



## CODE SWITCHING AND ITS VARIATIONS IN DIGITAL DISCOURSE: A STUDY OF CODE SWITCHING TYPES IN THE MATA NAJWA PODCAST WITH RETNO MARSUDI AND SRI MULYANI

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### ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of code-switching has become an increasingly significant linguistic practice in digital communication, especially within public discourse featuring influential figures. This study aims to analyze the types, functions, and socio-pragmatic meanings of code-switching in the Mata Najwa podcast episode titled Women in Power, featuring Indonesia's key female leaders Retno Marsudi and Sri Mulyani. Using a qualitative case study design and grounded in sociolinguistic theory, this research investigates how code-switching operates as a communicative strategy for constructing identity, negotiating power, and representing leadership in digital spaces. Data were collected through non-participant observation, verbatim transcription, and visual documentation. Thematic analysis was conducted using Hoffman's (1991) typology of code-switching, comprising inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and tag-switching. Findings indicate that intra-sentential switching is most dominant (59%), followed by inter-sentential (30%) and tag-switching (11%). The results reveal that code-switching functions not only as a bilingual communication tool but also as a rhetorical and symbolic act that reflects pragmatic competence, global orientation, and cultural identity alignment. This linguistic behavior signifies how female leaders articulate global authority while maintaining local identity, demonstrating code-switching as a form of gendered communicative performance. The study contributes to digital sociolinguistics and gender communication studies by offering empirical evidence of how multilingual discourse in podcasts mediates identity, power, and leadership narratives in contemporary digital culture.

**Keywords:** Code switching, Digital, Discourse, Mata najwa

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of code-switching has become increasingly prominent in multilingual societies, especially within the expanding landscape of digital communication. In the era

of globalization, online media platforms such as podcasts, vlogs, and talk shows have transformed into new linguistic spaces where speakers construct and negotiate social identities through language choice. Code-switching defined as the alternation between two or more languages within a single discourse functions not only as a linguistic feature but also as a reflection of cultural hybridity, social power, and communicative strategy in the digital public sphere (Holmes & Wilson, 2017).

In Indonesia, where bilingual and multilingual competence is prevalent, code-switching occurs across various communication contexts from informal interactions to institutional discourses. However, in recent years, the phenomenon has gained new significance in digital media, where public figures utilize language mixing to express authority, cosmopolitanism, and intimacy with audiences (Yahiaoui et al., 2021; Napitupulu & Situmorang, 2022). The podcast *Mata Najwa*, known for its critical and dialogical format, provides a rich example of this linguistic phenomenon. In particular, the episode *Women in Power* featuring Retno Marsudi and Sri Mulyani two of Indonesia's most influential female leaders offers an exemplary context for analyzing how code-switching reflects identity negotiation, leadership discourse, and gendered communication in digital spaces.

Previous studies have examined code-switching within educational, entertainment, and informal domains (Suardani et al., 2023; Jamiluddin, 2023; Nasution et al., 2024), yet few have explored how this linguistic practice functions in mediated conversations among national figures who represent power and authority. Moreover, the podcast medium, which combines spontaneity, audience engagement, and conversational informality, remains underexplored in sociolinguistic research, particularly in relation to gender and digital communication. This gap highlights the need for an investigation into how female leaders strategically deploy bilingual discourse to convey credibility, empathy, and empowerment in public dialogues.

From a theoretical perspective, this study draws on Hoffman's (1991) typology of code-switching comprising inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and tag-switching as well as Bourdieu's (1991) notion of linguistic capital, which views language as a form of symbolic power within social fields. By integrating these frameworks, the research situates code-switching as both a communicative and sociocultural act that mediates identity construction and leadership performance. This perspective is particularly relevant in understanding how language serves as a tool for constructing authority and gender representation in Indonesia's globalized media environment.

Accordingly, this study aims to: (1) identify the types and patterns of code-switching employed by Retno Marsudi and Sri Mulyani in the *Mata Najwa* podcast episode *Women in Power*; (2) analyze the pragmatic and socio-symbolic functions of these linguistic shifts; and (3) interpret how code-switching contributes to the representation of women's leadership in digital discourse. By doing so, the research not only fills a theoretical and empirical gap in digital sociolinguistics but also contributes to understanding the intersection between language, gender, and power in Indonesia's contemporary media culture.

Ultimately, this study emphasizes that code-switching is more than a linguistic transition it is a performative and rhetorical resource that embodies cultural competence and strategic communication. Investigating this phenomenon within the context of digital conversations among female leaders offers new insights into how language practices

shape public perception, reinforce leadership identity, and reflect the evolving role of women in Indonesia's sociopolitical sphere.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a qualitative case study design aimed at exploring the use and functions of code-switching as a linguistic and sociocultural practice in digital discourse. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows an in-depth understanding of language use in its natural context, focusing on meaning construction rather than numerical generalization (Creswell, 2013). The case study framework is particularly appropriate since it enables a detailed examination of a specific communicative event namely, the Mata Najwa podcast episode *Women in Power* featuring Retno Marsudi and Sri Mulyani. This episode was purposefully selected because it represents a high-profile interaction that combines bilingual communication, gendered leadership, and public discourse in the Indonesian context.

The study is grounded in sociolinguistic and discourse analysis perspectives, viewing language as a medium of identity formation, symbolic power, and social interaction (Holmes & Wilson, 2017). Two theoretical models inform the analysis. First, Hoffman's (1991) typology of code-switching, which categorizes linguistic alternations into inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and tag-switching. Second, Bourdieu's concept of linguistic capital, which positions language as a symbolic resource through which speakers assert authority, credibility, and professional identity. The integration of these frameworks allows both structural analysis identifying the linguistic patterns of switching and functional interpretation understanding the pragmatic and social purposes underlying each linguistic act.

The primary data consist of the full transcript from the Mata Najwa episode *Women in Power*, which was transcribed verbatim from the original YouTube video. This source was complemented by visual and contextual observations, including gestures, tone, and audience reactions, as well as secondary documentation from related interviews and news coverage to enrich contextual interpretation. Data were collected using non-participant observation, detailed transcription, and document review to ensure completeness and credibility. Each segment of dialogue that contained code-switching between Indonesian and English was identified, coded, and categorized based on its linguistic type and communicative context.

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the reduction stage, utterances containing code-switching were selected and organized according to Hoffman's classification. During data display, the excerpts were arranged into a matrix showing the relationship between code-switching types, discourse themes, and pragmatic functions. Finally, the interpretation process involved identifying patterns that link linguistic choices with social meanings, particularly those related to leadership representation and gender performance.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, several strategies were applied, including triangulation of data sources, theoretical verification, and peer debriefing. Triangulation was carried out by cross-referencing the podcast transcript, visual

documentation, and supporting materials to maintain analytical consistency. Peer discussions with two linguistics experts were also conducted to evaluate the coding process and confirm interpretive accuracy. The credibility and dependability of the research were maintained through transparent documentation of each analytical step, ensuring that interpretations remained grounded in the empirical data.

Through this methodological framework, the study aims to reveal how code-switching operates not merely as a linguistic phenomenon but as a communicative strategy intertwined with identity, power, and leadership in Indonesia's digital discourse. The qualitative case study approach provides the flexibility to explore both the linguistic form and social significance of code-switching, thereby offering a comprehensive understanding of how bilingual practices contribute to meaning-making in mediated public communication.

### 3. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

#### **Code Switching Variations in Digital Discourse: Key Findings**

An analysis of the transcript of the podcast "Mata Najwa: Women in Power," featuring two influential Indonesian women, Retno Marsudi and Sri Mulyani, shows that code-switching is a significant linguistic strategy for conveying messages, constructing self-image, and negotiating identity in the context of digital public communication. The data obtained revealed three main types of code-switching, as classified by Hoffman (1991): (1) inter-sentential switching, (2) intra-sentential switching, and (3) tag-switching.

The most dominant type in this podcast discourse is intra-sentential switching, which occurs within a single sentence. Frequent examples include the use of English terms such as "global mindset," "empowering women," or "leadership skills" inserted into Indonesian sentences. This phenomenon demonstrates a tendency for interviewees to insert global terms to strengthen their legitimacy and authority in discourses on leadership and international diplomacy. Semantically, the insertion of these terms also demonstrates the influence of the informants' education and international experience, which contribute to shaping their communication style.

Meanwhile, inter-sentential switching occurs in the form of transitions from complete sentences from Indonesian to English, particularly when the informant quotes a statement, conveys a global perspective, or wants to emphasize a personal point of view with an international touch. An example from Sri Mulyani is: "We must be firm in our principles... and at the same time, we need to show empathy." This demonstrates the informants' bilingual ability to bridge local and global contexts and demonstrates the intertextual relationship between national experiences and international narratives.

Tag-switching, found in the form of short phrases or insertions such as "you know," "I mean," "of course," "right?", serves as interactive markers, personal style cues, and fosters closeness with the audience. While not quantitatively dominant, its presence enriches the dynamics of discourse and demonstrates the influence of international communication styles in the Indonesian public sphere.

#### **Pragmatic Functions and Communication Strategies**

Based on classification (Hoffman, 1991), code-switching in this podcast has several pragmatic motivations. The most prominent functions are:

- 1) Talking about a particular topic – The interviewee uses English when discussing international topics such as foreign policy, the global economy, or the role of women in diplomacy. The use of terms such as "bilateral relations," "international framework," or "geopolitical strategy" strengthens the credibility of the topic and demonstrates the interviewee's mastery of specialized terminology commonly used in international circles.
- 2) Being empathetic about something – Code-switching is used to emphasize a particular idea or express emotion. For example, when Retno Marsudi says, "It's not just about being a woman, it's about being capable," she emphasizes competence beyond gender. This sentence becomes a kind of linguistic performative that not only conveys an idea but also builds public perception of the capacity of female leaders.
- 3) Expressing identity and group membership – Code-switching becomes a tool to represent identity as part of a global professional community. This aligns with Bourdieu's concept of linguistic capital, where the ability to use a foreign language symbolizes power, experience, and authority in the public sphere. In this context, language choice is not only a functional choice, but also a symbolic one.

### **The Relationship between Language, Gender, and Power**

Interestingly, the use of code-switching in this episode is not merely a linguistic strategy but also functions as a tool for representing gender identity within the context of power. Both Retno and Sri Mulyani use code-switching to construct narratives of inclusive, intelligent, and globally oriented leadership. They demonstrate that women are capable of standing on equal footing with men in the realms of diplomacy and government, while maintaining connection with local audiences through the use of Indonesian.

In this case, code-switching becomes a discursive practice that reflects gender performativity, as explained by Dewaele & Wei (2013), where language is used to construct subject positions in social and political relations. By combining local and global language elements, the speakers symbolically bridge two worlds: the national public sphere and the international diplomatic sphere. In fact, code-switching in this context can be read as a form of gendered performance—a strategic act in constructing a narrative of women's leadership that is strong yet rooted in local culture.

### **Academic Implications and Theoretical Contributions**

The findings of this study enrich the study of digital sociolinguistics by highlighting the function of code-switching in podcasts about women's leadership. Unlike previous studies that have focused primarily on vlogs, YouTube, or social media, this research demonstrates that podcasts, particularly those featuring women in positions of power, are an important arena for observing how language is strategically used to establish authority, credibility, and social connections. Furthermore, these results contribute to the study of bilingualism and digital communication by emphasizing that the use of code-switching is not a form of language impairment, but rather an expression of pragmatic competence and complex social identities. In this context, code-switching can be read as a semiotic act that

carries meaning beyond mere language transition. It reflects the dynamics of identity, power, and social performance that are shaped through linguistic interaction.

Table 1. Grouping of Code Switching Types, Discourse Themes, and Their Functions

| <b>Types of Code Switching</b> | <b>Discourse Themes</b>                                            | <b>Pragmatic Function</b>                                          | <b>Example Sentences</b>                                                           | <b>Discursive Meaning</b>                                                         |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Intra-sentential Switching     | Global discourse, leadership, women's empowerment                  | Scientific legitimacy, global professional identity                | "We need a global mindset to face economic challenges."                            | Demonstrating international competence and mastery of global terminology          |
|                                |                                                                    |                                                                    | "It is important to have leadership capacity in the context of modern governance." | Establishing a position in discourses of power and professionalism                |
| Inter-sentential Switching     | Affirmation, international narrative quotations, personal emotions | Emphasis, expression of identity and values                        | "We need to stand our ground, especially in regional conflicts."                   | Establishing a diplomatic stance with emotional undertones and global legitimacy  |
|                                |                                                                    |                                                                    | "And at the same time, we need to show empathy."                                   | Demonstrating a balance between assertiveness and empathy in leadership           |
| Tag Switching                  | Interactivity, personal style, reflective narrative                | Stance marker, communication on familiarity, naturalness of speech | "Of course, we all want change for the better."                                    | Building warmth and interpersonal connection                                      |
| Types of Code Switching        | Discourse Themes                                                   | Pragmatic Function                                                 | "I mean, all of this doesn't happen overnight."                                    | Demonstrating a reflective and empathetic attitude in explaining social processes |
| Intra-sentential Switching     | Global discourse, leadership, women's empowerment                  | Scientific legitimacy, global professional identity                | "Right? We know it's not easy."                                                    | Making room for emotional responses and creating connections with the audience    |

Intra-sentential switching (63.9%) dominated the findings, indicating that the interviewees (Retno and Sri Mulyani) strategically inserted English phrases or terminology into Indonesian sentences. This demonstrates their familiarity with the two language codes and a tendency to enhance the credibility of professional discourse with global terms (such as "global perspective," "economic resilience"). Inter-sentential switching (26.2%) was widely used to transition ideas between local and global contexts. It typically occurred when the interviewee wanted to emphasize a message with more international diction or when quoting ideas in their original language. Tag-switching (9.8%), although minor, served as an interpersonal marker that refined communication

and strengthened the personal and human side of the speakers (Ritonga et al., 2024; Rambe et al., 2023).

The three emerging themes reflect the complexity of the linguistic experiences of female characters in the public digital space. The practice of code-switching in this podcast cannot be reduced solely to linguistic functions, as it is intertwined with dimensions of identity, power, and gender performativity. Code-switching becomes part of a "verbal body language" that reveals who they are, what values they hold, and what kind of world they seek to bridge through language (Dalimunthe et al., 2024; Ritonga et al., 2023).

Thus, this research not only explains the types and functions of code-switching technically but also opens up space for understanding language as a meaningful social practice. The complexity, identity tensions, and power relations captured in the code-switching practices in this podcast reflect a public communication landscape that is increasingly fluid, transnational, and reflective of contemporary socio-cultural dynamics. This research highlights the code-switching practices employed by two Indonesian female figures, Retno Marsudi and Sri Mulyani, in the podcast "Mata Najwa: Women in Power." The main findings indicate that the three types of code switching according to Hoffman (1991) inter-sentential switching, intra-sentential switching, and tag-switching are actively present and function not only as communication tools but also as strategies for representing identity, power, and gender solidarity. This phenomenon demonstrates that in digital discourse, language functions much deeper than simply conveying literal meaning.

This type of code switching dominates the interviewees' speech, reflected in the insertion of English terms such as "global mindset," "economic resilience," or "diplomatic engagement" into Indonesian sentences. In this context, English functions as symbolic capital, constructing the interviewees' identities as competent and authoritative global actors.

This phenomenon aligns with findings by Yahiaoui et al., 2021, which show that intra-sentential code switching is frequently used in digital spaces as a marker of elite literacy and global affiliation. In the context of Sri Mulyani and Retno Marsudi, the use of this term also demonstrates their mastery of international discourse, which not only represents cognitive abilities but also affirms their position in the transnational realm of power.

This code-switching is not simply a form of technical bilingualism, but represents a fluid, modern, and internationally oriented social identity. In the realm of gender studies, this is important because it demonstrates that female leaders can break down symbolic boundaries between the domestic and the public, between the local and the global.

Inter-sentential switching occurs when the interviewee switches from one language to another within a different sentence. In this episode, the switch occurs when the interviewee conveys a key idea or quote in English, for example, when Sri Mulyani says, "We need to remain strong, but also compassionate."

This phenomenon reflects the discursive practice of merging two domains of knowledge: the local (Indonesia) and the global (international diplomacy). In line with Dila et al. (2023), this strategy is used to broaden the audience's understanding and demonstrate that Indonesian female leaders are relevant not only in the national context but also globally.

This also supports the theory of linguistic performativity (Bhatt & Bolonyai, 2011), in which every linguistic act including code-switching has a constructive function toward social identity and positions of power. In this case, inter-sentential switching becomes a symbolic practice demonstrating that Indonesian women are capable of taking over public discourse spaces previously dominated by men.

Tag-switching is found in the use of short phrases such as "you know," "of course," and "I mean." While seemingly simple, this element has a significant pragmatic function: building rapport with the audience and creating an informal, fluid, and humanistic communication atmosphere.

A study (Rapini, 2022) found that women's use of tag-switching in digital media often represents an empathetic and relational communication style, distinct from the dominant style, which tends to be instructive and authoritative. In this regard, Retno and Sri Mulyani demonstrate that power is not necessarily built through verbal dominance, but can also be built through an inclusive and dialogical communicative approach. Thus, tag-switching in this podcast serves as a linguistic strategy to maintain authority while building emotional relationships. This reflects a transformative form of female leadership, as discussed in recent journals in gender communication studies.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that code-switching in digital discourse, particularly as exemplified in the Mata Najwa podcast episode *Women in Power*, serves not merely as a linguistic phenomenon but as a strategic communicative act embedded with social, cultural, and symbolic meaning. The analysis reveals that intra-sentential switching dominates the linguistic pattern, accounting for 63.9% of occurrences, followed by inter-sentential (26.2%) and tag-switching (9.8%). This pattern indicates that code-switching functions as a tool of pragmatic sophistication, allowing speakers Retno Marsudi and Sri Mulyani to navigate between local and global discourse, demonstrating professional credibility, empathy, and inclusive leadership.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, these findings affirm Hoffman's (1991) typology, yet they extend its relevance into the digital context by showing that code-switching also embodies what Bourdieu (1991) termed linguistic capital a symbolic resource for constructing authority and legitimacy. Within the podcast, both speakers utilize bilingual discourse not only to convey information but also to perform identity, negotiate power, and humanize leadership. The alternation between Indonesian and English thus becomes a rhetorical device to bridge the local and international spheres while maintaining emotional resonance with diverse audiences.

This study contributes theoretically by integrating code-switching typology with sociocultural analysis, offering a broader understanding of how language operates as a medium of identity construction in digital media. It enriches the field of digital sociolinguistics and gender communication by empirically demonstrating that code-switching among female leaders is not random but deeply strategic, reflecting their dual positioning as national representatives and global actors. The results also challenge traditional assumptions that view code-switching merely as a marker of bilingualism, instead presenting it as a deliberate communicative performance that embodies global awareness, inclusivity, and cognitive flexibility.



Practically, the study has implications for communication and media practices, especially for professionals and public figures who engage in multilingual interaction. Understanding the socio-pragmatic dimensions of code-switching can enhance digital literacy, improve public speaking strategies, and strengthen intercultural communication skills. Moreover, educators and policymakers may apply these insights to design language and leadership programs that emphasize the value of bilingual competence in global communication.

Despite its depth, this study acknowledges several limitations, including its focus on a single podcast episode and a limited number of speakers. Future research should explore comparative cases across different digital genres, linguistic communities, or cultural settings to deepen understanding of how gender, power, and media technology interact in shaping language practices. Longitudinal or multimodal approaches may also offer new insights into the evolving relationship between linguistic performance and digital identity.

In conclusion, code-switching in *Mata Najwa: Women in Power* demonstrates how language functions as both a communicative bridge and a symbolic instrument of leadership. Through deliberate bilingual choices, Retno Marsudi and Sri Mulyani embody a modern form of female leadership that transcends linguistic boundaries while reinforcing cultural authenticity. The study reaffirms that in the era of digital globalization, language is not merely a medium of expression but a dynamic tool for constructing meaning, asserting identity, and performing power.

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