Investigating Bilingual Students' Codeswitching In Medan

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Abstract

This study tries to investigate a model of conversation between Bahasa Minangkabau-Bahasa Indonesia bilingual student's conversations in the city of Medan. Recordings and interviews were carried out to elicit relevant data. Qualitative data was collected using an observational framework. The data source was Minangkabau undergraduate students of the University of Sumatera Utara. The data was recorded conversations by using of transcribing different short Bahasa Minangkabau-Bahasa Indonesia conversations. Data were analyzed using Malik's framework (1994) to find the factors that lead to code-switching. The study also discusses the types of code-switching that frequently occur during the conversations using Poplack's framework (1980). The findings revealed that 'lack of register ability' was the most frequent factor for motivating the students to code-switching and 'pragmatic reasons' was the lowest factor. The most common type of code-switching was intra-sentential that was a predominant outside classroom and the lowest type of code-switching was tag switching. The study also revealed that age and length of stay influenced the code-switching use.

Keywords: *code-switching, bilingual students, register ability, pragmatic reasons, intra-sentential switching, tag switching*

Introduction

Most of the research on code-switching use English as a second language. In this research, code-switching focused on two local languages, Bahasa Minangkabau (BM) as the first language (L1) and national language Bahasa Indonesia (BI) as the second language (L2). Both of the languages are commonly used in Indonesia, especially in Medan, North Sumatera. Medan is one of the provinces that has many ethnic groups in Indonesia. One of the ethnicities is the Minangkabau community and this community has a large population than other communities in Medan. Several works found that Minangkabau speakers still used their language especially the traders in traditional markets (Deliana, 2013; Nasution, 2018). In line with this, (Siregar, 1996) has pointed out that the use of the vernacular between its speakers is often considered more familiar and implying a stronger feeling of group integrity and common commitment than the use of other codes in the repertoire. The choice of a local vernacular in an intra-group interaction is seen as a function of values and attitudes associated with familiarity and ethnic identity.

Today, we often hear two languages, even more, are used simultaneously in conversation. This phenomenon can be seen especially to young generation who live in the city. They often switch L1(first language) to English as a second language in the conversation. The use of more than one language is commonly referred to as code-switching. The switching from first language (L1) to the second language (L2) are almost found in every country in the world. Some code-switching studies have been carried out in various perspectives and code-switching is very closely related to bilingualism. Therefore, these two

aspects of language are very interesting to study and make a very great contribution to the area of sociolinguistics. The main objective of this research is to find out what factors cause code-switching and what type of code-switching is most often used by BM- BI bilingual students during a conversation.

Literature Review

The term code-switching is generally defined as the way to switch someone's language, dialect, speaking style, registers of the same language, or shifting from one linguistic code to better suit their environment, depending on the social context or setting of the conversation (Gonzalez, 2014, Esen, 2019, Nordquist, 2018). Moreover, (Jingxia, 2010) proposes code-switching as the notion of moving from one language to another in the middle of a conversation when both speakers speak the same two languages. (Hoffman 1991) emphasizes code-switching can occur quite frequently in an informal conversation among people who are familiar and have a shared educational, ethnic, and socio-economic background.

(Sardar et al, 2015) examined English-Arabic code-switching of Iraqi students who studied in Malaysian University. The objectives of the research were to identify types of codeswitching used by postgraduate Iraqi linguistics students, to explore the factors causing the code-switching, and to examine the consequences and the effects of codeswitching on students' target language proficiency. The result showed that various types of code-switching were used by Iraqi students in communication. The most frequent type of code-switching was intra-sentential while the most factor that leads to code-switching was signifying group identity and lack of vocabulary. The frequent use of code-switching affects the student's confidence and student's proficiency in using English as a target language.

(Çavuşoğlu 2013) investigated the use of code-switching by teachers who taught in EFL classes. Using the sociolinguistic perspective, there were four teachers with different backgrounds, namely two bilingual teachers, one native speaker of Turkish and one native speaker of English. The findings of the research were the four teachers used code-switching in the classroom with different objectives. All the teachers believed that code-switching was the right way to improve the learning process if they did it ineffective ways.

(Kharkhurin et al, 2014) were investigated whether code-switching has an impact on the creativity of bilingual students. A total of one hundred and fifty-eight multilingual students were given questionnaires relating to attitudes and habits in code-switching, which served to differentiate habitual and non-habitual code-switchers. Next, the two groups were given creativity and selective attention tests. The results showed that habitual codes switcher has greater creativity compared to non-habitual codes switcher. But in terms of selective attention, the two groups did not show differences. Furthermore, code-switching caused by a certain emotional state and lack of vocabulary specific words in the target language is a trigger to increase innovative capacity.

(Azlan et al, 2016) examined the use of code-switching in English-Malay TESL students. He found tag switching, inter-sentential switching, and intra-sentential switching were used between students-students and between students-teachers. The result of the study also showed that English as a second language was often used during communication while code-switching used to enhance solidarity in their first language.

(Hadei et al, 2016) focused the study on social factors and the social dimension of code-switching among Malay-Bilingual speeches. The data were collected from a Malaysian YouTube channel. The results showed that the occurrences of code-switching were high in Malay speech. The study revealed that the factor of code-switching 'show identity' was the most frequent factor for motivating to switch the language in communication and the less

frequent factor was 'the mood of the speaker'. It also found that the ability to speak more than one language and the ability to understand the language spoken were important in code-switching.

(Upasaluba, 2018) examined the types and functions of code-switching on two NET TV programs *Ini Talk Show* and *Good Afternoon*. The data was a recorded conversation of an Indonesian artist during an interview. The findings showed that all types of code-switching were found in both programs. It also found that the function of code-switching used by the artist was to save face-threatening because of her inability to use Bahasa Indonesia and to increase her prestige as a well-educated person.

(Quin Yow et al, 2018) examined how code switching affected linguistic competence of English-Mandarin bilingual children aged 5 to 6 years. The research was counted on word roots, the length of utterances for both languages, the utterances of code-switching, and the vocabulary score for each child were also found. Based on hierarchical and correlational regression analysis, the research found that code-switching did not indicate the inability of children's linguistic competence. On the other hand, the ability to switch the codes, it was an indicator that bilingual children have linguistic competence.

(Chan et al, 2018) investigated a new form of code-switching called three-language code-switching among Cantonese, English, and Putonghua in Hong Kong. Using data from sixty university students on the online survey, the study showed Hongkongers' view on the uses of the language, such as the use of pure code, bilingual code-switching, and trilingual code-switching. The results found that the three-language code-switching was less acceptable in Hong Kong and bilingual code-switching was linked to Hong Kong identity. Also, the use of 'pure code' was hardly found because Hong Kong residents did a lot of code-switching while communicating, both in formal and informal situations.

(Ginanti, 2018) explored the types and functions of code-mixing and code-switching in Instagram's caption and comment column. The data was a written message that found in English-Tagalog in the caption and the comments column on Instagram. The results revealed that the type of code mix found on Instagram was outer code-mixing between English-Tagalog while external code-switching was found to switch English to Tagalog.

Bilingualism is related to someone or a community that can speak two languages. The concept of bilingualism has been defined from different perspectives. (Haugen,1953) proposed that someone can be said to be bilingual if he or she can speak another language completely. (Mackey,1962) pointed out that bilingualism is the use of two languages of individual and its related to two different communities; not indicated bilingual community. In other words, bilingualism refers to individual property (Weinreich,1968).

In the case of BM-BI bilingual students in Medan, the varieties in their verbal repertoire are from BM to BI or vice versa. (Siregar, 1996) proposed that in the initial conversation between two or more new acquaintances BI tends to be considered as a neutral choice in exploring each other's identity. Minangkabau students came from West Sumatra, migrated to Medan to continue their studies. They use BM-BI alternately during the conversation.

Method

This study is qualitative descriptive research. It relies basically on conversational data from BM-BI bilingual students who study at Sumatra Utara University (USU). All participants were the native speakers of BM. The data was collected mainly by recordings and interviews. Recording conversations took place in several locations around USU such as canteens, classes, parking areas, and libraries. The conversations were recorded in naturally occurring situations to maintain the authenticity of the conversations. Interviews were conducted to get information about the age and length of stay. Ten recorded conversations of

30 minutes from each participant in several locations were recorded. The recorded conversations were then transcribed using a conventional transcription. Then, the data that had been transcripted were analyzed using a predetermined conceptual framework.

Result and Discussion

Result
**Figure 1. Age and Length of Stay**
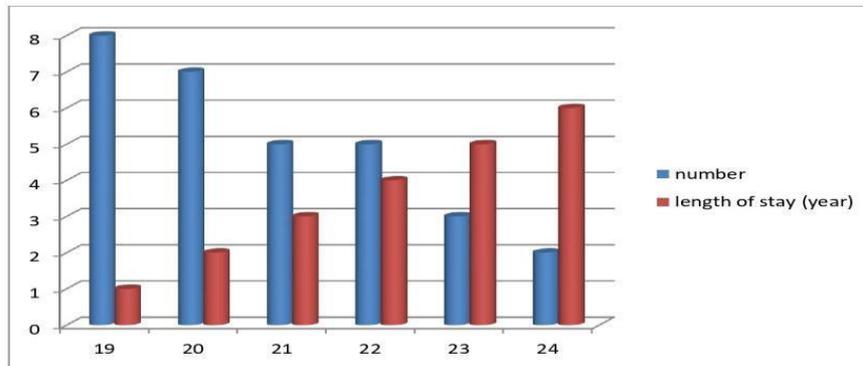
The students' age between 19-24 years old. The total number of students was 30 people. Findings showed that 8 (26,67%) were 19 years old and had stayed in Medan for 1 year. Next, 7 (23,33%) were 20 years old and stayed in Medan for 2 years. Then, 5 (16.67%) were 21 and 22 years old, stayed in Medan for 3 and 4 years respectively. Next, 3 (10.00%) was 23 years old and had stayed in Medan for 5 years. The last, only 2 (6,67%) was 26 years old and had stayed in Medan for 6 years.

The table above shows the different types of code-switching used in the Minangkabau-Indonesian language conversation. The most common type of code-switching was intrasentential as much as 62 (48%) of the total code-switching 130. The next type of code-switching that often occurs is intersentential 40 (31%), and the lowest type of code-switching is tag code-switching of 28 (21) %).

Types of Code-switching

(Poplack, 1980) proposes three types of code-switching during communication; intersentential, intrasentential, and tag switching. (Blom and Gumperz, 1972) classify code-switching into two categories; situational and metaphorical code-switching. While, (Hoffman, 1991) categorizes code-switching into; intra-sentential switching, inter-sentential switching, emblematic switching. The following table illustrates the types of code-switching used by BM-BI bilingual students.

Figure 2. Types of Code Switching
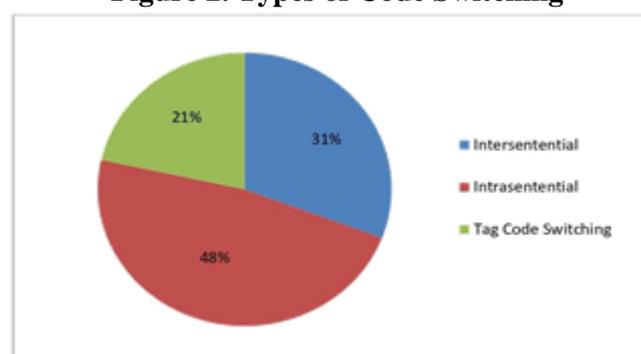
Analysis

1. Intersentential

(Poplack, 1980) reveals that intersentential code-switching occurs at the boundaries of a clause or sentences, words, phrases at the beginning or end of sentences. (Romaine, 1995) emphasizes that since major portions of the utterance must conform to the rules of both languages, inter-sentential switching requires greater fluency in both languages than tag-switching. This type is most often found in bilingual speakers.

Example: a conversation in a parking area.
[The BM is in italics. The BI is in a small capital letter.]
A) Ola: *pai makan wak lah*
        [let's eat]
B) Lina : *nan dakek-dakek siko si lah,* supaya ndak telat kita.
         [just the place is near here, so we are not late]
In B), the speaker uses code-switching in the form of a clause and appears at the end of the sentence. At first, the utterance starts in BM and ends in BI. The speaker uses BM at the beginning of the sentence which is considered more familiar and then uses BI to end the conversation. Here, the speaker switches the codes within the clauses boundary. Firstly, the clause is in BM, and secondly, the clause is in BI.

2. Intra-sentential

According to (Poplack, 1980) code-switching occurs in the middle of a sentence, with no interruptions, hesitations, or pauses to indicate a shift. The speaker is usually unaware of the shift. Different types of switches occur within the clause level and the word level.
Example: a conversation in a canteen.
A) Andi : *Ndak* mungkin *dapek si bro dapek A jo Pujay do lah...*
         [there's no way you can get an A grade from Mr. Pujay...]
B) Yusril : *andeeh bro..kok kuliah jo pujay tu* nilai *C lah* syukuran *urang mah bro... ndk dek* nilai *tu doh bro..*
         [ouch bro, if you go to college with Mr. Pujay, just getting a C grade is already thankful]
In A and B), code-switching occurs in the word *mungkin, syukuran*, and *nilai*, and inserted in the middle of the sentences. In this case, the two speakers are not aware of the switch because there are no hesitation and interruption during the conversation. Here, the speaker in B) switches the codes within a single sentence. The more fluent bilinguals tend to display congruent lexicalization and more complex insertion (Muysken, 2000)

3. Tag switching

(Poplack, 1980) revealed that tag switching is the simplest form of code-switching because grammatical rules violations are minimal. Therefore, tag switching can be embedded anywhere in the utterance. In English, tags code " right", "you know" are the commonly used.
Example: Conversation in a class.
A) Siti : *jadi apo indak kito rapek hari ko*? [so
        don't we have a meeting today]
B) Rina : Okelah. *lapeh jam ko kito pai*...
         [okay, after this lesson we leave]
In B), the speaker uses the phrase tag *okelah* at the beginning of the sentence, and the use of the code does not change the rules of the first language (BM)

Code Switching Factors

According to (Malik,1994), bilingual code switching consists of 10 factors, namely 1) to emphasize a point, 2) lack of register, 3) semantic significance, 4) to show identity to a group, 5) to address different audiences, 6) lack of facility, 7) mood of speaker, 8) pragmatic reasons, 9) to attract attention, 10) habitual expressions. While (Holmes, 2013) said that social aspects such as registers, style, diplopia, interference and borrowing, can influence code switching.The distribution of code-switching by BM-BI bilingual students can be seen in the following diagram:

Figure 3. Factors of Code-Switching
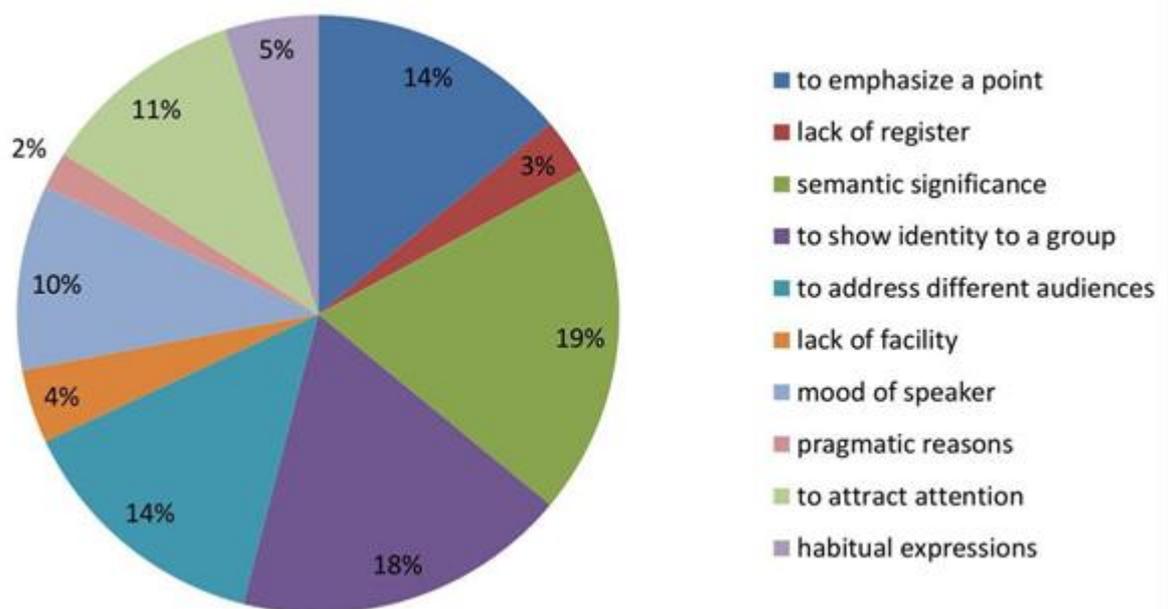
The table above showed that all the factors that caused by code-switching were used by BM-BI bilingual students in recorded conversations. However, the frequency of use of each factor is different. The total number of code changes over 300 minutes of recorded

conversation, there were 125 factors causing code-switching. The use of a lack of register ability is the most frequent code-switching factor of 24 (19%), followed by a factor of lack of facilities 22 (18%), factor emphasizing a point of discussion and to show identity, respectively 17, 18 (14 %), habitual expressions 14 (11%), the mood of speakers 12 (10%), to attract attention 6 (5%), to overcoming different audience 5 (4%), semantic significance4 (3%), and the lowest occurrence of code-switching is pragmatic reasons 3 (2%)

Analysis

1. To emphasize a Point

According to (Gal, 1979, Anderson, 2006), code-switching that used at the beginning of a conversation can help the speaker to stop a conversation and to emphasize a point of conversation.

Examples: conversation in a canteen

 Ami : *tampek nelpon ndak lo ado do e. isuaklah* ku bali kartu ya

    [there is no place to phone.. I'll buy it tomorrow]

 Ola : *Bedo ciek nomor se waktu tu ndak jo bg Dirga do mah* , eh iyo Ola ada revisi skripsi.

    [just one number different from Dirga (name) at that time, oh yes, Ola (name) has

     the thesis revision..]

In the example above, the speaker uses the phrases *ku beli kartu ya* and *Ola ada revisi skripsi* show that speakers using BI to emphasize or reinforce their words in certain situations. Here, the words *kartu, revisi* are the points that should be emphasized.

2. Semantic significance

    (Malik, 1994) claims code-switching at a particular situation provides semantically significant information. This is a communicative resource that is built based on participants' perceptions about the two languages. In other words,
Lexical choices convey meaning during codes-witching. Code-switching is used to identify the attitudes of speakers, or communicative intentions, and emotions because code-switching is a tool for conveying appropriate linguistic and social information (Gal, 1979). Example : a conversation in the parking area

Umar *: ang jan bangih, jan tasingguanglo, bia si lah, manga lo awak nan heboh,* lapor

    ke polisi!

    [don't be angry, don't be offended, just let it go. why do we have to get

    involved? just report it to the police!]

Code-switching in the phrase *lapor ke polisi !* reveals the angry attitude of the speaker when the code-switching takes place.

3. Lack of register

    During a conversation, a certain code may not be in the first language of a speaker, and at that time the speaker spontaneously transfers the code into his second language (Muthusamy, 2009). Related to this, (Anderson, 2006) emphasizes the use of certain codes in the second language of the speaker (L2) would be more effective than the first language (L1). This condition will usually encourage the speaker to switch the code. Examples: a conversation in the canteen

Ola : *manga wak lamo – lamo disiko ko*, buang – buang waktu *se, rancak pulang lai*

    [What are we doing here for long? wasting time. we better go home]

Rike : *..wak makak jo kecek si Bus. Apo* tugas emergensi *kini tu kak*?

    [... Bus (name) says that we always make noise. what is the emergency task now sis?]

On the example above, the speaker switched the codes into BI because there were no suitable sentences that could be better translated into her first language (BM). In this case, the phrases *'buang-buang waktu'*, and *'tugas emergensi'* were switched in the middle of the sentence. Both of these colloquial terms are mostly used in an informal conversation.

4. Lack of facilities

    (Malik, 1994) states bilinguals or multilingual often explain that they code-switch when they cannot find an appropriate expression or vocabulary item or when the language of conversation does not have the particular word needed to carry on the conversation smoothly. More over, the term lack of facilities relates to speakers who frequently switch codes into a second language (L2). In this case, the speakers do not find words that are equivalent to their first language (L1). (Liu, 2006), reveals bilingual speakers will switch codes if they cannot express themselves in a second language. This is due to the limitations of their vocabulary and at the same time to cover their weaknesses. Examples:

a conversation in the library

Lia : jam bara awak *pratikum*? langsuang se awak ka *laboratorium* sabalun tibo dosen.

    [what time do we practice? Let's go to the laboratory before the lecturer arrives.

 Rara : ndak ado kak *download*main nan baru, dari itu ka itu sajo..

     [I didn't download the new game. I still use the game]

The words *pratikum*, *laboratorium* and *download* have no equivalent in the BM, so speakers tend to use their second language BI.

5. To show identity to a group

According to (Crystal, 1987), code switching often occurs between bilingual and multilingual, which aims to express a sense of solidarity with certain social group. In other words, code switching is usually used to greet, congratulate, or welcome people from different language backgrounds (Malik, 1994).While (David,2003) says the advisors tend to switch code according to the ethnicity of the interlocutor. Examples : a conversation in the parking area

Opi : *tak bermakna....tak bernilai...tak bernilai...sorry forever...bernilai lah untuak*

    masa depan...hahaha...tapi ndak kini do kak...hahaha...ja an danga an pak bus, carito
wak ko ma pak bus...hihihi ...

    [... meaningless .... worthless ... worthless ... worthless for the future.. but not now
sis.. hahaha.. don't listen to us, Mr. Bus, all our statements Mr. Bus hihihi....]

In the example above, the speaker switches the code into L1 (BM) expressing solidarity to the language that used by her friend.

6. To address different audiences

Bilingual speakers will switch the code when they greet people from different language background (Malik, 1994). In this case, the speakers will switch the code to the language used by the interlocutor.

Example : a conversation in a canteen

Lila : ndak lasuah ko liek...kok bisa makan ko a, ndak tantu ka dimakan di Medan ko a,

    di kampuang banyak nan ka dimakan, *iyaa kan Ros* ?

    [the taste is not good, look at this... If you want to eat, there is no delicious food in
Medan. In the village, there is a lot of food that can be enjoyed, *is that right Ros* ?]

The speaker switches the code to BI *iyaa kan Ros* ? according to the language of the addressee.

7. The Mood of the Speaker

According to (Malik, 1994), when bilingual speakers are tired or angry, code-switching takes place with a new dimension. In this case, the speaker's mood can affect what language is used during the conversation. When the speaker condition is normal, the speaker can think of the codes that will be used in the second language   (B2) (Muthusamy, 2009). More over, code-switching can be influenced by factors of emotional, such as feelings of anger, hate, joy, confusion, surprise and so on

Example : a coversation in a parking area

Ami *: oke, siap...akupun free, akupun free...*lah salasai. kini jo pai tampek kak nak

    [*ok, ready ... I am free, I am free ... already finished*. Let's go to sister's house now]

In the example above, the speaker used BI expressions to express her happiness due to her task that already finished. She switched to BI at the beginning of the sentence to express her feeling then she switched back to BM at the end of the sentences.

8. Pragmatic reasons

During a conversation, (Malik, 1994) reveals sometimes the choice to switch the codes between two languages will be more meaningful based on the topic of discussion. In other words, the speaker switches the codes to attract the attention of interlocutors. Example : a conversation in the class

Ola : *ya, iya.* pasti artikel den nan kak ganti, *kak tambah sosionya...mudahkan ... selesai..*

　　　[yeah, *surely my article* that you changed, *you just add the sociolinguistics*, *it's easy ... finished..*]

In the example above, the speaker switched the codes to bring her friend's attention to the context of the conversation. Here, she felt tricked so that she switched to BI to make the conversation more meaningful.

9. Habitual experience

According to (Malik, 1994) code switching is often used for greeting, parting words, thanks words,　request, rejection, and certain code markers such as *Oyes, you know,* or *pero* (but).

Example: a conversation in a library

Ami : *ya Allah....* ami ndak ado mamaciek hp malom tu do...lalok.. bakaruah...

　　　[*Oh God..* Ami did not use a handphone that night .. sleeping .. snoring ...]

In the example above, the speaker switches the codes to ' *ya Allah'* because she was a pious Muslim. She used the expression to make sure that she was sleeping and she had no handphone at that time. By using this expression, she believed that her friend would understand her.

10. To Attract attention

In advertisements, the authors used code-switching in both written and spoken to draw the attention of the readers and listener Malik (1994). Example: a conversation in a lodging house

Lia :　*Apa kabar say..* masuaklah. Lah basuo jo doping tu ? aa.. caritonyo..

　　　[*how are you* .. come in. Have you seen the supervisor? how is the progress?]

In the example above, the speaker switched the codes to BM-BI in the beginning of the sentence to welcome her friend in her lodging house. Then, she would switch to BM. The phrase *'apa kabar say'* was commonly used among the students showing the intimacy.

Discussion

In bilingual student BM-BI conversations, the most frequent type of code switching was intrasentential code-switching, while tag switching was the lowest one. This means BM speakers often did code-switching during the conversation and most of them switch the codes at the beginning and at the end of the sentences during the conversation accidentally or spontaneously. Tag switching was very rarely occurred because most of them used code-switching in a sentence or phrase forms. The factor that leads bilingual students to switch codes most often was 'lack of register ability', which means at the time of conversation, they could not express theirself totally because of the limitations of vocabulary. The lowest factor in using code-switching was 'pragmatics reason'. In recorded conversations, this factor was hardly found. Based on the results of interviews and transcription of recorded conversation, bilingual students who have not recently settled in Medan and young age, code-switching was very rare, while for those who were older and have already stayed in Medan for a long time, code-was very common. In other words, age and length of stay can affect code-switching.

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