



Code-Mixing: A Strategic Communication Practice

Found in Cinta Laura's Podcast

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Article Info	Abstract
Received: 2026-06-03 Revised: 2026-06-19 Accepted: 2026-06-20 Keywords: code-mixing; communication practice; function; and podcast DOI: 10.24256/ideas.v14i1.11011 Corresponding Author: I Komang Sulatra Komang_sulatra@unmas.ac.id Sastra Inggris, Universitas Mahasaraswati Denpasar, Bali	<i>This study examines the phenomenon of code-mixing in contemporary digital discourse, specifically focusing on narrative podcasts. The study mainly aims to find out type of code mixing and analysing the function of code-mixing in podcast. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, the study analyzes an episode of the iWil Network podcast featuring Cinta Laura Kiehl, a prominent bilingual figure in Indonesia. The data were collected through observation method by applying several techniques, such as; making verbatim transcription, taking notes and categorizing the data of code-mixing according to Hoffman (1991) typology of intra-lexical mixing, intra-sentential mixing, and code-mixing involving a change of pronunciation. Audience Design Theory by Bell (1984) was applied to explore the functions of code-switching. The findings reveal a total of 124 instances of code-mixing, dominated by intra-Sentential mixing (21%) and followed by intra-lexical mixing (79 %). Meanwhile code-mixing involving a change of pronunciation did not occur in Cinta's Utterances, since she is very fluent in English, therefore there was no pronunciation interference. These results indicate that code-mixing serves as a functional communication strategy to enrich Indonesian conversation through lexical borrowing and discourse tags while maintaining interactional fluency. The findings show that code-switching is used strategically to emphasize important information, express identity and solidarity, clarify meaning, and index modernity and expertise.</i>

1. Introduction

Language is an essential tool for communication. It plays a fundamental role in human interaction. People use language to convey messages, express feelings, share thoughts, communicate emotions, and articulate intentions. Through language, individuals can exchange information, build relationships, and negotiate meaning within various social and cultural contexts. As societies become increasingly interconnected, language also serves as a medium for maintaining social identity and fostering mutual understanding among diverse communities. In both spoken and written forms, language enables individuals to participate effectively in personal, professional, and public communication, making it one of the most important aspects of human life (Halliday, 1978; Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2021).

In multilingual societies, people may use many languages in one communication activity. People mix languages in communication since they are bilingual or multilingual. Mixing language or later it is called as code-mixing is not a random habit, but it is a strategic communication tool. There are many reasons lie behind code-mixing, as classified by Hoffman (1991) at least seven reasons for bilingual or multilingual people to switch or mix the language they use to communicate, namely: talking topic particular, quoting somebody else, being emphatic about something, interjection, repetition used for clarification, intention of clarifying the speech content for interlocutor, expressing group identity.

In globalization era, where digital communication is getting massive, this practice has become increasingly common. This era provides communication where multilingual speakers do interaction with diverse audiences through social media, podcasts, and other online platforms. The growing prevalence of code-mixing in digital discourse reflects not only linguistic competence but also speakers' efforts to express identity, establish solidarity, and accommodate diverse audiences (Androutsopoulos, 2015; Bell, 1984). Muysken (2000) stated that code-mixing as the insertion of elements from two or more languages within a single sentence or utterance. In addition, according to Stavans & Hoffmann (2015), code-mixing refers to mixing various linguistic units such as morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, and sentences from two participants in the grammatical system within a sentence.

Several previous studies have explored code mixing. Mantika and Sulatra (2025) studied code-mixing in Instagram captions by the Indonesian skincare brand Glad2Glow, focusing on its types and functions in digital marketing. Based on Hoffman's (1991), Mantika and Sulatra (2025) found all types of code-mixing, such as; intra-sentential (dominant at 65.12%), intra-lexical, and phonological (least common at 4.65%). Zebua et.al (2024) also analysed the use of code-mixing on Instagram social media.

They mainly discussed the patterns of code-mixing in Instagram posts, captions, and comments, focusing on the combination of Indonesian and English. Zebua, et al (2024) found that code-mixing served multiple purposes, including emphasizing certain messages, expressing identity, and engaging with a broader audience.

Rahman et al. (2025) did research entitled “Bilingual Identity Construction through Social Media: A Study”. That study mainly focused on examining the role of English-influenced code-mixing in shaping the bilingual identity of social media users. Qualitative method was applied in that study. After conducting the research, they found that code-mixing practices on social media reflect complex socio-cultural dynamics and function as an effective communication strategy as well as a means of constructing bilingual identity in the digital era (Rahman, et al: 2025). Another study of code-mixing was done by Setyawati, et al (2023). They explored the occurrence of code-mixing in WhatsApp message.

The data were taken from WA group used the lecturers, students, and staff of English Department at Universitas Abdurachman Saleh Situbondo for sharing both academic and nonacademic information. Muysken’s theory was used to analyze the types of code mixing and Bhatia’s was used to study the reasons for using code mixing. The result of this research shows that insertion is the only type of code mixing which appeared in the group, while situational factor is the most used reason why the code mixing occurred.

Fitria (2022) wrote an article of code-mixing. That study aims to know the type and reasons for code-mixing used by English lecturers in teaching non-EFL students at ITB AAS Indonesia. Fitria (2022) applied descriptive qualitative approach. The analysis revealed that English lecturers use code-mixing during the English teaching and learning process by inserting Indonesian words, phrases, and clauses. According to Fitria (2022) code-mixing is felt to be very necessary to bridge communication in learning between lecturers and students.

Practically, the use of code-mixing serves as a way to teach English more easily. Hartono (2022) explored types and reasons for code mixing in Instagram captions from 23 users, using Hoffman’s (1991) framework and a descriptive qualitative method. Interviews revealed that users mainly mixed codes to discuss specific topics, especially when English terms like “field trip” or “viral” felt more natural.

These previous studies provide important explanation into the form and function of code-mixing. They mainly discussed type of code-mixing as categorized by Hoffman (1991). No study has specifically examined the function of code-mixing by applying the Audience Design Theory by Bell (1984). Unlike previous studies, this study aims to analyze the patterns, types, and communicative roles of code-mixing in modern narrative podcasts, not only from the speaker's perspective, but also in terms of how it affects audience perception and engagement. This emphasis on hybrid media and audience response is what makes the novelty of this study and distinguishes it from previous studies.

According to Bell (1984) speakers do not use language randomly; rather, they adjust their linguistic style according to their audience. In other words, language variation is primarily shaped by the people to whom the speaker is talking. Bell maintains that speakers continuously modify aspects of their speech, such as vocabulary choice, pronunciation, grammar, and even code-switching or code-mixing, to accommodate their listeners. This process is known as **style shifting**, and it reflects speakers' awareness of their audience and their desire to create particular social relationships.

This study aims to examine how code-mixing is used in contemporary narrative podcasts, focusing on the patterns, types, and communicative purposes behind it. It pays special attention to hybrid media that combine storytelling, audio, and visual elements, and explores how these language choices shape audience perception and engagement across diverse sociocultural and linguistic backgrounds. Unlike previous studies that mostly looked at code-mixing in single platforms or purely spoken contexts, this research seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of its role in modern digital communication by situating podcast discourse within broader media convergence and bilingual identity construction.

The findings are expected to offer practical insights for content creators as well as contribute to the broader study of bilingual communication strategies by highlighting how strategic language alternation functions as a resource for meaning-making, authenticity, and audience connection in digitally mediated narratives.

2. Method

This study used the podcast from iWil network featuring "Cinta Laura Kiehl tantang self-love dan mengatasi kesepian" as the primary source for linguistic examination. The choice of this specific podcast is grounded in the fact that the guest, Cinta Laura Kiehl, is a prominent bilingual figure in Indonesia who frequently exhibits code mixing in her natural speech. The analysis focuses on identifying the types and functions of code mixing used during the conversation, following the theoretical framework established by Hoffman (1991), who categorized code mixing into three categories of intra-lexical mixing, intra-sentential mixing, and code-mixing involving a change of pronunciation. Besides, this study also applied the audience design theory by Bell (1984) in exploring the function of code-mixing in digital communication.

The research data were collected from an episode of a podcast titled "Cinta Laura Kiehl: About Self Love and Overcoming Loneliness" which aired on the Sir Is She YouTube channel (<https://youtu.be/GtpZ-tXKC4k>). This podcast was chosen because it presented spontaneous and interactive narrative conversations, allowing researchers to observe code-mixing in the context of real social communication. The data collection process involved observation method, which

was carried out in several stages, such as watching the video, listening and transcribing the utterances, making note of every sentence, phrase, or word that contained code-mixing between Indonesian and English, next was marking each instance of code-mixing based on relevant categories based on Hoffman (1991).

The collected data were analyzed by applying descriptive qualitative method to determine the patterns of code-mixing usage, the most dominant types of code-mixing, and their communicative functions in narrative interactions. The finding of this researched were presented by applying formal and informal method

3. Result

After watching the podcast Cinta Laura Kiehl, there were found 124 instances of code-mixing. From those 124 instances, 26 data of intra-lexical code-mixing and 98 instances of intra-sentential code-mixing. The last type of code-mixing, involving a change of pronunciation did not occur in this video. This distribution shows that Cinta Laura often uses lexical borrowing to enrich her Indonesian conversation, while utilizing tag mixing and clause-level mixing to maintain the flow of conversation and convey meaning more subtly. The following is a summary table of the findings:

Table 1. Type of Code Mixing

Type	Frequency	Percentage
Intra-lexical mixing	26	21 %
Intra-sentential mixing	98	79%
Involving change of pronunciation	-	-
Total	124	100%

Overall, this podcast demonstrates natural bilingual code-mixing, reflecting the speaker's linguistic flexibility and the informal, relaxed nature of the conversation. The combination of single word borrowing, discourse tags, and full clauses makes the conversation dynamic and engaging for bilingual listeners.

4. Discussion

Code-mixing has become an increasingly prevalent linguistic phenomenon in digital communication. A rapid change in digital media force the users to adapt by using a strategic linguistic behaviour. This section focuses on analyzing code-mixing found in the utterances spoken by Cinta Laura. The discussion is mainly focused on type of code-mixing and it functions related to analysis focuses on three types of code mixing, namely intra-sentential mixing, intra-lexical mixing, and involving a change of pronunciation. This discussion aims to show that the

phenomenon of code mixing in the podcast does not occur randomly, but rather has a clear communicative function. The use of two languages, Indonesian and English, allows the speaker to convey ideas more effectively, emphasize certain meanings, and reflect an identity formed from a bilingual and multicultural background.

In addition, this section also discusses the contribution of each type of code mixing to the smoothness of interaction. Intra-sentential mixing allows for a smooth transition between languages within a single sentence, intra-lexical mixing shows the process of morphological adaptation of English vocabulary into Indonesian language structures. Through this analysis, it can be concluded that code mixing is a natural and functional communication strategy in contemporary podcast discourse.

1. Intra-lexical Code-mixing

Intra-lexical code mixing is the form of code mixing that occurs within a phrase, a clause, or a sentence. It is the shift that happens in a grammatical structure (Hoffman, 1991)

Data 1

Cinta Laura : *"Enggak tapi serius ya, aku lagi lagi, I don't want aku gamau ngejatuhin siapa siapa, tapi intinya cinta kita terdapat suatu negara enggak hanya ditunjukkan dari bahasa dan walaupun begitu I think my Indonesian isn't proof so much, jadi selama kita sebagai warga negara yang baik melakukan hal hal yang merepresentasikan negara kita degan positif that's not most pointing dan kalau orang lain mau **nge-judge** your not love Indonesia your not Indonesian enough, say what you want I dont care."* [26.56 – 3.59]

English Translation:

Cinta Laura : No, but seriously, I do not intend to criticize or demean anyone. My point is that love for one's country is not demonstrated solely through language use. Although I acknowledge that my Indonesian may not be perfect, what matters most is being a good citizen and engaging in actions that represent our country positively. Therefore, if others choose to judge me by saying that I do not love Indonesia or that I am not Indonesian enough, they are entitled to their opinion; however, I do not let such judgments affect me."

Cinta Laura's utterance in data 1 demonstrates a clear instance of intra-lexical code-mixing, particularly through the word **nge-judge**, which reflects morphological integration between Indonesian and English. The expression "*kalau orang lain mau **nge-judge***" is technically categorized as intra-lexical mixing because the English lexical item judge is combined with the Indonesian colloquial verbal prefix *nge-*, forming a single hybrid word within one grammatical unit. This process does not merely involve inserting an English word into an Indonesian

sentence, but rather shows an active adaptation of the foreign lexeme into the Indonesian morphological system. Linguistically, this indicates that the speaker treats the English verb as compatible with Indonesian affixation rules, which is a key characteristic of intra-lexical code-mixing.

The English verb *judge* is often perceived as carrying a stronger evaluative and social nuance than its Indonesian equivalents such as *menilai* or *menghakimi*, especially in informal and digital discourse. By attaching the prefix **nge-**, the non-standard form of prefix *MeN-* Cinta Laura localizes the foreign term, making it sound natural and conversational while maintaining its expressive force. This reflects a cognitive process in which bilingual speakers select lexical items that best capture their intended meaning and emotional stance.

In contrast, other English elements in the utterance, such as “I don’t want,” “I think,” “that’s not most pointing,” and “I don’t care,” do not constitute intra-lexical mixing because they remain intact as full English phrases without Indonesian affixation. These forms are better classified as intra-sentential code-mixing. Therefore, the uniqueness of **nge-judge** lies in its grammatical adaptation, illustrating that intra-lexical code-mixing in this data is not random but systematic, motivated by semantic precision, communicative efficiency, and the speaker’s bilingual competence.

Based on Bell’s Audience design theory (1984), He proposes that speakers may design their speech not only for their immediate listeners but also for referees-groups with whom they wish to identify. The speaker therefore converges toward Indonesian audiences through casual Indonesian while maintaining English elements that resonate with younger, educated, or digitally connected listeners. Audience Design Theory views style variation as a social act. The speaker uses code-switching strategically to construct multiple identities:

Linguistic Choice	Identity Projected
Informal Indonesian (" <i>enggak</i> ", " <i>aku</i> ", " <i>gamau</i> ")	Ordinary Indonesian citizen
English expressions ("I don’t want", "I don’t care")	Global, educated, cosmopolitan speaker
Nationalistic content (" <i>cinta kita terhadap suatu negara</i> ")	Patriotic citizen

The alternation between languages allows the speaker to balance a national identity with a global identity. The speaker communicates that speaking English does not diminish their Indonesian identity. Bell (1984) notes that speakers may also design their speech to distance themselves from certain audiences. This occurs in:

"kalau orang lain mau nge-judge you're not love Indonesia, you're not Indonesian enough, say what you want, I don't care."

Here, the speaker explicitly rejects the perspective of people who equate patriotism with exclusive use of Indonesian. The English phrase "say what you want, I don't care" functions as a marker of resistance and independence, signaling divergence from critics and strengthening the speaker's stance.

From the perspective of Bell's Audience Design Theory, the speaker strategically employs Indonesian-English code-mixing to address a multilingual audience, construct a cosmopolitan yet patriotic identity, and negotiate relationships with different audience groups. The use of colloquial Indonesian creates solidarity with local listeners, while English expressions index global affiliation and modernity. Furthermore, the speaker diverges from critics who question their nationalism, demonstrating how linguistic choices are shaped by audience orientation and identity management.

2. Intra-sentential Code-mixing

Data 2.

Wilona : *"Sagitarius gimana dong?"*

Cinta Laura : *"I mean kalian juga berapi – api, tapi kali ini yang paling **laid-back** dibanding **fire sign** yang lain, dibanding Aries dan Leo kalian lebih **chill** lebih suka **explore**, kalian lebih **free spirit**-nya." Data 2 [01.04–1.19]*

English Translation:

Wilona : *"what about Sagitarius?"*

Cinta Laura : *"I mean, you're fiery too, but this time you're the most laid-back compared to the other fire signs. Compared to Aries and Leo, you're more chill, you enjoy exploring more, and you have more of a free-spirited nature".*

Intra-sentential code mixing, is the form of code-mixing that occurs within a phrase, a clause, or a sentence. It is the shift that happens in a grammatical structure. Involving a change of pronunciation, is the form of code mixing that occurs at the phonological level. When Indonesians utter an English word, they change the phonological structure of the English word to match the structure in Indonesian word.

Laura's statement of love, "I mean, you guys are also fiery, but this time you are the most laid-back compared to other fire signs. you are more chill, more into exploring, you are more free-spirited," is technically a form of intra-sentential mixing because the insertion of foreign terms occurs within the same clause without damaging the basic structure of the Indonesian sentence. When analyzed individually, the use of adjectives such as laid-back and chill, as well as the verb explore, aims to find the right feeling or accuracy of meaning, because these terms

are considered to better represent the personality of the Sagittarius zodiac sign than their Indonesian equivalents, which may feel less appropriate.

The technical term “fire sign” is inserted as a form of communication efficiency to quickly refer to astrological elements, while the phrase “I mean” functions as a thinking bridge (filler) commonly used by bilingual speakers to keep the conversation flowing naturally. Uniquely, Cinta also performs intra-lexical mixing in her phrase free spirit by adding the Indonesian suffix *-nya* to the English noun, which indicates a process of grammatical adaptation in which Cinta's brain attempts to adjust foreign concepts to the local language so that they are more easily accepted by her conversation partner.

According to Bell's Audience Design Theory (1984), speakers modify their language according to the audience they are addressing. In this interaction, Cinta Laura responds to a question about the zodiac sign Sagittarius and employs frequent code-switching between Indonesian and English.

Examples include: “I mean”, “laid-back”, “fire sign”, “chill”, “explore”, “free spirit”

The use of these English expressions indicates that the speaker assumes her audience possesses sufficient English competence to understand these terms. Thus, her linguistic choices are designed for an audience that is bilingual or familiar with English-influenced popular culture. The linguistic style reflects an orientation toward a global audience and contemporary youth culture rather than solely an Indonesian-speaking audience.

Bell (1984) argues that style choices help speakers construct social identities. In this case, the speaker projects multiple identities simultaneously:

Linguistic Feature	Identity Projected
Indonesian base language	Indonesian speaker
English astrological terminology	Global and knowledgeable about astrology
Casual expressions (laid-back, chill)	Modern and relatable personality
Frequent code-switching	Bilingual and cosmopolitan identity

The speaker's language use helps construct an image of someone who is internationally oriented while remaining accessible to Indonesian audiences.

From the perspective of Bell's Audience Design Theory, Cinta Laura's code-switching is an audience-oriented strategy aimed at bilingual, urban, and globally connected listeners. The English expressions (I mean, laid-back, fire sign, chill, explore, and free spirit) reflect both convergence with young audiences and referee design toward global popular culture. Through this linguistic style, she constructs a cosmopolitan identity while maintaining accessibility to Indonesian

listeners, demonstrating how language variation is shaped by audience expectations and social identity.

Data 3

Wilona : ... “apakah omongan kamu itu riil, maksudnya kamu terapkan di kehidupan sehari-hari atau itu adalah bagian dari *campaign* kamu juga?”

Cinta Laura: “Ya, **that's definitely super-super riil** ya, kalian bisa tanya **staff** aku di kantor, *saking ga ada bajunya* buat hari ini **shooting content**, ini bener bener aku minjem dari **archive**-nya stylist aku. Aku bilang yang ada di **closet** kamu *gojek aja deh ke rumah aku pakai baju kamu aja*, **cause** aku dah kehabisan baju karena aku ndak pernah **shopping**. [38.24-39.03]”

English Translation:

Wilona: “Is what you're saying genuine? I mean, do you actually apply it in your everyday life, or is it also part of your public campaign or personal branding?”

Cinta Laura : "Yes, that's definitely genuine. You can ask my staff at the office. In fact, I didn't have any clothes available for today's content shoot, so I am actually borrowing this outfit from my stylist's collection. I told her to send some clothes from her closet to my house via Gojek because I have run out of clothes, as I rarely go shopping."

Type of code-mixing in Cinta's utterance predominantly demonstrates intra sentential code-mixing, where English words and phrases are inserted into an Indonesian sentence. The detail of occurrence of code mixing in that data can be seen below.

Examples include:

English Element

that's definitely super-super riil

Staff

shooting konten

Archive

Stylist

Closet

Cause

Shopping

Indonesian Context

Opening statement

"kalian bisa tanya staff aku"

"buat hari ini shooting konten"

"dari archive-nya stylist aku"

"stylist aku"

"yang ada di closet kamu"

"cause aku dah kehabisan baju"

"aku ndak pernah shopping"

These English lexical items are embedded within Indonesian grammatical structures without changing the overall language of the sentence. Indonesian remains the matrix language, while English functions as the embedded language. Besides intra-sentential there is Intra-Lexical Code-Mixing also found. The phrase: "archive-*nya*" can be categorized as intra-lexical code-mixing because an English lexical item (archive) is combined with the Indonesian possessive suffix *-nya*. This mixing occurs within a single lexical unit:

- English root: archive
- Indonesian suffix: *-nya*

According to Bell (1984), speakers adjust their linguistic style according to their audience and the identities they wish to project. Language variation is therefore audience-oriented. The speaker primarily uses Indonesian, which allows her to communicate effectively with Indonesian listeners. However, she frequently inserts English lexical items such as: staff shooting, archive, stylist, closet, shopping. These terms are familiar to urban Indonesian audiences, particularly those who consume digital media, fashion content, and international popular culture. By using this bilingual style, the speaker converges toward an audience that shares similar linguistic practices.

The speaker's linguistic choices construct multiple social identities simultaneously:

Linguistic Feature	Identity Projected
Indonesian as the dominant language	Indonesian public figure
Frequent English insertions	Bilingual speaker
Fashion-related vocabulary	Professional in the entertainment industry
Casual conversational style	Relatable and authentic personality

The code-mixing helps present the speaker as both globally oriented and locally connected. The utterance narrates a personal experience about borrowing clothes because she rarely shops. The conversational Indonesian expressions:

"kalian bisa tanya staff aku"

"aku dah kehabisan baju"

Create intimacy and solidarity with the audience. At the same time, the English insertions maintain her public persona as a cosmopolitan celebrity. From Bell's Audience Design Theory, the code-mixing serves as an audience-oriented strategy that accommodates bilingual Indonesian listeners while simultaneously projecting a modern, educated, and cosmopolitan identity. The speaker's style reflects convergence with her audience and alignment with global entertainment and fashion communities, reinforcing her public image as an internationally minded Indonesian celebrity

5. Conclusion

After conducting the analysis code-mixing in Cinta Laura's podcast discourse, the phenomenon of code mixing is a holistic and purposeful communication practice. Through the analysis it was found two of the three types of code mixing, namely intra-lexical with 26 data or 21 % and intra-sentential with 98 data or 79%.

This research shows that each type of code mixing has its specific purpose in constructing meaning and text, maintaining interaction, and confirming the speaker's identity within a bilingual and digitally mediated context. Intra-lexical code mixing indicates morphological adaptation and creativity in language, reflecting the speaker's linguistic competence and flexibility, while intra-sentential emphasize proper interpretation and understanding of the message through emphasis, clarity, and sustained engagement with the audience.

In this way, this research is a valuable asset in the field of sociolinguistics in that it explores a new area in the application of code mixing in digital and narrative media, based on the audience design theory by Bell (1984) the speaker 'Cinta Laura accomodates both local and global audience by using Indonesian and English. She did many style-shifting such as formal to informal, serious to relax which becomes strategic communication practice in digital era.

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