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An Analysis of Indonesian–English Code Switching in the BarengWarga Community on X During the 2025 DPR Demonstrations

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Abstract

This study examines Indonesian–English code-switching in the BarengWarga community, an online civic discussion group on the X platform, during the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR) demonstrations in August 2025. The study focuses on three main objectives: identifying the types of code-switching used by community members, determining the most frequent type, and examining the contexts in which Indonesian and English are mixed in online political discourse. Using qualitative content analysis based on Poplack (1980) framework, 41 text-only posts collected between 25 and 31 August 2025 were analyzed. The analysis identified 58 instances of code-switching, consisting of tag-switching, inter-sentential switching, and intra-sentential switching, with intra-sentential switching occurring most frequently. Some posts contain more than one type of code-switching within a single discourse; however, this pattern is not examined in detail. The findings further indicate that code-switching commonly appears when users express strong emotions such as anger, frustration, and disappointment in response to political issues discussed during the demonstrations. This study contributes to digital sociolinguistics by highlighting how bilingual language practices function as emotional expression in Indonesian online political communication. Nevertheless, the data are limited to a single online community, and the findings may not fully represent Indonesian social media users more broadly.

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1. Introduction

Code-switching is a linguistic phenomenon, referring to the alternation between two or more languages within a single interaction or discourse (Ambarita, 2024). For bilingual and multilingual speakers, this practice plays an important role in filling lexical gaps and expressing meaning more effectively within specific social contexts (Nuraini & Fitriana, 2024). In recent years, social interaction has increasingly taken place in digital spaces, where multicultural contact and online communication shape the way people use language (Yao, 2025; Yolanda et al., 2025). Online platforms allow users to express thoughts and emotions more freely, often without revealing personal identities, which encourages flexible and creative language use, including code-switching (Abdullah & Rusli, 2021). As a result, language mixing has become a common feature of digital communication.

English functions as a global lingua franca and is frequently mixed with local languages, including Indonesian, particularly in online interactions (Ridhawati et al., 2025). This phenomenon reflects broader sociolinguistic changes in contemporary communication. One platform where this practice is clearly visible is X, a text-oriented social media platform that emphasizes written expression over visual content (Savitri & Triyono, 2025). Unlike platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, or YouTube, X provides a space where language use can be observed through short written posts. In addition, X offers a community feature that allows users to form smaller, interest-based groups, creating micro-public spaces where shared identities and opinions are constructed through language (Malik & Haidar, 2021).

This study focuses on the BarengWarga community on X, a prominent Indonesian online discussion community whose name literally means "together with the citizens." It serves as a space where civil society members discuss public issues (Pradana et al., 2025). At the time of data collection, BarengWarga had more than 100,000 members and remains highly active (X, 2025). This community activity and membership increased during the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR) demonstrations in August 2025. This period is particularly relevant for linguistic analysis because heightened political tension often encourages stronger emotional expression (Malik & Haidar, 2021; S et al., 2023). Although the posts are related to political events, this study does not analyze political positions but focuses on linguistic patterns of code-switching and how language mixing appears alongside emotional responses.

To analyze these patterns, this study adopts Poplack's framework, which classifies code-switching into three types: tag-switching, inter-sentential switching, and intra-sentential switching (Poplack, 1980). This framework is widely used in sociolinguistic research and provides a clear basis for examining how bilingual speakers alternate languages in written discourse (Poplack, 2013). It allows this study to systematically identify patterns of Indonesian–English code-switching and explore their functions in digital communication.

Previous studies have explored the discussion of code-switching across different cultures and media contexts. For example, Suadnyani & I Komang Sulatra (2024) found that this helps content creators adjust their speaking style to fit the situation and the topic being discussed, while also building a sense of closeness with the audience. NurniKhairita & Panobiyasari (2022) explored how the use of code-switching not only functions as a language switch, but also as a communication strategy to express self-identity. Furthermore, Hofweber et al. (2020) investigated how often people use two languages, how they use them, and which language is more dominant, which plays an important role in shaping how bilingual speakers think and control their focus.

In the field of education, code-switching also has a positive impact on classroom interaction and language learning. Purnama (2020) showed that code-switching helps students understand lessons more easily and participate actively in class discussions. In addition, Lin (2017) stated that code-switching helps students learn better, supports interaction, and builds stronger relationships. Fathimah (2016) found that teachers switch languages not only because of classroom needs but also because they often use English in daily life. In conclusion, these studies indicate that code-switching is not just about a language practice. It's also a habit that helps people connect with others, communicate more easily, and express their feelings in different contexts.

However, despite extensive research on code-switching in media and education, studies focusing on community-based interactions on X remain limited, particularly in the Indonesian context. Most previous research has concentrated on large and content-driven platforms, while smaller online communities and text-based micro-publics have received less attention. This gap highlights the need to explore how code-switching operates within localized online communities, where shared cultural background and collective experiences may shape language choices differently (Putra, 2024). Examining this is essential for understanding how identity, emotion, and social belonging are expressed through language in digital environments (Cunanan & Manuel, 2022; Nuraini & Fitriana, 2024)

Based on these research gaps, this study was conducted with three main aims: (1) to identify the types of Indonesian–English code-switching used by members of the BarengWarga community on X, (2) to determine which type appears most frequently, and (3) to examine when users mix Indonesian and English, particularly in relation to emotional responses during the 2025 DPR demonstrations. By analyzing the types and frequency of code-switching, this study reveals language patterns within a specific online community and explores how bilingual users express emotions through language mixing. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on a single local online community during a politically significant period, offering a more detailed understanding of how culture, identity, and emotion are reflected in digital language practices

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2. Method

Research Design

This study employed qualitative content analysis to examine Indonesian–English code-switching in posts from the BarengWarga community on the X platform. This approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to interpret language use by considering both linguistic forms and the social context in which they appear, particularly in emotionally charged online interactions (Yuningsih et al., 2021). Qualitative content analysis is suitable for this study because it enables a detailed examination of how multilingual users express opinions and emotions through language mixing in text-based social media environments (Pratama et al., 2022).

Data Source and Sampling

The data source of this study was the BarengWarga community on X, an Indonesian online public discussion space characterized by high user participation and frequent posts containing personal opinions, satire, and emotional responses to social and political issues. Data were collected from posts published during the peak period of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR) demonstrations, specifically from 25 to 31 August. Although the demonstrations extended beyond this period, these dates represented the most intense phase of public reaction, marked by heightened emotional engagement and spontaneous language use. Such contexts are relevant for linguistic analysis because emotional situations often encourage code-switching in bilingual communication (Reuters, 2025).

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted through manual scrolling of all posts published in the BarengWarga community. No hashtags, keywords, or automated data collection tools were used. The researcher initially observed posting patterns to identify contexts in which code-switching appeared frequently and found that posts related to the DPR demonstrations contained a high concentration of language mixing. Based on this observation, a total of 55 original text-only posts were collected. Reposts, quoted posts, and posts containing images or videos were excluded to ensure that the data reflected users' own language production rather than language influenced by external texts or other users' discourse (Damayanti & Santika, 2024).

Data Analysis

During the analytical process, the data were refined by distinguishing between borrowing and code-switching. Borrowing was defined as the use of single English lexical items that have been commonly integrated into Indonesian and appear frequently in everyday communication, following Poplack et al. (1988).

Posts that only contained borrowing without clear alternation between Indonesian and English were excluded from the main analysis. As a result, 41 posts containing clear instances of code-switching were selected as the primary data for in-depth analysis. The unit of analysis in this study was each individual instance of code-switching within a post, allowing one post to contain more than one switching occurrence.

The analysis followed Poplack's typology of code-switching, which classifies switching into tag-switching, inter-sentential switching, and intra-sentential switching (Poplack, 1980). Each post was documented in a coding table created in Microsoft Word, containing information such as post ID, type of code-switching, context of use, and the inferred communicative function. The analysis process followed a clear workflow, starting from data collection, data filtering, identification of borrowing and code-switching, classification of switching types, and contextual interpretation.

In addition to identifying the types and frequency of code-switching, this study also examined when and for what purposes users switched languages. The functions of code-switching were inferred by analyzing contextual and discourse cues, including lexical choices, stance markers, evaluative expressions, sarcasm, emphasis, and overall discourse tone. Emotional expression was interpreted by drawing on the sociocultural perspective proposed by Zhang & Hatzidaki (2025), which explains second-language use as a sociocultural strategy for emotion expression.

The coding and interpretation were primarily conducted by the researcher and were regularly discussed with the academic supervisor to ensure analytical consistency and conceptual clarity. In addition, selected data were reviewed through peer checking by an independent reviewer with a bachelor's degree in English Education who is currently pursuing a master's degree in a related field. This process helped minimize subjective bias and strengthen the credibility of the analysis.

Ethical Considerations

All data were treated ethically. Personal identifiers such as usernames, profile information, and images were removed, and only the textual content of the posts and their publication dates were retained. The data were obtained from publicly accessible accounts, and no interaction with users occurred. Therefore, the study did not violate platform guidelines, and formal institutional ethics approval was not required.

3. Result

This study analyzed posts from the BarengWarga community on the X platform that contain Indonesian–English code-switching. From the initial 55 collected text-only posts, 41 posts were identified as containing clear instances of

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code-switching and therefore constituted the main data set analyzed in this section. The remaining posts contained only borrowing and were not included in the main analysis. Within these 41 posts, code-switching occurred 58 times, indicating that some posts contained more than one instance of switching. To present the findings systematically, the occurrences of code-switching were categorized based on Poplack's typology and are reported in terms of frequency and percentage, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The occurrences of the types of code-switching

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Tag-switching	5	8.6%
Inter-sentential switching	23	39.7%
Intra-sentential switching	30	51.7%
Total	58	100%

Based on the distribution in Table 1, intra-sentential switching appears as the most frequent type, with 30 occurrences (51.7%). This indicates that users in the BarengWarga community frequently integrate English elements within Indonesian sentence structures. Inter-sentential switching is the second most common type, accounting for 23 occurrences (39.7%), where users alternate between Indonesian and English in separate sentences within the same post. Tag-switching occurs least frequently, with only 5 instances (8.6%), typically involving short English tags inserted into otherwise Indonesian utterances.

Most posts contain a single type of code-switching; however, a smaller number of posts display more complex patterns. Specifically, six posts were found to contain two different types of code-switching within the same text, while the remaining posts exhibited only one type. These multi-type posts most commonly combine intra-sentential and inter-sentential switching, indicating that some users employ more than one switching strategy within a single discourse.

In terms of usage context, code-switching was frequently found in posts expressing strong emotional reactions related to the 2025 DPR demonstrations. These posts include expressions of anger, frustration, disappointment, and criticism toward political actors or policies. Overall, the findings indicate that Indonesian–English code-switching in the BarengWarga community appears in varied structural patterns, with intra-sentential switching as the dominant type and emotional political contexts as a recurring setting for language mixing.

4. Discussion

Dominance of Intra-sentential Switching

Intra-sentential switching is the most dominant type in the dataset, appearing 30 times and accounting for 51.7% of all switching occurrences. This indicates that more than half of the code-switching instances involve the integration of English elements within Indonesian sentence structures. The high

frequency of this type suggests that intra-sentential switching is not only numerically dominant but also widely used by different users in the BarengWarga community. This pattern aligns with previous studies showing that intra-sentential switching is commonly employed by multilingual users because it allows them to express meanings efficiently while maintaining a natural flow of interaction (Si & Ellison, 2022).

P26 (30/08/25)

WHERE THE FUCK IS KEMANUSIAAN YANG ADIL DAN BERADAB
(WHERE THE FUCK IS JUST AND CIVILIZED HUMANITY)

This post illustrates intra-sentential switching as Indonesian and English are combined within a single continuous structure. The switch appears at the beginning through the English expression *where the fuck is*, which is immediately followed by the Indonesian phrase *kemanusiaan yang adil dan beradab*. The English clause functions as an emotionally charged opener, while the Indonesian phrase completes the ideological and contextual meaning of the statement.

P27 (30/08/25)

Ngl the situation is very concerning terutama utk orang2 yang sedang dalam kondisi khusus kayak gw yang lagi hamil ini, **if things don't get any better**, takut bgt kalua impact nya jd ke mana2
(Ngl, the situation is really concerning, especially for people who are in special conditions like me, since I'm currently pregnant. If things don't get any better, I'm really scared that the impact will spread everywhere.)

Based on the analysis of Poplack's typology, this post contains multiple instances of intra-sentential switching within a single discourse. The writer begins with an English clause *ngl the situation is very concerning*, continues with Indonesian, and inserts another English clause *if things don't get any better* before returning to Indonesian. These two English parts are inserted into Indonesian discourse to express anxiety and fear. This support the view that intra-sentential switching is commonly used to intensify emotional expression while maintaining a coherent flow of discourse (Sebba et al., 2017).

Overall, the dominance of intra-sentential switching supports Poplack (1980) claim that intra-sentential switching reflects higher bilingual competence, as speakers are able to switch languages without disrupting grammatical structure. In the context of BarengWarga, intra-sentential switching also appears to function as a discursive resource that allows users to emphasize emotions and evaluations in politically charged discussions, which aligns with Zhang & Hatzidaki (2025) argument that second-language use can function as a sociocultural strategy to articulate emotions more forcefully.

Inter-sentential Switching as Rhetorical Framing

Inter-sentential switching occurs 23 times, representing 39.7% of the total code-switching instances. This type typically involves a complete switch between

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Indonesian and English across sentence boundaries, with each sentence remaining structurally independent. Compared to intra-sentential switching, inter-sentential switching appears less frequently but still plays a significant role in organizing discourse.

P8 (28/08/25)

Bener-bener hilang respect sama temen gw yg klo orang bahas pemerintah ataupun politik malah diketawain. **Bruh, I can't even find the right word to capture what a jerk you are.**

Negara udah sakit, lu jangan ikutan "sakit" soang.

You were given a brain to think. Use it wisely.

(I've completely lost respect for my friend who laughs whenever people talk about the government or politics. Bruh, I can't even find the right words to describe what a jerk you are.

The country is already sick, don't "be sick" too.

You were given a brain to think. Use it wisely.)

In this post, inter-sentential switching appears twice as the writer alternates between Indonesian and English across separate sentences. The post begins in Indonesian, shifts to English *Bruh, I can't even find the right words to describe what a jerk you are.* After that, the user switches back to Indonesian before ends the text in English sentence *You were given a brain to think. Use it wisely.* The occurrences of inter-sentential switching help users to emphasize feelings of anger and disappointment in the context being discussed. This pattern suggests that inter-sentential switching is used to frame criticism and emphasize moral positioning without affecting grammatical structure.

P15 (29/08/25)

Dari sejarah kita belajar, segala tindakan represi yg dilakukan ke rakyat hanya akan menimbulkan chaos yg lebih besar dan berujung ke perubahan.

CONGRATULATIONS!!! YOU MAKE YOUR OWN DOWNFALL

(From history, we learn that any act of repression carried out against the people will only create greater chaos and eventually lead to change.

CONGRATULATIONS!!! YOU MAKE YOUR OWN DOWNFALL)

This post also demonstrates inter-sentential switching, with the writer presenting a reflective statement in Indonesian followed by a fully capitalized English sentence *CONGRATULATIONS!!! YOU MAKE YOUR OWN DOWNFALL*. The switch occurs in a separate sentence and does not affect the grammar of the sentence from the other language, which fits Poplack's definition of inter-sentential switching.

These examples indicate that inter-sentential switching often serves a rhetorical function in discourse. English sentences are frequently used as punchlines, conclusions, or confrontational statements that intensify criticism. This finding supports previous research suggesting that inter-sentential switching plays an important role in discourse organization and evaluative emphasis,

particularly in emotionally charged communication (Moody & Eslami, 2020).

Limited Use of Tag-switching

Tag-switching is the least frequent type in the dataset, occurring only 5 times or 8.6% of the total instances. These switches consist of short English expressions inserted into otherwise Indonesian sentences and do not alter the grammatical structure of the surrounding text

P49 (31/08/25)

benci bgt kalo ada yg bilang "gara gara demo gw jadi gak bisa blablabla...." **dude???** orang orang pada bertaruh nyawa di jalan demi keadilan dan lu masih mikirin diri sendiri, **seriously???**

(I really hate it when someone says "because of the demonstration I can't do blablabla…." dude??? people are risking their lives on the street for justice and you are still thinking about yourself, seriously???)

In this post, the English tags *dude* and *seriously*. are inserted into Indonesian discourse. These tags function pragmatically rather than structurally. The word *dude* serves as a sarcastic form of address, while *seriously* is placed at the end of the sentence to emphasize that the writer feels frustrated and disbelieves regarding the political issues (Iftikhar et al., 2025).

The relatively low frequency of tag-switching suggests that this type is used selectively rather than as a dominant switching strategy. Its function aligns with previous studies that describe tag-switching as a pragmatic resource for expressing sarcasm, emphasis, and interpersonal positioning rather than for conveying propositional content (Ameliza & Ambalegin, 2020; El-dakhs & Ahmed, 2023).

Posts with Multiple Switching Types

While most posts contain only one type of code-switching, six posts were found to contain two different switching types within a single text. These posts represent a smaller portion of the dataset but demonstrate more complex switching behavior. The most common combination involves intra-sentential and inter-sentential switching. This case is unusual, but it shows that the members in the BarengWarga community on X actually shift language in a more varied and complex way (Reponte-Sereño et al., 2023).

P16 (29/08/25)

teman2 kita boleh marah pada aparat yg brengsek, tapi jgn lupa **to the one we must blame first**: (1) prabowo dan jajaran sampahnya, (2) dpr yang pecundang karena gak berani menghadapi kita. **let's keep our focus on them**, jangan mudah diadu domba. ingat lagi kepada tujuan awal kita.

(Friends, we're allowed to be angry at the awful officers, but don't forget the ones we must blame first: (1) prabowo and his trash entourage, (2) the cowardly parliament because they don't dare to face us. let's keep our focus on them, don't let them turn us against each other. remember our first goal.)

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This post contains both intra-sentential and inter-sentential switching. The English clause *to the one we must blame first* appears within an Indonesian sentence, representing intra-sentential switching. Later, the sentence *let's keep our focus on them* appears separately, functioning as inter-sentential switching. These switches highlight key argumentative points and guide readers toward the writer's intended focus.

P35 (30/08/25)

Negara dah kacau balau, demo dari daerah sampe pusat ricuh ga karuan, korban terus nambah, isu SARA sampe PKI udah dibawa-**bawa and yet the government still silent. @prabowo do something, its all yout responsibility** KOCAK
Fuck @prabowo
Fuck @DPR_RI
Fuck @DivHumas_Polri
(The country is already a complete mess. Protests from the regions to the capital are turning chaotic, the number of victims keeps increasing, issues of ethnicity, religion, and even communism are being thrown around, and yet the government is still silent. @prabowo do something, this is all your responsibility WHAT A JOKE.
Fuck @prabowo
Fuck @DPR_RI
Fuck @DivHumas_Polri)

This post combines inter-sentential switching and tag-switching. The shift from Indonesian to English *and yet the government still silent, @prabowo do something, its all your responsibility* functions as inter-sentential switching, while repeated expressions *Fuck @prabowo, Fuck @DPR_RI, and Fuck @DivHumas_Polri* operate as tag-like insertions emphasizing anger and condemnation. The layered use of different switching types emphasize emotional anger (Hamawand, 2024).
This pattern suggests that multi-type switching tends to occur in posts with stronger emotional engagement. This finding supports Reponte-Sereño et al., (2023) observation that multilingual users may deploy layered switching strategies in socially and politically salient contexts.

5. Conclusion

This study examined Indonesian–English code-switching in posts from the BarengWarga community on X during the 2025 DPR demonstrations. The findings show that three types of code-switching appeared in the data: tag-switching, inter-sentential switching, and intra-sentential switching. Among these types, intra-sentential switching occurred most frequently, followed by inter-sentential switching, while tag-switching appeared only in a small number of cases. This indicates that users tend to mix Indonesian and English within a single sentence rather than switching between full sentences or adding short English tags.

The dominance of intra-sentential switching suggests that users in the BarengWarga community are comfortable combining two languages in one

continuous discourse. This type of switching allows users to express their opinions and reactions more naturally, especially when responding to political issues. Inter-sentential switching is mainly used to emphasize evaluation or criticism, while tag-switching functions as a brief pragmatic marker to strengthen tone, such as sarcasm or emphasis.

Although most posts contain only one type of code-switching, several posts were found to include two types within a single post. These multi-type cases show that some users employ more complex switching patterns when expressing their stance toward political events. However, these cases were not explored in depth, which becomes one of the limitations of this study.

Overall, the findings indicate that code-switching in the BarengWarga community is closely related to how users respond to political situations, particularly during the DPR demonstrations. Language mixing appears as a communicative strategy that helps users convey evaluation, stance, and emotional involvement in online political discourse. However, since this study focuses on one community on X, the findings cannot represent all Indonesian social media users. Future studies may involve broader data sources and further examine how different types of code-switching function within a single discourse.

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