

The Influence of English Code-Mixing in Social Media Content on the Language Attitudes of Indonesian Youth

Samsidar

Universitas Islam Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi, Jambi, Indonesia
E-mail: dharsamsidar@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of English code mixing in digital communication has become increasingly prominent among Indonesian adolescents, particularly as social media functions as their primary space for interaction, self-expression, and identity negotiation. This study aims to describe the patterns of code mixing use, the socio-linguistic motivations that shape these practices, and their influence on adolescents' language attitudes by employing a qualitative descriptive approach based on document analysis. The findings reveal that code mixing appears in various linguistic units, including words, phrases, and clauses, and serves multiple communicative purposes such as expressing identity, enhancing interpersonal engagement, and aligning with globalized youth culture. The motivations underlying these practices are influenced by language prestige, peer group dynamics, digital social expectations, and self-presentation strategies that integrate both local and global identity orientations. Furthermore, the study shows that adolescents' language attitudes demonstrate a dual orientation. While Indonesian is still highly valued in formal, academic, and national identity contexts, English is perceived as expressive, modern, and socially advantageous for digital communication. This duality reflects the flexible and adaptive nature of adolescents' linguistic identities, shaped by continual exposure to global content and participation in multilingual online environments. The findings also indicate that code mixing should not be interpreted as a threat to the national language; rather, it represents a natural linguistic response within multilingual societies experiencing rapid technological and cultural shifts. Therefore, language education and policy interventions should promote context-appropriate use of Indonesian while accommodating the creative and innovative linguistic practices that emerge within digital youth communication.

Keywords: Code Mixing, Teenagers, Language Attitudes, Social Media

INTRODUCTION

The development of social media such as TikTok, Instagram, and X (Twitter) has brought significant changes in the language practices of Indonesian youth, particularly in the use of Indonesian which is increasingly influenced by foreign languages and informal communication styles. Teenagers now tend to use *code-mixing*, namely the mixing of English vocabulary in captions, comments, and various forms of digital content, which is seen as an impact of cultural globalization and changes in communication norms of the younger generation (Hasjim et al., 2024; Putri et al., 2025). In addition, social media has given rise to new language variations in the form of slang, abbreviations, and creative spelling variations that also enrich vocabulary, but also shift standard language norms (Suratni, 2025). Various studies have shown that the use of informal language and mixed languages can reduce adherence to standard Indonesian language rules, especially among



young users with low levels of education (Listiani et al., 2023) . However, social media also serves as a space for expressing group identity and a medium for promoting local culture, thus holding an ambivalent position in the development of the Indonesian language (Putri et al., 2025) . In this context, efforts to preserve the Indonesian language in the digital era require government policy support, curriculum updates, literacy campaigns, and increased public awareness (Hasjim et al., 2024).

The use of English *code-mixing* is also closely linked to the construction of adolescents' social identities, particularly as English is viewed as a symbol of modernity, intelligence, and social prestige. Adolescents utilize *code-mixing* to project a self-image relevant to digital communities, construct in-group identity, and enhance self-presentation in algorithm-based interaction spaces. This phenomenon reflects the formation of a hybrid linguistic identity that combines local and global values and demonstrates a process of identity negotiation amidst the currents of cultural globalization (Husnita et al., 2025) . Furthermore, *code-mixing* functions as a social adaptation tool that enables adolescents to adjust to various communication contexts and different social groups (Razali et al., 2024) . However, excessive use of *code-mixing* has the potential to pose challenges to formal communication skills and mastery of Indonesian language rules (Dahniar & Sulistyawati, 2023) .

This phenomenon has sparked debate regarding its impact on language attitudes and loyalty to Indonesian. Some view *code-mixing* as a form of linguistic creativity in a multilingual society that can enrich communication and facilitate social relationships (Utami & Andharu, 2025; Zebua et al., 2025) . However, others worry that the dominance of English vocabulary in everyday conversation can reduce awareness of formal language norms and even weaken national identity, especially if the use of a foreign language is conscious and continuous. One study showed that approximately 68.3% of respondents use *code-mixing*, a condition that has the potential to threaten the national language if not balanced with awareness of Indonesian language preservation (Verawati et al., 2023) . On the other hand, *code-mixing* is also a means of forming social identity and self-expression, so this phenomenon does not only concern linguistic aspects, but also attitudes and language ideologies among adolescents (Ishak et al., 2025) . Handling this issue requires collaboration between government policies, educational institutions, and the community to ensure that the use of *code-mixing* remains balanced (Hasjim et al., 2024) .

Although numerous studies have examined *code-mixing* , most have focused on the forms and types of *code-mixing*, particularly in formal educational contexts. Studies on the relationship between *code-mixing* and language attitudes in digital interactions are still relatively limited, despite social media being the most active and dominant communication space for adolescents. Recent studies have shown that Indonesian social media users, particularly adolescents, have positive attitudes toward English-Indonesian language mixing, influenced by language prestige, communication needs, and the expression of self-identity (Rizky et al., 2024) . Furthermore, *code-mixing practices* function as a mechanism for social identity marking while reflecting the language ideology developing among young users (Zebua et al., 2025) . This indicates that the

dynamics of adolescents' language attitudes need to be understood not only through linguistic motives but also through the socio-psychological context of digital media use.

Studies in the digital realm have tended to focus their analysis on linguistic strategies, communication functions, and patterns of language variation, so that the implications for language attitude tendencies have not received adequate analytical attention. Meanwhile, research on language attitudes is more often directed at institutional domains, such as schools or universities, so it has not captured the dynamics of adolescent linguistic expression on social media, which is performative, flexible, and influenced by global exposure. This complexity indicates the need for a more comprehensive conceptual analysis to explain how the integration of English elements in digital communication can influence the value orientations, language preferences, and linguistic representations of Indonesia's young generation.

Based on these developments, an analysis is needed that can map the relationship between *code-mixing practices* on social media and the configuration of Indonesian adolescents' language attitudes. This article aims to construct a conceptual understanding of this relationship through a synthesis of recent theories and research findings, thereby providing a more comprehensive picture of adolescent linguistic dynamics in the digital context and its implications for the development of the Indonesian language.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach to explain the phenomenon of English *code-mixing* on social media and how it relates to the language attitudes of Indonesian adolescents. This approach was chosen because the research focuses on understanding concepts, patterns, and trends based on published findings, without directly collecting field data. The data in this study comes from documents and written sources, such as journal articles, books, proceedings, and other scientific publications relevant to the topics of *code-mixing*, language attitudes, adolescent digital communication, and linguistic phenomena in social media. These sources were analyzed to identify concepts, language use patterns, and socio-linguistic factors that influence adolescents' language practices. Data analysis was conducted descriptively and analytically, namely by reading, interpreting, and connecting information from various sources, then compiling a systematic description of the relationship between *code-mixing* and adolescents' language attitudes. The results of the analysis are presented in the form of a comprehensive explanation that illustrates general trends and key findings from these sources.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis in the following section is structured to provide a comprehensive overview of the phenomenon of English code-mixing in Indonesian youth's digital communication. This study highlights various interrelated dimensions, ranging from the forms and patterns of code-mixing use, socio-linguistic factors influencing youth's language choices, language attitudes shaped through digital interactions, and sociolinguistic implications arising from the dynamics between linguistic creativity and

language norms. These four themes are presented systematically to demonstrate the interconnectedness between language practices, identity formation, and changing communication patterns evolving in the social media era. With a structured presentation, the following section is expected to provide a deeper understanding of how Indonesian youth construct, negotiate, and express their linguistic identities in an increasingly complex digital space.

1. English Code-Mixing Usage Patterns on Indonesian Youth Social Media

The pattern of English and Indonesian code-mixing on Indonesian youth social media generally involves inserting words, phrases, and clauses that serve to emphasize messages, express identity, and enhance the quality of social interactions. Studies on Instagram show that code-mixing is used to expand audience reach and strengthen users' social identities, although in some cases it can pose challenges related to communication clarity (Zebua et al., 2025). This use is influenced by several factors, including language prestige, language habits, bilingualism, and the user's social and cultural context (Rustan & Ajiegoena, 2023).

Generation Z utilizes code-mixing as a symbol of social status and a lifestyle expression that combines local and global values, as well as a form of identity negotiation in the digital age (Husnita et al., 2025). In this process, code-mixing also contributes to second language acquisition, although research still finds errors in language structure and cohesion in its use (Rustan & Ajiegoena, 2023). Thus, code-mixing on Indonesian youth social media can be understood as a dynamic phenomenon reflecting sociocultural changes and increasingly complex linguistic interactions in the digital world (Wibowo & Hamidah, 2023).

This phenomenon is further amplified by exposure to global culture, consumption of English-language entertainment content, and social media algorithms that encourage the spread of international language trends (Purba et al., 2024). In the context of fast and practical digital communication, adolescents tend to choose specific English vocabulary to more accurately describe emotions or situations, such as "cringe," "literally," and "vibes." Furthermore, code-mixing serves to affirm the social and cultural identity of Generation Z, reflecting a lifestyle that blends global and local values (Husnita et al., 2025). While enhancing linguistic creativity and enriching social interactions, intensive use of code-mixing also has potential negative impacts, such as decreased formal language skills and difficulty communicating in formal contexts (Dahniar & Sulistyawati, 2023).

2. Socio-Linguistic Motivation and Adolescent Identity

Adolescents' socio-linguistic motivations for language use are closely related to the dynamic process of identity formation, which continues to evolve as they interact with their social environment. Adolescent identity is not only shaped by personal values but also the result of social negotiations that occur through interactions with peer groups, including discussions and participation in digital spaces. This is evident in the development of adolescents' political identities through discussions on digital platforms, where language plays a crucial role in negotiating social positions and

ideological views (Hung, 2020). These interactions demonstrate that language use, including *code-mixing*, is influenced by adolescents' need for acceptance and recognition within their peer group.

External factors such as educators' attitudes toward linguistic and cultural diversity also influence adolescent identity development, particularly for those from minority groups. Educators' supportive attitudes toward linguistic diversity can strengthen adolescents' affective motivation toward the majority language while encouraging the development of a more positive bicultural identity (Laketa et al., 2023). In this context, translanguaging practices and the use of personal narratives become important means for adolescents to connect their interests, multilingual experiences, and identities, particularly in school environments that encourage linguistic exploration (Przymus & Mendoza, 2025). These interactions that support language flexibility contribute to the formation of a healthier and more stable multilingual identity.

On the other hand, the dominant use of a second language in academic and social contexts can gradually lead to the erosion of the first language, ultimately affecting adolescents' cultural identity. When English becomes more frequently used than the mother tongue, whether due to school expectations, exposure to global media, or communication habits in digital spaces, adolescents may develop new linguistic preferences that distance them from the cultural values embedded in their native language. Factors such as peer pressure and educational policies also play a significant role in weakening loyalty to the mother tongue, resulting in observable shifts in both linguistic and cultural identity (Alasgarova, 2025). These changes illustrate that language functions not only as a medium of communication but also as a central component in the formation, maintenance, and negotiation of adolescents' cultural identity within a multilingual environment that continues to evolve under the influence of globalization.

Linguistic creativity, including the creation of new words, the transformation of meanings, and the use of innovative language variations, is also part of adolescents' social strategies. This strategy is used to gain acceptance within peer groups and build a positive identity, while also serving as a communication bridge between adolescents and adults (S. Przymus, 2024). Furthermore, social and cultural awareness of linguistic diversity significantly influences the development of adolescents' multilingual competence and cultural identity. This is particularly evident in adolescents growing up in multilingual environments and with migration backgrounds, where exposure to diverse languages and cultures creates a more flexible and adaptive identity (Han & Park, 2020). These findings suggest that code-mixing patterns are inextricably linked to identity construction and the changing landscape of adolescent digital communication.

3. Adolescents' Language Attitudes towards Indonesian and English

Indonesian adolescents exhibit diverse attitudes toward Indonesian and English, with variations influenced by their social context, educational environment, and the cultural identities they construct. In the context of formal education, research shows

that high school students in Indonesia have positive attitudes toward learning English. These attitudes are shaped by cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects that contribute to their motivation to master the language (Rangkuti et al., 2023). Other findings suggest that adolescents value variations in English accents and view the primary goal of language learning as the ability to communicate effectively, rather than imitating native speakers (Franssiska & Subekti, 2022). These positive attitudes reflect a more communicative and inclusive view of English as a global language.

However, attitudes toward English are not uniform across contexts. In Islamic boarding schools, for example, adolescents tend to exhibit less positive attitudes due to limited exposure to English, the emergence of language anxiety, and low internal motivation to use the language (Saputra et al., 2025). These differences in context indicate that language attitudes are strongly influenced by the learning environment and the level of exposure adolescents receive in their daily lives.

On the other hand, Indonesian adolescents also display positive attitudes toward Indonesian, both in its standard and non-standard forms. Although standard Indonesian is more valued in formal and educational contexts, slang variants remain widely accepted as a means of self-expression and social familiarity (Salsabilla & Usiona, 2025). Attitudes toward regional languages such as Javanese and Balinese are also influenced by cultural identity and ethnic pride, although in everyday communication practices, Indonesian remains the primary choice (Fitriati et al., 2025). These findings suggest a balance between preserving local languages and the need to master the national language as a unifying tool.

This balance is also related to adolescents' need to master global languages, particularly English, which they see as crucial for educational opportunities, social mobility, and international relations (Indarti & Manara, 2025). Thus, adolescents' language attitudes are not dichotomous, but rather a dual orientation that accommodates local identities while simultaneously opening up to global demands. A comparative study of Indonesian and Filipino students reveals differing perspectives on English learning. These differences can inform the development of more effective and contextualized learning methods for Indonesian students (Permadi et al., 2025). Meanwhile, adolescents in international schools in Jakarta tend to be more comfortable using English in their daily activities, while still maintaining their cultural identity and mother tongue as part of their multilingual identity (Sukamto et al., 2021). This suggests that comfort in English does not necessarily undermine national identity or mother tongue.

4. Socio-Linguistic Implications: The Balance between Creativity and Language Norms

The sociolinguistic implications of the balance between linguistic creativity and language norms suggest that linguistic creativity plays a crucial role in language development while challenging established rules. Linguistic creativity emerging in young speakers, as influenced by linguistic maturity and language attitudes, can enrich creative thinking skills and encourage innovation in everyday communication practices (Guentulle et al., 2024). This perspective aligns with the *translanguaging*

approach, which emphasizes that linguistic innovation in multilingual speakers is not simply a deviation from the norm, but a meaningful socio-political act that reflects the flexibility of linguistic identity (Wei, 2020). This view broadens the understanding that creativity is not in conflict with norms, but has the potential to be part of language evolution.

In the context of language learning, the use of a second language (L2) and the motivation to master it also contribute to the process of linguistic creativity. Better mastery of a foreign language has been shown to improve creative performance, although L2 use sometimes presents cognitive and affective challenges for young speakers (Yang & Li, 2025). Linguistic creativity is not only manifested through variations in linguistic structures, but also through dynamic social interactions and cultural contexts, which allow language to develop flexibly without losing its communicative function (Pérez, 2024). Thus, the balance between creativity and language norms is an important aspect in understanding how adolescents use language to negotiate identity, adapt to social change, and participate in evolving digital communication practices. Overall, maintaining a balance between creativity and language norms is important to support linguistic innovation while maintaining the effectiveness of social communication (Casini, 2021).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the use of English code mixing is an integral part of Indonesian youth's digital communication practices, evolving with the influence of globalization, the intensity of popular culture consumption, and the need to construct relevant self-expression on social media. Code mixing functions not only as a linguistic medium but also as a symbol of social identity, signaling youth's connectedness to global trends, the dynamics of digital communities, and modern lifestyles that emphasize creativity and speed in communication. This practice demonstrates that language in the digital space is not static, but continues to adapt to the interaction needs of the younger generation.

Adolescents' linguistic attitudes toward Indonesian and English demonstrate a complementary dual orientation. They maintain Indonesian as a formal means of communication and a symbol of national identity, while simultaneously recognizing the functional value of English as a language for global information, educational mobility, and digital interaction. This dual orientation demonstrates that adolescents' linguistic identities are flexible, adaptive, and formed through the simultaneous interaction of local values and global expectations. Adolescents' language choices reflect the need to stay connected to their national culture while utilizing English as a source of prestige, efficiency of expression, and social legitimacy in online spaces.

Overall, code mixing cannot be understood as a form of decline or a threat to the survival of national languages. Rather, this phenomenon is a natural linguistic phenomenon in multilingual societies experiencing rapid cultural mobility and technological development. The use of code mixing demonstrates how adolescents utilize their linguistic resources to negotiate identity, build social relationships, and adapt to the demands of dynamic digital communication. Therefore, language policy and education

need to be directed at fostering awareness of contextually appropriate language use, maintaining linguistic norms in formal settings, and simultaneously providing space for linguistic creativity to develop organically in digital interactions.

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