

## Multilingualism academic community in Purwokerto

Ummi Nurjamil Baiti Lapiana<sup>a,1,\*</sup>, Weksa Fradita Asriyana<sup>a,2</sup>, Eka Dyah Puspita Sari<sup>a,3</sup> Nadia Wirda Ummah<sup>a,4</sup> Memet Sudaryanto<sup>a,5</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Jenderal Soedirman, Purwokerto, Indonesia

<sup>1</sup>[ummi.nurjamil@unsoed.ac.id](mailto:ummi.nurjamil@unsoed.ac.id) \*; <sup>2</sup>[weksa.fradita@unsoed.ac.id](mailto:weksa.fradita@unsoed.ac.id); <sup>3</sup>[eka.dyah@unsoed.ac.id](mailto:eka.dyah@unsoed.ac.id); <sup>4</sup>[nadia.wirda@unsoed.ac.id](mailto:nadia.wirda@unsoed.ac.id); <sup>5</sup>[memet.sudaryanto@unsoed.ac.id](mailto:memet.sudaryanto@unsoed.ac.id)

\* Korespondensi Penulis

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### ABSTRACT

*Language is one of the cultural elements that shows self-identity in certain communities. Multilingualism in non-indigenous community in Purwokerto needs to be analyzed to see how natives and sojourners negotiate meanings and deliver messages in their daily multilingual interactions. The negotiation of meanings and delivery of messages become prominent points since multilingualism may lead into meaning shifting, identity changing, and or cultural conflicts between interlocutors. This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to explain multilingual phenomena in Purwokerto academic community. The data were taken from direct and indirect interactions, such as scientific forums, scientific discussions, faculty meetings, scientific presentations, and social media. The findings and discussions show that the most frequent reasons for multilinguals to code-switch and code-mix is for talking about a particular topic (55.06%) and being empathetic about something (34.17%).*

Bahasa merupakan salah satu anasir kebudayaan sekaligus dapat menunjukkan identitas diri pada komunitas tertentu. Penerimaan multibahasa pada masyarakat non-native Purwokerto perlu dianalisis untuk melihat keberterimaan bahasa dan ketersampaiannya. Konsep multibahasa yang diterima interlocutors dapat mengalami pergeseran makna, perubahan identitas, maupun perselisihan budaya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan menjelaskan fenomena kebahasaan yang ada pada komunikasi akademik di Purwokerto. Transkrip data meliputi komunikasi yang terbentuk atas pola interaksi langsung dan tidak langsung yang meliputi pertemuan ilmiah dalam diskusi ilmiah, forum rapat, paparan materi maupun komunikasi akademik pada media sosial. Sebagian besar alasan yang mendasari penggunaan multibahasa adalah talking about particular topic (55.06%) dan empatic about something (34.17%). Selain itu, bentuk-bentuk penerimaan konsep multibahasa direfleksikan melalui campur kode dan alih kode melalui interaksi langsung maupun tidak langsung

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## 1. Introduction

Communication in academic community is expected to have minimal bias and same understanding seen from the perspective of the language used in their forms, functions, and meanings. However, in reality, many languages, dialects, and other linguistics codes are used in these interactions due to speakers' cultural background differences.

Speakers' and interlocutors' ability to negotiate and accept meanings while talking about academic topics and having scientific discussions show that they have agreement in using languages in those interactions. Unfortunately, cultural differences, especially languages in micro linguistic and macro linguistic aspects, tell that multilingualism may lead sojourners into misunderstandings which in time may cause misinformation in their interactions with Purwokerto local residents due to the used of native dialects.

Hymes argues that language is a system of arbitrary, vocal symbols that is created by complex process both internally by its linguistics aspects and externally by the influence of languages (Hymes, 2013). Language changes are shown by meaning shifting differences between cultural societies. At the end of the day, languages will adapt to certain contexts of communication based on speakers' needs. These changes of language function, usually applied by a community as its group identity, that is formed based on geographical regions, gender, occupation, or other cultural aspects.

In multicultural society, one is exposed to several languages at the same time, so that one has access to learn more than one language, which in turn makes one a multilingual. This fact, then, lead one to use certain language for certain purpose. Another factor that may be the cause of multilingualism is global communication that enables application of multilingual programs in education. These programs push students to be multilinguals, so that it is not surprising that recently the youth are fluent in many languages. Language is one of the cultural elements that shows self-identity in certain communities (Sudaryanto et al., 2014). Languages show one's social cultural, political, and status in community. Languages are symbols that certain people have certain cultural background. Languages and cultures are the backbones in a community social identity construction.

One's multilingualism acceptance influences their social and phycological mindset in their community life. The smallest scope of language changes is experienced by sojourners as they have to quickly adapt themselves into a certain community so that they can be accepted and able to talk just like the natives. A complex challenge in acquiring first and second language is the relation between language and thought. Language shapes our thoughts, and our thought are expressed through language. In line with the rapid divergent cultural changes, multilingualism shows one's social intelligence to be able to make up their mind and develop creative ideas to face global society. Indirectly, languages play prominent roles in the development of multicultural society communication. However, community members' readability to acquire and learn a new language as a medium for daily communication is still a challenge to be conquered.

Purwokerto sojourners' multilingualism is needed to be analyzed to see how they negotiate meanings and accept messages in daily interactions. Each member of academic community is to deliver concrete, no-bias, acceptable, non-maxims violation information in their interactions.

Multilingualism is sometimes misinterpreted as bilingualism. They refer to different level of language usage. Bilingualism refers to the ability to speak two languages, while multilingualism refers to the ability to speak more than two languages. It is in line with McArthur's opinion. McArthur (in Aronin and Hufeisen, 2009: 15) defines multilingualism as "a person who has the ability to use three or more languages, either separately or in various degrees of code-mixing, different languages are used for different purpose, competence in each varying according to such factors such as register, occupation, and education (Aronin & Hufeisen, 2009)." But nowadays, multilingualism is commonly used by people in daily life conversation. Gorter notes "multilingualism is a common phenomenon because the diversity of languages displayed in the linguistic landscape does not stand on its own. The variety of languages in this world and the dissimilar vitality of the languages takes significant inferences for both societies and individuals (Gorter, 2006)." Gorter further explains some various factors that can come up as the result of multilingualism. They are: (1) political or historical movements, for instance imperialism or colonialism; (2) economic movements in term of migration; (3) improved communication among diverse parts of the world and the extent of languages of broader communication; (4) social and cultural distinctiveness and awareness in the preservation and renewal

of minority languages; (5) education, in which second and foreign languages are counted in the curriculum; and (6) religious movement which makes people migrating to a new country. Regarding the factors that can come up as the result of multilingualism, it can be said that multilingualism plays a big role in people's life and daily conversation.

In a multilingual society, in which speakers speak two languages or more, there is no explicit guidelines of what language to speak in all situations (Saddhono, 2012). This absence of explicit guidelines results in an unclear code choice. Since the code choice is not clear, multilingual speakers have to use multimodal discourse in their interactions. These speakers will select particular code, switch code, and or mix code in their daily conversations. In a matter of time, multilingual speakers will develop competence in each of the code to the extent that they need it and for the context in which the language is used (Wardhaugh, 2011). The context of language usage determines speakers' language choices. Speakers take into consideration about who uses what language, when to use certain language, and or for what purpose to use some languages. Moreover, through their language choices, speakers also declare their social identities in groups, claim their judgement of personal treatment or how they want to be treated in certain community, show their solidarity, accommodate their listeners, state their stance in certain topic, and demand perceived social and cultural distance. These then lead to the use of code switching and code mixing by multilingual speakers.

Multilingual speakers are more often than not switching from one language to another in their everyday conversations and they do this subconsciously. They alternate languages on the level of words, phrases, or full sentences. This substitutions of words or phrases in a given language with a counterpart in another language is called code switching (Laufer & Aviad-Levitzky, 2017). Bilinguals and multilinguals code-switch due to the non-equivalent between the languages. Sometimes, multilinguals and bilinguals find themselves in a situation in which they cannot find the suitable word to express their feelings and thoughts in a given language, then they switch code to better express themselves. Hoffman's study in 1991 gives us more insight about the reasons for multilinguals to code-switch. Hoffman states that there are ten reasons for one to code-switch in conversations (Hoffmann, 2014). Speakers code-switch when they talk about a particular topic, quote somebody else, are empathetic about something, interject, repeat their statement, intent to clarify their speech content, express group identity, soften and strengthen request or command, have lexical need, and exclude others.

Code mixing is closely related to code switching, but the fundamental difference between them is code switching emphasizes switching a given language to another one, while code mixing underlines language hybridization. As Megginson states code mixing takes place when there are no changes in topic and situation (Megginson & Clutterbuck, 2006). In addition, Hoffman emphasizes the distinction between the two by stating that code switching happens across phrase and sentence boundaries, whereas code mixing takes place within sentences and often involves single lexical items (Hoffmann, 2014).

When talking to others in academic context, people change their conversational language into academic language. Cummins explains "the social practice of schooling entails certain "rules of game" with respect to how communication and language use is typically organized within that context (Cummins, 2000). In short, in the present context the construct of academic language proficiency refers not to any absolute notion of expertise in language but to the degree to which an individual has access to and expertise in understanding and using the specific kind of language that is employed in educational contexts and is required to complete academic tasks." Academic language usually includes formal rule, structure, and content. All these elements need to apply to meet academic expectation on academic language. Grigorenko identifies some critical features on academic language (Grigorenko, 2015). They are: (1) language functions: describing, summarizing, categorizing, explaining, comparing/contrasting, and recording; (2) language forms: oral reports, group discussions, debates, choral singing, poetry, drama, textbooks, essays, and research reports; (3) discourse: the structures of written and oral language; and (4) language demands: particular functions, forms, and discourses that one must be able to use fluently to accomplish assigned academic tasks. Academic language can be interpreted as a formal language which applies formal vocabulary, rule, structure, and content to meet academic purpose.

## 2. Method

Descriptive qualitative approach was employed in the form of phenomenology research to analyses the languages used in academic community. Multilingualism in academic community in Purwokerto can be seen from direct and indirect interactions, such as academic forums, scientific discussions, faculty meetings, scientific presentations, and academic interactions in social media (Williamson et al., 2017). The research subjects are native or local residents of Purwokerto and sojourners that communicate in daily academic interactions. The data are the transcript from those daily interactions between lecturers, students, and academic staffs in Purwokerto academic community.

This study used theoretical triangulation from experts and writers' findings to validate the data. Each datum was distributed in triadic information that consist of language structure, cotext, and context (Sudaryanto, Saddhono, et al., 2019). The data analysis employed interactive technique, starting from data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and data verification

## 3. Finding and Discussion

The data of this study were taken from both direct and indirect interactions on academic society in Purwokerto. The interactions include interactions on scientific forum, meeting, daily conversation, topic discussion and academic communication on social media on academic society in Purwokerto. The analyzed data showed some reasons why someone spoke in multilanguage. Hoffman states seven reasons for a bilingual or multilingual person to switch or mix his language (Hoffmann, 2014). They are talking about particular topic, quoting somebody else, being emphatic about something, interjection, repetition used for clarification, intention of clarifying the speech content for interlocutor and expressing group identity.

The data analysis on this study started from reducing conversations and grouping the clauses into the seven reasons. There were 158 clauses that worked as the data of this study. The data spoke some reasons of using code mixing that could be classified as follows:

**Table 1.** Number of clauses of reasons for multilingual person to mix his language

Reasons for language-mixing	Number of clauses
Talking about particular topic	87
Quoting somebody else	1
Being emphatic about something	54
Interjection	3
Expressing group identity	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>

From the table, it could be concluded that interaction on academic society in Purwokerto showed various reasons in code mixing. 87 clauses (55,06%) showed code mixing due to talk about particular topic. Most discussion on specific topic in a conversation on academic society were dominated on code mixing among Indonesian, English, and Javanese. Multilanguage showed different communication skill specifically in the form, and the meaning showed difference between one utterance and the other. For example, the difference on someone's pronunciation with another was common in practice. The difference of language form like this was called language variation or style.

The result of the analysis on the related conversation on academic topic was mostly using mix between Indonesian and English. While, mix between Indonesian and Javanese were mostly seen on the casual conversation or daily-topic conversation that was affected by the geographical dialect. Geographical dialect was a set of different local utterance that had general characteristic and each of which were similar compared to another form of utterance on the same language. It could be said that every place had different utterance which meant it was similar to the same region and different to the further region. Geographical dialect indirectly became one of the factors that formed utterance identity, either in language-mixing or in language-switching.

Language-mixing or language-switching possibly happened for some reasons, such as to make the communication easier or to raise sense of humor to deal with existing tension on formal meeting so it functioned as ice-breaking. Mixing between Indonesian and Javanese was sometimes done to show respect. It could be seen from the table below:

**Table 2.** The analysis of talking about particular topic

<i>Nggih saget tetapi tidak nyaman nggih...monggo ke ruang rapat pukul 10.00</i>
<i>Inggih Bu maturnuwun</i>
<i>Sami sami Bu</i>
<i>Niku vaksin ngge sedaya warga nggih?</i>
<i>Manut mawon kalih ahline, mangke tulih di pernah pernahna sesuai kondisine masing masing?</i>

In specific topic, mixing between Indonesian and Javanese was also undertaken by the sense of humor and to show close relation as seen on the table below:

**Table 3.** The analysis of talking about particular topic

<i>Eh jebule senjata makan tuan</i>
<i>Begitu sampe rmh baru mesem langsung dibentak guyaa guyu bae, Simpulannya sehat cuman di luar rumah.</i>
<i>Tenane....</i>
<i>Otot kawat balung thok</i>
<i>Virus setengah mati golek kanca nggo dolan bareng</i>

Code mixing on academic society in Purwokerto was also seen when it came to talk about particular topic with mixing between English and Indonesian, and even multilingual (English, Indonesian, and Javanese). In particular topic, most speakers spoke multilanguage to show their intelligence and to make the conversation more scientific. It could be seen on the table below:

**Table 4.** The analysis of talking about particular topic

<i>Berikut unlock KRS mahasiswa</i>
<i>Login dulu</i>
<i>Ini Media sosial resmi kita, Bapak Ibu....Mari di-follow</i>
<i>Sudah, Ibu.ini baru bisa setelah browser saya update dan bersihkan chace-nya</i>
<i>saya screen shoot bagian tentang KKN dan mata kuliah mengulang sbb</i>
<i>My huge thanks go to you all, and all BESTIES in this faculty. Take my words that you are, and will be, truly professional and competent writers and editors. God bless the all</i>
<i>Sebenarnya kalau bahasa Jawa tidak perlu dikhawatirkan....karena sudah hegemoni...Jadi kalau terjadi language attrition secara masif maka bahasa Jawalah yang the last language stands....</i>

Second reason to switch or mix the language was quoting somebody else. A speaker switches code to quote a famous expression, proverb, or saying of some well-known figures. The switch involves just the words that the speaker is claiming the quoted person said. The example details of quoting somebody else was as follow:

<i>Trimikisiih pak info-nyaa</i>
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**Fig. 1.** The analysis of quoting somebody else

The use of quoting somebody else on academic society conversation in Purwokerto showed 1 clause (0.63%). The speaker used the clause “trimikisiiiih” to show his gratitude by copying the specific speaking style of the figure. The figure was known by his speaking style that changed the vowels “a, u, e, o” to “i”. It made the figure had special characteristic in his speaking style and most quoted by others.

The third reason was Interjection. Interjection is word or expression, which is inserted into a sentence to convey surprise, strong emotion, or to gain attention. Academic society conversation in Purwokerto used some clauses to show strong expression. There were 3 clauses (1.89%) that used interjection. The example details were shown as follow:

**Table 5.** The analysis of interjection

<i>Proficiat, Prof. Mantaaab.</i>
<i>Mantaps.. keren euy</i>
Wah, <i>alhamdulillah</i> , mantap kang Yudi, sukses selalu

The word “*proficiat*” was used to express happiness of the interlocutor’s success. The similar word was also found on the particle “*euy*” on “*Mantaps, keren euy*”. The use of the particle was in Sundanese. It was used to express strong emotion. The word “*alhamdulillah*” in Arabic as also used to express happiness and gratitude for the achievement. The fourth reason was expressing group identity (As Sabiq, 2020). Academic society in Purwokerto mixed the language to express group identity. The speaker usually called the interlocutor with specific salutation. 12 clauses (7.59%) expressed group identity. The example details of expressing group identity were as follow:

**Table 6.** The analysis of expressing about group identity

Maksudnya gimana, Laoshi?
Setelah acc KRS, Sensei
Wa'alaikumsalam wr wb.... terimakasih banyak, Sen
Sami-sami Yudi Sensei
D3 tdk ada KKN kan laoshi

The use of salutation showing interlocutor’s identity was commonly used by the speaker as a recognition to interlocutor’s identity (Sudaryanto, Mardapi, et al., 2019). In those clauses, the speaker used the word “*laoshi*” for those who had Chinese identity background and the word “*sensei*” for those who had Japanese identity background.

The reason why language switched was because of the change of topic (Sari & Asriyama, 2021). The formality level of utterance changed the conversation direction. When speaking in formal level, Indonesian was used in conveying the message. After that, the speaker and the interlocutor changed the topic to a more personal topic and used casual language. Generally, the forms of utterance in academic communication were (1) each language still supported each function according to the context, (2) function of each language was set to situation relevant to the context change.

The last reason was being emphatic about something (Kidwell, 2017). Someone usually mixed and switched the language, both consciously and subconsciously, from his first language to second or even third language when they feel emphatic about something. 54 clauses (34.17%) used this reason to switch or mix the language. The example details of being emphatic about something were as follow:

**Table 7.** The analysis of being emphatic about something

Waktu dia datang dan mendekat, terus nanya, is everything okey?
Itu kasuistis Bu. Tergantung banyak faktor. In syaa Allah seluruh warga kampus kita tdk akan mengalami gejala2 tsb. Aamiiiiin
Barokallah Pak.kerenennn
Innalillahi wa inna ilaihi rooji'un.Nderek bela sungkoyo njih Pak

The use of language switching or mixing on the conversation was affected by the sense of the speaker, in which he felt more comfortable when expressing his emphatic feeling using second or third language. The use of second or third language was seen more suitable because it could convey speaker's feel for the interlocutor.

Mutual relation between role and function of language showed that the role of multilingual in academic communication was stronger. The role on the conversation was built on the mutual principle and communication transaction, i.e., who used the language, and the language function meant what the speaker was going to achieve through his utterance. Academic situation as language context directed the utterance form the simplest to the most complex one.

#### 4. Conclusions

The use of multilanguage on academic society in Purwokerto was affected by some reasons. Most of the reasons were talking about particular topic (55.06%) and emphatic about something (34.17%). It might happen because multilanguage used in specific topic and feeling emphatic about something seemed more comfortable, polite, and scientific.

Language switching was also affected by verbal context, which were divided into two aspect, i.e., the language involved in the conversation and the conversation language. If both aspects were connected in the form of horizontal balance, the language used could be seen from the vocabulary selection. If both aspects were connected in the form of vertical balance, the language used could be seen from language variation. The language variation could be seen from the status, education level, and occupation. The language produced could be drawn in the daily life, in which someone mostly spoke on each form of language switch. The reason why repetition used for clarification dan intention of clarifying the speech content for interlocutor did not show in the clauses. It might happen because both the speaker and the interlocutor had mutual understanding on the language used. In the multilingual conversation, the reason why someone used it could vary, from one factor to another.

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