

Code-switching in English by Indonesian Subject Teacher in an International Elementary School as the Conveying Strategies

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Abstract

Code-switching is not merely existing in a casual conversation. Many teachers also use the term of code-switching in an education system. Teaching Indonesian subject in an international elementary school that English is the primary instruction language needs an attempt. Facing the students who are from many different language backgrounds is also another difficulty. Teacher is required to suit herself in that situation. By switching her language, from Indonesian to English, it assists the teacher to deliver the lesson clearly. This attempt is due to the function of code-switching in class and also as the conveying strategies to the students. This research shows how Indonesian subject teacher delivers the lesson to the students by using code-switching to convey her students to make the activity in class work well and avoid students' misunderstanding. The teacher's code-switching makes the students, who basically more comfortable in using English feel comfortable in learning Indonesian and understand the lesson clearly. In this research, the present writer observes an Indonesian female subject teacher as the main participant. This research is using Sociolinguistics and Pragmatics study in analysis.

Keywords: Indonesian Teacher, Code-switching, Conveying Strategies, Elementary School

Introduction

Code-switching as the product of language contact has so many functions in a society. It cannot deny that many teachers who have students from many different language backgrounds often use this term in class. Teaching in a school, which has basically as 'international school' where English is used as the main language of instruction, will be challenging and needs attempt to get students' attention. Before delivering the lesson to the students, teacher has to 'read' the situation of the class especially when the teacher is trying to introduce a lesson, which is different from the students' background. Therefore, by using code-switching, teacher will be more confident to get students' attention. Code-switching is not only used to get students' attention, but it is also having another function. The functions of code-switching sometimes help the teacher to manage the class. Some students will be more comfortable in using their first language to utter what they want or need. In this situation, teacher uses code-switching to understand her students' want or need, without leaving the main purpose of the lesson. On the other hand, the function of code-switching itself has additional purposes for the teacher. In teaching another language, which basically different from the students' language background, teacher needs to convey the students that they are sharing the same interest. Teacher needs to convey the students that they are in the same activity; both of them are in the same mutual interest. It is cannot deny that during the lesson, students will ask questions and teacher also needs to explain it. By conveying them that the teacher is going to help them, will make the activity work well. Therefore, in this research, code-switching has functioned as conveying strategies from the teacher to the

students. Teaching is about delivering the message of the subject that the matter will be more effective and easy to understand if the teacher uses code-switching in class, either in explaining the lesson or helping the students. This research shows how code-switching as conveying strategies work in Indonesian subject class.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Code-switching

If we are talking about language and society it will be something related with the language contact, and that language contact will be more interesting if the people in the society come from different language backgrounds. It will bring us to the term code-switching. Code-switching has become a common phenomenon in a society where two languages or more are used. People will use language based on the place they are located in. Stockwell (2002) stated that people choice in what language they want to speak is determined by the domain. The aim of it is simply to make the communication meaningful. On the other hand, code-switching is not only about changing two or more languages but it is also to communicate. Communication is the basic reasons for people to do code-switching. Sometimes the switching is needed to get a better understanding between them, especially when they are coming from a different background. By changing the language, it means that the people are trying to build a relationship. People do code-switching with certain reason. Most of them are due to the society. Different language background is one of the factors that make people do code-switching. Furthermore, the society in our life brings a lot of factor that make we need to put ourselves to be the part of it. Not only become the member of the society, but also to get a better communication within the people. The main reason is to have a better understanding among the speakers. When people try to utter something to a person with a different language background, code-switching will be very helpful in this situation. It is the same ones like what Hoffmann said (1991) that code-switching is using two or more languages during the conversation. Code-switching is something that sometimes happens unconsciously. Sometimes people don't realize that they are switching their codes while talking. On the contrary, code-switching can be also done because of certain purposes, which are done consciously. As Holmes (2001) proposed, there is tag-switching where the speakers use a tag in their utterances. Sometimes tag-switching can also be regarded as emblematic switching. Another one is metaphorical code-switching. This switching occurs in the middle of the situation. The speakers are mixing-up codes indiscriminately or perhaps because incompetence. The last is lexical borrowing. This switching occurs because the speaker is lacking in the vocabulary. Code-switching can occur anywhere by anyone. In this case, teacher needs to switch the language as the tool to give the instruction in the class. By saying that, the teachers do code-switching for a certain purpose. Switching the codes means that the teacher knows how to communicate with the students.

2.2 Function of Code-switching

Code-switching as the product of language contact has many functions according to its different needs. As the social phenomenon, code-switching occurs when the speakers have anything to deliver. Being in the class as the teacher that contents with many students from diverse languages make code-switching a best way to communicate in class. Abbas, et al (2013) proposed the function of code-switching in class. According to them, there are several functions of code-switching in class:

1. Starting new topic: Teacher uses code-switching in starting a new topic to give significant explanation about the idea of the lesson to make the students'

- understanding clear.
2. Lack of vocabulary: it cannot deny that sometimes a teacher forgets or has no idea about the requisite word. By changing the language, teacher will avoid her difficulties during the class.
 3. Emphasis: code-switching to give emphasis. Sometimes teacher needs to emphasize some points. She wants to convey about the information effectively and properly.
 4. Clarification: This situation is always happening in class. When the teacher feels that students are not apprehending the meaning of teacher's utterances, she will be slightly changing the language to make a clarification.
 5. Translation: translation happens when the students do not pay attention to the language that said in the first utterance. Teacher needs another technique to get students' attention.
 6. Creating a friendly environment: Teacher does code-switching to the students to be friendly with them. It is also to get the positive result from them. Teacher sometimes does code-switching also to motivate the students in class.
 7. Accessing the understanding: the teacher needs to understand her utterance. Therefore, teacher does code-switching to comprehend their communication.
 8. Repetitive function: This repetitive function is used to expand further information about the teacher's utterance.
 9. Explaining grammar: this one has a function as "time saving, grammar oriented exams and worries about too much pressure on the studies".
 10. Managing class: it is said that the class organization involves the selection of language.

Some teachers switch their language in attempts to handle the class. Teachers switch their codes in the class to make the students' understanding as clearly as possible. It is simply because the teachers want to make sure that the students understand about the lesson that they are going to do on that day. In short, this function is to avoid students' misunderstanding. Teachers do code-switching among the activity in class to fill the gap among them. It is used to accommodate the teachers' needs, to give explanation and instruction to students, and to accommodate the students' understanding. Teaching a class with students from diverse language background needs strategy to attention of the students. By changing the codes, both teachers and students can communicate freely. The message will be delivered perfectly, and it will be less misunderstanding. Teachers need to make the students comfortable in class, especially when the students are having difficulties to understand the lesson. Agguire (1988) said that code-switching is the tool for the teachers when they are facing a different language background. It somehow helps the teacher to learn the students' needs. From all the explanation above, it shows that code-switching can be used by the teacher in their teaching strategy. The function of it will be varied based on the class needs. By switching the codes, teachers will be easier to have a friendly environment in class.

2.3 Conveying Strategies

There is one of big major classes in positive politeness strategy according to Brown and Levinson (1987). Conveying strategies, these strategies are used to see if the speakers and hearers are cooperatively involved in the same activity. By using these strategies also, both speakers and hearers will share the same goals and understanding in their activities.

People who live in a society need to communicate each other that makes these strategies are regarded as one of the major classes in positive politeness strategy. Sharing the same goals and understanding are not the easy thing especially when the speakers need to

convey something to the hearers. Brown and Levinson (1987) proposed that the strategy is to convey that they are being cooperators and speakers can serve to redress the hearers' positive-face want.

Besides, these strategies also can be determined as a state of mutual helping. When the speakers need help, they have to make sure that the hearers will understand it, then their mutual relation will be built. On the other hand, this cooperation is also may be stressed by speakers' indicating their knowledge to hearers' wants. In other words, these strategies can work out if both speakers and hearers are sharing the same goals. If the speakers and the hearers share the same goals in the same activity or domain, thus the conveying strategy will appear in this situation.

3. Methodology

This research uses descriptive qualitative analysis method. Sugiyono said that in qualitative research the research questions are not determined by one particular variable, but it aims to understand a social interaction, other possibilities or a new theory from the research (2012:210). Therefore, qualitative analysis method is more suitable for this research because it helps to get a better understanding about the research. By using qualitative analysis method, the relationship between the phenomena will be easier to be investigated.

The participant of this research is an Indonesian subject teacher. The teacher is female and native Indonesian. The class that the present writer attends is held twice a week and has 45 minutes in each meeting. The teacher has been teaching in the international school for about 5-6 years. The name of the teacher is unknown due to the privacy of the teacher and so does the name of the school.

The data are taken from the activity of the teacher in class. The teacher explains or gives instruction to the class about the activity that will be done by the class in every meeting. The questions from students are sometimes being the trigger of the data, because the way the teacher answers the questions show how the teacher uses code-switching. The present writer observed the class by recording the teacher's utterances and taking notes on the important things. Interviewed the teacher is also done by the present writer. By observing the class without joining the activity makes the situation of the class is more neutral. Both teacher and students are having no problem and they don't feel awkward. The situation is just as normal as it is.

The data was recorded in one of international schools in Bandung, West Java Province, Indonesia. The situation is in the Indonesian subject class where the teacher is a native Indonesian but the children come from many different countries. The chosen class is the 4th grade. There are 13 students in the class. Only the data that shows the interaction of the teacher to the class and students that using code-switching are regarded as the data. After that, the data are analyzed to find the factor of code-switching that the teacher done and also the function of code-switching from the teacher to the students.

4. Data Analysis

Regarding to Abbas, et al. (2013), there are several functions of code-switching in class. The functions of code-switching help the analysis clearer to get the teacher's purposes of her use of code-switching. Meanwhile, Brown and Levinson (1987) proposed several conveying strategies. The strategies link with the use of code-switching as the conveying strategies that done by the teacher in class. In this data, teacher is symbolized as 'X' and student as 'Y'. On the other hand, not all of functions and strategies are found in the data,

only several which match with the teacher's utterances.

4.1 Code-switching as offer, promise

Y: Ibu... (Ma'am...)

X: Ok, sebentar, **wait a minute**... (Ok, hold on, wait a minute...)

[walking to Y]

Y: Ibu... This is jajan di jalan, jajan kaki ayam... Kaki ayam goreng...

(Ma'am... this is buys snacks on the road, buy chicken's feet... fried chicken's feet...)

The situation above is in the class when the teacher asks her students to find Indonesian children snack in the Internet. In here, the teacher uses code-switching from Indonesian to English as the conveying strategy. The strategy is used to give the student, as the hearer, a promise. The hearer needs help from the speaker as he is trying to show to his teacher whether what he found is acceptable or not. Then, the teacher, as the speaker, gives a promise to the hearer by saying, "wait a minute", it means that the speaker pays her attention to the hearer's wants. From the speaker's utterance, it can be regarded that the speaker tries to convey the hearer that she will help and get the hearer's needs or wants. From the utterance also, the hearer believes that the speaker understands about what he wants. This conveying strategy works because we can see that the Y, the student, utters to his teacher what he wanted to say. It concludes that between both of them, the conveying strategy works. The teacher has good intention to satisfying the student's positive-face wants. In this data above, it shows that the teacher uses code-switching to make the student feels that she tries to convey him by giving promise that she knows that the student needs help. The function of code-switching above is to make the environment friendlier. By saying promise, the teacher tries to break the boundaries between teacher-student relationships. It is simply because the teacher tries to access the student's understanding. By switching her codes, the student will feel that the teacher really gives a space for him to express what he wants to say. In addition, the teacher also wants the student to comprehend their communication. This shows from the utterances. Teacher switches her codes to English, then the student responds in English too, but then he realizes that the situation is in Indonesia class, so the student changes his codes to Indonesian. This short conversation shows that the teacher's conveying strategy by giving promise works well.

4.2 Code-switching as be optimistic

Y1: Ini kursinya jadi kecil. (The chair becomes smaller)

Y2: Iya, jadi pendek. (Yes, it's shorter)

X: **Ok, wait... the right one is the small one.** Yang benar itu yang kecil, the bigger chair is for grade 7 & 8. But if you want to, you can use. Kalau mau boleh dipake. (Ok, wait... the right one is the small one. The right one is the small one; the bigger chair is for grade 7 & 8. But if you want to, you can use. You can use if you want)

In the data above, the situation is portrayed when the students entered the class and found that the chairs were changed from the big one to the small one and then they started to say each other because they found that it was weird. From the situation portrayed, it shows that the teacher gives her students clarification about the chair. She realizes that the students don't like it, and then she tries to explain about it. The teacher uses English in the beginning of her utterance because she realizes that she is talking to the whole class who are not entirely of them are Indonesian. She tries to convey the students about the changing and carries a commitment that the students can use the old chair, which is the big one if they want to or if they feel uncomfortable with the small chair. In here, the speaker is being optimistic that she finds that the hearers find they uncomfortable situation. Therefore, the

speaker will presumptuous to assume the hearers that she will cooperate with them by sharing them mutual interest. The interest here is regarded as the ‘big chair’ as well. The speaker’s utterance claims as conveying strategy, be optimistic, to make the speaker sure that the speaker will obtain to help them. The speaker flips her point-of-view to understand what the hearers really want. The function of code-switching itself is a repetitive function, because both English and Indonesian version of utterances has the same meaning and point. The utterances “*Ok, wait... the right one is the small one*” and “*Yang benar itu yang kecil...*” have the same meaning and point, that the teacher explains about the small chair. The repetitive is used as the extended information. Sometimes, teacher repeats what she is saying to make the students understand what she is trying to deliver. Even that so, there is still possibilities that one utterance in code-switching has function more than one. In this utterance, the speaker’s utterance is not only regarded as repetitive function but also has another function as translation. Since the structure, the meaning and the point of the utterances are the same, the speaker’s utterance is also regarded as translation. This function is to make the students pay their attention to her. If it’s related to the conveying strategies, it is also can be said that the teacher translate her utterance to convey the students. Since the students come from different language background, the teacher as the speaker needs to convey them by translating her utterances that she understands about what the students are talking about and tries to share the same interest and makes commitment. On the other words, it is used to avoid misunderstanding between the speaker and hearer.

4.3 Code-switching as include both S and H in the activity

X: *Selamat siang anak-anak... (Good afternoon class...)*

Y: *Selamat siang, bu... (Good afternoon ma’am...)*

X: ***Before we go to computer lab, sebelum kita ke computer lab... apa yang harus kita cari? Tentang anak-anak Indonesia... (Before we got to computer lab, before we go to computer lab, what we have to find? About Indonesian children...)***

Y: *Harus cari semuanya? (Do we have to find all of them?)*

X: *Sebentar, kita baca dulu sama-sama, read together! (Wait, let’s read together; read together!)*

The situation of the data above happens in the beginning of the class. It is obvious because in the beginning the teacher greets her students. The first two utterances are said in Indonesia since it is Indonesian class, but then the teacher switches her language to English by saying “*Before we go to computer lab, sebelum kita ke computer lab...*” the teacher is using the pronoun ‘we’ to express to community of the class or it is claimed as inclusive ‘we’. The inclusive ‘we’ here means ‘you’ and ‘I’ or the teacher and the students, the rest of the class. The teacher uses ‘we’ to convey the students that they are one community. This strategy is used to express that both the speaker and the hearer are in the same activity. By joining in the same activity, the speaker will be easier to convey the hearer to make a cooperative assumption. In this case, the students need to find the activity of Indonesian’s children. That is why, the speaker as the native Indonesian needs to convey her students that they are in the same activity by using inclusive ‘we’ to ask the students to join. It is also said that, by using inclusive ‘we’ the speaker is trying to invite the students. Therefore, whenever the students find difficulties during the activity, the students will feel that their teacher will be there to help them. This kind of strategy is important to make the students feel comfortable in class especially when the students are coming from different language background and feel alienated because they don’t understand about the language. On the other hand, the function of code-switching itself is as starting to new topic. In the beginning of the lesson, teacher needs strategy to engage the students to participate with the activity that will be done on that day. Using code-switching as the starting new topic will give the students a significance understanding. Teacher will not be looking too

overacting in the class, it simply gives the students chance to understand the lesson. This kind of code-switching is needed in every class for every teacher to get the students' attention, so the teacher will not find difficulties to deliver the lesson and also this makes the environment of the class friendlier.

4.4 Code-switching as give (or ask for) reasons

X: Sudah ketemu gambar anak indonesianya? **What are you trying to find first?** (Have you found the pictures of Indonesian children? What are you trying to find first?) (1)

Y: Not yet... Ga tau... (Not yet... No idea...)

X: Biasanya anak Indonesia gimana? (What Indonesian children usually do?)

Y: Pakai seragam.. (Wearing uniform...)

X: Oke, kalau gitu coba cari yang pakai seragam gambar anak indonesianya. (Ok, then try to find the pictures of Indonesian children who wear uniform)

X: Udah ketemu gambarnya? (Have you found the pictures?) (2)

Y: Udah, ini gambarnya tentang anak Indo lagi working. (Yes, this is the picture of Indonesian children. They are working).

X: **Do you think anak Indonesia working?** (Do you think Indonesian children working?)

Y: Yaaa... go to school is working. (Yaaa... got to school is working)

X: Sudah selesai? (Is it done?) (3)

Y: Anak Indo jalan kaki, anak Indo pakai seragam, anak Indo jajan. (Indonesian children are walking, Indonesian children are wearing uniform, Indonesian children are buying snacks)

X: Selain itu ada lagi ga? **What else we can find about Indonesian children?** (Besides that? What else we can find about Indonesian children?)

Y: Bangun jam 6 pagi. It's all I remember from the board. (Wake up at 6 am. It's all I remember from the board)

X: Kalau mainannya? Mereka suka main apa? (What about the games? What are they playing?)

Y: Itu.. mereka suka main yang pake bola.. apa namanya? (That... they like to play with the ball... what is it?)

X: Apa coba? (What do you think?)

Y: Sepak bola. Anak laki-laki main sepak bola di sekolah. (Football. Boys like to play football at school)

Those three data above are in different conversation, but they are in the same situation. Data (1), (2) and (3) are regarded in the same strategy that is conveying strategy to ask or give for reasons. The speaker, who is the teacher, tries to convey the students that they are in the same activity. This strategy is the reflection of the speaker to give reason to what the hearer wants. This activity is assuming the hearer wants to be reasonable. In other words, speaker tries to help hearer in other way that the hearers need to explain the reason of their difficulties as the other way to say, "can you help me?" That is why in those data above, the speaker utter her "help" by saying "What are you trying to find first?", "Do you think anak Indonesia working?", and "What else we can find about Indonesian children?". These utterances will lead to the hearers' difficulties. Hearers will answer the speaker's question as the reason of their difficulties, by giving that reason; the hearers believe that the speaker will help them to go through it or even to give instruction. This conveying strategy is used to convey that both of them are in the same situation and activity and trying to share the same goals or understanding. The switching is done by the speaker, the teacher, from Indonesian to English is simply as the trigger to make the hearers express their difficulties and also to make sure whether they need help or not. Meanwhile, this kind of strategy helps the hearers to express what they want and need, and also to make a good connection between speaker and hearer, because the speaker will help or try to fulfill hearers need without saying "can I help you?" or something like that. As the addition, those utterances have function as accessing understanding. It is said that to access the students' understanding, teacher sometimes needs to change her language. This aim is to get the students understanding about what they are working in class. Also, this code-switching will engage the students to say what they are trying to explain in their mind so teacher will understand and find in which part she needs to be involved and convey the students.

5. Conclusions

Not all of the function of code-switching that proposed by Abbas, et.al (2013) appear in

this research. Meanwhile, only several functions that found in this research. There are: starting new topic, translation, creating friendly environment, accessing the understanding and repetitive function. All of these functions have the same point, which is to avoid the students' misunderstanding and to get students' attention. Every teacher will have their own strategy to make the class controllable and the activity work well. On the other hand, the several conveying strategies that found in this research are conveying strategies as offer; promise, be optimistic, include both S and H in the activity, and give (or ask for) reasons. All of strategies that found in the research are having the similarities that both speaker and hearer are in the same activity. They are trying to same understanding and agreement. The speaker has the main purpose in this strategy; it is to make the hearer believe that the speaker understands about what the hearer needs or wants.

Therefore, this research is having two approaches: code-switching and conveying strategies as the main topic. The relation of these approaches is in the speaker. When the speaker tries to convey his or her utterance to the hearer, he or she needs strategy to make it work. Especially when the speaker is dealing with communities that consist of people from many different language backgrounds. This makes the speaker's attempt will be easier to adopt with the situation and also to convey the hearer that they are sharing the same mutual agreement. In this research also shows that code-switching can be used in every aspect. It is not merely about culture, but in teaching strategy, code-switching would be very helpful.

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