

## CODE SWITCHING USED BY INDONESIAN K-POP FANS ON TWITTER

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**Abstract:** This research aims to identify the types and functions of code switching used by Indonesian K-pop fans on Twitter. A qualitative descriptive method with a content analysis approach was employed in this study. A total of 40 tweets were collected through documentation from active Indonesian K-pop fan accounts that exhibit code switching. The analysis is based on Poplack's (1980) classification of code-switching types and Hoffman's (1991) framework for its functions. The findings show that Indonesian K-pop fans use three types of code switching: intra-sentential switching (19 cases), inter-sentential switching (18 cases), and tag switching (3 cases), with intra-sentential switching being the most dominant. Regarding the functions, the results reveal that code switching is used for talking about a particular topic (8 cases), being empathetic about something (expressing solidarity) (13 cases), quoting somebody else (1 case), intention of clarifying the speech content for the interlocutor (3 cases), interjection (inserting sentence fillers of connectors (3 cases), and expressing group identity (12 cases). The most dominant function is being empathetic about something (expressing solidarity).

**Keywords:** *Code switching, Indonesian K-Pop fans, Twitter.*

### INTRODUCTION

Code switching is a linguistic phenomenon in which speakers alternate between two or more languages within a single conversation. According to Sanjaya et al. (2023), code switching refers to the use of two or more languages, dialects, or language varieties during communication among bilingual or multilingual speakers. This phenomenon plays an important role in facilitating effective communication and interaction among individuals from different linguistic backgrounds. Similarly, Novianti (2013) states that code switching is a sociolinguistic phenomenon in which two or more language varieties are used within a speech community. Furthermore, code switching can reflect speakers' adaptation to different audiences and social contexts (Wardhaugh, 2010, as cited in Holmes & Wilson, 2022). Poplack (1980) defines code switching as the alternation of two languages within a single discourse or sentence, while Wardhaugh (2010) argues that individuals may switch codes depending on the topic, audience, or social situation. Based on these definitions, code switching is not merely a random linguistic behavior but a communicative strategy that reflects social dynamics and identity.

Among Indonesian K-pop fans, code switching functions not only as a communication tool within the local fan community but also as a means of interacting with fans from different countries. Indonesian K-pop fans are generally bilingual or multilingual and frequently switch between Bahasa Indonesia, English, and Korean when communicating on social media platforms, particularly Twitter. According to Faiza (2020), Twitter has strengthened its position as the primary global platform for K-pop-related conversations. Moreover, Indonesia consistently ranks among the top three countries with the highest number of K-pop-related tweets (Iwan et al., 2021). Due to the global nature of K-pop fandoms, Indonesian fans actively participate in multilingual interactions involving Bahasa Indonesia, English, and Korean. As a result, code switching has become a common linguistic practice in online fan communication.

According to Poplack (1980), code switching can be classified into three types: intra-sentential switching, inter-sentential switching, and tag switching. Intra-sentential switching occurs when speakers switch languages within a single sentence or clause. This type of switching is characterized by the insertion of words, phrases, or clauses from one language into the structure of another language (Kandiawan, 2022). Inter-sentential switching refers to language switching that occurs between sentences. As explained by Appel and Muysken (2005), this type of switching takes place when a speaker completes a sentence in one language

and begins the following sentence in another language. Meanwhile, tag switching involves the insertion of a tag, discourse marker, or short phrase from one language into an utterance that is otherwise entirely in another language (Dewi, 2021). Also known as extra-sentential switching, this type typically does not affect the grammatical structure of the sentence. In addition to examining the types of code switching, this study also investigates its functions based on Hoffman's (1991) framework. Hoffman identifies seven functions of code switching, namely talking about a particular topic, quoting somebody else, expressing empathy or solidarity, interjection, repetition used for clarification, intention of clarifying the speech content for the interlocutor, and expressing group identity.

Several previous studies have investigated the phenomenon of code switching on social media platforms; however, notable differences exist between those studies and the present research. Melvia et al. (2019), in their study entitled *An Analysis of Code Switching Used in Photo Caption by Facebook User*, focused on identifying the types and reasons for code switching in Facebook captions and status updates. Their data were collected from 90 Facebook users and analyzed using Hoffman's (1991) and Saville-Troike's (1986) theories. The findings revealed three types of code switching and five main reasons for their use, with "being emphatic about something" emerging as the dominant reason. In contrast, the present study focuses on Indonesian K-pop fans on Twitter and employs Poplack's (1980) classification to identify the types of code switching and Hoffman's (1991) framework to analyze its functions, resulting in a more specific and comprehensive investigation.

Another study conducted by Novianti (2013), entitled *The Use of Code Switching in Twitter (A Case Study in English Education Department)*, examined code switching among students in an English Education Department. The study analyzed tweets and questionnaire responses to identify the types of code switching, language combinations, and reasons for switching. Although the study also utilized Poplack's and Hoffman's theories, its scope was limited to a specific academic community. In contrast, the present research focuses on Indonesian K-pop fans and explores the functions of code switching within a broader social and linguistic context.

Furthermore, Wulandari and SusyLOWATI (2021), in their study entitled *Code Switching and Code Mixing in Kpopers EXO-L in Social Media Twitter*, investigated both code switching and code mixing among EXO-L fans on Twitter. The findings indicated that inter-sentential switching and external code mixing were the dominant forms used by the participants. While the study shares a similar research setting involving K-pop fandoms on Twitter, it focused exclusively on a single fandom and included code mixing as part of the analysis. In contrast, the present study concentrates solely on code switching and encompasses a broader range of Indonesian K-pop fans from various fandom communities. Additionally, this research applies a more focused theoretical framework by utilizing Poplack's (1980) and Hoffman's (1991) models to examine both the types and functions of code switching in online fan communication.

Based on the background above, this study aims to identify the types and functions of code switching used by Indonesian K-pop fans on Twitter. By examining the linguistic practices of K-pop fans in online interactions, this research is expected to contribute to the understanding of code switching in digital communication and provide insights into the role of language in constructing identity and social relationships within online fandom communities. Accordingly, this study seeks to answer the following research questions: (1) What types of code switching are used by Indonesian K-pop fans on Twitter? (2) What functions does code switching serve in the online interactions of Indonesian K-pop fans on Twitter?

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative descriptive method with a content analysis approach to examine the types and functions of code switching used by Indonesian K-pop fans on Twitter. Qualitative descriptive research aims to describe and interpret phenomena based on naturally occurring data. In this study, the data consisted of tweets produced by Indonesian K-pop fans who frequently used code switching in their online interactions.

The data were collected through documentation of tweets from Indonesian Twitter users

who are active K-pop fans. A total of 40 tweets were purposively selected based on their relevance to the research objectives. The tweets were obtained by observing public fan accounts that frequently mixed Bahasa Indonesia with English and/or Korean in their posts. The selected tweets represented various K-pop fandoms and were not limited to a specific fan community.

This research applied content analysis as the primary data analysis technique. According to Kandiawan (2022), content or document analysis is a research method used to analyse written or visual materials, such as books, newspapers, social media posts, videos, advertisements, and other forms of communication, in order to identify specific characteristics within the data. In the present study, content analysis was used to examine the linguistic features of code switching found in the selected tweets.

The analysis was conducted using two theoretical frameworks. First, Poplack's (1980) classification was employed to identify the types of code switching, namely intra-sentential switching, inter-sentential switching, and tag switching. Second, Hoffman's (1991) framework was used to determine the communicative functions of code switching, which include talking about a particular topic, quoting somebody else, expressing empathy or solidarity, interjection, repetition for clarification, intention of clarifying the speech content for the interlocutor, and expressing group identity.

After the data had been collected, each tweet was carefully analysed and categorized according to Poplack's (1980) classification of code-switching types. Subsequently, the communicative function of each instance of code switching was identified based on Hoffman's (1991) framework. The results were then classified and interpreted to provide a comprehensive description of the types and functions of code switching used by Indonesian K-pop fans on Twitter.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

For ease of reading and comprehension, findings are presented first followed by discussion. The Findings sub-title and Discussion sub-title are presented separately. This section should occupy the most part, minimum of 60%, of the whole body of the article.

### **Findings**

The analysis of 40 tweets posted by Indonesian K-pop fans on Twitter revealed the use of three types of code switching as classified by Poplack (1980): intra-sentential switching, inter-sentential switching, and tag switching. Among these types, intra-sentential switching was the most frequently used, occurring 19 times, followed closely by inter-sentential switching with 18 occurrences. Tag switching was the least frequently used type, appearing only 3 times. These findings indicate that Indonesian K-pop fans tend to switch languages within a sentence or between sentences rather than inserting isolated tags or discourse markers into their tweets.

Regarding the functions of code switching, the findings showed that intra-sentential switching served various communicative purposes. The most common function was being empathetic about something (expressing solidarity), which appeared 8 times, followed by expressing group identity (6 occurrences) and talking about a particular topic (4 occurrences). In addition, intra-sentential switching was used once as an interjection by inserting sentence fillers or connectors. These results suggest that K-pop fans frequently employ language switching within a sentence to strengthen emotional connections with fellow fans and to express their membership in the fandom community.

Similarly, inter-sentential switching was used for several functions, including expressing group identity (6 occurrences), being empathetic about something or expressing solidarity (5 occurrences), and talking about a particular topic (4 occurrences). Other functions included intention of clarifying the speech content for the interlocutor (3 occurrences), quoting somebody else (1 occurrence), and interjection (1 occurrence). Meanwhile, tag switching occurred only 3 times and was primarily used for expressing solidarity (2 occurrences) and interjection (1 occurrence). Overall, the findings indicate that expressing solidarity and group identity were the most dominant functions of code switching among Indonesian K-pop fans on Twitter, highlighting the important role of language choice in maintaining social relationships and fostering a sense of belonging within online fandom communities.

## Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that Indonesian K-pop fans on Twitter employ various types and functions of code switching in their online interactions. Based on Poplack's (1980) classification, intra-sentential switching was identified as the most dominant type, occurring in 19 out of 40 tweets. This finding suggests that Indonesian K-pop fans frequently combine elements from different languages within a single sentence. The predominance of intra-sentential switching indicates a relatively high level of bilingual or multilingual competence among the participants, as this type of switching requires speakers to manage linguistic elements from different languages while maintaining grammatical coherence. This finding supports Poplack's (1980) argument that intra-sentential switching is commonly used by speakers who possess sufficient proficiency in both languages. It also corroborates the findings of Iwan, Jendra, and Komang (2021), who reported that Indonesian K-pop fans frequently insert English expressions into Indonesian utterances when communicating on social media.

Inter-sentential switching was the second most frequent type, appearing in 18 tweets. In this type of switching, language alternation occurs between complete sentences, allowing users to separate ideas or emphasize particular messages more clearly. The relatively high occurrence of inter-sentential switching reflects the multilingual nature of communication within K-pop fandom communities, where English is often used alongside Bahasa Indonesia to reach wider audiences and engage in global fan discourse. In contrast, tag switching appeared only three times in the data. The limited occurrence of this type suggests that Indonesian K-pop fans prefer more integrated forms of language alternation rather than simply inserting isolated tags or discourse markers into their tweets.

Regarding the functions of code switching, the findings demonstrate that being empathetic about something (expressing solidarity) was the most dominant function, occurring in 13 instances. This finding highlights the importance of emotional expression within K-pop fandom culture. Fans frequently use code switching when expressing admiration, excitement, sympathy, disappointment, or support toward idols and fellow fans. In this context, code switching serves as a linguistic resource for strengthening interpersonal relationships and creating emotional closeness within the community. This finding supports Hoffman's (1991) view that bilingual speakers often switch languages to express feelings and solidarity more effectively. The result also reflects the highly interactive and emotionally driven nature of K-pop fandoms, where emotional engagement plays a central role in fan communication.

Another prominent function identified in this study is expressing group identity, which occurred in 12 cases. The frequent use of this function suggests that language choice serves as an important marker of membership within the K-pop fan community. Indonesian fans often incorporate English and Korean expressions, fandom-specific terminology, and idol-related vocabulary into their tweets to demonstrate their affiliation with a particular fandom and to signal shared cultural knowledge. Through code switching, fans are able to construct and reinforce a collective identity while distinguishing themselves from non-members of the community. This finding is consistent with Hoffman's (1991) assertion that code switching can function as a marker of social identity and group belonging.

Other functions, including talking about a particular topic, intention of clarifying the speech content for the interlocutor, interjection, and quoting somebody else, were also identified, although they appeared less frequently. The occurrence of these functions indicates that code switching among Indonesian K-pop fans is not limited to emotional or identity-related purposes but also serves practical communicative needs. Fans often switch languages when discussing concepts, terms, or expressions that are more familiar or widely recognized in English or Korean than in Bahasa Indonesia. Likewise, code switching may be used to clarify meanings, reproduce quotations accurately, or add emphasis to particular expressions. These findings demonstrate the multifunctional nature of code switching in online communication.

When compared with previous studies, such as those conducted by Novianti (2013) and Melvia et al. (2019), the present study produced similar findings regarding the occurrence of intra-sentential, inter-sentential, and tag switching. However, this study contributes additional

insight by examining code switching within the specific context of Indonesian K-pop fandoms on Twitter. Unlike students or general social media users investigated in previous research, K-pop fans participate in a globalized digital community that regularly exposes them to multiple languages and cultures. Consequently, code switching becomes not only a communicative strategy but also a reflection of transnational fan practices, cultural participation, and social identity construction in contemporary digital spaces.

## CONCLUSION

Conclusion is intended not only to repeat findings. It contains substantialization of meaning. It can present a statement of what is being expected as proposed in the “Introduction” and what has happened as reported in the “Findings and Discussion” so that there is compatibility. An addition can be made concerning the prospects of enriching the research findings and developing the potentials for future research.

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