

Toward a Theoretical Inquiry into Codeswitching: The Indonesian Experience

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Abstract: Hardly has codeswitching been evaluatively treated on the theoretical level using the natural language data from the sociolinguistic context of Indonesia. This research paper is to address such an issue as a field of inquiry incorporating the researcher's first-hand encounter with naturalistic language data in the field.

Key words: codeswitching, interlingual paradigm, multilingualism, Indonesian sociolinguistics

Codeswitching behavior that I have often come across in the field while scrutinizing the sociolinguistic data among Indonesian speakers gives me convincing evidence that such behavior is both quite natural and widespread among members of any multilingual community (cf. Fishman, 1972; Gumperz in Dil, 1971; Sankoff, 1971; Huerta, 1978; Kartomihardjo, 1981; Poedjosoedarmo, 1982; Grosjean, 1982; Heller, 1988). However, my first difficulty in the field is that, to my knowledge, no Indonesian researchers have addressed it evaluatively on the theoretical level using some empirical evidence from Indonesian context. Such an inquiry will undoubtedly provide insightful contribution to Indonesian sociolinguistics.

EARLY INQUIRY INTO CODESWITCHING

Shafter (1978, p. 265) notes that linguists actually have long recognized two basic principles: on one hand, that languages in contact may influence each other, and on the other hand, that each language internally has a hierarchical structure. However, it was just in the early 1950s that theoretical inquiry into languages in contact really began in Weinreich's seminal concept of "interference" (1953).

Switching behavior is actually recognized, though not necessarily understood by Weinreich. The fact is that such a form of verbal behavior is left unexplored due to the limitation of his interlingual paradigm of interference.¹ Like speech mixture, switching is even given a derogatory label as being a speech behavior which is "...condemned by a society like any other undesirable traits" (Weinreich, 1953, p. 83). Running-counter to this idea, my scrutiny of the linguistic communication among many members of any multilingual community even justifies that their use of codeswitching (in less formal context of situation) indicates their verbal virtuosity.

Haugen (1953), in his study of the speech of Norwegian-American informants, also notices the frequent occurrences of switches, but they are usually characterized by "a clean break",² i.e. that the switches hardly take place within "a single breath group" (p. 65). However, instead of simply accepting Weinreich's concept of the interlingual "interference" as being the overlapping between two distinct linguistic systems, Haugen (1956, p. 40) introduces two other distinct stages of the interlingual impact of languages in contact: "codeswitching" and "integration". In his scheme, codeswitching is defined as the alternate use of two languages that also includes the introduction of a single "unassimilated" word up to a sentence or more into a stretch of discourse in another language.³ (cf also Haugen, 1973, p. 528); whereas "integration" is almost similar to the notion of "interference", i.e. the introduction of some linguistic forms from one language into another. However, the only distinction between the two rests on the question of the current norms. If "interference" is, on one hand, considered contrary to the current norms of usage, "integration" is, on the other hand, in harmony with the contemporary norms (cf Shafter, 1978, p. 265).

Meanwhile in pursuit of the interlingual impact of speech among postwar German-speaking immigrants in Australia, Clyne (1967, p. 19)

¹ Less debatable is probably the application of this theoretical concept in the pedagogic context. Enormous researches may be found on the interference of any local language on students' competence of Indonesian.

² The concept of "clean break" is essential as it may signal the involvement of two (or more) different linguistic systems. This may lead to Gumperz' later idea of processing (conversational) codeswitching according to two different linguistic systems and Poplack's theories of "free morpheme and equal constraints on codeswitching".

³ See the same issue on footnote 2.

realizes the derogatory connotation of Weinreich's interference and then he proposes a term "transference" to refer to "the adoption of any elements from another language". By his scheme, a term "transfer" is used as an instance of "transference" that may cover both a "switch" and a "loan word".⁴ Some sort of variation in the length of switched elements is evidently recognized in this work as a further distinction is also made between a minimal switch, simply being a "multiple transfer", which usually constitutes the introduction of a long stretch of speech from one language into another (pp. 60-70).

Still quite useful up to now is probably Clyne's distinction between (a) extralinguistically triggered switch, and (b) intralinguistically triggered switch. This lends a support to understand codeswitching in terms of both linguistic and extralinguistic configurations.

In addition, Clyne's introduction of a term "trigger word" may still have its relevance for analyzing codeswitching. He defines "trigger word" as a kind of word that may cause a speaker to switch from one language to another. Furthermore, for such an on-going process a term "triggering" is coined and further classified as:

- (a) consequential triggering,
- (b) anticipational triggering, and
- (c) contextual triggering.

To contextualize the three concepts in Indonesian context, the following examples are useful (henceforth the following abbreviations will be used: IND = Indonesian, JVN = Javanese, MKB = Minangkabau):

- (a) Consequential triggering

IND		JVN
Kamu ini mau pakai jas kok sekarang blangkonan. <i>Ya ora mathuk.</i>		

(You may want to wear a jacket now, but why is it that you are putting the "blankon" on. Certainly they don't match).

The utterance above indicates that the speaker has to resort to the use of the word "blankonan" in Javanese, and, as a result, it triggers him to switch to Javanese.

⁴ The use of loan word may indicate that the speaker only has access to the use of any particular word in one language while using another language.

(b) Anticipational triggering

IND

MKB

Kita harus melestarikan, misalnya: Ko, bantuak ko rumah gadang. (we have to preserve, among other things: this kind of “rumah gadang”)

While speaking in Indonesian the speaker is triggered to switch to Minangkabau in anticipation of the use of the term for the Minangkabau traditional house, “rumah gadang”.

(c) Contextual triggering :

While enjoying the food, a host may comment on different kinds of traditional cuisines:

(to a somewhat common Indonesian cuisine)

IND

Yang ini lezat. (This one is delicious) (Pointing out to the traditional cuisine of Minangkabau).

MKB

Nan iko lamak juo (this one is also delicious).

IND JVN

(To a Javanese cuisine) **yang itu oenak tenan.** (That one is delicious, indeed.).

GUMPERZ' INQUIRY INTO CODESWITCHING

Based on the analytical concept of verbal repertoire, Gumperz (1964a) makes an inquiry into codeswitching. At first Gumperz (1964b) draws a distinction between transactional and personal switchings, which are currently no longer tenable in favor of his revised distinction between situational and metaphorical codeswitchings. Under the theoretical concept of situational codeswitching, the kind of switching occurrence is attributable to the change(s) in any component of the social situation.⁵ From his Hennesberget data, for instance, Blom and Gumperz (1971)

⁵ It is worthy of note here that “social situation” is defined by Gumperz (1977, p. 423; cf similar conclusion, 1982, pp. 60-61) : “...the activities carried on by particular constellations of personnel, gathered in particular settings during a particular span of time”. So situational switching is closely related to the change(s) of any component of the social situation such as : activity, speech participants, setting and time. Nowadays, however, the situational type of switching is commonly understood as linguistic evidence for a constituent of diglossia.

illustrate that the presence of other people being considered as outsiders on the on-going speech interaction may have something to influence not only on the non-verbal but also on the verbal interaction.

Unlike situational switching that is closely related to the configuration of social situation, metaphorical codeswitching hinges on the regularities of the social situation. Using the Hennesberget data, Blom and Gumperz describe that the occurrence of metaphorical codeswitching in the form of a switch using the local dialect that is inserted into an on-going discussion normally delivered in the standard variety in the formal context of situation could get across social meaning or informal nuance closely related to the use of the local dialect.⁶

Without rejecting the prior dichotomy of switching, McClure (1981, p. 70) supports Gumperz' previous stand that the so-called situational switching will rarely be found within a sentence. McClure observes that such a switching occurs on a particular stage or episode of speech event whose boundaries can be readily recognized. Such a switching is further referred to as being a constituent of the linguistic phenomenon known as diglossia (cf Trumper, 1984, pp. 35-36; Auer & Di Aldo, 1984, pp. 52-53).

CONVERSATIONAL CODESWITCHING

On the basis of the arguments as expressed by the latter researchers, the juxtaposition of different codes in the stream of utterances of bilinguals or multilinguals is currently most commonly referred to as conversational codeswitching, of which Gumperz (1982, p. 60) defines it as : "exchange of passages of speech belonging to different grammatical systems or subsystems". This definition underlines the idea of processing conversational codeswitching in terms of the internal rules of the two different grammatical systems involved. This definition is also in support of the idea about speaker's competence to make good use of different grammatical systems or subsystems at his or her disposal.

⁶ In Fishman's observation (1972), such a switch is understood as an insertion of a particular kind of social role other than the concomitant social relation identical to the use of the standard variety.

Furthermore some characteristics of conversational codeswitching are identified as follows (Gumperz, 1982, pp. 59-66):

- (1) The speech exchanges using two different codes constitute one interactive whole.
- (2) Speakers are involved in the regular flow of speech.
- (3) The switches are part of some minimal speech act, and the message is tied by the same syntactic and semantic relation if the same switches were delivered in one language.
- (4) Unlike situational switching, the correlation between switched element and the social context is not obvious.
- (5) The speaker's intent becomes more dominant as the speech participants emphasize the communicative effect of the speech exchanges.
- (6) The switches rely on the speaker-addressee's negotiation of common communicative knowledge.

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF CONVERSATIONAL CODESWITCHING

The following is Gumperz' classification of the functional repertoire of conversational codeswitching to help understand its semantic interpretation. To make it easier to understand, each is provided with my own experience in the field:

- (1) Quotation:

The switched element is identified as : direct quotation or reported speech

MKB

IND

Ambo lai baco kapatang ko pengumuman: "**Sebelum UTS, SPP harus lunas.**

(I read the announcement yesterday : "Before the mid exam, school fee must be paid.)

JVN

IND

Njaluke: "**Sembilan ribu seorang**".

(The request is nine thousand for each)

- (2) Addressee specification

The switched element is used to highlight the message directed to one of several possible addressees.

- (b) The degree of speaker's involvement or distance from a message, whether a statement reflects one's opinion or generally known facts:

MKB

IND

Nan jaleh nan iko labiah rancak, **tapi cara mengoperasikannya lebih canggih.**

(To tell the truth, this one looks better but the way to operate it is more sophisticated).

Notice how the code contrast symbolizes a varying degree of speaker's involvement in the message : the statement in the local language is personalized, whereas that in Indonesian shows more distance.

LINGUISTIC RULES GOVERNING CODESWITCHING

Researchers are generally of the same opinion that codeswitching is rule-governed (cf Poplack, 1981, p. 174), both linguistically and extralinguistically. This position is, among other things, clearly reflected in the commonly accepted dichotomy between extralinguistically triggered switching and intralinguistically triggered switching (Clyne, 1977, p. 24).

Poplack (1981, p. 174), in addition to mentioning co-variation between linguistic and extra linguistic constraints, makes an attempt to identify the rules that govern codeswitching in terms of two dominant rules :

1. Free Morpheme Constraint

Codes may be switched after any constituent in the discourse provided that constituent is not a bound morpheme.

The switched element could be in the form of full sentences (including conjoined sentences, repetitions equalling full sentences, interjections) and any kind of constituent within the sentences provided that the constituent minimally consists of one free morpheme.

My scrutiny of linguistic data in the field obviously offers empirical evidence for the above rules as follows:

(1) Full sentence:

IND

MKB

Katanya mau rapat lagi. Puku bara awak ka rapek lai keceknyo kapatang ?

(It is said that we are going to have a meeting. What time are we having a meeting as it was told yesterday).

(2) Conjoined sentence:

IND

MKB

Saya sudah pernah ke restoran itu dan awak raso ‘ndak ado nan istimewa.

(I have been to that restaurant and I would say there’s nothing special).

(3) Interjection

MKB

IND

Onde mande ! **Sudah lama nunggu ?**

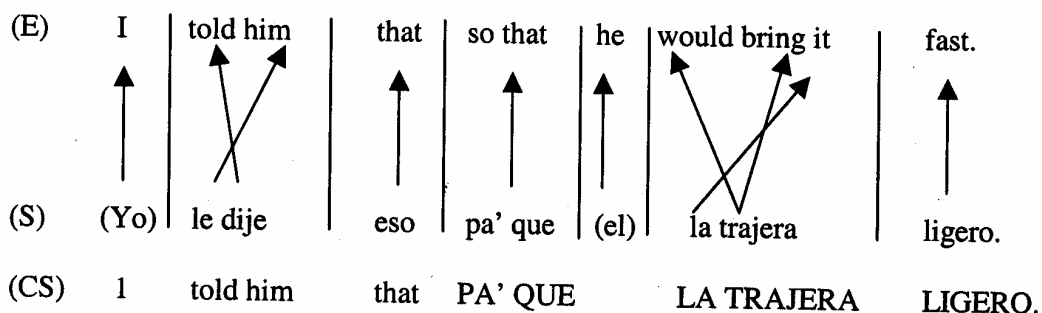
(What a surprise ! Have you been waiting long ?)

In the light of my empirical study, the free morpheme constraint as a theory proves to be tenable on ground of its power to be able to describe the whole bunch of data in my empirical study.

2. Equal Constraint

Switch could occur at some point whereby the juxtaposition of the elements from language 1 and language 2 does not violate the syntactic rules of respective languages.

The examples below (Poplack, 1980, p. 586) show sentences having the same linguistic meaning as they are expressed in English (E), Spanish (S) and Codeswitching (CS). Notice how the arrows indicate ways in which constituents from the two languages map onto each other within the permissible switch points:



Using my empirical data, the equal constraint as a theory also proves to be tenable on ground of its power to display that codeswitching utterances rarely indicate any violation of the rules of the respective languages or codes involved. This indicates that a speaker who

codeswitches normally also masters the syntactic rules of the languages or codes involved.

Meanwhile McClure (1977, pp. 97-98; also cf Wentz & McClure, 1977, p. 716 and Pfaff, 1979, p. 298) presents codeswitching phenomena in terms of their linguistic substance as code changing and code mixing. However it is worthy of note to pay attention to the distinction that she draws between the two linguistic phenomena. In code mixing, the dominant code can still be recognized and the mixed element from another code occurs within the constituent boundaries; whereas code changing occurs whenever a speaker starts his or her utterances in one code (say code 1) and then changes into another code (code 2). The codechanging occurs on the constituent boundary. To clarify those distinctions, the following examples are given by McClure (1977, p. 26).

(1) Codechanging:

Codechanging is clearly signified by a shift that occurs from one linguistic system to another, for instance:

I put the forks **en las mesas** (...on the tables)

(2) Codemixing:

Codemixing occurs within the constituent structure, for instance:

I put the **tenedores** on the tables. (forks)

From the examples given by McClure above, it is obvious that the kind of linguistic phenomenon known as codechanging occurs in the form of a switched constituent to another code and concomitantly takes place what is commonly called as a change to the use of another code. Meanwhile the phenomenon known as codemixing is understood as the insertion of a linguistic element from another code into the receiving constituent of the utterances currently going on. Thus, a change to another code does not take place.

However scrutinizing the whole bunch of my data, I would say that the most real and natural codeswitching mostly falls within the boundary of what McClure calls as codechanging. Such a phenomenon would certainly follow both the Free Morpheme Constraint and the Equal Constraint. Consider that the following examples would be appropriately called as codemixing between Indonesian and Javanese elements:

IND JVN

Saya nggak tahu mana rumah-e

(I don't know where his/her house is)

IND JVN

Awat, lho wedang-nya masih panas.

(Watch out, the drink is still hot)

For some obvious reasons the utterances above do not indicate any switch to another code.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I would like to sum up the previous discussions as follows:

1. Codeswitching, as a kind of linguistic behavior, may be defined as the use of two or more languages or codes without violating the rules of the grammar of respective languages or codes involved.
2. Codeswitching as a kind of linguistic behavior is both intra-and extra linguistically constrained and should not be given any pejorative label.
3. The skillful and rule-governed codeswitching may indicate the speaker's virtuosity.
4. Haugen's notion of a "clean break" is to be understood to pave a way to :
 - a. Gumperz' notion of processing codeswitching in terms of separate linguistic systems of the codes involved.
 - b. Poplack's free morpheme and equal constraints for codeswitching.
5. Clyne's "trigger words" that may cause "trigerring" may be tenable to explain codeswitching.
6. Following Trumper, Auer and Di Aldo, situational codeswitching is recognized as a constituent of diglossia.
7. Following McClure, situational codeswitching is observed to take place on a particular stage or episode of speech event whose boundaries may be readily recognized.
8. Based on the regularities of the social configuration that generates codeswitching, a redefinition of the social meaning holding between a speaker and his/her interlocutor may take place by switching (occasionally or back and forth) to any other code different from the one being used. This phenomenon is commonly known as metaphorical switching.

9. The juxtaposition of different codes without violating the grammar of any respective codes involved in the speech of bilinguals or multilinguals is commonly referred to as (conversational) codeswitching.
10. Codeswitching is a linguistic behavior quite different from code-mixing.
11. Gumperz' functional repertoire of codeswitching can be verified by empirical evidence and can be used furthermore to explore the taxonomy of its functions.

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