

---

## CODE SWITCHING USED IN CONVERSATIONS BY AN AMERICAN STUDENT OF THE *DARMAISISWA* PROGRAM

**Saptina Retnawati** | **Yan Mujiyanto**  
[teena.calissta@gmail.com](mailto:teena.calissta@gmail.com) | [yanmujiyanto@gmail.com](mailto:yanmujiyanto@gmail.com)  
Semarang State University, Indonesia | Semarang State University, Indonesia

Received: 15 June 2015. Revised: 10 August 2015. Accepted: 25 August 2015

---

### ABSTRACT

This study analyzes code switching used in conversations by an American student of the *darmasiswa* program, addressing four objectives to find out the types and the functions of code switching, the possible factors that cause the occurrence of code switching, and the impacts of code switching to the abilities of involved languages. The approach of this study is qualitative. The researcher applies mixed techniques to obtain data; recording the conversations in natural setting and interview. The analysis is interpretive. The findings of this study indicate that three types of code switching found in the conversations; intersentential code switching, intrasentential code switching, and tag/emblematic switching. They are used for various functions due to several reasons. The most significant function is to emphasize the message which gets the highest percentage (27.6%) and intention to clarify the speech content to the other interlocutors is the most significant factor causing code switching which gets highest percentage (40.8%). It is found that code switching gives impact to the abilities of involved languages in conversations. It results in the loss of English language ability and the gain of Indonesian language ability.

Key Words: *Code Switching; Conversations; Darmasiswa Program.*

**How to Cite:** Retnawati, S. & Yan Mujiyanto. 2015. Code Switching Used in Conversations by an American Student of the *Darmasiswa* Program. *Language Circle: Journal of Language and Literature*, X/1.

---

### INTRODUCTION

In an attempt to promote and to share the Indonesian languages and cultures, particularly *bahasa Indonesia*, the government developed the scholarship program called *Darmasiswa* program. This program was developed by the Ministry of Education in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1974. Besides promoting and increasing the interest in the language and culture of Indonesia among the youth of other countries, this scholarship has also been designed to provide stronger cultural links and understanding among participating countries.

The *Darmasiswa* program started in 1974 as a part of ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) initiative, offering students from abroad to study *Bahasa Indonesia*, Indonesian arts, music and crafts. According to the Ministry of Education, the participants in this program can choose one of 45 different universities located in different cities in Indonesia. At the State University of Semarang, there were twenty students from some foreign countries who joined this scholarship in the academic year of 2013/2014. They were from Hungary, Scotland, Lithuania, Afghanistan, China,

England, Italy, Russia, Peru, Japan, Germany, Denmark, the United States, Vietnam, Portugal, Poland, and Thailand.

Because the purpose of the program is to spread the Indonesian language, all participants are required to take Bahasa Indonesia course. In this course, students are taught bahasa Indonesia starting from the basic level. The course also aimed to improve students' skills in communicating with Indonesians. Therefore, the course material included Indonesian grammar and conversation. It is hoped that the students would be able to communicate using Bahasa Indonesia inside or outside of the classroom both with Darmasiswa students and Indonesian native speakers.

Since the students came from different countries and each student had different mother tongues and different cultural backgrounds, the students might have used more than one language to communicate with others. To communicate with Indonesian people, they might use English or Indonesian. This situation opens up to the use of code switching in their conversation. This phenomenon motivates me to investigate more on how they communicate in daily life, especially how they switch from one language to another language, also the impacts of the use of code switching to the languages capabilities.

### **Code Switching**

Code switching is a phenomenon of switching from one language to another language in bilingual or multilingual communities (Wardhaugh, 2006:101). Code-switching may also be defined as the alternation between two or more languages in a speaker's speech, occurs naturally in the scheme of bilinguality. Some people may

perform code switching unconsciously as the result of their ability in using more than one language, while others may perform code switching to repeat what has said before. This study focuses on the theories from Hoffman (1991) and Saville-Troike. There are ten reasons in total of why people perform code switching in the conversations. Those reasons are talking about a particular topic, quoting somebody else, being emphatic about something, interjection, repetition, intention to clarify the speech content, expressing group identity, to soften and straighten request or command, real lexical need, and the last is to exclude other people. However, some people also may perform the different kinds of code switching. This study focuses on the theories from Hoffman (1994) and Poplack (2002) whose concepts of code switching can be summed up as: Inter-sentential switching, Intra-sentential switching, and Emblematic-switching (tag switching).

Inter-sentential code switching is the switching that occurs between sentences. This code switching occurs at a clause or sentence level, in which each clause or sentence is in a different language. Intersentential switching requires more fluency in both languages than tag switching because the portions have to follow the rules of both languages. It is found that the research subject in this study perform quite a lot of inter sentential switching. Different from inter sentential switching which occurs in the sentence level, intra sentential switching occurs within a clause or sentence boundary (Poplack, 2002). Poplack states that intra-sentential switching is the most complex type of code switching, requiring that the speaker be able to control two linguistic systems simultaneously. The third

type, tag switching, is an insertion of a tag in one language into an utterance which is entirely in another. Bullock (2010:4) in Suprihartanta (2012:36) states that “tag switching is defined by the insertion of formulaic expression from language B (e.g., *so, well, d'accord?*) into an utterance in language A, primarily for pragmatic effect.

### METHODOLOGY

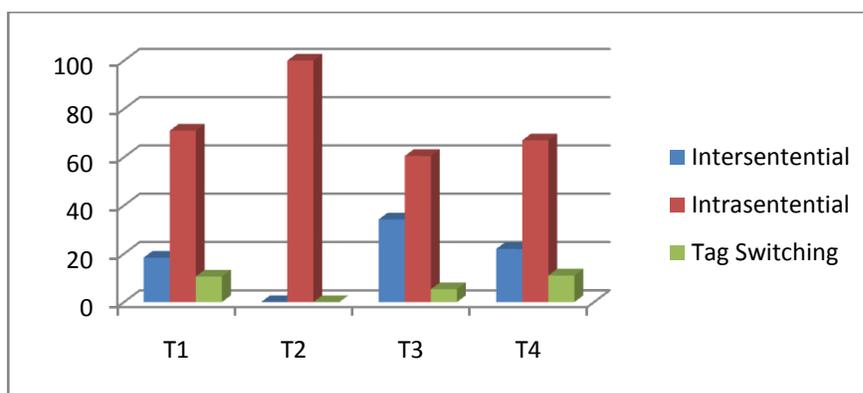
The study employed a descriptive qualitative design which concerned on utterances produced during the conversations by the American student of *Darmasiswa* program with her colleagues or with Indonesian native speakers. I recorded the conversation in some informal occasions. The spoken conversations were then transcribed into written form so that I could analyze the code switching occurred from Indonesian to English or from English to Indonesian or from other languages she was able to speak. The analysis was focused on the types and the functions of code switching, and the cause of occurrence of code switching in the conversation, also the impacts of code switching in terms of language capabilities.

The data were obtained in several steps, included firstly, observation, audio recording, and interviews. The triangulation process was conducted to ensure the reliability of data analysis. The next step was transferring the spoken data into the written form. I transcribed the data without changing or improving them. The guideline of transcribing the data into written form was used as the standard of transcription.

After being collected, I analyzed the data based on the types of code switching and then analyzed the data to find out the functions of code switching and the reasons why code switching occurred in the conversation. There were two stages in analyzing the data, i.e. data identification and classification and then data tabulation.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Following Hoffman and Poplack, I divided code switching into three types; Intersentential code switching, intra-sentential code switching, and emblematic or tag switching. The comparison of the occurrence of code switching in transcription one until transcription four is described in Chart 1.



**Chart 1. Comparison of the total types of CS in T1-T4**

There were 105 types in total of code switching that occurred in the four transcribed conversations in which Intra-

sentential code switching dominated the conversation which occurred 76 times. Tag switching occurred less than both Inter-

sentential code switching and Intra-sentential code switching. An example of intrasentential code switching performed by research subject (A) and her Indonesian friend (T) is given below:

- A : “Ya, All are closed at noon?”  
 T : “Ya, I mean they’ll open at...”  
 A : “3 a.m. in the morning?”  
 T : “Five p.m.”  
 A : “Oh, 5 p.m. *yaya*”  
 T : “They will start”  
 A : “OK . Because I was trying to a *warung* over there that I usually go to, and...”  
 T : “Warung, which one?”

The Indonesian word ‘warung’ (small restaurant) is inserted between English utterances so that it can be categorized as Intra-sentential code switching. Among 105 occurrences of code switching in this study,

29 occurrences of code switching were functioned to emphasize the message. Instead of using repetition, the speaker mostly switched from English to Indonesian to emphasize the message in a conversation, particularly the specific topic such as difficulties that encountered when she learnt Indonesian language for the first time.

Some words or expressions were inserted into the sentences she used. Those are functioned to to convey surprise, emotional feeling, or to attract attention from other interlocutors. This function is known as interjection. Based on the data analysis, the research subject performed eleven times of code-switching in the four conversations. The table below shows the result of the functions of code switching Gumperz (1982), Sert (2005), and Holmes (2008) in the four transcribed conversations.

**Table 1. Total Functions of Code-switching Occured in T1-T4**

No.	Functions of CS	Total Occurence of Functions of CS in T1-T4	
		Occ	%
1.	Changing Topic	0	0
2.	Emphasizing the message	29	27.6
3.	Expressing Feeling	3	2.9
4.	Repetition	5	4.8
5.	Joking	0	0
6.	Quoting someone or something	11	10.4
7.	Showing solidarity	9	8.6
8.	Translation	11	10.5
9.	Equivalence	26	24.8
10.	Interjection	11	10.4
	Total	105	100

From the findings of this study, the code switching did not occur for changing the topic of conversation and for joking.

Some factors of causing the occurrence of code switching are also discussed in this study. Following Hoffman and Saville-

Troike, there are ten factors that cause someone to perform code-switching. Those factors are talking about a particular topic, quoting somebody else, being emphatic about something, interjection, repetition, intention to clarify the speech content, expressing group identity, to soften and straighten request or command, real lexical need, and the last is to exclude other people.

In this study, it is found that the research subject mostly performed code-switching due to the intention to clarify the speech content for other interlocutors which held the highest percentage 40.9%. It occurred 43 times in T1 to T4. Real lexical need was in the second position which occurred 19 times or 18.1% in T1 to T4. Both reasons to talk about a particular topic and repetition held the third position. They occurred 11 times 10.5% in T1 to T4. Among all factors of causing the occurrence of code-switching, it is found that the research subject did not perform code-switching to soften and straighten the request or command nor to exclude other people.

The occurrence of code switching may give impacts to the languages involved in the conversations. One of the impacts are the occurrence of language loss and language diffusion (Wardhaugh, 2001). Bilingualism and Multilingualism are two crucial factors that can lead the speakers to language loss. In this study, the research subject who experienced code-switching in bilingual and multilingual setting, was known to experience the language phenomenon; language loss.

There are some factors that cause the occurrence of language loss by the research subject in this study. Multilingualism and oppression of using Indonesian language are external factors that results in code-

switching, which is then give impact to the loss of language that she has learned before (English, Khmer, Teo Chew, and Spanish). From the interview conducted by, it can be concluded that she experienced the loss of English capability. As English is the minority language here, she chose to use Indonesian language more than English to communicate in daily life. She confessed that her English was gone down and that there were some English words that she could not speak anymore, particularly the sophisticated words. She preferred to use basic English vocabularies to communicate with Indonesian native speakers who were able to speak in English, because she followed their ability in English.

Other results from the interview was that she used more Indonesian tag question, in the end of English sentences. For instance; "You are going to come, ya?". The tag 'ya' indicates that she follows the Indonesian form of sentence; "Kamu akan datang kesini, ya?" In standard English, she might have used "Are you going to come here?", but she preferred to use Indonesian form of sentence.

The second factor that cause language loss is oppression of using a certain language. As it was stated and found by Erin Haynes (2010) that education field in U.S has a history of suppressing the active use of non-English languages for the purpose of promoting assimilation of the speakers. It is then related to the aim of *Darmasiswa* program that all the students are expected to communicate with Indonesian language with other speakers in daily life. It results in the habit to speak Indonesian more than other languages. Based on the observation and interview, the research subject in this study chose to speak in Indonesian with Indone-

sian speakers at the first time they meet. She said that using Indonesian with the native speakers of Indonesia was more comfortable, even though there might be switch to English or even Javanese to clarify something. This, of course, gives impact to her ability in using English. Based on the data in the transcribed conversations, I found several examples that she often inserted Indonesian words to English sentence in order to keep the conversation with Indonesian speaker flows smoothly.

### CONCLUSION

From the finding of this study, there are 105 total occurrences of code-switching. Inter-sentential code switching occurred 22 times. Intra-sentential code switching takes the most frequent type of code-switching as it occurred 76 times. While emblematic/tag switching occurred less as it occurred only 7 times. The most frequent function is to

emphasize the message which totally holds the highest percentage; 27.6% which occurred 29 times.

There are some functions which are not occurred in this study, they are changing topic and joking. The most significant factors of code-switching is intention on clarifying the speech content for interlocutors which totally holds the highest percentage 40.9%. It occurred 43 times in T1 to T4. Finally, this study is to answer the impacts of code switching in terms of capabilities of the involved languages. It is found that the research subject of this study experienced English language loss and language gain of Indonesian language. The most significant factors that cause language loss and language gain were the multilingual settings she experiences in Indonesia and the oppression to use Indonesian language in daily life.

### REFERENCES

- Auer, P. 2002. *Code-Switching in Conversation: Language, Interaction and Identity*. London: Taylor & Francis e-Library.
- Ariffin, K. and Husin, M. S. 2011. Code-switching and Code-mixing of English and Bahasa Malaysia in Content-Based Classrooms: Frequency and Attitudes. *The Linguistics Journal*, Vol. 5 Issue 1.
- Cantone, Katja F. 2007. *Code-Switching in Bilingual Children*. New York: Springer.
- Chloros, P. G. 2009. *Code-switching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Crawford, J. 1996. *Stabilizing Indigenous Languages: Seven Hypotheses on Language Loss Causes and Cures*. Arizona: Northern Arizona University
- Fitriyani, I.D. 2013. Code Switching Used by Students in a Speaking Class Activity (The case of the sixth semester students of English Study Program at Dian Nuswantoro University Semarang in the Academic Year of 2012/2013). Thesis. English Language Education Post-graduate Program Semarang State University.
- Guardado, M. 2002. Loss and Maintenance of First Language Skills: Case Studies of Hispanic Families in Vancouver. Thesis. Vancouver: University of British Columbia.
- Gulzar, M. A. 2010. Code-switching: Awareness about Its Utility in Bilingual Classrooms. *Bulletin of Education and Research* December, Vol. 32, No. 2 pp. 23-44. Retrieved 4 October 2013.

- Gumperz, J. 1982. *Discourse Strategies*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Hidayat, T. 2012. An Analysis of Code Switching Used by Facebookers(a Case Study in a Social Network Site). Thesis. English Education Study Program Language and Arts Department of Sekolah Tinggi Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan (STKIP) Siliwangi Bandung. Retrieved on November, 11 2013.
- Hoffmann, C. 1991. *An Introduction to Bilingualism*. London: Longman Group UK limited.
- Marasigan, E. 1983. *Code-Switching and Code-Mixing in Multilingual Societies*. Singapore: Richard Clay Pte Ltd.
- Milroy, L. & Muysken. 1995. *Introduction: Code-Switching and Bilingualism Research*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Suprihartanta F.P. 2012. Code-switching In Science Teachers' Talk: The case of code-switching in the Talk of the Teachers of Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics of SMAN 1 Slawi. Thesis. English Language Education Postgraduate Program Semarang State University.
- Wardhaugh, R. 1998. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. New York: Brasil Blackwell.
- Wardhaugh, R. 2006. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics - Fifth edition*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.