

Ahmad Habibi Syahid

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Research article

**Bilingual Code Switching in Arabic Learning: A Sociolinguistic Perspective on Indonesian Learners****Ahmad Habibi Syahid¹, Ani Susilawati², Nuroh Nuroh³**¹³Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, Indonesia²IAIN Metro, Indonesia**ARTICLE INFO****Article History:***Submitted/Received 27 Apr 2025**First Revised 05 May 2025**Accepted 27 Jul 2025**First Available online 28 Jul 2025**Publication Date 01 Sep 2025***Keyword:***Bilingual, code switching, Arabic language, Indonesian Language***ABSTRACT**

This study discusses bilingual code-switching between Arabic and Indonesian. This research aims to identify the forms of code-switching in Arabic learning as a foreign language for Indonesian speakers that occur in Arabic learning. Authors see that given the number of language varieties available to Arabic speakers in diverse contexts, the use of code-switching as a form of social interaction becomes expected. This includes Code Switching in Arabic learning for Indonesian speakers. In the sociolinguistic context, the prestige of language cannot always be converted into pragmatic advantages such as everyday interactions. Prestige language does not always have an impact on the social and pragmatic function of one or any of the codes. This study used the descriptive qualitative method. The data in this study are Arabic from Indonesian students. The data analysis techniques in this research are data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The results of this study were code-switching, internally, figuratively speaking Arabic code-switching became Arabic fluency. External transcoding is in the form of transcoding Arabic to Indonesian.

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning foreign languages in higher education has become a primary need not only for students of foreign language study programs such as Arabic, English and other language study programs, but also other study programs (Onishchuk et al., 2020). The ability to master a foreign language or a standard UN (United Nations) language has become a necessity, both for academic and non-academic purposes.

Every individual can be considered bilingual to some extent. This notion is proposed by Edwards, who argues that virtually no one exists without knowing at least a few words from a language other than their native tongue. In essence, this implies that bilingualism is a universal phenomenon. He further explains that if a speaker of English is able to say phrases such as *c'est la vie*, *gracias*, *guten Tag*, or *tovarisch*—or even merely comprehend their meaning—they are, in fact, demonstrating familiarity with a foreign language. Nevertheless, such linguistic competence is often not consciously recognized as bilingualism by most people. (Edwards, 2006)

Bilingualism is a phenomenon that is often encountered. According to experts almost 2/3 of the world's population speaks with language dualism or also more (multilingual). Like a speaker is part of the Sundanese tribe and uses Sundanese as the mother tongue in speaking daily in the family environment. Then, he studied at the Modern Islamic Boarding School with a Bilingual System that requires his students to use Arabic and English as a daily language (Language for Daily Conversation). Therefore, he is required to have the ability to use the two languages without leaving the mother tongue. This is one of the factors of acquiring a second language for individuals or speech communities in learning and acquiring a second language.(Hidayati, 2020)

The widespread presence of multilingual abilities among the global population indicates that acquiring a second language is not necessarily an extraordinary accomplishment. This perception, however, contrasts significantly with the attitudes observed within dominant linguistic communities. Among these groups, it is not uncommon to encounter assertions regarding the inherent difficulty of learning an additional language or a perceived deficiency in linguistic aptitude. In contemporary contexts, for instance, monolingual individuals from the United Kingdom and the United States frequently express frustration over their inability to acquire foreign languages, often attributing it to a lack of natural talent. Such sentiments are frequently accompanied by admiration—sometimes tinged with envy—for multilingual Europeans. In subtler instances, these attitudes are intertwined with a form of linguistic elitism, underpinned by the entrenched notion that non-English speakers ought to adapt within a global environment increasingly shaped to cater to *Anglophones*—that is,

English-speaking nations sharing a common cultural background. Ultimately, these perspectives reflect underlying dynamics of power and prevailing social norms rather than genuine concerns about linguistic capability.(Edwards, 2006)

From the above, then what kind of speakers are counted or referred to as bilingual? The answer to this question is that someone who speaks more than one language is called bilingual. Bilingual in other definitions has a more specific meaning that is a person who speaks two languages even though he has little competence in one of the four language skills.

It is evident that definitions of bilingualism can vary significantly, particularly when considering the matter of degree. For instance, in 1933, Bloomfield described bilingualism as the result of acquiring complete fluency in a second language while maintaining full command of one's native tongue. However, he complicates this notion by conceding that the concept of "perfection" in language proficiency is inherently subjective. By acknowledging this relativity, Bloomfield did not resolve the issue of proficiency levels but rather reinforced the idea that the boundary between monolingualism and bilingualism aligns more closely with Steiner's interpretation than with a simplistic understanding, such as recognizing the phrase *c'est la vie*.(Edwards, 2006)

The terms *bilingual* and *bilingualism* can carry a range of meanings, contingent upon the specific context in which they are applied. These interpretations may encompass the ability to understand and communicate in two or more languages, the conveyance of information through dual languages, the necessity for multiple linguistic competencies, or the introduction and coexistence of several languages. According to Grosjean and Li, bilingualism exists on a continuum and can be analyzed based on two primary dimensions: linguistic proficiency and the frequency of language usage. These variables enable researchers to trace and evaluate the progression of bilingual language development over time.(Grosjean & Li, 2013)

Al-Khulli, adds that there are several definitions that describe a speaker being called bilingual. First, a speaker is called bilingual based on a spoken society that speaks two languages. Secondly, a speaker is called bilingual because he knows about two languages. Thirdly, a speaker is called bilingual because he becomes fluent in two languages. Fourth, a speaker is called bilingual because he uses two languages.

The definition of bilingual called Al-Khulli above certainly still raises questions like the word use. Does using it concern all or part of the four language skills such as speaking and reading? Is a speaker called bilingual because he uses two languages at the time of speaking and reading and he

understands it? These questions that Al-Khulli said make the notion of bilingual vary depending on what size a speaker is called bilingual. He went on to conclude based on the above understanding that bilingualism is the use of bilingualism by a speaker or speech society with any level of proficiency and for any language skill as well as for any purpose. (Grosjean, 2015)

Determining a speaker called bilingual has many indicators that are not as simple as defined. Weinrich said that a measure of relative proficiency can be easily achieved. He also said in many cases it can be found that which language is more dominant than a bilingual speaker. This assertion is not always straightforward, as relying solely on proficiency as a metric proves inadequate when attempting to compare distinct groups of bilingual individuals or when examining the correlation between bilingualism and various personality characteristics in a given speaker. (Edwards, 2006)

2. METHODS

This research employed a descriptive qualitative method to obtain comprehensive and in-depth insights concerning the formulation of the research problem (Kim et al., 2017). The approach that this research relies on to answer the previous questions is the descriptive analytical approach. So that this research is treated in the light of the bilingual code switching on Arabic and Indonesian, after collecting its research material from several primary and secondary sources, and it represents all types of bilingual code switching on Arabic and Indonesian. The research also uses in the analysis process the bilingual code switching on Arabic and Indonesian, in addition to discussing it with the findings Researchers in this subject, past and present, have sought it to reach results that appear to be closer to the nature of the language, and more accurate and convincing than what was presented by the ancient bilingual code switching on Arabic and Indonesian from the point of view of this study.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A speaker being bilingual can be influenced by several factors. In addition to socio-cultural factors such as the Indonesian speech society with various tribes and languages as well as Indonesian as a national language, there are also several other factors such as marriage between countries, political policies that become provisions in a government. It is also the assumption that a language has a high prestige as the language of instruction in institutions or international relations. (Hidayati, 2020)

Indonesia is a country with various tribes and languages. Of course, this diversity of tribes and languages makes Indonesia a country with a speech society that not only speaks the mother tongue

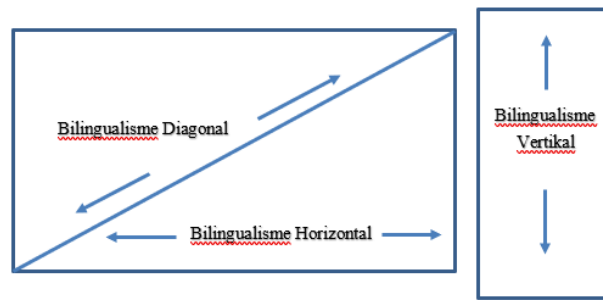
but also Indonesian as a national language. The ability of Indonesians to use these two languages is considered a bilingual society (Supiastutik & Rudianto, 2014). Even individually there are speakers who adapt more than two languages or known as multilingual. The ability to use these two languages is what can also influence Indonesians to learn foreign languages and acquire them. It is also possible that some speakers from Indonesian society have assessed foreign languages such as English, Arabic and others as second languages. This is because they use the foreign language in their daily communication. The speech community by itself builds a culture and language environment.

Related to Indonesian people with various languages from each tribe. Also, with Indonesian as a language of unity and unity, making Indonesia a country with an interesting society to study, especially with cultural acculturation such as West and East also makes some people have the ability to speak two languages or even more. The bilingual ability of the Indonesian people is very influential, especially on the ability to communicate. This is also a factor in how metalinguistic awareness is formed because it is based on awareness of the function of language in communicating. The easiest thing to find to describe the situation is the use of the language used in traditional markets. A buyer will use the same native language as the seller's native language to get a relatively cheap price. Therefore, in this situation the use of language has a big role. (Supiastutik & Rudianto, 2014)

The diversity of languages owned by Indonesian society leads to the definition of bilingualism whether viewed from individual speakers or speech societies (Sari et al., 2019). Al-Khulli explains bilingualism and the relationship between two languages. This definition also illustrates the influence of bilingualism in the socio-cultural society of Indonesia with language learning, especially in learning foreign languages such as Arabic. A society whose members use two languages to the same degree in either the formal or cultural dimensions is then referred to as horizontal bilingualism. Meanwhile, vertical bilingualism is referred to as a bilingual model which is one language but has different dialects. As in Arabic which knows the Arabic term Fusha and Arabic 'Amiyah. Al-Khulli also mentions diagonal bilingualism, which is a dualism that mixes between one official language and an unofficial language dialect of another. This kind of bilingual occurs in Arabic 'Amiyah. Like the word "*Kam 'Ala*" for the expression invite upwards (higher places). "*Kam*" which is taken from the English word "*come*" which means *mari* (invitation) and "*Ala*" which means above comes from the Arabic Fusha.

Here's an overview of the relationship of two languages in the concept of bilingualism:

Figure 1 Relationship between Two Languages



Arabic for Indonesians, especially those who are Muslim, is important. Arabic is not only considered as the language used to communicate, but also related to the knowledge of Islam and its practice which is derived from the Qur'an and Hadith. Indirectly, Arabic has been known from an early age to Indonesians who are Muslims. It also affects the learning and acquisition of Arabic either as a foreign language or a second language. Arabic is also learned to be able to understand religious books written by earlier scholars using Arabic such as Tafsir, Fiqh and others.

Arabic began to be taught at the primary education level at the primary school level in *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*. Students have begun to understand vocabulary as well as terms in Arabic since primary school age. Arabic for some Indonesians, especially those who study in Madrasah, learn Arabic. Even in Islamic boarding schools, Arabic has been used as a language for daily communication. The students and *ustadz* in Islamic boarding schools are especially modern with a bilingual school system until the growth of the language environment makes students and *ustadz* as bilingual speakers and even multilingual. This is because in addition to the students already have a mother tongue as a first language and also Indonesian as a national language, coupled with Arabic and English as languages that are agreed to be used in everyday life as part of the discipline of creating a language environment that is part of the process of learning and acquiring Arabic.

A variety of formal approaches exist for language instruction; traditionally, the more classical methods have placed a strong emphasis on memorizing grammatical structures and vocabulary, primarily within the context of literary analysis, while often neglecting the development of spoken language skills. In more modern educational environments, this emphasis has begun to shift. Nevertheless, even technologically advanced language laboratories occasionally serve only to individualize conventional techniques rather than promoting a genuine transition toward communicative competence. Although classroom instruction frequently fails to accurately reflect the

natural progression of language acquisition, there is a growing emphasis on interactive communication. Learners are increasingly encouraged to engage in spoken language prior to receiving formal grammar instruction, and the influence of their native language is often deliberately minimized. Essentially, second language acquisition is being designed to mirror the process of first language learning. This pedagogical approach is similarly adopted in educational institutions such as *Madrasahs* and *Pesantren* for teaching Arabic to students.(Edwards, 2006)

The examination of bilingualism is closely linked to theories of second language acquisition. One such comprehensive framework was introduced by Spolsky (1989), who proposed a "general theory" of second language learning. This model seeks to integrate earlier, more narrowly focused theories and also offers insights relevant to first language acquisition. Spolsky's framework is characterized by five key features. First, it endeavors to encompass all dimensions of language learning within a unified model. Second, it emphasizes precision and clarity, ensuring that the broad scope does not compromise attention to contextual specifics, goals, or outcomes. Third, it posits that all components of the learning process are interconnected; even if not all elements are active in every scenario, they still influence one another—motivation, for instance, is examined in terms of its types and varying intensities. Fourth, Spolsky maintains that language learning must be understood within a social context. Finally, the theory distinguishes between "assessable" learning conditions—those that, when more favorable or intense, are likely to enhance language acquisition—and "idiosyncratic" conditions, which commonly occur but are not essential.(Edwards, 2006)

Research that writes about the study of bilingualism in relation to language acquisition and learning, both first and second languages, has been widely carried out. Research conducted by Hamers and Blanc, that the process of becoming bilingual can be created through the classroom atmosphere (Hamers & Blanc, 2000). Classes are designed to use at least two languages in their learning planning and presentation. The goal is to support learners to become bilingual. Heinlein and Williams found that there was a positive influence on child development through bilingual programs. Bilingual programs need to be well designed to have a positive impact on a child's development (Byers-Heinlein & Lew-Williams, 2017). This was reinforced by Werker and Heinlein who found that a child would not experience significant confusion or delay in speaking with him being born ready to learn one or more languages in his context.(Pransiska, 2020)

Furthermore, several studies have explored the relationship between bilingualism and metalinguistic ability or awareness. Metalinguistic awareness, a cognitive skill in which bilingual

children often demonstrate an advantage, refers to the capacity to engage in flexible and abstract thinking about language. It involves recognizing and reflecting upon the formal linguistic properties of language, rather than focusing solely on meaning. This cognitive capacity enables individuals to disengage from the immediate process of understanding or producing speech in order to analyze the underlying linguistic form and structure.

In this context, a metalinguistic task is one that necessitates deliberate reflection on the linguistic characteristics of a message, requiring attention to and evaluation of language's structural components. Achieving metalinguistic awareness entails the development of strategies for approaching and resolving problems that inherently demand both cognitive and linguistic competencies. Typical metalinguistic activities include identifying ambiguity in language and breaking down sentences or words into their constituent elements. These tasks require not only an understanding of language as an organized system but also the ability to access and manipulate knowledge pertaining to that system.

Importantly, metalinguistic awareness does not equate to the possession of explicit knowledge of technical linguistic terms. For instance, a child may be proficient in performing tasks such as phonemic segmentation or recognizing ambiguous expressions without being familiar with the terms phoneme or ambiguity themselves.

The impact of globalization in the contemporary era necessitates individuals to develop proficiency in multiple languages. (Purwowidodo, 2016). The ability to speak foreign languages is one of the needs of today's society, along with technological advances as a result of globalization. The desire to master foreign languages such as Arabic and English encouraged the growth of bilingual programs in schools. Although this movement has grown, especially in schools with boarding school systems such as modern Islamic boarding schools. This need is also felt by students in universities. Language is no longer considered as lecture material that only discusses grammatical but as a tool to understand the theory of many references from Arabic or English.

The theories that developed about bilingualism in language learning were used as a basis for seeing and analyzing the phenomenon of the influence of bilingualism on metalinguistic abilities and also on the learning of foreign languages in this case Arabic. In bilingualism are known three common terms that are commonly encountered. First, Code Switching is the ability of a first language speaker to change and replace the first language (home language) into a second language (target language) properly and correctly in accordance with the language rules that apply to the second language. A

speaker will use Arabic on campus and then change it when he is in the home environment or vice versa.(Pransiska, 2020)

Second, Simultaneous language Acquisition (SLI) is a time when children learn two languages simultaneously before the child is three years old. According to Hoff and Shatz SLI is also known as Bilingual first language acquisition. IDD is also a time when children acquire two languages together. One of these things happened because of the marriage of two individuals of different countries. This means that the father and mother of the child have different nationalities with different languages. In Indonesia, there are many things like this. Indonesian men marry women from outside countries or vice versa Indonesian women are married by men from outside countries. Usually, they use different languages when communicating with children in order to introduce the language of their father and mother. So, the child must be able to master the vocabulary of two different languages. Seker said that the amount of vocabulary input received by children affects language acquisition. This means that if a child comes from a parent of different languages, then the dominance of the language that the child has depends on which vocabulary of the language he hears more often and how often the parent speaks the two languages and communicates with the child in two languages simultaneously.(Pransiska, 2020)

Third, successive language acquisition (SLA). Grosjean and Ping say that SLAs are not like Simultaneous Language Acquisition where the process of forming takes place at an early age. SLAs can last a lifetime, from childhood, adolescence to adulthood (Grosjean & Li, 2013). The acquisition of a second language in SLA can occur from early childhood in kindergarten education to adolescence and/or adulthood and can occur in family or school environments ranging from kindergarten to college. It aims to give foreign language proficiency to make it bilingual. Kindergarten is a good time to start SLA. In this golden age the development of language developed well. Through the correct method and appropriate media will support this bilingual program The acquisition of this type of language will also be good when the age of adolescence to adulthood. A child who goes to a bilingual school such as a modern boarding school will get used to using a foreign language as a sehoro-day language in order to create a language environment.(Pransiska, 2020)

Pransiska said that in creating bilingual conditions in learners with a foreign language as a second language, it is necessary to pay attention to several procedures (Pransiska, 2020). The procedures for implementing programs that are well planned and made such as curriculum, teacher competencies, use and selection of methods and strategies. This is intended to support the

development of students into bilingual such as increasing the cognition ability of students, social students and learners as well as social traits and attitudes.

In research on the positive impact of bilingualism on early childhood social behavior. Rachmana and Budiani conducted research on the social behavior of children who get bilingual learning in kindergarten (Rachmana & Budiani, 2013). From the results of his research, it was found that of the six kindergarten students who ran bilingual programs both at home and at school, they showed changes in social behavior in children. Social behaviors that are formed include being willing to share (give in), not insulting and saying rudely (loudly), never quarreling, wanting to share possessions such as food and drink, discipline (obeying the rules), easy to get along with others, giving support, friendly, independent, willing to cooperate, willing to help, easily adjusting, behaving on one's own initiative and behaving well which is the hallmark of each subject. These findings clearly reinforce the benefits of bilingual programs that impact several aspects of development, namely cognitive and social children.(Pransiska, 2020)

The interaction between two languages in bilingual individuals contributes to various dimensions of their linguistic development. The simultaneous acquisition and learning of two languages during early childhood, as well as the subsequent learning of a second language during formal education—from primary school through higher education—shape the speaker's linguistic competence. Throughout this process, individuals are exposed to and internalize the grammatical systems of both languages, while also fostering metalinguistic awareness regarding their structural and functional differences. As demonstrated in studies on metalinguistic awareness, bilingual children and adults consistently outperform their monolingual counterparts when tasked with evaluating the grammatical correctness of sentences that contain semantically distracting or contextually irrelevant content (De Bruin et al., 2015). These types of tasks demand focused attention, requiring individuals to disregard semantic incongruities and concentrate solely on syntactic form. Bilingual individuals, both children and adults, tend to manage this more effectively than their monolingual peers. This ability to suppress salient yet irrelevant information is associated with the executive control system, suggesting that bilinguals may outperform monolinguals in such tasks due to their strengthened executive functioning in linguistic contexts. Consequently, findings from metalinguistic task research support the hypothesis that bilingualism enhances the efficiency of executive functions—not only in language-related processing, but also in broader, nonverbal cognitive tasks.(De Bruin et al., 2015)

According to Bialystok and Barac (Bialystok & Barac, 2013), the cognitive advantages of bilingual experiences in children have been observed across a broad age range, specifically between 3 and 8 years. More recently, research conducted by Kovács and Mehler expanded these findings to include infants. In their study, 7-month-old infants were presented with verbal cues composed of nonsensical three-syllable utterances, each followed by a visual reward in the form of a toy consistently appearing on the same side of a screen. The task required infants to associate the verbal cue with the anticipated location of the toy. This association was measured by tracking the infants' anticipatory gaze—if the infants had learned the cue-location pairing, they would look toward the expected location prior to the toy's appearance. Both monolingual and bilingual infants were equally adept at forming this initial association. However, in the second phase of the experiment, the toy was relocated to the opposite side of the screen, altering the established pattern.

The most significant impact of bilingualism is frequently observed in the domain of executive functioning—a set of cognitive processes including attention regulation, selective focus, inhibition, monitoring, and cognitive flexibility—all of which develop alongside the maturation of the prefrontal cortex. Diamond (Diamond, 2006) and Miyake et al. (Miyake et al., n.d.) identified three core components central to executive functions: inhibitory control (the capacity to suppress automatic or irrelevant responses), working memory (the ability to retain and manipulate information mentally), and cognitive flexibility (the skill of adapting to changing goals or priorities and shifting between mental sets). (Bialystok & Barac, 2013)

In a related study, Galambos and Goldin-Meadow (1990) investigated whether growing up in a bilingual environment—characterized by the concurrent acquisition of two linguistic systems—could enhance children's metalinguistic awareness. Their research assessed metalinguistic development across three distinct levels of explicit language knowledge in monolingual children and evaluated how bilingual experience influences this trajectory. The findings indicated that monolingual children generally progressed through a consistent sequence when acquiring the ability to identify, correct, and explain grammatical errors. This development typically moved from a meaning-oriented to a form-oriented approach to language at each level. However, variations emerged regarding the types of grammatical constructions that were most easily mastered. Those that were simpler to detect and correct often differed from those that were easier to explain. (Galambos & Goldin-Meadow, 1990)

The bilingual experience was shown to accelerate the shift from content-based to form-based

language awareness at certain stages (such as detection and correction), although it had minimal influence on the explanation stage. Additionally, bilingualism did not significantly alter which types of grammatical structures were more easily acquired across the three levels.

Thus, within the framework of language learning and acquisition theories, bilingualism is recognized as playing a pivotal role in the development of linguistic competence in both first and second languages. In the context of Arabic language education, which typically occurs during adolescence or adulthood, learners engage with the language through structured instructional settings governed by formal educational guidelines. Bilingual exposure not only supports linguistic proficiency but also enhances metalinguistic awareness—particularly in terms of adhering to grammatical conventions in the target language, which is essential in learning and acquiring Arabic.

4. CONCLUSION

This research examines the occurrence of bilingual code-switching between Arabic and Indonesian within the framework of Arabic language instruction for native Indonesian speakers. The findings reveal that code switching occurs in various forms, both internal and external. Internal code switching refers to shifts between different varieties or styles within Arabic itself, contributing to the development of Arabic fluency among learners. External code switching, on the other hand, involves switching between Arabic and Indonesian, serving both communicative and pedagogical functions in the learning process. This study underscores that the prestige of Arabic as a language does not automatically translate into pragmatic dominance in everyday classroom interactions, where Indonesian often plays a crucial role. Overall, code switching emerges as a natural and strategic tool used by learners and educators to navigate the complexities of bilingual communication in the Arabic learning context. This study contributes to the growing body of research on bilingual education by emphasizing the strategic use of code-switching as a pedagogical tool in Arabic language classrooms.

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