

CODE SWITCHING AND SOCIAL IDENTITY IN DIGITAL ERA

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Abstract

The development of language usage in this digital era affects millennial generation to become bilingual and multilingual. The phenomenon of switching their utterances in a conversation occurs in both offline and online setting. When they use languages, they also do so as individuals with social history. It indirectly shows their social identity which can be happened subconsciously or consciously signifying that they belong to certain identity in society. This paper aims to explain the connection between code switching and social identity. It shows that the three types of code-switching can appear in showing someone's identity both online and offline communication.

Keywords: code switching, social identity, bilingual, multilingual

A. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, people can use more than one language to communicate with others. The term of bilingual (two languages) and multilingual (many languages) speaker occurs to show that the person can speak more than one language. Then, the existence of social media supporting by advance machine translation create a situation where people can switch their language from one language to another language.

Indonesia has Bahasa Indonesia as the official or national language, 746 different local languages (Resmayani & Septarini, 2016) which 19 languages of local language have over a million speakers (Chon & Ravindranath, 2014), and English as the foreign language. This situation required Indonesian to not only master their local language but also the official language in order to create unity among them, and English to make them familiar with international world. Moreover, Indonesia has Muslim as the majority population (Riyanti & Sarroub, 2016) so that Arabic language also occurs in communication. Unconsciously, it creates bilingual and multilingual society which people can switch their utterances between two or more languages in a conversation (Kiranmayi in Nova, 2018).

The practice for switching from one language to another language in communication called code-switching. Code switching can be described as the alternating use of two or more codes within one conversational episode (Auer in Mabule, 2015). In the context of contemporary Indonesia, Indonesians frequently utilise code-switching between their local language and the national language (Skujins, 2017) for example the using of Bahasa Jawa and Bahasa Indonesia in society. These days, it is commonly found that Indonesian especially young generation switch local languages to foreign language, and/or national language to foreign languages. They use code switching to signal familiarity or friendship, to create close social relationship and camaraderie, and build closer social relationship. In addition, Indonesians also code switching between Indonesia and English to show their prestige (Skujins, 2017).

Through a sociolinguistic views, code-switching has been seen as a salient feature of marking personal and social identity (Gumperz in Skujins, 2017). Reasons for code-

switching have been found to include not just language proficiency but language dominance, untranslatable words, voicing the 'other' or creating a personal and projecting social identity (Heredia & Altarriba in Skujins, 2017). As Jaspal (2009) stated that one function of language beside as an instrument of communication is a means of asserting one's identity or one's from other. One can show his/her social identity by selecting some words in their utterances and also switch the languages in communication. Moreover, languages can often constitute a marker of the distinct (adolescent) identity; for instance, it may reflect membership of a particular subculture, and endow members with a sense of distinctiveness from other groups (Jaspal, 2009).

B. METHOD

This study is library research with qualitative research design. Zed (2014) said that library research includes activities of collecting library data, reading, noting, and analyzing materials. In this case, article journals, e-book, and printed sources are used including other relevant resources. Then, qualitative research means a research conducted to understand a phenomenon by focusing on the total pictures with depth understanding (Ary, et al, 2010). Here, the writer describes and explains the data gather from literature about the phenomenon code switching usage and its relation to social identity.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Code Switching and Language Use

Code switching entails the ability to switch from code A to code B (Hasan & Akhand, 2015). It can be used to mark relationships, signaling status and situation, deference and intimacy (Malmkjaer, 2006). There are purposes why people switch the language such as to quote someone, qualify message, amplify or emphasize, convey confidentially, anger and annoyance, mark and emphasize group identity (solidarity), exclude someone from conversation, change role of speaker, rise status, add authority, show expertise and continue the last language used (Groskeam in Yuliana, Luziana, & Sarwendah, 2015). However, sometimes monolinguals who hear bilinguals code switch may view it negatively, believing it shows a deficit in mastery of both languages (Malmkjaer, 2006) although at the fact it is not like that.

Appel and Muysken (in Fong, 2011) explained six functions of code switching, they are:

- a. Directive function: People switch languages to either include or exclude other people from the conversation.
- b. Expressive function: People include the embedded language in order to express some part of their identity.
- c. Referential function: Someone is unable to express an idea easily in one language, switches to the other language in order to express it more easily.
- d. Phatic function: sometimes a speaker switches language or repeats something in both languages in order to emphasize it.
- e. Metalinguistic function: reporting something in the other language or commenting on something said in the other language.
- f. Poetic function: the speaker says certain words or makes jokes in the embedded language

for amusement or humor.

Code switching is divided into three different forms: intersentential, intrasentential, and extrasentential or tag-switching (Poplack in Fong, 2011). Intersentential switching is the language switches for entire sentences or clauses, for instance: “Kabar umaku baik haja, umamu pank?”. Intrasentential switching is the speaker switches language within a clause or sentence boundary, for example: “Alhamdulillah, saya lulus.” And the last, extrasentential or tag-switching which is a tag from one language is inserted into another language like “So, kita jadi pergi ke pasar?”.

The advance of technology especially in cyber world also contributes to communication in society. The existence of social media like facebook, twitter, and instagram gives strong influence to social interaction. In this world, people seem free to switch any kinds of language in order to express their thoughts and emotions. Halim and Maros (in Resmayani & Septarini, 2016) stated in social media, code switching take the role for quotation, addresse specification, reiteration, message qualification, clarification, emphasis, checking, indicating emotions, and free switching.

2. Code Switching and Social Identity

Based on the Nafa's research (2005) when he analyzed the relationship between code switching and social identity construction among Arabic-English bilinguals, he concluded that code switching is a linguistic, resourceful means through which speakers perform multiple aspects of their social identities that are not tied to inherent associations with either language. A number of evaluative stances, such as being 'positive', 'polite', 'competitive/defensive' and 'authentic speaker' were considered to account for some of the code switching acts speakers take. According to Gumperz (in Nafa, 2005), bilinguals mainly and unconsciously switch between two codes in order to make a communicative effect that is dependent on the sum of the structural units of the two switched codes. Also, code-switching can be shown to demonstrate linguistic acts of identity for portraying social 'in group' and 'out group' (Hamers & Blanc in Skujins, 2017) as a part of social categorization in the context of social identity.

Social identity can be described as a conceptualization recognizing that the way we perceive others and ourselves on both our unique characteristics and our membership in various groups (Tajfel & Tunel, 1979). It is the part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group (Tajfel in Jaspal, 2009). In short, social identity is about a group which people belong to like citizen of certain country (Indonesian, Malaysian), the different gender (male and female), particular religious association (Muslims, Christians, Jews), particular student in a university and so on.

These various group memberships are significant to the development of social identities in that they define in part the kinds of communicative activities and the particular linguistic resources for realizing which have access. Those identities become associated with particular sets of linguistics actions for realizing the activities, and with attitudes and belief about them (Hall, 2011). For example as a family, people take on roles as parents, children, siblings or cousins and will use a family conversation related to their life outside the house, their relationship among people, and etc.

Code-switching can also serve as an identity marker when it enables the speaker to

signal two identities at once. The choice of a particular language variety shows how we want others to perceive us (Lovrić, 2012). For example the conversation that happened in one's family:

“Tan, iki piye to?” ask the mother. (Tan, how to use this?)

“Itu nah buk, lihati di bungkusnya kayapa cara meulahnya,” replied the daughter.
(Just look at the cover how to use it, mom)

“Ibuk lo ora ngerti, tan, tan, piye iki?” (I don't understand, tan, how?)

The daughter actually understands about everything that her mother said to her, but she felt more comfortable now speaking in Banjarese. In the twenty years since they had migrated to South Kalimantan, they had evolved a kind of bilingual dialogue, where her parents would continue to address her brothers and her in Javanese, and they would reply in Banjarese. This seems that the daughter show her identity that she capable to speak Banjarese.

Also, speakers may code-switch in order to show their social status, which makes code switching not only a communicative but also a social phenomenon (Lovrić, 2012). For example, a conversation of a rich woman who has travelled to Java switched to Bahasa Indonesia in order to show their (higher) social status and also social identity.

“Inggih, kemaren anak lun wisuda di Jogja. Jadi kami semua pergi,” (Yes, my daughter have graduated from her university in Jogja, so we have gone there.)

“Untungnya pian lah. Naik pesawatkah?” (How lucky you are, did you go by airplane?)

“Alhamdulillah, iya. Pesawat Garuda” (All praises to Allah. Of course by Garuda airlines). The interaction begins in Banjarese, but when the rich woman want show her social status and the identity of her daughter she talked in Bahasa Indonesia.

So, by using language spiced with Bahasa Indonesia or even English utterances, language users may be subconsciously or consciously signifying that they are members of a particular club (a club that is cosmopolitan, well-travelled, successful and prestigious) either by speaking the same language as other interlocutors, or speaking a language which may exclude their audience. By demonstrating that you are a member of this club, you may be threatening the face of others around you – who may be new members (i.e. just understanding a few English words or phrases), or individuals who simply are not members (Skujins, 2017).

D. CONCLUSION

Using language is not only just a mean of representing meaning that are commonly understood but also it is a way of creating meaning (Young, 2008). When people use language, they also do so as individuals with social history (Hall, 2011). The use of code switching in Indonesian bi- and multilingual society reflects in their real conversation and their social media. By choosing a particular variety the speaker can simply organize the interaction i. e. exclude someone from a dialogue, emphasize certain parts, ensure a better understanding, signal the change of the interlocutor or attract attention. By switching between different linguistic varieties the speaker can also signal his or her identity or change roles. Moreover, the speaker can employ CS in order to denote his or her social status and show authority, which serves as a way to demonstrate power (Lovrić, 2012)

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