Code Mixing for Beginner Japanese Language Learners at Mirai Mandiri

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ABSTRACT

In a bilingual society, language contact always occurs along with misunderstandings in conveying messages or information. The purpose of this research is to find out the use of code mixing in the interaction process between elementary school students who are taking a Japanese language course for beginner classes and teachers at the Mirai Mandiri Japanese Language Course, the type of code-mixing that is spoken and the form of grammatical code-mixing phenomenon to be used in communicating process. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method. The research subjects were 15 elementary school students who were members of elementary level class groups, as well as a Japanese language teacher. The data collection technique used is the Uninvolved Conversation Observation Technique. Methods of data analysis using the equivalent method. The results of this study are that there are three types of code mixing used by elementary school students who learn Japanese as beginners when interacting with teachers or when interacting with fellow friends. The types of code mixing used are outer, inner, and mixed code-mixing. The used grammatical form is insertion.

1. INTRODUCTION

Foreign language learning requires a cultural experience in the classroom. Bilingualism is a good tool in the process of learning a foreign language (Herdiawan, 2017). In his research case he looks at English as a foreign language (EFL), and analyzes the role of bilingualism in the class (Bozorgian & Fallahpour, 2015; Pavón Vázquez & Ramos Ordóñez, 2019). The teacher uses code-switching techniques, so that students are skilled in English they can learn. This is in line with previous research which explains, in teaching languages a sociocultural context and experience of language variations are needed, since these two factors influence success in learning a language (Ahmad, 2015; Ravindranath Abtahan et al., 2016).

Sociolinguistics is an area of language that is interesting and important for teachers, because this field is related to the use of language in everyday life. This discipline of knowledge can assist teachers in selecting activities for learning, also aiding in identifying the diversity of languages and social backgrounds of the students (Barnes et al., 2016). This diversity of languages and social backgrounds can affect the results of learning foreign languages for students. A case example by previous research which commented on OGO’s research in Nigeria indicates that high school student’s lack English skills is not caused by gender, age, religion, etc., but rather by the students’ parents (Hasanah et al., 2019). In this context, it points out to the parents’ work and socioeconomic circumstances. Hence, students’ mastery of English are better because of the support from economically established parents. From this case it can be seen that social background also influences foreign language learning.

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In Indonesia, this also happens, especially in bilingual schools. States to previous studies, bilingual schools in Indonesia can be in the form of RSBI (International-Standard School Pilot) or SBI (International Standard School) (Jayanti & Sujarwo, 2019). The response of Indonesian people to these two types of schools is also very good, and some people consider them useful. Socially, these schools are favored by people at the upper middle economic level (Jailani et al., 2017; Lestar & Wahyudin, 2020; Wang et al., 2021). Further regarding Japanese as a foreign language in Indonesia, it is in demand for different reasons than English. The reason for choosing to study English is a career and the future, while studying Japanese is due to the uniqueness of the country (Reswari, 2020; Siridetkoon & Dewaele, 2018). Even so, both English and Japanese when studied require sociocultural understanding. Research on Indonesian students studying Japanese as a foreign language has been carried out by previous studies who found code switching occurring in basic and intermediate levels of Japanese learning (Nadhiyah & Haristiani, 2022; Zimmerman, 2020). There is outer and inner code switching carried out by students, in addition, code mixing is also found in the levels of words and phrases (Asrifan et al., 2021).

Furthermore, researches on Japanese as a foreign language are not only conducted in Indonesia. Previous research stated that Indonesian learners who use Japanese which they learn in Japan (Okamoto et al., 2021). The research participants were students from India and Indonesia who had studied Japanese for 3-4 years in their home countries. The research looked at the occurrence of code switching and code mixing by participants when speaking Japanese. It was found that the cause of the transition was the speaker’s difficulty in finding equivalent words in Japanese, the interlocuters were people with the same L1, speech situations, and speech topics. In code mixing, the causes were found to be limited vocabulary learned, speakers’ speaking habits, and the purpose of using words in utterances. The location of the speech is not fully capable of influencing speakers to use Japanese naturally. Even though Japanese occurs, code switching and mixing can still occur even for students who have studied Japanese for around 3-4 years. In order to make it easier to learn Japanese as a foreign language, there are various studies discussing this. For example, the previous research discusses basic Japanese language learning books that can be used for self-study. There is also a discussion by similar studies, who look at the use of the Bandung no Kankouchi networking website which is able to improve Japanese language skills for students in Indonesia. The studies, researches, and discussions that have been mentioned previously indicate a form of Japanese as a foreign language which has limitations for the language learners. All the discussions look at Japanese as a foreign language in formal institutions of long duration (about 4 years until graduation), meanwhile further discussion for learning Japanese as a foreign language in non-formal institutions of short duration (around 6 months to 1 year) can also still be carried out. Moreover, Japanese language learners in these non-formal institutions are elementary school children, not adult learners (college and high school students) as discussed in previous studies.

Based on such elaboration, this discussion shall discuss learning Japanese as a foreign language at LPK Mirai Mandiri, with participants being children learners, with the specificity of the sub-discussion being the use of code mixing in the learning process. Based on this, there are two things that would like to be investigated further, namely: (1) What types of code mixing are used by beginner Japanese learners? and (2) What are the forms of code mixing that occurs?

There is an intersection between lexical and functional categories in the type of language mixing carried out by bilinguals (Palmer et al., 2016; Silverstein, 2015). In a bilingual speech group, the bilingual speakers will use two languages to other speakers. Sometimes they also mix their languages into the same sentence, often adding elements of the second language to the first language sentence. Furthermore, Muysken saw that in many cases the sub-types of this mixing were insertions or mixed insertions, the basic grammatical came from the spoken base language, and only the lexical elements came from the inserted language. Cases that can be found are doubling, inserting noun phrases, pronouns and prepositions. A frequent phenomenon in code-switching involves doubling the functional category of the embedded language by one of the matrix languages. Doubling mainly involves plurals, adpositions, case markers, and occasionally conjunctions. There are many cases of doubling of plural forms. Doubling of plural forms usually involves affixes, especially suffixes. In English with Japanese constituents inserted, Muysken also found doubling in adposition.

(1) For Sean ni
For Sean for

In example (1) shown by Muysken it shows the doubling that occurs because English is a preposition while Japanese is a postposition. This caused a doubling of the British and Japanese mix to occur. The term doubling is more accurately referred to as morphosyntactically doubling, and other names such as portmanteau sentence, copy translation construction, or repetition translation. The principle
remains that there are double lexical meanings from two languages in one matrix sentence. In the mixed Japanese – English case, this structure can occur due to differences in word order in sentences in both languages (English is in SVO order, while Japanese is in SOV order). In addition, this can also be caused by the presence of a subject ellipsis in Japanese sentences.

Insertion in mixed sentences occurs because inserting a foreign language noun in the sentence is very easy. Not only nouns, however, other grammatical categories can be inserted, such as adjectives, adverbs, or others. In language contact this must be distinguished from absorption. As in the previous research which provides an example of insertion as follows.

(2) Tsugi greeting de iimasu
Next greeting in say

This example shows the insertion of the English noun 'greeting' in the Japanese sentence. Another example of insertion as in example (3).

(3) Soshite, juuichi to juuni grade wa junior college to iimasu
Then, eleven and twelve grade TOP secondary school is said

Example (3) shows that there is insertion twice in the Japanese sentence. The insertion of English noun ‘grade’, and compound words ‘junior college’. Thus, the two examples shown show that English insertion into Japanese occurs in nouns.

The term sociolinguistics was first used by Eugene Nida in 1949 in his work, Morphology. This term developed and became a special field of study developed during the 20th century. Linguists and educators mention that sociolinguistics is an important part of the field of language which encompasses pragmatic and contextual situations.

That language plays an unavoidable role in society and the relationship has broad roots. Every social change makes a change in language which incorporates social values in its parameters. Likewise, language and society have a reciprocal relationship; language determines social interaction and social relations construct language. Therefore, from this explanation it is learned that sociolinguistics focuses on studying the influence of society on cultural norms and different contexts, the way language is used, and the influence of language on society. Language is also a linguistic and communicative competence. Consequently, sociolinguists distinguish the types of language variations. The most common distinctions are between variations within individuals, which are called idiolects, variations related to social factors, sociolects, regional variations, dialects, and variations due to functional aspects, which are called registers or styles.

Seeing these variations, individually the use of language in society in various contexts and places is included in the realm of sociolinguistics, and education is no exception. In education, or rather the learning process, there is social and language interaction with communication media. This then becomes the development of the discussion of sociolinguistics.

This can be seen in previous research that the use of code switching in Mandarin classes for foreign students (Hu et al., 2022; Ye, 2021). Language is a product of society and a complex social phenomenon. The increasing learning of Mandarin for foreign students in China as a result of internationalization causes role of teaching Mandarin as a foreign language to be very important. With an increasing number of international students, teachers are required to be more creative in teaching Mandarin. One of the creative things is using code switching as a medium that helps students learn Mandarin quickly. This also helps in building communication between teachers and students, considering that the students are foreigners studying in China.

From previous case can be seen how sociolinguistics plays a role in the learning process (Verhoeven, 2017). This is also in accordance with several previous studies which stated in foreign language classes teachers often ignore sociolinguistic aspects and only focus on teaching the content specified in the syllabus (Colina & Lafford, 2017; Dang & Seals, 2018; Enisa & DİLİLİTAŞ, 2015; Rashidi & Meilhami, 2016; Sundari, 2017). Consequently, students fail to understand pragmatics and communication concepts in the foreign language they are learning. Therefore, teachers must relate foreign language learning activities to social contexts.

Looking at the explanation from previous case study, it can be concluded that sociolinguistics has a role in learning, especially in learning foreign languages (Ma, 2020; Sankar, 2022). This is because language cannot be separated from its people, and language is not just a rule that must be learned, but language is a tool or medium for communication. Hence, foreign language learners should gain experience to build such communication, and foreign language teachers must be ready to facilitate this.
2. METHOD

This study utilized a qualitative approach. The subjects of this research were 15 elementary school students taking the shokyu (beginner) level Japanese course at the Mirai Mandiri course institution. The data analyzed are conversational interaction data between elementary school students and Japanese language teachers, as well as between students and other students. In qualitative research, the main instrument is the researcher, and interview guides and observation sheets are used to support the data collection process. Data was collected by observation and documentation techniques. Documentation techniques were carried out by recording student and teacher interactions in various speech contexts. The data in the form of speeches were then transcribed for later analysis. Conversational data that contains elements of code mixing was given a code to facilitate the process of classification and analysis. These codes included DCKD for data containing inner code-mixing elements, DCKL for data belonging to the outer code-mixing type, and DCKC for mixed code-mixing data. The observation and process of recording speech data were carried out for three months from October 2022 to January 2023. Each level of the Japanese language course lasted for 3 months, with 3 meetings a week on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

The research results shall be explained in a Table 1 showing the number of data distribution found.

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From the results of observations in elementary level Japanese language course, speech data using code mixing was found as shown in the table above. The most widely used type of code mixing was mixed code mixing. The data found on the use of inner code mixing used Indonesian vocabulary, and regional languages, namely Balinese when communicating in Japanese. The outer code mixing data found indicates the use of English vocabulary combined in one Japanese sentence. Meanwhile, the forms of code mixing found were doubling and insertion at the word and phrase levels.

Discussion

The following describes some of the data found in the communication process between Japanese language teachers and elementary school students as beginner Japanese language learners at Mirai Mandiri Singaraja Japanese Language Course.

DCKD 03
Queen san : 皆さん今日の勉強はあと30分に始まります。

Minnasan kyou no benkyou wa ato 30 pun ni hajimarimasu.
‘Everyone, today’s lesson will start in 30 minutes.’

静かにしてください。
Shizukani shite kudasai.
‘Please be quiet.’

Sena san : はい、わたった。Baik... しずかにしてね。(a)

Hai, wakatta. Baik...shizukanishitene.
‘Yes, understood. Baik...please be quiet okay.’

Teacher : 皆さん、こんにちは。。じゃあ、はじめましょう。

Minnasan, konnichiwa...Jaahajimemashou.
‘Kids, Good Afternoon...Let’s begin’.

Anika san : 先生。。。こんにちは。

Sensei ...konnichiwa.
‘Good Evening, Ma’am...’

Teacher : 元気ですか。

Genki desu ka.
‘How are you?’

Sena san : ちょっとFluです。 (b)
Looking at the conversation fragments in the DCKD 03 data, in utterances a, b, c the students used Indonesian vocabulary when communicating with friends or when answering questions from the teacher. The words baik, flu, and tidak apa’ belong to code mixing because the speaker mixed Indonesian vocabulary into Japanese speech. During the interaction process, this often arises due to the desire of the speaker to be able to immediately convey the message or intent of the utterance. The use of inner code mixing can also be caused by the lack of vocabulary mastery of the speaker who is a beginner learner of Japanese. The form of code mixing that occurred in this data is in the form of insertion at the word level. This is in line with the previous statement that the most frequent phenomenon of code mixing is insertion at the word level, whether inserting adjectives, nouns, or adverbs (Ramzan et al., 2021).

Language phenomena using code mixing can also be seen in the following data.

DCKD05

Teacher : みんなさん、こんにちは。
Minnasan, konnichiwa.
‘Good Evening, Kids’.

Queen san : こんにちはすせんせい。。。
Konnichiwa sensei...
‘Good Evening, Ma’am.’

Teacher : 今日は一生にゲームをしましょう。いいですか。
Kyou wa isshouni geemu wo shimashou. Ii desuka.
‘Today we are going to play. Is it okay?’

Ryan san : すみません、ゲームはmaksudnya apa? (a)
Sumimasen, geemu wa maksudnya apa?
‘Excuse me, geemu maksudnya apa?’

Teacher : ゲームというのはPermainanです。(b)
Geemu to iu no wa permainan desu.
‘Geemu means permainan’.

The data above also shows utterances that mix Indonesian into Japanese sentences. The words ‘maksudnya apa’ and ‘permainan’ are Indonesian vocabularies. The use of code mixing was influenced by the limited vocabulary mastery of elementary school students, because as a beginner learners the vocabulary mastery is still limited. Therefore, the choice of utterances with Indonesian vocabulary is often used as an alternative to replace words that have the same meaning in Japanese. Utterance (b) which was spoken by the teacher also used inner code mixing with the aim that the interlocuters more quickly understand the meaning of the speech delivered. This form of code mixing is also an insertion at the word level.

The following two data fragments were fragments of conversations between elementary school students and Japanese teachers in the classroom containing the use of outer code mixing.

DCKL 12

Teacher : こんにちは、先週の宿題はもうやりましたか。
Konnichi wa, senshuu no shukudai wa mou yarimashitaka.
‘Good Evening, have you finished last week’s assignment?’

Sena san : へえ、宿題？
Hee, shukudai?
‘Eeh, assignment?’

Queen san : 宿題はHomework Sena さん。
In the conversation fragment above, it is observed the use of outer code mixing, namely the use of the English equivalent of the word 'homework'. Queen tried to explain to her friends that shukudai is the same as homework. If viewed at the cultural background, Queen is a mixed-race child of Indonesia and China. Thus, in her daily life, Queen uses English more when communicating with her parents. This background factor in the use of language causes Queen in her speeches to often mix English and Japanese speeches together. This form of code mixing is an insertion at the phrase level. The following data also used outer code mixing.

DCKL 15
Sena san : 先生、サリミは日本語でなんですか。
'Sensei, Sarimi wa Nihon go de nan desuka.'
Teacher : サリミはインスタントラーメンです。かたかなで書きます。
'Sarimi wa insutanto ramen desu. Katakana de kakimasu.'
Sena san : インスタントはInstant?
'Insutanto wa instant?'

In the conversation above, Sena, an elementary school student taking a Japanese language course, asked the teacher about Japanese from “Sarimi”. After receiving an explanation from the teacher that “Sarimi” in Japanese was called “Insutanto Ramen”, in the end, Sena reiterated that the “Insutanto” that he meant was the word “instant” in English. Sena prefers to use English equivalents to make it easier for other course participants to understand rather than explaining the Indonesian equivalent of fast food. As previously explained in the literature review section, the habitual use of English or other foreign languages in one’s daily life is the main factor influencing this variety of exit code mixed languages. The form of code-mixing that occurs is an insertion at the word level. Apart from these two types of code mixing, mixed code mixing was the type most commonly found in interaction activities in the classroom. The following is an analysis of speech data containing mixed code mixing.

DCKC 25
Queen san : Guys...みんなさん、聞いてください。
'Guys...minnasan, kiite kudasai.'
Students : はい、了解です。
'Hai, ryoukai desu.'
Queen san : 明日やすみですね。
'Ashita yasumi desune.'

In the data fragment above, Queen used mixed code-mixing variations in her speech, namely mixing words in English and Indonesian together, namely the words 'guys and minnasan'. This form of code mixing is classified as doubling because it uses two words with the same meaning 'friends' but with different language choices (Mulyajati, 2018). Meanwhile, the words 'please and dengarkan' are insertions at the word level. There was a desire to convey a purpose or message quickly resulting in mixed coded mixing appearing. The speaker expected the interlocutors to understand well what the speaker wanted to convey because the utterances were spoken using English words that had often been heard and used by the interlocuters. When looking at the context of the speech situation, the use of the words 'guys', 'please' and 'dengarkan' in Queen's speech provided an emphasis of meaning. The following conversation excerpts also used mixed code mixing.

DCKC 27
Anika : 昨日の宿題はどう。Sudah finish?
'Kinou no shukudai wa dou. Sudah finish?'
In the excerpt of the DCKC 27 data, a student named Anika also used speech with mixed code-mixing variations, namely combining Indonesian and English vocabulary in a Japanese sentence. The limited mastery of Japanese vocabulary for students resulted in the use of mixed code mixing. The words 'sudah' and 'finish' were used to replace Japanese vocabulary that the speakers had not yet known. The use of outer code mixing was also effectively used to get a response from the interlocutors immediately. The form of code mixing that can be observed in this data was insertion at the word level.

Of the six fragments of speech analyzed, the forms of code mixing that occurred were in the form of doubling, insertion with a simple form at the level of words and phrases. This indicates that in this group of beginner Japanese learners consisting of elementary school students in grades 4 and 5, a phenomenon of the use of code mixing was found, both inner code mixing, outer code mixing, and mixed code mixing in the form of doubling and insertion.

4. CONCLUSION

From the data analysis it can be seen that elementary school students who are beginner learners of Japanese use three types of code mixing in their speaking activities, namely inner code mixing, outer code mixing, and mixed code mixing. Furthermore, the forms of code mixing found were doubling and insertion at the level of words and phrases. Another interesting finding from this study is that in a classroom environment consisting of elementary school students, the phenomenon of code mixing in learning Japanese as a foreign language can occur due to limited vocabulary mastery, the speaker’s desire to explain something with a choice of words that are easily understood by the interlocutors and the daily life of the speaker. The way of speaking and the culture of each speaker and interlocutors.

5. REFERENCES


