

Conference Paper

Code Switching in a Multilingual Society: A Case Study of Bilingual Students

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Abstract

Students living in Medan are quite varied. They come from various parts, especially from outside the province of North Sumatra, Indonesia. Bahasa Indonesia is the only communication tool that is used, if there is a conversation among them. Therefore, the influence of Bahasa Indonesia is very possible for transferring code from the first language (B1) Minangkabau to the second language (B2) Bahasa Indonesia. This article presents several aspects concerning the use of code switching among Minangkabau–Indonesian bilingual students in Medan. This study uses qualitative descriptive method. Data are collected by recording conversations of 30 minutes per day, for 10 days, at several locations in USU. Using Malik's framework (1994), the factors influencing code switching in communication are analysed. The code switching data are conversations among Minangkabau-Indonesia bilingual students who migrated to Medan. They are fluent in Minangkabau language, and they are members of *Imam Bonjol* Student Association (IMIB) in USU.

Keywords: code switching, bilingual student, Minangkabau language

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1. Introduction

This article presents some aspects concerning the use of code switching among bilingual students, and it will become a future research that will examine the situation in Medan, a multilingual city in Indonesia. Code switching is a common phenomenon that occurs in multilingual country. Medan as the capital city of North Sumatra has various ethnic groups so that there are various languages spoken as well. In Medan, *Bahasa Indonesia* is used when inter-ethnic group make a conversation, and in the formal situations. In Minangkabau ethnic group, the use of Minangkabau language has diminished nowadays especially those who are born in Medan. Minangkabau ethnic group who were born in West Sumatra, mainly Minangkabau traders, the Minangkabau language still survives (Deliana, 2013), (Nasution, 2018). In the context of the Minangkabau-Indonesian language, sometimes Indonesian is more dominant, or conversely the Minangkabau language is more dominant (Deliana, 2016). They use

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Minangkabau-Indonesian languages alternately, using codes that already understood among them.

Bilingual students of Minangkabau-Indonesian came from some regions in West Sumatera. They stay in Medan in order to continue their study in University. Those students speak Minangkabau language actively because they were born and raised in West Sumatera. They use Indonesian when interact with others, and in the formal situations. It cannot be denied that the influence of mass media was greatly influenced their first language. Besides, they live in a heterogeneous society that have varied languages. Therefore, it is possible for them to switch codes in a conversation.

Code switching, according to (Muysken, 1995) is a quite normal form of bilingual interaction, requiring a great deal of bilingual competence. Code switching is the way how a speaker uses a language, dialect, registers, language variety, speaking style alternatively to better fit one's environment (Gonzalez, 2014; Nordquist, 2018; Khullar, 2018; Esen, 2019; Morrison, 2019). In here, bilingual term refers to speakers who use two languages, namely Minangkabau-Indonesian language. Minangkabau language is the first language (L1) and Indonesian is the second language (L2). Data will be analyzed using Malik's concept (1994) for factors that causing code switching in a conversation. This article aims to present the phenomenon of code switching in Medan, one of multilingual city in Indonesia. This phenomenon is related to bilingual students of Minangkabau-Indonesian in communication. The objective of this study is to find out the causes of the occurrence of code switching by bilingual Minangkabau-Indonesian students and to find a model of conversational code switching.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Bilingualism

The term bilingualism is related to the use of two languages or two language codes (Fisman, 1975; Franson, 2009). According to (ASHA, 2004) bilingualism is a system that fluctuates in children and adults, where is the use and proficiency in two languages can change, depending on the opportunity to use the language and the opportunity to present it to others. This process is quite dynamic, and smooth on several domains, including experience, assignments, topics, and time. Furthermore, ASHA categorizes two forms of bilingualism, as follows:

1. Simultaneous bilingualism occurs when a child has gained an understanding of two languages from birth. Ideally, the child will have the same quality of experience in both languages
2. Sequential bilingualism occurs when an individual has an understanding of both languages, usually above the age of 3, after his first language has been perfectly understood. Learners of these second languages are referred to as "English learners" in schools in America.

The individual bilingual experience is unique. Such as, the quality of exposure to the language learned by an individual, and the experiences of using that language when interacting with other individuals.

Rosaria, M. (1990) distinguishes three types of bilingualism, namely compound, coordinate, and sub-coordinates. Compound bilingual is an individual who learns two languages in the same environment so he gets one idea with two verbal expressions. Coordinated bilingual is that individuals acquire two languages in different contexts (e.g., home and school), so that the words of the two languages have a separate and independent system. Bilingual sub-coordinates are one of the more dominating languages. He concluded, besides biological tendencies, motivation and context, played an important role in the development of bilingualism, and also enriched the bilingual experience.

2.2. Code-switching

The discussion of code switching has been carried out in various perspectives (Hadei, M et al 2016), (Lovric, M 2012), (Sardar, S.S et al 2015), (Azlan&Narasuman, 2013). In Indonesia, many studies related to code switching have been conducted in various aspects, such as CS in Media on Line conversations (Kalangit, 2016), CS in teaching (Sugiyono, 2017), CS in TV programs (Putri (2013), CS in literary works (Romani, 2012), CS in the film (Hudha, 2018), and others.

Code switching as a bilingual phenomenon refers to persons who use two languages alternately. Wang (2016) has conducted a research on bilinguals in the class with Chinese as foreign language, focusing on the function, forms, and frequency of code-switching. It was found there were some problems in understanding expression and interaction especially in foreign language class conversation. The teachers and students preferred to switch to appropriate language in order the class interaction could be carry on smoothly. Sardar (2016) examined code switching behavior among Iraqi students in

Malaysia. It was found that Iraqi students used various types of code switching, and the highest results were to assert group identity and lack of vocabulary in English. Hadei, et, al. (2016) observed some factors in code-switching among Malay-English bilingual speeches. Malik (1994) found that 'show identity' was the most frequent factor in code-switching

Malik (1994) pointed out several factors that led to code switching in conversation such as the lack of facility, lack of register ability, emphasize a point of discussion, to overcoming different audience, to identity show identity, mood of the speaker, habitual expressions, pragmatic reasons, semantic significance, and to attract attention.

3. Research Method

The method of this research is descriptive qualitative. Data will be collected from daily conversation among Minangkabau-Indonesian bilingual students at USU.

3.1. Research participants

The participants of this study were the conversations among Minangkabau-Indonesian bilingual students at the University of Sumatra Utara (USU), and joined the Imam Bonjol Student Association (IMIB) USU. All participants speak both languages fluently, Minangkabau as the first language (L1) and Indonesian as a second language (L2).

3.2. Data collection techniques

In collecting data collection, two techniques are used, namely:

1. Record technique. This study will be conducted by recording 30 minutes conversation for ten days among Minangkabau-Indonesian bilingual students in USU.
2. Interview. Interviews are used to find further data in the form of new finding factors that might cause Minangkabau-Indonesian bilingual students to do code switching in the conversation. In here, the participants will be interviewed regarding their age and length of stay in Medan.
3. The steps for collecting data are as follows
 - (a) The conversation is recorded for 30 minutes per day, and lasts in 10 days.
 - (b) After being recorded, then the participants are interviewed related to their first and second language.

- (c) The recordings are then transcribed, analyzed, and displayed in tables in the form of numbers and percentages.

3.3. Data analysis techniques

The data analysis technique uses Miles and Huberman (2014), namely data reduction, data appearance and data verification. Reduction of data by selecting conversational recording data, simplifying data by sorting conversations into factors that cause code switching. Next, the data is displayed in a table according to the category. Finally, the data is verified based on the findings achieved.

TABLE 1: Factors lead to code switching.

No	Factors	Frequency	Percent
1.	Emphasize a point of discussion		
2.	Semantic significance		
3.	Lack of register ability		
4.	Lack of facilities		
5.	To show identity		
6.	To overcoming different audience		
7.	Mood of the speaker		
8.	Pragmatic reasons		
9.	Habitual expressions		
10.	To attract attention		

4. Result and Discussion

4.1. Code

Wardaugh (2000) says code switching is a natural concept that represents a system used by two or more speakers in a conversation. Speakers are always asked to choose specific codes when they speak. In addition, they also decide to switch codes from one code to another, or mix the codes, sometimes they even create new codes in their conversations (Wardaugh, 2006). In line with this, Holmes (1992) says code switching occurs when speakers switch their language from one language to another, this means that bilingual speakers change their language to other languages when they communicate. Therefore, this language transfer can take different words, phrases, and sentences which are used interchangeably, and diverts in long narratives. Crystal (1987) says code

switching occurs when a bilingual speaker chooses one of two languages during a conversation with other bilingual speakers.

4.2. Factors that cause code switching

Code switching can be caused by several factors. According to (Holmes, 2013), the social aspects that affect code switching are borrowing, diplopia, registers, style, and interference. This study uses the concept of code switching proposed by Malik (1994). He proposes 10 factors that causes the occurrence of code switching, namely: 1) emphasizing a point of discussion, 2) semantic significance, 3) lack of register ability, 4) lack of facilities, 5) to show identity, 6) to overcoming different audiences, 7) mood of the speaker, 8) pragmatic reasons, 9) habitual expressions, 10) to attract attention.

4.2.1. Emphasize a point of discussion

According to Gal (1979) doing code switching at the end of a conversation, not only means to end the conversation, but also to emphasize a point. Anderson (2006) states when a speaker wants to emphasize a particular statement, then code switching can be occurred.

Example: *Bahasa Indonesia*-English code switching

“We travel for work. *Aku ingat waktu kecil keluarga kami sering berpindah-pindah karena pekerjaan orang tuaku*” (Yusuf, Q.Y., 2018)

“We travel for work. I remembered when I was a child, our family moved around because of my parents’ work.”

In the example above, the sentence *we travel for work* indicates the speaker wants to confirm or emphasize his words in a certain situation.

4.2.2. Semantic significance

Code switching can be used to signify the attitude of speakers, or communicative intentions, and emotions because code switching is a tool to convey appropriate linguistic and social information. (Gal, 1979).

Example: Malay-English code switching

“*Korang tak boleh bising, cannot complain, tak boleh mengerang macam kucing nak beranak. Kalau tak puas hati tentang dunia sekeliling korang, kenapa tak boleh complain?*” (Hadei, et al, 2016)

"You can't be noisy, you can't complain, you can't groan like a cat will give birth. If you are not satisfied about the world around you, why can't you complain?"

In the example above, code switching occurs in the phrase *cannot complain* and *complain*. It shows the attitude and emotions of the speaker in a conversation.

4.2.3. Lack of register ability

According to Muthusamy (2009), when a particular vocabulary is not available in the first language of a speaker, then he transfers the codex to the second language during the conversation. In line with this, Anderson (2006) says that using certain phrases in the second language (B2) will be better than in the first language (B1), and this is usually the trigger for code switching.

Examples: Spanish-English code switching

"*la clase de hoy fue way over my head*" (Azlan, et al, 2013)

"Today's class was way over my head"

In the example above, speaker use the English phrase *way over my head* because this phrase is not available in the vocabulary of the speaker.

4.2.4. Lack of facilities

This term refers to bilingual and multilingual speakers who often switch code to a second language (B2) because they cannot find words that match the first language. According to Ping (2008), a speaker will switch code if he is unable to express himself in a language. This is as compensation for the limitations of his words or to cover up his shortcomings.

Example: Malaysia-English code switching

"*Eh! Kalau letak dalam poket nanti kena pick-pocket, jadi kena ikat kat pinggang*" (Hadei, et al, 2016).

"Eh! don't put it in your wallet; otherwise you will be picked up, so just tie it around your waist.

In the example above, the phrase *pick-pocket* has no equivalent in Malay, so speaker switch code to English as a second language (B2).

4.2.5. To show identity

Crystal (1987) says that each individual will switch the code to express a sense of solidarity to a particular social group. Malik (1994) states that code switching is used when the speaker intends to greet and greet people who come from various language backgrounds. According to David (2003), advisors tend to talk to a number of different interlocutors simultaneously. On such occasions, it is clear, they will change the code according to the intended ethnicity. The following is an example that can illustrate this explanation.

Example: Malaysian-English code switching

“Am I the last person to know this? *Adakah juga orang kat luar sana yang telah membawa anak-anak mereka dengan impian nak main golf versi mini tapi terkejut bila find out rupa-rupanya ini operasi haram tahap dewa*” (Hadei, et al, 2016)

”Am I the last person to know this? Are there any people out there who have brought their children with the dream of playing the mini-version golf but are surprised to find out that apparently this operation is illegitimate, the god stage.”

In the example above, speakers switch the code into English to show a sense of solidarity with certain social group.

4.2.6. To overcome different audiences

Malik (1994) says code switching is also used when speakers want to greet people who have varied linguistic backgrounds.

Example: Malaysian-English code switching

”*Anak-anak korang dah ditahan*, they will start doing waiting like settling for anyone just to make you happy.” (Hadei, et al, 2016)

“Children, you have been arrested, they will start doing waiting like settling for anyone just to make you happy.”

In the example above, speaker switch codes into English because of different audien.

4.2.7. Mood of the speaker

Speakers' moods can determine what language to use when communicating. When the condition is stable, a speaker is able to think of words that are right to use in the second language (B2) (Muthusamy, 2009). Code switching can occur by emotional factors, such as fatigue, joy, anger, confusion, fear, surprise and so on.

Example: Malaysian-English code switching

"Look! Is this because there are no stories made for middle-ages women? Tak *boleh kah perempuan yang lebih matang dijadikan watak utama?*" (Angry) (Hadei, et al, 2016)

"Look! Is this because there are no stories made for middle-aged women? Shouldn't a more mature woman be the main Character?"

In the example above, the transfer of code to English shows the emotions of speaker who are angry.

4.2.8. Pragmatic reasons

Malik (1994) says speakers will switch codes with the intention of attracting attention in the context of a conversation. He emphasized that sometimes the choice between two languages is more meaningful based on the context of the conversation.

Example: Malaysian-English

"Maybe we should put a sign outside these places, *supaya senang polis nak cari.*" (Hadei, et al, 2016)

"Maybe we should put a sign outside this places, so the police can find out easily."

In the example above, English sentences are used when the speaker wants to bring the attention of the addressee to the context of the conversation.

4.2.9. Habitual expressions

Malik (1994) emphasizes the fact that code switching often occurs in welcoming and parting phrases, orders and requests, invitations, expressions of thanks and discourse markers such as O, yes, you know, or pero (but).

Examples: Malaysian-English code switching

"*Excuse me*, Wan Faizul, mak bapak engkau tak ajar kah macammna nak eja betul betul?" (Hadei, et al, 2016)

"Excuse me, Wan Faizul, your parents didn't teach you to spell correctly, right?"

In the example above, the English greeting *excuse me* shows that the expression is the habits of the speaker.

4.2.10. To attract attention

Malik (1994) states that in advertising (both written and oral) code switching is used to attract the attention of readers or listeners.

Examples: Malaysian-English code switching

”Hello everyone, tuan-tuan dan puan-puan, dah puas mengundi”? (Hadei et al, 2016)

”Hello everyone, ladies and gentlemen, are you satisfied with your vote”?

In the example above, *hello everyone* shows the speaker wants to attract the attention of listeners.

5. Conclusion

The discussion about code switching in future research will use the Malik’s concept (1994) to see the factors that led to the occurrence of code switching among *Minangkabau-Bahasa Indonesia* bilingual students in Medan.

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