

**LANGUAGE USE AT AL-AMIN CHILDREN ISLAMIC  
BOARDING SCHOOL IN SUKOARJO, CENTRAL JAVA  
(A CASE STUDY)**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This paper is abstracted from the findings of a case study aimed at describing the codes used by children at Al-Amin Children Islamic Boarding School in Sukoharjo, Central Java. The majority of children at this Children Islamic Boarding School are bilinguals. They use Javanese as their first language and Indonesian as their second language. However, they live in a specific language condition in which they should only use Indonesian in their daily activities. The analysis shows that the codes used by children are in the form of language (Indonesian and Javanese), speech level (ngoko, madya and krama), and style (formal, informal and brief). The differentiation of function between Indonesian and Javanese is not quite clear. Frequently, children use both Indonesian and Javanese in many occasions. As a result, there are many code switching and code mixing in their speech. Code switching occurred in their speech to function: (1) count (2) think aloud (3) show annoyance (4) give emphasis (5) give reinforcement (6) give respect, and (7) make quotation. The result also shows that code mixing indicates that children's mastery of Indonesian and Javanese is still lacking. Besides, it also indicates that they get confused with language function.*

**Key words:** *code forms, code function, code switching, and code mixing*

**1. Introduction**

Indonesia is a multicultural country that has many regional languages. This condition leads most people in Indonesia to be bilinguals. They use Indonesian and one of regional languages in their daily life. Children, as the members of such kind of speech community, also learn how to use both languages. They generally use their regional language as their first language and Indonesian language as their second language.

In the beginning, the use of Indonesian and regional language is diglossic. Each language has its own function, which is clearly

distinctive. However, this distinctive function is getting blur. The function of the two languages is sometimes overlapping. The diglossic situation has changed. The change is influenced by the use of Indonesian as introductory language at schools including boarding schools. Even at the lowest level such as at kindergartens and playgroups, Indonesian is used as a means of communication. The use of Indonesian as a family language, especially by educated people who live in cities and who have good economical status also becomes a factor influencing the role of the two languages.

In the popular view, being bilingual equals to being able to speak two languages perfectly; this is the approach of Bloomfield (1935: 56), who defines bilingualism as 'the native-like control of two languages'. In contradistinction to this definition which includes only 'perfect bilinguals', MacNa-mara (1967: 58) proposes that a bilingual is anyone who possesses a minimal competence in one of the four language skills in a language other than his or her mother tongue.

One encounters a whole array of definitions between these two extremes, as for example the one proposed by Titone (1972: 11), for whom bilingualism is the individual's capacity to speak a second language while following the concepts and structures of that language rather than paraphrasing his or her mother tongue.

Among those definitions, Mackey (1968: 555) concludes that in order to study bilingualism we are forced to consider it as something entirely relative because the point at which the speaker of a second language becomes bilingual is either arbitrary or impossible to determine. He therefore considers bilingualism as simply the alternate use of two or more languages.

In many parts of the world it is a normal requirement of daily living that people speak several languages. When two or more languages are used, there is a language contact. This contact leads to the condition of language dependency. It means that a speaker is impossible to use only a language. There are sociolinguistic phenomena such as code choice, code switching, code mixing, borrowing and interference as the products of language contact.

According to Sutanto (1995: 123), code switching is the turning of one code to another code. Romaine (1989: 111) explains code switching as the turning from a language to another language, from a register to another register. Hymes (1962: 103) suggests a wider definition of code switching. It is the alternate

use of two or more languages, language varieties, register and styles. It can present in form of switching from a language variety to another language variety.

Code mixing is a language phenomenon in which people insert a language in another language in their speech. Wardaugh (1986: 103) states that code mixing occurs when the speaker use two or more languages at the same time, they mix the languages in an utterance. Code mixing in conversation involves the mixing of two languages without the change of the topic. Kachru (in Suwito, 1985: 76) defines code mixing as the use of two or more languages by inserting the element of a language in another language. The elements can be in the form of affixes, words, phrase or clause. Code itself, refers to any kind of system that people employ for communication; it may also refer to a language or a variety of language (Wardaugh, 1986: 86). The term code is used because it is neutral; it does not incline to raise emotions.

A bilingual is demanded to choose a code in a certain situation and use another code in another situation. Code choice may be based on certain variables such as participants, settings, topics, relationships and so on. Code selection or code choice here is defined as speaker's decision, in a given situation of communication, to use one code rather than another; by code we mean a separate language or a language variety (Blanc and Hammers, 1989: 145).

In accounting for the particular code used, certain factors have been relevant. Some relate to its uses—the social setting and function of the interaction. To whom someone is talking to is also an important factor. The setting or social context is generally an important factor too. The aim or purpose of the interaction may be important, and in some cases the topic has proved an influence on language choice.

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1) Settings 2) Participants 3) Ends 4) Act sequences 5) Key 6) Instruments 7) Norms and 8) Genre. Later, Poedjosoedarmo and Wolff (1982: 9) elaborate Hymes' concept with some additions, which are appropriate to the reality of Javanese speech community. There are thirteen speech components: 1) The characteristics of speaker 2) The assumption of the speaker about social status and social distance 3) The existence of third speaker 4) Speaker's intentions 5) Speaker's emotion 6) Tones 7) Topics 8) Act sequences 9) Discourse 10) Instruments 11) Speech events 12) Speech environment 13) Other language norms.

In a normal condition, bilingual children learn how to use Indonesian and regional language (in this case, Javanese) appropriately. They usually use Javanese at home in informal situation, to talk to their family and their friends. Indonesian is used at school and in formal situation. However, children at Al-Amin Children Islamic Boarding School Sukoharjo, Central Java live in a specific language condition in which they should use only Indonesian as their daily language. This phenomenon raises an interesting question on how the children use the two languages. The research is carried out to answer this question.

## 2. Research Method

The data of this research are codes in the speech events done by children at Al-Amin Children Islamic Boarding School in Sukoharjo, Central Java who use Javanese as their first language. The data collected by hidden recording and observing the variety of speech events. Hidden recording means that the recording process is not known by the speakers to get the natural speech events. The speech events are taken randomly, however, the writer has tried to collect the data from various speech events and various topics. Based on the 42 speech events collected, the data transcriptions are made. To complete the data, an interview is carried out as additional information. The data

analysis applies component analysis by Hymes and the elaboration of component analysis by Poedjosoedarmo and Wolff.

## 3. Discussion

### 3.1 Children Code Use

Children Islamic Boarding School is a kind of education and family domain. The majority of children at this Children Islamic Boarding School are bilinguals. They use Javanese as their first language and Indonesian as their second language. Normally, they choose certain code in certain situation, and another code in another situation. This code choice is influenced by factors such as place and situation, interlocutors, topic and the purpose of speech. However, at the Islamic boarding school, children should obey the language norm. They are strongly recommended to use Indonesian in their daily activity. Consequently this norm influences children code use.

The codes used by children at Al-Amin Islamic Boarding School are in the form of languages (Indonesian and Javanese), speech levels (*ngoko*, *madya karma*), and style (formal and informal). Indonesian is used in any speech situation, yet it is used frequently when the interlocutors are boarding school supervisors and school teachers. It is also used when children are talking about lessons and something serious. This can be seen in the following speech event:

Speech event 31

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| Speakers | : A : Teacher, female<br>B : Male student             |
| Place    | : In the classroom                                    |
| Topic    | : The function of <i>Baitul Mal</i>                   |
| A        | : "Coba sebutkan apa saja fungsi <i>Baitul Mal</i> ?" |
|          | 'Can you mention the function of <i>Baitul Mal</i> ?' |
| All      | : " <i>Sumber keuangan</i> "                          |

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- B : 'Financial resources'  
 : "Menjalin silaturahmi"  
 'Keep the relationship'  
 A : "Ya Li, apa Li?"  
 'Yes, Li, What is it?'  
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In the speech event above, children use Indonesian because they are in the classroom; they are in a formal situation. They are talking about lesson and the teacher is involved in the conversation. However, the style used is informal style. The teacher herself talks to the students using informal style of Indonesian.

Likewise Indonesian, Javanese is also used in any speech events. It is dominantly used to talk to school mates and to talk about something trivial. (The use of Javanese here means the breaking of the language norm of the Islamic Boarding School), the following speech event is an example of the use of Javanese:

#### Speech event 22

- Speakers : A, B and C: Male students  
 Place : At School  
 Topic : The time to go to the course  
 A : "Bib Labib engko kowe marani aku"  
 'Bib Labib you must pick me up'  
 B : "Bar sholat lho"  
 'Certainly, after praying '  
 A : "Yu Bayu kowe engko bar sholat madhang terus ngampiri aku"  
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 C : "Insya Allah"  
 'God Willing'  
 A : "Bib Labib pas Bundes Liga, pas Bundes Liga main"

'Bib Labib, when The Bundes Liga is on TV'

- B : "Jam piro Bundes Ligane?"  
 'When?'  
 A : "Jam siji"  
 'At one o'clock'

The speech event above shows us the use of Javanese and the use of speech level of *ngoko* (low level Javanese). Generally, they use Javanese whenever the Islamic Boarding School supervisor does not exist around them. The low level Javanese or *ngoko* dominates their Javanese. They use *ngoko* when they talk to friends in informal situation.

The speech level of *madya* (middle level Javanese) is used when the children talk to older outsider (people other than their school teacher and their Islamic Boarding school supervisor). This can be seen in the following speech event:

#### Speech Event 33

- The Speakers : A : Outsider, Female  
 B & C : male students  
 Place : On the way home  
 Topik : Going home earlier

- A : "Lho kok yah mene wis mulih dhik"  
 'You go home earlier, don't you?'  
 B : "Inggih, enten rapat-ok mbak"  
 'Yes we do, there's a meeting at school'  
 A : "Kabeh diulihke?"  
 'Do all students go home earlier?'  
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Javanese) is only used when children read or quote Javanese textbooks.

There is a slight difference of the use of Indonesian and Javanese between male and female children. Female children tend to use Indonesian in their daily activity, while the male children prefer to use Javanese. This shows that female children are more obedient to the boarding school's rule.

The more detail description of the form and the function of codes used by children at Al-Amin Children Islamic Boarding School can be seen in the following table:

### 3.2. Code Switching and Code Mixing in Children's Speech

It seems that Indonesian is used in a certain speech event to talk about certain topic and Javanese is used in another speech event to talk about another topic. In fact however, children cannot make clear differentiation of the function of Indonesian and Javanese. Both languages are frequently used in many occa-

sion regardless the place, situation, interlocutors, topic and the purpose of the speech. The use of Indonesian and Javanese at the same time and in the same utterance generates code switching and code mixing in their speech.

Code switching occurred in their speech is language switching from Indonesian to Javanese and vice versa, speech level switching from *krama* to *ngoko* and style switching from informal to formal. Code switching from Javanese to Indonesian can be seen in the following example:

#### Speech event 21

Speakers : A, B and C : Male students

Place : In the classroom

Topic : food

A : "Tukune piro .. tukune piro ?"  
'How many will you buy?'

B : "Telu. Eh ... papat, .. eh limo...limo."  
'Three. Oh no, ... four ... five ... yes, five.'

### Children Code Use At Al-Amin Islamic Children Boarding School of Sukoharjo

Language	Speech Levels	Styles	Setting						Locutor							
			Place			Situation			Speaker				Interlocutors Boarding school supervisor			
			Boarding school	In the class	Out of the class	Other place	Formal	Informal	Male	Female	Young Class 1-3	Older Class 4-6	Male	Female	Young	
Indonesian	Formal		✓	✓			✓									
	Informal		✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓
Javanese	Krama			✓												
	Madya			✓		✓		✓								
	Ngoko		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓			✓

Language	Speech Levels	Styles	Speakers Interlocutors									Purpose					
			Super visor Older	Teacher				School mates	Students		Stra- ngers	Giving Infor- mation	Imita- ting	Asking and answering question	Making Joke		
				Female	Male	Young	Older		Male	Female							
Indonesian	Formal																
	Informal		✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓
Javanese	Krama																
	Madya										✓						
	Ngoko				✓			✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

NOTES :

- ✓ : Shows the use of code
- ✓✓ : The more intensive use of code

Language	Speech Levels	Styles	Topic										Instrument		Norm
			Getting intimate	Counting	Thinking aloud	Giving emphasis	Lessons	Serious things	Games and play	Something from media	Food	Other things	Written	Oral	Indonesian use only
Indonesian		Formal											✓✓		
		Informal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓		✓	
Javanese	Krama												✓		
	Madya												✓	✓	
	Ngoko		✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	

NOTES :

- ✓ : Showing the use of codes
- ✓✓ : Showing the more intensive use of codes

- A : "Rizal ho-o ra? takonono."  
'Does Rizal buy it too? Ask him'
- B : "Zal .. Zal .. kowe tuku panganan kuwi ra ?"  
'Zal .. Zal .. will you buy that food?'
- C : "Moh, aku emoh-ok. Aku nggak beli."  
'No, I won't'

ing its speech level appropriately is so limited. Hence, the mastery of their first language is very poor. Gradually, this condition can lead to the 'leaking' of regional language. On the other hand, their mastery of Indonesian is still insufficient. As a result, their language patterns are far from standard. Due to the use of very informal style and the mixing of Indonesian and Javanese, their Indonesian becomes a non standard Indonesian. Such kind of pattern is a representation of confusion of language function.

4. Conclusion

A specific language norm—to use only a language—applied on bilingual children will influence their language use. They tend to maintain using two languages, but there are many code switching and code mixing in their speech.

In this specific condition, the opportunity to practice children's first language includ-

To deal with this condition, a good cooperation of the Islamic Boarding School supervisor and the school teacher to maintain the use of both Indonesian and Javanese is strongly recommended. Moreover, it is necessary to give them good models and opportunities to practice using both languages appropriately.

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