

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the methodology of the present study. The main objective of this study is to investigate functions of code switching among primary school learners during peer interactions. It also aims to identify the linguistics features present in their communication and compare patterns when different genders code switch.

### **3.2 Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by a number of theoretical assumptions related to bilingualism, communicative competence and gender. Firstly, children's patterns language usage and code switching often mirror the ways in which language is used in their communities (Lanza, 1997; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). The working hypothesis from a developmental perspective is that code switching increases in bilingual children as they have more exposure to the L2, and it is used as a resource to extend communicative competence (Gumperz and Berenz, 1982).

Secondly, it has been long recognized that men and women differ in communicative style (Lakoff, 2004) and this could be used to find similarities or differences between gender in their way of language learning in conversations.

The plan of this study will be to set forth the context in which gender and code switching have gained currency in recent years and then discuss the ways in which the interplay of these two elements have taken place in primary school learning classroom with the principal focus of this study being on the Malaysian community.

In the classic code switching study by Poplack (1980) with bilinguals, she analyzed adults' conversations in natural settings during a sociolinguistic interview to learn about inter-gender bilinguals' linguistic competence and their use of code switching. Poplack's findings indicate that code switching might be an indicator of bilingual ability in adults and code switching among the children with balanced language skills in both languages had the purpose to outweigh the gender point of view. This is because regardless of gender, all children indicate development of bilingual communicative competence while still learning the second language (L2) (Reyes, 2001).

According to Pavlenko (2001), all language contact phenomena, including bilingualism, acquire different meanings, indifferent contexts and can be linked to gender only indirectly. In some contexts, where bilingual skills are highly valued, they may become a means for one group to dominate the other, while in others bilingualism and cultural mediation are constructed as "servile" occupations and assigned to the less powerful group. Depending on gender relations in minority and majority communities, the values and benefits of monolingualism and bilingualism may be different for men and women. In some situations, knowledge of the majority language would be useful to everyone in the community, in others, the majority language is more useful for men than for women, and yet in others, it is women who profit most by shifting to the majority language.

Here, the code switching of the participants in this study will be investigated based on Gumperz and Berenz (1982)'s findings of twelve types of functions for conversational code switching. These twelve functions of code switches will be used to analyze the patterns of code switching by these participants in a Malaysian classroom setting.

The study also aims to explore if there are differences in these patterns between different genders. Gender in this study is seen as a sociolinguistics element in which

this study hopes to gain insight on the connection between code switching and gender in communication in Malaysian classroom settings.

Furthermore, occurrence of speech acts in the conversation need to be also investigated and will also be analyzed based on Searle's (1975) Speech Act Theory as to why and how children of different gender use this linguistic feature when code switching.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

The research is conducted in a primary school in Petaling Jaya, Selangor with 99.8% (school record, 2007) majority Malay students. The researcher is attached to the selected school as an English teacher. Most of the students who live in the residential area neighbouring the school come from middle class families. For this research, a group of Year Six pupils were selected as participants of the study based on their average understanding on both languages which are Bahasa Malaysia and English. Data for this study were collected through audio recording which were later transcribed according to Gumperz Notation (1993).

#### **3.3.1 Participants**

Participants consist of eight Year Six (11-12 years old) pupils from the national primary school. The group consist of four male and four female participants. All of the participants are Malay bilinguals, proficient in Malay as their native language (L1) and English as their L2. They use and learn both the language vastly in school.

### **3.3.2 Language Background of Participants**

Bahasa Malaysia is the participants' native language. The interviews with students indicate that the participants use more of Bahasa Malaysia in their daily life compared to English which is used only during the school hour.

These students were chosen to be the participants for this study because they have been close friends for six years. Therefore, the participants are comfortable with each other and all the participants are classmates. It is hoped that the code switching process will occur naturally in this group and understood by all of them.

These participants are from the best class in Year Six, according to the school streaming. On average, they have obtained Grade A to Grade B in their mid term school exams for English and Bahasa Malaysia. They are proficient in both languages to be able to participate in this study. For the selection of participants, their English and Bahasa Malaysia teachers helped to verify that the participants are proficient in both Malay and English. Teachers based their evaluation on the mid-term school's test scores for both subjects, Bahasa Malaysia and English.

### **3.3.3 Groupings**

8 pupils from Year Six were chosen as the participants. This is based on their average understanding of both languages (Bahasa Malaysia and English Language). The Year Six pupils are chosen as they have more language experiences compared to their younger counterparts. The group consist of four male participants and four female participants. Each participant is coded as following:

Male students: M1, M2, M3 and M4 and Female students: F1, F2, F3 and F4

### 3.3.4 Topics

3 topics were chosen for the group discussions as in Table 3.1 below. Table 3.1 below shows topics given for each group and number of participants involved in the groups.

**Table 3.1 : Topics for Group Discussions**

Group	Type of Interaction	Participants	Topics
1	Single Gender Interaction (Male)  Group 1 ( G1)	M1,M2,M3,M4	Who is your favourite singer and why do you choose him/her? (Single Gender Interaction Male Topic 1- SGIM 1)  What is your favourite sport and why do you choose it? (Single Gender Interaction Male Topic 2 – SGIM 2)
2	Single Gender Interaction (Female)  Group 2 ( G 2)	F1, F2, F3, F4	Who is your favourite singer and why do you choose him/her? (Single Gender Interaction Female Topic 1- SGFI 1)  What is your favourite sport and why do you choose it? (Single Gender Interaction Female Topic 2- SGIF 2)
3	Mixed Gender Interaction Group 3 ( G 3 )	M1,M2.M3,M4 F1,F2,F3 & F4	Girls are cleverer than boys! Discuss.

The topics chosen were based on the age group of the participants as students at the age between 11 to 12 years are very much interested in singers and sports activities. Other than that, these topics are interesting for both genders. As for the mixed gender interaction topic, it was selected based on their debate topic that they had participated in early the of the year. This is to give the participants some familiarity and confidence on the topic besides as a topic that catches interest of both genders. 3 discussion groups (G1, G2 and G3) were formed with each group given 10 minutes to discuss a topic

(total of 3 topics). G1 consist of 4 male participants, G2 consist of 4 female participants while G3 consist of all the 8 participants. Total discussion time is about 60 minutes.

### **3.3.5 Informed Consent**

A letter of approval to conduct the research was submitted to the administration of school on June, 2008 and approval received a week later. The timetable slot was later analysed for the appropriate dates of the recordings to be conducted by the researcher. The researcher gave one-week notice before she could do the audio recording and observation. The participants were informed of the research so as to prepare their mindset and to give confidence during the process. Approval from the parents was not obtained because as a teacher at the school, the approval was given by school in that the researcher would be held responsible for any mishaps during the audio recording of the group interactions.

### **3.4 Instrumentation**

Instrumentation is defined as the art and science of measurement and control. Here instrumentation is the technique or ways of collecting and measuring data using instruments such as interviews, questionnaires and recordings. In this study, instrumentations that will be used are interviews and recordings.

#### **3.4.1 Interview**

First, interviews with individual participants will be conducted to ask the following questions:

1. What is your mother tongue?
2. Which language do you speak other than Malay?
3. When do you speak English?

#### 4. Do you like speaking in English?

The researcher conducted an interview session with the participants after the recording to determine the various reasons as to why code-switching occurred in their interactions. The answers were filled in a form by the researcher (Table 4.7 and Appendix B).

### **3.4.2 Data Recording**

Before the first group interaction was conducted for each gender group, participants were informed that the study's purpose was to describe the way language is used in second language classes. In this case, it would be their English language classes. However, they were not informed that code switching was the focus of the study because this can create a sense of carefulness and they may avoid code switching in their interaction.

The audio recorder was placed near the front of the room, generally on a desk or chair near the teacher's desk, while the researcher sat at the back of the room. She tried to be as unobtrusive as possible while recording but occasional problems with recording equipment drew attention to it and her presence in the classroom. The researcher was always in the classroom while recording was carried out.

Each group was recorded separately. Each group was recorded based on the topics given. Overall, each group was given three topics to discuss where two topics (Single Gender Group Discussion Topics) were discussed among the same gender while one topic (Mixed Gender Group Discussion Topic) was discussed among all the participants, both males and females. The discussions were impromptu as this would be able to produce more genuine ideas and spontaneous discussion. According to Preston

(1992), the effective impromptu speaker not only acquires skill in preparing areas to discuss, but in expressing ideas just as those ideas come into consciousness. In impromptu, the diction and word choice occurs while the student thinks. This shows spontaneity especially in research on code switching.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

#### **3.5.1 Transcribing the Recordings**

Firstly, after collecting the recordings, the researcher listened to the recordings carefully. Next, each recording was transcribed into written form. The transcription then typed for easier identification purpose. Then, the researcher transcribed them based on Gumperz and Berenz (1982)'s conventions, working mainly from the audiotapes. The researcher included features of talk that were likely to serve as contextualization cues, that is, features that would help provide understanding of the interaction. Such features include pauses, changes in intonation and volume, gestures, interruptions and overlapping speech. Other than that speech acts by Searle (1975) was also analysed in the transcription to indicate intentionality and consciousness of participants in performing illocutionary act in conversation with their peers. Non-verbal behaviors such as pointing or miming were indicated in the transcripts in square brackets. A list of all symbols used in transcriptions is included in the study. Some portions of the recordings remained unclear or unusable despite repeated listening. Then, the researcher compared the speech in the corpus with the categories of code switching identified by Gumperz and Berenz (1982) as stated in Table 3.3.



### 3.5.2 Analyzing Transcriptions

The analysis begins with the categories of a general code switching typology presented by Gumperz (1982). Each of the conversations lasted about 10 minutes. Each speaker's turn, between the turns of speaking by the other child, was taken as a unit of analysis. For the frequency analysis, counts of all code switches were made. The following frame of coding was based for analysis.

**Table 3.2 : Frame of Coding**

Codes	Meanings
SGIM 1	<b>Single Gender Interaction Male Topic 1</b> Who is your favourite singer and why do you choose him/her?
SGIM 2	<b>Single Gender Interaction Male Topic 2</b> What is your favourite sport and why do you choose it?
SGIF 1	<b>Single Gender Interaction Female Topic 1</b> Who is your favourite singer and why do you choose him/her?
SGIF 2	<b>Single Gender Interaction Female Topic 2</b> What is your favourite sport and why do you choose it?
MGI	<b>Mixed Gender Interaction</b>
M = Male-M1, M2,etc	Coding for Male Participants Number 1 to 4 (M1, M2, M3, M4)
F = Female-F1,F2,etc	Coding for Female Participants Number 1 to 4 (F1, F2, F3, F4)
L=Line – L1,L2,etc	Line Coding for Transcription [Gumperz (1993)]

The analysis begins with the categories of a general code switching typology presented by Gumperz (1982). He identifies situational code switching and metaphorical code

switching, which includes the subcategories: addressee specification; quotation; interjections; reiteration; qualification; personalization and objectification.

The code switches were analyzed in terms of content and function in relation to location in the conversation. To determine the extent of use of each language, the total number of turns in only English or only Bahasa Malaysia, and in both English and Bahasa Malaysia, were counted separately. The following are the three categories used to code each participant's turns:

1. Bahasa Malaysia only: All phrases in one turn are Bahasa Malaysia, with no code switching to English.
2. English only: All phrases in one turn are English, with no code switching to Bahasa Malaysia.
3. Mixed language: Both languages are used within the same turn (more than a word/phrase).

In the end, the findings facilitated identification of the categories most relevant to the code switches produced by the participants in this study. The study used ten categories in the analysis for conversational code switching. These categories were used to indicate the conversational function of the code switch and were always determined in relation to the contextual information at a specific point of the ongoing conversation.

The data were examined for instances of code-switching by the participants when a Malay language unit which is a word, phrase, a clause or even a sentence was inserted into an English utterance during the interaction and the data were analyzed in three sections. The conversations were transcribed for analysis using Gumperz and Berenz's

(1993) transcription conventions. Each of the conversation lasted a minimum of 10 minutes taking into consideration the lead in time. Each speaker's turn, between the turns of speaking by the other child, was taken as a unit of analysis.

For the frequency analysis, counts of all code switches were made which all the code switches from English to Bahasa Malaysia and Bahasa Malaysia to English were counted. Each switch was counted as an instance of code-switching. The code switching were then examined for the possible reasons and motivation as per in the research questions and whether there are similarities or differences in the purpose for code switching between two genders in three types of interactions studied besides analyzing occurrence of speech acts in the transcriptions.

For the analysis of conversational functions, the different types of code switches that were most prevalent in the participant's conversations were first identified through analysis of the transcripts. The code switches then categorised according to the following functions based on Gumperz (1982) as in Table 3.3.

### **3.5.3 Categories of Code Switching**

The study used 10 categories of code switching in analysis for conversational code switching. These categories used to indicate the conversational functions of the code switching in relation to the contextual information at a specific point of the ongoing conversation. The categories are presented below in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3 : Categories of Code Switching for Analysis by Gumpers & Berenz(1982)**

No	Categories of Functions of Code Switching
1	Clarification
2	Emphasis
3	Situation Shift
4	Representation of speech
5	Quotation
6	Insistence
7	Topic Shift
8	Person Specification
9	Question Shift
10	Discourse Markers

Source : Gumperz (1982-75)

### **3.5.4 Categories of Speech Act**

After categorizing the transcription based on the functions of code switching by Gumperz (1982), the analysis goes a step ahead to study speech acts presented by Searle (1975) in the transcriptions as per given in Table 3.4.

Searle (1975) has set up the following classification of illocutionary speech acts and the categories of speech acts as in Table 3.4 below were used to analyse linguistic features in the transcriptions.

**Table 3.4 : Types of Speech Acts by Searle**

<b>Type of Speech Acts</b>	<b>Meanings</b>
Representative	speech acts that commit a speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition, e.g. reciting a creed
Commissives	speech acts that commit a speaker to some future action, e.g. promises and oaths
Expressives	speech acts that express the speaker's attitudes and emotions towards the proposition, e.g. congratulations, excuses and thanks
Declaratives	speech acts that change the reality in accord with the proposition of the declaration, e.g. baptisms, pronouncing someone guilty or pronouncing someone husband and wife
Directives	speech acts that are to cause the hearer to take a particular action, e.g. requests, commands and advice

Source: Searle (1975-7)

### **3.6 Pilot Study**

A pilot study was conducted a week before the actual study by the researcher by doing a pre-recording with the pupils on given topics. It was a short recording for each topic. The significance of the pilot study was to guide the researcher to test if the questions prepared for the participants in the interview are clear and could generate the required data. The same participants as per the actual study are used during the pilot study.

### **3.7 Summary**

This chapter presented the methodology of research used in this study. The theoretical framework includes the analysis on code switching by Gumpers and Berenz (1982) and Searle's (1975) speech act. Besides, this chapter also describes the planning, procedures, data collection method and data analysis used in this study.