Authors: Daulay, S. Hamidah, Lubis, R. Audiyah

# TWEETING BETWEEN THE LINES: EXPLORING CODE MIXING IN THE TWITTERSPHERE

## Sholihatul Hamidah Daulay, Rodiatul Audiyah Lubis

*sholihatulhamidah@uinsu.ac.id*,
*audybaru10@gmail.com*

## Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara

## ABSTRACT

Communication is the most essential thing in purpose. In life, sometimes we communicate with people who speak different languages from ours. Moreover, it could be an obstacle to the process of communication in society. In everyday life, we often use code-mixing with the aim of making the person immediately understand what we say. Code-mixing is the practice of combining two or more languages or language varieties within a single conversation, sentence, or even word. This research aims to analyze code-mixing phenomena in the Twittersphere. This research focused on recognizing the types of code-mixing and factors influencing code-mixing by Twitter users. This study uses a descriptive qualitative research design. The subject of this study is Twitter users who post tweets that contain code-mixing. The researcher uses documentation as a data collection method. The data for identifying the types of code-mixing were collected by documentation, such as the tweets posted previously by Twitter users on the Twitter platform.

*Keywords: Communication, Code-mixing, language, Social Media, Twitter*

## INTRODUCTION

Language is an essential element of communication in society. Language is a media of communication that holds a very important role in human life (Anderson, 2012). Language is the principal method of human communication, consisting of words used in a structured and conventional way and conveyed by speech, writing, or gesture. The language that people use in communicating every day could represent our personality, determine the direction of our social behavior, convey thoughts, ideas, and feelings, provide more opportunities for each individual to

work together, and improve our development process through language (Chaturvedi, 2015).

The influences of foreign cultures make Indonesian people learn about foreign languages, like the English language. English is an international language that is now almost a second language in all countries, especially in Indonesia. The phenomenon of mixing English and Indonesia now is not strange. Sometimes, some people understand more quickly when they mix one language with another because it has become a habit. In communication, some people find it difficult to express their thoughts by speaking directly and choose to write them on social media. Social media is a feature that is very close to us nowadays to interact with everyone.

Almost everyone has a social media account to get information and communicate with everyone. Twitter is a place for everyone to speak their mind and to get information. In the vast and dynamic scope of social media, Twitter stands out as a feature of diverse voices, opinions, and cultures. Within this digital world, an interesting linguistic phenomenon unfolds: language mixing. When Twitter users mix languages fluently in their tweets, it creates a dynamic communication that reflects the interconnected and multicultural nature of our online discourse. The phenomenon of language mixing is called code-mixing. Code-mixing frequently arises among social media users in written and oral communication in an informal context. Social media and language are closely related (Syafaat & Setiawan, 2019).

### a. Twitter

In an age of digital communication, are we saying so much more about so much less? More specifically, how has Twitter microblogging technology shaped the way modern humans communicate? It is undeniable that as a communication platform, Twitter has increasingly infused itself into daily life—regardless of one's geographical location. Just ask the estimated 554.7 million people around the globe who actively use the service and post a collective 58 million "tweets" each day. Alternatively, perhaps query one of the 135,000 new users joining the network daily. Twitter is one of the well-known applications widely used by various groups, such as teenagers, influencers, artists, public figures, and others, to share thoughts or information in the form of text. Syafaat and Setiawan (2019) also state that bilingual people who are Twitter users often mix bilingual vocabulary in a post/tweet. Therefore, Twitter has become the focus of this paper's social media platforms.

### b. Code Mixing

Code-mixing, a nuanced language choice, involves incorporating elements of one language while predominantly using another. These elements, whether words, phrases, or larger units, are seamlessly integrated within a single clause or sentence (Balumurugan, 2017). This linguistic phenomenon occurs without a

Authors: Daulay, S. Hamidah, Lubis, R. Audiyah

change in topic and encompasses various language levels, including phonology, morphology, grammatical structures, and lexical items. The influence of one's first language significantly impacts the second language, leading to linguistic interaction and the amalgamation of diverse languages. In society, individuals often blend their language by borrowing or incorporating foreign elements, persistently influenced by their primary language (Kachru in Nusjam, 2004). Code mixing, as defined by Nusjam, involves the consistent transfer of linguistic units between languages, resulting in the development of a new, sometimes constrained, linguistic code for interaction.

Conversational code-mixing goes beyond a mere blending of languages due to laziness or ignorance. It necessitates a profound understanding of both languages and an awareness of community norms. Jacobson outlines formal and functional constraints, considering sociological, psychological, and linguistic dimensions, highlighting the importance of context, cognition, and grammar in code-mixing (Waris, 2012).

Furthermore, the practice of code-mixing underscores the dynamic nature of language use within a multicultural and multilingual society. It serves as a linguistic bridge, facilitating communication between individuals with diverse language backgrounds. The intentional incorporation of linguistic elements from different languages reveals a speaker's adaptability and cultural fluidity. This phenomenon is not only a reflection of linguistic competence but also a manifestation of social identity and belonging. Code-mixing becomes a powerful tool for expressing nuanced meanings, conveying emotions, and establishing a sense of camaraderie within a linguistically diverse community. To sum up, code-mixing entails using two or more languages within the same sentence or discourse, with one language predominantly dominant. This linguistic choice is intricately tied to social context and serves as a function of code selection.

## METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach to describe the problems and research focus. Qualitative methods are social research steps to obtain descriptive data in the form of words and images. This is in accordance with what is revealed by Lexy J. Moleong that the data collected in qualitative research are words, pictures, and not numbers (Moleong, 2007). This research is included in descriptive qualitative research and uses the documentation method as a way of retrieving data sources. The data of this research are utterances contained in several Twitter accounts. The data was collected in December. The data collection technique uses documentation or screen capture on a cellphone.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Authors: Daulay, S. Hamidah, Lubis, R. Audiyah

Code-mixing, as a linguistic phenomenon, encapsulates the seamless integration of multiple languages or linguistic elements within a conversation or even within a single sentence. As elucidated by Wardhaugh and echoed in the research by Virginia and Ambalegin (2021), this linguistic practice manifests when distinct languages intermingle within the confines of a singular clause or expression during speech or writing. The intricacy of code-mixing unveils itself predominantly among bilingual or multilingual individuals who possess fluency in multiple languages. In the fabric of their communication, elements from disparate linguistic backgrounds effortlessly blend, allowing for a nuanced and diverse expression. This convergence of languages often arises organically, reflecting the linguistic repertoire and cultural amalgamation present in regions or communities where multiple languages coexist harmoniously.

The phenomenon of code-mixing is not only a testament to the linguistic proficiency of individuals but also serves as a cultural bridge, allowing for the preservation and celebration of diverse linguistic heritages. Its prevalence in such diverse settings mirrors the fluidity of communication and the dynamic nature of language, showcasing the adaptability and richness embedded within multilingual discourse. Code-mixing can take various forms, such as inserting words or phrases from one language into another, borrowing grammatical structures or expressions, or switching between languages mid-sentence. It is a natural part of communication for many bilingual individuals and can serve different purposes, like emphasizing a point, expressing cultural identity, or filling lexical gaps.

Based on my research on Twitter's social media, the researcher found a lot of code-mixing used by Twitter users. Below are just a few of the many code-mixings that I found.

1.



"Loveble banget" is an intriguing example of code-mixing, where words from different languages combine to create a unique meaning. In this context, "lovable" originates from English, derived from "lovable," describing something or someone highly likable or endearing. On the other hand, "banget" is an Indonesian word employed to intensify or emphasize the preceding word's meaning. In this scenario, "banget" serves to underscore the quality of "lovable," amplifying the impression that the subject is exceptionally charming or delightful. When these two words are fused as "loveble banget," their synergy creates an amplified expression,

Authors: Daulay, S. Hamidah, Lubis, R. Audiyah

signifying an extraordinary level of charm or endearment. It conveys the notion that the object or person being referred to possesses an immensely attractive or appealing quality, capable of evoking profound admiration or a profoundly positive impression. This form of code-mixing not only enriches linguistic usage but also reflects the vibrant interplay between diverse cultures and languages. In the case of "loveble banget," the fusion of words from different languages adds depth to the understanding and expression of positive values in communication.

2.



That tweet exemplifies code-mixing, intertwining words from both English and Indonesian languages seamlessly. "Adegan" and "hujan-hujanan" are Indonesian terms signifying "scene" and "playing in the rain," respectively. On the other hand, "memorable" and "ost" are English terms. "Memorable" denotes something unforgettable or deeply impactful, while "ost" stands for "original soundtrack." Therefore, within this sentence, there is a harmonious blend of vocabulary from both languages employed to vividly describe a remarkable scene that impeccably complements the accompanying background music. This amalgamation of languages adds depth and nuance to the description, underscoring the immersive and impactful nature of the depicted moment in the narrative or visual content.

3.

Authors: Daulay, S. Hamidah, Lubis, R. Audiyah

This tweet is also another example of code-mixing, blending English and Indonesian. "Lucu banget" combines "cute" in English with "banget," an Indonesian word used to emphasize something adorable. "Sehat selalu" means "stay healthy" in Indonesian. The rest of the sentence is primarily in English, expressing gratitude and affectionate wishes for the daughter who sent the videos, thanking her for being born and growing up to be a beautiful, kind, and warm-hearted person, and wishing her good health.

4.



This sentence mixes both English and Indonesian elements to convey a particular sentiment. For instance, "Fans Arsenal" intertwines the English term "fans" with the name of the football club "Arsenal," retaining the club's name in its original English form. Moreover, "Disenggol slow aja" incorporates the Indonesian term "disenggol," signifying being bumped or pushed, alongside the English phrase "slow aja," which suggests taking things slowly or avoiding haste. Consequently, the sentence in English expresses the emotions of an Arsenal football club

Authors: Daulay, S. Hamidah, Lubis, R. Audiyah

supporter, pondering a potential shift or alteration in the team's dynamics or performance. This blending of languages adds depth to the expression, enabling a nuanced description of the individual's thoughts regarding the team and amalgamating diverse linguistic elements to articulate their sentiments comprehensively.

5.
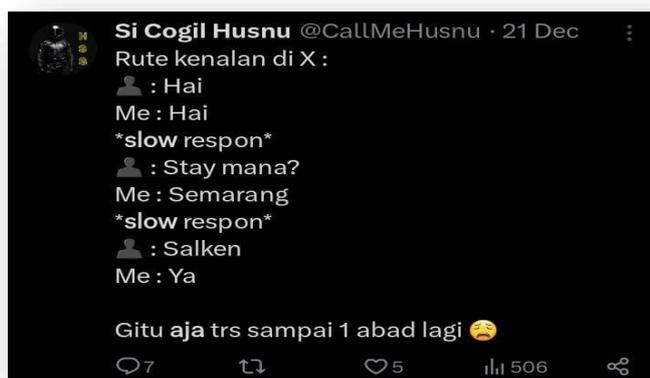


The tweet above seems to showcase a conversation where there is a mix of English and Indonesian, specifically in a messaging or chatting context. "Rute kenalan di X" mixes Indonesian ("rute kenalan" meaning the route or way of introducing oneself) on "X or Twitter." The conversation essentially contains brief greetings and exchanges like "Hai" (Hi) and "Stay mana?" (Where do you live?) in a mix of languages. "Salken" is a shortened form of "Salam Kenal," an Indonesian greeting used when meeting someone for the first time. The last line, "Gitu aja trs sampai 1 abad lagi," is primarily in Indonesian, meaning "Just like that until a hundred years later," expressing a light-hearted sentiment about the conversation continuing in the same manner for a long time. Overall, it is a mix of casual conversation elements in both English and Indonesian within a chat or messaging context.

6.

Authors: Daulay, S. Hamidah, Lubis, R. Audiyah

In this tweet, the amalgamation of Indonesian and English illustrates a common occurrence among bilingual individuals or in settings where multiple languages coexist. The seamless interweaving of these languages in the communication process signifies a nuanced approach to expression, enabling individuals to convey intricate thoughts and emotions more effectively. The term "sender," rooted in English, is a familiar term used to denote the person initiating communication or sending a message. This borrowing of the English term into Indonesian discourse showcases the adaptability and integration of foreign language elements into the local vernacular, enriching communication. The phrase "Ternyata easy going yah" merges "Ternyata," an Indonesian term implying a realization or discovery, with "easy-going," an English expression characterizing a relaxed demeanor. This blend encapsulates the speaker's realization of someone's personality, demonstrating how the fusion of languages augments the description of characteristics or traits. "Seru anaknya," an Indonesian phrase translating to "fun kid," showcases the use of native expressions to describe someone's enjoyable nature. This combination illustrates how code-mixing extends beyond single words to encompass entire phrases or expressions, creating a more vivid and culturally nuanced communication style. The predominant use of Indonesian in the sentence "Maaf pas maba aku gak suka sama kamu soalnya kelihatan sombong" conveys an apology and explanation rooted in the local language context. It narrates a past misunderstanding during their initial interaction as freshmen ("maba"), where the speaker initially misjudged the other person as appearing arrogant but later realized their easy-going nature. Overall, this blend of languages in conversational contexts illustrates the complexity and adaptability of communication, where bilingual individuals effortlessly navigate between languages to express sentiments, share experiences, and convey subtle nuances in meaning and perception. It underscores the multifaceted nature of language use, reflecting cultural integration and the fluidity of linguistic exchanges in diverse settings.

One of the interesting phenomena in sociolinguistics is code-mixing, which has several types. Although many scholars offer different types of code mixing, this research selected one of Muysken's theories because the types of code mixing are divided into three types: insertion, alteration, and Congruent Lexicalization (Muysken, 2000).

## DISCUSSION

However, based on the findings found in several Twitter accounts, the code mix found is included in the insertion category, where insertion occurs when the lexical part of a language inserts and can adjust to another language sentence. The concept of insertion itself refers to the term used by Clyne, namely transference or transfer, and the term from Myer-Scotton, which is called embedding (Muysken, 2000). He also adds that insertional interference is a constituent that is inserted; the constituent can be any syntactic unit, such as a lexical item or phrase.

Authors: Daulay, S. Hamidah, Lubis, R. Audiyah

Code-mixing observed, comprising Indonesian and English, reflects a form of bilingualism—a proficiency in two languages. Bilingualism extends beyond mere language usage to encompass a deeper understanding and application of multiple languages in various contexts. This ability to seamlessly switch between languages, as evidenced in code-mixing, aligns with the concept of bilingualism. It is estimated that approximately half of the global population are native speakers with the capability to navigate and utilize more than one language, as noted by Fromkin (2003).

This linguistic ability reflects the multicultural and multilingual nature of societies worldwide, where individuals adeptly maneuver between languages in everyday interactions. Expanding on Sumarsih et al.'s perspective in 2014, bilingualism is more than just contingent upon proficiency levels in the two languages. Instead, it signifies the skill to engage with and proficiently use two languages, regardless of the depth of knowledge or fluency in each.

Bilingualism, therefore, encompasses a spectrum of language abilities, ranging from basic communication skills to advanced proficiency in two or more languages. The practice of code-mixing, as observed in the blending of Indonesian and English, highlights individuals' dynamic linguistic capabilities and their adeptness in navigating and using multiple languages to communicate effectively in diverse settings. This multifaceted aspect of bilingualism contributes significantly to the rich tapestry of multicultural and multilingual interactions evident in global communities.

However, problems arise when faced with defining the meaning of bilingualism itself because everyone has diverse bilingual characteristics, and sometimes, they can be classified as bilingual. Bilinguals often switch from one language to another in conversational situations that exist in everyday life. Sometimes, language switching occurs due to the circumstances and the interlocutor. For example, when someone uses a different language with a different speaker, context monitoring is needed to choose the correct target language in communication and immediately switch to using the language at the right time (Bruina et al., 2018). A person who has the ability to use more than one language is not only switching languages but also commonly mixing languages for some reason, and it could be seen the speakers of mixing are primarily teenagers.

## CONCLUSION

In the various instances of code-mixing provided, the fusion of English and Indonesian is evident across different settings. Expressions like "loveble banget" or "Lucu banget" intertwine words from both languages, intensifying feelings of endearment or describing extreme levels of cuteness. Examples such as "Fans Arsenal" or "sender" illustrate how blending words from different languages enriches communication, offering nuanced expressions. This practice showcases

Authors: Daulay, S. Hamidah, Lubis, R. Audiyah

language's adaptability in conveying specific meanings, like showing support for a particular football club. Code-mixing also mirrors cultural integration, serving as a bridge between diverse cultural backgrounds and identities.

Moreover, the context in which code-mixing occurs varies, from casual social media conversations to informal chats and even formal expressions in communication. Overall, code-mixing highlights language's flexibility and dynamism in expressing emotions, thoughts, and cross-cultural identities. Its usage reflects the diversity and richness inherent in human communication, showcasing language's evolution to meet the varied communication needs in our globally connected world.

## REFERENCES

A. d. Bruina, A. G. Samuela, J. A. Dunabeitiad. (2018). Voluntary language switching: When and why do bilinguals switch between their languages? *Journal of Memory and Language*. 103, 28–43.

Anderson, S. R. (2012). Languages: A Very Short Introduction. Oxford University Press.

Balamurugan, K. (2017). Code mixing and code-switching—a panorama (with respect to Pondicherry UT & Cauvery delta). *Studies in Linguistics and Literature*, *1*(1), 1. https://doi.org/10.22158/sll.v1n1p1.

Daulay, S. H. (2009). Language and Society. Medan: LPPI

Daulay, S.H. (2014). Types of code mixing on the Facebook status. The 2nd ELITE International Conference, Vol. 38, 365–371.

Daulay, S. H. (2019). The Using of Emoticon in BBM Status. *AL-IRSYAD: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Konseling*, *6*(2).

Daulay, S. H., Nst, A. H., Ningsih, F. R., Berutu, H., Irham, N. R., & Mahmudah, R. (2024). Code Switching in the Social Media Era: A Linguistic Analysis of Instagram and TikTok Users. *Humanitatis: Journal of Language and Literature*, *10*(2), 373-384.

Daulay, S. H., & Aulia, D. N. (2024). Understanding the Role of Language on Twitter: From Hashtag to Discourses. *EBONY: Journal of English Language Teaching, Linguistics, and Literature*, *4*(2), 148-156.

Fromkin, V. (2003). An Introduction to Language. Michigan University.

Muysken, (2000). Bilingual Speech: A Typology of Code Mixing. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Moleong, Lexy J. 2006. Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif. Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya.

Nusjam. (2004). Indonesian-English Code Mixing in Tourism Context. Hasanuddin University.

S. Chaturvedi. (2015). A Sociolinguistic Study of Linguistic Variation and Code Matrix in Kanpur. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 192*, 107 – 115.

Authors: Daulay, S. Hamidah, Lubis, R. Audiyah

Sumarsih, Siregar, M., Bahri, S., & Sanjaya, D. (2014). Code-switching and code-mixing in Indonesia: Study in sociolinguistics? *English Language and Literature Studies*, *4*(1). https://doi.org/10.5539/ells.v4n1p77.

Syafaat, P. M. F., & Setiawan, T. (2019). An analysis of code-mixing in Twitter. *Advances in Social Science, Education, and Humanities Research*, *297*, 276–281. https://doi.org/10.2991/icille18.2019.57.

Virginia, F., & Ambalegin, A. (2021). Directive acts are uttered by the main character in the movie I Care a Lot. *Journal of Applied Studies in Language*, 5(2), 237–244. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31940/jasl.v5i2.237-244.

Waris, A. M. (2012). Code-switching and mixing (Communication in Learning Language). *Jurnal Dakwah Tabligh*, *13*(1), 123–135.