

Code-Switching in Multilingual Classroom Interaction: A Sociolinguistic Analysis of the Sitcom *Mind Your Language*

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ABSTRACT

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Code-switching is a common linguistic practice in bilingual and multilingual communities in which speakers alternate between languages to negotiate meaning and maintain communication. This study examines how code-switching is represented in the British sitcom *Mind Your Language*, a television series that portrays learners from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds interacting in an English language classroom. This research aims to identify the types of code-switching used in the series and to explore the communicative purposes behind these language shifts. The study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach by analysing dialogues from two episodes of the first season. The findings reveal that inter-sentential switching is the most frequently occurring type of code-switching in the selected episodes, followed by intra-sentential switching, while tag-switching does not appear in the data. In addition, six communicative motivations for code-switching were identified, with discussing a particular topic emerging as the most dominant reason, followed by expressing emphasis and repetition for clarification. These findings highlight how code-switching functions as a communicative strategy among multilingual speakers and demonstrate how popular media can reflect real-world linguistic practices in multilingual settings.

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Introduction

English has developed into a global language that facilitates communication across cultures, nations, and professional communities. As international interaction continues to expand, the number of bilingual and multilingual speakers has also increased. In many societies, individuals grow up speaking more than one language and naturally move between them in everyday communication. Indonesia, for instance, is a multilingual country where people commonly use their local languages alongside Indonesian and, increasingly,

English in various contexts such as education, media, and digital communication.

In multilingual environments, speakers often alternate between languages during conversation. This phenomenon is widely known as code-switching, which refers to the use of two or more languages within the same communicative interaction. Puspawati (2018) describes code-switching as the use of multiple linguistic codes within a single speech event or exchange. From a sociolinguistic perspective, code-switching is not merely a linguistic irregularity; rather, it is a meaningful communicative strategy used by bilingual speakers to negotiate meaning, express identity, or maintain the flow of interaction (Ansar, 2017). Speakers may switch languages to clarify ideas, emphasize certain expressions, or accommodate their interlocutors' linguistic abilities.

Code-switching can occur in a wide range of communicative settings, including everyday conversations, classroom interactions, and various forms of media. In educational contexts, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, learners often alternate between their first language and the target language to support comprehension and communication. Beyond classroom settings, code-switching also appears in written and spoken discourse found in novels, magazines, television programs, films, and digital platforms such as YouTube. These media representations often reflect real-world linguistic practices and illustrate how multilingual speakers navigate communication across languages. Code-switching has been widely examined in media discourse such as films, television programs, and digital platforms. Previous studies have explored language switching in movies, online content, and classroom interaction (Ningsih & Setiawan, 2021; Reformadita et al., 2021; Munawaroh et al., 2022).

Within the field of sociolinguistics, scholars have proposed various definitions and perspectives on code-switching. Jingxia (2010), for example, describes code-switching in the foreign language classroom as the practice of alternating between the first language and the target language during interaction. Similarly, Rios and Campos (2013) argue that code-switching is a natural characteristic of bilingual communication, particularly among individuals who are still developing proficiency in a second language. Bhatti, Shamsudin, and Said (2018) further emphasize that code-switching frequently occurs in bilingual discourse when speakers use two languages within the same conversation or utterance. More recently, Morris (2024) defines code-switching as the shift from one linguistic code, whether a language or dialect, to another depending on the social context and communicative needs of the speakers. These perspectives collectively suggest that code-switching is not simply a sign of linguistic limitation, but rather a communicative resource that bilingual speakers employ strategically.

In Indonesia, code-switching between English and Indonesian frequently occurs among students when interacting with peers and teachers in educational settings. Students may shift between languages to compensate for limited vocabulary in the target language or to ensure that their ideas are clearly understood. Similar patterns of language alternation can also be observed in popular media. One example is the British sitcom *Mind Your Language*, which first aired in 1977 and portrays an English language class consisting of learners from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The series humorously depicts the challenges faced by non-native speakers as they attempt to learn English while maintaining their own linguistic identities.

The interactions among characters in *Mind Your Language* provide a rich representation of multilingual communication. Students in the fictional classroom come from different countries and speak different languages, resulting in frequent instances of language switching as they attempt to understand each other and communicate with their teacher. These interactions often create humorous misunderstandings, but they also illustrate how multilingual speakers navigate linguistic barriers in real-life situations. As such, the sitcom offers an interesting context for examining how code-switching functions within intercultural communication.

Although numerous studies have examined code-switching in bilingual communication and classroom interaction, much of the existing research has focused on real-life educational contexts such as EFL classrooms, teacher-student interaction, or peer communication among language learners. Comparatively fewer studies have explored how code-switching is represented in media discourse, particularly in television sitcoms that portray multilingual learning environments. Media texts provide a unique perspective because they often reflect, exaggerate, or stylize real communicative practices while simultaneously shaping public perceptions of multilingual interaction. Investigating code-switching in a sitcom such as *Mind Your Language* therefore offers an opportunity to examine how multilingual communication is constructed and represented in popular culture. By analysing the types and communicative functions of code-switching in this media context, the present study aims to contribute to sociolinguistic discussions on bilingual interaction while also expanding research on language representation in media.

For this reason, the present study focuses on analysing code-switching in selected episodes of the sitcom *Mind Your Language*. The setting of the series, an English language classroom with students from different countries, resembles many EFL learning environments, including those in Indonesia. By examining how characters shift between languages, this study seeks to understand both the linguistic patterns and communicative

motivations behind these switches. Specifically, this study aims to address the following research questions: 1) What types of code-switching appear in the sitcom *Mind Your Language*, particularly in episodes one and six of season one?, and 2) What are the communicative reasons for the use of code-switching in these episodes? Through this analysis, the study aims to contribute to sociolinguistic discussions on bilingual communication and to demonstrate how popular media can reflect multilingual language practices in educational and intercultural settings.

Theoretical Framework

A. Code-Switching

Code-switching refers to the practice of alternating between two or more languages within a single interaction. In sociolinguistic research, this phenomenon is commonly observed in multilingual communities where speakers possess competence in multiple languages. Nilep (2006) describes code-switching as the selection or replacement of linguistic features in order to contextualize speech during interaction. Similarly, Gumperz (1997) defines conversational code-switching as the juxtaposition of linguistic elements from different languages within a single conversation.

Code-switching frequently occurs in bilingual communication and reflects the speakers' linguistic resources as well as their social identities. In multilingual societies such as Indonesia, individuals often shift between Indonesian, local languages, and English depending on the context and interlocutors involved. In educational settings, for instance, teachers and students may alternate between English and Indonesian to facilitate understanding and maintain effective communication. Code-switching is a prevalent phenomenon among Indonesian citizens in the present day. Occasionally, students may encounter auditory information inside the educational setting "good morning, everybody, how are you today? *Hari ini kita akan melanjutkan pembelajaran dari minggu sebelumnya, ya?*" (Good morning, everybody, how are you today? Today we will continue our learning from last week, ok?). Puspawati (2018) stated that non-native English speakers may switch to their first language if they forget the English words or do not know the English expression they want to convey.

This phenomenon can also be observed in media representations of multilingual interaction. Television programs, films, and online content often portray characters who switch languages while interacting with others from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Such representations provide valuable contexts for examining how code-switching functions in communicative situations.

B. Types of Code-Switching

Several scholars have proposed classifications of code-switching. One of the most widely cited frameworks was introduced by Poplack (1980), who identified three main types of code-switching: tag-switching, inter-sentential switching, and intra-sentential switching.

Tag-Switching. Tag-switching occurs when a tag or a short phrase from one language is inserted into an utterance that is otherwise expressed in another language. These tags usually function as discourse markers or expressions used to emphasize meaning. Because tags are syntactically independent elements, they can easily be inserted into sentences without disrupting grammatical structure (Yletyinen, 2004).

For example:

"Bunganya bagus, isn't it?" (the flower is beautiful, isn't it?).

In this sentence, the English tag *"isn't it?"* is inserted into an Indonesian sentence to emphasize the statement. Tag-switching is generally considered the simplest type of code-switching because it requires minimal integration between the two languages.

Inter-Sentential Switching. Inter-sentential switching occurs when language alternation takes place between sentences or clauses. In this type of switching, a speaker completes a sentence in one language before continuing the conversation in another language. According to Jingxia (2010), inter-sentential switching happens when each clause or sentence belongs to a different linguistic system.

For instance:

"Semua pekerjaan telah selesai, ayo siap-siap liburan! Bali here I come!" (All the work has been completed, come on, get ready for the holidays! Bali here I come!).

The first sentence is expressed in Indonesian, while the second sentence is in English. This shift between sentences illustrates inter-sentential switching.

Intra-Sentential Switching. Intra-sentential switching occurs within a single sentence when elements from different languages are combined. Poplack (1980) considers this type of switching more complex because it requires speakers to manage two linguistic systems simultaneously.

An example of intra-sentential switching is:

"Saya suka ice cream yang rasa coklat." (I like the chocolate-flavored ice cream).

In this sentence, the English phrase *"ice cream"* is inserted into an otherwise Indonesian

sentence. This type of switching demonstrates how bilingual speakers integrate lexical elements from one language into the grammatical structure of another.

C. Reason for Code-Switching

Code-switching occurs for various communicative purposes. Hoffmann (1991) identified several reasons why bilingual speakers switch languages during interaction (as cited in Rini, Natsir, & Setyowati, 2019, p. 55-56).

Talking About a Particular Topic. Speakers may switch languages when discussing certain topics that are more easily expressed in a particular language. Using a familiar language can help speakers communicate their ideas more comfortably and effectively. The following are the example of the code-switching:

Speaker A: *Aku mau ngomong sesuatu* (I want to talk about something).

Speaker B: *Mau ngomong tentang apa?* (what do you want to talk about?)

Speaker A: So, I mistook you for someone else when coming here. I waved and shouted at that person. It was so embarrassing.

Quoting Somebody Else's Words. Bilingual speakers may retain the original language of the quotation. Several variables contribute to the occurrence of switching code, including the usage of the quotation or reported speech, reiteration or paraphrasing, topic-commented/relative clauses, hedging, interjections or sentence filler, idioms, and deep-rooted cultural wisdom. Bilingual individuals frequently exhibit code-switching or code-mixing languages alternation when employing direct quotations or reported speech, irrespective of their specific language pairing.

Being Emphatic About Something. Speakers sometimes switch languages to emphasize a message or express emotions more strongly. Switching to a familiar language can make expressions of empathy, surprise, or concern more meaningful. According to Hoffmann (1991), when individuals who are conversing desire to express emphasis, they may consciously or unconsciously transition from their second language to their first language as they find it more convenient to convey emphasis in their preferred language. The following are the example of the code-switching:

Speaker A: Do you remember an incident last year? Tuti was injured last year. *Tapi kasihan sekali Tuti. Udah lah baru keluar dari hospital, udah kena musibah lagi.*

(Do you remember an incident last year? Tuti was injured last year. But, what a pity for Tuti. She just discharged from the hospital, and already hit by calamity again).

Interjection. Interjections are short expressions used to convey emotions such as surprise or excitement. Words like “hey,” “look,” or “excuse me” may appear in a different language from the surrounding discourse.

Repetition for Clarification. Speakers may repeat information in another language to ensure that the listener clearly understands the message. Repetition helps reinforce meaning and reduce misunderstanding in multilingual interactions. Repetition not only clarifies the meaning of a statement, but also emphasizes or highlights it. The following are the examples of the code-switching:

Speaker A: *Kamu sedang mengerjakan skripsi, ya? Fighting! Semangat!*
(You are working on your thesis, aren't you?)

Referring to the previous example, it indicates providing encouragement to someone by repeating a statement or word from English to Indonesian, which is "Fighting! Semangat!" The speaker reiterates their statement by transitioning to the Indonesian language.

Clarifying the Speech Content. Code-switching can also be used to clarify previous statements. When speakers believe their interlocutors may not fully understand a message, they may restate the information in another language. To ensure that the content of their speech flows seamlessly and comprehensible to the audience the speaker's message is replicated with slight changes to clarify the content of the speech. The following are the example of the code-switching:

Speaker A: *Diam-diam aja*, are you bored? (why so quiet, are you bored?)
Speaker B: I'm not bored, I'm simply thinking about the task I have to complete for school.

Expressing Group Identity. Language switching can signal membership in a particular social or cultural group. By using a specific language, speakers may express their identity, cultural background, or social affiliation. As an example, the communication methods used by academic individuals within their disciplinary groups differ significantly from those of other organizations. The following are the example of the code-switching:

Speaker A: *Tolong perkenalkan diri Anda* (please introduce yourself).

Speaker B: Morning everyone. My name is Sari. I am a Javanese Balinese. I am from English Language Education Department in Santa Ursula.

Method

A. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research approach to explore the phenomenon of code-switching in the British sitcom *Mind Your Language*. Qualitative research focuses on understanding social phenomena within their natural contexts and emphasizes the interpretation of meanings that individuals attach to their actions and interactions (Aspers & Corte, 2019). Rather than measuring variables statistically, qualitative research seeks to provide rich descriptions and interpretations of observed phenomena. More specifically, this research adopted a descriptive qualitative design. Descriptive qualitative research aims to present a comprehensive summary of events or phenomena in everyday terms and to describe patterns found within the data (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). This design was considered appropriate because the study focuses on identifying and describing the types of code-switching and the communicative reasons behind their occurrence in the selected media context.

Qualitative approaches are widely used in sociolinguistic studies that examine language use in natural discourse because they allow researchers to analyze linguistic behavior in authentic communicative settings (Creswell, 2014; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). In this study, the qualitative approach enabled the researchers to examine how multilingual characters in the sitcom shift between languages during classroom interactions.

B. Data Source

The data for this study were obtained from the British sitcom *Mind Your Language*, which portrays an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom consisting of students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The episodes analyzed in this research were accessed from the Rezaul Karim YouTube channel.

Two episodes from Season 1 were selected as the primary data source: 1) Episode 1, with a duration of 23 minutes and 52 seconds, which has approximately 7.2 million views, and 2) Episode 6, with a duration of 25 minutes and 10 seconds, which has approximately 1.8 million views. Both videos were published on November 21, 2016 on the YouTube platform.

The sitcom features several characters representing different national and linguistic backgrounds. The classroom is led by Jeremy Brown, the English teacher, and includes students such as Giovanni (Italy), Max (Greece), Taro (Japan), Jamila and Ranjeet (India),

Su-Lee (China), Juan (Spain), Ali (Pakistan), Danielle (France), and Anna (Germany). Other characters include Miss Courtney, the school principal, and Gladys, the cafeteria tea lady. The multilingual nature of these characters creates frequent opportunities for code-switching during classroom interactions.

C. Data Collection

The data were collected using a documentation method as the primary source of data consisted of recorded video materials. Documentation is a method of collecting data through the examination of existing documents such as texts, images, audio recordings, and audiovisual materials (Nilamsari, 2014). In qualitative research, documentary data can provide valuable insights into social interactions and linguistic practices presented in media or recorded contexts (Creswell, 2014). The data collection process involved several stages. First, the researchers watched the selected episodes repeatedly in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the dialogues and interactions among the characters. Repeated viewing is commonly used in discourse and media analysis to ensure familiarity with the data and to avoid overlooking important linguistic details (Cohen et al., 2018). Second, the dialogues from the two episodes were transcribed. The transcription process was supported by several online transcription tools, including Happy Scribe, Tactiq, and Good Tape, which assisted the researchers in generating preliminary transcripts. The transcripts were then carefully reviewed and corrected manually to ensure accuracy. Transcription plays a crucial role in qualitative discourse analysis because it transforms spoken interaction into textual data that can be systematically examined (Bailey, 2008).

D. Data Analysis

After the transcription process was completed, the researchers identified utterances that contained instances of code-switching. This identification process took approximately two days and involved carefully reviewing the transcripts to locate segments where characters alternated between languages. The identified utterances were then organized using a checklist table. This table was used to categorize the data according to 1) Types of code-switching, based on Poplack's (1980) classification comprising tag-switching, inter-sentential switching, and intra-sentential switching, and 2) Reasons for code-switching, based on Hoffmann's (1991) framework. Using a structured coding table helped the researchers systematically classify each instance of language switching and identify recurring patterns within the data. Coding and categorization are common procedures in qualitative content analysis because they allow researchers to organize large amounts of textual data into meaningful categories (Elo et al., 2014).

E. Trustworthiness of the Data

To enhance the credibility of the analysis, the researchers conducted an external audit through expert judgment. In this process, an expert in linguistics reviewed the categorized data to evaluate the accuracy of the coding and the interpretation of code-switching instances. External auditing is a strategy used in qualitative research to ensure that the analytical procedures are transparent and logically consistent (Creswell, 2014). Through this validation process, the researchers aimed to ensure that the classification of code-switching types and reasons was reliable.

Findings and Discussion

A. Findings

The findings are presented based on the results of the data analysis of the use of code-switching in *Mind Your Language*, specifically Season 1 Episode 1 and Episode 6. The analysis addresses the two research questions of this study: (1) the types of code-switching used in the sitcom and (2) the reasons behind the use of code-switching in the interactions among the characters. To provide a clearer understanding of the results, the findings are presented separately from the discussion. In an attempt to give more comprehensive understanding, the results and the discussions are explained separately.

1. Finding 1: Types of Code-Switching in *Mind Your Language*

Based on the analysis of the dialogues in the selected episodes, two types of code-switching were identified: inter-sentential switching and intra-sentential switching, following the classification proposed by Poplack (1980). Among the three types proposed by Poplack, tag-switching was not observed in the analysed data. Inter-sentential switching appeared most frequently in the conversations among the characters, while intra-sentential switching occurred less frequently.

Table 1. Types of code-switching percentages

Types of Code-switching	Occurrences
Tag switching	-
Inter-sentential switching	78
Intra-sentential switching	27
Total	105

These findings indicate that the majority of language alternations in the sitcom occur between sentences rather than within sentences.

a. Inter-sentential Switching

Inter-sentential switching occurs when speakers alternate languages between sentences or clauses within a single discourse. According to Jingxia (2010), this type of

switching takes place when one sentence is expressed in one language and the following sentence is expressed in another language.

Example 1

Data 77 [05:51]

Juan: *Es la primera vez que vengo. Es esta la clase para aprender inglés?*
(It's the first time I come. Is this the class to learn English?)

Mr. Brown : *Well, I haven't the faintest idea what you're saying. But I'm sure you're not trying to find the needle-work class.*

In this example, Juan speaks in Spanish while Mr. Brown responds in English. The language shift occurs between two complete utterances produced by different speakers. This pattern clearly illustrates inter-sentential switching, as each sentence is produced in a different language.

Example 2

Data 118 [08:17]

Mr. Brown : *What is your name?*

Jamila : *Kya kaha?* (What did you say?)

In this interaction, Mr. Brown asks a question in English, while Jamila responds in Hindi/Urdu. The shift from English to Hindi/Urdu occurs between sentences, demonstrating inter-sentential switching.

Example 3

Data 293 [20:11]

Juan : *Ja ja, no está.*

Giovanni : *It is raining!*

In this example, Juan uses Spanish, while Giovanni responds in English. The two utterances occur sequentially in different languages, which again represents inter-sentential switching.

The frequent occurrence of this type of switching reflects the multilingual nature of the classroom depicted in the sitcom, where students with different linguistic backgrounds attempt to communicate with the teacher and with each other.

b. Intra-sentential Switching

Intra-sentential switching occurs when language alternation takes place within a single sentence. This type of switching is considered more complex because it involves integrating elements from two languages within one grammatical structure (Poplack, 1980). According to Panhwar and Buriro (2020), intra-sentential switching requires speakers to manage two linguistic systems simultaneously, which increases the syntactic complexity of the utterance.

Example 1

Data 232 [15:54]

Mr. Brown: *What's wrong with where you're sitting before?*

Giovanni: *Is a my eyes, **professori**. I gotta sit near the front.*

In this example, Giovanni inserts the Italian word **professori** into an otherwise English sentence. In this example, Giovanni's response demonstrates intra-sentential switching. Specifically; "Is a my eyes" is a mix of English and Italian, indicating a switch within the sentence. "Professori" is an Italian honorific used to address Mr. Brown, further showing the blending of languages within the sentence. The insertion of an Italian lexical item within an English sentence demonstrates intra-sentential switching.

Example 2

Data 114 [08:00]

Giovanni: *Si! I cook ravioli, I cook spaghetti, I cook lasagna.*

Here, Giovanni uses the Italian word **Si** ("yes") before continuing his explanation in English. Although the majority of the sentence is expressed in English, the insertion of the Italian expression indicates intra-sentential switching.

Example 3

Data 292 [20:10]

Giovanni: *Lloviendo! It is raining.*

In this case, Giovanni begins the utterance with the Spanish word **lloviendo** ("raining") before repeating the information in English. The presence of two languages within the same utterance reflects intra-sentential switching. These examples demonstrate how characters integrate elements of their native languages into English sentences while interacting with others in the classroom.

2. Finding 2: Reasons for Using Code-Switching in *Mind Your Language*

In addition to identifying the types of code-switching, the study also analyzed the reasons behind the use of code-switching in the dialogues. The analysis was guided by Hoffmann's (1991) framework, which identifies several communicative motivations for language switching. The findings indicate that six reasons for code-switching appeared in the selected episodes.

Table 2. Reasons for code-switching percentages

Reasons for Code-switching	Occurrences
Taking about particular topic	21
Quoting Somebody else word	-
Being emphatic about something	11
Interjection	15
Repetition used for clarification	11
Intention of clarifying the speech content for interlocutor	14
Expressing group identity	13
Total	85

Among these categories, talking about a particular topic was the most frequently observed reason for code-switching.

a. Talking About a Particular Topic

Speakers may switch languages when discussing certain topics that are more naturally expressed in their first language. According to Hoffmann (1991), bilingual speakers often prefer to use a specific language when discussing topics closely associated with their cultural or linguistic background.

Example

Data 122 [08:39]

Mr. Brown : *Max. Anna Schmidt. Giovanni Cupello. You?*

Jamila : *Aap naam pooch rahe ho... achchha main likh detee hoon.*

(You are asking my name... alright, I will write it.)

In this example, Jamila switches to Hindi/Urdu while responding to Mr. Brown's question about names. This switch occurs because she feels more comfortable discussing the topic of names in her native language, which allows her to express herself more clearly and effectively in that context. This aligns with Hoffmann's reasoning that speakers may switch languages when discussing specific topics.

Example

Data 77 [5.50]

Mr. Brown : Yes?

Juan : *Es la primera vez que vengo. Es esta la clase para aprender ingles?*

In the context, Juan's inquiry ("Is this the class for learning English?"), it aligns with Hoffmann's reasons for code-switching; talking about particular topic because Juan is specifically asking about something relevant to him.

From the examples above, it can be concluded that the speakers used code switching when they were discussing a certain topic. This happens because someone prefers to express a certain topic more comfortably and freely by using the second language.

b. Interjection

Interjections are expressions used to convey emotions such as surprise, excitement, or frustration. Hoffmann (1991) explains that bilingual speakers may switch languages when using interjections because such expressions are often culturally embedded.

Example

Data 132 [10:05]

Ali : *I am going into unemployment exchange for to be collecting my money. **Cor blimey!** I get more money for not working than when I'm working.*

The British interjection "Cor blimey!" expresses surprise and disbelief, illustrating how speakers may switch linguistic codes to express emotions more vividly.

c. Repetition for Clarification

Code-switching may also occur when speakers repeat information in another language to clarify their message. Repetition can help ensure that the interlocutor understands the intended meaning (Hoffmann, 1991; Rini, Natsir, & Setyowati, 2019).

Example

Data 292 [20:10]

Giovanni : *Lloviendo! It is raining.*

In this example, Giovanni first uses Spanish (*lloviendo*) and then repeats the message in English to ensure that the listener understands the meaning.

d. Clarifying Speech Content for the Interlocutor

Speakers sometimes switch languages to clarify or reformulate their statements when communication difficulties arise. This strategy helps maintain the flow of interaction and improves mutual understanding.

Example

Data 184 [12:49]

- Mr. Brown : Tree lagers? You lag trees?
Juan : *Si*, one gin tonic, two whisky, coka, tree langgers!
Mr. Brown : Three lagers!
Juan : *Si*!
Mr. Brown : You work in a bar.
Juan : *Si, si*. Bar, bar.

Juan clarifies his profession by demonstrating how drinks are served at the bar. Through repeated explanation and language switching, the meaning becomes clearer to the interlocutor.

Example

Data 169 [12.20]

- Mr. Brown : Very good. Very good. And finally, your name?
Juan : *Por favor?* (Sorry?)
Mr. Brown : Your name, what is your name?
Juan : *Por favor?* (Sorry?)
Giovanni : *Nome!* (Name!)

In this context, Giovanni aids Juan in clarifying Mr. Brown's question in Spanish, as Juan could not comprehend Mr. Brown's statements.

Example

Data 118 [8.25]

- Mr. Brown : What is your name?
Jamila : *Kya kaha?* (what did you say?)
Mr. Brown : Me, Jeremy Brown, you?
Jamila : *Kya kah rahe ho?* (what are you saying?)

In this example, Mr. Brown tries to clarify his speech by introducing himself and using body language for Jamila to understand what he is talking about. The previously mentioned instances that employ code-switching to clarify the topic of their conversation for their interlocutors. The code-switching seeks to clarify the previous statement by allowing the listener to understand the intended meaning. Hoffmann (1991) clarify, when a bilingual or multilingual individual converses with another bilingual or multilingual person, significant

code-switching and code-mixing occur. It means ensuring the coherence and comprehensibility of the speaker's discourse for the audience.

e. Expressing Group Identity

Code-switching can also function as a marker of cultural or social identity. According to Hoffmann (1991), speakers may switch languages to emphasize their cultural background or group affiliation (Dewi & Ekalaya, 2015).

Example

Data 170 [12:27]

Juan : *Ah, nome, si. Juan Cervantes. Para Sevilla!*

Juan introduces himself using Spanish expressions, which highlights his cultural identity and linguistic background. Language choice in this context serves as a marker of group membership and identity (Candra & Qodriani, 2018).

f. Being Emphatic About Something

Speakers may switch languages when expressing strong emotions or emphasizing a message. Hoffmann (1991) explains that bilingual speakers often shift to their first language when expressing feelings because it carries stronger emotional resonance.

Example

Data 76 [04:50]

Anna : *Kurt was kissing me on my neck!*

Danielle : **Sacre bleu!**

Danielle uses the French expression “**Sacre bleu!**” to express surprise and shock. The switch to her native language intensifies the emotional impact of her reaction.

B. Discussion

This section discusses the findings in relation to the two research questions of the study. The first research question concerns the types of code-switching used in the sitcom *Mind Your Language*, while the second research question examines the reasons behind the use of code-switching in the interactions among the characters.

The first research question asked: *What are the types of code-switching used in the sitcom Mind Your Language?* Based on the analysis of the selected episodes, two types of code-switching were identified: inter-sentential switching and intra-sentential switching, while tag-switching was not observed in the data. Inter-sentential switching was found to be the most dominant type of code-switching in both episodes. In Episode 1, inter-sentential

switching occurred 45 times, followed by intra-sentential switching with 14 occurrences. Similarly, in Episode 6, inter-sentential switching remained dominant with 35 occurrences, while intra-sentential switching appeared 13 times. These results indicate that language alternation in the sitcom mainly occurs between sentences rather than within sentences.

This finding differs from the results of Fauzi and Utami (2023), who found that intra-sentential switching was the most dominant type in their study, followed by inter-sentential switching and tag-switching. However, the findings of the present study are consistent with several previous studies. For example, Starman, Putri, and Ayuningsih (2022) reported that inter-sentential switching was the most frequently used type of code-switching in their data. Similarly, Rini, Natsir, and Setyowati (2019) found that inter-sentential switching occurred more frequently than other types of code-switching in multilingual interactions. The predominance of inter-sentential switching in the sitcom may be explained by the multilingual classroom context depicted in the series. In the early episodes, the students are portrayed as having limited English proficiency, which leads them to respond in their native languages when interacting with their teacher. This pattern results in language alternation between speakers rather than within the same sentence. According to Poplack (1980), inter-sentential switching is often easier for bilingual speakers because it does not require the integration of two grammatical systems within a single sentence.

Furthermore, the frequent use of inter-sentential switching reflects the communicative challenges experienced by learners in multilingual educational environments. As suggested by Bhatti, Shamsudin, and Said (2018), code-switching often occurs in EFL contexts when learners rely on their first language to support communication and comprehension. In this sense, the sitcom portrays language switching as a natural strategy used by learners to overcome linguistic limitations.

Another interesting observation is the slight reduction of code-switching in Episode 6 compared to Episode 1. This may indicate a gradual improvement in the students' ability to communicate in English. As learners become more familiar with the target language, their reliance on their native language may decrease, although language switching may still occur when communication difficulties arise. This pattern supports the view that code-switching can function as a transitional strategy during the process of second language learning (Rios & Campos, 2013).

The second research question examined the reasons behind the use of code-switching in the sitcom. The analysis revealed six communicative motivations for code-switching: 1) talking about a particular topic, 2) interjection, 3) repetition for clarification, 4) clarifying speech content for the interlocutor, 5) expressing group identity, and 6) being emphatic

about something. Among these categories, talking about a particular topic emerged as the most dominant reason, while quoting someone else's words did not appear in the data.

One major reason for code-switching observed in the sitcom is talking about a particular topic. Characters often switch to their native languages when discussing subjects that are more familiar or culturally specific to them. According to Hoffmann (1991), speakers may switch languages when certain topics are more naturally expressed in a particular language. This explanation is supported by Valentine, Rismaniar, and Paramitha (2018), who argue that topic-related switching frequently occurs when speakers feel more comfortable expressing certain ideas in their first language.

Another reason identified in the findings is clarifying speech content for the interlocutor. Characters sometimes repeat or reformulate their utterances in another language in order to make their message clearer. Such behaviour reflects the communicative function of code-switching in maintaining mutual understanding during interaction. Hoffmann (1991) explains that bilingual speakers may switch languages to ensure that their message is understood by their interlocutors. Similarly, Dewi and Ekalaya (2015) note that code-switching can be used as a strategy to clarify meaning and reduce misunderstanding in bilingual communication.

The findings also show that interjections frequently trigger code-switching. Interjections such as emotional expressions or exclamations are often deeply rooted in a speaker's native language and cultural background. As a result, speakers may spontaneously switch languages when expressing surprise, excitement, or frustration. This phenomenon has been widely documented in sociolinguistic studies of bilingual discourse (Hoffmann, 1991; Thesa, 2017).

Another motivation for code-switching observed in the data is expressing group identity. Language can function as an important marker of social and cultural identity. By switching to their native languages, characters in the sitcom implicitly signal their cultural backgrounds and linguistic affiliations. This finding aligns with sociolinguistic perspectives suggesting that language choice often reflects social identity and group membership (Candra & Qodriani, 2018). Dewi and Ekalaya (2015) similarly emphasize that code-switching may serve as a symbolic resource for expressing cultural belonging.

Finally, being emphatic about something was also identified as a reason for code-switching. In emotionally charged situations, speakers may switch languages to intensify their expressions or convey stronger feelings. Hoffmann (1991) suggests that bilingual speakers often revert to their first language when expressing emotions because it carries stronger affective meaning.

In summary, the findings suggest that code-switching in *Mind Your Language* serves multiple communicative functions beyond simply compensating for limited language proficiency. The characters use language alternation to clarify meaning, express emotions, emphasize cultural identity, and maintain effective communication within a multilingual environment. These findings reinforce the view that code-switching is not merely a linguistic deficiency but rather a strategic communicative resource used by bilingual speakers in multilingual interactions (Bhatti et al., 2018; Rios & Campos, 2013).

Conclusion

Code-switching is a common linguistic phenomenon that frequently occurs in multilingual societies. In everyday communication, bilingual speakers often alternate between languages to negotiate meaning, express identity, and maintain effective interaction. Because of its prevalence in multilingual environments, code-switching has become an important area of inquiry in sociolinguistic research. This study examined the use of code-switching in the British sitcom *Mind Your Language*, focusing on the types of code-switching used by the characters and the communicative reasons behind these language shifts.

This research employed a qualitative approach using a documentation method. The data were obtained from two episodes of *Mind Your Language* Season 1 Episode 1 and Episode 6 that is available on Rezaul Karim's YouTube channel. The analysis involved repeatedly watching the selected episodes, transcribing the dialogues, and identifying instances of code-switching. The identified data were then categorized based on Poplack's (1980) classification of code-switching types and Hoffmann's (1991) framework of communicative motivations for code-switching.

The findings revealed two types of code-switching in the selected episodes: inter-sentential switching and intra-sentential switching. Inter-sentential switching was found to be the most dominant type, as many characters alternated languages between sentences during classroom interactions. This pattern occurred frequently when students responded to the teacher using their native languages. In contrast, intra-sentential switching appeared less frequently, as it requires speakers to integrate elements from two languages within a single sentence. Interestingly, tag-switching was not identified in the analysed data.

Regarding the motivations for code-switching, the analysis identified six reasons: talking about a particular topic, using interjections, repetition for clarification, clarifying speech content for the interlocutor, expressing group identity, and being emphatic about something. Among these reasons, talking about a particular topic emerged as the most

frequent motivation, particularly in Episode 1, where students often reverted to their native languages when discussing familiar or culturally related topics. In Episode 6, however, being emphatic about something appeared more prominently, suggesting that emotional expression may also trigger language switching in multilingual interactions.

In conclusion, the findings highlight that code-switching in *Mind Your Language* functions as a communicative strategy rather than merely a linguistic limitation. The characters use language alternation to clarify meaning, express emotions, emphasize identity, and maintain effective communication within a multilingual classroom setting. These findings reinforce sociolinguistic perspectives that view code-switching as a natural and functional aspect of bilingual communication.

The findings of this study offer several implications for language learning, teaching, and future research. For language educators, understanding the communicative functions of code-switching may help them recognize that language switching is not necessarily a barrier to language learning. Instead, it can serve as a useful strategy that supports comprehension and facilitates interaction in multilingual classrooms. Teachers may therefore consider using code-switching strategically to assist learners in bridging gaps in understanding, particularly in the early stages of language acquisition.

For language learners, awareness of code-switching practices may contribute to the development of communicative competence in multilingual environments. Recognizing when and why speakers shift between languages can help learners become more flexible and adaptive communicators in intercultural interactions.

Future research may expand this study by examining code-switching in a broader range of contexts. Researchers could explore code-switching in other television series, films, or digital media platforms to better understand how multilingual communication is represented in popular culture. Comparative studies involving different media genres, linguistic communities, or educational settings may also provide deeper insights into the patterns and functions of code-switching in contemporary communication.

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