

**THE TYPES AND FUNCTIONS OF CODE-SWITCHING  
AMONG MALAY BILINGUALS**

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SWITCHING AMONG MALAY BILINGUALS**

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# **THE TYPES AND FUNCTIONS OF CODE-SWITCHING AMONG MALAY BILINGUALS**

## **ABSTRACT**

Code-switching is a communicative strategy used by bilingual and multilingual speakers where two or more languages are used. Malaysia is a perfect example of a country where code-switching is a common phenomenon among its people, due to its multilingual and diversified cultural communities. The aim of this study is to identify and determine the types and functions of Malay-English and English-Malay code-switching instances observed from interactions among 12 Malaysian bilingual students of a private college in Kuala Lumpur. The theoretical frameworks adopted in the study are Poplack's (1980) three types of code-switching and Appel and Muysken's (2006) six functions of code-switching. The data were collected through questionnaires, recorded observations and interviews. The findings revealed that participants used more intra-sentential switches compared to inter-sentential and tag switches. The findings also show that among the reasons that prompt Malaysian bilingual students to code-switch include compensating for lack of equal translation, quoting somebody else, making an interjection, repeating to clarify, expressing group solidarity and providing emphasis. In addition, it was found that most of the participants code-switch frequently and subconsciously. By understanding the different types and functions of code-switching, it is hoped that the findings from this study will provide more insights into the phenomenon of code-switching among Malaysian bilinguals.

**Keywords:** Code-switching, types of code-switching, functions of code-switching, Malaysia, bilingual students

**JENIS DAN FUNGSI PERALIHAN KOD DIKALANGAN PENUTUR  
DWIBAHASA MELAYU**

**ABSTRAK**

Peralihan kod (code-switching) adalah strategi komunikasi yang digunakan oleh penutur dwibahasa dan pelbagai bahasa di mana dua atau lebih bahasa digunakan. Gejala peralihan kod telah menjadi suatu kelaziman dalam masyarakat berbilang kaum di Malaysia. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti jenis dan fungsi peralihan kod diantara Bahasa Melayu ke Bahasa Inggeris dan Bahasa Inggeris ke Bahasa Melayu di kalangan 12 pelajar dwibahasa Malaysia sebuah kolej swasta di Kuala Lumpur sewaktu berinteraksi. Analisis data adalah berpandukan tiga jenis peralihan kod Poplack (1980) dan enam fungsi peralihan kod Appel dan Muysken (2006). Kajian ini menggunakan data yang dikumpulkan melalui soal selidik, catatan pemerhatian dan temu bual. Dapatan kajian mendapati penutur lebih cenderung menggunakan peralihan kod intra-ayat berbanding inter-ayat dan ayat sisipan. Dapatan kajian juga mendapati penyebab peralihan kod termasuk kesukaran penutur menemui kata-kata yang tepat untuk mengungkapkan sesuatu yang tersirat difikiran (lack of equal translation), petikan (quotation), sisipan (interjection), pengulangan (repetition), penunjukan semangat perpaduan (solidarity) dan penekanan (emphasis). Peralihan kod diantara penutur juga kerap berlaku dan dilakukan dibawah sedar (subconsciously). Penemuan kajian ini diharapkan dapat memberi lebih kefahaman tentang fenomena peralihan kod dikalangan penutur dwibahasa di Malaysia.

**Kata kunci:** peralihan kod, jenis peralihan kod, fungsi peralihan kod, Malaysia, penutur dwibahasa

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## LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

For examples:

AM1 : Group A, Male, Participant 1

AF2 : Group A, Female, Participant 2

CMS : Management System Server

KUPTM : Kolej Universiti Polytech Mara

MARA : Majlis Amanah Rakyat

TESL : Teaching of English as a Second Language

SPM : Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Code-switching is considered a common practice in bilingual multilingual communities. It may have developed as a result of the speakers' habit or for specific purposes. Malaysia is one good example of such community. With a population of 32.425 million (Department of Statistics, Malaysia 2018), Malaysians, like other Southeast Asian communities, are multilingual due to the multicultural scenario they live in. Multiple races in Malaysia have their own languages and dialects and these are often combined with Bahasa Malaysia (Malay) as the national language and English as the second language. The phenomenon of code-switching is the norm in Malaysia and is likely to occur in both formal and informal situations.

Gumperz (1982) remarked that code switching was not entirely random. Instead, it takes place to fulfill certain purposes within different interactions. It is neither a "haphazard mixing of two languages brought about by laziness or ignorance" (Wardhaugh, 2009). As a matter of fact, speakers switch codes to achieve various objectives. It could be to assert group solidarity, to maintain or begin a relationship or even used as a personal marker of identity (David, 2009).

Code switching occurs when two bilingual speakers alternate two languages during their speech between them (Crystal, 1987). These alternations may include sentences or phrases from both languages in a long and successive sentence or paragraph. An example of a Malay-English code-switching utterance is given below:

Saya start kerja pukul tujuh

(I start work at 7)

(Wong Khok Seng, 1987)

People who code switch usually have a matrix language in their utterances. Due to the vast selection of languages and dialects in Malaysia, this study has narrowed down the selections of languages to only Malay and English. This study aims to identify the types and functions of code-switching among Malaysian bilinguals in their conversations. The matrix language can either be Malay or English and the other language will be embedded into the matrix language.

## **1.2 Background of Study**

Malaysia has an estimated population 32.4 million (Department Of Statistics Malaysia, 2018). Malaysians use at least 139 different languages and dialects due to the various numbers of ethnics that exist in the country. The three main communities are Malay, Chinese and Indians. The large Chinese community is divided into different ethnics and each has their own languages like Hokkien, Cantonese, Hakka, Hainanese and others. The Indians speak at least nine different languages namely Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, and Sinhalese (Sri Lanka) (A. Hassan, 2004). Malay, as the national language, is no doubt the dominant language used as the language of instruction and administration in government services.

English is also commonly used in private sectors, trade, commerce, and international diplomacy and has always been considered “the language of middle class



elite in Malaysia” (Gaudart, 2003) and used as a first language at home, and with each other. In earlier research, it has been shown that Malays, Chinese and Indians tend to use a mixed language with the ethnic language being dominant (David, McLellen, Rafik-Galea & Abdullah, 2009).

The variety of languages used by Malaysians has a big influence on their language patterns of interactions. Most Malaysians speak two or more languages but in order to accommodate other speakers from other ethnic groups who speak different languages, the mixing of languages and dialects are inevitable. This was stressed by Haja Mohideen (2006, p.22) who pointed out that “mixing two or more languages is a very normal phenomenon in non-monolingual societies”.

In schools, Malay is the medium of instruction in national schools and English is taught as a second language while in national-type schools, Mandarin or Tamil is used as the medium of instruction, respectively. English is formally introduced to year 1 primary school students. Some children are also exposed to English from home or preschools. According to Lim (2008), Malaysian children’s linguistic repertoire comprises of the standard form of Malay and English acquired in school and a good selection of ethnic languages and dialects.

University Malaya (UM) is the first public university in Malaysia, built during colonisation in 1949. It used English as the medium of instruction mainly for all courses except Malay, Chinese and Indian studies (Zaaba, 2010). Later on, more public universities were built and the two main languages used in these universities are English

and Malay. However, for informal and everyday interactions students use their respective mother tongues or dialects. Thus, occurrences of code-switching are common among these undergrads. Holmes (2001) stressed that “one will surely have a good command of at least more than one language which is his or her mother tongue and the other one is the national language which functions as a tool of unity among all ethnics and races in the respective society”. In this study, the students’ ability to communicate and interact both in Malay (L1) and English (L2) that ensure occurrences of code-switching, allow this research to be conducted. Thus, this study focuses on the verbal code-switching of English and Malay among college students.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

The phenomenon of code-switching has been widely researched by linguists, sociologists and anthropologists as it concerns a central part of our lives. In multiethnic and multilingual country like Malaysia where code-switching is a common sociolinguistic phenomenon, it occurs in both formal and informal contexts of communication and has become a normal verbal mode particularly among Malay/English bilinguals (Jacobson, 2004). Malaysian bilinguals switch codes subconsciously. There are no written rules on how code-switching should be done and there are no correct ways to do so. Code switching has become “an entrenched code in multilingual Malaysia” (David, 2003). Previous researches have shown that code-switching is extensively used both formal and informal settings (David, 2011) like in the home domain, in classroom settings and in professional work-place settings (David, McLellen, Rafik-Galea & Abdullah, 2009).

In classroom settings, extensive studies on code-switching in Malaysia have been conducted, concentrating on the teaching of English in schools. The need to identify students' and teachers' perception and functions of code-switching is crucial to improve the learning process. Code switching is very common in English teaching or learning process. In reality, it is a "silent strategy" practiced by many Malaysian English teachers in class. From prior studies conducted, it was revealed that non-native English teachers switched codes to accommodate students who were weak in English. The students in return, stated that the teachers' code-switching helped them learn English better.

Lee (2010) investigated the use of code-switching in ESL lessons in secondary schools in Malaysia and revealed that the teachers had positive attitudes towards code-switching. They believed that code-switching facilitated second language learning because students felt more comfortable and confident. Weak students could not cope with the full use of the English language thus code-switching helped them comprehend the lesson better. The teachers claimed that they would switch to the native language when explaining new words, discussing assignments, tests and quizzes and explaining administrative information.

In a related research, Yao (2011) studied teachers and students' attitudes on code-switching in EFL classes in China and found that when students favoured code-switching done by their teacher as lessons were easier to understand and the learning atmosphere became more interactive. They also stated that teachers who code-switched were better at negotiating and bound well with the students as words of encouragement and feedback in Malay sounded better and made them feel at ease.

However, the perception of code-switching can be perceived as not a practice that could help the learning process. In a research conducted by Ling, Lee Yi, et al. (2014), it was found that the students did not favour the code-switching instances done by their lecturer because they were expecting more English exposure from the lecturer. This is especially true for students with advanced language learners.

In informal settings for example like in the home domain, studies to analyse the code-switching behaviours in interracial marriages between the two major races in Malaysia: the Malays and the Chinese were conducted. David (2002) and Stapa & Khan (2016) studied the code-switching phenomenon occurring in verbal interactions in a mixed Malayalees and Malay/Chinese family respectively, in the home domain. The main objective of these studies was to identify the types, patterns and functions of code-switching that occur in this type of family. It was found that code-switching was essential to facilitate communication among the family members as it allows them to express themselves clearly using the languages they prefer. Code-switching also served multiple functions in the families.

Similarly, the present research tries to fill the gap related to studies on code-switching in an informal setting by identifying the types and functions of code-switching instances observed among bilingual Malaysians in informal situations.

#### **1.4 Objectives**

The aim of this study is to explore the phenomenon of code-switching, in the context of Malay bilinguals. The focus will be on Malay-English and English-Malay code-switching as they are the two most common languages among the other languages

that co-exist in Malaysia. This research hopes to identify the types and functions of code-switching among Malay bilinguals.

## **1.5 Research Questions**

The research is based on the objectives discussed in chapter one. To achieve the objectives, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What are the common types of code-switching instances used by Malay-English bilingual college students?
2. What are the functions of code-switching instances used by Malay-English bilingual college students?

To answer the first research question, transcriptions of audio recordings of discussions were analysed to determine the types of code-switching based on Poplack's (1980) types of code-switching: inter-sentential, intra-sentential and tag switching. For the second research question, the same transcription of the recordings were analysed to identify the functions of code-switching used by the participants. It will be based on Appel & Muysken's (2006) theory on functions of code-switching: referential, expressive, directive, phatic, metalinguistic, phatic and poetic functions.

## **1.6 Significance of the study**

The results of the analysis provided an insight on the phenomenon of code-switching among Malay bilingual community and how it is transpired. This study is also hoped to contribute to the fundamental literature of code-switching and to enable us to

understand more about the occurrence of code-switching in Malaysia. Besides that, this study would be useful to researchers who aspire to study on code-switching practices especially done in a verbal communication. The study also analysed the code-switching instances based on different matrix languages: Malay-English and English-Malay. The types and functions of the code-switching instances showed significant differences when analysed according to different matrix language.

### **1.7 Scope**

This study identifies the types of code-switching among Malay/English Malay bilingual college students who are currently studying in Kuala Lumpur. It also analyses the functions of these code-switching instances.

### **1.8 Limitations**

Historically, code-switching is a very wide topic and has been researched in many domains. However this research will only concentrate on among Malay bilingual students in Kolej Universiti Polytech Mara Kuala Lumpur (KUPTM). Due to the limited scope of this study, the findings do not generalize across other code-switching observed in other age groups, languages and communities. Additionally, since the participants were all students of Diploma in TESL, the findings from this paper did not represent other Malay bilinguals in Malaysia.

## 1.9 Definition of terms

For the purpose of this study, a few concepts used have been briefly defined as follows:

- Code-switching refers to a juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems (Gumperz, 1982)
- Malay-English code-switching refers to a code-switching instance which consists of Malay with insertion of English words (Adapted from Choy, 2011)
- English-Malay code-switching refers to a code-switching instance which consists of English with insertion of Malay words (Adapted from Choy, 2011)
- Matrix language refers to the matrix language provides the word/morpheme order of the clause as a whole as well as a certain class of grammatical morphemes (Myers-Scotton, 2002)
- Bilingual speakers are “people who use two or more languages in their daily lives and have developed competencies in their languages to the extent required by their needs and those of the environment. They normally use their two languages separately or together for different purposes, in different domains of life with different people”. (Grosjean, 1995: 259). In the present study, a Malaysian bilingual is considered as someone who is able to interact or to converse in Malay and English.

## CHAPTER 2: LITTEATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to provide a review of previous studies on code-switching among bilinguals, a phenomenon which is the focus of the present study. This chapter is divided into six sections. The first section is an overview on bilingualism while the second is on code-switching, particularly in the Malaysian context. The third section presents the reasons why bilinguals switch codes. The fourth section discusses the different types of code-switching while the fifth is about the different functions of code-switching. The final section looks at previous studies on code-switching which focuses on the types and functions of code-switching.

### 2.2 Bilingualism

Bilingualism, or bilingual, is the ability to use two languages or codes. The concept of bilingualism is constantly changing. It was first introduced by Bloomfield in 1935. Bloomfield defined bilingualism as “the ability to use two languages or to have native-like control of two languages” (Bloomfield, 1935: 56). When a bilingual speaker uses two languages alternately in an utterance, he is said to code-switch.

For example: Dame una hamburguesa sin lechuga por favor.

(Heredia, 2001)

(Give me a hamburger without lettuce please)



In the past, bilingualism, and especially code-switching, was considered as “a sign of linguistic decay” (Appel & Muysken 1987). One of the most frequent explanations of why bilinguals switch codes is that they did it to compensate for the lack of language proficiency (Heredia, 2001). This statement was supported by Nguyen (2008) who stated that code-switching is considered the consequence of not knowing at least one of the languages very well. Bilinguals were said to be unable to acquire two languages properly and that code-switching was deemed ungrammatical. However, positive evidences on bilingualism and code-switching have been proven upon in-depth and extensive studies conducted over the years. Code-switching has been considered a result of complex bilingual skills and a natural communicative strategy and no longer deficient language behaviour.

Code-switching is considered a norm in any bilingual speakers’ conversations and is one of the principal issues in bilingualism research. It is often considered as a communication strategy with different functions. For example, code-switching may be used when the speaker wants to elaborate, to emphasise, to elaborate or to comment on an issue. In a bilingual community, code-switching has a value of “naturalness” (Fachriyah, 2017).

### 2.3 Definitions of Code-switching

One of the earliest definitions of code-switching was given by Weinreich (1953: 73) who stated that bilingual people were individuals who “switch from one language to the other according to appropriate changes in speech situation”. Meanwhile, Hans Vogt (1954) considered code-switching as more of a psychological phenomenon as a result of extra linguistic reasons.

Poplack (1980) considered the existence of a speaker’s L1 and L2 in her definition of code-switching. She stated that “code-switching proceeds from the area of the bilingual’s grammar where the surface structures of L1 and L2 overlap”. Code-switching is considered as more of a bilingual ability rather than a degradation of linguistic skills. However, the definition may not describe the speech of all bilinguals. For bilinguals who have not successfully acquired their L2, Poplack (1980) attributed a variety of functions of code-switching that these speakers use in their utterances, for instance; hesitations, false starts, repetition, fillers, interjections, tags, quotations and idiomatic expressions. Additional extra linguistic factors, like gender, age of L2 acquisition, education, age, ethnic identity and work place, also contribute to the occurrence of code-switching.

Gumperz (1982: 55-59) defined conversational code-switching as “the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems” and is mainly used by bilinguals to express social meanings in response to the situation and also other social variables. He provided six conversational

functions of code-switching: quotations, addressee specification, interjections, reiteration, message qualification and personalization versus objectivization.

Code-switching is considered a natural language development process in the usage, where the speaker has a repertoire to effectively manipulate two or more languages in any given speech events. The interlocutors also have access and use of a variety of language resources in their communication (Hood et. al, 2007). According to Jacobson (2001), those who code-switch may not be aware of their behavior and will deny that they resorted to such a practice in their speech.

Asmah (1982) defined code-switching purely as a “phenomenon which reflects the change from one code, which includes language varieties and dialects, to another in the speech of a particular speaker in a particular situation”. Code-switching could also occur in monolingual interactions depending on the social situation they are in at the time. This is supported by Kuo (1985) who noted that “code switching can only exist in societies which are at least bilingual and such societies must be linguistically, if not ethnically, heterogeneous and the members of these societies be multilingual in a variety of languages or dialects that are functionally differentiated”.

Myers-Scotton (1993: vii) on the other hand defined code-switching as “the use of two or more languages in the same conversation” and distinguished the difference between the matrix and embedded languages in code-switching. The matrix language is the language that is mainly used during the conversation and whose grammar applies to

the overall sentence structure. The embedded language is the contributing language of the switch. The data analysis of this study was also based on the matrix and the embedded language.

From the definitions provided above, it is obvious that there are various ways of looking at the same phenomenon and this is not surprising, considering that the occurrence is so common. In the current study, the term code-switching is seen as a mixture of two languages, in particular, Malay and English, within an utterance. The occurrences of code-switching can happen in any situation among bilinguals and multilinguals. As far as the researcher is concerned, code-switching appears to occur based on the speakers' personal needs and for various reasons. The term code-switching used in this study simply refers to any instances where the Malaysian subjects alternate between the two languages, for example Malay and English, in this study. It may incur in one word, one phrase or segments of utterances.

Additionally, it is also important to note that other terms have also been used to describe the switch between languages in the course of a single conversation such as for example code-mixing and code-borrowing. Wardhaugh (1989: 98) defined code-mixing as "the mix of both languages to the extent that they change from one language to the other in the course of a single utterance". A more recent definition is given by Bauer (2010: 4) who referred code-mixing as the "linguistic behavior of a bilingual speaker who imports words or phrases from one of his languages to another".

The difference between code-switching and code-mixing was mentioned by Hoffman (1991). According to Hoffman (1991: 116), code-switching is “the process of exchanging or speaking two language terms or linguistics varieties within a dialogue or a conversation”. These changes may occur over phrases or a sentence, including tags and exclamations at either end of the sentences. Meanwhile, code-mixing is defined as switches that occur at the lexical level within a sentence and usually does not change the topic of the conversation. An example of a code-mixing is provided below:

This morning I hantar my baby tu dekat my babysitter tu lah.

(Stockwell, 2002 )

(This morning, I sent my baby to the babysitter)

Code-borrowing, according to Gumperz (1972: 66) is “the introduction of single words or short frozen, idiomatic phrases from one variety into the other”. The borrowed items are often incorporated into the grammatical system of the borrowing language and are treated as part of the lexicon. They also take on the borrowing language’s morphological characteristics and enter into its syntactic structure. In Malaysia some borrowings are inspired by patriotism (Thirusanku, 2013). An example is provided below:

There was a proposal to make **Rukun Negara** the preamble to the Constitution by Dr Chandra Muzaffar.

*(“Rukun Negara as preamble to constitution will cause confusion” The New*

*Straits Time, March 8 2017)*

In this study, the term code-switching is used as a generic term comprising code-mixing and code-borrowing. Thus, the vague and imprecise distinction between code-mixing and code-borrowing is not significant in the analysis.

### **2.3.1 Code-switching in Malaysia**

The questions why Malaysian speakers choose to mix languages rather than communicate in one language have been addressed in numerous sociolinguistics researches in Malaysia. Code-switching is, no doubt, a common phenomenon among speakers of multilingual countries such as Singapore, the Philippines and Malaysia where English and Malay, as well as other languages, are combined in sentences. In the Malaysian context, it is so common to hear a conversation when there are a lot of English words as the Malay language is dominant and vice versa (David, 2003). Malaysians switch codes for many reasons, both in formal and informal settings.

One common view many Malaysians share and believe is that the more proficient a person's English is, the higher is his level of education. In Malaysian society, being proficient in English not only is a sign of intellectuality but also shows how an individual is experienced in communication skills (Jariah, 2003). However, Atas (2012) argued that there was no connection between one's difference level of proficiency and his use of code-switching. In consequence, advanced learners and competent bilinguals have been reported to employ code switching similarly (Winford, 2003).

Jariah (2003) examined code-switching instances between working adults during office meetings. The participants constantly switched from Malay to English depending on the suitability of their needs. Senior officials switched code to demonstrate status and exert their power. Code-switching was used to mark a higher social status and membership of educated elites. David (2003) studied the functions of code-switching in a Malaysian courtroom environment. Both lawyer and judge constantly code switched during the mitigation process. The judge used English with the counsel and Malay with the witnesses. The functions of code-switching identified include directive, quotations and emphasizing. Chu (2005) studied the interactions between a doctor and his patients to identify the reasons and functions of code-switching. Frequent use of code-switching instances was observed. Code-switching was the strategy used by the doctor to explain the patient's medical condition clearly so that correct medication and care can be provided (Chu, 2005). Code-switching was also used as a "private language" when the doctor did not want a child patient to understand the conversation to avoid fear and worry.

In the areas of second and/or foreign language acquisition and code-switching is considered as one of the teaching "tools" by some teachers. However, students and teachers have different perceptions of the use of code-switching in classrooms. In fact, the use of code-switching in English classrooms has always been a subject of controversy. William (2012) studied the purpose and the reason why ESL teachers switched codes in the predominant Bidayuh rural primary schools in the Padawan district in Sarawak. It was found that instead of code-switching to Bidayuh, the teachers code-switched to Malay. The main reason for code-switching was to facilitate the teaching and learning process especially in rural schools. Nordin's (2012) researched on

the attitudes of ESL learners towards the functions of code-switching employed by English language lecturers at tertiary level. The study reconfirmed that code-switching definitely helped students to learn English better. Students felt more comfortable knowing that they could always depend on the explanations in L1 provided by their lecturers. However, the participants also acknowledged that code-switching should not be extensively done as English is still the target language in the classroom and that code-switching should only be limited for specific purposes. Next, Muthusamy (2010) examined code-switching instances among secondary school students in the Klang Valley. Similarly, code-switching occurrences were observed and are considered a habit among the students. It was also found that the language choice depended on the participants' economic and education strata as well as ethnicity. This is supported by Asmah's (1992) study that claimed that the choice of the language varies according to the speaker's sociolinguistic situations.

Code-switching among Malaysians exists at all social levels and races Asmah (2007). The most common code-switching in Malaysia is between English and Malay. Code-switching is unavoidable when Malaysians of different races meet and interact. This is parallel to Muthusamy's (2009) findings of code-switching patterns among three main races in Malaysia: Malays, Chinese and Indians. During interracial communications, the participants used Malay as their matrix language along in English. However, when participants of the same ethnic group conversed, their respective mother tongues automatically became the dominant language and Malay as the embedded language.



Multilingual Malaysians do not have any problems switching from their dominant language to another to convey messages more effectively (David, 2003). Often, it is to fulfill different reasons.

With the various official statuses accorded to the four basic languages in the country (Bahasa Malaysia, English, Chinese-Mandarin and Tamil) along with the diverse range of languages in actual currency amongst the people of Malaysia, it is small wonder then that the average Malaysian is at least a bilingual - regardless of educational or socioeconomic background. On the other hand, it is not unusual to find the trilingual or multilingual Malaysian either.” (Baskaran, 2005, p.16).

According to Jacobson (2004), the possibility of code-switching occurring among interlocutors with similar linguistic backgrounds is unavoidable especially when two languages co-exist. The language choices by the speakers are determined by aspects like difference in culture, social, political, educational, and economic features. Additionally, the status of the language and the proficiency level of interlocutors also determine the choice made during code switching from one language to another (Jacobson, 1998). In relation to this, Husni (2009) studied on the Bahasa Malaysia used in Kuala Lumpur (KL Malay) and revealed a substantial percentage of English words that were imported into the KL Malay lexicon and used in numerous contexts. Code-switching in KL Malay is closely associated to socio-educational conditions such as the implementation of education policies and the superimposition of English in schools.

Code-switching can also be observed in written forms. Li Wei (2012) studied on the code-switching occurrences of online blogs of Chinese Malaysian female bloggers. She revealed that the bloggers switched codes when writing about certain topics like family, work and education. Halim *et. al* (2014) studied the reasons of code-switching on Facebook interactions. Among the reasons revealed was free switching where code-switching is employed for “no apparent reason or comprised of an eclectic mix of functions” (Nordin *et, al*, 2014: 132). Marlyna *et. al* (2016) analysed the code-switching instances in the Malaysian movie *Ola Bola*. The study identified the functions of code-switching observed among the multi racial characters in their daily interactions in the movie. The need to study the reasons and functions of code-switching in this movie proves that code-switching is a common phenomena and is accepted in the Malaysian society in our daily lives.

Other than code-switching between languages, the various dialects that exist in Malaysia also provides Malaysians more language resources when interacting with people of different races and dialectal backgrounds. Zuraidah (2003) studied language-dialect code-switching, specifically between Kelantanese dialect and standard Malay. The participants include Kelantanese and non-Kelantanese students who were studying in a university in Kuala Lumpur. Observations revealed that the switching of the codes is determined by who the speaker is addressing or responding to. The Kelantanese participants would always accommodate to the language of the non-Kelantanese participant. They would communicate in Kelantanese dialect among themselves but once the non-Kelantanese participant joined the conversation, they would revert back to standard Malay. The Kelantanese dialect functions as a reinforcement of regional bonds and is sometimes used to exclude those who do not know the dialect.

## 2.4 Reasons for Code-switching

Whenever a bilingual speaker code-switches, there must be for some motivation and reasons. Grosjean (1982) proposed some reasons for code-switching. For example, bilingual speakers code-switch when they cannot find proper words or expressions or there is no appropriate translation of the words in the target language. Other reasons include emphasizing one's identity, specifying the addressee and to qualifying what has been said.

Malik (1994) in her book entitled *Socio-Linguistics: A Study of Code-Switching*, studied the role of code-switching and code-mixing in the formation of Indian English. She identified 10 social factors of code-switching. These social reasons were used in the classification of reasons for code-switching in the data analysis of this study. The social functions are:

- To show identity in a group
- To address different audience
- Lack of facility
- Pragmatic reasons
- Lack of registral competence
- Semantic significance
- To attract attention
- Habitual expressions
- To amplify and emphasise a point
- Mood of the speaker

The examples of some of the reasons are given below:

- Lack of registral competence::

Example: Saya syorkan agar anda kurangkan jerit **time** pagi-pagi.

(I advise you to stop shouting early every morning)

(Hadei, 2017)

The switch to English is mainly because the speaker felt the word “**time**” is more suitable to be used in the context. To some speakers, certain phrases sound better in the second language compared to in the first language (Anderson, 2006) and this can result in code-switching. A bilingual speaker has the advantage of mixing and borrowing words due to their larger choice of language repertoire and not because they lack the term in the language or another (Romaine, 1995).

Sometimes speakers switch codes to replace cultural items:

Example: Others said that the **tudung**-clad woman who was in a **baju kurung** had stripped so that people would think she was mad and let her go.

(David & McLellan, 2007)

The example is an extract taken from a Malaysian newspaper. The journalist switched to Malay when describing specific Malay clothes “**tudung**” and “**baju kurung**” because he assumes the readers will understand them.

- To emphasise:

Example: A: What kind of question, it’s because I’m injured **la**.

B: Why I’m wearing slippers?

A: Where injured?

B: You see here **bengkak**. (swollen)

(David & Lim, 2009)

The speaker code-switched to Malay “**bengkak**” to emphasise the severity of his injury and that was the reason why he was not wearing shoes.

Inevitable borrowings from other languages like Malay, the Chinese dialect and Tamil were also observed. David stated that in a bilingual community where there is a third language, the members can use more than one language in their utterances and this sometimes resulted in a mixed language (David, 2001:45). An example is provided below:

Example: Aku kenal budak tu tapi tak **kamceng** ah.

(I know that guy but we are not that close)

“Kamcheng” is a slang word borrowed from Hokkien that means being close to someone.

## 2.5 Types of Code-switching

The first research question of the current study is to identify the types of code-switching among Malay-English bilingual college students. The two theories that will be discussed in this section are Poplack's (1980) 3 Types of Code-Switching and Gumperz's (1982) 2 types of code-switching.

### 2.5.1 Poplack's (1980) 3 types of code-switching

In 1980, Poplack conducted a research to analyse the Spanish-English code-switching use of Puerto Rican immigrants living in Harlem. It was revealed that code-switching was an integral part of the community linguistic and functions as a mode of interaction similar to monolingual use. Poplack proposed three types of code-switching: (1) inter-sentential switching (2) intra-sentential switching (3) tag switching which Milroy and Muysken (1995) called extra-sentential switching.

#### 2.5.1.1 Inter-sentential switching

Inter-sentential switching refers to switches that take place between sentences, occurring at a clause or sentence boundary where each clause or sentence is in a different language (Romaine 1989). It may also take place between turns. Since the switch occurs between sentences, inter-sentential switch requires the least integration.

For example: Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish **y termino en español**.

(Poplack, 1980:219)

(Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish and finish in Spanish).

In the example, part of the conversation is in English and the other half is in Spanish.

### 2.5.1.2 Intra-sentential switching

Intra-sentential switching occurs within a sentence and performed without hesitation, pause and interruption. It also requires a lot of integration and is usually associated with the most fluent bilinguals (Poplack, 1980). Intra-sentential code-switching requires a speaker with a higher level of fluency compared to the other types because he is required to switch the rules of syntax of the other language midway or sentence.

For example: Why make Carol **sentarse atras pa' que** everybody has to move  
**pa' que se salga?**

(Poplack, 1980:214)

(Why make Carol sit at the back so everybody has to move for  
her to go out?)

### 2.5.1.3 Tag switching

Tag switching requires a little integration of the two languages. According to Poplack (1980) tag-switching refers to inserting or switching “interjections, fillers, tags and idiomatic expressions”. It also involves inserting a tag in one language to an utterance which is otherwise in another language (Romaine 1995: 122). The insertion of a tag to an utterance has no implications on the rest of the sentence because tags have no

syntactic constraints, move freely and may be inserted anywhere in a discourse without violating any grammar rules (Poplack, 1980).

For example: I could understand que you don't know how to speak Spanish.

¿verdad?

(Poplack, 1980:221)

(I could understand that you don't know how to speak Spanish. Right?)

### **2.5.2 Gumperz's (1982) 2 types of code-switching**

Blom and Gumperz (1972) who are considered the pioneers of interactional sociolinguistics, viewed code switching in a positive light and were the first to adopt a positive view of code switching. They saw code-switching as an indicator of the fluency of the speakers involved. In their study on language use through observation and the analysis of taped recordings in a Norwegian fishing village, they argued that the switch in language depends on the topic being discussed and the situation the speakers found themselves in. Thus, language code switching served several purposes and it was employed by various speakers to perform a range of functions (Gumperz, 1982).

Blom and Gumperz (1972) proposed two types of code-switching: situational code-switching and metaphorical code-switching.



### **2.5.2.1 Situational code-switching**

It occurs when the speaker uses different codes for different situations. The speaker speaks one language in one situation and another in a different one. For example, teachers deliver formal lectures in English but if they want to encourage open the discussion, then they will shift to Malay.

Baljit (1994), in her study on turn-taking, observed that Malaysians have the tendency to switch codes when speaking to a person from a different ethnic group. For example, one may speak in English with his friends from work but will speak in Malay to his family members. The languages used are switched because the situations changed.

### **2.5.2.2 Metaphorical code-switching**

Metaphorical code-switching is more complex. Wardhaugh (1998) defines metaphorical code-switching as “the changing of the topic that requires the changing of the codes”. It occurs when the speaker code-switches according to the topic discussed. The speakers rely on two or more code in a single social interaction. However, speakers are usually unaware which code is used at any one time (Gumperz, 1982, p. 61).

This study applies Poplack’s (1980) 3 types of code-switching because the classification of code-switching is clearer and well defined. Poplack’s categories might be out dated but they are still being referred to by many linguists for their studies of code-switching. Appel & Musyken (2005), Hoffman (1991) and Romain (1995) are

among the linguists who have applied Poplack's types of code-switching in their researches. By referring to Poplack's (1980) three types of code-switching as the framework of this study, the researcher hopes to classify and further expand the study of the functions of code-switching in the Malaysian context.

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## 2.6 Functions of Code-Switching

For many years, researchers have investigated the types and functions of code switching among bilingual speakers around the world. These researches have therefore identified different functions of code switching in different contexts.

### 2.6.1 Gumperz's (1982) conversational functions of code-switching

1) Quotations: People code-switch using direct quotations or reported speeches in a language different from the matrix language.

For example: A father was trying to describe the behaviour of modern women.

No wonder **la**. So weird girls nowadays. **Perigi cari timba  
sungguh la hai.**

(Stapa & Khan, 2016)

The father switched to Malay to quote a common expression. “**Perigi mencari timba**” is the explanation that best described what the father had in mind of the behaviour of modern women.

2) Addressee specification: By code-switching, a speaker can direct his message to one of possible addressees (Gumperz, 1982: 77). Romaine (2004) stated that addressee specification can be used both with monolinguals and bilinguals. To accommodate a monolingual person, a bilingual speaker will switch to the language the monolingual person knows. Similarly, a speaker can also switch to a language that no one else in the group understands apart from the speaker and his addressee to exclude someone during a conversation. With a bilingual, the speaker switch codes to invite the

addressee to participate in the conversation. This function is similar to Appel & Musyken's directive function.

3) Interjection: to show emotional associations with different languages, or because specific expressions come to mind more readily in a language than in another.

4) Reiteration: to repeat the same content in each of their languages in order to clarify or to emphasise a certain message.

For example: Hindi-English. Father in India calling to his son, who was learning to swim in a swimming pool:

Baju-me jao beta, andar mat. **Keep to the side.**

(Gumperz, 1982:78)

(Go to the side son, not inside. Keep to the side)

5) Message qualification: Refers to an elaboration of the preceding utterance in the other code (Gumperz, 1982).

For example: So this is the passive: **Dia telah diberikan anugerah itu.**

(So this is the passive sentence: He was given the award)

(Ibrahim, 2013)

In the example, the speaker introduced the English passive voice to her students. When presenting the example, she switched to Malay to explain the concept.

6) Personalization vs. objectivization: speakers may switch codes to make their messages more personal and more objective to express certain facts within the speakers' language repertoire, whereas others are associated with subjective opinion. It can identify the speaker's involvement in or distance from the interaction.

For example: Jason introduced Keong to his Malay girlfriend, Oked. Both Jason and Keong are Chinese. This is Keong's reaction:

Keong: You're gonna break your parents' heart **la**. You have to change your name, then change your religion, very **mah fan** one you know? Some more you cannot eat **Char Siew** anymore you know or not, cannot eat pork.

(Ling, 2012)

(You are going to break your parents' heart. It is troublesome as you have to change your name and your religion and you can no longer eat roasted pork anymore. You cannot eat pork)

Keong did not take the news well. He switched codes between English, Chinese and Cantonese. This is not due to his lack of vocabulary in the languages but he knew Jason would be able to understand him well in all three languages. The utterance reflects the close friendship and solidarity between the speaker and his friend (personalization).

Gumperz's conversational functions (1982: 75-79) have inspired many succeeding linguists to refine or even propose their own list of functions but some of them found that these functions were inaccurate. Auer (1988) argued that the study of functions of code-switching should be boundless, without a pre-established set of functional categories. He also commented on the ambiguity of the reiteration function and its failure to define exactly what is repeated and why it is repeated.

However, this study has taken Nilep's (2006) suggestion that is "to observe actual interaction rather than the assumption from the general effects of code-switching" into consideration. Thus, this study adheres to the classification of functions of code-switching for analysis and discussions. To determine the functions of code-switching in this research, Appel & Muysken (2005) functions of code-switching are used as a framework.

### **2.6.2 Appel and Muysken's (2006) functions of code-switching**

Jacobson (1960) and Halliday et al. (1964) studied code-switching from its conversational aspects and later proposed a specialized framework. In 1981, Mühlhäusler introduced six functions of code-switching: directive, referential, phatic, expressive, metalinguistic and poetic. Later, Appel and Muysken (2006) applied these functions of language code switching to verbal communication.

1) *Referential function* refers to people switching from the dominant language to another language because they are short of certain knowledge of the dominant language or that they are not sure how to say the word in the dominant

language (Appel & Muysken, 2006, p. 118). Most bilinguals are aware that they perform referential functions. They are aware that they tend to switch codes when they do not know the exact word in the other language or a certain language chosen is more appropriate when talking about a certain subject (Appel & Muysken, 2006).

2) *Directive function* refers to code-switching that directly involves and affects the hearer (Appel & Muysken, 2006, p.119). It can either include or exclude the hearer. For example parents will tend to switch to another language when they do not want their children to understand their conversation.

3) *Expressive function* is a code-switching instance used by bilingual persons to express or emphasize certain perceptions or feelings in a different language (Appel & Muysken, 2006, p.119).

4) *Phatic function* refers to a code-switching instance where speakers changed their tone so as to highlight the information that is conveyed, and to make people pay more attention to the importance of the information (Appel & Muysken, 2006, p. 119).

5) *Metalinguistic function* refers to a code-switching instance which serves as “a comment directly or indirectly on the language involved” (p.120), and was used for providing quotation or report speech that was composed by other persons, for instance, idioms, etc (Appel & Muysken, 2006, p.120).

6) *Poetic function* refers to a code-switching instance where speakers used puns or jokes, etc in another language instead of using the matrix language (Appel & Muysken, 2006, p.120).

## 2.7 Previous Studies on Code-Switching

Over the years, linguists and scholars researched on code-switching from the sociolinguistics and psycholinguistic point of views. Linguists study the structure of languages used in code-switched discourse meanwhile sociolinguists study the relationship between language and society and explains why humans speak differently in different contexts and identifies the social functions of the language.

Najafi Sarem (2012) examined the reasons behind code-switching among Iranians in an EFL setting and to determine the frequency and reasons why the students code-switch in their English class. Their study revealed that when a teacher switch codes to explain something difficult to the students, this acted as a signal for the students to start code-switching too. It was also observed that the students felt more confident and at ease to switch to the language they were more fluent in. The teacher would prefer to switch codes mainly to improve the teacher-student communication and to facilitate teaching and learning process.

However, Joanna (2014), who examined teachers' perception of code-switching in the classroom settings, revealed that their perceptions are divided. Some gave positive input while some thinks that code-switching could be detrimental to the students' English language proficiency. The teachers code switch to facilitate students' comprehension and grammar rules and also to lessen students' anxiety in the classroom. Students perceive code switching as a learning strategy and a way to compensate for their limited proficiency in the target language.



Rita Amourim (2012) studied on the reasons and pragmatic functions of code-switching among students revealed that students switch codes to fill in lexical and grammatical gaps in the target language, to negotiate language and meaning and to manage the activity and other participants. The study also revealed that students with a higher level of English proficiency level performed more inter-sentential switches and acted as “leaders” in the group discussion, explaining or coaxing the rest to continue on with the discussion. Meanwhile, students with low English proficiency level preferred intra-sentential switches.

Regarding studies on code-switching occurrences in non-educational context, Yankova and Vassileva (2013) studied on the functions and mechanisms of code-switching among first generation Bulgarian in Canada. The respondents were 16 legal immigrants who left Bulgaria between 1948 and 1998. They, except for a few who were not married to Bulgarians, have all retained their native language and spoke Bulgarian at home. The data was collected using recorded interviews, questionnaires and direct observations and the theoretical framework was based on Appel & Muysken (1987) six functions of language. The functions identified were mainly referential, followed by expressive and phatic. Respondents tend to code-switch when there was no direct equivalent in the Bulgarian language, when they tried to achieve language economy and when they were trying to refer to objects and phenomena. The participants preferred to use English or French in formal interactions and most informal interactions were done in Bulgarian.

In a more informal situation, a study on the types and functions of code-switching in a mixed Malay-Chinese family in the home domain was conducted by Stapa & Khan (2016). The types of code-switching were analysed using Poplack's (1980) types of code-switching and the functions of code-switching were analysed based on the adapted framework of Appel and Muysken's (2006) functional model of code-switching. The findings revealed that the family members code-switch consciously and unconsciously. It was found that the reasons the participants switch codes are: issues discussed, quotations, emphatic, interjection, lexical need (no equal translation), phatic and poetic functions.

Muthasamy (2009) on the other hand conducted a study on secondary students in the Klang Valley to identify patterns and dominance of language choice of code-switching. The participants were of mix gender and different ethnicities (12 Indians, 4 Malays, and 4 Chinese). It was found that when all the participants were in a communication, they used Malay as their matrix language and English as the embedded language. However, when those of the same ethnic communicated, their respective mother tongues became the matrix language while Malay and English became the embedded languages.

Previous studies have reported that code-switching often happen subconsciously. People may not be aware that they have code-switched, or even be able to identify which code they use for a particular topic (Wardhaugh, 1998). This can be seen in Nik Mastura Nik Ismail Azlan and Suthagar Narasuman's (2013) research to determine the types and reasons for code-switching. Three instruments were used: questionnaire,

observations and interviews. In the questionnaire, the participants were asked to identify the reason for them to code-switch. Later on, observations were conducted in English classes. The researchers observed and listened to the interactions and took down notes of the code-switching instances. It was found that the findings of the questionnaire contradicted with the findings of the observations. The participants claimed that they wanted to “emphasise on a point” when they code-switch but from the observations the researchers identified that the most frequent reason for code-switching was “to show identity within a group”. This coincides with Wardhaugh’s (1998) statement that one may not be aware that they have code-switched nor is he able to identify the reason why they code-switched. Thus, in the present study, the researcher opted to use these three instruments: questionnaire, observations and semi-structured. The questionnaire is used to obtain information on students’ perception of code-switching, the audio recorded discussions to observe the use of code-switching in the conversation while the unstructured interview to further explore the participants’ view and perception of code-switching.

Another study on code-switching which is relevant to the present study is the one conducted by Niema Hamad AlHeeti and Ammar A. Al Abdely in 2016. Their study also researched to identify and determine the types and functions of code-switching but in a more formal setting. The participants were Iraqi doctors. From the observations, it was revealed that intra-sentential switching is the most frequent type of code-switching. Intra-sentential switches, though more complex, is preferred because of the participants’ lack of linguistics skills and confidence to speak in English. Their main reason for using English is for communicative purposes. The doctors also switched to English for psychological and social functions. The doctors also claimed that they

sometimes used English instead of Arabic just to sound different. English language is used for a prestigious matter and a sign of high social status.

Considering a study which focuses on reasons for code-switching among Malay-English bilinguals, Noor Azlina's (1979) identified these reasons for code-switching:

1. Words that have no Malay equivalent
2. Words that do have Malay equivalents but are actually English loan words adapted to Malay phonological and morphological patterns
3. Words with Malay equivalents but the Malay equivalents are not commonly used, like "musim sejuk" for "winter"
4. Some words are used because they represent concepts that are Western rather than Malay
5. Code switching also occurs when the speaker uses certain idioms which express the meaning more accurately, or which demonstrate intimacy through shared knowledge between speakers
6. Economy of articulation: Speakers switch code from English to Malay because sometimes a small number of Malay words are sufficient to communicate many English words.
7. Similarly, speakers use shorter English words in place of longer Malay words, like "law" for "undang-undang"
8. There is no English equivalent to a Malay word or concept, like "canai"

9. Speakers may also wish to avoid taboo words in Malay, and English offer more polite ones

10. Speakers use pronouns “I” and “You” at all times, probably to symbolize equalitarian status between interlocutors.

These reasons will be referred to when explaining the functions of code-switching among Malay-English bilingual college students who are the participants of the current study.

## **2.8 Summary**

This chapter presents the definitions of bilingualism and code-switching proposed by different scholars and also the discussion on the different types and functions of code-switching. The review of literature illustrated here has also looked at the previous studies of code-switching in both the educational and non-educational settings as well as formal and informal situations. Generally these studies focused on the types and functions of code-switching and they also explained the reasons for the phenomenon of code-switching among bilinguals or multi-linguals. From the findings of this study, it can be seen that code-switching is a common phenomenon among multilingual Malaysians and that Malaysians code-switch for various reasons. The

purpose of code-switching has also been identified to serve various functions under various circumstances.

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## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter demonstrates the method data elicitation of the present study. The theoretical framework is provided in the first section followed by the description of the research design that include the profile of subjects involved in the research and the multiple research instruments used for data collection. The data analysis is provided in the last section of this chapter.

### 3.2 Theoretical Frameworks

The theoretical framework to identify the types of code-switching was based on Poplack's (1980) three types of code-switching. Meanwhile, Appel and Muysken's (2006) functions of code-switching were used to identify the functions of code-switching observed.

#### 3.2.1 Poplack's (1980) three types of code-switching

Poplack (1980) categorized code-switching into 3 types:

1. Tag-switching refers to the "insertion or switching of interjections, fillers, tags and idiomatic expressions" (Poplack, 1980), for example such as you know, I see, well, etc. The speakers do not have to be equally competent in both languages.

2. Inter-sentential switching occurs between sentences (Poplack, 1980). Poplack's (2000) "Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish y termino en español" (Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish and finish in Spanish) is a perfect example of an inter-sentential switch.

3. Intra-sentential switch is the most complex switch because of the high probability of violation of syntactic rules that might occur if the speakers do not have a great knowledge of both grammars. It occurs in the middle of a sentence (Poplack, 1980).

### **3.2.2 Appel and Muysken's (2006) functions of code-switching**

As previously outlined in 2.6.2, to determine the functions of code-switching, this study is based on Appel and Muysken's (2006) functions of code-switching. In this section, the definitions of the functions along with the example are provided. The six functions are:

1. *Referential functions* are employed when the speaker lacks knowledge and facility of one language on a certain subject (Appel & Muysken, 2006, p. 118). When a word is not available to a speaker in his first language (L1), he may switch to his second language (L2) (Muthusamy, 2009). This is agreed by Anderson (2006) who suggested that certain phrases would sound better in the L2 than the L1. This usually will trigger a code-switch. This is shown in the examples below:



Example: Aku ada **movie** yang lagi best.

(I have a better movie)

(Hadei et. al, 2016)

Example: Sesiapa kat sini pandai **create infographic** ?

(Who here can create info graphic?)

(Rasdi, 2016)

In the example, the speaker preferred to use some words in English because they found them more suitable. Grosjean (1982: 125) described this as “the phenomenon of the most available word”, which saves the speaker time and efforts to find the exact word in the current language spoken.

Generally, bilinguals are aware of this function when they code-switch. When asked for the reason they switched codes, they said it was because they did not know the word in that one language or because they felt that the language that they have chosen was the most appropriate when talking about a particular topic or subject.

2. *Directive function* refers to code-switching that directly involves and affects the hearer. By employing languages familiar or unfamiliar, the speaker may choose to include or exclude the hearer (Appel & Muysken, 2006, p.119). This function is similar to Gumperz’s (1982) addressee specification function. For example, parents would speak in a foreign language to each other when they do not want the children to understand what is being said. Consider the examples given below:

Example: Tengok. Sekarang tiga-tiga jalan. **Sam in the middle!**

Fauziah! Jalan biasa. Duduk sini dan pura-pura **go to the middle.**

When the speaker gave instructions, he switched to English to give his utterances a “ring of power” (Soo, 1987). The next example is a Facebook status. The speaker targeted his intended audience (the bloggers) who are not only those who know English internet terms. The readers must also know Malay.

Example: Jangan lupa **tag** rakan **blogger** anda.

(Don't forget to tag your blogger friends)

(Rasdi, 2016)

3. *Expressive function* is used to express or emphasize mixed identity through the use of two languages in the same discourse (Appel & Muysken, 2006, p.119). Consider the example below:

Example: **I really appreciate it and the reason** saya tak respond kepada semua puji-pujian ni, saya rasa macam gedik lah kalau asyik nak **highlight** dengan puji ni, kan? **So, thank you, thank you, thank you.**

(Kothari, 2004)

(I really appreciate it and the reason I didn't respond to all this laudation, I felt bashful if continuously highlighted with praise right? So,thank you, thank you, thank you).

The speaker thanked his audience and expressed his feelings in English.

4. *Phatic function* refers to code-switching instances when speakers changed their tone to highlight the information that is conveyed, and to make people pay more attention to the importance of the information (Appel & Muysken, 2006, p. 119). For instance, a stand-up comedian who tells a whole joke in one language or standard dialect but switches to another language or dialect for the punch line.

The change of tone can also indicate whether the content is hostile or friendly, private or formal. Consider the examples provided below:

Example: Cucuk? Bontot? **No way! I don't want. Please.**

The speaker switched to English and raised her tone when objecting an injection suggested by a doctor. She was being hostile and ready to defend herself when said “**No way!**”

Example: **Hello everyone**, tuan-tuan dan puan-puan, dah puas mengundi?  
(Hello everyone, ladies and gentlemen, are you satisfied with your vote?)

(Jacobson, 2004)

By saying **Hello everyone**, the speaker hoped to attract the attention of others and to signal that the communication channel is opened, before he went on in Malay.

5. *Metalinguistic function* refers to code-switching instances which serve as “comment directly or indirectly on the language involved” (Appel & Muysken, 2006, p.120). For example, bilingual speakers sometimes switch codes to impress other participants and to show off their linguistic skills. This function is also used for providing quotation or report speech that was composed by other persons, for instance,

idioms, etc. This function is similar to Gumperz's (1982) quotation function. An example is provided below:

Example: (The speaker was telling his mother about a girl)

No lah. Tak berani. Nanti takut Mira dengan Bella gaduh. Ameer serabut la kalau orang perempuan gaduh-gaduh ni. Malu la kat orang. Tau apa dia cakap ? **“I really like you Ameer. I don't know why, tapi I rasa I boleh je tunggu you kalau you rasa I ada chance la”**.

The speaker switched from Malay to English when he quoted his friend because he wanted to use the language used by his friend. By doing so, he retained the original and exact words used by his friend.

6. *Poetic function* refers to code-switching instances where speakers used words, puns or jokes in another language instead of using the matrix language for the purpose of amusement and entertainment and also to make fun and jokes in context (Appel & Musyken, 2006, p.120). An example is provided below:

Example: (A mother is describing a baby)

Comel sungguh! Dia **chubby, round face, really round** macam adik. Heh..

The mother switched from Malay to English to describe the baby. She used the **adjectives “chubby”, “round face” and “really round”** to also tease her own

daughter. She switched to English for the purpose of providing amusement by teasing her daughter.

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### 3.3 Data Collection

The research is conducted at Kolej Universiti Polytech Mara Kuala Lumpur (KUPTM), a private higher educational institution and one of the subsidiaries of Majlis Amanah Rakyat (MARA). The institution offers a wide range of diploma and degree courses in the field of the English Language, Computer Sciences, Communication, Accounting and Finance. The researcher chose this setting because of the connection she had with the establishment. Arrangements to set time to meet with the participants were easier and permission to conduct the study in the college grounds was granted almost immediately by the university. The data collection is considered a „convenience“ or „opportunistic“ plan (Tracy, 2012). Biggam (2011, p. 134) stated that convenience is usually used as a form of exploratory research, giving ideas and insight to more detailed and representative research.

Before the research was conducted, the researcher sought approval from the Head of Department of the English Language in KUPTM. The head of department alerted the lecturers of the department about the researcher who was going to conduct her research. The lecturers are the researcher’s colleagues; therefore the students’ schedules were easily obtained. The researcher had access to the participants’ contact numbers from the KUPTM Management System Server (CMS). A slot was determined to meet with all the participants to distribute the questionnaires. A letter of consent was also distributed to each of the participants. The researcher gave a 2-week notice before the audio recording of the observations were conducted. During the observation, the researcher identified the possible participants for the interviews. Another 2-week notice was given for the participants before the interview. To maintain the confidentiality of the participants’ information, no names were mentioned in the study.

Participants of the audio recording observation were selected from the students who completed the questionnaire. The researcher informed the participants and stated the objectives of the observation and that their discussions would be recorded. 12 participants voluntarily agreed to participate in the observation. Later on, the researcher determined 4 participants for the interview. The selection was based on the frequency of the code-switching instances done by the participants. The researcher wanted to further explore the participants' code-switching instances.

### **3.3.1 The respondents**

30 respondents for the questionnaire were selected at random, age ranging from 19 to 20 years old. Since they are diploma students, they would also have done at least 10 years of national schooling with Malay as the medium of instruction. 12 participants agreed to pursue with the observation. Table 3.1 shows the background information of the participants for the observations. The minimum requirement to enroll in the Diploma in TESL in KUPTM is a B for English at the SPM level.

Based on that, the participants are considered to be equally proficient in both English and Malay thus allowing the code-switching process to occur naturally in their conversations. Table 3.1 shows the profile of the participants of the 3 discussion groups:

**Table 3.1 Profile of participants**

Participant	Age	Gender	Education level
A1	19	M	Second semester
A2	19	F	Second semester
A3	19	F	Second semester
A4	19	F	Second semester
B1	19	M	Second semester
B2	19	M	Second semester
B3	19	M	Second semester
B4	20	M	Second semester
C1	19	M	Second semester
C2	19	F	Second semester
C3	19	F	Second semester
C4	19	F	Second semester

### **3.3.2 Language background of the participants**

The minimum requirement to enroll in the Diploma in TESL in KUPTM is at least a B for English at the SPM level. The questionnaire provided the participants' education background and time spent conversing in the second language. Based on the information gained, the participants are considered to be equally proficient in both English and Malay which makes them either effective or balanced bilinguals. Thus this guarantees that code-switching will occur naturally in their conversations.



### 3.3.3 Groupings

The participants were grouped in 3 groups of 4 students. They were allowed to choose their group members. This is to ensure that they are comfortable with each other thus allowing discussions on topics given to run smoothly.

### 3.3.4 Topics

At the beginning, 3 topics were prepared for the group observations. (Refer to Appendix C). However, the participants were allowed to select their choice. Finally, two topics chosen were based on the common interest of the participants who are at the age of 18-20 years old. Since the participants are among friends in their respective groups, their own selection of topics would provide more familiarity and confidence during the discussion. The groups were allowed to choose their own topic and were given a maximum of 15 minutes to discuss their topics. Table 3.2 below shows the 3 groups with their respective topic:

**Table 3.2 Topics of discussions**

Group	Types of Interaction	Participants	Topics
1	Mixed gender interaction Group A (A)	AM1, AF2, AF3, AF4	If you were given a chance to go for a holiday tomorrow, where would you go? (topic related to holiday plans and general future plans)
2	Single gender interaction (Male) Group B (B)	BM1, BM2, BM3, BM4	How do you see yourself in 10 years' time? (topics related to future life plans and feelings)
3	Mixed gender interaction Group C (C)	CM1, CF2, CF3, CF4	If you were given a chance to go for a holiday tomorrow, where would you go? (topic related to holiday plans and general future plans)

Key (example):

AM1 - Group A, Male, Participant 1

AF2 - Group A, Female, Participant 2

### **3.3.5 Informed consent**

A letter of approval to conduct the research was submitted to the dean of the faculty in July 2015 and was approved immediately. The schedule to meet with the participants was determined upon a notice given to them a week prior to the discussions and interviews. The participants were informed of the objectives of the research. Participants' approval on the research was then given before observations and interviews.

## **3.4 Research Instruments**

Instrumentations refer to devices used to collect data such as questionnaires, tests, structured interview schedules and checklists (Seaman 1991:42). In this study, the instruments used are questionnaires, observations and structured interview. Myers-Scotton (2006) stated that "only naturalistic data can inform code-switching research, since it is the only type of data that occurs in everyday situations". Therefore, the present study is designed based on the assumption that the best way to understand a research problem is by collecting a variety of data. It began with a broad survey to find out the background information of the participants. The questionnaire is adapted from a study by Dong Wenjing (<http://survey.askform.cn/109192-177924.aspx>) on students' perception of code-switching. The second phase is the audio recorded discussions to observe the use of code-switching in the conversation. The third instrument employed in

the study is the unstructured interview to further explore the participants' view and perception of code-switching.

### **3.4.1 Questionnaire**

The questionnaire is divided into two sections namely section A and section B. Section A consists of seven demographic questions while section B consists of eight questions to determine the participants' tendency and preferences in code-switching in a conversation. The demographic data collected include the participants' age and place of origin, L1 and L2 language acquisition. Meanwhile, questions in section B are designed to allow further elaboration during the interview. These questions are adapted and modified to suit the objectives of the study.

### **3.4.2 Recorded observation**

The primary focus of this exercise was to observe the participants' use of code-switching when interacting with their peers in a discussion. The participants were informed that topic of the study was sociolinguistics and communication patterns among youths in the college. The participants were divided into small groups of three or four to limit the confusion on identifying the speakers when doing transcriptions.

During the discussion, the audio recorder was placed on the table in front of the participants while the researcher sat outside the room. This is in order to reduce any anxiety factors. Each group was recorded separately on different days. 3 topics were chosen for the group discussions. The participants were allowed to select their choice.

The participants were given approximately 15 minutes to talk and discuss about the topic given, without supervision. All discussions were impromptu and this allowed the participants to produce more genuine ideas and spontaneous discussion. Instructions were given both in Malay and English. The participants were allowed to speak in any language of their choice. The recordings were later transcribed and analysed according to the types and the functions of code-switching. The topics of discussion are provided in Appendix B.

### **3.4.3 Interviews**

The final instrument is a semi-structured interview with a fairly open framework which allows focused, conversational, two-way communication. Semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer and interviewee more freedom to articulate the wording of the questions or to clarify unclear terms. The interviewer is in control of the sequence of the interview and this usually will result in a higher response rate and spontaneous reactions of the respondents. Semi-structured interviews allow more “flexible, control of the interview situation, high response rate and collection of supplementary information” (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 1996).

A total of three respondents were selected at random from the recorded observation for the interview sessions. The objectives of the interview are to elaborate more on their purpose of code-switching instances, to explore their views and opinions on code-switching.

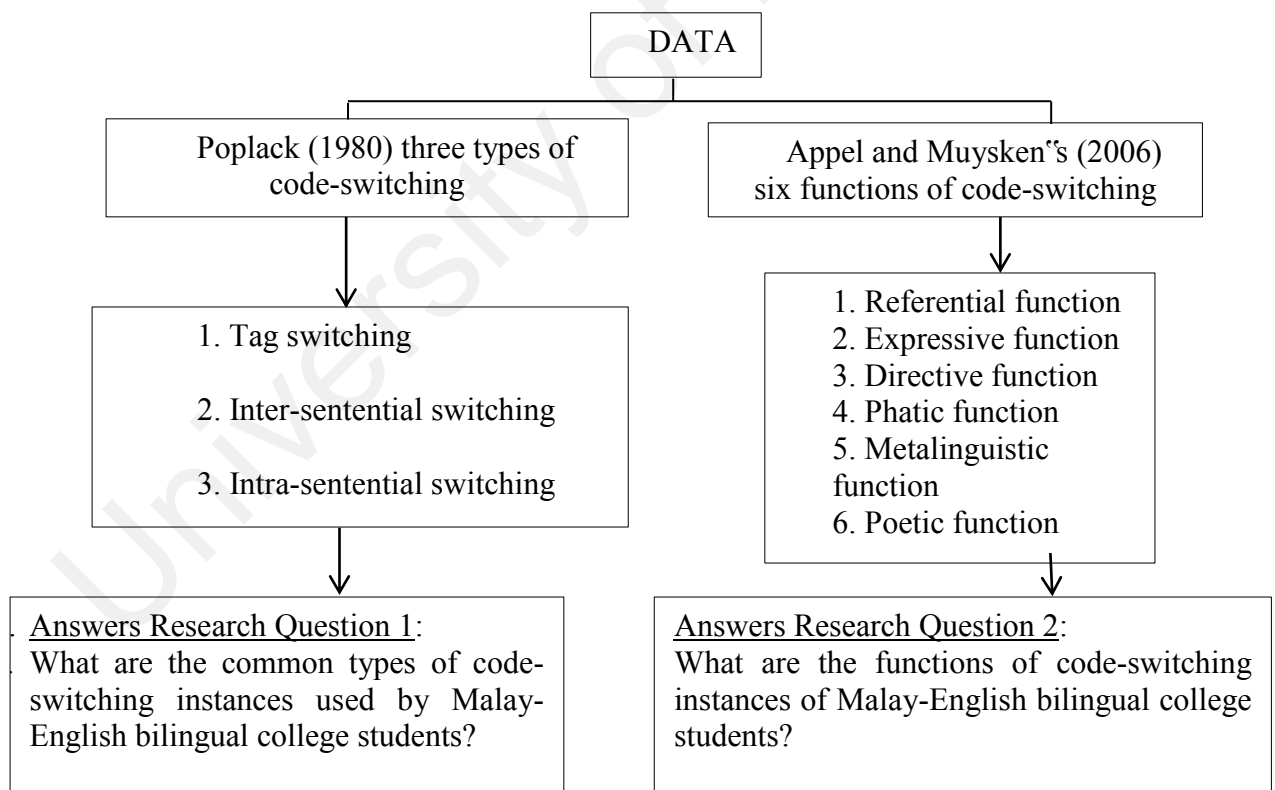
The interview was conducted individually and the duration for each interview was approximately 10 minutes each. The six questions created for the interviews (refer Appendix D) were structured and based on the research questions. The participants were free to express themselves in either Malay or English. The interviews were conducted in a friendly manner therefore the participants felt comfortable and were able to express themselves confidently. At the end of every interview session, a token of appreciation was given to the participants. The interviews were recorded and the data gathered were transcribed for analysis.

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### 3.5 Data Analysis

The occurrences of code-switching by the participants were examined whenever either a Malay or English language unit, be it a word or a phrase, a clause or a complete sentence was intentionally and unintentionally inserted into the utterances in the conversation. The study only concentrated on the instances of code-switching.

Each switch was counted as an instance of code-switching. These occurrences were later examined to determine the types and functions of code-switching. The procedure of data analysis is provided in Figure 3.1.



**Figure 3.1** The procedure of data analysis

The quantitative approach was used to calculate the frequency of the types of code-switching instances at word, phrase, clausal and sentence level using Poplack's (1980) three types of code-switching to answer the first research question. Next, to answer the second research question, the qualitative approach was used to identify and determine the functions of code-switching instances. This is done based on Appel and Musyken's (2006) six functions of code-switching.

### **3.5.1 Transcribing the recordings**

Only the recorded observations were analysed for occurrences of code-switching. This was done by attentively listening to the three recordings of observations. After each recording was transcribed, a total of 3 recordings of observations of 30 minutes were recorded. Examples of excerpts taken from the transcriptions were provided in the discussions along with the English translation of the Malay code-switching instances. Meanwhile the recordings of the interviews were transcribed but the occurrences of code-switching were not analysed. The transcriptions of the interviews were used to elaborate on the participants' reasons and general perception of code-switching.

The observations were transcribed based on Gumperz and Berenz (1993) transcription conventions. Utterances and interjections were not transcribed as the researcher was only interested in the code-switching utterances.

### 3.5.1.1 Analysing the transcriptions

All code-switching occurrences in the transcriptions were taken into account. In order to achieve the objective of the research, the features of English morphemes inserted into Malay lexical items were observed by means of word-count similar to that used by Jacobson (1996): (1) monolingual English, (2) main language English with some Malay (3) equal alternation of Malay and English (4) main language Malay with some English (5) monolingual Malay. However, this study only focuses on 3 categories which are main English with some Malay, main Malay with some English and equal alternation of English and Malay.

The classification of different matrix variety in utterances in the conversations is essential in the study of code-switching. From the data, the researcher determined the matrix language of the switches.

1. Main language Malay with some English (Malay-English): the number of Malay words exceeds the English words in an utterance.

For example: Let's say, **aku nak kawasan yang tak terlampau  
kekampungan sangat.**

2. Main language English with some Malay (English-Malay): the number of English words exceeds the number of Malay words.

For example: **How would you guarantee your business, you know  
how hard it is, that's what I said,** kau tak cukup masa  
untuk semua ni.



3. Equal alternation of Malay and English: the number of English and Malay words in the sentence is equal.

For example: **My** kampung.

**Aku nak beli satu** caravan with many utilities.

However, for such cases, the words of the language that gives the sense to the utterance will be considered the matrix language and classified as either English-Malay or Malay-English code-switching.

Next, the types of code-switching were determined based on Poplack's (1982) types of code-switching. This is done by highlighting the different types of code-switching in the transcriptions. The results of the findings were tabulated. There were a number of overlapping types of code-switching in an utterance. In such cases, all the possible types of code-switching were considered. The findings of this section answered the first research question.

The next step is to determine the functions of code-switching according to the framework of Appel & Muysken (2006) six functions of code-switching. The researcher made a fresh copy of the transcriptions for better identification. The functions were divided into different categories and functions. The findings of this section answered the second research question. All the discussions were illustrated using tables and figures. Examples of excerpts taken from the transcriptions were provided in the discussions along with the English translation of the Malay code-switching instances. English translations were provided in brackets after each followed by explanations.

For example:

Aku nak beli satu **caravan with many utilities**.

(excerpt)

(I want to buy a caravan with many utilities)

(translation)

The speaker started in Malay then switched to English when describing his caravan. “Caravan” does not have an equivalent in Malay. The speaker uses the referential function. } (explanation)

### 3.6 Summary

This chapter presented the methodology of the research used in the study, how data is collected and analysed to match the research questions. Poplack’s (1980) three types of code-switching were used to identify the types of code-switching and Appel & Musyken (2006) six functions of code-switching were used to determine the functions of code-switching in the study.

## **CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

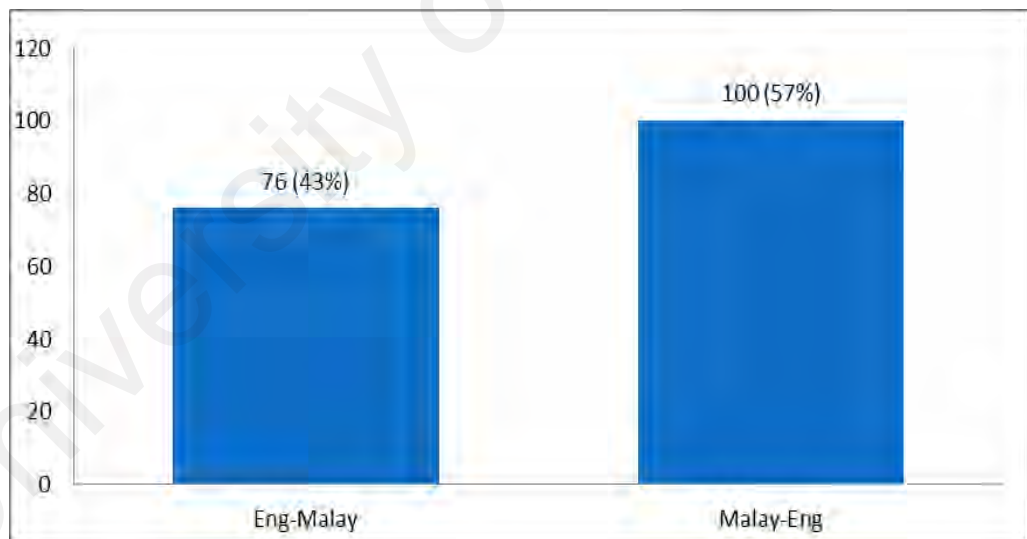
This chapter presents the findings of the data analysis. The first section in this chapter provides general information on the data gained from the code-switching occurrences during the data collection process. The second section talks about the types of code-switching instances identified based on Poplack's (1980) types of code-switching. The results of the analysis presented in this section will also answer the first research question that is "What are the common types of code-switching instances used by Malaysian bilinguals?" The third section identifies the functions of the code-switching instances based on Appel and Muysken's (2006) functions of code-switching. Similarly, the results of the analysis presented in this section will answer the second research question that is "What are the functions of code-switching among Malay bilinguals?"

### **4.2 Occurrences of Code-switching**

The main instrument of the research is the observations of the discussions. The transcriptions of the discussion are used to identify the types and functions of code-switching. The study began with the distribution of questionnaires. 30 participants completed the questionnaires. From the data gained, the researcher identified possible participants for the observation exercises. They were approached and 12 participants confirmed their participation for the observation. The 12 participants were Malay-English bilinguals and went through 11 years of Malaysia National Education system thus had sufficient exposure to both languages. All the participants were Malay but

code-switching instances were still recorded. According to Muthusamy (2010), “the ethnic communities which belong to the same ethnic group also have an extensive code-switching due to the influences from the multilingual environment, in which they interact and coupled with various socio-economic pressures that exert on the homogenous ethnic communities”.

During the observations, it was found that one group preferred to code-switch from English to Malay. Another group had a balanced English-Malay and Malay-English code-switching occurrences. The third group favoured Malay-English code-switching. Table 4.1 illustrates the participants’ preference of code-switching occurrences:



**Figure 4.1 Participants’ preference of code-switching occurrences**

From Figure 4.1, it can be observed that the total number of code-switching occurrences with Malay as the matrix language is higher,  $n = 100$  (57%) than the code-switching occurrences with English as the matrix language,  $n = 76$  (43%). This

difference in the choice of matrix language is explained further by Grosjean and Li (2013). They stated that “the majority of bilinguals do not have equal fluency in their languages; many have an accent in at least one of their languages”. For this study the participants’ L1 (Malay) is more dominant than their L2 (English). Even if an individual is highly proficient in both languages to a similar degree, it is likely that they will still identify one language as being dominant (A de Jong, 2016).

However, this cannot be observed among the participants in group A. Group A participants preferred to switch more from English to Malay (39) compared to from Malay to English (13) code-switching. This is illustrated in Table 4.1 below. Data gained from the questionnaire had indicated that out of the 30 participants, the first language (L1) for 2 of the participants is English (7%) while 28 students’ L1 is Malay (23%). This may be the reason for this different choice.

**Table 4.1 Participants’ preference of code-switching occurrences according to group**

Group	Total CS occurrences (Malay-English)	Percentage %	Total CS occurrences (English-Malay)	Percentage %
A	13	13	39	51
B	44	44	26	34
C	43	43	11	15
Total	100	100	76	100

Table 4.1 proves that the code-switching occurrences among the participants are a common phenomenon as they switched codes constantly. The choice to switch from a language to another depends entirely on the speakers. The speakers switched codes to achieve certain functions and the choice of language they made only have one objective

in common that is to be understood by others and most importantly is to get their message across.

To identify the types of code-switching, the researcher divided the research into 2 parts, according to the utterances' respective Matrix Languages (ML): Malay-English and English-Malay. By classifying the MLs, the researcher gains more information on the different types of code-switching.

In code-switching studies, the dominant language used by the speaker in an utterance is called the ML. Elements from embedded languages are inserted into the ML. According to Myers-Scotton (1993), "the „base“ language is called the matrix language (ML) and the „contributing“ language (or languages) is called the embedded language.

For this study, an utterance where the dominant word is Malay is considered Malay-English code-switching meanwhile when the dominant word is English it is considered English-Malay code-switching. Since the research questions of this research are to identify the types of code-switching and their functions, the researcher did not elaborate on the different types of ML but instead classified the code-switching occurrences into different MLs to gain more information on the different types of code-switching for different MLs. Examples of the two types of code-switching are provided in the examples.

#### 4.2.1 Malay-English code-switching

Examples of the code-switching occurrences are provided below:

##### Example (1)

(BM1) Bila ada **stable** punya gaji ni **of course** la aku nak **stay** kat situ.

(If I had a stable salary, I will definitely stay)

##### Example (2)

(BM2) **Building** semua aku yang buat nanti. Kalau aku jadi **engineer** lah.

(I will build all the buildings if I were an engineer)

##### Example (3)

(BM3) Kalau aku, **wedding** aku **simple** aje. **Maybe** kat rumah aje.

(My wedding would be simple and might be done at home)

##### Example (4)

(CM3) Malaysia dah banyak **culture** dah.

(Malaysia has already many cultures)

In the examples above, we can see that Malay is the matrix language. There are a number of borrowed words from English to replace some Malay words. For example “**stay**” “**building**” and “**engineer**”. These words are English nouns that are used to replace Malay nouns and do not change the structure of the sentence. Even though the equivalent of the words does exist in Malay (bangunan and jurutera, respectively), the

speakers still preferred to switch to English perhaps to impress the listeners as they were talking about their future plans. This type of code-switching is the most common type of code-switching. Speakers simply enjoyed mixing Malay and English together in the conversation. This can be especially true among speakers of equal linguistic competencies (Jacobson, 2001, p. 182).

In example 3, the speaker switched to “**wedding**” instead of perkahwinan. According to Soo (1987), the expression of love is not part of Malay culture. Malay speakers often express themselves in the Westerner’s code, with which the topic seems more natural. Example 4 is a classic example of how a bilingual speaker code-switches by repeating himself in a different language. By repeating, the speaker aligned the meaning in Malay and English to improve the understanding of the phrases or words used in the discussion.

#### 4.2.2 English-Malay code-switching

Examples of the code-switching occurrences are given below:

##### **Example (5)**

(AF3) It’s different and shopping is heaven **gila, murah** and wherever you go the tourists are everywhere **tau**.

(It’s different and shopping is heavenly cheap and tourists are everywhere)



**Example (6)**

(AF2) Everybody is like going to Australia but not New Zealand,  
**padahal sebelah aje.**

(Everybody is going to Australia but not New Zealand, and it is just next  
to each other)

**Example (7)**

(AM1) Ipoh is so **panas** actually.

(Ipoh is actually very hot)

**Example (8)**

(BM3) I prefer to live where there is no noise, **tak ada bunyi-bunyi kereta,**  
**jalan jam.**

(I prefer to live where there is no noise, no car horns, and no traffic jam)

The examples above show code-switching occurrences where Malay words and phrases were inserted into English sentences. Examples 1 and 3 show the use of Malay adjectives that replaced English adjectives without changing the structure of the sentence. In example 4, the speaker defined what he meant as “no noise” in a different language. The speaker switched to L1 to emphasize the degree of quietness and calmness of the place he wished to live in the future. According to Malik (1994), the “alternation between two languages is highly meaningful in terms of the conversational context”.

### 4.3 Types of Code-switching

The types of code-switching are based on Poplack's (1980) three types of code-switching:

- 1) tag-switching: speaker adds a tag phrase in a different language
- 2) inter-sentential switching: speaker switches languages between sentences
- 3) intra-sentential switching: speaker switches languages in the middle of a sentence

In this study, the types of code-switching were determined from the recorded observations. A total of 30 minutes of recording were collected and transcribed. Table 4.2 below shows the total amount of Malay-English and English-Malay code-switching occurrences according to Poplack's (1980) three types of code-switching:

**Table 4.2 Types of code-switching occurrences**

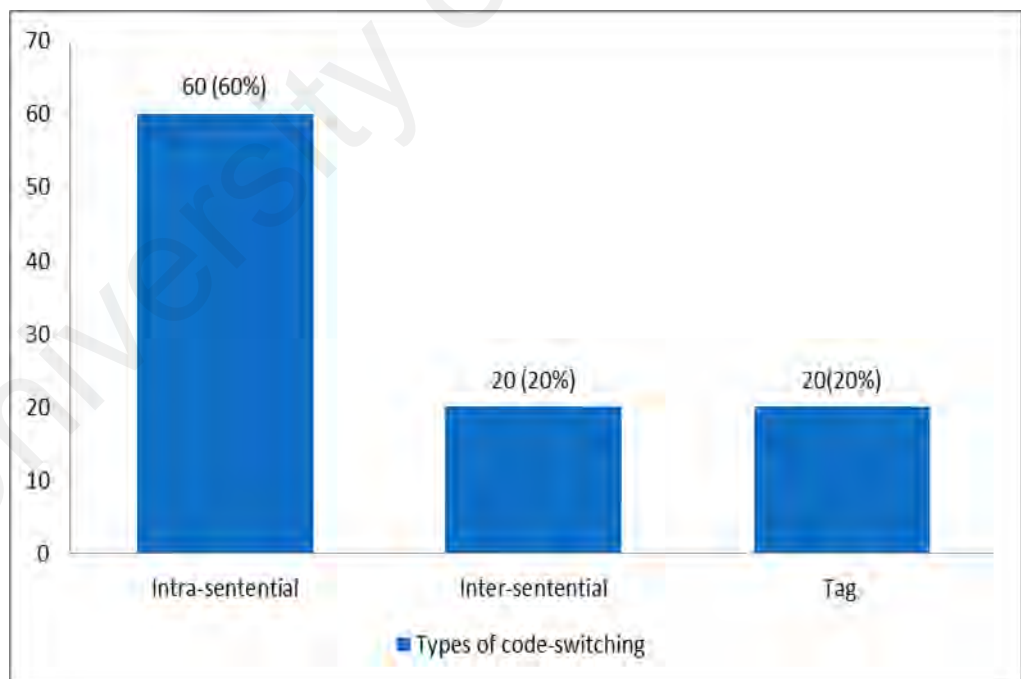
Utterances	Types of code-switching		
	Intra-sentential switching	Inter-sentential switching	Tag switching
Number of occurrences	116	37	23
Percentage	66%	21%	13%

According to Table 4.2, the most common switches observed were intra-sentential,  $n = 116$  (66%), followed by inter-sentential,  $n = 37$  (21%) and the least is tag switching,  $n = 23$  (13%). The detailed distribution of the code-switching occurrences

according to types during Malay-English and English-Malay code-switching will be discussed in Sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2.

### 4.3.1 Malay-English code-switching

As seen in Figure 4.1, 57% (100) instances of Malay to English code-switching were recorded. This section will focus on Malay-English code-switching occurrences and the types of code-switching observed. By having the knowledge of two or more languages, a bilingual society, like Malaysian's, has an advantage to swap the languages intra-sententially or inter-sententially for different purposes. The study shows that there exist three types of Malay-English code-switching instances. This is demonstrated in Figure 4.2.



**Figure 4.2 Types of code-switching during Malay-English code-switching instances**

From the analysis, it is found that intra-sentential code-switching is the most preferred by the participants (60%) while both inter-sentential and tag switching had the same number of occurrences respectively (20%). Poplack (1980) stated that intra-sentential code-switching are frequently observed among balanced and more fluent bilingual speakers and it is largely reserved for “communication between members of the same group”. All the participants in the study are Malays. The participants felt more confident speaking in Malay while regularly switching to English with confidence. The participants were aware that their friends have the same language capacity thus allowing them to code-switch with ease. Meanwhile, bilinguals who are less fluent in one of the two languages usually prefer inter-sentential switches because this allows them to code-switch „without the fear of violating a grammatical rule of either of the languages involved“ (Poplack, 1980, p. 581).

#### 4.3.1.1 Intra-sentential code-switching

Intra-sentential code-switching presents an unequal partnership between two languages where one of the two alternating languages serves as the main language which provides the morphosyntactic frame, and the other serves as the inserted language that supplies the words (Rasdi, 2016). In this section, Malay is the main language that provides the grammatical frames and English is the embedded language that provides the inserted words or clauses.

##### **Example (9)**

(BM3) After kita dah ada **stable job**, **sure** kita nak rumah yang cantik kan?

(After we have a stable job, we sure want a beautiful house right?)

### Example (10)

(BM3) Tak terlalu **crowded**.

(Not so crowded)

### Example (11)

(BM1) Maybe aku **involve** dengan **education** **because best** kot klu boleh ajar budak-budak kan?

(Maybe I could be involved in education because it is good to teach children right?)

In Example 10, the participant inserted an English adjective “**crowded**” to replace the Malay word *sesak* without changing its part of speech. As stated by Musyken (2000), one of the types of code-switching included insertion and alternation. Insertion is when the speakers exchange a single-word or single-utterance. Here, the choice to choose the word “**crowded**” instead of *sesak* might be culturally influenced. The same example can also be seen in Example 11. The use of the word “**involve**” to replace the Malay equivalent *terlibat* might be due to the formality of the Malay word compared to the English version.

Meanwhile, in Examples 9 and 11 the speakers alternated between Malay and English in a longer and more complex way. In Example 10, the speaker used “stable job” to define a more economically established situation in his future. Once established, he would want to buy *a rumah yang cantik* (beautiful house). The words “**stable**” could be replaced with its equivalent *stabil*, a Malay word that is loaned from English, but as a

TESL student, the participant might feel more comfortable with the English pronunciation. The English adverb “**best**” is used to mean “superlatively good”. It is also a common expression in Malay borrowed from English.

#### 4.3.1.2 Inter-sentential code-switching

##### Example (12)

(CF1) **You know that** kita boleh berangan kat situ? Yes, I would like to go to New York!

(Do you know that we could pretend to be there? Yes, I would like to go to New York!)

##### Example (13)

(CF1) Pergi musim bunga. Bunga tulip dia. **The beds of tulips.** Ya Allah beautifulnya.

(You should go in spring. Their tulips. The bed of tulips. Oh God, they are so beautiful!)

Example 12 is an inter-sentential utterance. The speaker used the pronoun “**you**” to address her respondent and continued on in Malay. Borrowed pronouns, like “you” and “I”, are particularly common in colloquial Malay. They apparently provide a welcome opportunity extremely common in colloquial Malay to lessen the gap between high-low and formal-informal distinctions (Hoogervorst, 2015, p. 37). Next she switched to English to emphasize her dreams about going to New York.

In Example 13, the speaker started in Malay suggesting her friends to go to Amsterdam in spring because of the tulips that bloom during the season. She switched to English when describing the beauty of the beds of tulips. Later on she switched again when praising Allah and then switched again to English to describe the beautiful tulips. She ended her sentence with *nya*, signifying the stress commonly used in Malay on the adjective “beautiful”.

#### 4.3.1.3 Tag switching

##### Example (14)

(CF4) So, mana lagi?

(So, where next?)

##### Example (15)

(BM1) Let's say aku nak kawasan yang tak terlampau kekampungan sangat.

(For instance, I would like an area which is not so remote)

In both examples, the speakers use common tag switches in the forms of so and let's (let us say) at the beginning of the sentences.

### 4.3.2 English-Malay code-switching

As seen in Figure 4.1, 43% (76) occurrences of English to Malay code-switching were recorded. This next section will focus on English-Malay code-switching occurrences and the types of code-switching observed. Most of the code-switching occurrences were intra-sentential switching (68.4%), followed by inter-sentential switches (25%) and the least were tag switches (6.6%). This is demonstrated in Figure 4.3.

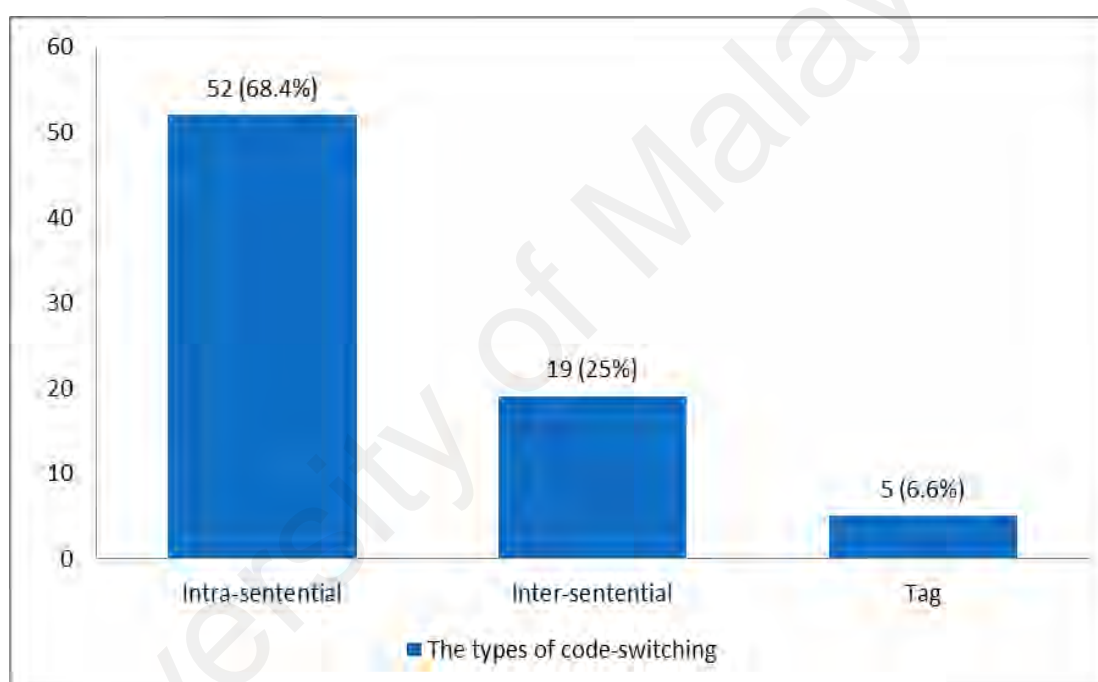


Figure 4.3 Types of code-switching during English-Malay code-switching instances

#### 4.3.2.1 Intra-sentential code-switching

##### Example (16)

(AF3) And then what can we say the locals are very welcoming; they are **macam** very kind-hearted **gila la**.



(And the locals are very welcoming. They are also very kind-hearted)

**Example (17)**

(AF3) Everybody is like going to Australia but not New Zealand, **padahal sebelah aje**.

(Everyone goes to Australia but not New Zealand that is just next door (to Australia).

**Example (18)**

(BM1) Untuk dream **punya** job, of course **la** my dream is to be a lecturer **kan**.

(For my dream job, of course I want to be a lecturer).

There are instances of both intra-sentential and tag switching in the examples. In Example 16, the speaker used the Malay word “**macam**” that means like in English that is one of the common English expression used by the young Malaysians. Another common Malaysian expression used by the speaker is “**gila**” (super) which is one of the common semantic innovations in the contemporary Malay youth language (Hoogervorst, 2015, p. 32). In Example 16, “**gila**” emphasizes the fact that the locals are very kind-hearted.

Intra-sentential code-switching is observed in Example 18 when the speaker code-switched to replace possession by using the Malay word “**punya**”. In the same sentences there were two instances of tag switching by using the fillers “**la**” and “**kan**”, in the middle and at the end of the sentence respectively.

#### 4.3.2.2 Inter-sentential code-switching

##### Example (19)

(AF2) There is no direct flight, **tak banyak**. You have to tukar.

(There are not many direct flights. You need to change)

##### Example (20)

(BM3) So your dream job is to be an engineer? So **kau cita-cita nak jadi** engineer **lah?**

(So your dream job is to be an engineer? So do you want to be an engineer?)

##### Example (21)

(AF3) You guys are making me hungry. **Sebab tak makan lagi.**

(You guys are making me hungry because I have not eaten)

All three examples started with an English utterance that is followed by utterances spoken entirely in Malay (Examples 19 and 21) or by an inter-sentential switching utterance (Example 20). In Example 20, the speaker uses a very common particle in BM “**lah**”. “**Lah**” has various meanings, depending on the way it is pronounced. It can function as “an intensifying particle, as a marker of informal style, as a signal of intimacy, for persuading, deriding, wheedling, rejecting, and many other purposes” (Tongue, 1979). Here, the speaker uses “**lah**” to confirm his friend’s intention to be an engineer.

### 4.3.2.3 Tag-switching

#### Example (22)

(AM1) I went to Johor **pun** like because I want to go to Singapore by car.

(I went to Johor just because I was driving to Singapore)

#### Example (23)

(AF2) It's like going to New York **pun**, it's a metropolitan city, so many people and everyone is so fast-paced.

(It's just like going to New York; it's a metropolitan city, so many people and everyone is so fast-paced)

#### Example (24)

(CF1) So educational trip **lah**.

(So is this an educational trip?)

The examples demonstrate examples of tag switching using particles “**pun**” and “**lah**” that are commonly used in Malay utterances. Malay particles like “**lah**” seldom express “familiarity, informality and solidarity” (Goddard, 1994).

#### 4.4 Functions of Code-switching

After identifying the types of code-switching, the researcher determines the functions of code-switching using Appel and Muysken's (2006) six functions of code-switching as the framework: referential, expressive, directive, phatic, metalinguistic and poetic functions. The data of the function of code switching were taken from the type of code switching determined earlier. Only five out of six functions were observed and they are referential, expressive, metalinguistic, phatic and poetic. Directive functions were not present. The three most frequent functions identified in the occurrences of code-switching are referential, expressive, and phatic functions. The distribution can be seen in table 4.3 below.

**Table 4.3 Functions of code-switching occurrences**

Code-switching functions	Frequency	Percentage
Referential	82	57.3
Expressive	42	30
Phatic	12	9
Metalinguistic	4	3
Poetic	1	0.7
Total	265	100

#### 4.4.1 Referential function

Referential function refers to instances of code-switching where people shift from using the dominant language to another language because they are short of certain knowledge of the dominant language or when they are unsure of how to say the word in the dominant language (Appel & Muysken, 2006, p. 118). These functions can also be related to topic related switching because a particular language might be more appropriate or suitable to be used, compared to another, for a particular topic. The referential functions of the code-switching instances were divided into subcategories. The categories and examples of the referential functions are given below:

##### Category 1: Non-Malay equivalent

##### Example (25)

(AF2) Lagi-lagi dah nak **Halloween** kan?

(Especially that Halloween is near right?)

##### Example (26)

(CF1) Dia orang ada **cliff bungee, bridge bungee**...

(They have cliff bungee, bridge bungee...)

##### Example (27)

(CF1) Macam **summer camp** la.

(It is like summer camp)

In all three examples, the participants switched to English because there are no equivalent words in Malay for the words. “**Halloween**” has no equivalent in Malay mainly because it is not celebrated in Malaysia. “**Cliff bungee**” and “**bridge bungee**” are activities that are not common to Malaysians and not practiced in Malaysia. Unlike other sports activities that have both Malay and English versions, these two activities do not have their equivalent in Malay. Another not so common activity in Malaysia is “**summer camp**”. These speakers might have been exposed to the concept of “**summer camp**” through American television and movies. However summer camps are non-existent in Malaysia simply because it is summer all year long thus the need for a Malay equivalent to the term is unimportant.

## **Category 2: Culture-specific concepts or reality**

### **Example (28)**

(BM2) Aku nak kahwin kat tempat yang **grand**, makan-makan kat hotel yang **grand** sikit, **of course we will have a full white wedding**.

(I want to have a grand wedding, eat at fancy hotels and of course we will have a full white wedding)

In the example, the participant switched to English when talking about his wedding. The participant feels when talking about love, English might be a more appropriate language to be used compared to Malay. This may be because open expression of love is not part of Malay culture and in voicing a 'foreign topic', he expresses it in the Westerner's code with which the topic seems more natural (Soo, 1987).

The speaker also described a “**full white wedding**”. This expression is influenced by the western culture where brides are normally dressed in white for their weddings. However, in Malay weddings, brides do not wear white dresses but they have certainly adopted the expression to describe a perfect wedding. There is no equivalent to the expression in Malay.

**Example (29)**

(CF2) Sambut **birthday**, **anniversary** tak.

(Birthday is celebrated, but not anniversary)

**Example (30)**

(CF1) Sebab aku nak sambut **birthday** kat Disneyland.

(Because I want to celebrate my birthday in Disneyland).

In these examples, the participants switched to English when talking about “**birthday**” and “**anniversary**”. These two expressions are common wishes, adopted from the English language, among Malaysian bilinguals. It is common to hear Malaysians wish each other “Happy Birthday” and continue their conversations in their respective L1.

### Category 3: Technical terms

#### Example (31)

(BM1) **Maybe** aku **involve** dengan **education** **because** **best** kot kalau ajar budak- budak kan?

(Maybe I could be involved with education because it would be nice to teach kids)

Romaine (1989) gave examples of discourse markers like “you know”, “I mean” or “like” that are commonly and spontaneously used by multilingual speakers in a conversation. They are either placed before or in the middle of a sentence. An example of this discourse marker is the word “maybe”. The speakers switched to English because of habitual expression.

#### Example (32)

(BM2) Tapi aku rasa lagi best jadi **engineer**.

(But I think it is better to be an engineer)

#### Example (33)

(BM2) **Building** semua aku yang buat nanti.

(I will do all the buildings)

In the examples, the speakers were talking about their dreams in the future. They switched to English to replace Malay words *engineer* and *bangunan*. The existence of their equivalent in Malay does not stop the speakers from switching to English due to “habitually mixed discourse” (David, 2003).



#### Category 4: Emphasizing a point

##### Example (34):

(AF3) Everything there is heaven, **gila, murah** and wherever you go tourists are everywhere tau.

(Everything there is heavenly cheap and wherever you go tourists are everywhere)

The function of these insertions is mainly to emphasize on a point. The speaker switched to Malay adjectives to describe how cheap shopping is in Thailand. “**Gila**” is a Malay adjective that is used as a slang word among Malaysian youths to emphasize and to blow something or an issue out of proportion. Also, the speakers are friends and this influences how they address each other.

##### Example (35):

(AF2) Food in Kelantan. Every time I **balik**, non stop. They are gonna buy **dari pagi sampai malam**. Food **aje**.

(Food in Kelantan is great. Every time I go back my (family) buys food non stop from morning till night. Just food)

There is a continuation of intra-sentential switching from the beginning of the conversation. When she started with “Food in Kelantan”, she stressed on how great food in that state is. She switched to Malay to emphasize on how her (family) would eat continuously the whole day. At end of the conversation, she finished with a switch “food **aje**” (only food). She was asserting and emphasizing that food in Kelantan is so good.

**Example (36):**

(AF2) There is no direct flight. **Tak banyak**. You have to **tukar**.

(There is no direct flight. Not many. You need to change)

“**Tak banyak**” is actually the repetition of the English sentence *„there is no direct flight“*. The speaker began the conversation in English and switched to Malay to emphasise that there are no flights.

Malik (1994) affirmed that code-switching can be triggered when bilingual speakers are “unable to find an appropriate expression in a language or when certain concepts are only available in one language and do not have words that convey equivalent meanings in other language”. This may be because of the speakers’ different levels of competency in the two languages. They may switch to the language that they are more competent in when they could not find suitable words or phrases in another language due to the lack of vocabulary in that particular language as it may not be their mother tongue. From this study, it was observed that the participants did not code-switch from English to Malay because they were unable to find the appropriate and suitable word or expression in English. Instead, the participants switched to Malay mainly because of personal habitual preferences. This is shown in the examples 37 and 38:

**Example (37)**

(BM1) At that time, **ada banyak** commitment, of course family **lagi**.

(At that time, I have a lot of commitment and of course which include family)

### Example (38)

(BM1) I want to travel and go places like that **kalau** possible **tiga tahun sekali** **aku** travel **kalau boleh**. **Jauh-jauh** Europe **ke**, by thirty I know I would have achieved that.

(I want to travel and go places if possible once every three years to faraway places such as Europe and by thirty I know that I would have achieved that.)

According to Jacobson (2004), code-switching is natural for Malaysian speakers and they engage into it for the “mere pleasure of combining the two languages” as shown in the two examples. Gumperz (1982) marked that speakers would subconsciously change their style of speech to accommodate to their listeners. The participants in this study are equally competent in both Malay and English and they are aware that they could code-switch to either language yet still are understood.

### Example (39)

(AF2) There was one time, we were running from the breakfast hall, me and my friend, **kitaorang nak** press the lift **tau**. And then there was the **tong sampah** and that **apa** ashes of tray **rokok** thing. And then **benda tu jatuh**.

(There was one time, when my friend and I were running from the breakfast hall to the lift. And then the dustbin and the ash tray fell.)

The speaker recalled the time when she and her friend were staying in a hotel. They were running to the lift where they accidentally hit the dustbin and ash tray. The speaker switched to Malay to replace *dustbin* with “**tong sampah**”. When she could not

find the equivalent of ash tray, she switched to “**apa**” (*what*), indirectly asking her friends for help to recall the English equivalent of ash tray. She switched to Malay to describe “**ashes of tray rokok**”. In this example, there speaker was unable to find suitable vocabulary so she switched to her L1 (Malay) vocabulary.

### **Category 5: To clarify**

It is common for bilingual speakers to switch codes when they want to clarify or further elaborate their messages or ideas (Zentella, 1979). This is to ensure effective explanation and to get their messages across.

#### **Example (40):**

(BM3) So your dream job is to be an engineer? So **kau cita-cita nak jadi**  
engineer lah?

(So your dream job is to be an engineer? So, you want to be an  
engineer?)

The speaker started asking the question in English and later switched to Malay, still asking the same question. The speaker repeated the question that was uttered in English, in Malay. He wanted to clarify his question and to ensure that his friends understood his question.

#### **Example (41)**

(AF3) You guys are making me hungry. **Sebab tak makan lagi.**

(You are making me hungry because I have not eaten)

The conversation about food was making the speaker hungry. She announced it in English and later clarified in Malay.

**Example (42)**

(AF2): If you go to Cape Town, there are a lot orang yang **macam** can survive.

(AM1): Cape Town is ok **kan?** It is a developed area of Africa.

(There are a lot of people who do survive in Capetown.)

Cape Town is safe right? It is a developed area of Africa)

The speakers were discussing about the situation in Cape Town. The Malay word “**macam**” does not have a grammar and semantic function. It only helps to clarify the fact that Cape Town is safe to live and that people can actually survive there. AM1 wanted to clarify further. She said “Cape Town is ok **kan?**” The speaker ended the utterance with an interjection “**kan**” to clarify that Cape Town is really a safe place to live in.

**Category 6: Habitual expressions**

**Example (43):**

(AF2) Road trips like from KL **gerak** to Melaka.

(Road trips from KL to Melaka)

“**Gerak**” has become a slang word among young Malaysians. Hoogervost (2015: 3) defined youth language as “slang used by young people”. AF2 switched to

Malay and used a slang word “**gerak**” because she is confident that her peers would understand her. The switch also serves as a mark of group identity.

**Example (44):**

(AF2) I’ve been to New York and LA so **macam** to go there again would be fun but I wanna go to New Orleans. Like the vibe there **macam kan** New Orleans is known as..

(I’ve been to New York and LA so to go there again would be fun but I wanna go to New Orleans. New Orleans is known for its vibe)

“**Macam**” is a filler that does not contribute any meaning to the sentence. It is typically used by Malaysian bilinguals in their daily conversations.

#### 4.4.2 Expressive function

The expressive function is when speakers use more than one language to stress their self-identity or feelings to others in the conversation. According to Appel and Musyken (2006), when bilinguals code-switch to express or emphasize perceptions or feelings, they are applying the expressive functions. Participants in this study switched from Malay to English to express their feelings on certain topics such as when talking about their future or dreams and when expressing their feelings. The topics identified from the data collected are illustrated in the example:

## Topic 1: when talking about their future or dreams

### Example (45):

(CF1) **You know** that kita boleh berangan kat situ. **Yes, I would like to go to New York.**

(You know that we could dream of going there. Yes, I would like to go to New York)

The participant dreamt about going to New York. In the first utterance, she switched from English by saying “**you know**” to gain her friends’ attention. In the next utterance, when she talked about her dreams, she switched completely to English. She felt more at ease expressing her plans for a holiday in English compared to in Malay.

### Example (46)

(BM1) Aku dah lama dah nak buat benda ni **like one day I know** aku boleh duduk tepi pantai **like** Hawaii, **like in the movie**.

(I have always wanted to do this. I know that one day I can live by the beach like in Hawaii, like in the movie)

The participant also expressed his feelings about spending time by the beach in Hawaii. He switched to English clauses when mesmerizing about his dreams.

### Example (47)

(BM1) **In 10 years’ time** aku **maybe** dah habis master.

(In 10 years time I would have completed my master degree)

There are equal numbers of Malay and English words in the utterance. However, the moment the speaker began expressing his dreams about the future, he switched to English.

## **Topic 2: when expressing feelings**

### **Example (48)**

(AF2) Like Malacca, as you know, it has a lot of historic essence there. Penang, it's like a food haven. Ipoh.

(AM1) **My kampung.**

(My village)

The speaker automatically switched to Malay when describing her hometown. “**Kampung**” is a Malay term which means village or rural settlement in Malaysia (Hussain, 2013). Malays generally associate their hometown as “**kampung**” even though they live in a big city. This term of endearment is described by Awang Goneng, a Malaysian-born author who lived in London for decades, as “the womb of the Malay and soul that will always bring the Malays back home to their kampong” (Goneng, 2007). To Malays in Malaysia, describing their hometown as “kampong” is habitual.



#### 4.4.3 Phatic function

Code-switching has a phatic function when it is used to show a change in tone and to emphasise parts of a conversation that are of importance, and simultaneously makes people pay more attention to the information. Some examples are given below:

##### Example (49):

(AF2) **And then**, benda tu jatuh.

(And then, the object fell)

In this example, the speaker used a discourse marker in English “**and then**” to add suspense and emphasise on the trouble that she was going to be in.

##### Example (50):

(BM3) Suasana macam kampung tau. **Yes, like back to the old days.**

(It is like in the village. Yes, like back to the old days)

The speaker used this intra-sentential code-switching utterance from Malay-English to attract the attention of his interlocutors by emphasizing “**the good old days**”.

#### 4.4.4 Metalinguistics function

Metalinguistic functions refer to when speakers code-switch to provide quotations from others or to cite a speech that is composed by others (Appel & Muysken, 2006). This is because they wanted to get the meanings across to the others as clearly as possible by trying to retain the original and exact words used by the speaker whom they were quoting (Stapa & Khan, 2016).

**Example (51) :**

(CM3): Lebih kurang la tu. Airnya jernih boleh berenang, airnya tenang.

(Something like that. The water is clear and safe for swimming)

(CF1): Mana tau ada **sponsor** ke? **If**, kan?

(Who knows of there is someone who is willing to sponsor right?)

(CM3): Over ambitious.

(CF1): **Confidence is king.**

CM3 was commenting on how CF1 dreams of someone paying for her dream holiday. He said CF1 was bei

ng over ambitious. To that, CF1 retorted back by quoting in English, “**Confidence is king**”.

**Example (52)**

(AM1) I guess it’s a place where guys can **cuci mata**.

(I guess it’s a place where guys can get a good view of something)

The speaker switched to Malay to quote a common expression “**cuci mata**” because the expressions best suits the meaning she wanted to convey. The expression “**cuci mata**” is a Malay proverb that will lose its meaning if translated into another language thus the speaker code-switched to English to quote a common expression that best explained the situation of the moment.

#### 4.4.5 Poetic function

According to Appel & Muysken (2006, p. 120), poetic function is when the switches “involve words, puns or jokes in different languages for the purpose of amusement and entertainment and also to make fun or jokes in a context”. There is only one example of a poetic function switch observed from the study which is from the English-Malay code switching.

##### Example (53):

(CF1): During this month **dekat New York memang dia orang punya** festival mood **tu** is very happening. Christmas tree, the largest Christmas tree, the **beautifulest**.

(CM3): Beautifulest... **hancur**.

The participants were talking about Christmas celebration in New York. CF1 described the largest Christmas tree as the “**beautifulest**”. She added a superlative suffix *-est* to the adjective “*beautiful*” with the intention to magnify the beauty of the tree. To her friend Speaker 2, it was a joke. Speaker 2 answered “**Beautifulest... hancur**”. “Hancur” is slang word, commonly used by young Malays to mean *destroy*. “**Hancur**” was meant to be a joke in this context, referring to CF1 incorrect use of the suffix *-est*.

As mentioned above, directive function was not observed in the corpus. This may be because the participants knew each other quite well therefore there was no need for a directive function to ensure cooperation among them.

#### 4.5 Summary

The results of the analysis showed that the Malay bilingual participated in this study preferred to use Malay (L1) as the matrix language. It was observed that the total number of code-switching occurrences with Malay as the matrix language is higher,  $n = 100$  (57%) than the code-switching occurrences with English as the matrix language,  $n = 76$  (43%). Regarding the types of code-switching, the results of the analysis showed that Poplack's (1980) three types of code-switching were all present with intra-sentential,  $n = 116$  (66%) being the highest, followed by inter-sentential,  $n = 37$  (21%) and the least is tag switching,  $n = 23$  (13%). In terms of the functions of code-switching, it was revealed that only five out of six functions proposed by Appel & Muysken (2006) were observed while the three most frequent functions identified in the occurrences of code-switching in Malay-English and English-Malay are expressive, referential, and phatic function.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

### 5.1 Introduction

In this last chapter, the summary of the research will be presented. This chapter will be divided into two sections. The first section provides the general conclusion of the study based on the objectives and research questions. The second section presents possible studies that could be continued to further analyse on the topic of code-switching among Malaysian bilinguals especially among Malay-English bilinguals.

### 5.2 Discussion of Research Questions

This paper has explored the different types and functions of code-switching in among Malay bilinguals in Malaysia. From the data gained, it is clear that code-switching is spontaneous and pervasive. The conversations recorded also proved that both languages, English and Malay, are used together effortlessly and not treated as two distinctive entities.

It is also interesting to note that there is a difference the matrix language for the three groups. An interesting pattern observed from the data is the different manner in which the younger and older groups code-switch. The older participants tend to code-switch from Malay to English, and the younger participants are primarily English-dominant, code-switching from English to Malay.

The participants were divided into small groups and were given topics for discussions. The discussions were recorded and transcribed. From the transcriptions, the researcher identified the types and functions of code-switching with Poplack (1980) three types of code-switching and Appel & Musyken (2005) functions of code-switching as the framework. The participants were later interviewed to elaborate more on their perception and reasons on why they code-switch.

From the transcription, two different matrix languages were identified and these became the reason for the division of 2 types of code-switching occurrences: the Malay-English and the English-Malay code-switching. The researcher adapted the definition of Choy (2011) on Mandarin Chinese - English code-switching. Thus, Malay-English code-switching in this study refers to a code-switching instance which consists mainly of Malay words and English-Malay code-switching refers to utterances that consist of mainly English words.

#### **5.2.1 Research question 1: What are the common types of code-switching instances among Malay-English bilingual college students?**

In both Malay-English and English-Malay code-switching instances, intra-sentential switches were the most preferred type of code-switching. This finding is supported by Poplack's (1980) statement that "intra-sentential code-switching are frequently observed among balanced and more fluent bilingual speakers". Meanwhile, bilinguals who are less fluent in one of the two languages usually prefer inter-sentential switches because this allows them to code-switch „without the fear of violating a grammatical rule of either of the languages involved“ (Poplack, 1980:581). Inter-

sentential switches were also identified in both Malay-English and English-Malay code-switching instances in this study.

### **5.2.2 Research question 2: What are the functions of code-switching instances among Malay-English bilingual college students?**

One of the objectives of this study is to determine the functions of code-switching among Malay bilinguals. The findings of the study revealed that the matrix language of two out of three recorded observations conducted was Malay (L1). It is unexpected result as the respondents were TESL students. The respondents felt more comfortable using Malay, while code-switching in English, to communicate with each other. A possible explanation to these findings is that the respondents might have felt a bit pressured during the observation and in order to overcome the feeling they turned to Malay for support. The findings would have been different if the respondents were of different races.

Five functions of code-switching were identified: referential, expressive, metalinguistic, phatic and poetic functions. Referential function is the most common function observed. This is consistent with the findings of the interviews. From the interviews, respondents claimed that they usually switched codes when they could not find the appropriate words, terms or concepts and code-switching is mainly done for better comprehension. Also, it was difficult for them to maintain the use of English at all times when they were among their own race. This is reflected in the data analysis. Referential functions can be found more in Malay-English code-switching instances compared to English-Malay switching instances. Participants would switch to English

when they could not find the Malay equivalent of the English word or phrases. Similarly it was revealed that some cultural-concepts and ideas, birthdays and anniversaries were better expressed in English than in Malay. Topics concerning love and relationship were best expressed in English. In the interviews, respondents also cited that they opted to use English when expressing their love for someone. One of the respondents replied that she felt awkward when expressing her feelings in Malay.

The primary reason why these participants switched codes was merely out of habit. They preferred using the English equivalent even though the equivalents of these words do exist in Malay. Habitual reason of code-switching as stated by David (2003) is not because of the speaker's lack of vocabulary but purely habitual. This is typical of a multilingual country like Malaysia where speakers use more than one language in a discourse.

The speakers also had a habit of repeating the same word or phrases to emphasize on a point and also to ensure the continuity of the conversations. The participants knew each other and they were aware of each other's linguistic competency. Knowing that the listener would be able to understand them well in both Malay and English, the participants felt confident and at ease code-switching throughout the interactions. However, referential functions in Malay-English code-switching instances were not employed as much as in English-Malay instances. There were no instances of using Malay words or phrases to replace English.



Another function observed in the conversations is the expressive function. Sometimes the speakers felt more comfortable expressing themselves using a certain language when talking about certain topics. As stated by Grosjean (1982), in some instances, members of a community are reported to code-switch regularly when a particular topic is discussed. This is reflected by this study where it was clearly revealed that conversation topics play an important role that triggered code-switching among the speakers. Topics concerning the participants' plans for the future and feelings were preferably expressed in English. This is consistent with the findings of the interviews that revealed that the interviewees would subconsciously switch codes to English when talking about certain topics like romantic feelings and education. One interviewee mentioned that she would code-switch to Malay when she wanted her advice to have a greater impact on her listener. Other than specific topics, diverse social factors such as age, race and status also influence speakers' language choice. During the interviews, the respondents stated that their choice of language depended largely on the race of the people they talked to. When they spoke to a Malay person they would switch to Malay while English was used usually when speaking to a Chinese person. In more formal situations like conversations with their lecturers, they would speak in English and would try to avoid code-switching to Malay as they thought it would be improper to do so as they were TESL students.

Meanwhile, the only function that was not observed was directive function. This may be because the participants knew each other quite well therefore there was no need for a directive function to ensure cooperation among them.

A comprehensive study on motivations, functions and reasons for code-switching has been done by a number of linguists and researchers from different linguistic perspectives. However, Auer (1988) argued that code-switching is used in a creative way and its functions should be boundless without a pre-established set of functional categories.

### **5.3 Implications of the Study**

The findings of the study hope to enlighten Malaysian students on the phenomenon of code-switching. Code-switching might be accepted in the community but an overuse of it might not be healthy as it can sometimes bring about confusion. Code-switching among bilingual speakers is a norm and has different functions. However, as found in this study there are instances of code-switching that have no real functions. These types of code-switching were done out of habit. Students should train themselves to use the language correctly without code-switching.

For language practitioners, the findings of this study could help them understand the reason why their students code-switch.

### **5.4 Limitations of the Study**

The study only focuses on Malay bilinguals code-switching between Malay and English who are currently studying in a private institution in Kuala Lumpur. This group of participants does not present all Malay bilinguals in Malaysia. Data was collected by

observations of discussions of the participants. The time given was limited and the topics of discussion were given. The objective of the research is to observe an informal communication. However by providing topics to the discussions, the discussions were somewhat controlled.

## **5.5 Recommendations for Further Studies**

For future studies, the types and functions of code-switching among bilingual Malay-English college students can be observed among a larger number of participants from more institutes of higher learning to obtain a more substantial result. Studies can also focus on topic-specific context and specific gender in order to identify the different types and functions of code-switching. As this study is aimed to add to the very limited studies on verbal and informal Malay-English and English-Malay code-switching occurrences, it is hoped that this study will help future researchers in conducting further studies apart from clarifying to the public on this current language trend among university students in code-switching in Malaysia.

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