

**“THE PRONUNCIATION IS TOO MUCH”: INDONESIANS IDEOLOGIES TOWARD  
ENGLISH-INDONESIAN CODE-SWITCHING**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study is a pilot study focuses on the observation of the language attitude of Indonesian people toward English-Indonesian code-switching in Indonesia to see the ideology exists behind their attitude. Written questionnaire and interview method is used as a way to observe the language attitude of Indonesian people toward English-Indonesia code-switching. The participants are 15 Indonesians which are randomly selected from several different cities in Indonesia. The data are interpreted based on the institutional language ideology of Indonesia context. Based on the observation, there are two significant findings are found; English is seen as a prestigious language in Indonesia and standard language ideology is revealed through the notion of correctness and authority and the idea of legitimacy.

Keywords: *language attitude, language ideology, code-switching*

**1. Introduction**

Coupland (2007) states that “language ideology research assumes that, in particular socio-cultural environments, certain beliefs about the value of sociolinguistic features, styles and practices are structured into people’s everyday understanding (Lippi-Green, 1997)”. Therefore in language ideology research, it is important to observe how people reveal their evaluation and their belief toward certain language practices within their community. Language ideologies have been observed through several approaches such as from the fields of language attitudes research and folk linguistics (Coupland& Bishop, 2007).

Through the observation of language attitude, language ideology within a community speech can be observed. Agheyisi and Fishman (1970: 141) divides the three major categories which pertain to language attitude; “(1) those dealing with language-orientated or language-directed attitudes; (2) those dealing with community-wide stereotyped impressions toward particular language or language varieties (and in some cases, their speakers, functions, etc.); and (3) those concerned with the implementation of different types of language attitudes”.

This paper will deal with the observation of ideology through language attitude relates to the second category. It concerns generally on the social significance of language or language varieties with the main focus on the speakers’ attitude toward appropriate language varieties and the use of different languages in multilingual settings. Therefore, this paper focuses on the observation of how the attitude of Indonesian people on the use of English-Indonesian code-switching in Indonesia to see the ideology exists behind their attitude.

**2. The Institutional Language Ideology in Indonesia**

Language ideology has important contribution in explaining relation of language and sociocultural condition. Silverstein (1979) points out that language ideology is a crucial link which can be used to mediate the use of linguistic form and social structure. Jaffe (2009: 390) argues that through the observation of language ideology, we can find “the analytical models for taking the connections between talk as social action and broader social and political structures and process”. The main focus in the language-ideological approach is the examination of the process of social power forms and being formed through the ideas about language and discursive practices (Bourdieu 1991; Woolard and Schieffelin 1994).

Spolsky (2004: 14) defines the difference between language ideology and language practice as “what people think should be done” against “what people actually do”. The previous study of language ideology in India done by Chand (2010) proves that language ideologies are well-articulated by local and transnational speakers assessing language practices, besides media, language classrooms and training centers, and government policy. “Publicly circulated language ideologies shape the layperson’s experience of language. These belief systems, which often reinforce the dominance of a standard, provide a (if not the) lens through which speakers interpret and understand the language variation that they encounter” (Wassink & Curzan 2004 :175). Thus, in this context, the process of interpreting language ideologies cannot be separated from the socio-political context.

Indonesia is a country where there are more than 500 regional languages spoken all over the country. The official national language in Indonesia is Indonesia language, which is also known as *Bahasa Indonesia*. Indonesia language has been used for all official used within media, educational, and governmental systems. English becomes popular in Indonesia from 1966, the beginning of Suharto’s New Order regime, where many Indonesian Elites started to get chances to travel aboard for international diplomatic businesses. “Because access to English was at first available mainly to elite in society, those who could acquire a good education and travel aboard, the ability to speak (some) English, like the ability to speak Dutch before it, has always carried high prestige” (Shenddon, 2003: 175).

In the early 1980, the access of western culture through the English printed media such as magazines and newspaper which aimed for educated class started to flood the country which encourage more people to learn English. Based on study done by Warrillow-Williams (2001), many Indonesian businesses use English word to create a more “international” and “prestigious” image for their cooperation. In the beginning of 1980’s the television shows, movies in cinemas, and English-language songs started entering the country and makes English language becomes very popular, especially among young people. Thus, the user of English in Indonesian is always related to an educated, young, and up-to-date person. Since that, excessive borrowing and code-mixing from English word in newspaper, news program, and radio becomes major issue.

But as the time passed by, people started to worry about the invasion of English in Indonesia because it might “kill” regional languages and ruin the standard national language. There has been a lot of criticism toward the practice. The government and Indonesian Language center tried to make the standardization rules to avoid the “contamination” of English getting worse:

- Policy from *Pusat Bahasa* (Language Center in Indonesia) not to borrow English words unless there is no local choice.
- Campaign by *Pusat Bahasa* in 1990s against the use of foreign terms for the sake of prestige only.
- Indonesianisation requirement in 1995 by Indonesian government which requires the names of all buildings and business use only Indonesian Language.

From all those historical contexts, it shows that institutionally, Indonesia has a strong standard language Ideology, as it stated by Silvestein (1996:290) that the process of standardization affects on the individuals extralinguistic properties and attitude. Therefore, it becomes important to see how the standardization process and the institutional ideology create effects on Indonesian people’s attitude toward the use of Indonesian-English code-switching.

### 3. Methodology

Written questionnaire method and interview is used as a way to observe the language attitude of Indonesian people toward English-Indonesia code-switching. The questionnaire contains several questions about their language personal opinion about whether they think English-Indonesian code-switching is acceptable and whether they do English-Indonesian code-switching often. The interviews were done to each participant to get more elaboration from the participants. Since the study is intended to be the pilot study of language ideology of the Indonesian people toward the use of Indonesian-English code-switching, the participants who

were asked to participate in this survey are 15 Indonesian who are randomly selected and lives in several different cities in Indonesia. All of them are multilingual who, at least, speak three languages; Indonesian, English, and their local vernacular. The answers from the participants are used as the data of the study which are interpreted and related to the institutional language ideology of Indonesia.

**4. The Ideology toward Indonesia-English Code Switching Practice**

The table below shows the Indonesian-English code switching practice and point of view from the Indonesian people. The data were based on the answer of the questionnaire distributed to 7 of Indonesian people who live in several different cities in Indonesia.

No.	Questions	Answers	Reason
1.	Do you often switch your language from Indonesian to English in your daily conversation?	Yes (57%)	- To be cool (50%) - English borrowing/terminology (16%) - English is more Comfortable (34%)
		Occasionally (29%)	- To curse (cursing in English sounds more polite) (50%) - Only English terminology words (50%)
		No (14%)	Not good in English
2.	What do you think the reason/motivation of Indonesian people's frequent switching from Indonesian into English?	To show their intellectuality (50%) The words are untranslatable in Indonesia (10%) Life style (10%) English is more efficient (10%) To improve their English (10%) To look modern (10%)	
3.	Is Indonesian-English Code Switching Acceptable?	Yes (86%) (conditional)	- Correct English (38%) - Not too much (25%) - Understandable (12%) - Contextual (9%) - Effective and efficient (9%) - Not only for coolness and prestige (7%)
		No (14%)	It's showing off

Based on the table, it can be seen that most of the Indonesian frequently switches their language from Indonesian into English. The main reason of the language switching is mostly because of the English terminology or borrowing words which are not common in Indonesian language. Other reasons of language switching are because it is more comfortable to use English and because English is related to coolness. The Indonesian people also relate English with intellectuality, as most of them answer that people's motivation of using English is to make them look intellectual.

Most of them also think that it is acceptable to do Indonesian-English code switching in several conditions. The language switching is acceptable as long as it is in the right proportion (not too much English), in a proper situation, the person who does the switch is capable to speak English correctly, and the utterance must be understandable.

*English is seen as a prestigious Language*

From the answers and reasons given by the participant, there are several important points that can be captured related to the Ideology toward Indonesian-English code switching practice. The majority of the participants argue that code switching is acceptable as long as it is done in a proper context and for borrowing words. The code switching which is done randomly is

considered as a way to show off, the speaker who switches randomly into English is valued negatively and identified as a poser who try to look intelligent, modern, cool, professional, etc. The entire adjective that participants used to describe the use of English related to the prestige. Thus, it can be seen that English is seen as a prestigious language related to the history of English in Indonesia. The limited access to the language in the past made it not accessible for everyone. Even the situation is already changed nowadays, where English is now accessible for everyone, this ideology remains the same. English is still seen as a prestigious language in Indonesia, people who often switch to English or use English language is seen by other people as an intelligent, modern, and professional.

#### *The Ideology of Standard Language*

The ideology of Standard Language is also revealed through the participant opinion toward Indonesian-English code switching practice. As framed by Milroy (2007), the ideology of standard language is revealed through the notion of correctness, the importance of authority, the relevance of prestige, and the idea of legitimacy.

##### (1) The notion of correctness and authority

One of significant consequences of language standardization is the growth of consciousness among speakers of a 'correct' form of language. "In standard-language cultures, virtually everyone subscribes to the idea of correctness. Some forms are believed to be right and others wrong, and this is generally taken for granted as common sense" (Milroy, 2007: 136). The notion of correctness and authority revealed through the way the participants answer the last question related to the acceptability of Indonesian-English code switching practice. The majority of the participants agree that English switching is acceptable as long as it is "correct" and "not too much".

Through the interview, one of the participant elaborate;

"Many Indonesian people switch to English very often recently. I think it is still acceptable as long as they do not try to sounds like western people and do not do it too often. They can still use English, but should still sounds like an Indonesian. I heard many Indonesians try to sounds like a foreigner now, I guess it is annoying. That kind of pronunciation is too much as an Indonesia."

The ideology shows that switching into English is acceptable as long as it is not too frequent and in the right proportion. It has something to do with the way people try to keep the "purity" of Indonesian language. In another word, it says that it is okay to switch to English but Indonesian is more acceptable, so switch "wisely". The English should be used correctly (grammar and pronunciation) but the speaker should still use in Indonesian accent, they should not pronounce the English "too much" (English native-like).

##### (2) The idea of legitimacy

The idea of legitimacy is another indication of standard language ideology. Based on the interview done to the participant, the idea of legitimacy revealed through the way the participant asses the way foreigner speaks Indonesia.

"... I think one of the reason why many Indonesians do English switching is because they try to imitate the way many public figure talk in TV talk. As you know, we have many foreigners in our national television right now, and the way they talk is somehow weird. I mean, after this whole time they live in Indonesia, they should be fluent in speaking Indonesian already. Imagine if people keep imitating the way they talk, it will ruin our Indonesia language. They need to fix their language."

It relates to what Shuck (2004) frames that in a community speech who live with standard language there will be complain about the immigrant who do not learn to have the "standard" accent. In a community speech with standard language, legitimacy is signified through authority and doctrines of correctness. "There is usually also a tradition of popular complaint about language, bewailing the low quality of general usage and claiming that the language is degenerating" (Milroy, 2007: 138).

## 5. Conclusion

The finding of the ideological examination of Indonesian people's toward English Indonesia code switching practice shows that the institutional ideology and history within a society affect on the individual's attitude toward language practice. The process of standardization of language which is done by the Indonesian Language Institution and Indonesian government shapes the standard language ideology in the individual level. It is revealed through the notion of correctness and authority and the idea of legitimacy. This findings support the theory from Wassink and Curzan (2004: 175) where "publicly circulated language ideologies shape the layperson's experience of language".

In this paper, it is also found that the ideology toward a language is also influenced by the historical events of how a language came into a speech community. English is seen as prestigious language related to the history that the language is acquired by intellectual people who had access to the language. Later on, the language is getting more popular through the arrival of western pop culture which identical with coolness and modernity. Thus, the negative linguistic stereotypes emerges for people who switch from Indonesian to English too frequent is seen as a poser who tries to look intellectual, cool, and modern.

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