CODE-SWITCHING IN WHATSAPP-EXCHANGES: CULTURAL OR LANGUAGE BARRIER?

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Abstract

This paper explores the employment of code-switching in Social Media 'Whats-app (WA)' Bahasa text, namely from Bahasa to Javanese, English and/or to Arabic. Two WA groups are chosen namely 'Trending Topic' and 'LPPM' WA group as they are more universal chat places for Unissula academia than other faculty limited members of WA groups. This is a descriptive qualitative research, deeply analyzing several purposefully selected data. Interviews with some members of WA groups were performed to gain some data related to the use of code switching. The writer found that the main reason for code-switching is therefore to keep on communication by using technology-related, Koranic-related or Javanese-colloquial terms to try to refer to certain concepts of which the equivalence for such terms are not available in Bahasa. Another reason is to gain closer-relationship among attendants. For this socio-linguistic phenomenon, the writer feels that it is necessary for Bahasa experts or scholars to coin and popularize more Bahasa lexical items required to accommodate the new concepts.

Key words: code-switching, Bahasa, Bahasa Experts, technology-related terms, Koranic-related terms, Javanese-colloquialterms

Introduction

Bahasa is a language attributed to a formal meeting as it is declared as the national language since its declaration back in 1928. The language has developed more in both lexical and rhetorical scopes. Current general dictionary of Bahasa 'Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI)' copes more than 65.000 words or 23.000 by Purwadharminta. (Chaer & Agustina, 2010:139). This is not much at all when compared with English which has more than 600.000 words (Chaer, 2010:139), Arabic which has 90 million or from another list 500 million (Da'na, 2015), or Javanese which has 1 to 2 million only in ngoko version (www.uni.edu/becker/Javanese.html). It is arguably true that the older the more words a language has.

Bahasa speakers, even in a formal meeting, as the lack of equal concept, use another language/code to communicate. They do it in informal meeting as well, include in social media What App conversation. In here, the conversation is limited to 'Trending Topic' and 'LPPM' WA group. This two WA groups are chosen as they are more universal chat places for Unissula academia than other faculty limited members of WA groups. Data shows, very often they switch to English in response to lexical drawbacks in technology-related term, switch to Arabic in response to unequal Koranic-related term, or switch to Javanese to gain closer-relationship among attendants.

This sociolinguistics phenomenon has been going on for decades without any concerns on the part on Bahasa experts and users alike. Even they seem to be proud

that employing foreign language means establish them be more sophisticated. They use 'boarding pass, barcode, frequent flyer, hacker', on line, copy-paste, etc' whose lexical counterparts in Bahasa have not been coined. However, they ought to have alternate terms to replace 'monitor, keyboard, mouse, download, upload'; such as '*menyimak, papan tuts, tetikus, mengunduh, mengunggah*' respectively.

Another data, they use to remain the Koranic words in discussion or salutation. To say thanks, WA group participant tend to use *'Alhamdulillah, jazaka/illah, barakallah'* more than 'Terimakasih, semoga allah membalas, semoga diberkahi'. They remain *'hisab, tabayyun, aqad nikah, ke-tauhidan'* rather than 'perhitungan, klarifikasi, akad nikah, ke-esa-an.

The purpose of this paper is simply to justify that Indonesian cannot find Bahasa lexical items to describe technologically-related or qur'anic-related terms. The speakers simply code-witch both 'intra-sententially' or inter-sententially. (Wardhaugh: 2006: 101). As well, this paper may want to clarify whether code-switching is cultural or language barrier.

Consequently, especially for the reason of language barrier, **the significant of this study** is therefore to recommend scholars or experts of Bahasa to coin more new words, along with the development of technology and science (includes Islamic scientific words); even, if possible, the equal words to any language colloquial. More, is to popularize the new coinage words through all media.

Code Switching

Code-switching occurs when someone 'decide to switch from one code to another or to mix codes even within sometimes very short utterances and thereby create a new code in a process' (Wardhaugh: 2006: 101)

Wardhaugh further argued that:

"Code-switching can occur in conversation between speakers' turns or within a single speakers' turn. In the later case it can occur between sentences (inter-sententially) or within a single sentence (intra-sententially). Code-switching can arise from individual choice or to be used as a major identity marker for a group of speakers who must deal with more than one language in their common pursuits" (2016: 101).

From the above quotation it is clear that code-switching happens in two contexts of situation. In one instance, when a speaker produces an utterance in one code, and being responded by another speaker in a different code, it represents one type of code switching between two speakers. The other situation is that when a speaker code-switches from one sentence to another, he or she performs inter-sentential code-switching. However, when he or she code-switches one word to another within one sentence, he or she is said to perform intra-sentential code switching.

With respect to this paper, the writer would like to justify that the WA group participan perform both context, namely between speakers. However, it is also possible that a single speaker perform both inter-sentential and intra-sentential type of code-switching, as seen in the following example:

Group LPPM Unissula : 21/12/2016

Abdur : "Pak Marco stl masa trial apa masih bisa akses .., ASCE" (12:38)

MQomar : "Mboten pak Dr @Abdurrahim Gani Ahmad ... kecuali kita subscribe
dg harga $7,700
Silahkan dimanfaatkan" (13:49)

The above exchange shows that Speaker Abdur code-switched from Bahasa (Pak Marco stl masa) to English (trial) to Bahasa (apa masih bisa akses .., ASCE); which then be replied by code-switching of Speaker MQomar from Javanese (Mboten pak Dr @Abdurrahim Gani Ahmad ...) to Bahasa (kecuali kita) to English (subscribe) to Bahasa (dg harga $7,700 Silahkan dimanfaatkan). Speaker Abdur code-switched between two languages and Speaker MQomar code-switched among three languages.

The above phenomenon is possible to occur because Bahasa and Javanese are linguistically related. Javanese is their mother tongue and Bahasa is the national language. However, what about their code-switching to English; why does Speaker Abdur prefer using 'trial' to *'percobaan'* and Speaker MQomar prefers using 'subscribe' to 'berlangganan'. The writer is quiet sure that Speaker Abdur can replace that 'trial' to 'percobaan', not like Speaker MQomar who may cannot find the equal-related term of 'subscribe' as the Bahasa-related word is quiet unfamiliar. Another assumption is that both Speakers simply picked out from the terms provided which are also understood. Even Speaker Abdur may need long process to cope the idea if Speaker MQomar use the Bahasa term.

This is ironical to happen in Bahasa as the national language. There are also scholars majoring in Bahasa. But, it seems that the scholars have no interests in support of the new lexical items to support technology emergence. Or if there are some new items, it seems lack of willing to popularize them. Are we going to let Bahasa always step backward or even left by speakers in the future?

Purpose of Code Switching

There are number of reasons for which a speaker code-switches from one language to another either inter or intra-sentential. A study Pujiastuti disprove her previous prediction that:

> "The inter- or intrapersonal mechanism, such as community or institutional norms, accommodation, politeness, physical condition such as fatigue or laziness, and rationality may determine the speakers' language choices. This study indicated that that Indonesians in the U.S. might be aware of the importance of influences such as, cultural values that may directly or indirectly impact the language preference, and some unpredictable and violable arrangements for language choice, such as exclusion/inclusion of others in addition to the apparent communal perception of English as the accepted institutional and social password in the U.S." (2007)

Additionally, she learned that: "the students' multilingual strategy was reflected in. Their ability to 'play safe' in using the languages in multilingual interactions, by selecting the most Comfortable languages in conversations without neglecting others who were within their earshot." (Pujiastuti, 2007)

From this point, it is apparently true that contexts play an important role as to which particular code is used in which particular situation. English as an international language, for instance, is suitable to be used in talking about academic matters. Bahasa is used to show solidarity among a group of Indonesia with different indigenous linguistic background. Thus, code-switching allows a speaker to meet someone else half-way, establish common ground, and show flexibility and openness.

Thampson (2013) elicit 5 reasons why people code switch, namely: (1) our lizard brain take over; folks would slip into a different language or accent without even realizing it or intending to do it. (2) we want to fit in; to act or talk more like those around them (3) we want to get something; but to actively ingratiate themselves

to others. If we can pull off the right accent in the right context, we can get all kinds of favors (4) we want to say something in secret; to hide in plain sight, a habit most common among people in love and/or (5) it help us convey a thought; employ colloquialisms to express particular ideas (2013)

Despite those reasons, In this paper the writer observed different purposes of code-switching, that is to facilitate communication due to lexical drawback in Bahasa with respect to technology related to terms. Another purposes include to show: self-identity, religiosity, culturally touched, superiority touched, emotionally touched, and easy accessed. In the clause as previously mentioned "... *kecuali kita* **subscribe** *dg harga* $7,700" communication would break down if Speaker MQomar tried to find out the Bahasa word for 'subscribe'. Therefore, Speaker MQomar simply said 'subscribe' the original term as this word is by concept shared between Speaker Abdur and Speaker MQomar. In other word they both know the meaning of the word 'subscribe'.

Method
Interviews (Cohen et al., 2000) were conducted involving some users of WhatsApp in groups of 'trending topics' and 'LPPM' to find out the types and rationales of using code switching (Bahasa, English, Javanese, or even Arabic) in their WA chats. Their answers were recorded as the data for analysis with respect to the rationale for the use of code switching. Meanwhile the data with regard the texts (WA Exchanges), the writer simply quoted from the achieve of her mobile phone (Nokia) which recorded all WA Exchanges in the two groups as previously mentioned.

The results of the interpretative analysis were tabulated, consisting of the texts, type of code switching, and rationale for the use of code switching. The table was then explained, elaborated in the discussion sub heading on the basis of which conclusion was drawn.

Findings and Discussion
As previously touched upon, it can be emphasized that code-switching occurs in speakers of more than one language or in multicultural and lingual society with different purpose, such as in dealing with specific fields of discussion, showing democracy and solidarity, keeping up intimacy, or even, as this paper is about facilitating communication.

In Singapore, as studied by Wardhaugh, is a multilingual country. It has four official languages namely: English, the Mandarin variety of Chinese, Tamil and Malay, which is also the national language. In this country, the ability to shift from one language to another is accepted as quiet normal. National policy promotes English as a trade language, Mandarin as the international 'Chinese' language, Malay as the language of the region, and Tamil as the language of one important ethnic group in the republic. What this means for a 'typical' Chinese child growing up in Singapore is that he or she is likely to speak Hokkien (the native speaker of its majority population) with parents and informal Singapore English with siblings. Conversation with friends will be in Hokkien or informal Singapore English. The language of education will be the formal variety of Singapore English and Mandarin. Any religious practices will be conducted in the formal variety of Singapore English if the family is Christian, but in Hokkien if Buddhist or Taoist. The language of government employment will be formal Singapore English but some Mandarin will be used from time to time. However, shopping will be carried on in Hokkien, informal Singapore English, and the 'bazaar' variety of Malay used throughout the region (2006: 101-102).

Another study by Thampson, he recorded a story of a Spanish teacher in

Nashville named John Davis:

> I am a Spanish teacher in a high-needs school in Nashville. I grew up in a homogeneous town in rural Pennsylvania. Foreign languages came easily for me, so I majored in Spanish and minored in French at the University of Pittsburgh. When I moved to my school in Nashville, I had to learn another language: Southern, African American English. I entered my learning experience with fervor. My students taught me almost as much as I taught them in my first years. Now that I am well versed in the language, I have trouble code switching back to Standard American English.
>
> One day my principal walked into my room and asked me, "Mr. Davis, I didn't receive your editions to the School Improvement Plan." I replied, "Nah, you flaugin' bruh, I put that on your desk yesterday." My boss froze, with his jaw dropped and one eyebrow raised. After a moment he shook his head and said, "you're spending too much time with the kids." "My bad." (2013)

Code-switching is therefore an interesting linguistic phenomenon that really occurs in a multi-culture and society in response to different contexts of situations, thereby different purposes.

Cultural or Language Barrier

Another interesting question is that whether code-switching belongs to cultural phenomenon or language barrier. Intuitively, those who perform code-switching may master those languages, the one switched into and from, for example in an office for Indonesian teachers teaching English in Islamic School, those teachers master Bahasa as they are native speakers, English as they are qualified English teachers, and Javanese as their mother tongue. More interestingly, they may master Arabic as they are moslem who are familiar with Koranic term which is in Arabic.

The problem is why they sometimes are overhead to code-switch from Bahasa to English and Javanese, and at time to Arabic. The writer assumes that this kind of linguistic phenomenon is somehow cultural, since they do not seemingly have any problem speaking the languages. However, it remains a preliminary assumption until a further research with a more complex multicultural and quantity of respondents is conducted.

Table 1 below displays some types of code switching, including the rationale for which they were possibly used to achieve the desired goals of WA communication.

Table 1 Code Switching in Whats-app Exchanges

Code Switching	Type	Rationale
Astaghfirllah Ya Allah berikanlah kekuatan dan perlindungan bagi sdr Muslim kita yang baru ter**dlolimi** oleh musuh2 Mu **Ya Allah** tunjukanlah kebesaranMu Amin.	Intra-sententially Trending Topic WA group 29/01/217; 16:59	● Self-identity ● Religiosity
(jempol) **Jos Gandos**..[1] Besuk merapat lagi... Giliran langsung **action**[2] berikutnya..	1) Inter-sententially 2) Intra-sententially Trending Topic WA group 28/01/217; 19:45	● Emotionally touched ● Culturally touched ● Easy access
Leres, **cak** zainal juga sudah diskusi dg saya juga..	Intra-sententially Trending Topic WA group 28/01/217; 19:11	● Emotionally touched ● Culturally touched

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Bu...ttg optimalisasi ZIS **cak** Zenal pernah **duscuss** (typo: discuss) dgnku n aq minta hub **sampean**....**monggo** ditindaklanjuti... aq **supporting** mawon	Intra-sententially Trending Topic WA group 28/01/217;19:09	● Culturally touched ● Easy access ● Emotionally touched
(jempol 2x) Mantabss nanti bisa **urun** memberikan kontribsinya, saya juga sempat minta masukan pak kyai Rosihan..	Intra-sententially Trending Topic WA group 28/01/217;19:05	● Culturally touched ● Easy access
Lha yang punya kewenangan memberi **titah** itu siapa? RUPS / RAT?	Intra-sententially Trending Topic WA group 28/01/217;18:09	● Culturally touched ● Superiority touched
MINI BANKING Aja kayak UMY Kabarnya bisa membuat dana pensiun. Tapi **njih niku** BPD dan BNI harus **out**	Intra-sententially Trending Topic WA group 28/01/217;17:44	● Culturally touched ● Easy access ● Emotionally touched
Sik penting RAT dulu, keliatannya, Bu WR sdg ber upaya audit Koperasi kita	Intra-sententially Trending Topic WA group 28/01/217;17:30	● Easy access
Mudah2an nggak merasa di **comfort zona area**	Intra-sententially Trending Topic WA group 28/01/217;17:22	● Easy access
Subhamallah (typo Subhanallah)...... terima kasih **tausiyah**nya .... (simbol)	Intra-sententially LPPM Unissula 27/01/2015; 04:00	● Emotionally touched ● Self-identity ● Religiosity
Subhanallah...**maturnuwun sharing**nya....ijin **share nggih** pak....	Intra-sententially LPPM Unissula 27/01/2015; 07:17	● Self-identity ● Religiosity ● Cultural touched ● Easy access
Monggo di **sharing** sebanyak2nya	Intra-sententially LPPM Unissula 26/01/2015; 07:19	● Cultural touched ● Easy access
Nggih, pak Qomariddin (typo: Qomaruddin) pernah akan **invite** saya tapi lupa mungkin	Intra-sententially LPPM Unissula 26/01/2015; 06:50	● Cultural touched ● Easy access
Barakallah semua peserta (simbol 4x)	Intra-sententially LPPM Unissula 25/01/2015; 20:23	● Self-identity ● Religiosity ● Easy access

From Table 1 above, it can be assumed that t he use of code switching by the members of WA group is due to the following facts:

1. Most of them code-switch intra-sententially; the initial intention is to speak Bahasa, however, for a certain purpose the code is switched to other languages (Javanese, English or Arabic.
2. For Arabic words or phrases, they are religious stereotypes in which certain Arabic jargon has become commonly used in a daily basis due to the sense of being devoted moslems.
3. English words are occasionally used in response to the need for efficiency or easy

access of lexical items.

4. In short, codes are switched for self-identity, religiosity, efficiency and easy access of the lexical items.

Such phenomenal usage of language is spontaneous response to special context of situation with an assumption that all language participants are of the same knowledge of the languages being used in code-switching. In this study all the participants have some knowledge of Bahasa (the mainstream language), Javanese (mother tongue), English (easy accessed survival) and Arabic (Islamic jargon).

Conclussion

The writer has described a sociolinguistic phenomenon in which the WA groups participants tend to code-switch into mostly Javanese and sometimes English and Arabic as Javanese is the mother tongue of the most participants. It is arguably true, as Javanese is still being used as a lingua franca in the majority of Javanese community located in Java or outside Java Island. In addition, Javanese is highly attributed to a language of high cultural heritage.

It is therefore suggested that Bahasa scholars sit together in a national conference to try to form a team who will formulate or coin new Bahasa words to accommodate the development of new concepts in response to the emergence of new technology. New Bahasa words should be coined so as to anticipate the development of technology and science which are always accompanied by the emergence of new words to name new things or actions.

Whether code-switching is cultural or language barrier remains a premature hypothesis. However, to the writer' stance, it is assumed to be more cultural and situational than a language barrier. Perspectives of efficiency and easy access can be thought of as the dominant rationale for the use of code switching. For example, it would be more efficient to say *"Barakallah"* rather than *"Semoga Allah memberkati (memberi tambahan yang baik)* in Bahasa. In addition, it is much easier and more understandable to say "share" than *"membagipublikasikan"*. Dealing with this premature hypothesis, a further research is, therefore, required to justify. It is a real challenge, isn't it?

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