



Code Switching Occur in *Susah Sinyal* Movie

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Abstract. *This study explores the phenomenon of code-switching as portrayed in the *Susah Sinyal* movie. Code-switching is the practice of alternating between two or more languages within a single conversation, commonly done by bilingual individuals for different social and communicative reasons. The objective of this research is to examine the types of code-switching using the framework of Romaine (1989) and to describe its communicative functions based on the theory of Appel and Muysken (2006). The data were obtained from the movie using documentation techniques and analyzed using a descriptive qualitative method. The analysis revealed three types of code-switching, namely intra-sentential, inter-sentential, and tag-switching. Additionally, the study identified six functions of code-switching: referential, directive, expressive, phatic, metalinguistic, and poetic. Overall, the use of code-switching in *Susah Sinyal* movie demonstrates how the characters strategically shift between languages to clarify meaning, convey feelings, direct actions, maintain social bonds, reflect identity, and enhance expression, reflecting the dynamic nature of bilingual communication in Indonesian popular media.*

Keywords: Sociolinguistics, Code Switching, *Susah Sinya* Movie

1. INTRODUCTION

The use of two or more languages in a single conversation or utterance is known as code-switching and is commonly observed among bilingual or multilingual individuals. This phenomenon often occurs in multilingual communities such as Indonesia, where people alternate between languages depending on the context, audience, or purpose of communication. According to Romaine (1989), code-switching is not a random practice, but a patterned and purposeful linguistic behavior used to express identity, convey meaning more effectively, or adapt to social dynamics.

The phenomenon of code-switching is examined in this research through its appearance in *Susah Sinyal*, a 2017 Indonesian comedy-drama film directed by Ernest Prakasa. The film presents a rich portrayal of multilingual communication, where characters frequently switch between Indonesian, English, and sometimes local languages in their dialogue. These language switches are not only stylistic but often reflect social identity, emotions, or specific communicative intentions.

This research adopts Romaine's (1989) framework to classify the types of code-switching, namely intra-sentential, inter-sentential, and tag-switching. In addition, it utilizes the theory proposed by Appel and Muysken (2006) to analyze the functions of code-switching, including referential, directive, expressive, phatic, metalinguistic, and poetic. By applying both theoretical approaches, the study investigates the structural forms and communicative purposes of language switching within the context of the movie.

This study aims to offer insights into the strategic use of code-switching in film dialogue, particularly in conveying meaning, expressing identity, and portraying the multilingual nature of Indonesian society. The characters' language choices serve as a way to understand how language operates in media and how bilingual communication captures the complexity of social interaction.

From the explanation above, this study focuses on the following research questions: what types of code-switching are found in the *Susah Sinyal* movie? And what functions of code-switching are used by the characters in the film?

In line with these questions, the objectives of the study are to identify the types of code-switching that occur in the *Susah Sinyal* movie, to examine the functions of code-switching based on the characters' dialogue throughout the movie.

2. THEORY

Code-switching is the act of shifting between two or more languages during communication, whether in the same sentence or throughout a conversation. This linguistic practice frequently appears in bilingual or multilingual environments, such as those found in Indonesia. It represents more than just language proficiency, it also serves various social and communicative purposes that depend on the context and intention of the speaker.

According to Romaine (1989), code-switching can be categorized into three main types. The first type, known as intra-sentential switching, takes place when elements from a different language are embedded within the same sentence or clause spoken by the speaker. For example, in the utterance "*Oma tau ga, followers aku banyak oppa-oppanya,*" the English word "followers" appears inside a grammatically Indonesian sentence. This kind of switching is the most common and requires the speaker to have fluency in both languages to maintain grammatical structure.

The second type, inter-sentential switching, occurs when the speaker switches languages between complete sentences, with each sentence being spoken in a different language. For instance, in the dialogue "*Tapi kalau sampai ada apa-apa,* it's all on you," the speaker moves from Indonesian to English at the sentence boundary. This switch is clear and usually does not interrupt sentence structure.

The third type, tag switching, refers to the insertion of set phrases or tag elements from one language into a sentence that is primarily in another language. An example from the movie is "Well done, Ellen, well done! By the way, good luck *dengan kantor kamu*

yang baru nanti.” Expressions like “well done,” “by the way,” and “good luck” are considered tag-switches because they stand independently and are not part of the sentence grammar.

To examine the functions of code-switching, this research adopts the framework proposed by Appel and Muysken (2006), which outlines six distinct categories of code-switching functions:

- Referential function is used when the speaker switches languages to express something more clearly or precisely. In the sentence “*Ini gabisa-bisa gue download, Wan. Emailnya apaan sih emangnya?*”, the words “download” and “email” are used in English because they are more familiar in a technological context.
- Directive function appears when switching is used to influence the listener's behavior or attention. For example, “*Ya pokoknya gini, gue percaya aja sama lo, kalo ada yang urgent lo telfon atau sms ya,*” where “urgent” emphasizes importance in a command-like manner.
- Expressive function is used when the speaker switches languages to express emotions or personal feelings. In the sentence “Wow, nice outfit!”, Andien uses English to express admiration toward Kiara’s appearance. The use of “wow” and “nice” makes the compliment sound more expressive and enthusiastic than if it were said in Indonesian.
- Phatic function occurs when the speaker switches languages to maintain social relationships or create a friendly tone. In the sentence “Congrats juga buat kantor baru lo,” Aji uses the word “Congrats” to casually congratulate someone. This switch creates a warm, relaxed atmosphere rather than delivering critical information.
- Metalinguistic function happens when a speaker uses code-switching to comment on their own speech. In the sentence “Cause... wait... why do I have to tell you this?”, Astrid realizes she’s saying too much and directly questions her own explanation. The switch reflects self-awareness about the ongoing conversation.
- Poetic function is used when code-switching adds rhythm, emphasis, or style to the utterance. In the sentence “I got it, I got it. Yeay!!”, Kiara repeats her words in English with excitement. The repetition and tone not only show happiness but also create a more dynamic and expressive delivery.

These theoretical frameworks are applied in this research to examine the types and communicative functions of code-switching found in the *Susah Sinyal* movie, aiming to understand how language switching is used as a communicative strategy in film dialogue

and what it reveals about the characters' social background and emotional expression.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

A descriptive qualitative approach was employed in this research to examine how code-switching is used throughout the *Susah Sinyal* movie. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for a deeper understanding of language use in a natural context, especially in spoken interaction. The data were taken from the movie, which contains utterances by various characters who switch between Indonesian and English throughout the film.

The data collection was conducted using a documentation method. The researcher watched the entire movie and transcribed selected dialogue containing instances of code-switching. After transcription, the data were examined to determine the types and functions of code-switching. The classification of code-switching types followed Romaine's (1989) framework, which consists of intra-sentential, inter-sentential, and tag-switching. Meanwhile, the functions were analyzed using the model introduced by Appel and Muysken (2006), which outlines six functions: referential, directive, expressive, phatic, metalinguistic, and poetic.

The analysis was conducted by categorizing the code-switching data according to these frameworks. Every utterance was analyzed to identify the type and communicative purpose of the code-switching used. The findings were subsequently interpreted to explain the ways in which code-switching is employed in the film and the reasons behind its usage.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This part outlines the research findings and provides a discussion on the types and functions of code-switching identified in the *Susah Sinyal* movie. The analysis is guided by Romaine's (1989) classification of code-switching types and the functional framework proposed by Appel and Muysken (2006). The data were gathered from the characters' dialogues, specifically examining the moments where language shifts took place.

- Types of Code-Switching

According to Romaine's (1989) classification, the movie contains three types of code-switching: intra-sentential, inter-sentential, and tag-switching. Among the three, intra-sentential switching was the most commonly used, occurring in 9 instances, while inter-sentential switching appeared 3 times, and tag-switching was

found only once.

- Intra-sentential switching refers to the use of English words or phrases embedded within sentences that are primarily in Indonesian.

For example:

Kiara: “Oma tau ga, followers aku banyak oppa-oppanya.”

In this example, the English word “followers” is embedded within an Indonesian sentence. It plays an important grammatical role and contributes to the sentence’s overall meaning. This pattern is common throughout the movie, especially when characters discuss modern topics like social media, work, or trends.

- Inter-sentential switching takes place when an entire English sentence is spoken either before or after a sentence in Indonesian.

For instance:

Ellen: “*Tapi kalau sampai ada apa-apa*, it’s all on you.”

This example shows a clear switch between two full sentences in different languages. The speaker switches language at the sentence boundary.

- Tag-switching is characterized using fixed phrases or expressions in English within an otherwise Indonesian context.

For example:

Pak Handi: “Well done, Ellen, well done! By the way, good luck *dengan kantor kamu yang baru nanti*.”

Expressions like “well done”, “by the way”, and “good luck” are typical examples of tags that are commonly used to emphasize emotions or mark transitions in speech.

- **Functions of Code-Switching**

To analyze why characters switch languages, Appel and Muysken’s (2006) six functions were applied. Each function reveals how language serves different purposes in communication.

- Referential Function: This function appears when a switch helps clarify meaning or express a concept more precisely. For example, the use of “download” and “email” in:

Ellen: “*Ini gabisa-bisa gue download*, Wan. *Emailnya apaan sih emangnya?*”

These English terms are more familiar in a digital context, making the communication clearer and more effective.

- Directive Function: Found when language switching is used to influence the listener.

For example:

Ellen: “*Pokoknya gini, gue percaya sama lo. Kalo ada yang urgent, lo telfon atau sms ya.*”

The word “urgent” is used to signal the importance of action, guiding the listener to respond immediately.

- Expressive Function: This function is used when the speaker expresses personal emotions or feelings.

For example:

Andien: “Wow, nice outfit!”

In this sentence, Andien expresses admiration toward Kiara’s appearance. The English words “wow” and “nice” make the compliment sound more enthusiastic, showing a genuine emotional reaction.

- Phatic Function: This function helps to maintain social connection or create a friendly atmosphere.

For example:

Aji: “Congrats juga buat kantor baru lo”

Here, Aji uses “Congrats” to casually congratulate someone. The use of English creates a relaxed tone, aiming to build rapport rather than convey detailed information.

- Metalinguistic Function: This occurs when the speaker comments on or questions their own speech.

For example:

Astrid: “Cause... wait... why do I have to tell you this?”

In this utterance, Astrid becomes aware that she is explaining too much and reflects on it. The English part shows self-awareness and shifts the focus to her own act of speaking.

- Poetic Function: This function adds rhythm, repetition, or expressive style to the utterance.

For example:

Kiara: “I got it, I got it. Yeay!!”

The repetition and excited tone emphasize Kiara’s joy. The use of English here not only conveys meaning but also adds stylistic energy to her speech.

- Interpretation of Findings

The use of code-switching in *Susah Sinyal* movie reflects various aspects of social life, such as generational differences, urban-rural contrasts, and professional versus personal interactions. English is frequently used in professional or modern contexts, while Indonesian is used to express personal emotions or family-related topics. The movie illustrates that code-switching is not random but reflects deeper cultural and situational meanings. The findings also show that the most frequent function is the referential, followed by expressive and directive. These choices help characters communicate more effectively and express their social identity.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This research examines code-switching in the *Susah Sinyal* movie by concentrating on both its types and functions. The analysis applies Romaine's (1989) framework to determine the types of switching and utilizes the theory of Appel and Muysken (2006) to explore their communicative functions. The findings reveal that three types of code-switching are present in the movie: intra-sentential, inter-sentential, and tag-switching. Regarding the functions, six types were identified: referential, directive, expressive, phatic, metalinguistic, and poetic. The characters in the movie use code-switching for different purposes, which are to explain something more clearly, to express emotions, to give advice or orders, to establish or maintain interaction, to comment on language use, or to make certain expressions stand out. This shows that code-switching in *Susah Sinyal* movie is not used indiscriminately, but plays an important role in helping the characters communicate more effectively depending on the situation, context, and who they are talking to.

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