

Code-Switching as A Strategy of Diasporic Identity Articulation in *American as Paneer Pie*

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the phenomenon of code-switching as a strategy for articulating diasporic identity in the children's novel entitled *American as Paneer Pie*. This study uses a qualitative method with a text analysis that employs Gumperz's concept of code-switching and Stuart Hall's articulation of identity to examine how code-switching in the narrative not only represents language transition but also articulates cultural identity in the context of diaspora. The results show that out of 38 data points 34 use metaphorical code-switching in the form of Indian food, tradition, and cultural terms to emphasize Lekha's attachment to her cultural roots and show her identity negotiation process in the American multicultural environment. The other four data indicate situational code-switching that reflects changes in social context, such as when Lekha uses Hindi to emphasize cultural closeness and English to adapt to the American environment. It indicates that code-switching functions as a means of articulating the cultural identity of the diaspora through negotiation between language and culture.

Keywords: code-switching, identity articulation, Indian-American diaspora, children literature

Introduction

In diasporic communities, language is used not only as a means of communication, but also as a marker of cultural identity. The layered culture of diasporic life means that language use is often dynamic and contextual. In this case, diasporas adapt their language choices according to the situation, the person they are talking to, and the purpose of communication. Code switching becomes a daily practice that allows diasporas to access and negotiate two or more cultural systems at the same time. The concept of code switching first emerged from sociolinguistic studies in the mid-20th century and was systematically introduced within the framework of bilingualism by Einar Haugen in his work entitled *The Norwegian Language in America: A Study in Bilingual Behavior* (1953). Haugen emphasized that bilingualism is not merely the separate mastery of two languages, but also includes the individual's ability to choose and switch between languages according to the social context. Haugen's findings were later elaborated upon by Gumperz (1982), who viewed code switching as a social practice that serves to negotiate identity, solidarity, and social distance between speakers. With a broader understanding than just a linguistic phenomenon, code switching becomes a communication strategy that reflects the dynamics of culture, identity, and power in multilingual societies, especially in the context of diaspora.

In the context of America's multicultural society, code switching has developed into a complex communication practice laden with sociocultural meaning. Code switching is

used by diasporic communities in America as a means of reinforcing internal solidarity while adapting to dominant social norms. As in the context of African-American society, Rickford (1999) explains that code-switching is a strategy for social adaptation and a way of maintaining ethnolinguistic identity. African Americans use African American Vernacular English (AAVE) as a form of cultural identity and community solidarity. Meanwhile, Standard American English (SAE) is used in formal contexts or when interacting with white groups. According to Alim and Smitherman (2020), code-switching in African-American communities is not only a linguistic issue, but is also related to language politics, discrimination, and cultural resistance, which shows how African-American communities navigate their identity amid American cultural dominance.

The Hispanic community in America also engages in code-switching between Spanish and English. They do this not only to fill in vocabulary that is difficult to translate, but also as a strategy for self-expression and resistance to full assimilation into the majority culture (Toribio, 2002). The use of code-switching has even become a strategy in Latin American bilingual literature—including poetry, drama, and fiction by Mexican-American writers—which is used not only as a stylistic device, but also to convey bicultural identity, humor, social criticism, and ethnicity (Montes-Alcalá, 2015). Meanwhile, the Chinese-American diaspora often feels caught between their Chinese cultural experiences and American society's demands to speak English. In this situation, code-switching emerges as a daily adaptation strategy, where they switch languages not only to communicate, but also to express their hybrid identity and socio-cultural negotiations. This makes bilingualism play an important role in the process of cultural and social identity affirmation (Williams, 2006; Shi & Lu, 2007).

In the context of the South Asian diaspora in America, code-switching has also become a way for them to negotiate their identity. South Asians in America are often summarized under the label “ABCD” (American-Born Confused Desi). This label is generally attached to the second generation of the South Asian diaspora, who experience cultural and linguistic ambivalence. Code-switching in this situation is used by them to negotiate their identity and facilitate cultural transmission within the family (Fatima & Nadeem, 2025). In this case, South Asian diaspora may switch to Hindi to show emotional closeness to their community, then return to English for formal contexts. In addition, code-switching is growing rapidly in the digital realm through Hinglish, which has become a popular communication style among young South Asian diaspora in America (Si & Mark Ellison, 2023).

Regardless of the context of diasporic life in America, code-switching is also widely used in diaspora literature as a narrative strategy to create realism, showcase socio-cultural backgrounds, or describe diasporic characters (Gardner-Chloros & Weston, 2015). Writers and characters in diasporic literature are generally at the intersection of two or more languages and cultures. This makes language switching function not only as a means of communication, but also as a strategy for representation and identity negotiation (Grutman, 2024). The phenomenon of code-switching can open up new areas of study when applied to diasporic children's literature. Narratives in diasporic children's literature present a mixture of the native language and the dominant language. This means that code-switching is not merely understood as a linguistic phenomenon, but as a cultural practice that marks the efforts of diasporic children to access, articulate, and negotiate their identities between two cultural spheres.

The phenomenon of code-switching in diasporic children's literature can be found in the novel *American as Paneer Pie*. Through this analysis of this novel, the study presents the phenomenon of code-switching, not merely as a form of linguistic transition, but as a

strategy for articulating the identity of diaspora children. In this novel, the characters interact in a mixture of English and terms from Hindi or Marathi. It not only reflects the practice of bilingualism, but also shows how diasporic children negotiate emotions, cultural attachment, and the process of social integration in a predominantly American environment. *American as Paneer Pie* is an Indian-American children's novel by Supriya Kelkar, published in 2020. The novel tells the story of Lekha Divekar, an Indian-American child growing up in a small town in Detroit. In her daily life, Lekha lives between two cultures—India and America—which directly influence the way she speaks. The switching between English and Hindi or Marathi in the novel *American as Paneer Pie* reflects Lekha's hybrid position as a child of the diaspora who continues to negotiate her identity between two cultural systems. The presence of various Indian terms, both Marathi and Hindi, such as *bindi*, *odhani*, and *Diwali*, reinforces the representation of emotional and cultural closeness to her homeland. Through this practice of code-switching, the author presents language as a medium for articulating the layered identity of the diaspora. In this case, symbolic strategies mark the differences and connections between Indian and American cultures. This strategy, within Stuart Hall's framework of articulation, can function as a mechanism of representation in which cultural elements and migratory experiences are synchronized so that identity is no longer monolithic, but rather formed through a process of negotiation, relations, power, and interaction between the original and new cultures.

The use of bilingualism in *American as Paneer Pie* prompted this study to explore how language is used as a strategy to articulate cultural identity, emphasizing the function of code-switching as a practice of identity articulation. This study focuses on the narrative of a diasporic children's novel, in which the term code-switching becomes a strategy for articulating identity that represents Lekha's attachment to her native culture through terms, food, and traditions.

Gumperz (1982) defines code-switching as the transition between two different grammatical systems or subsystems in a single utterance. Meanwhile, Myers-Scotton (1993a, p.4) states that code-switching is the selection of forms from an embedded language by bilingual or multilingual speakers in a matrix language during the same conversation. In other words, in bilingual or multilingual communities, speakers can naturally use more than one language or code. They switch languages or codes, for example, to fill vocabulary gaps when they do not know a particular word in one language, or they may switch codes for other specific communication purposes (Bassiouney, 2009).

Gumperz (1982) views code-switching not as a result of a speaker's lack of proficiency in one of their languages, but rather as an additional resource that allows various social and rhetorical meanings to be conveyed. He emphasizes that language switching has both an expressive function and a pragmatic purpose. In addition, Gumperz states that non-linguistic factors such as the speaker's social role, type of conversation, type of interlingual exchange, audience, context, and topic also influence the use of code-switching. Gumperz (1977, p.84) divides code-switching into six types, namely situational code-switching, metaphorical code-switching, conversational code-switching, tag-switching, intersentential code-switching, and intrasentential code-switching. Situational code-switching occurs when speakers switch languages according to the context or situation of the conversation. In other words, the choice of language used depends on the social conditions in which the interaction takes place, without necessarily changing the topic of conversation. Metaphorical code-switching occurs when a change in topic requires a change in the language used in conversation. In this case, each topic tends to be expressed using a specific language code; for example, greetings or conversations about

family are usually conducted in the local dialect, while business transactions use more formal language. According to Blom and Gumperz (1972, pp. 126-127), metaphorical code-switching refers to a shift in language that is not triggered by a change in external circumstances, but rather to mark a shift in meaning, emphasis on a topic, or a particular social nuance within the same interaction.

Conversational code-switching can occur in language use. When speakers switch languages within a single sentence without changing the situation or topic of conversation, for example from Indonesian to English, this switch is called conversational code-switching. Gumperz (1977) divides this type of conversational code-switching into six main forms. First, quotation, which is the use of another language to quote someone else's words, either directly or indirectly. Second, address specification, which occurs when a third person joins the conversation, prompting the speaker to change languages to better suit the new participant. Third, interjection, which is the insertion of an emotional expression to express surprise or other feelings without referential meaning. Fourth, reiteration, which is the repetition of a message in two languages to emphasize or clarify meaning. Fifth, message qualification, which is used to clarify or add information in another language. Sixth, personalization versus objectification, which is the switching of languages to show emotional closeness or personal relationships. In conversational code-switching, language switching does not merely reflect changes in situation or topic, but rather highlights the creativity and pragmatic awareness of speakers in communicating across languages.

In another form, code-switching can occur when speakers insert short phrases or expressions (tags) from another language that have different pronunciations into their speech, which is referred to as tag-switching. This shift usually appears spontaneously in the middle of a sentence, for example in expressions where English phrases are inserted into Indonesian language structures. Meanwhile, intersentential code-switching occurs when speakers switch languages between sentences or clauses, so that each clause is spoken in a different language. Unlike intersentential code-switching, intrasentential code-switching refers to code-switching that occurs within a single clause or sentence without any change in context, subject, or time of speech. Code-switching can also be understood as a form of contextualization cues, namely linguistic and paralinguistic cues (such as intonation, word choice, and code switching) used by speakers to negotiate meaning and mark social relationships in conversation (Gumperz, 1982). Thus, code-switching is understood not merely as a linguistic phenomenon, but as a communicative strategy that serves to articulate social meaning and manage interactions between speakers in everyday conversation.

Code-switching can be linked to the concept of identity articulation. Hall (1990) views identity as something that is not static, but rather continuously produced and negotiated through cultural and discursive practices. In this context, code-switching becomes a linguistic practice that shows how individuals in the diaspora articulate their identities, both by negotiating identities and by responding to the dominance of the majority culture. Theoretically, Hall (1996) explains articulation as a way to characterize a social formation without falling into the trap of reductionism and essentialism. This, according to Grossberg in Hall (1996), can be seen as a transformation of cultural studies from a communication model (production-text-consumption; encoding-decoding) to a context theory. However, articulation can also be considered a method used in cultural analysis. Articulation, on the one hand, provides a methodological framework for understanding what a cultural study does, while, on the other hand, it provides a strategy for conducting cultural studies, namely a way of 'contextualizing' one's object of analysis

(Hall, 1996, p.112). Therefore, the concept of articulation not only serves as a theoretical tool for reading the relationship between text and context, but also as a critical approach that enables analysis of how identity, representation, and cultural practices work dynamically in the field of power and ideology.

The practice of code-switching can be understood as a form of cultural articulation. This is because through language code switching, speakers connect two or more systems of meaning—for example, between their culture of origin and the dominant culture—so that language functions as an articulative medium that reveals social position, identity affiliation, and power dynamics in discourse. Within this framework, code-switching is used as an articulative strategy that connects linguistic practices with the social, cultural, and ideological conditions that underlie the novel *American as Paneer Pie*.

Method

This study uses a qualitative method with a literary text analysis approach to an Indian-American children's novel entitled *American as Paneer Pie* (2020). The qualitative method was chosen because it allows researchers to examine in depth the language practices in this novel and the cultural meanings contained therein. The data obtained from the novel were identified and grouped based on the type and function of code-switching. Furthermore, the data were analyzed using the concept of identity articulation to see how the practice of code-switching served as a form of identity articulation for characters in representing the process of cultural negotiation and self-identity within the narrative. To examine the phenomenon of code-switching, this study uses John Gumperz's code-switching theory. Meanwhile, in relation to the articulation of diasporic identity, this study links code-switching as a strategy for articulating identity, where the concept of identity articulation is Stuart Hall's concept of how cultural and linguistic elements are linked to form, affirm, and express diasporic identity in a flexible and negotiated manner.

Result

American as Paneer Pie depicts the life of an Indian-American diasporic girl named Lekha. She is a second-generation Indian immigrant who lives with her parents in the United States. Lekha's life is filled with challenges in balancing two different cultures, namely Indian culture and American culture. In this novel, the practice of code-switching emerges as an important strategy used to negotiate cultural identity, where Indian food terms, traditions, and cultural symbols serve as markers of Lekha's connection to Indian culture, which is also her way of interacting with the dominant American context. This practice opens up space to examine how code-switching becomes a distinctive form of cultural expression, as well as a medium for the formation of diasporic identity, which will be discussed further in the following analysis.

Code-Switching in *American as Paneer Pie*

In the novel *American as Paneer Pie*, code-switching appears through the use of food, cultural, and traditional terms. These terms represent Lekha's connection to Indian culture, which continues to live on in her daily life in America. The use of Hindi and Marathi to refer to food, culture, and tradition invites readers to enter into Lekha's cultural experience, which cannot be fully translated into English. This makes Hindi and Marathi a medium for preserving Lekha's family traditions and negotiating her identity as a member of the diaspora.

Code-switching in the novel *American as Paneer Pie* is predominantly conveyed in the form of metaphorical code-switching. There are 34 out of 38 data found using metaphorical code-switching, which includes the use of Indian food, tradition, and culture terms. This dominance shows that language switching in this novel functions more as an expressive and cultural strategy, not merely as a result of changes in speech situations. In some texts, this metaphorical code-switching is demonstrated through the alternation between English and Hindi or Marathi. In the following text, metaphorical code-switching occurs when words or phrases from Hindi and Marathi are used in the narrative to introduce social and cultural terms that indicate Indian identity.

*Most **Desi** kids I knew in Detroit had jam-packed weekends, full of **Bharat Natyam** classes, **Bollywood** dance classes, classical Indian singing lessons, and nonstop social events, with dozens of holiday celebrations, temple outings, Bollywood concerts, classical music concerts, and **Marathi** plays added to the mix. (Kelkar, 2020, pp.26-27)*

The word *Desi*, in the text above, is a form of metaphorical code-switching. However, functionally, this word is an identity marker that indicates Lekha's membership in the *Desi* diasporic community, thus distinguishing her social experiences from those of American children in general. Meanwhile, the words *Bharat Natyam*, *Bollywood*, and *Marathi* present the social context and traditions specific to the Indian diasporic community in Detroit. Lekha does not only describe ordinary weekend activities, but explains that these activities are rooted in Indian cultural practices. *Bharat Natyam*, *Bollywood*, and *Marathi* function as message qualifications because they serve to clarify and enrich the meaning of statements about the life of the Indian diasporic community in Detroit. These terms not only refer to types of activities, but also classify and concretely illustrate the forms of cultural attachment experienced by *Desi* children.

Code-switching is generally used in this novel for more than one word to refer to types of Indian food. In the following text, food terms that retain Hindi and Marathi make the Indian cultural characteristics in this novel even stronger.

*Before I could worry about it anymore, Aai served us the traditional Marathi meal of **varan**, **bhaat**, **bhaji**, and **poli**. Split yellow mung beans pressure-cooked into a hot varan were poured onto the **basmati bhaat**. (Kelkar, 2020, p.37)*

The text above shows that the words *varan*, *bhaat*, *bhaji*, *poli*, and *basmati bhaat* are also forms of metaphorical code-switching used to show the richness of Indian culinary culture and emphasize the ethnic identity of diasporic characters. In this context, the author does not translate Marathi food terms into English because each word has cultural and emotional meanings that cannot be fully replaced by English equivalents. According to Gumperz (1982), this kind of switching functions as message qualification to add social and cultural meaning to the main message. The use of these food terms does not merely describe the types of food, but also builds a domestic atmosphere and brings the collective memory of the culture of origin into the lives of the diaspora.

The function of metaphorical code-switching as message qualification is also used to provide more specific cultural explanations not only for food terms, but also for traditional Indian practices that do not have exact equivalents in English. As in the following text, message qualification is found in a narrative that explains the traditions of celebration in Indian culture.

Bhaubeej was the day brothers gave their sisters girls. Since I was an only child, my cousins in India would send me **Amar Chitra Kathas** each year. (Kelkar, 2020, p.107)

The word Bhaubeej describes a tradition in which brothers give gifts to their sisters as a symbol of love and protection. This word signifies the cultural identity of the diaspora, explaining Lekha's position as an only child living in America. In this case, Lekha maintains a symbolic connection to Indian traditions through the Amar Chitra Kathas sent to her by her cousin in India. A form of metaphorical code-switching with another function is found in the following text, which shows how Hindi phrases are directly repeated and explained in English.

"Badha kadam," I responded softly. It meant "**take that step forward.**" It was part of a Hindi phrase Dad had learned in medical school that meant "we're in this together." (Kelkar, 2020, p.13)

Functionally, code-switching in the above text is a form of reiteration because it occurs when utterances in one language are repeated or reaffirmed in another language with the same meaning. Reiteration is usually used to reinforce a message or ensure understanding, such as the phrase "*Badha kadam,*" which is emphasized by the phrase "take that step forward." The text above also contains a cultural message that makes language a medium for conveying the identity of the diaspora.

Although dominated by metaphorical code-switching, this novel also uses situational code-switching in four specific contexts. As in the following text, situational code-switching is used to explain the situation when the narrator Aai switches from English to Marathi.

*She glanced at Avantika's empty plate. "**Ankhin kaay pahije**, Avantika?" Aai asked, uncovering the dishes to find out what else Avantika wanted to eat. (Kelkar, 2020, p.40)*

The sentence *Ankhin kaay pahije, Avantika?* means What else do you want, Avantika? The narration Aai in the text above shows a shift from English to Marathi in the dialogue. This code-switching emphasizes the familiarity and emotional closeness in family interactions. In addition, this change affirms Indian cultural identity in the context of a diasporic household. In this case, the narration not only conveys the content of the conversation, but also presents cultural nuances and ethnic affiliation through the language used. Situational code-switching is also found in the following text, triggered by the social context and participants. The situation in the following text shows the use of Marathi to suit the setting and participants.

"Ani, Lekha?" Vikram Uncle asked me, motioning to the plates. "**Kordi poli khau nakos.**"

..... "**I'm fine. Thanks,**" I mumbled, avoiding eye contact with Avantika just in case she was trying not to laugh at me for answering in English instead of Marathi.

"No problem," replied uncle.(Kelkar, 2020, p 42)

The text above shows situational code-switching in cultural and linguistic interactions within a diasporic family. Uncle Vikram, as a native speaker, uses Marathi, while Lekha, as a child of the diaspora, responds in English. Uncle Vikram's use of Marathi in the sentences "*Ani, Lekha?" ... "Kordi poli khau nakos.*" is appropriate for the setting and participants in the context of an Indian family. However, Lekha's response in English, "*I'm fine. Thanks,*" shows a shift to the language she is fluent in and Lekha's personal identity

as a diasporic child. This shift is also shown by Uncle Vikram by changing his language to English in the sentence "*No problem*" to respond back to Lekha's sentence.

In general, *American as Paneer Pie* displays language switching in two main categories according to Gumperz, namely situational and metaphorical code-switching. Situational code-switching occurs when characters adjust their language to a specific social context, participant, or setting. In the text, situational code-switching can be found when family members speak in traditional Hindi and Marathi to interact within the family environment. Meanwhile, metaphorical code-switching is more dominant and serves to express cultural identity and build the emotional nuances of the characters. In this novel, metaphorical code-switching is used to express cultural meanings, such as Indian food terms, traditions, clothing, or rituals, thereby emphasizing the cultural identity and inherited values maintained by the diasporic characters in their interactions with the American environment.

Articulation of Cultural identity through Code Switching

Code-switching can be understood as a symbolic practice that marks the process of becoming a diasporic identity. Hall (1990) asserts that identity is not a fixed entity, but rather the result of articulation that is continuously shaped through differences and negotiations of meaning. In *American as Paneer Pie*, the shift between English and Hindi or Marathi, and vice versa, functions as a differential symbol that affirms the diaspora's distance from the dominant American culture. Each code-switching becomes a form of self-articulation, in which the diasporic subject unites two systems of meaning—one rooted in tradition and the other in Western modernity—without having to completely merge into either one.

The mention of Indian food, traditions, and culture preserved in Hindi is not merely an attempt to preserve the original linguistic elements, but a form of articulation of cultural identity that affirms the continuity of Lekha's relationship with his cultural roots. As in the following text, the use of Hindi to refer to types of food is not just a mere mention, but gives the impression of closeness to Indian culture.

Today's bhaji was made from bitter gourd, and the poli was steaming hot, the way the Indian flatbread tasted best. Next to it was a small bit of kairi lonche, made from pickling raw mangoes, and a slice of lime with some sea salt. There was also a bowl of koshimbir, cucumber and roasted cumin powder in yogurt. And to top it all, there was Dad's totally-not-Marathi, Punjabi-style paneer. (Kelkar, 2020, p.37)

In the text above, descriptions of dishes such as *bhaji*, *poli*, *kairi lonche*, and *koshimbir* show the characters' attachment to their Indian cultural roots, especially the Marathi culinary traditions that are part of their ethnic identity. Lekha articulates her identity as a child of the diaspora in the text above, which is no longer entirely "Indian" or "American." She is the result of cultural hybridization. Culinary practices at the dinner table become a form of representation of the process of blending between her native culture and American culture, through adaptation, modernization, and her existence in the diaspora space. The insertion of the phrase "*Dad's totally-not-Marathi, Punjabi-style paneer*" also indicates a cross-cultural fusion within the domestic space of the diaspora. This mixture of Marathi and Punjabi cuisine is not just a variation in taste, but reflects the articulation of a hybrid diaspora identity, where diverse Indian cultural values are adapted and negotiated in accordance with the new context in America. In terms of type, the above text is a metaphorical code-switching that makes readers recognize Indian food

not only as an object but also as a cultural symbol articulated by Lekha in the context of the diaspora.

The use of metaphorical code-switching in the novel *American as Paneer Pie* symbolizes the process of negotiating identity between the Indian values inherited by the family and American culture. In the following text, code-switching shows how the shift from English to Hindi in the phrase "*Badha kadam*" is not caused by a change in the speech situation, but rather functions as a symbolic strategy to express cultural values and the emotional bond between father and son. This Hindi expression not only conveys the literal meaning of "take a step forward," but also contains a moral message and solidarity of "let's face this together" that represents the collective values of Indian culture.

"Badha kadam," I responded softly. It meant "**take that step forward.**" It was part of a Hindi phrase Dad had learned in medical school that meant "we're in this together." (Kelkar, 2020, p.13)

The use of the Hindi phrase "*Badha kadam*" is a form of articulation of diasporic identity that connects two cultural spaces, namely India as the root of tradition and America as a new living space. This Hindi phrase not only conveys a message of courage, but also signifies the emotional and cultural relationship between father and child that is inherited through language. When the phrase is translated into English, the author shows an effort to bridge two systems of meaning (tradition and modernity, East and West). In addition, the author also wants to emphasize that diasporic identity is constructed through symbolic connections such as this context. Therefore, the phrase "*Badha kadam*" becomes an articulate representation of a hybrid identity that is constantly "becoming," rather than simply "being."

In the context of the following conversation between Lekha and her mother, the novel shows a shift in language where Lekha positions herself as a diaspora child dealing with her mother, who predominantly uses Hindi. Lekha's position as a second-generation immigrant who uses English as her primary means of communication shows that, as a diaspora, language becomes a marker of identity and a space for cultural negotiation.

Aai shook her head. "They wouldn't beg their parents to have dinner with friends away from their family on Christmas."

"It's different."

"Kaay different aahe?"

"Nothing stops for our holidays. There's no vacation from school for Diwali. It's just a regular day here, remember? This isn't India." (Kelkar, 2020, p.91)

The text above represents the practice of situational code-switching that articulates diaspora identity through the mixing of English and Marathi in a conversation between Lekha and Aai (her mother). The phrase "*Kaay different aahe?*" which means "what's the difference?" serves as an ideological marker that represents Aai's cultural affiliation with the Indian language and values that she wants to maintain in the domestic sphere. Meanwhile, Lekha's use of English reflects the process of assimilation and internalization of American culture as a second-generation diaspora. In the framework of articulation, this code-switching affirms that identity is not essential, but rather the result of a continuous process of negotiation between two cultural and linguistic systems. As a child of the diaspora, Lekha negotiates her identity position in a hybrid space between "India" and "America."

Furthermore, the articulation of identity in the context of diaspora shows that identity is not a fixed entity, but rather the result of a negotiation process that takes place

between the culture of origin and the host culture. In this case, code-switching functions as a linguistic and symbolic practice that represents this articulative dynamic. The switching between the mother tongue and American English, both in conversation and in the use of cultural terms, marks the diaspora subject's attempt to bridge two different cultural systems. Therefore, language becomes the medium of articulation where diaspora identity is constructed, negotiated, and continuously "becomes."

Conclusion

The dominance of metaphorical code-switching in *American as Paneer Pie*, with 34 out of 38 data, shows that the use of language switching in this text has a function beyond simply reflecting changes in the speech situation. The author consciously uses Indian language—especially in references to food, traditions, and culture—as a form of representation and articulation of diasporic identity. The insertion of Indian terms, especially to refer to food, traditions, and cultural customs such as *bindi*, *Bharat Natya*, *Desi*, or *paneer*, is the author's way of showing the presence of Indian culture in American social spaces. The author uses code-switching in this novel to emphasize Lekha's attachment to her cultural roots and to show her identity negotiation process in the midst of America's multicultural environment. Meanwhile, situational code-switching appears in certain social interactions, such as when Lekha talks to her family or when she responds to Hindi with English. There are four data found as the situational code-switching. In this context, Lekha's interactions are influenced by generational factors, as Lekha is part of the second generation that is more closely tied to the process of cultural acculturation. Nevertheless, the dominance of metaphorical code-switching indicates that language functions as a means of articulating identity, where language becomes a space for diasporic identities to be negotiated and articulated. Thus, the code-switching in *American as Paneer Pie* functions as a strategy for articulating identity, whereby through this practice, Lekha negotiates her identity as a diasporic child between two different cultures.

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