

A Sociolinguistic Study on *Code Switching* Among Overseas Indonesian Students on *Facebook* Comments

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Abstract—this aim of this study is to find out the use of code switching on Facebook comments. This study investigates the types of code switching which occurred on Facebook comments of overseas Indonesian students, the shifts of code switching between female and male and the reasons why overseas Indonesian students use code switching. The study involves overseas Indonesian students who already signed up as Facebook users as the respondents. This is a qualitative research; therefore, it uses descriptive method. The data were analyzed by using the theory developed that identifies the types of code switching on Facebook comments, the shifts of code switching between female and male on Facebook comments [1]. However, the reasons why overseas Indonesian students switched code on Facebook comments were analyzed by using theory about the differences between female and males using code switching [2] and theory about types of code switching occur on Facebook comments; intersentential switching, intrasentential switching, and tag switching [3]. Intrasentential code switching is used at the maximal scale on Facebook comments, and tag switching. This study shows that there are differences between the use of endearment words such as “baby”, “dear”, “honey”. It should be used by female speech but it’s more frequently used by male than female. Then, there are also five code-switching reasons discovered on Facebook comments: real lexical need, expressing group identity, softening or strengthening request or command, talking about particular topic, and show solidarity.

Keywords—Code switching, Facebook comments, shifting, sociolinguistics

I. INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, most people in the world speak more than one language because of internal and external factors, such as ethnical and cultural backgrounds, inter marriages, and career opportunities. People who can speak two languages are bilingual and if it is more than two languages then it is multilingual. Because of having

ability in speaking several languages, people have a tendency to mix and switch the languages. The tendency of mixing and alternating between two or more languages in a single conversation is called code switching.

Code switching occurs when the speakers shifts from one language or code to another language or code. In other words, code switching can be defined as the use of two or more languages in the same context or speech event, and it is comprehensible to all speakers who share the same language.

The example:

Santy: „Nggak papa, I love you too...!”

Santy seems more comfortable to express her emotional feeling in English. Then she has switched some personal words into English so that she does not sound so melancholic. In *Bahasa Indonesia*, the statement „*Aku cinta kamu*” can only be said by a person to his/her special friend. On the other hand, in most of the English speaking countries, saying I love you or I miss you to a father, mother, brother or sister, a close friend, or even to a teacher is very common. In other words, there are some expressions under a certain topic that are inexpressible in *Bahasa Indonesia*, but are expressible in English.

The phenomenon of code switching has become an interesting topic to be discussed, especially code switching found in Facebook comments. Since this social network appears in 2004, it has large members and may lead the members that are mostly teenagers and adults, including overseas Indonesian Students as Foreign Language to begin imitating the way they communicate to each other. Getting loose from the reasons why they choose Facebook to communicate each other, in their daily day, they do not seem to stop posting or giving comment on Facebook. Most of them use Facebook as media to communicate each other. People, who have *Bahasa Indonesia* as their first language and English as

another language and study overseas, often switch their first language into English when they are writing comments on Facebook. This phenomenon is called code switching. Considering the phenomena of code switching doing by the Learners of English as Foreign Language, especially the overseas Indonesian Students who broadly appears on Facebook, this research is conducted to observe this phenomenon more deeply.

The writer explores the code switching because there are many interesting things in the meaning of code switching which is produced on Facebook and the reasons of code switching which used by male and female that occurs on Facebook. It is hoped that this research will differentiate code switching between male and female on Facebook comments.

Thus, related to this, the writer expects that this investigation will contribute to the field of linguistics, especially in the field of sociolinguistics.

II. RELATED WORK

The author used some theories related to this research. There are seven reasons for bilinguals to switch their languages. The seven reasons are as follows: (1) talking about a particular topic, (2) quoting somebody else, (3) being emphatic about something, (4) interjection, (5) repetition used for clarification, (6) intention of clarifying the speech content for the interlocutor, and (7) expressing group identity [4]. The use of code switching between male and female are: female is more polite than male, female tends to share and communicate their personal information such as feelings, experiences, fears, and happiness [1]. On the other hand, male tends to talk about sport, technology, and compare their knowledge and experience.

In this sub-chapter, two important points are discussed. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method for the research. A qualitative study involves description and analysis rather than the counting features. Mayring has developed a procedure for a qualitative content analysis that includes a procedural model of text analysis and different technique to apply it [5]. Sociolinguistics is a concerned with the relationship between language and the context in which it is used. In other words that sociolinguistics studies the relationship between language and context of it. differentiate the three types of code switching into *tag-switching*, *intersentential code switching* and

intrasentential code switching (Poplack, 1980: 86). The followings are definitions of three types:

Additionally, code switching as the mixing by bilinguals (or multilinguals) of two or more languages in discourse [1]. Code switching is the use of two languages, which implies some degree of competence in the two languages even if bilingual fluency is not yet stable [6]. The term gender is commonly used in sociolinguistics study rather than sex, because sex is classified by biological characteristics of being male or a female, whereas gender is socially constructed, involving the whole scope of psychological social and cultural differences between males and females [7].

Language is resulted rules from every aspect in its circumstances, like who the speaker and the listener are, the place where the language is used or occurred, the intention of the speaker, the mood of the speaker and the norms of the society. This statement is in line Language varies according to its uses as well as its users, according to where it is used and to whom also according to who is using it say that women seem to be alert to the fact that what they say may threaten face. [6]. In other words woman are used to involve their feelings of sensitivity and solidarity, while men's speech is more matter of fact. This kind of difference may also be reflected in the way men and women respond to something.

III. SOCIOLINGUISTICS ANALYSIS

Data 1

David: "@Bang Carles: Do u need some **anti-aging?** As woman needs... *kalau mau di sini ada.*"
(July 31 at 3:10 am 2011)

Analysis:

The code switching in the comment is **do u need some anti-aging? As woman needs** in the type of intersentential since this sentence comment occurs in the sentence. The type of switching occurs at the level of words within sentences and it can be in the middle of sentences, clauses or even words. The majority of code switching exists at the intersentential level, especially from Bahasa Indonesia to English. In (1), intersentential code switching is carried out by inserting English clause **do u need some anti-aging? as woman needs**. One of the reasons of code switching is talking about particular topic. Based on that data, anti-aging is a comment from male Facebook user. Whereas that comment is commonly commented by females as they are familiar with beauty and fashion. Females are considered to be beautiful if they have slim body, light-

skin, and young look. In order to have a younger look, they apply anti-aging on their skin. As we know, anti-aging is commonly used by female, although the term anti-aging is also familiar and more interesting for female than male. There is a difference between female and male considering their background on performance. The data shows a shift in the topic in that comment since male Facebook users use word **anti-aging**.

After the analysis, it is found that there are two topics in the male comments categorize *Intersentential Shifting* in Vocabulary. The topic as Person, female tend to use certain adjectives such as pretty and nice with a higher frequency than males do. There is also a more frequent expression of endearment like dear, honey, lovely, cute, sweet, etc which are typically used by women, but only very rarely by men. The results show that endearment words are commented by males Facebook users. Such as: "dear, love " are written by male Facebook user.

Data 2

Fiddy Sembada: "Have a safe journey and good luck, **dear!** *Salam buat semuanya yang ada di Indo.*"
(December 17, 2011 at 6:44pm)

Analysis:

In the comment above, the code switching is **have a safe journey and good luck, dear**. it can be analyzed that Intersentential occurs in which involves a switch at a clause or sentence level in different languages. There is a difference between female and male considering their background to express their feeling. The data shows a shift in vocabulary. The word "dear" is written by male Facebook user. The word "dear" means: close to the heart. In that comment he uses **dear** to call his male friend. It means they are intimate and express their feeling. The data illustrate that male are accustomed to say "dear," or "sayang" to not only towards their girlfriend but also male friends. This indicates that he supposes to enjoy this endearment. Moreover, he shows that he dares to express his feelings and he tends to express a relationship, mostly a supporting and intimate relationship. Male rarely use endearment such as "baby" and "dear" to their male friends. In addition, they rarely express their relationships. Talking about feelings and showing emotions commonly belong to female talks.

Data 3

Sarah Febriyanti **Fuck dissertation**, *pusing, lieur*,
capeeeeeeeee!

August 19 at 3:33am LikeUnlike

Analysis:

The code switching in that comment is **fuck dissertation**. In the type of tag switching. Type of tag switching occurs on Facebook comment involves the switch that occurs at the level of words in another language. In (61), tag code switching is carried out by inserting English word **fuck dissertation**. One of the reasons of code switching is talking about particular topic. Based on that data, **fuck dissertation** is commented by female Facebook user. Female is rarely to be rude. It should be feature of male speech. In the data, she wants to express her stress since she is stuck with her dissertation. She says **fuck dissertation**, it means that she wants to express that she is angry, stressful. From the data also can be found that female Facebook users use **fuck dissertation** to strengthen her emotion. Moreover, **fuck dissertation** is feature of male speech. She wants to express her emotion along with actual action in her experience. From the data shows a shift in different politeness in that comment. From the data above, we can see the point that female speakers use offensive words or "tabooed words", and slang in her comment. Taboo words are the words that are often considered offensive, shocking, or rude. The meaning of "fucking" is very rude and indecent. RF has written **fuck** to reflect the superiors" felt anger. Female Facebook user should be more polite than male. But In that comment occurs the shift since that female says "fuck" it should be used by male because female more polite than male.

IV. CONCLUSION

In line with what has been described in the previous chapter, the writer draws the conclusion as follows:

The results show that a large quantity of endearment has considered by male. The writer finds out that male uses more endearment such as "baby", "dear," and "honey" than female. The total number of endearment uttered by male. Moreover, the writer finds out the shifts between female and male in their comments. Such as; shifting in vocabulary, shifting in politeness

shifting in different topic, shifting in question tag .Such as male are more polite than female. Females use

words “fuck and shit” in their comments; it should be used by male speech.

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