

CODE SWITCHING AND CODE MIXING IN STUDENT INTERACTIONS ON INSTAGRAM SOCIAL MEDIA

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Abstrak

This study aims to explain the phenomena of code-switching and code-mixing, as well as the underlying social factors in their use in interactions between students on Instagram. The approach used in this study is qualitative with a descriptive method. The data obtained came from students' writings that appeared in captions, comments, and direct messages on Instagram. Data collection was carried out through observation and recording techniques, then analyzed by categorizing information based on the type of code-switching and code-mixing and interpreted using a sociolinguistic approach. The findings show that students actively apply code-switching and code-mixing, especially between Indonesian, English, and regional languages. Code-switching is usually used to adjust to the context and interlocutor, while code-mixing functions as a strategy of expression and symbolism in digital communication. The social factors that influence its use include aspects of identity, social solidarity, modern image, and the characteristics of social media, which tend to be informal. This study highlights that code-switching and code-mixing in student interactions on Instagram are not merely linguistic phenomena, but also social practices that reflect the development of language and identity in the digital age.

Keyword: *Code-switching, Code-mixing, Instagram, Students, Sociolinguistics*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan fenomena code-switching dan code-mixing, serta faktor-faktor sosial yang mendasari penggunaannya dalam interaksi antara siswa di Instagram. Pendekatan yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif. Data yang diperoleh berasal dari tulisan siswa yang muncul dalam caption, komentar, dan pesan langsung di Instagram. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui teknik observasi dan pencatatan, kemudian dianalisis dengan mengkategorikan informasi berdasarkan jenis code-switching dan code-mixing, dan diinterpretasikan menggunakan pendekatan sosiolinguistik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa secara aktif menerapkan code-switching dan code-mixing, terutama antara bahasa Indonesia, Inggris, dan bahasa daerah. Code-switching biasanya digunakan untuk menyesuaikan diri dengan konteks dan lawan bicara, sementara code-mixing berfungsi sebagai strategi ekspresi dan simbolisme dalam komunikasi digital. Faktor-faktor sosial yang mempengaruhi penggunaannya meliputi aspek identitas, solidaritas sosial, citra modern, dan karakteristik media sosial yang cenderung informal. Studi ini menyoroti bahwa code-switching dan code-mixing dalam interaksi mahasiswa di Instagram bukan hanya fenomena linguistik, tetapi juga praktik sosial yang mencerminkan perkembangan bahasa dan identitas di era digital.

Kata Kunci: *Code-switching, Code-mixing, Instagram, Mahasiswa, Sosiolinguistik*

I. PENDAHULUAN

Social media has become an integral part of students' daily lives. It serves not only as a source of entertainment, but also as a primary platform for communication and self-expression. Advances in digital technology have changed the way students interact, especially in their use of language. One of the most frequently used applications is Instagram, which allows users to communicate through a combination of visuals and text in a spontaneous, casual, and open manner.

From a linguistic perspective, student interactions on Instagram show a tendency to use more than one language in a single conversation. This phenomenon is known as code-switching and code-mixing. Code-switching is the shift from one language to another, either in different sentences or in different contexts of conversation, while according to Ita Kurnia et al. (2023), code-mixing is the insertion of elements from another language into the main language structure, such as words or phrases. This phenomenon often occurs in speakers who are proficient in more than one language, including students in Indonesia who are usually fluent in Indonesian, regional languages, and foreign languages, especially English.

The practice of language blending that appears in student interactions on Instagram can be explained through the concept of translanguaging. Liu and Fang (2022) argue that individuals with multilingual abilities do not rigidly separate languages, but rather utilize all of their language abilities holistically to create meaning. Therefore, the application of English elements in Indonesian statements is not merely a mixture of languages, but rather a communication strategy that demonstrates students' linguistic flexibility and creativity in the digital context.

Restika et al., (2023) explain that language activities in digital situations cannot be separated from the context of the environment, social relationships, and the characteristics of the communication media used. In the digital world, language not only functions to convey messages, but also to build identity, express oneself, and negotiate social meaning. In line with this thinking, Apriani et al. (2024) emphasize that language switching in student social media occurs as a communication strategy aimed at adapting to the interlocutor, the topic of discussion, and the self-image that one wishes to project. The use of foreign languages, especially English, is not only a linguistic aspect but also has symbolic meaning that reflects modernity, intelligence, and connection to global culture among students.

The phenomenon of code-switching in individuals who speak more than one language does not occur without reason, but is influenced by the type of language being used by the speaker. Xin Hu & Vahid (2024) explain that bilingual individuals are in a specific language mode, which is a state in which languages can be activated that vary depending on the context, interlocutor, and communication purpose. In the context of social media such as Instagram, students are usually in a bilingual or multilingual mode that allows code-switching and code-mixing to occur naturally and without coercion.

In line with this view, Gongyuan Wang et al. (2021) see social media platforms as a new sociolinguistic territory, allowing for more flexible and innovative use of language. They argue that code-switching in the context of social media not only reflects the bilingual or multilingual skills of speakers, but also functions as a semiotic tool for shaping identity, building group solidarity, and creating self-image in digital interactions. The choice of language that appears in posts, comments, and online messages illustrates how users utilize code-switching as an integral part of a specific communication style on social media.

Code-switching in interactions on social media platforms is understood as a normal linguistic practice among people who speak different languages digitally. Lin Wang (2024) emphasizes that code-switching in social media environments does not occur randomly, but functions as a pragmatic tactic used by speakers to tailor the content of their messages to the context, audience, and intended purpose of communication. In the digital realm, code-switching is often used to express feelings, reinforce meaning, establish social relationships, and build a certain sense of identity related to online communities.

The use of code-switching and code-mixing in digital communication cannot only be viewed from a linguistic perspective, but also as a social activity. Wildani et al. (2025) emphasize that the choice of language by speakers is closely related to social identity, interactions between speakers, and the communicative goals to be achieved. In this context, language acts as a tool to assert social status, build closeness, and adapt to the audience.

The language choices made by students in their interactions are not only related to linguistic aspects, but are also closely linked to their social identities. Joel E. Martinez et al. (2022) reveal that language functions as a tool for negotiating identity and building social relationships.

In the digital context, this phenomenon is increasingly evident through the use of code-mixing. Yohanes Octovianus et al. (2025) emphasize that code-mixing in student interactions on social media platforms acts as a communication strategy that reflects linguistic agility, digital lifestyle, and the casual nature of online communication.

Instagram, as a digital communication platform, provides an environment that supports natural code-switching and code-mixing. The freedom from having to use formal language gives students the space to express themselves according to the language style and identity they want to display. Faiqotul Hikmah (2025) states that social networks allow users to develop linguistic identities in flexible ways through language choices in online interactions. Therefore, the use of mixed language on Instagram often functions as a communication strategy that is either conscious or unconscious on the part of the speakers.

In the context of students in Indonesia, Dr. Yunidar, M.Hum (2022) notes that the use of English is often associated with a modern, global, and intellectual image, while regional languages symbolize emotional closeness, solidarity, and local identity. This choice of language suggests that code-switching and code-mixing are not immune to influence, but are strongly influenced by the social and cultural factors that form the background of the speakers.

In light of this explanation, this study focuses on analyzing code-switching and code-mixing in interactions between students on Instagram through a high-quality sociolinguistic approach. This research aims to detail the forms of code-switching and code-mixing used by students and identify the social elements that influence such usage. This study is expected to contribute to the development of sociolinguistic research, particularly in understanding students' language practices in the context of digital communication.

In addition to being a tool for communication, Instagram also serves as a discussion platform where students can develop and negotiate their linguistic identities. Nurjamillah et al. (2025) state that the language used in digital interactions is no longer bound by formal language norms, but is flexible and contextual according to the circumstances and audience. Bambang Riadi et al. (2025) add that this situation has spurred the emergence of abundant language variations, including the use of code-switching and code-mixing, as a way to adapt to the diverse communication environment in social media.

According to Rismarini Nursaly et al. (2025), the phenomenon of code-switching and code-mixing in social media has become the focus of sociolinguistic studies because it reflects the close relationship between language and society in the digital age. Nurul Asdah et al. (2025) found that several studies show that language practices on social media are not only influenced by the bilingual or multilingual abilities of speakers, but also by psychological, ideological, and symbolic factors. In this context, language functions as a tool to show group affiliation, strengthen social solidarity, and build a certain self-image in front of an online audience (Faiqotul Hikmah, 2025).

However, research on code-switching and code-mixing in student interactions on Instagram is still relatively scarce, especially studies that apply an in-depth qualitative approach. Nadyatunnisa et al. (2025) note that many previous studies tend to focus their analysis on the frequency and form of code-switching and code-mixing, without linking them comprehensively to social factors, identity, and the context of language use on social media platforms. According to Mujianto et al. (2025) in sociolinguistic studies, linguistic phenomena need to be understood as part of the social context related to the speakers' backgrounds and their communication goals. Therefore, research that is able to investigate students' linguistic practices in a more contextual and interpretive manner is urgently needed.

Based on this, this study has significant urgency to enrich the field of sociolinguistics, especially in analyzing the dynamics of students' language skills on Instagram social media. The research by Hasnul Ulya et al. (2024) not only examines code-switching and code-mixing, but also investigates the underlying social factors behind their emergence, including identity, solidarity, and self-image in the digital realm. Thus, the results of this study are expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to understanding the relationship between language, identity, and digital communication among students.

II. METODE PENELITIAN

This study applies a qualitative approach using descriptive methods. This approach was taken because the purpose of the study is to understand and explain in detail the linguistic phenomena that occur in their underlying social context, rather than to measure or test hypotheses using statistical methods (Werner R. Murhadi, (2025)). The descriptive method serves to present

in a structured manner the various forms of code-switching and code-mixing seen in student interactions on the Instagram social media platform (Ritmika & Andik, 2025).

The data used in this study consists of written utterances made by students in captions, comments, and short chats (direct messages) on Instagram. The data consists of language units that have code-switching and code-mixing elements, whether in the form of words, phrases, or clauses. The subjects studied were students who actively use Instagram as a means of daily communication. The selection of Instagram as the focus of the study was determined by its nature as a social media platform that encourages the use of more casual and multilingual language (Ihsan Shadiq et al. (2025)).

Data was collected using listening and recording techniques. The listening technique aimed to observe how students used language in their Instagram posts and interactions, while the recording technique was used to record language data relevant to the research objectives (Yani Konisi et al., (2025)). After data collection, the analysis process was carried out by grouping utterances according to the type of code-switching and code-mixing. Then, referring to Andini & Joko (2025), the analysis was conducted using a sociolinguistic approach to identify the functions and social factors underlying the use of code-switching and code-mixing in digital communication among students.

III. HASIL PENELITIAN DAN PEMBAHASAN

Based on an analysis of data obtained from student comments, feedback, and interactions on Instagram, regular code-switching and code-mixing were identified in online communication. The code-switching observed included shifts from Indonesian to English, from English to Indonesian, and from Indonesian to regional languages. This code-switching pattern generally occurs when there is a change of topic or when the speaker adapts to a particular interlocutor, such as a peer with a similar linguistic background. This phenomenon is in line with the views of Dian and Joko (2025), who reveal that code-switching is often implied to indicate a change in situation, theme, or social relationship in a conversation.

Code-switching between Indonesian and English has also been identified as a strategy to emphasize certain meanings or highlight the message being conveyed. The use of English in certain contexts is considered more expressive and relevant to digital communication. This is in line with the opinion of Aura Ramadani et al. (2025), who argue that code-switching can function as an expressive and symbolic tool in bilingual interactions.

In addition to code-switching, code-mixing also occurs through the integration of English elements into Indonesian sentence structures. This code-mixing takes the form of words and expressions such as update, deadline, mood, and vibes, which are often found in captions and comment columns. The insertion of English elements reflects that English has become part of students' daily communication tools on social media. According to Tri Kristianti (2022), code-mixing is a linguistic phenomenon that occurs when elements of another language are added to the main language without modifying the basic sentence structure.

The dominance of English code-switching in student interactions on Instagram shows the impact of globalization and digital culture. English is seen as a language that reflects modernity, urban lifestyles, and closeness to international culture. Graceva Canavallia et al., (2023) explain that social media plays an important role in spreading English vocabulary to various linguistic communities, especially among the younger generation.

From a social perspective, the application of code-switching and code-mixing is influenced by students' desire to project a modern and educated image of themselves, build solidarity with other Instagram users, and adapt to communication situations that tend to be informal. Mixed language is used as a means to build emotional bonds and express membership in certain social communities. This is in line with the opinion of Rahman Maddimunri et al. (2025), who state that language choice is closely related to social identity and interaction among speakers.

Therefore, the practice of code-switching and code-mixing in student interactions on Instagram cannot be considered merely a linguistic phenomenon, but also a social activity that reflects identity, values, and communication dynamics in the digital age. The findings of Eldawati Limbong et al. (2025) reinforce the sociolinguistic view that language always functions as a social tool that is influenced by context, purpose, and relationships between speakers.

IV. KESIMPULAN

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that code-switching and code-mixing are linguistic phenomena that commonly appear in student interactions on the Instagram platform. The use of code-switching and code-mixing not only serves as a means of communication, but also as a medium for expressing social identity, creating connections, and adapting to the context of digital communication.

This study reveals that social media provides students with great opportunities to communicate in a more flexible manner. Therefore, sociolinguistic analysis of language on social media platforms is very important for understanding language shifts in the digital age. Future research is expected to expand the focus of the study by involving other social media platforms or more varied methods of analysis.

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