *Sebab benda itu senang…*
	(Because it is easy…)
Researcher	: So, you feel easy words no need to use Malay… Use English will do…
Batrisya	: Yes…

Students' Interview

Aza found that Miss Amira's code-switching practices for repetition mainly assisted her peers but did not help herself as she could understand the requirement of the question without needing Miss Amira to code-switch to Malay. Aza's response is understandable due to her high English proficiency. Interestingly, Batrisya also felt that Miss Amira's code-switching practice for repetition was unnecessary. Specifically, Batrisya felt that only one language, English, would be sufficient in reference to Miss Amira's repeated statement 'This is a wall…' in Malay, '*Ini adalah dinding…*'.Batrisya believed that "*sebab mungkin semua orang tahu* 'wall' *itu apa…*' which translates to 'because everyone knows what 'wall' is…' (see Excerpt 4). Batrisya explained '*sebab benda itu senang*' (because that is easy), which means that the word 'wall' is easy for everyone to understand. In this case, Batrisya felt that code-switching practices for repetition may be unnecessary when the words are easy and familiar to students.

Surprisingly, both Aza and Batrisya who felt Miss Amira's code-switching practice for repetition was unnecessary, did not share their views when Miss Amira posed the question in English. Instead, both of them looked at their peers. The rest of the students competed to share their answers when the question was repeated in Malay. To illustrate further, Aza and Batrisya's gesture of looking around could be to provide an opportunity for their peers to answer the question since

they already knew the answer. This is because Aza specifically mentioned in the interview that she finds it necessary for Miss Amira to practise code-switching during English lessons to assist her peers in learning. Chafiq, on the other hand, found that he was able to reinforce his understanding and make meaning of the input given to him in both languages when Miss Amira repeated the statements and questions in Malay. To illustrate, Chafiq was able to confirm his understanding of the requirement of the statement by making relations via more than one language: Malay and English.

Based on both the perspectives above, it could be deduced that Miss Amira's reasons for practising code-switching for repetition are similar to Chafiq's perspectives. Specifically, code-switching practices by Miss Amira were able to reinforce Chafiq's understanding of the requirement of the statements and questions; thus, increasing his participation during English lessons. Again, Aza and Batrisya perceived otherwise, as they could not see how Miss Amira's code-switching practices for repetition benefited them in their learning. This could possibly be due to the fact that both Aza and Batrisya have better English vocabulary knowledge compared to Chafiq. Hence, they were able to understand the input conveyed by Miss Amira without the need of code-switching. Repetition of input in more than one language led to boredom for these two students as the same input was repeated twice. Hence, these students tended to disengage themselves from the lesson as the input provided by Miss Amira did not accommodate their learning needs and abilities.

Teacher's perspectives on code-switching for explanation
Excerpt 5
Miss Amira   : Okay…what is the meaning of the word 'verb'?
Kata kerja…mesti ingat…
(Action words…you must remember…)
Kalau verb… *perbuatan… mesti perlakuan…*
(If it is a verb…it is action…must be doing something…)
                                  Classroom Observation

Apart from explaining the formula for constructing a simple sentence in Excerpt 5, Miss Amira provided further explanation on the meaning of verbs as a grammatical item in simpler terms for students to understand. Specifically, she said 'verb' should be "*perbuatan*" and "*mesti perlakuan,*" which means "*actions*" and "*must be doing something.*" Through Miss Amira's explanation, Miss Amira was able to reduce students' comprehension burden by providing a clear definition of the word 'verb.' Miss Amira expressed that she provided the explanation in Malay as she felt that she had to accommodate her pupils' lack of proficiency in English, which could hinder their understanding if code-switching was not used. Miss Amira also believed that by helping students translate

and explain the meaning of a particular word, students would be able to have a broader understanding of the reading texts. Miss Amira felt that in this way, students could develop their confidence in responding during lessons and attempt exercises given to them.

Students' perspectives on code-switching for explanation
Excerpt 6
Miss Amira   : Okay…*apa formula yang* Teacher *ajar*?
(Okay…what is the formula that I taught all of you?)
Lepas 'is' *mesti tambah…*
(After 'is'…you must add…)
Students   : 'ing'!
Miss Amira   : Ah…*tambah* verb…*lepas itu tambah* 'ing'…
(Yes…add the verb…then add 'ing')
Kena ingat 'is' 'are' *mesti ada* 'ing' *di hujung…*
(Must remember…'is' 'are' must be followed by 'ing' at the end…)
                                  Classroom Observation

Among the three participants, Aza found that it was crucial for Miss Amira to provide the explanation (see Excerpt 6) in Malay as she felt that this explanation would eventually assist her to come up with a grammatically correct sentence. Aza felt that Miss Amira's explanation on sentence construction enabled her to better understand the various forms of grammar items such as 'verbs.' Aza believes that this knowledge of grammar items would eventually help her in essay-writing in the near future. This particular view from Aza contradicted her previous views on code-switching practices during English lessons. There are two papers for the English subject: Paper One and Paper Two. Paper One is a comprehension paper, and Paper Two is essay-writing. In most of the exams, it was noticeable that Aza's scores for Paper Two were lower than her scores for Paper One. Thus, this could possibly explain why Aza felt that this particular code-switching practice for explanation assisted her in learning as she was able to understand the individual grammar items. This in turn would enable her to construct grammatically correct sentences. Indirectly, this would help her to score well in her essay-writing in future exams.

Likewise, in relation to Excerpt 6 as presented above, Batrisya found the need for code-switching to provide an explanation vital for her to understand how to construct a simple sentence. She also mentioned during the interview session that if Miss Amira only used English to provide the explanation, it would have been difficult for her to understand the content being delivered. This is also parallel with Chafiq's perspectives on Miss Amira's code-switching practice for explanation as he believed that with the help of both languages, Malay and English, he was able to understand the input delivered to him.

Thus, it could be deduced that Miss Amira's reasons for practising code-switching for explanation were parallel with all the three participants' perspectives. All the participants felt that they were able to understand the meaning of individual grammatical items to construct sentences when the formula was explained in Malay. Equally, based on the data collected, almost all the students in this classroom were able to attempt the exercises on sentence construction given by the teacher, which further reinforces that Miss Amira's code-switching practice for explanation assisted students in their learning.

DISCUSSION
From the findings, it is apparent that the teacher's and students' perspectives on code-switching practices in the classroom differ. This section discusses the perspectives of the teacher and students in detail as to whether Miss Amira's code-switching practices assisted or hindered students' learning during English lessons.

How code-switching practices clear students' doubts
Miss Amira's code-switching practices for translation cleared Chafiq's doubts on certain words during English lessons (Lie, 2017; Meisel, 2011; Qian, Tian, & Wang, 2009). This is because the translation provided by Miss Amira enabled Chafiq to clear his doubts on the meanings of certain words as these words were translated in a language that is comprehensible to him. This strategy is also supported by Wei and Martin (2009), as translating words from the target language to a language that is familiar to students provides a clear-cut linguistic meaning of a particular word. To illustrate further, Siti Rohani Md. Zain (2009) mentioned in her study that code-switching also assisted teachers in clearing students' doubts on abstract words [in the case of this study, 'unpopular' (Excerpt 1)].

While some of the students perceive Miss Amira's code-switching practices to be of help in clearing their doubts on certain words, Aza and Batrisya perceived otherwise. Aza felt that Miss Amira's translation of certain words did not assist her in her learning because she already has knowledge of those words. Hence, Miss Amira's translations were redundant for her as she could comprehend the lesson without needing Miss Amira to code-switch. Similarly, Batrisya also felt the same when Miss Amira translated the word 'wall' in one of the lessons as she believed that 'wall' is a common word. Aza and Batrisya, being advanced students in this classroom expected the lesson to challenge their ability; thus, they felt that the translation of words or phrases that they already knew did not challenge their thinking skills and learning. This reflects Gregory's (2008) belief that too much Malay language during English lessons could lead to boredom and disengagement among some of the advanced students as students would only remain on task and engaged in classroom activities if the input and task are in line with the students' interest and ability.

Code-switching practices reinforce students' learning
Based on the findings collected from the teacher and students on code-switching practices during the teaching and learning of English in a multilingual classroom, it is noted that for some code-switching practices, both Miss Amira and the students believed that code-switching practices developed students' understanding during English lessons by way of reinforcing their knowledge. To illustrate, the repetition of statements and questions in two languages by Miss Amira reinforced Chafiq's understanding of the requirement of questions. This is because he was given a choice of input in more than one language. Thus, he was able to reinforce their understanding of the content being taught through lexical that overlaps in English and Malay.

This is a reflection of Cummins' (2000) theory that the conceptual knowledge developed in one language helps to make input in another language comprehensible. This is because the literacy developed by Chafiq in the Malay language enabled him to transfer their knowledge to learn the target language, English. The instances of learning through code-switching in this study also clearly fit the theory proposed by Cummins (2007) in his Iceberg Model of Language Interdependence where teachers are encouraged to transfer common knowledge from previous learning instead of compartmentalising these languages in students' minds.

Likewise, all the three students were able to reinforce their understanding to construct a grammatically correct sentence when Miss Amira explained the formula of sentence construction in Malay (see Excerpt 5). Here, Miss Amira also explicitly explained the grammatical element that a be-verb (is) should be followed by a verb ending with 'ing.' It was noticeable that she repeated the word '*mesti*' twice which serves as a reinforcement for students to remember the formula for sentence construction (Essizewa, 2014; Then & Ting, 2009; Wyngaerd, 2016). Here, Miss Amira used Malay to emphasise the importance of her explanation as she believed that students would be able to memorise the formula easily as the language used was comprehensible to them.

Code-switching practices encourage students' participation
Miss Amira's code-switching practices during English lessons led to student participation during English lessons. To illustrate, it was evident that some of the students, especially Batrisya and Chafiq, were able to participate actively in both verbal and also written tasks. This is because the instructions and explanations provided by Miss Amira via code-switching met their individual learning abilities. To exemplify, Miss Amira's code-switching practices for repetition encouraged most of the students to share their views confidently via verbal responses. When the statement was posed to the students in two languages, these students responded with nods (see Excerpt 2).

Interestingly, some of the verbal answers provided by these students were accurate as they were able to confirm the requirement of the questions via repetition in two languages (see Excerpt 5). This is because "if (students) are asked questions they are able to answer, they will continue to remain on task and engaged in classroom discussion" (Nordlund, 2003, p. 8). In this way, these students will feel less overwhelmed during English as they are able to contribute their ideas and to be part of the English lesson. This echoes a study conducted by Rose and Dulm (2006), in which students were able to understand a question through code-switching even though only a single word was translated. In other words, code-switching encourages student participation during English lessons as the input suits the students' learning abilities.

Although the responses provided by Chafiq were mostly single word answers, it was evident that Miss Amira's code-switching practices invited Chafiq's participation (see Excerpt 3). Nevertheless, it must be noted that during this classroom observation, most of the responses provided by these students were mostly in Malay rather than in English. This is also supported by the Kivinen (2011) stating that "it is better for a child to express his/her feelings in one language than that she/he is unsure to use any languages" (p. 25). Therefore, rather than forcing students to speak in English or share their views in English, teachers could encourage students to speak in a language that they are comfortable and confident with while learning the target language. This will not only develop their interest in learning and understanding the target language, but also to scaffold them to build their confidence in speaking and learning English. Equally, Jingxia (2010) also concurred that this phenomenon is accepted in bilingual and multilingual classrooms as this motivates students to participate in language lessons and at the same time, measures students' understanding on the content being taught as they are able to share their ideas during lessons.

When the teacher's and students' perspectives differed, it was mainly with advanced proficiency students. As discussed above, some students like Aza and Batrisya thought it was unnecessary for Miss Amira to translate certain words from English to Malay; thus, they were less motivated to participate in English lessons. One of the reasons that could contribute to their views as mentioned above is that the lesson was less challenging and did not meet their expectations (Cahyani, de Courcy & Barnett, 2018; Mafela, 2009; Olson, 2006). Students will be demotivated and make fewer attempts to learn if the students are often exposed to tasks that are easy and closely related to their learning abilities. This causes the students to feel less engaged in the lesson as they could anticipate the content of the input beforehand (Gierlinger, 2015). This also explains why some students in Miss Amira's class, who were proficient in English, chose not to answer the teachers' question although they knew the answer to it. Although it is evident that code-switching encourages student participation, teachers should be cautious while addressing advanced proficiency students as not all students see the same benefit of code-switching practices in assisting them in their learning.

Apart from student participation in verbal and written tasks during English lessons, Miss Amira's code-switching practices during English lessons also motivated these students to learn independently. To exemplify, evidence collected from Chafiq's work in Miss Amira's classroom showed that he often wrote down the translation and meaning of difficult words that he encountered inside or outside the classroom (see Figure 2). This is to help him to refer to the definitions of these words when necessary. Similarly, some of the students in the classroom made it a habit to refer to a bilingual dictionary to help them to get an idea of the meaning of a particular word. This idea is supported by Lucaz and Katz (1994) in encouraging bilingual and multilingual students to use bilingual dictionaries to understand difficult words, for they believe that some words are less predictable for students and with the help of a bilingual dictionary, students can gain access to the meanings of the words easily. In other words, code-switching practices encourage students to seek independent learning rather than depend on the teacher to deliver input. This ensures students to be passive listeners rather than active listeners.

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
The aim of this qualitative research study is to address students' voices, especially primary students situated in rural schools (Qian, Tian, & Wang, 2009). However, we are cautious in generalising the findings of this study to all schools, teachers, and students in Malaysia, as limitations apply. In this study, we acknowledged several limitations, which include the research design of this study. A case study approach was used for the purpose of this study to obtain in-depth perspectives from a teacher and students on code-switching practices as a teaching tool during English lessons. Since a comprehensive investigation is needed to examine a teacher and students' perspectives, it limits the number of participants in this study (Nunan & Bailey, 2009). The findings of this study are based on views from one teacher and three students. Hence, the limited number of teachers and students may not permit the researchers to generalise the findings obtained beyond these particular participants. However, the aim of this study is to explore in-depth views on the need of code-switching as a teaching tool during English lessons from the perspectives of a teacher and students, particularly in a Malaysian primary multilingual classroom. Hence, the limited number of participants chosen will be able to address the proposed research questions for the purpose of this present study only.

Another limitation of this present study includes participants' perspectives, especially primary students. Young students were chosen as participants for the purpose of this study to bridge the gap mentioned by

Qian, Tian, and Wang (2009) stating that perspectives of young students are less explored, specifically in the Malaysian context. We are aware that some young students find it difficult to verbalise their views due to a language barrier, lack of understanding of the question, and anxiety (Creswell, 2012). For instance, in relation to the interview session conducted, it was noted that these primary students find it difficult to verbalise their ideas. Thus, we allowed them to share their views in the Malay language, a language that they are comfortable and familiar with, at the same time to develop their confidence in sharing their views. To overcome this, we translated a few questions to these students for them to understand the requirement of the questions. The idea of translating the questions encouraged students to provide detailed responses to each question that was directed to them. Occasionally, we also used sub-questions and probes during the interview sessions with the participants to elicit responses from young students to their perspectives on a particular code-switching practice by their teacher. Hence, we would suggest that other researchers not only rely on interview questions to elicit views from participants, but to also include sub-questions as these questions will eventually provide opportunities for participants to elaborate their views.

Recommendations for future research are included in this section to expand the scope of this study in the future. This study focused particularly on primary students' perspectives on their teacher's code-switching practices during English lessons. As evident in the limitations as stated above, young students find it difficult to verbalise their ideas; thus, this limits the researcher to obtain in-depth data on students' perspectives of code-switching practices during English lessons. Thus, in future research studies, mixed methods, which include both quantitative and qualitative methods could be used as a methodology to explore perspectives from participants who who may have difficulty verbalising their opinions (Creswell, 2012). For example, both questionnaires and interview sessions could be conducted to gain in-depth perspectives of students on their teacher's code-switching practice rather than incorporating only one method to elicit responses from students. This is because when questionnaires are distributed to students, researchers will be able to reconfirm students' views during the interview session, which ensures comprehensive data.

Instead of focusing on two classrooms of the same age group as being presented in this study, researcher(s) can conduct a study based on two classrooms, representing primary and a secondary level age group respectively. This is an interesting study to be considered in future studies as the learning environment, cognitive abilities and purpose of code-switching in both primary classrooms and secondary classrooms are different (Kharkhurin & Wei, 2015). The findings obtained could also serve as a guideline for both primary and secondary language teachers to make comparisons on the different purposes of code-switching practices that could be enacted during language lessons and how this code switching practice assists students in their learning at the same time to adhere to individual students' needs.

CONCLUSION

This article has argued and demonstrated that the students' and teacher's perspectives on code-switching practices differ in terms of the students' level of proficiency. The teacher's code-switching practices during English lessons, to some extent, facilitated, yet hindered students' learning. Therefore, teachers should be cautious in assuming that code-switching practices assist students during English lessons.

Though Miss Amira intended to assist her students in their learning of English, not all students benefited from her code-switching practices. While some students found that Miss Amira's code-switching practices assisted them in clearing their doubts, enhancing their comprehension and attracting their attention in learning English, some of Miss Amira's code-switching practices also confused and distracted students from the lesson content. Thus, code-switching should be practised moderately during English lessons to accommodate students' learning and to maximise the use of the target language among primary students. Therefore, in future English lessons, teachers could also attempt to relate the content being taught with previous learning to ensure their understanding of the input being delivered to them. Probably, by using examples that are familiar to them, teachers could reduce the use of code-switching practices during English lessons.

Teachers can also consider ways to address possible student boredom. For instance, teachers can provide instructions and explanations in English substantiated with gestures and visuals (Gilead, 2016). This approach will suit students of different levels of English proficiency. Students with higher proficiency will engage themselves as the lesson meets their needs; and at the same time, students with average and low proficiency will be able to understand the input being delivered due to the aid of gestures and visuals.

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