

## THE ANALYSIS OF CODE-SWITCHING IN X JAPAN'S SONG

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### Abstrak

This study analyzes the phenomenon of code-switching in the lyrics of six songs by the Japanese rock band X Japan: Dahlia, Scars, Longing, Rusty Nails, Tears, and Forever Love. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, the research identifies and categorizes code-switching into three types: intersentential, intrasentential, and tag switching. The research instrument played an important role in obtaining the research results. Creswell (2009, p. 164) stated that in qualitative research, the main instrument was the researcher. The researcher uses some steps in analyzing the data, which are, first observing the data or information available in the data sheet, second classifying the data based on the kinds of code-switching used, third recheck and make sure all the data is well organized. Describing and discussing the code-switching used, and last drawing a conclusion based on the data analyzed. A total of 123 instances of code-switching were identified, with tag switching being the most prevalent (46%), followed by intersentential (37%) and intrasentential switching (17%). The analysis indicates that English insertions enhance rhythm, emphasize emotion, and broaden the appeal to an international audience. These findings underscore the linguistic creativity within J-Rock music and imply that code-switching fulfills both artistic and communicative functions within multilingual song lyrics.

**Keyword:** code-switching, X Japan, intersentential, intrasentential, tag switching

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### Introduction

People communicate with each other through language, which is similar to how symbols can evoke feelings, impulses, and thoughts. Humans use a system of written, spoken, or traditional symbols known as language to share ideas. Among the many languages spoken worldwide, English is among the most prevalent and widely studied international languages.

When learning English, the learner must master a few skills, such as listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Besides these skills, the learner must also develop pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and more. Learning English is quite similar to how a child learns their mother tongue. There are several steps involved in learning English. The first step is listening. Before they can speak, they will listen to speakers first, which helps stimulate children to

produce words and talk to others. The second step is speaking; they can create words and speak after listening to others. Based on the explanation above, we understand that listening is the input and speaking is the output.

Being proficient in English is crucial in today's world. As the world's most widespread international language, English offers numerous advantages for our careers. It opens up more job opportunities, as many companies seek employees who can communicate in English.

Hence, acquiring proficiency in English provides numerous benefits, despite its inherent challenges. Various challenges may be encountered throughout learning English, including difficulties with vocabulary, diminished self-confidence, and challenges in achieving fluent speech.

Typically, music consists of two fundamental elements: musical

instruments and lyrics. Beyond merely appreciating the instrument, we also have the opportunity to learn a language through its lyrics. Some song lyrics are composed using more than one language; occasionally, they employ two or more languages concurrently. Using two or more languages within a single song is a bilingual song. (Mesthrie et al., 2009) 'Bilingualism' broadly denotes using two or more languages within society. Consequently, it encompasses the concept of 'multilingualism'. Various authors use the term 'multilingualism' in a more general sense, meaning using two or more languages. Neither approach is entirely satisfactory, as the reader must infer whether, in specific contexts, 'multi' implies 'more than two' or whether 'bi' signifies 'two'.

Using multiple languages in a song can be beneficial. The main goal is often to boost popularity or to leave a lasting impression on the listener. It can also help the song gain international popularity. The term for switching between languages in a song is "code-switching." Code-switching is common in songs and everyday conversation, making it a familiar concept.

Code-switching describes a speaker's switching from one language to another during communication with others who understand that language. It is a linguistic phenomenon where a speaker moves between two varieties (or codes) in conversations with people who share a similar language background (Trousdale, 2010). Romaine (1994) highlights that switching is a communication option available to bilingual members of a speech community, similar to how switching between styles or dialects is available for monolingual speakers.

Code-switching is a typical linguistic behavior when people switch between different languages or varieties

across various social contexts (Holmes, 2013). Stockwell (2007) also identifies three types of code-switching. First, tag-switching involves inserting a word or phrase from one language into another sentence. Second, inter-sentential switching happens when the language changes at the sentence boundary. The last type is intra-sentential switching, which occurs within a single sentence or utterance. The researcher selected X Japan's song lyrics because not only is the band a pioneer among Japanese rock bands, but most of their songs feature code-switching between Japanese and English.

Researchers have studied code-switching, such as Villaderez (2021), who conducted a study on code-switching in a song from the Philippines. The purpose of this study is to describe the code-switching used in the lyrics; another previous study is a bachelor's thesis by Witness Eunike Margaretta (2024) titled "Korean-English Code Mixing and Code-switching of New Jeans' Song." The study aims to fill gaps by considering the significant impact of speaking multiple languages to attract the attention of multilingual audiences worldwide. Additionally, Jechan Shofwatul Maula, J. S. (2024), conducted a study titled "Analysis of Code-Switching and Code-Mixing on The Album Greetings by Haris J." This research examines the forms and factors of code-switching and code-mixing in the songs on Haris J.'s Salam album.

Referring to the issue mentioned, the researcher was interested in studying code-switching in song lyrics. This study looks at these lyrics from a sociolinguistic point of view, focusing on code-switching themes. The limitation of this study is that it only analyzes X Japan's song lyrics. This study aims to analyze the different types and functions of code-switching used in the song lyrics.

Together, these studies create a comprehensive foundation that bridges popular culture linguistics and bilingual communication research, establishing both the cultural relevance and linguistic validity of examining code-switching in Japanese rock music.

### Research Method

The study uses descriptive qualitative methods because the data is from words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. The researcher can also explain the data in utterances.

In this study, the researcher aims to analyze code-switching in song lyrics. The focus is on X Japan's song lyrics, which include Dahlia, Scars, Longing, Rusty Nails, Tears, and Forever Love.

The researcher selects the song lyrics of X Japan, specifically 'Dahlia,' 'Scars,' 'Longing,' 'Rusty Nails,' 'Tears,' and 'Forever Love,' as the primary data sources. Creswell (2009: 230) states that data may include photographs, art objects, videotapes, main website pages, emails, text messages, social media communications, or sound recordings.

In dealing with this research, the researcher used non-test and observation methods to collect the data. The researcher will observe the song lyrics. The result of the observation could be achieved by taking notes. Therefore, the researcher uses a descriptive qualitative technique. The steps to collect the data for this research are as follows:

- a. Finding the primary source, X Japan's song lyrics
- b. Reading the lyrics carefully while listening to the song to ensure the lyrics are correct. Finding the code-switching in the song lyrics. Classifying the types of code-switching

### c. Writing the types of code-switching

The researcher employed non-test and observation methods to gather data in this research. The researcher observed the song lyrics and documented the observation results through note-taking. Consequently, a descriptive qualitative approach was utilized.

The Data analysis was conducted in three distinct stages: first, identifying the primary source, which comprises the song lyrics of X Japan; second, meticulously examining the lyrics in conjunction with listening to the song to verify their accuracy; and third, identifying instances of code-switching within the lyrics. Subsequently, the various types of code-switching were classified, and their respective categories were documented.

### Results and Discussion

This research employs a mixed-methods technique, gathering qualitative data and presenting the findings quantitatively through numerical values and percentages.

Following data collection, the subsequent step involves analyzing the data to derive meaningful results. Analyzing qualitative data necessitates understanding how to effectively make sense of text and images in qualitative research, formulating answers to research questions. This chapter delineates the six principal steps involved in analyzing and interpreting qualitative data: preparing and organizing the data, exploring and coding the database, describing findings and developing themes, representing and reporting findings, interpreting their significance, and validating the accuracy of the results (Creswell, 2012, p. 236).

According to Creswell (2012, p. 237), specific steps are involved in data analysis. However, these steps are not necessarily followed in a fixed sequence.

Instead, they encompass preparing and organizing the data for analysis; conducting an initial exploratory phase through coding; utilizing these codes to develop a comprehensive understanding of the data, including descriptions and themes; presenting the findings through narratives and visual representations; interpreting the significance of the results by reflecting personally on their impact and considering relevant literature to inform the conclusions; and ultimately, implementing strategies to validate the accuracy of the findings.

Based on the explanations above, this research employs several steps for data analysis, including:

- a. Observing the data or information available in the data sheet.
- b. Classified data according to the types of code-switching employed.
- c. Recheck and ensure all data is well-organized. Include a description and discussion of the code-switching employed.
- d. Concluding insights derived from the analyzed data.

The data analysis unit in this research employs code-switching within the lyrics of X Japan's songs. The specific lyrics to be analyzed are "Dahlia, scars, longing, rusty nails, tears, forever love." The analysis concentrates on three types of code-switching: intersentential, intrasentential, and tagswitching.

This study analyzes the types of code-switching present in X Japan's song lyrics, including Dahlia, Scars, Longing, Rusty Nails, Tears, and Forever Love. The researcher identified 123 instances of code-switching across these songs: 28 in Dahlia, 16 in Scars, 28 in Longing, 17 in Rusty Nails, 21 in Tears, and 13 in Forever Love. The results detail the various types of code-switching used and include the percentage of instances in each song, providing a clear overview of

the patterns in X Japan, Dahlia, scars, longing, rusty nails, tears, and forever love to make the research findings clear.

Table 1 shows how many code-switches for each type are used.

**Table 1.** Number and Percentage of Code-switching in all the lyrics: *Dahlia, scars, longing, rusty nails, tears, forever love*

Types of Code-switching	Frequency	Percentage
Intersentential Code-switching	46	37%
Intrasentential Code-switching	21	17%
Tag switching	57	46%

The researcher wishes to present the study's data analysis. It was observed that Code-switching is utilized within the lyrics. The researcher provides a detailed summary of the data results. To make the reader's understanding easier, the researcher displays the frequency and percentage of Code-switching usage in each song lyric within the tables below.

**Table 2.** Number and Percentage of Code-switching in all the lyrics of *Dahlia*

Types of Code-switching	Frequency	Percentage
Intersentential Code-switching	46	37%
Intrasentential Code-switching	21	17%
Tag switching	57	46%

According to the table above, the researcher concludes that 28 utterances demonstrate Code-switching. Dahlia's lyrics exhibit three types of Code-switching: Intersentential Code-switching (32%), Intrasentential Code-switching (14%), and Tag switching.

**Table 3.** Number and Percentage of Code-switching in all the lyrics of *Scars*

Types of Code-switching	Frequency	Percentage
Intersentential Code-switching	4	25%
Intrasentential Code-switching	7	44%
Tag switching	5	31%

Based on the table above, the researcher concludes that 16 utterances demonstrated the use of Code-switching, with three types identified in the lyric "Scars": Intersentential Code-switching, four utterances (25%); Intrasentential Code-switching, seven utterances (44%); and Tag Switching, five utterances (31%).

**Table 4.** Number and Percentage of Code-switching in all the lyrics of *Longing*

Types of Code-switching	Frequency	Percentage
Intersentential Code-switching	6	21%
Intrasentential Code-switching	3	11%
Tag switching	19	68%

Based on the table above, the researcher concludes that twenty-eight utterances indicated Code-switching. Three types of Code-switching were identified in the lyric 'Longing': Intersentential Code-switching with six utterances (21%), Intrasentential Code-switching with three utterances (11%), and tag-switching with nineteen utterances (68%).

**Table 5.** Number and Percentage of Code-switching in all the lyrics of *Rusty Nails*

Types of Code-switching	Frequency	Percentage
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Intersentential Code-switching	12	70%
Intrasentential Code-switching	3	18%
Tag switching	2	12%

Based on the data in the table above, the researcher concludes that seventeen utterances utilize Code-switching. The study identifies three distinct types of Code-switching within the lyrics of 'Rusty Nails': intersentential code-switching, which accounts for twelve utterances (70%); intrasentential code-switching, comprising three utterances (18%); and tag switching, involving two utterances (12%).

**Table 6.** Number and Percentage of Code-switching in all the lyrics of *Tears*

Types of Code-switching	Frequency	Percentage
Intersentential Code-switching	11	52%
Intrasentential Code-switching	0	0%
Tag switching	10	48%

Based on the table above, the researcher concludes that 21 utterances denote Code-switching. Two types of Code-switching are identified in the lyrics of 'Tears': Intersentential Code-switching, comprising 11 utterances (52%), and Tag Switching, comprising 10 utterances (48%).

**Table 7.** Number and Percentage of Code-switching in all the lyrics of *Forever Love*

Types of Code-switching	Frequency	Percentage
Intersentential Code-switching	3	14%
Intrasentential Code-switching	4	18%
Tag switching	6	68%

The researcher concludes that the table above indicates 13 utterances utilizing Code-switching. Within the lyric 'Forever Love,' three types of Code-switching are identified: Intersentential Code-switching at 14%, Intrasentential Code-switching with four utterances (18%), and Tag Switching comprising six utterances (68%).

## Discussion

Some researchers have researched Code-switching, such as Villaderez (2021), who conducted a study about Code-switching in the Philippines' song. The purpose of this study is to describe the code-switching used in the lyrics; another previous study is a bachelor's thesis by Margaretta (2024), the study proposes to fill in the gaps by considering the significant impact of speaking multiple languages on our members as a strategy to grab the attention of multilingual audiences worldwide. Also, Jechan Shofwatul Maula, J. S. (2024) conducted a study entitled Analysis of Code-Switching and Code-Mixing on The Album Greetings by Haris J. This research aims to investigate the forms and factors of code-switching and code mixing in the songs on the Salam album by Haris J.

The discussion constitutes the core component of this research. In this section, the researcher presents the analysis results concerning identifying various types of code-switching within song lyrics: Dahlia, scars, longing, rusty nails, tears, and forever love. Three distinct types of code-switching are employed in the song lyrics.

Intersentential code-switching pertains to switches that occur at sentence boundaries. This phenomenon is most commonly observed among

proficient bilingual speakers. The researcher identified forty-five utterances classified as this type within the song lyrics, representing thirty-seven percent of a total of one hundred twenty-three utterances.

The utterance is an instance of *Intersentential Code-switching*. We can see that the switching occurs after the first utterance is completed.

Ore no naka de tada

*(The warped melody inside me)*

Nari tsuzuketeru dake (*continues to ring.*)

*"Dead Poem is Still Alive"*  
(utterance no.12)

The italic words are included in *Intersentential Code-switching* or switching at the sentence level. Switching at the sentence level means that the alternation in a single discourse between two languages, where the switching occurs after a sentence in the first language has been completed, and the next starts in a new language, or, on the other hand, Intersentential Code-switching occurs between different numbers of sentences.

*Intersentential code-switching* involves a switch at a clause or sentence boundary where each clause or sentence is in one language or another.

Kawaranau ai ga aru nara (*my love does not change.*) "Will you hold my heart" (utterance no.45)

The utterance, which is heartache in the lyrics above, includes intersentential code-switching because it is not a part of the following sentence. It shows that the utterance is switching at the sentence level. In the utterances above, we can see that the singer switches from English to Japanese and Japanese to English in different utterances. It shows that the lyric is included in Intersentential code-switching.

The statement pertains to Intersentential Code-switching. It is

observable that the switch occurs subsequent to the completion of the initial utterance.

Dore dake namida wo nagaseba (If I shed these tears, I wonder) anata wo wasurareru daro (how long it will take me to forget you).

*"Just tell me my life"* (utterance no.31)

The italicized words are indicative of intersentential code-switching or switching at the sentence level. Switching at the sentence level refers to the alternation between two languages within a single discourse, where the transition takes place after a complete sentence in the first language, followed by the commencement of a new sentence in a different language. Conversely, intersentential code-switching occurs across different sentences.

Intrasentential code-switching involves a shift occurring within the middle of a sentence, without interruptions, hesitations, or pauses indicating a transition. Various switches are observed at the clause level, including within individual words. The researcher identified eight utterances classified as this type within the song lyrics. This constitutes 17% of a total of 123 utterances.

Intrasentential code-switching involves a shift occurring within the midst of a sentence, characterized by no interruptions, hesitations, or pauses indicating a transition. For example, "fusagaru kizuatō ni yonmoji no TATTOO" describes a four-letter tattoo resting on my healing scars. (utterance no.5) The above utterance is classified as intrasentential because the italicized word is an English term while the sentence begins in Japanese. The shift occurs at the word level.

*Intrasentential code-switching occurs when the shift transpires within the sentence without any interruptions, hesitations, or pauses indicating a*

*transition. To elucidate this concept, the researcher will analyze the following utterance: 'Zure hajemeta RHYTHM no naka' (In the rhythm that had begun to shift) (utterance no.6).*

The statement above is categorized under the Intrasentential level because the italicized words are in English, whereas the sentence commences in Japanese. The transition occurs at the phrase level. Midare odorū MELODY (I dance to a disordered melody) (Utterance no.7).

The utterance above is classified at the *Intrasentential* level because the italicized words are English, while the sentence begins in Japanese. The shift occurs at the clause level.

Tag switching may be incorporated at any position, including as an interjection or sentence filler. It can also serve as a discourse marker. The researcher identified 57 utterances classified under this category in the song lyrics, representing 46% of the total 123 utterances.

Tag switching is occasionally called emblematic switching, wherein the switch functions primarily as an interjection, sentence filler, and discourse marker. This includes words that encompass interjections such as "wow," "oh," "hi," etc.; sentence fillers such as "well," "ok," "you know," etc.; and discourse markers such as "so," "by the way," "alright," etc.

As an independent element, tag switching can serve to accommodate various needs. As an interjection, tag switching might convey emotions such as shock, amazement, and attraction; however, in relation to the song, tag switching may enhance its aesthetic appeal and harmonize the rhythm and sound.

Namida wo dakishimete... mo ichido (I'll hold your tears... once more) "OH MY DAHLIA" (utterance no.2).

The words in italics include tag switching because they are independent elements. In the song lyrics, the word serves to enhance the aesthetic quality of the song and to balance the sound and rhythm.

Tag switching also served as discourse markers that could be placed at the beginning or end of a sentence.

*Kirei na uso ni kaete mo.....*  
(Change into pretty lies...) "ALL ALONE"  
(utterance no.1)

Tag switching may be incorporated at the conclusion of a sentence and serve as discourse markers. To make the explanation, the researcher analyzes the following utterance: " Yoake no sora wo..." (beneath the sky at dawn).

"Destiny" (utterance no.5)

The utterances involved tag switching due to the italicized words functioning as discourse markers, which conveyed the song's melancholy, as if the singer were communicating directly with the singer's romantic interest.

Based on the discussion above, the researcher concludes that the most common type of code-switching in the lyrics "Dahlia," "Scars," "Longing," "Rusty Nails," "Tears," "Forever Love" is Intersentential code-switching. This accounts for 45 utterances, or 37% of the total 123 utterances. In comparison, Tag switching was found in 57 utterances, making up 46%. Additionally, there are only 21 utterances of Intrasentential code-switching, representing just 17% of all utterances, highlighting the prevalence of code-switching.

In English Language Teaching (ELT), code-switching—the practice of switching between two or more languages during communication—can be a useful teaching tool. Although some teachers advocate for an English-only approach to maximize immersion, research shows that strategic code-switching can improve understanding, build confidence, and increase

engagement, particularly for beginner and intermediate students. Allowing students to use their native language for clarification helps bridge comprehension gaps and reduces anxiety in the classroom. Additionally, code-switching can clarify complex grammar, introduce new vocabularies, and create a more inclusive learning environment. However, its use should be carefully balanced to ensure students develop English proficiency without becoming overly dependent on their first language.

## Conclusion

Based on the research findings and subsequent discussion, the researcher concludes that code-switching is a prominent linguistic feature in the selected X Japan song lyrics. Six songs—Dahlia, Scars, Longing, Rusty Nails, Tears, and Forever Love—identified 123 instances of code-switching.

The most common form is Tag Switching, a lyrical device that enhances rhythm, emotional impact, and audience engagement. English phrases, often used for emphasis or repetition, serve as emotional or universal expressions, while Japanese lines mainly convey narrative structure or poetic meaning. This intentional code switching highlights artistic style and cross-cultural communication strategies within J-Rock music.

Based on the research findings, the researcher aims to offer some suggestions after completing this study. This study intends to help readers and English language learners better understand the concept of code-switching, especially in musical contexts. Song lyrics that combine multiple languages can be helpful resources in language learning. These materials can help with vocabulary growth, improve listening skills, and increase cultural literacy. Educators and

learners are encouraged to explore bilingual songs as engaging extra resources in language education.

This research may serve as a reference point for forthcoming investigations into bilingual or multilingual usage within popular media. Future studies could:

- a) Analyze code-switching across genres or artists, such as K-pop and Western pop.
- b) Include audience perception studies to understand listener reception and interpretation. Use a larger dataset or corpus analysis to generalize findings.

Such extensions may offer comprehensive insights into the role of language mixing within contemporary pop culture and sociolinguistic identity.

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