ATLANTIS
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# Code-Mixing Employed in Examiner-Examinee's Interaction: A Sociolinguistic Study

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## Abstract

Code-mixing happens due to bilingualism phenomenon and it is possible to appear in various occasions. This present study deals with exploring the employment of code-mixing in the interaction of examiner and examinee in thesis seminar. Content analysis was employed as the research design. The source of the data was from recorded utterances uttered by examiners and examinee during two thesis seminar sessions in postgraduate English program at Universitas Sumatera Utara. The data obtained were in the form of word, phrase, and clause. Based on the analysis, it was found that intra-sentential and inter-sentential code-mixing were used in the interaction. The conclusion could be drawn that the use of code – mixing in examiner-examinee interaction was aimed at avoiding misunderstanding on the questions given as well as maintaining the smoothness of the interaction.

*Keywords:* *code-mixing, examiner-examinee interaction, bilingualism*

## Introduction

In communication, people use language or code as its medium. It is more elaborated that a code is a system employed for communication or interaction in any situation (Hanafiah, Rantika, & Yusuf, 2018). Other experts, Hasan & Akhand (2015) believe that code may be a language or a variety or style of a language. Code-mixing (CM) is one of the phenomena in daily society and it shows human's language behavior. The phenomenon of CM generally occurs in spoken discourse. It could possibly appear in many discourses including educational discourse.

Bilingualism becomes the key factor triggering CM. Bilingual is literally understood as the one who is able to use two languages during communication. The contact among languages leads to the occurrences of CM (Hanafiah et al., 2018). Bilingual or multilingual has the choice in using the language since it is an alternative to convey the meaning (Johansson, 2013). The other factors that affect CM to appear are social factors, cultural factors, and individual factors (Syam, Sangkala, & Syarif, 2018). Moreover, CM is different from code-switching (CS). This is supported by Grosjean (1982) clarifying that CM observes the movement of the elements from a lexical item to a sentence whereas CS is understood as the alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence or constituent.

One of the stages that master candidate should pass before graduating is presenting and defending their thesis in front of examiners. In Master of English studies department, Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU), Indonesia, the students should pass three stages namely colloquium, thesis result seminar, and thesis defense. The first two stages are conducted publicly, and audiences can attend as well as provide questions. Meanwhile, for thesis defense, there are only examiners and examinee.

The interaction of examiner and examinee during the thesis seminar in graduate program of English of USU is part of educational discourse. Preferably, the interactants should communicate fully in English. But, in fact, the observation done by researchers shows that code-mixing and code-switching (English-Bahasa Indonesia) could still be found. This makes this study is critical to be explored.

One of the facets why the examiner utilizes CM since the examinee does not give any response. This condition is understandable by the examiners. Furthermore, this action is regarded as normally happen since the participants are bilingual and it can facilitate them to make the interaction run smoothly such as the followings:

Examinee: "just two sir, according to Levinson and Brown, ya *strategi-nya* , Sir."

The utterance above is spoken by the examinee as an attempt to answer the question given by the examiners. She employed intra-sentential CM in her utterances. She inserted the word, *strategies-nya,* rather than use the word 'strategies'. She chose to use CM in order to maintain the interaction.

The researches related to the phenomena of CM have been done many scholars such as Syam et al., (2018) which observes CM uttered by teacher in Indonesia. They took the sample from one of senior high school teacher in Makassar, Indonesia. In their conclusion, the teacher inserted English phrase to Indonesian when exact term in English difficult to discover in the base language. A research conducted by Ling, Jin, Tong, Tarmizi, & Sahiddan (2014) reveals the condition that code-switching occur both in student-student, and educator-educators to facilitate students' learning process. Then, Hasan & Akhand (2015) attempts to review the phenomenon of CM in ESL context in Bangladesh. Moving to Africa, Mabule (2015) state that CM phenomenon also occur in south Africa due to regular use of language in multilingual communities which also shows social group memberships.

The phenomenon of code mixing in examiner-examinee interaction is worth to be discussed. This research is hoped to broaden the horizon in CM discussion specifically in academic discourse. Therefore, this research addresses to explore the employment of code-mixing in the interaction of examiner and examinee in thesis seminar.

## Literature Review

### Bilingualism

Sociolinguistics deals with observing the link between language and society (Hanafiah, 2011). One of the areas discussed is bilingualism. Bilingualism is generally comprehended as someone's ability in utilizing two languages or language codes (Fachriyah, 2017) and a result of the contact of language. People have potency to either bilingual or multilingual. This happens around the world in any circumstances (Shay, 2015). Bilingualism comes out from linguistic contact phenomena of code-switching and code-mixing among the conversant who alternate or mix elements of French language together with their mother tongue (Abdoulaye & Minkailou, 2019). To sum up, bilingual person tend to switch or mix their codes during the interaction.

### Code-Mixing

Code – mixing happens as the result of bilingualism. It happens frequently are the among bilingual or multilingual communities (Chughtai, Khan, & Khan, 2016). CM is the mixing of words, phrases within a sentence from two distinct grammatical systems (Mohammed, Hameed, & Yasin, 2015). The use of CM can be boosted by some reasons. Sridhar & Sridhar (1980) clarify that CM is applicable to make a variation in a communication. Furthermore, Mustafa & Al-Khatib (1994) believe that it has functions to fulfill the linguistic needs and some other reasons. To summarize, CM is global phenomenon and an alternative in creating variation to deliver the meaning in communication.

According to Siregar (1996), CM comprises of two types, intra-sentential mixing (ISM) and extra-sentential mixing (ESM). Intra-sentential mixing possibly range from the alternation of single words or phrases to clauses within a single sentence or utterance. Conversely, ESM occurs between sentences because it occurs at sentence boundaries, it needs less complex syntactic interaction between two languages involved in CM. The other experts, Musyken (2000) divides CM into intesertional, alternational and congruent lexicalization. In this study, the writers used Siregar (1996)'s theory as the foundation of the analysis.

## Method

Content analysis was employed as the research design. The instruments used were video recorder and notebook. The source of the data was from recorded utterances by examiners and examinee during two thesis seminar sessions in graduate program of English at Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU) in April 2019. In every session, there is one examinee and 4 examiners. The data obtained were in the form of word, phrase, and clause. The mixing of code that is analyzed in this study is English and Bahasa Indonesia.

## Result

Based on the analysis data result, there were 215 occurrences of code-mixing; 130 occurrences in the first presentation and 85 occurrences in the second presentation. The details of the occurrences of code-mixing analysis are presented in table 1.

Table 1. The Tabulation of Code Switching Occurrences

| No. | Code Mixing Types | Occurrences | | Total | Percentage |
|-----|-------------------|-------------|---|-------|------------|
| | | **First Presentation** | **Second Presentation** | | |
| 1 | Intra-sentential Word, Phrase, clause | 120 | 65 | 185 | 86.04 |
| 2 | Inter-sentential | 10 | 20 | 30 | 13.96 |
| | Total | 130 | 85 | 215 | 100% |

In relation to table 1, it is observable that there are two types of CM namely intra-sentential, and inter-sentential mixing. The most frequent code-mixing occurrence was intra-sentential. The numbers of intra-lexical occurrence were 185 occurrences or 86.04% comprising of 120 occurrences in the first presentation and 65 occurrences in the second presentation. Subsequently, inter-sentential code mixing was the second frequent of code mixing types occurrence totaling to 13.96%.

**Intra-sentential Code Mixing**

This type of CM occurred dominantly and it covers three areas. They are in the level of words, phrase, and clause level. The analysis from each level is presented as the followings.

*Word level*

This kind of intra-sentential mixing is also found in the data. The example of intra-sentential CM is presented in the following:

Examinee          : *Dijumpai* Sir. *Dijumpai* Sir. (Found Sir. Found Sir)

The last utterance that conveyed by examinee is categorized as intra-sentential code mixing due to the existence of two different language in the single sentence namely Bahasa and English. In that sentence, the word *'dijumpai'* was used and it is from Bahasa. On the other hand, the word '*sir*' comes from English language.          This makes sense that it is categorized into intra-sentential mixing.

*Phrase level*

Phrase is defined as group of words. In the data, it was also found the use of intra-sentential mixing in the phrase level as the following example.

Examinee : Politeness

TE2       : So listen to me …. *Suara tinggi,* the one is in high intonation. So what are you thinking about?

Examinee : I think if someone to say by the high intonation you can see from the culture sir.

During the conversation, the examiner 2 mixed his code with Bahasa in utterance "*Suara* tinggi" or in English meant "High voice (related to intonation). He mixed the language when he tried to ask a case study question about politeness phenomenon. Meanwhile, the level of code-mixing that the speaker TE2 conducted was in the phrase level within the sentence which the rest of sentence is in English. So this was the reason why the utterance "*Suara tinggi*" categorized as intra-sentential code mixing specifically in phrase level.

*Clause level*

This level of CM is more complicated compared to word and phrase level viewed grammatically. The example of the occurrences of this type is presented in the upcoming sentence.

TE 3: And also the consistencies in writing the…..and the symbols of and *Ada yang pakai* and *ada yang gak pake* (there are using and there are not).

The sentence above uttered by TE3 (*thesis examiner 3*) uses clauses in a sentence by combining clauses in Bahasa and in English. The clause in Bahasa is *Ada yang pakai* and *ada yang gak pake.* That is the reason why this sentence is regarded as containing intra-sentential mixing in the level of clause.

*Inter-sentential Mixing*

This type of code-mixing appeared lesser than intra-sentential mixing. This has 30 occurrences from the total occurrences. The example of the existence of this type is as the following:

**TE 3:** you have to subjective of your analysis and to subjective the finding and to point your bab dua, ***yang satu kesimpulan dari jawaban masalah pertama yang kedua kesimpulan dari jawaban yang kedua***, finish!

The utterance contains 2 codes covering English and Bahasa. The use of Bahasa in the clause above is the signal of the occurrences of inter-sentential mixing. Its position is in the middle of English clauses.

## Discussion

From the data analysis, it reveals that the examiners and examinee utilized CM in their discourse. The dominant use of CM was done by the examiners. Literally, the session is started by using fully in English, but, during the process, the examinee keeps silent. This implies the meaning that the examinees sometimes do not comprehend what is meant conveyed during the session.

The examiners use CM (English-Bahasa) for some reasons such as giving enlightenment, clarification, checking understandings and so on. If they do not do so, the process will be disturbed and even it could lead to misunderstanding and misconception. At the same time, the examinee used CM to give clarification, explanation, and repetition. Those are applied in order to keep the interaction run well. This fact is quite

similar to what (Suganda, 2012) discovered in his research. He found that CM is utilized to maintain the smoothness of their teaching-learning process.

## Conclusion

Intra-sentential and extra-sentential code-mixing were discovered in the examiner-examinee's interaction. Intra-sentential mixing becomes the dominant type of CM appear in the data. The employment of CM by both examiners and examinees was intended to avoid misunderstanding on the questions given as well as maintaining the smoothness of the interaction. In this case, CM is beneficial as a strategy in conveying the meaning and understanding as long as it is used effectively.

## Acknowledgment

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