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INDONESIAN-ENGLISH CODE-MIXING IN PLATFORM X POSTS: LINGUISTIC LEVELS AND COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTIONS

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Abstract

This study examines the linguistic levels and communicative functions of Indonesian-English code-mixing in public posts on Platform X. Using a qualitative descriptive design and a sociolinguistic approach, it analyzes ten posts purposively collected from late 2025 to early 2026. Each post was coded by identifying the Indonesian matrix frame, classifying the English material as lexical, short phrasal, extended phrasal or clausal, or morphologically hybrid, and interpreting its primary communicative function from the textual and interactional context. The analysis shows that Indonesian remains the matrix language, while English operates as an embedded communicative resource. Lexical and short phrasal insertions are prominent, although several posts contain longer English stretches and one hybrid form combining an English stem with Indonesian morphology. The main functions are referential precision, expressive or emphatic stance, identity positioning, humor or irony, and phatic alignment. Because these functions can overlap, the analysis assigns a primary function according to the most immediate discourse effect and records secondary functions where relevant. The findings support an insertional and continuum-based account of code-mixing and indicate that Platform X enables locally grounded messages to incorporate globally recognizable linguistic resources. The study contributes a transparent coding framework for small-scale digital sociolinguistic analysis while acknowledging the limitations of corpus size and contextual access.

Keywords: *Code-mixing, digital discourse, English bilingualism, platform X, Sociolinguistics.*

INTRODUCTION

Digital communication has expanded the settings in which multilingual speakers draw on more than one language within a single message. Social media is especially important because written interaction is rapid, publicly visible, and shaped by platform-specific

conventions such as brevity, hashtags, reposting, and imagined audiences. These conditions encourage users to combine linguistic resources for informational, interpersonal, and stylistic purposes (Crystal, 2006; Herring, 2007). In Indonesia, this process frequently involves Indonesian and English, reflecting the interaction between the national language and a language associated with education, technology, entertainment, and transnational media (Sneddon, 2003).

Platform X, formerly Twitter, provides a useful site for examining this interaction. Its microblogging format compresses personal narratives, evaluations, humor, and public commentary into short posts that may circulate beyond the writer's immediate social network. In this environment, language choice is not merely a grammatical decision; it can help users manage stance, address an audience, signal familiarity with a cultural domain, or intensify an evaluation. Zappavigna (2012) shows that social-media language is closely connected with affiliation, while Tagg and Seargeant (2014) demonstrate that users design language for dispersed and partly imagined audiences. These perspectives make Platform X relevant to the study of code-mixing as social action.

The present analysis uses complementary sociolinguistic frameworks. Muysken (2000) provides a structural basis for identifying inserted lexical items, phrases, and longer stretches within a dominant linguistic frame. Auer (1999) emphasizes that the meaning of language alternation depends on its local conversational or discourse context rather than on form alone. Myers-Scotton (1993) further treats language choice as socially meaningful, allowing particular codes to index relationships, identities, or communicative expectations. These theories are applied here not as interchangeable citations but as distinct analytical resources: Muysken guides the classification of linguistic form, Auer supports context-sensitive interpretation, and Myers-Scotton helps explain the social significance of selecting English within Indonesian discourse.

Recent research confirms that Indonesian-English code-mixing is widespread across social-media environments. Nabila and Idayani (2022) identified word-, phrase-, idiom-, and clause-level mixing in Indonesian Twitter data and linked it to information, humor, and emotion. Tarihoran et al. (2022) found that social-media exposure contributes to Indonesian-English mixing among Generation Z. Wibowo and Hamidah (2023) reported diverse linguistic levels and motivations in Indonesian Twitter posts, while Zahro' and Nafihima (2024) found insertion to be the dominant pattern in an X account. Research on Instagram similarly associates Indonesian-English mixing with emphasis, identity expression, and audience engagement (Zebua et al., 2025). Together, these studies show the vitality of the phenomenon but also reveal variation in how forms and functions are categorized.

A continuing methodological problem is that linguistic levels and communicative functions are often presented as separate lists, while the criteria for distinguishing overlapping functions remain implicit. A technical term may be referential and identity-indexing at the same time; an English clause may simultaneously convey emotion, humor, and in-group alignment. Consequently, a transparent analysis must identify the most immediate function of an English element while recognizing secondary effects. It must also distinguish single lexical insertions from short phrases, extended English stretches, and hybrid forms that display Indonesian morphological integration.

This study therefore addresses two questions: (1) What linguistic levels and forms of Indonesian-English code-mixing occur in the selected Platform X posts? and (2) What communicative functions do these mixed elements perform in their textual contexts? By answering these questions through explicit coding criteria, the study aims to connect

structural description with sociolinguistic interpretation and to contribute a replicable small-scale framework for analyzing multilingual digital discourse.

METHODS

The study employed a qualitative descriptive design with a sociolinguistic approach. The complete dataset consisted of ten publicly accessible Platform X posts collected through documentation from late 2025 to early 2026. The ten excerpts reproduced in Tables 1 and 2 constitute the full set of posts analyzed in this article. They were purposively selected because Indonesian functioned as the main language while one or more English elements occurred within the same post. The posts concerned personal experience, health, technology, sport, work, social evaluation, and everyday activities.

Each post was documented as a textual unit. A single post could contain more than one English segment, so the number of linguistic items was not identical to the number of posts. Usernames, profile photographs, and other direct identifiers were removed. Although the posts were public, the analysis focused on language rather than on the individuals who produced it. Quotations were retained only because their wording was necessary for linguistic analysis, and interpretations were limited to meanings supported by the textual and interactional context (Yus, 2011).

The analysis proceeded in three stages. First, Indonesian and English elements were identified and the dominant or matrix language of each post was determined. Second, each English segment was classified by linguistic level: (a) lexical insertion, a single English word or abbreviation; (b) short phrasal insertion, a multiword constituent below clause level; (c) extended phrasal or clausal insertion, a longer stretch that retains English syntax; or (d) morphologically hybrid form, an English stem integrated with Indonesian morphology. These operational categories refine the broad insertional continuum proposed by Muysken (2000) and accommodate forms found in the dataset, such as *followan*, which combines the English stem *follow* with the Indonesian suffix *-an*.

Third, each segment was interpreted according to five functional categories. Referential function was assigned when English named a technical, professional, cultural, or domain-specific concept. Expressive or emphatic function was assigned when English intensified emotion, evaluation, contrast, or metaphorical framing. Identity function referred to positioning associated with bilingual, urban, professional, or transnational discourse; because identity cannot be inferred directly from a post, it was treated cautiously and usually as a discourse-level or secondary function. Humor or irony was assigned when the language contrast created incongruity, mock quotation, or playful criticism. Phatic function was assigned when English primarily established rapport, addressed an audience, or signaled in-group solidarity. When several functions were plausible, the function most directly responsible for the local discourse effect was coded as primary, and other supported effects were recorded as secondary. This procedure avoided treating overlapping categories as mutually exclusive while still making the coding decision explicit.

After classification, patterns were compared across the ten posts and interpreted through structural and interactional theories of code-mixing (Auer, 1999; Muysken, 2000; Myers-Scotton, 1993). The analysis also compared the observed patterns with recent studies of Indonesian-English mixing on social media. Because the dataset was small and purposively selected, the study did not use frequency statistics to claim population-level prevalence. Its purpose was to explain how particular forms functioned in context.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Linguistic levels and forms of code-mixing

The analysis identified a continuum ranging from single lexical items to longer English clauses. Indonesian remained the matrix language at the level of the post: it supplied most of the grammatical frame, connected the propositions, and anchored the message in local interaction. English material was inserted at different points to name concepts, construct a stance, or produce a recognizable digital style.

Table 1 presents five posts in which the linguistic form of the English material is foregrounded. The categories are not assigned to an entire post when the post contains several different forms; instead, each English segment is classified according to its own structure.

Table 1. Linguistic forms in five excerpts

Excerpt	English element(s)	Linguistic classification
<i>Udah lama banget nggak sore throat separah dan sesakit ini sehat-sehat ya semua..</i>	sore throat	Short noun-phrase insertion
<i>Screaming crying throwing up mengingat negara2 yang sudah aku kunjungi tapi aku gak nyoba bouldering di sono</i>	screaming, crying, throwing up; bouldering	Extended coordinated verb phrase; lexical noun/gerund
<i>UI UX nya aja naugubilah jelek banget</i>	UI UX	Technical abbreviations functioning as a noun phrase
<i>Degdegan followan sama cewek spek idol 163 followers shes so cool (im gatekeeping)</i>	followan; followers; she's so cool; I'm gatekeeping	Morphologically hybrid form; lexical noun; two English clauses
<i>Besok ke Bandung lagi my third modelling job</i>	my third modelling job	Extended noun-phrase insertion

The table shows that the data cannot be reduced to a simple word-versus-phrase distinction. Some posts contain short noun phrases such as *sore throat*, while others include extended sequences such as *screaming, crying, throwing up*. The fourth excerpt is especially important because it combines several levels in one post. The form *followan* is morphologically integrated: an English stem is combined with the Indonesian nominal suffix *-an*. By contrast, *followers* remains an English lexical item, and *she's so cool* and *I'm gatekeeping* retain English clause structure.

This variation supports Muysken's (2000) view that bilingual speech includes multiple mixing processes rather than a single uniform pattern. Most items are compatible with insertion because English material is embedded in an Indonesian frame. However, longer clauses approach alternation because they retain their own syntax and discourse rhythm. The data therefore suggest a continuum between compact insertion and extended alternation, rather than an absolute boundary. This interpretation is consistent with recent Twitter/X research in which insertion is frequent but phrase- and clause-level material also occurs (Nabila & Idayani, 2022; Wibowo & Hamidah, 2023; Zahro' & Nafihima, 2024).

The forms also differ in their degree of adaptation. Technical abbreviations such as *UI* and *UX* circulate as internationally recognizable labels and require little translation. The hybrid *followan*, however, demonstrates that English material can be incorporated

into Indonesian morphology. Thus, English is not always simply copied into Indonesian discourse; it may also be reshaped by local grammatical resources.

Communicative functions and category boundaries

The second part of the analysis focused on communicative function. Functional categories necessarily overlap because the same segment may identify a concept, express emotion, and index a social orientation at once. To make the interpretation systematic, Table 2 distinguishes the primary function—the most immediate effect in the local wording—from secondary functions supported by the same excerpt.

Table 2. Primary and secondary functions in five additional excerpts

Excerpt	Primary function	Secondary function(s)	Coding rationale
Can someone convince my dad that there's no such thing <i>NONTON VIDEO AS SIDE JOB TERUS NANTI DAPET DUIT JUTAAN RUPIAH</i>	Humor/irony	Expressive; referential	The English opening frames a mock appeal, while “as side job” is embedded in an exaggerated claim. The contrast ridicules an unrealistic online-income promise.
<i>Iya jr suka kaget ama orang yang plainly jahat atau ngeliat dunia negatif bgt where is your whimsy brah</i>	Expressive/evaluative	Phatic; identity	The English question dramatizes the writer's negative evaluation. “brah” directly addresses an imagined in-group audience and adds interpersonal alignment.
Sometimes i gotta remind myself that life is not all whimsical AAAAAH <i>susah banget jujur karena temen2ku semuanya whimsical dan manis AAAAAH</i> people are so mean out there	Expressive/emphatic	Identity	The longer English stretches intensify the emotional contrast between an idealized social world and perceived meanness, using a recognizable internet-discourse style.
life and job is just a series of side quests really,... living my best life.. naik tije, product photoshoot, endorsements, claiming my free donuts and matchas and a cup of coffee!! boothing and friends came to see me..all these in a day & <i>masih banyak kegiatan lainnya:3*</i>	Expressive/metaphorical framing	Identity; referential	Gaming language metaphorically organizes everyday work and leisure. English also names professional and lifestyle activities associated with transnational online culture.
<i>Kenapa bukan GUE yang come up with this joke???</i>	Expressive/emphatic	Humor; identity	The English verb phrase sharpens the complaint and connects it to the humorous object of the post. Capitalization and punctuation reinforce emphasis.

Referential function

Referential mixing occurs when English efficiently names a concept associated with a specialized or globally circulating domain. UI UX identifies a technical interface-design concept; bouldering names a specific sport; modelling job and product photoshoot refer to professional activities; and side quests imports a gaming concept. In these cases,

English is not necessarily more semantically precise in an absolute sense, but it is the conventional label within the relevant discourse community. This finding supports the view that code choice is related to topic and domain (Myers-Scotton, 1993) and resembles recent Indonesian social-media studies in which particular topics and informational needs motivate mixing (Nabila & Idayani, 2022; Wibowo & Hamidah, 2023).

Expressive and emphatic function

English is also used to intensify evaluation and emotion. Longer stretches such as *people are so mean out there and where is your whimsy brah* function as stance-bearing units: they do more than provide information because their syntax, rhythm, and internet-register associations dramatize the writer's reaction. The phrase *come up with this joke* similarly adds force to an Indonesian question. From Auer's (1999) perspective, the significance of the switch lies in its local contrast with the surrounding Indonesian material. The language boundary itself helps mark a change in voice, emotional pitch, or evaluative focus.

Identity positioning

Identity is treated as a discourse effect rather than as a verified personal characteristic. The repeated use of English associated with technology, creative work, gaming, and global internet slang can position the post within an urban and transnational communicative style. Expressions such as *living my best life*, *side quests*, *gatekeeping*, and *brah* presuppose familiarity with digitally circulating repertoires. This pattern is compatible with audience-design accounts: users select resources that are likely to be recognized by an imagined bilingual audience (Tagg & Seargeant, 2014). It also aligns with findings that social-media mixing can support identity expression and audience engagement (Tarihora et al., 2022; Zebua et al., 2025). Because the study lacks interviews, however, it does not claim that these linguistic choices prove a stable bilingual identity.

Humor and irony

Humor and irony emerge when English participates in a contrast between voices or expectations. In the side-job excerpt, the bilingual construction reproduces and mocks the language of an implausible money-making claim. In *Kenapa bukan GUE yang come up with this joke???*, English helps frame the object of frustration as a humorous creative achievement. The effect comes not from English alone but from the juxtaposition of languages, typography, and exaggerated punctuation. Code-mixing therefore operates as a resource for voicing and incongruity.

Phatic alignment

Phatic mixing is most visible in direct audience-oriented expressions such as *brah*. This item does not contribute substantial propositional content; instead, it establishes an informal relationship and signals solidarity with readers who recognize the register. Other conversational English stretches can perform a similar secondary role by making a post sound like an intimate spoken aside. Zappavigna's (2012) account of social-media affiliation helps explain why such small expressions matter: they position readers as participants in a shared evaluative community.

Integrating form, function, and platform context

The relationship between linguistic level and communicative function is not one-to-one. Short technical items tend to carry a strong referential function, whereas longer clauses often carry expressive or interpersonal force; nevertheless, either form can support identity or humor. This is why primary and secondary coding is analytically preferable to assigning one fixed function to every English item. It acknowledges multifunctionality without abandoning systematic classification.

At the theoretical level, the findings combine three observations. First, Indonesian provides the dominant frame, supporting an insertional analysis. Second, the presence of longer English clauses and a hybrid form demonstrates a continuum of bilingual integration rather than a strict word/phrase binary. Third, the social meaning of each segment depends on its local discourse placement and anticipated audience. Platform X intensifies these processes because posts are concise, highly stylized, and oriented toward rapid recognition by networked readers. The result is not a random replacement of Indonesian with English but a strategic distribution of resources across referential, expressive, interpersonal, and identity-related work.

The small dataset does not permit claims about how frequently Indonesian users employ each category. It does, however, show why transparent coding is necessary. Recent studies have reported different dominant forms—ranging from lexical insertion to substantial clause-level mixing—partly because their datasets and category definitions differ (Nabila & Idayani, 2022; Wibowo & Hamidah, 2023; Zahro' & Nafihima, 2024). By specifying linguistic units, primary discourse effects, and secondary functions, the present study offers a framework that can be applied to larger corpora and compared across online communities.

CONCLUSION

This study examined ten Platform X posts to determine the linguistic levels and communicative functions of Indonesian-English code-mixing. Indonesian consistently served as the matrix language, while English appeared as lexical items, technical abbreviations, short phrases, extended phrasal or clausal stretches, and one morphologically hybrid form. The data therefore support a continuum-based account: compact insertion is prominent, but longer alternations and local morphological integration also occur.

Functionally, English contributed to referential precision, expressive or emphatic stance, identity positioning, humor or irony, and phatic alignment. These categories were not fully discrete. A segment was coded according to its most immediate discourse effect, while secondary functions were acknowledged. This approach strengthens the connection between structural form and social meaning: the same English element can name a domain-specific concept, shape an emotional voice, and orient a post toward an imagined bilingual audience.

Theoretically, the findings suggest that code-mixing on Platform X is best understood as the strategic organization of multilingual resources within a locally dominant Indonesian frame. Practically, explicit distinctions among linguistic level, primary function, and secondary function can improve the consistency of digital sociolinguistic analysis. The framework may also support language education and digital-literacy discussions by showing that mixed language is not inherently deficient; its interpretation depends on context, audience, and communicative purpose. Several

limitations must be recognized. The corpus was small, purposively selected, and limited to ten public posts, so the findings cannot establish population-level frequencies. The analysis did not include complete interaction threads, demographic information, or interviews that could confirm users' intentions. Future research should analyze larger and more diverse datasets, compare communities and time periods, examine replies and multimodal features, and combine textual analysis with participant perspectives. Such work would clarify how platform affordances, audience structure, and changing digital cultures shape Indonesian-English code-mixing.

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