SOCIOLINGUISTICS IN THE DIGITAL ERA: CODE MIXING USED BY STUDENTS-LECTURER IN MOBILE MESSAGING CONVERSATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated how language was used in digital communication between students and their lecturer in an academic setting based on sociolinguistic perspective. The research focused on conversations among students in the Indonesian Language Education program at Dwijendra University. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed to explore the linguistic patterns present in interactions between students-lecture interaction. The data were collected from conversations via WhatsApp. Afterwards, the analysis cantered on identifying and categorizing instances of code mixing based on their types and frequencies. The findings indicated that code mixing was a prominent feature in the students' digital communication. The findings revealed that insertion was the most type that frequently used, accounting for 85% of occurrences, followed by congruent lexicalization at 15%, while alternation was not found in the collected data. Some of the insertions found in this study include; submit, link, itinerary, Mr., guys and other. Additionally, the presence of Balinese elements, such as nggih, demonstrated the influence of local linguistic norms in formal interactions. The finding revealed students frequently mixed Indonesian language with Balinese and English during their conversations in WhatsApp. These linguistic shifts highlight the dynamic nature of language use in digital communication underscore the role of code-mixing as a means of interaction in a multilingual context.
Keywords: Sociolinguistic Study, Digital communication, Code-Mixing, Conversation in WhatsApp.

1. INTRODUCTION

In daily communication, we often encounter interesting linguistic phenomena, one them is code-mixing. In Indonesia, where most people are bilingual or multilingual, shifts the 'codes' frequently occur, making this phenomenon interesting to study continuously. There have been many studies examined code-mixing, relatively few have looked at this linguistic phenomenon from the point of view of digital communication. In fact, communication carried out in digital media is one of the interesting phenomena to be examined. This phenomenon is relevant because it can reveal new patterns in the use of "code" that are not found in traditional oral communication. Moreover, the linguistic phenomenon is carried out by people who have been said to be "mature" in language, for example, university students.

In general, the level of ability of students in using Indonesian (mostly also mastering regional languages) has reached a good level of mastery. This is due to the process of language acquisition that begins in childhood or also through interaction with the surrounding environment. Additionally, their exposure to English course from elementary school (or even kindergarten) through high school has enriched their knowledge of English as a second language. In this context, the phenomenon that

experienced by students in Indonesia can be studied from a sociolinguistic perspective, especially in relation to the use of code-mixing as a reflection of the dynamics of bilingualism and multilingualism in an academic setting. Students in Indonesia frequently shift the 'code' between Bahasa Indonesia, regional languages, and English for various reasons, such as when speaking with familiar interlocutors or when encountering lexical gaps. These shifts show the existence of 'code' selection in communication, where students consciously or unconsciously use it in interaction.

Wardhaugh (2010) states that language competence comes in many forms among speakers, regardless of the specific language they speak. Moreover, bilingualism and multilingualism are more common globally than monolingualism. As a result, in multilingual communities, speakers naturally engage in code-switching and code-mixing based on their communication needs and social context. Code-mixing, which is a fundamental aspect of code-switching, occurs when elements from one language are inserted into speech that is predominantly in another language. Unlike code-switching which often involves a change of topic or context, code-mixing is the deliberate integration of two languages in one conversation without changing the subject matter. Muysken (2000) classifies code-mixing into three main types: insertion, alternation and congruent lexicalisation.

Mixing phrases or expressions from other languages is one of linguistic phenomenon that appear in bilingual society. Code-mixing is a term used to describe a broader category of linguistic contact, including instances of code-switching and other interactions that place more emphasis on lexical components (Muysken, 2000). Insertion is a technique of code-mixing that is conceptualized as comparable to borrowing. In this section, words and phrases are typically used to combine two or more languages into a framework of the other language. Alternation Alternation is the switching from one language structure to another. It describes the employment of one language between clause forms from different languages. Congruent Lexicalization Congruent lexicalization of material from different lexical inventories into a shared grammatical structure, where two languages share grammatical structure, which can be filled lexically with elements from either language. From the above definition, it can be concluded that code mixing refers to mixing some parts of another language, such as words or phrases, in a particular topic without violating any grammatical rules and can involve different levels of language.

This research highlights the phenomenon of digital communication between students and lecturers, where this interaction reflects the dynamics of information delivery and language acquisition. Dwijendra University was chosen as the study site due to the diversity of student backgrounds. The main focus of this study is on students taking the Hotel and Restaurant course, specifically students enrolled in the Indonesian Language Education programme in the fifth semester. The selection of students in this semester is based on their level of intensity in communicating to lecturers, so that they can provide more insight into the use of language in digital communication. WhatsApp application was chosen because this application is one of the most common communication platforms used by students to interact with lecturers.

Based on the background, this research aims to examine the phenomenon of code-mixing among fifth-semester students of the Indonesian Language Education program taking the Hotel and Restaurant course when communicating with lecturer via WhatsApp. Accordingly, the research question for this study is: What types of code-mixing are used by fifth-semester students in the Indonesian Language Education Study Program when having chats with lecturers on WhatsApp during the Hotel and Restaurant course?

2. RESEARCH METODOLOGY

In this study, the subjects were analysed using a qualitative descriptive research design. Qualitative research is an approach used to explore and understand the meaning given by individuals or groups to social or human-related issues (Mahsun, 2019). The main purpose of qualitative research is to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects, such as behaviour, perceptions, motivations, and actions holistically, and describe them in the form of words and language in their natural environment using various naturalistic techniques.

The data in this study were obtained from conversations between fifth-semester students of the Indonesian Language Education Study Programme who took the Hotel and Restaurant course when communicating with their lecturers via WhatsApp. After data reduction, the next step is data presentation. The purpose of presenting the data is to organise the information collected to make it easier to understand and analyse. The data that has been reduced is then arranged and interpreted as research findings. Afterwards, this research used qualitative techniques to analyse the data. The qualitative approach emphasises flexible research methods with data collection in a natural environment while paying attention to the social and individual context of the subject under study. Data was analysed inductively and deductively to identify emerging patterns or themes. The results of the research were then presented in descriptive form.

3. LITERATUR REVIEW

Code in sociolinguistic studies refers to the communication system used by individuals in certain social situations (Holmes, 2013). Codes can be languages, dialects, or language variations chosen by speakers based on social factors such as participants, places, and topics of conversation. In multilingual societies, individuals often switch between codes to adjust to the communication context, show solidarity, or express formality and social status.

Malabar (2015) explains that code-mixing is a linguistic phenomenon commonly found in communication in multilingual societies, where elements from one language are inserted into another language to enrich language style or variety. In addition, the phenomenon of interference also often appears in bilingual societies, where elements of the dominant language influence the lexical and grammatical rules of the other language, as is often the case in the influence of Javanese regional languages and foreign languages on Indonesian.

Several research have explored the role of code-mixing in language learning, particularly in spoken communication among students. Code-mixing is commonly observed in bilingual and multilingual societies, where individuals naturally blend two or more languages in conversation. The research by Humaira, Jamaliah, and Ramlan (2024) highlights the students frequently use code-mixing while practicing speaking English, as it helps them overcome vocabulary limitations, boost confidence, and maintain fluency. Their findings suggest that students perceive code-mixing positively, as it allows them to express themselves more naturally while integrating English into their daily conversations.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After collected students' conversations from WhatsApp chats sent to the lecturer, the data was then shorted based in code-mixing elements. Furthermore, the data were classified into a table based on the form of code-mixing used. In this study, the researcher found various forms of code-mixing used by 5th semester students of Indonesian Language Education Study Programme who took Hotel and Restaurant course. Code-mixing was found mostly in the form of insertion of English or Balinese elements into Indonesian conversation. The data shows that there are three main

forms of code-mixing used, namely insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalisation.

Table 3.1 The Percentage Code-Mixing Made by Students

No	Type	Frequency	Percentage
1	Insertion	23	85%
2	Alternation	0	0%
3	Congruent lexicalization	4	15%
	total	28	100%

Based on the table 3.1 shows the percentage of code-mixing used by the students. As previously explained, code-mixing was dominated by insertion 85%, then, congrent lexicalization 15% and Alternation 0%.

The Types of Code-Mixing
The followings are some conversations that reflects the phenomenon of code-mixing, which occurs when a students communicated with their lecturer through the WhatsApp application in an academic context.

(1) Selamat pagi pak, untuk tugas **Hotel and Restaurant** sudah saya **submit** di **link** Google Drive yang bapak berikan. Terima kasih
(2) [mengirim file powerpoint] Selamat Pagi **guys**, ini materi dari **Mr**. Wira, Terimakasih

Data (1) reflects the insertion phenomenon in code-mixing, where English elements are added in indonesian conversation. The English 'code' such as **link** and **Hotel and Restaurant** and verb **submit** are inserted into the Indonesian sentence structure without changing the main syntactic pattern. In sociolinguistic studies, code-mixing refers to the simultaneous use of two or more languages in one utterance, which often occurs in bilingual or multilingual communication (Muysken, 2000). Insertion as a form of code-mixing occurs when lexical elements or phrases from one language are inserted into the constructions of another language, while maintaining the dominant syntactic structure of the primary language used. In this data, the phrase **Hotel and Restauran**t is used in an academic context as a specific marker for the course being discussed. The use of foreign terms in academic contexts can also be attributed to pragmatic factors, such as the need to maintain clarity of terminology or increase precision in the delivery of information (Poplack, 1980).

Data (2) also shows the phenomenon of code-mixing in the form of insertion, where there is an insertion of lexical elements from English, namely the words guys and **Mr.,** into the Indonesian sentence structure. The word guys is an informal form of greeting in English used to address a group of people, indicating social and cultural influences in language use. In this context, the use of guys indicates a more relaxed and inclusive communication style, which is often found in interactions between students. In addition, the use of **Mr.** before the name reflects a more referential code-mixing pattern. In the academic world, English titles or addresses such as Mr., Dr., or Professor are often used as a form of respect or to follow international academic conventions. This shows that although the core of the sentence uses Indonesian, there is a tendency to maintain certain foreign terms that are considered more appropriate in certain contexts. According to Muysken (2000), the phenomenon of code-mixing can occur for various reasons, including pragmatic needs, language habits, and the influence of social and academic environments. In this data, the insertion of English elements not only enriches students' communication style, but also reflects changes in the dynamics of language use in the digital era.

In the conversations conducted by students via WhatsApp, not only English 'code' appears, but also Balinese 'code' are inserted in Indonesian conversation. The example of this code can be seen in data (3).

(3) Lecture: Selamat Pagi adik-adik mahasiwa, berikut PPT pertemuan ke 7.
   Student: **nggih** bapak, terimakasih

In data (3), the phenomenon of code-mixing occurs in the form of the use of the word **nggih**, which comes from Balinese and has an equivalent in English as alright or yes. The insertion of this word into the main sentence using Indonesian shows the insertion of language mixing, which is when lexical elements from one language are inserted into the syntactic structure of another language without changing the main sentence pattern (Muysken, 2000). This phenomenon reflects how code-mixing does not only occur with foreign languages such as English, but can also involve local languages in academic interactions. The use of **nggih** in this context functions as a form of politeness and respect to the lecturer.

(4) **BTW** apa ada yang masih nyimpen itinerary untuk yang waktu ini dikasi sama Mr. Wira?

In digital communication, especially through short message applications such as WhatsApp, the use of mixed languages in conversations is becoming an increasingly common phenomenon among students. One interesting example of this phenomenon can be found in sentence (4)**.** This sentence shows how students naturally combine various language 'code' in one utterance, with Indonesian as the main structure, but there is an insertion of 'code' from English, such as **BTW**, as well as terms related to the hospitality and tourism industry, namely **itinerary**. In the context of this communication, the conversation most likely aims to inquire about the whereabouts of the itinerary document previously provided by a lecturer, **Mr** Wira. The word **BTW**, which is short for By the way, is used as an introduction in the sentence to introduce a new topic in the ongoing conversation. The use of English 'code' in this message not only reflects the students' tendency to use a more practical and efficient language in digital communication, but also shows the influence of an academic or professional environment that is familiar with English terms.

In terms of language structure, this sentence is an example of code-mixing, where Indonesian is the main frame in the utterance, but there are English elements inserted in it. The word **BTW** in this sentence can be categorised as a form of congruent lexicalisation according to the code-mixing classification proposed by Muysken (2000). This is due to the ease with which the word **BTW** can be replaced with its original English form, namely By the way, without changing the syntactic pattern in the sentence. In other words, the insertion of this English element occurs due to the harmony between the structures of Indonesian and English, which allows words or phrases from both languages to be used interchangeably without disrupting the grammatical integrity of the language used in the conversation. In addition, the insertion of the word **itinerary** in this sentence also shows the adaptation of terms from English that are commonly used in certain fields, such as the hospitality and tourism industry, where many technical terms are more commonly known in English than their Indonesian equivalents.

The linguistic phenomenon seen in this sentence reflects how students, especially in academic settings related to hospitality and tourism, actively use English in their daily communication. This shows that code-mixing is not simply a form of language mixing that occurs randomly, but is a reflection of students' exposure to technical terms as well as communication habits in their academic and professional environments. In this case, the use of Btw as a new topic marker is one of the common communication strategies in English, which is then adopted into Indonesian communication without significantly changing the syntactic structure of the sentence. Thus, this phenomenon not only reflects students' bilingualism skills,

but also shows how global language influences and academic communication needs shape their linguistic patterns in digital interactions.

5. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study highlight the type of code-mixing in digital communication between students and lecturers, particularly within the academic setting of the Hotel and Restaurant course. Through the classification of code-mixing based on Muysken's (2000) framework, it was evident that insertion was the dominant form, accounting for 85% of occurrences, followed by congruent lexicalization at 15%, while alternation was absent from the collected data. The presence of English and Balinese linguistic elements in students' conversations further indicates the dynamic nature of bilingual and multilingual interactions. This suggests that students tend to integrate foreign lexical items into Indonesian sentence structures without altering syntactic patterns, reflecting a natural linguistic adaptation influenced by their academic and professional environment.

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