

## A Case Study On the Use of Humorous Code-Switching in Harith Iskander's Stand-Up Comedy Shows

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Submitted: 30/3/2023. Revised edition: 14/8/2023. Accepted: 13/11/2023. Published online: 4/12/2023

### ABSTRACT

Code-switching is a phenomenon where bilingual and multilingual speakers use two or more languages. Code-switching is a common situation in Malaysia due to the diversified cultural communities. However, little that we know how code-switching influences stand-up comedy shows. Hence, this paper explores the use of code-switching in stand-up comedy shows. Specifically, this paper explores the humorous code-switching that a comedian uses, the different linguistic types of code-switching used, and the conversational functions of code-switching. Data from this case study was collected by observing the stand-up comedy show from YouTube videos by one of the best Malaysian comedians, Harith Iskander. A total of ten YouTube videos were chosen where Harith used humorous code-switching to make the audience laugh. The data were analysed according to the objectives of this study. The analysis revealed three types of humour that aligned with superiority theory: self-deprecating humour, disparaging others, and sarcasm. We found that ad-lib humour and funny comments aligned with the theory of incongruity. The analysis also revealed one humour that aligns with the relief theory. This study used Poplack's (2008) three types of code-switching, namely tag-switching, inter-sentential switching, and intra-sentential switching. Based on Gumperz's (1982) six conversational functions, four of which have been identified in Harith Iskander's stand-up comedy shows: quotation, reiteration, message qualification, and personification versus objectification. This also suggests that humorous code-switching is invaluable for stand-up comedians and the audience, particularly those who are bilingual or multilingual.

*Keywords:* Code-switch, Stand-up Comedy, Humour, Harith Iskander

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is a diverse country with a multicultural population comprising Malays, Chinese, and Indians (Muthusamy, 2010). This diversity has resulted in most Malaysians being proficient in at least two languages. A multilingual individual can speak multiple languages fluently, while a bilingual individual can communicate proficiently in two languages (Baker, 2011). Bilinguals in Malaysia are known for their ability to switch between languages due to their sociocultural background artfully. In Malaysia, code-switching is common in a multilingual setting, which involves shifting from one language to another during communication (Muthusamy, 2010).

It is worth noting that code-switching is not only prevalent in everyday situations but also in specific contexts, such as in the field of entertainment, particularly stand-up comedy. Stand-up comedy involves a comedian performing a monologue directly to the audience, delivering a series of humorous stories or short jokes (Nadia, 2014). Comedians use code-switching as a tool to create humour in their shows and convey their message amusingly. Thus, this study aims to investigate the use of humorous code-switching in Malaysian stand-up comedy shows. Specifically, the research questions for this study are as follows:

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1. What are the types of humorous in the code-switching used by a stand-up comedian?
2. How does a comedian code-switch between languages in stand-up comedies?
3. Why does a comedian use code-switching in a stand-up comedy show?

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Humorous Code-switching in Stand-up Comedy

There is a growing body of literature on the study of humorous code-switching in stand-up comedy. For example, a study was conducted by Putu (2014) to examine the use of code-switching by Indonesian stand-up comedians. This study explored the types and functions of code-switching along with how the switching of codes could provoke humour among the audience. In the study, Putu (2014) examined the performances of 10 comedians on the “Stand-up Comedy Show Edisi Akhir Tahun 2011”. Romaine’s (1995) was used to analyse the types of code-switching, Gumperz’s (1982) conversational functions, and Raskin’s (1985) three classes of psychological theories. According to the author, comedians switched from Bahasa Indonesia to English for two main reasons, apart from creating humorous effects. To begin with, it was done to connect with the audiences since foreign languages were regarded as popular and were considered “cool.” The second reason was to avoid misinterpretations, as Indonesian has no equivalent words for humour. Another study by Lamidi (2017) explores the use of multimodal pairing and switching of codes in Nigerian stand-up comedy performances to evoke humour, a field that has not received much research attention. A total of six DVDs and six video clips were analysed using three theories within a comedic context: (1) incongruity theory; (2) layered meaning theory; and (3) visual semiotics theory. Since Nigeria is a multiracial and multilingual country, Lamidi (2017) concluded that Pidgin was the most dominant language followed by English because most Nigerians understood these two languages compared with other languages used across the various performances analysed. The use of multimodal codes such as gestures and costumes with visual codes was also identified as a worthwhile strategy for creating a comedic effect. On the other hand, Chan *et al.* (2018) compare the text structures of ethnic and political Malaysian stand-up comedies, particularly how politeness strategies mitigate backlash. This study analysed 17 ethnic jokes and 13 political jokes using Hockett’s (1960) Internal Structure of Jokes, which contains the build-up, pivot, and punch line. To prevent the generalisation of stereotypes of a certain group, ethnic jokes require more build-up to address the stereotypes. Using Brown and Levinson’s (1987) Politeness Strategies, they discovered that comedians primarily use off-record strategy to avoid adverse responses from what can be regarded as sensitive jokes. The study would have been more interesting if it would have included a stand-up comedy from a Malaysian context as Malaysia is a multicultural country.

### 2.2 Concept of Code-switching

In general, it is important to understand the concept of code-switching. Numerous researchers have explored code-switching in various contexts and have presented diverse definitions of the term based on their respective research. For instance, Baker (2011), Cook (2016), Stylianou-Panayi (2015), Hamid (2016), and Moghadam *et al.* (2012). Typically, multilingual speakers frequently incorporate words from different languages into their conversations. For the purpose of this study, code-switching is defined as when a

speaker shifts from one language to another during a conversation or within a text, and it is referred to as code-switching (Gumperz, 1982).

### **2.2.1 Types of Code-switching**

According to Poplack (2008, p. 589-596), there are three types of code-switching: 1) tag-switching, 2) inter-sentential switching, and 3) intra-sentential switching. The first type of code-switching is known as tag-switching. It includes adding a tag or a short sentence of another language into a speech that is different. When inserted into a specified sentence, they do not breach the syntactic rules (Hamers *et al.*, 2000), like interjections, fillers, and idiomatic expressions involved in tags. The second type of code-switching is known as inter-sentential switching. Inter-sentential switching arises within a clause or phrase, where each clause or phrase is in one language or another. The last type of code-switching is intra-sentential. Intra-sentential switching is commonly found in statements, even though it entails a significant syntactic risk because language switching occurs within the boundary of the clause or sentence.

### **2.2.2 Functions of Code-switching**

The types and functions of code-switching among bilingual speakers worldwide have long been the subject of inquiry. Therefore, various functions of code-switching in various settings have been identified by this research. The conversational purposes of code-switching, according to Gumperz (1982, p. 59-99):

#### **1. Quotations**

It is common for people to code-switch by using direct quotations from other people or by reporting speeches in a language they are not familiar with. Participants continued speaking the same language when they quoted someone.

#### **2. Addressee specification**

According to Romaine (2004), addressee specifications can be used for monolinguals and bilinguals. An individual who speaks a monolingual language will switch to the language the individual understands. Bilinguals code-switches in order to engage an addressee in conversation. In short, when an addressee specification is used, the message is directed to a particular person.

#### **3. Interjection**

Words expressing strong or sudden emotions are known as interjections or sentence fillers. According to Gumperz (1982), switching languages can sometimes signify an interjection or sentence connector between bilinguals or multilingual. Expressions and words such as *wow*, *oops*, *ah*, *oh*, *er*, *huh*, *eh*, *ahem*, *dammit*, *(bloody) hell*, *shit*, *yes*, *no*, *thanks*, and *well* are some examples of interjections (Wharton, 2000, p. 203-243). This may be explained by the fact that interjections convey intense emotions.

#### **4. *Reiteration***

The purpose of code-switching is to emphasise a particular message by repeating it in every language (Gumperz, 1982). This refers to clarifying, emphasising, and promoting understanding by switching or modifying literal codes. This is known as a reiteration when someone repeats a message in another code to underline, emphasise, or clarify what was said.

#### **5. *Message Qualification***

According to Gumperz (1982), message qualification expands the previous utterance in the other code. The main message that is expressed in another code is framed by the switching method. In the comments portion, the topic of utterances is often introduced in one language before switching to another. In message qualifying, a topic is introduced in one language and explained in another to justify a message.

#### **6. *Personalisation versus Objectification***

A speaker may switch codes to convey personal and objective messages based on their language repertoire for expressing specific facts, while others reflect subjective opinions (Gumperz (1982). As a result, it can be used to determine how closely the speaker is involved in the interaction or how far away he or she is.

### **2.3 *Types of Humour***

Three primary types explain the concept of humour and provide insight into why specific interactions are considered humorous based on the context in which they occur. According to Meyer (2000), the three main types of humour are superiority, incongruity, and relief. The incongruity suggests that humour arises from unexpected or surprising situations (Bakar & Kumar, 2019). In contrast, superiority suggests that humour comes from making fun of someone else's misfortunes or weaknesses (Zillmann, 1983). Lastly, the relief proposes that laughter is a safety valve that helps to release stress and anxiety (Gruber, 2008). Humour is a psychological or psycho-physiological mechanism that allows individuals to alleviate social and physical tensions (Yoshikawa *et al.*, 2019).

## **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

A qualitative case study was conducted to gain insights into a stand-up comedian's humorous code-switching. The Malaysian actor and comedian Harith Iskander bin Musa was selected from a list of renowned comedians in Malaysia provided by TalleyPress in 2019 on Malaysia's Top 10 Comedians. Harith Iskander's comedy videos from YouTube which consist of Malay code-switching have been collected. Videos on YouTube of Harith Iskander's comedy that include Malay code-switching have been collected. YouTube videos of Harith Iskander's comedy shows and the audience's laughter were clearly heard. When an audience laughs, it signifies that they have found something amusing or entertaining. The presence of laughter indicates that the audience has connected with the comedic content and is actively engaged in the experience. The audience's laughter is important for our studies when it comes to highlighting

the humorous aspects. The observed instances of Harith's humorous code-switching were transcribed and analysed using the theories of humour, Poplack's types of code-switching, and Gumperz's conversational functions of code-switching.

## 4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 What are the Types of Humour in the Code-switching Used by Harith Iskander?

In this section, we discuss our findings on the types of humour that aligned with the theories of humour on superiority, incongruity, and relief such as self-deprecating humour, sarcasm, ad-lib humour, funny comment, and relief.

#### 4.1.1 *Harith's Use of Humour that Aligned with Superiority Theory*

##### *Self-deprecating Humour*

According to Berk (2003), self-deprecating humour is a unique form of comedy that involves laughing at one's own flaws and faults. Unlike other types of humour that may involve making fun of others, self-deprecating humour focuses on mocking oneself. This type of humour exposes one's shortcomings and imperfections, often in a light-hearted manner, to generate laughter and create a sense of relatability with the audience. An example of this is provided in the following Extract 1.

Extract 1:

Harith: And then when all arrived they mentioned me hoi botak, no it's ok because I am really botak  
(and then, when all arrived, they mentioned me as bald, but I'm ok with it because, yes, I am bald)

Audience: Laughing

In this example, Harith chose to make fun of his own appearance rather than targeting the crowd. Harith used the word 'botak' which means bald. By doing so, he aimed to elicit laughter and engage the audience by drawing attention to his own physical attributes in a humorous way. This approach allowed Harith to connect with the audience on a personal level, as they could relate to the insecurities and self-consciousness that often accompany physical appearances. This has been supported by Andeweg *et al.* (2011), when speakers make self-deprecating comments, they demonstrate their ability to laugh at their own shortcomings. Self-deprecating humour can be an effective tool for comedians, as it helps to break down barriers and create a sense of camaraderie with the audience. respectful.

##### *Sarcasm*

Lagerwerf (2007) defines sarcasm as a comment with the opposite meaning of what is being said. An example of sarcasm from Harith's comedy show is in Extract 2:

## Extract 2:

Harith: When there's an accident, then only the Malaysian driver slowed down, pernah tak at the highway, tiba-tiba keluar jem slow down, eh jem every time got jammed what's the first thing oh my gosh, accident ini eksiden. I don't care, ladies and gentlemen, I don't care what job you have when it comes to an accident when you park your car you go to the accident automatically you become the investigating officer. (When there's an accident then, only the Malaysian driver slows down. Did you ever encounter it on the highway when suddenly the cars slowed down during the jam? I don't care, ladies and gentlemen, I don't care what job you have when it comes to an accident when you park your car you go to the accident automatically you become the investigating officer)

Audience: Laughing

In Extract 2, Harith's seriousness regarding Malaysia's attitude towards accidents was evident. He referred to them as investigating officers, clearly indicating his sincere approach. A study by Rullyanti and Nurdianto (2019), revealed that sarcasm is used to cover up the true intention, to give a positive appearance to a negative meaning. Harith's ability to find humour in such serious situations is truly commendable.

#### ***4.1.2 Harith's Use of Humour that Aligned with Incongruity Theory***

##### ***Ad-lib humour***

According to Berk (2003), ad-lib humour, often referred to as improvisational humour, is characterised by the ability to come up with witty and spontaneous responses to various situations or comments. It involves thinking on one's feet and generating humorous remarks on the spot. In the context of this study, there was a particular instance where Harith skilfully employed ad-lib humour as in Extract 3.

## Extract 3:

Harith: 25 years ago, a little boy killed and slaughtered his whole family. They say he was possessed by the devil, and then when the American family said oh, that's interesting, let's go have a look at the house and basically, Asians were like, hey bodoh, you didn't hear what the housing agent said ah/isn't?  
(25 years ago, a little boy killed and slaughtered his whole family. They say he was possessed by the devil, and then when the American family said oh, that's interesting, let's go have a look at the house and basically, Asians were like, hey stupid, you didn't hear what the housing agent said ah/isn't)?

Audience: Laughing

During a discussion about ghost stories with the audience, Harith decided to entertain them with his storytelling skills. As he began narrating an American horror story, he realised that the atmosphere was tense, and the audience was eager to be frightened. Sensing this opportunity to inject some light-heartedness, Harith cleverly incorporated ad-lib humour into his narration. As the story unfolded, Harith skilfully weaved in humorous remarks and witty one-liners, adding a touch of comedy to the otherwise chilling tale. His ad-lib humour served as a way to alleviate the tension and create a more enjoyable and engaging experience

for the audience (Garin, 2022). By incorporating ad-lib humour into his storytelling, he managed to captivate the audience and keep them engaged throughout the narration.

### ***Funny Comment***

An additional humorous example was a funny comment displayed. Funny comments can be defined as short statements containing humorous elements (Bryant, Comisky, & Zillmann, 1979). For example, Harith uses a funny comment to mention the traffic light, as mentioned below in Extract 4.

Extract 4:

Harith: Red kan ada the red man with the green man. The red man macam ini, the green man macam ini. Kalau red man, they stop they wait. When the red man turns green, then they cross the road.

(Red is there, isn't it? The red man with the green man. This is the red man and the green man like this. If red man, they stop they wait. When the red man turns green, then they cross the road).

Audience: Laughing

Harith ingeniously weaved a connection between the ongoing discussion and his remark about the traffic light, thereby adding a touch of humour to the conversation. The audience could not help but burst into laughter, appreciating the cleverness and unexpectedness of his response. It is this clever connection between seemingly unrelated topics that makes funny comments truly amusing. By playfully referencing the traffic light in his comment, Harith demonstrated his sharp wit and ability to find humour in everyday situations. The audience's giggles were a testament to the effectiveness of his comedic timing and the connection he forged between their conversation and his response.

#### ***4.1.3 Harith's Use of Humour that Aligned with Relief Theory***

The relief theory of humour suggests that laughter can help to ease anxiety (Nesi, 2012). Stand-up comedians, in particular, have a unique ability to employ code-switching to inject humour into tense situations, thereby eliciting laughter from their audience. It posits that when people find something funny, it provides a temporary release from tension and stress. One example of code-switching in comedy can be seen in the act of Harith. During one of his performances, Harith incorporated a Malay term into his routine. This unexpected twist caught the audience off guard and resulted in chuckles of amusement.

Extract 5:

Harith: Out of the ground monster would come out with six arms and six legs and two horns, big fire-blowing eyes; wow, and step on Tokyo, and the buildings would be collapsed. People in Tokyo were like ahhhh raksasa, raksasa means monsters, raksasa datang, and they would run vigorously.

(Out of the ground monster would come out with six arms and six legs and two horns and big fire-blowing eyes, wow and step on Tokyo and the buildings would collapse, people in Tokyo would be like monsters, the monster is coming, and they would run vigorously).

Audience: Laughing

For instance, Harith's tales about ground monsters from Extract 5, had the audience hooked, resulting in a silence that indicated their attentiveness. Through skillful storytelling, comedians can create a shared experience that allows the audience to escape from their worries and immerse themselves in the humour.

## **4.2 How does Harith Iskander Code-switches between Languages in Stand-up Comedies?**

In this section, we discuss our findings on the types of code-switching, such as inter-sentential switching, intra-sentential switching, and tag switching (Poplack, 2008, p. 589-596).

### **4.2.1 *Inter-sentential Switching***

Inter-sentential switching occurs within a sentence or phrase where each phrase is in a different language (Jingxia, 2010). For example, when the first sentence in one language and the second sentence in another are switched, this is known as inter-sentential switching. Harith used inter-sentential switching in his video. In the context of Harith's video, he employed inter-sentential switching as a stylistic technique. The main focus of this extract 6, is to explore various ideas related to the establishment of a censorship board. By incorporating inter-sentential switching, Harith adds depth and complexity to his discourse, creating a unique linguistic experience for his audience.

Extract 6:

Harith: We don't have homeless people in Malaysia. Ini bukan budaya kita.  
(We don't have homeless people in Malaysia. This is not our culture.)

Audience: Laughing

In extract 6, Harith started a conversation in English and said that Malaysia does not have homeless people. Then, he switched to Malay in the second sentence. Thus, the sentence begins in the English language and ends in the Malay language. This finding aligns with the previous study by Al-Heeti and Al-Abdely (2016), which describes that inter-sentential switching involves one sentence in one language and the following sentence in another. Hence, it is proven that inter-sentential switching has occurred at a clause level where each clause used a different language.

### **4.2.2 *Intra-sentential Switching***

According to Jingxia (2010), intra-sentential switching refers to the phenomenon of switching languages within a clause or sentence. This type of switching typically involves the substitution of a word or phrase in one language with an equivalent in another language. An example of intra-sentential switching can be seen in a conversation between Harith and the audience, where he was discussing ghost stories. During the narration of one particular story, Harith code-switched by inserting the Malay noun "bodoh" in place of the English word "stupid". This switch allowed Harith to convey a specific meaning or emphasis that may not have been as effectively expressed using only one language. Intra-sentential switching is a common linguistic practice that occurs in bilingual or multilingual communities (Yaseen and Hoon, 2017). It serves various communicative purposes, such as expressing identity, emphasizing certain ideas, or creating a sense of belonging among speakers of different languages.



### 4.2.3 Tag switching

The last type of code-switching is known as tag-switching. It includes a tag or a short sentence of another language in a speech that is different. This form of code-switching happens most likely because it usually contains minimum syntactic limitations, so when inserted into a sentence specified, they do not breach the syntactic rules (Hamers, Blanc, & Blanc, 2000). Most of the tags used by the subject in the Malay language are the particle "lah" and "kan". These two particles, "lah" and "kan", are commonly used as tags in the Malay language. They play a significant role in expressing various meanings and emotions in conversations. For instance, when Harith tried explaining the monster scenario to the audience as in Extract 7, he code-switched and used the particle "lah". By doing so, he effectively conveyed his message in a way that connected with the audience. The use of "lah" in this context added emphasis and clarity to his explanation.

Extract 7:

Harith: You want to climb the chair, climb *lah* climb Audience: Laughing

The above extract shows the tag switching by using particle *lah*. In this extraction, Harith used the particle *lah* in between his sentence. This linguistic strategy helped him establish a connection with the audience and created a humorous atmosphere. The use of "*lah*" in comedic contexts is quite common, as it adds a touch of playfulness and lightness to the performance. This finding is similar to a study by Goddard (1994), who found that the use of the particle *lah* is optional, where it conveys messages with a friendly feel. He also claimed that the Malay particle *lah* is also used to express their closeness in their communication with others. Hence, the particle *lah* is just used to stress or express certain feelings towards a sentence.

## 4.3 Why Does Harith Iskander Uses Code-Switching in a Stand-up Comedy Show?

In this section, we will discuss the functions of code-switching. Based on Gumperz's (1982) six conversational functions, four of which have been identified in Harith Iskander's stand-up comedy shows such as quotation, reiteration, message qualification, and personification versus objectification.

### 4.3.1 Quoting Somebody Else

Quoting somebody else is one of the reasons for code-switching from English to the Malay language. This has been supported by Stapa and Khan (2016), who said that it was common for participants to use the same language when they quoted someone. By mimicking the original speaker's style and tone, they conveyed the story vividly and as interestingly as possible. An example from Extract 8:

Extract 8:

*Harith:* We will keep standing in stadium and my dad be like, you just follow me: ooi Refri balik kampung kayu buta oi perlahan oh.  
(We would keep standing in the stadium, and my dad would be like, you just follow me.  
Hoi, Refri is going back to the village at night, so drive slowly).

*Audience:* Laughing

Extract 8, shows the reason for code-switching, which helps in quoting somebody else. The comedian switched to Malay to quote a common expression. “kampung kayu buta” is the explanation that best describes the night situation in the village. The same phenomenon can be observed in everyday situations, as demonstrated in a study by Stapa and Khan (2016), where participants code-switched when they quoted others with the intention of retaining their meaning in the original form.

#### 4.3.2 *Reiteration*

Reiteration is another reason for code-switching from English to the Malay language. When someone repeats a message in another code to underline, emphasise, or clarify what was said, this is known as a reiteration (Eldridge, 1996). Reiteration occurs to repeat the same content in different languages to clarify a certain message.

Extract 9:

Harith: Have you all watched CSI? No, not everyone so CSI to those people who don't know what CSI is, CSI is crime scene investigation is a very good show in one hour the policeman is fantastic they can find out who is the killer, first, they have a dead body, orang mati, they have a dead body got no evidence, where they have a dead body, they got no evidence.

(Have you all watched CSI? No, not everyone, so CSI, to those people who don't know what CSI is, CSI is crime scene investigation. It is a very good show in one hour. The policeman is fantastic. They can find out who the killer is. First, they have a dead body, a dead body, and they have a dead body got no evidence, where they have a dead body, they got no evidence).

Audience: Laughing

The above extract 9, shows Harith code-switched to Malay to emphasise the word. “Orang mati” is a Malay word used to mention a dead body. He used a Malay word to repeat the same word. It was supported by Eldridge (1996), that “messages may be reinforced, emphasised, or clarified if they have already been transmitted in one code, but not understood”. By using repetition, the speaker attempts to convey the meaning of the message in the target language in his native tongue.

#### 4.3.3 *Message Qualification*

Message qualification is another reason for code-switching from English to the Malay language. Message qualification extends the preceding utterance in the other code (Halim & Maros, 2014). An example from Harith's stand-up comedy is in Extract 10.

Extract 10:

Harith: When Malaysian want to cross the road, we cross the road like tengah jalan perasaan lintas tu datang je, straight away gitu, tak takut, traffic datang pun kita tak takut sebab kita percaya kuasa tangan. Malaysian bila dia lintas jalan kita datang...ooii pak cik, boleh diri kat tengah jalan, the lorry coming, lori dengan 18

tayar, kita oohi berhenti, walaupun kita cakap berhenti kita tahu the lorry tak akan berhenti dia akan avoid, elak, because the Malaysian driver we never slow down unless got accident.

(When Malaysians want to cross the road, we cross the road like being in the middle of the road. Most Malaysians are not scared of anything, even if they see the traffic police. When Malaysians cross the road, they just pretend as if nothing happened. They will stand in the middle of the road, talking with others. Even if they saw a big lorry with 18 tires, they would ask the drivers to stop instead of moving aside. The lorry drivers will avoid accidents because Malaysian drivers never slow down unless got an accident.)

Audience: Laughing

Harith uses code-switching for message qualification reasons. Harith was trying to explain the extended story of how Malaysians always cross the road. This has been supported by Halim & Maros (2014), who claimed that switching languages for message qualification occurs when an issue is introduced in one language and then affirmed or qualified in another.

#### **4.3.4 Personalisation versus Objectification**

Personalisation versus objectification is another function of code-switching. Speakers may code-switch to make their communications more subjective and personal in order to express particular facts within their linguistic repertoire (Hoffman, 1991).

Extract 11:

Harith: Mesti ada Singaporean kat atas, no it's ok, I like Singapore, Singapore and Malaysia like to kutuk-kutuk each other kan. Singaporeans kutuk Malaysians. Frankly kita macam adik-beradik tapi kadang-kadang kita gaduh and another day we are brothers.

(Sure, they would be some Singaporeans but no, it is fine because I like Singapore; Singaporeans and Malaysians like to curse each other. Singaporeans curse Malaysians and vice versa. Frankly, we are like siblings, but sometimes we fight, and other days, we are brothers).

Audience: Laughing

Extract 11 shows Harith switching between the English language and the Malay language. He did so not because he lacked vocabulary in the languages but because he knew that the audience would understand him well in either language. It is evident from the utterances that Malaysians and Singaporeans have a close relationship. This has been supported by Masrurroh & Rini (2021), where an individual can use this function to express his or her opinion about any specific example or fact.

## **5.0 IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **5.1 Significant of this Study**

Code-switching allows comedians to establish a stronger connection with the audience (Nor & Shangeetha, 2023). By incorporating familiar languages or dialects, comedians can make the audience feel more involved and engaged in the performance. This connection is crucial in stand-up comedy, as it enables comedians to gauge the audience's reaction and adjust their comedic timing and delivery accordingly. Code-switching acts as a bridge, allowing comedians to build rapport and create a shared experience with the audience, ultimately leading to more laughter and successful performance.

One of the interesting aspects of code-switching in comedy is its ability to bridge cultural divides and break down barriers (Kawwami, 2015). When comedians switch between languages or dialects, they can incorporate humour that resonates specifically with certain groups of people. This can elicit laughter from those who understand the particular linguistic or cultural nuances being referenced. Simultaneously, it can also create curiosity and engagement from audience members who may not be familiar with the specific language or culture being referenced. In this way, code-switching becomes a powerful tool for cultural exchange and understanding.

### **5.2 Recommendation for Further Study**

This study encourages further research on Malaysian stand-up comedy, particularly on code-switching. Considering this topic from different viewpoints would be interesting. To get a more comprehensive picture of code-switching usage in Malaysian stand-up comedy, more comedians could be incorporated into the data analysis rather than just one comedian. In order to know patterns and styles in code-switching between comedians, it is necessary to have access to performances from multiple comedians. Additionally, code-switching can also affect the way jokes are delivered during performances. Research in the future may also incorporate non-Malay speakers to collect data using surveys or interviews to determine the relationship between code-switching and the comprehensibility of jokes.

## **6.0 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this study aimed to identify the use of humorous code-switching in stand-up comedy shows. Mainly, it explored the types of humour used by the comedian and identified the types of humorous code-switching and its functions towards stand-up comedy shows. This study revealed that all Harith Iskander's humorous code-switching falls into three theories of humour: superiority, incongruity, and relief. All three types of code-switching by Poplack (1980), were found in this study. Lastly, based on Gumperz's (1982), six conversational functions, four of them appear in Harith Iskander's stand-up comedy shows, including quotation, reiteration, message qualification, and personification versus objectification. Most of the code-switching happened naturally without the comedian's realisation. Thus, it is important to understand code-switching in stand-up comedy shows.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to acknowledge the reviewers for their feedback on the corresponding author's masters from which this paper is derived.

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