

Code Switching by an Indonesian Muslim Preacher

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Abstract

Ustadz Abdul Somad (UAS) is a currently controversial yet famous Muslim preacher in Indonesia. His speeches are delivered for various background listeners in various places within Indonesia and overseas. One of his linguistics aspects that is obviously found in his speeches is code switching. This study uses UAS's speeches delivered for the authorities of Sabah kingdom Malaysia, local people of Payakumbuh West Sumatra and for the students and lecturers of Islamic Economic Institute of Tazkia in West Java. Analysis of a range of his speeches suggests that UAS's code switching of English and local languages occurs metaphorical switching. His speeches were significantly variable but not aimless, and depended primarily on particular audiences. His language competence strengthens his positioning as modern Islamic preacher who has higher international educational background.

Keywords: *code switching, Indonesian Muslim preacher, UAS, sociolinguistics*

Introduction

Indonesia is the largest country in Southeast Asia with the population of more than 250 million (Indonesia-investment, 2017). Indonesian as the national language unites a large number of ethnics and languages. As an addition to Indonesian, it is estimated that there are more than 700 local languages that exist (Lewis, 2009). Indonesian is used mainly in formal domain such as education and government while local languages are used in non-formal daily activities. As the result of the plurality of languages in use, bilingualism becomes common in Indonesia.

As an addition to the existence of mother tongue and Indonesian, there are also foreign languages that have significant impact to Indonesian speech practices. One of these is Arabic, which is thought to have entered Indonesia in 13th century in conjunction with the religion of Islam (Cederroth, 1999). As the language of the holy Qur'an, Arabic is commonly used in religious context. While taught as compulsory subject in Islamic schools under the ministry of religion, Indonesians generally do not speak Arabic. Yet Indonesian Muslim particularly preachers and Islamic teachers often memorize and quote text from the holy Qur'an for religious purpose and cite phases or words from Arabic language for daily speeches. Besides, there is evident that direct face-to-face interaction between Indonesian and Arabic for trading in the past has brought Arabic words to be taken as loan words in Indonesian (Van Dam, 2010).

While the use of Arabic words and term is limited and does not seem to be expanding, the introduction of English into Indonesian is significant and advanced greatly from time to time. This is due to the place of English within Indonesian national curriculum. English is one of the compulsory subjects taught in formal education and assessed in national examination. Not only is English associated as higher education, it is also regarded as having economic benefit (Lauder, 2010). Another factor that strengthens the impact of English in Indonesia is the development of technology. The role of technology in globalizing English all over the world is obvious (Hjarvard, 2004). In the past, television has huge contribution as media of introducing English language entertainment and program and today the exposure is even multiplied dramatically through the role of internet technology. Indeed, Indonesians do not speak English well, as is the case of Arabic. However quoting words or phrases in speeches is becoming more common along with the increase of educational quality and economy.

The diversity of local languages, the existence of Indonesian as national language and the introduction of foreign languages into the society create Indonesian multilingualism society (Nababan, 1991). Multilingualism itself is defined as the ability possessed by an individual to use, and his alternate of use, of two or more codes (language, dialects or other languages-varieties) for the purpose of communication (Halim, 1971). Another term, which is thought to be similar, is bilingualism. Though both terms refer to the ability of alternating two or more codes, Clyne (2017) tends to relate bilingualism as the competence at an individual level, while multilingualism refers to an entire nation or society.

In communication, a bilingual individual's use of particular codes is not aimless. Bilingual do not switch language simply because they lack of expression to be use in their base language. Switching language

is seen as a proof of languages proficiency of the speakers and the performance of using the languages they possesses (Bhattacharjee et al., 2009). Some condition might contribute in code selection. A range of scholars has studied factors that affect code mixing. Rubin (1962) suggested location, formality, intimacy, seriousness of the situation and sex as factors making a particular code or language is fit within a specific context in the bilingualism society of Paraguay. In Indonesian context, Tanner (1967) has pointed out situational factors effecting code mixing: setting or performance, content or topic of discourse, and social distance, along with motivational factors on code choice. Lambert, Gardner, Olton and Tunstall (1968) proposes the concepts of instrumental and integrative motivation in learning and using second language. Instrumental motivation occurs when the aim is mainly the ability to use the language for certain practical purposes such as getting ahead in an individual's occupation or improving one's economic status. The motivation is integrative when the main aim is to know more about and perhaps to be integrated into the culture of the people who speak the language. Mackey (1968) suggests a number of pressures that influence the bilingualism the use of one language over the other. Those are economic, administrative, cultural, political, military, historical, religious and demographic. There are many more scholars propose their concepts related to what triggers and motivates code mixing. Yet the examples cited above is more than adequate to show the large variety of factors involve in code selection and code switching.

Another dimension of code switching that is worth to consider is the concepts of situational and metaphorical switching. Situational code switching occurs when speakers change code between different situations or settings without requiring of changing topic. On the other hand, metaphorical code switching involves changing in topic, followed by shifting the tone of the conversation such as from formal to informal, official to personal, serious to humorous or from politeness to solidarity (Blom and Gumperz, 2000).

Since the practice of incorporating Indonesian with local languages and Indonesian with foreign languages is considered normal, more and more Indonesian public figures use this strategy in their speeches. Among contemporary Indonesian Muslim preachers, Ustadz Abdul Somad (UAS) is known to practice code switching in his lectures. Currently UAS is one of the most famous Indonesian public figures with huge numbers of followers. In every performance, millions of viewers attend his speeches. As a graduate from Al Azhar university of Egypt and Dar Al-Hadith al-Hasaniyyah Institute of Morocco, he is expert in hadith and Islamic jurisprudence. Beside these two domains, he also frequently discusses trending topics regarding Muslim society such as nationalism. His lectures are unique, characterized by inserting humor and mixing languages. Not only live performances, his speeches are also broadcasted in YouTube channel and other social media platforms. Since he has higher degree from Middle East universities, he has fluency in speaking Arabic. He also seems to speak English even though not as fluent as his Arabic.

Analyzing UAS's code switching

To examine UAS's code switching, we analyzed three lecturers delivered between 2017 and 2019. Speeches were selected to provide a range of locations and audiences, since code switching occurs closely related to the circumstances in which the speech takes place (Myers-Scotton, 1997).

The first lecture that is being analyzed takes place in Insan Cendikia Islamic Boarding School Payakumbuh. The audience of the speech varies, from the teachers, students and parents. In this occasion, UAS is invited as a key speaker the gathering conducted by the school to welcome guardians of the students. To examine UAS's discourse in detail, selected quotes are taken from the speech. UAS's utterances which use Minang language are bold. The quotes are followed by the translation.

Example 1

*Ini ibuk ini orang Riau, ini bapak ini orang kabupaten Kampar. Saya sudah pede betul tadi, ini mereka datang jauh - jauh mau dengar ceramah saya. **Rponyo manjapuik anak. Insyallah dapek juo niat. Niat nan partamo manganta manjapuik anak awak, nan kaduo basilaturrahim dan manuntuik ilmu. Mako segala yang kita lakukan ini untuk mencari ridho Allah Subhanahu wata'ala amin ya rabbal 'alamin.***

This lady is from Riau, this gentleman is from Kampar regency. I have been so confident that they are coming from far places to listen to my speech. **In fact to pick their children. Insyallah (we) get our intention. The first intention is to take and pick up our children, the second one is for hospitality and to get knowledge. Then** everything we do is to achieve blessings from Allah subhanahu wata'ala amin ya rabbal 'alamin. (UAS speech 1)

This example is taken from the beginning of the speech, when UAS mentions that he recognizes some faces he see among the audiences. The utterances are in informal style since the audience is vary in term of

educational background, economic, age, etc. UAS shifts from the idea of people coming to listen to his speech to a fact that people are coming to pick up their children. This type of shift refers to what Blom and Gumperz (2000) say as metaphorical switch. The serious tone of the Indonesian sentence alters into humorous in the Minangkabau. Similar tone is also found in the following example:

Example 2

*Sempat pula saya naik sampan tadi dengan Ustadz Ahmad Maududi. Bersampan, berfoto. Bersampannya tak begitu penting, fotonya itu yang penting. **Dima bumi dipijak, disinan awak bakodak.** MasyaAllah, **update status.***

I had time got in small boat with Ustadz Ahmad Maududi. Got in small boat, took photo. Getting in the boat was not too important, taking the picture was. **Wherever we are standing, there we take photo.** MasyaAllah, **update status.**

In this example, UAS expresses his happiness for being warmly welcome by the host of the event. The head of the school takes him on boat and makes pictures. UAS shifts from Indonesian to Minang language when he says people tend to take photo wherever they are. The word *awak*, in this utterance refers to Indonesian people in general, who like to take picture of their activity and post it to their social media account. The insertion of English words ‘update status’ is common in Indonesian people’s daily speech since Indonesia is one of the highest users of Facebook (Nguyen, 2017). Even the expression ‘update status’ will feel unusual if it is translated into *perbaharui status*. This example is also classified as metaphorical switch since there is change of topic and tone when UAS switch from Indonesian into Minang language.

Example 3

*Sampai tadi malam kemari pukul empat kurang, Ustadz Somad bisa istirahat 45 menit menjelang azan subuh, iyalah. Sayapun tidur. Bangun tidur mandi. Indahny mandi, rasa mandi air kulkas. Tapi setelah itu segar. Ini saya bilang, saya sampaikan ke sahabat saya tadi, yang sama di Mesir dulu, **andailah ambo lamo tingga disiko, mungkin gapuak ambo Insyallah.***

We arrived here before four AM. Ustadz Somad may have arrest for 45 minutes before Shubuh pray, okay. Then I slept. Woke up then shower. A nice shower, felt like water from the refrigerator. But after that I felt fresh. I told my friend who was with me in Egypt, **If I stayed here longer, I might gain some weight, Insyallah.** UAS is a

UAS is physically slim. In his speech, he often makes jokes about this. In the above example, UAS, in a humorous tone says that if he stays in Insan Cendikia Payakumbuh for a long time, he might be fat because the place is convenient. When describing the convenience of Harau, UAS speaks seriously, but then he shifts to Minang language when he intends to make joke.

Example 4

*Insyallah anak – anak kita nanti bisa masuk ke universitas dalam keadaan iman dan takwa yang kuat Insyallah amin. Masuklah dia nanti ke perguruan tinggi, terserah. Dapat beasiswa ke Jepang, Insyallah. Tadi yang pembawa acara tadi Bahasa jepangnya mantap, dapat dia. **Salamo iko nan tau awak Lubang Jepang. A iko nyo memang pai ka Jepang, dapat beasiswa.***

Insyallah our kids will be able to enrol to universities by having strong faith and piety Insyallah amin. They will go to any university. They will get scholarship to Japan, Insyallah. Our master of ceremony just now, speaks fluent Japanese. **So far what we know is only Lubang Jepang.** But he did went to Japan, by scholarship.

As the previous examples, code switching in this example is also metaphorical. When switching from Indonesian to Minang, the tone is also altered from serious to humorous. UAS connects Japanese language used as the opening of the gathering with *Lubang Jepang*, a historical place in Bukittinggi, as a joke.

The four examples above show how UAS performs his proficiency in speaking Minang. We argue that the use of Minang is not aimless, but is influenced by the location of the speech. Indeed the speech occurs in Harau, Payakumbuh West Sumatra. UAS who is originally from Riau, neighbouring province of West Sumatra, seems to speak Minang fluently. By performing his ability in speaking Minang, UAS establishes an emotional bonding with his audiences.

The second lecture being observed takes place in Sabah Malaysia on 14 September 2019, when UAS delivered his speech about Ahlus Sunnah principle in the society's life. This lecture is delivered special for the officials of Sabah Kingdom Malaysia. The speech is in Malay. UAS speaks Malay fluently since he is originally from Riau province where the local language is also Malay. As widely known, UAS is famous not only in Indonesia but also in neighboring countries such as Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam (Gatra.com, 2019). As an addition, UAS also has an award from the authority of Kelantan Malaysia in 2019 (Semaranginside.com, 2019).

Example 5

*Karena di Azhar semua kami pelajari. Belajar Hanafi, belajar maliki, belajar Hambali, belajar Syafi'i. Kita tidak menyatakan satu mazhab saja, kemudian yang lain kita katakan tak ahlussunnah wal jama'ah, tapi dalam mengamalkan. Sebab masyarakat ini dia sudah **busy** dengan berbagai macam **problem**. Dia di **office** ada banyak masalah, balik **traffic** dia juga masalah di **jam**, lepas tu dia nak ke surau, dia nak mengaji, dia nak tenangkan hati.*

Because in Azhar we learned everything. We learned Hanafi, we learned Maliki, we learned Hambali, and we learned Syafi'i. We did not say just one mazhab, and then we claim the rest as not ahlussunnah wal jama'ah, except in practice. Because this society is already **busy** with every **problem**. They have **problems** in their **office**, traffic **jam** in their way back home, so after that they want to go to surau, they want to read the holy Qur'an, they want to feel peace.

In the above example, UAS uses formal style of Malay. Although Indonesian and Malaysian are mutually intelligible, UAS chooses to speak Malay. By doing this, UAS establishes an emotional bonding with his audience. UAS's strategy shows a strong empathy that erases a gap between two different countries. Since Malaysians tend to mix English and Malay in their daily speaking, UAS also applies that strategy in his speech by inserting English words.

Example 6

*Ada soalan –soalan akan saya jawab. Yang tak boleh saya jawab saya akan bawa ke Pekan Baru Riau. Saya akan jawab, saya buat **video**, akan saya **upload** di **channel** Ustadz Abdul somad **Official**. Jangan lupa **subscribe**, **like** and **share**.*

If you have questions, I will answer. If I am unable to answer it, I will bring it to Pekan Baru Riau. I will answer, I will make video, I will upload it in channel Ustadz Abdul Somad official. Do not forget to subscribe, like and share.

In this example, UAS uses common English terms related to internet. UAS mentions that he has a special channel to post his speech. In a humorous tone, he also invites audiences to subscribe, like and share his channel. It is interesting that UAS chooses to speak Malay rather than Indonesian. Indeed, UAS is from Riau, which is home to Malay ethnic in Indonesia. However, Malaysians also understand Indonesian. We argue that by doing this, UAS would like to be welcome as a Malay man rather than Indonesian. By doing so, UAS can cut the gap between him and the audiences.

The third speech of UAS is from a lecture given in Tazkia Andalusia Islamic on 23 October 2019. In this occasion, UAS speaks for the students and lecturers of Tazkia Economic Islamic Institute.

Example 7

Our title today integration of Islamic, economic Islamic knowledge. If we talking about economic Islamic knowledge, Idzaa takallamna....Jika kita, saya agak kurang lancar Bahasa Indonesia ini. MasyaAllah indahnyanya berada di kampus Tazkia, walaupun jantung saya berhenti berdetak sejenak, ketika ibu rektor berbahasa Inggris, Masyaallah.

Our title today is integration of Islamic, economic Islamic knowledge. If we are talking about economic Islamic knowledge, Idzaa takallamna....If we, I do not speak Indonesian fluently. MasyaAllah how wonderful to be in Tazkia campus, even though my heart stopped for a while when Mrs rector spoke English, MasyaAllah.

In the above example, UAS was invited to speak about the integration of Islam and economic knowledge. The opening of the event is delivered in English by the rector of the institute. UAS begins his lecture by using English as an act of solidarity. By doing so, UAS also performs his linguistic repertoire. The

shift from the topic of the seminar and why UAS speaks English is metaphorical as English is not used in the entire lecture. In a joke, UAS says that he is unable to speak Indonesian fluently. This strategy is chosen as UAS knows his audience. The students and lecturers in Tazkia know English, so mixing English and Indonesian, although for the purpose of humor, is an approach that will establish emotional relation.

Conclusion

Examples outlined in this study demonstrate some ways in which UAS incorporates English and local languages in his speeches. His switching is strongly influenced by the audience to whom the speeches are given. The range of examples explained shows that the strategy is metaphorical since there is shift of topics and tone.

UAS use of English and local languages has been shown to be a communication strategy to reduce gap between him and his audiences. He also shows his unique linguistics repertoire that benefits him as a religious public speaker. He strengthens his distinction from common Islamic preachers who tend to cite Arabic language in their speech.

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