

Demonstration of Code-Mixing in *Kasih Aba-Aba* by Naykilla, Tenxi, and Jemsii

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the phenomenon of code-mixing in the Indonesian pop song 'Kasih Aba-aba' by Naykila, Tenxi, and Jemsii, with a focus on the structural types and linguistic purposes of code-mixing in the lyrics. Employing a qualitative descriptive method and a content analysis approach, this research utilized a purposive sampling strategy to select this specific song as a rich case study due to its prevalent use of English-Indonesian code-mixing and its popularity on digital platforms. Line-by-line analysis of the lyrics was part of the research process, and each instance of code-mixing was categorized using Muysken's (2000) typology of insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalization and its functions were interpreted using sociolinguistic frameworks (Gumperz, 1982; Hoffman, 1991; Poplack, 1980). Findings indicate that insertion is the most common kind of code mixing, followed by alternation and congruent lexicalization. These are employed to accomplish a variety of sociolinguistic goals, including emphasis, identity expression, prestige, and emotional personalization. English elements used for stylistic purposes represent global influence, young identity, and multilingual proficiency. The purposeful use of Bahasa Indonesia and English enhances the emotional tone of the lyrics and aligns with current linguistic trends in Indonesian youth culture. The results indicate that code-mixing in popular music acts as both a communicative and cultural strategy. This research adds to our knowledge of bilingual language usage in media discourse and has practical implications for discourse-based English training and the development of culturally relevant language curricula. The limitation of the study is that study only focuses on a single song, which limits generalizability. Therefore, future research is recommended to expand into cross-artist comparisons and to investigate audience reception.

Keywords: *code-mixing, Indonesian pop culture, sociolinguistics, youth language*

Introduction

English plays a dominant role in the modern world of globalization in various aspects of life, including business, education, media, and notably, music (Souad & Ramdane, 2019). In Indonesia, a multilingual country with hundreds of local languages and cultures, blending English with daily conversation and creative expressions is typical (Alrajafi, 2021). One of the linguistic phenomena that arises sporadically in these bilingual environments is code-mixing, the combining of a pair or a simple code alternative of elements from two different languages in a single utterance or sentence (Muysken, 2000). It is evident in the lyrics of contemporary Indonesian songs, which often incorporate both Bahasa Indonesia and English to reach a wider audience, as well as to sound more appealing and relatable (Susilawati & Andriani, 2023).

The urgent need to comprehend how language changes in contemporary digital cultures and reflects changing societal identities is what

motivated this research. English-Indonesian code-mixing is widely used in viral music platforms such as TikTok and Spotify (Kandiawan, 2022). This is not just a linguistic trend, but it is a significant indicator of how a generation manages its dual identity, balancing a global, digital mindset with local cultural heritage (Kadir, 2021; Nurhaidal, 2022). In contrast to unplanned dialogue, code-mixing in song lyrics is a purposeful artistic technique that is skillfully designed to create relatability, authenticity, and virality among young audiences (Vionita et al., 2023). Examining a recent viral hit such as "Kasih Aba-Aba" offers a pertinent perspective for analyzing the deliberate linguistic decisions that influence and are influenced by Indonesian popular culture today. This study goes beyond simple categorization to comprehend language's function in creating contemporary identity, which is essential for recording the deliberate use of language as a cultural instrument in the digital age.

Code-mixing refers to the blending of two

or more languages within a single sentence, phrase, or discourse (Muysken, 2000). Unlike code-switching, which involves switching between languages at the sentence or discourse level, code-mixing occurs within a single grammatical unit (Poplack, 1980). This phenomenon is common in multilingual societies, where speakers naturally integrate elements of different languages into their speech. Nugraha et al., (2024) further define code-mixing as the practice of mixing two or more languages in speech or discourse without any specific requirement, often influenced by the speaker's habits or a relaxed conversational setting. Another definition of code-mixing is the change from one language to another within the same speech or writing (Usmanova, 2023).

According to Muysken (2000), code-mixing is a linguistic phenomenon that frequently occur in bilingual and multilingual communities. Various studies have classified these phenomena into distinct types based on structural and functional characteristics. Muysken (2000) categorizes code-mixing into three main types. The first one is insertion. Insertion refers to the embedding of lexical items or phrases from one language into the syntactic structure of another. According to Muysken (2000), this type of code-mixing is common in situations where one language serves as the dominant grammatical framework, while elements from another language are inserted into it. The second one is alternation. Alternation occurs when speakers switch between languages at the phrase or clause level, creating distinct segments that follow the grammatical rules of each language. This type of code-switching is more commonly found among fluent bilinguals who can seamlessly transition between languages (Muysken, 2000). The third is congruent lexicalization. Congruent lexicalization involves extensive mixing between languages that share similar grammatical structures. This type of code-mixing is particularly prevalent in languages that have significant lexical and syntactic similarities (Muysken, 2000).

Understanding the function or purpose of language mixing is just as important as examining its structure. Several important explanations for why people mix languages have been proposed by researchers (Gumperz, 1982; Hoffman, 1991; Muysken, 2000; Poplack, 1980). These include directly quoting someone else, clarifying a message, emphasizing specific words or ideas, expressing group identity, demonstrating solidarity with a particular community, changing topics, being courteous or softening a statement, establishing a sense of prestige or modernity,

lowering the social distance with the audience, or filling in lexical gaps where one language lacks an exact word. These roles are often complex and emotionally charged, as they help songwriters create depth and connection in their lyrics.

Prior research on Indonesian music has examined code-mixing in boy and girl band song (Bhasmanara et al., 2025) and the music of well-known artists like Saykoji (Vionita et al., 2023). The analysis of more recent, popular musicians who control digital music platforms and appeal to Gen-Z and millennial consumers is still lacking, though. Even though code-mixing has been proven to exist, more in-depth research is required to understand how these up-and-coming musicians strategically employ various mixing techniques to accomplish particular communicative goals within a single, powerful song.

The purpose of this study is to investigate code-mixing in the 2025 song "Kasih Aba-Aba" by Naykilla, Tenxi, and Jemsii. This song is a current and relevant case study because it became extremely popular on TikTok and Spotify which demonstrates the dynamic way a new generation of musicians engage with language. Based on Muysken's (2000) framework, the study aims to identify the distinct types of code-mixing that are employed. Sociolinguistic theories are also used to interpret the potential functions of the language choices. Through this analysis, the study aims to reveal how code-mixing functions in Indonesian popular music as a cultural and communicative tool in addition to a linguistic strategy.

Method

This study utilized a qualitative descriptive methodology to examine the types and functions of code-mixing in the Indonesian pop song "Kasih Aba-Aba" by Naykilla, Tenxi, and Jemsii. A qualitative method was chosen for its appropriateness in analyzing language use within natural contexts, emphasizing the interpretation of meaning, communicative purpose, and linguistic structure over frequency quantification (Creswell, 2014). The primary data source consisted of the complete lyrics of Kasih Aba-Aba, sourced from the official [YouTube](#) music video and corroborated with transcriptions found on [Spotify](#).

The primary research instrument for this analysis was the researcher, utilizing a structured analytical protocol developed from the theoretical frameworks of Muysken (2000), Gumperz (1982), and Hoffman (1991). The song "Kasih Aba-Aba" was chosen as a single, rich case study using a purposive sampling technique. Its full lyrical content serves as the entire dataset for a thorough

analysis, and it was chosen specifically because it is a dense and modern example of strategic English-Indonesian code-mixing in a viral pop song. The process of collecting data was carried out with considerable caution. In order to guarantee accuracy in its entirety in the final dataset, the official lyrics were first transcribed from the Spotify platform and then cross-checked against the official music video on YouTube. A methodical, multi-phase process was used for the data analysis. Identification was the first step, in which each instance of code-mixing was isolated by going line-by-line through the finalized lyrics. The second step involved typological classification, which involved a thorough grammatical analysis to group each identified instance into Muysken's (2000) types including insertion, alternation, or congruent lexicalization. A functional analysis was the last step, which involved interpreting each coded instance's sociolinguistic purpose such as emphasizing a point, expressing identity, or including a quote based on the song's context and accepted sociolinguistic frameworks.

This song was deliberately chosen for its explicit incorporation of both Bahasa Indonesia and English, exemplifying a modern instance of code-mixing in popular music aimed at youth. The analysis was performed in two phases: Identification and classification. The lyrics underwent a line-by-line analysis to identify instances of code-mixing, characterized as phrases or utterances that incorporate lexical or grammatical elements from two separate languages within a single clause or sentence. Instances were categorized according to Muysken's (2000) typology of code-mixing, which comprises the following: insertion refers to the integration of elements from one language within the grammatical framework of another. Alternation refers to the practice of switching between languages at the boundaries of clauses or phrases. Congruent lexicalization involves the integration of elements from two distinct languages while adhering to a standard grammatical structure.

The sociolinguistic function of each code-mixed instance was analyzed using frameworks established by Gumperz (1982), Hoffman (1991), and Poplack (1980). The analytical framework centres on communicative purposes, including emphasis, expression of identity, and personalization, as well as alignment with prestige or trends, quotations or cultural references, and the expression of emotions. To maintain analytical rigour, each classification underwent repeated review of the lyrics and was compared with functional typologies from previous studies.

Interpretative decisions were validated through peer discussions with academic supervisors to reduce researcher bias. This study focuses on a single song as a case study. Although it provides detailed insights into the structural and functional aspects of code-mixing, it does not evaluate listener reception or compare practices across different artists. Future research may enhance this by integrating audience analysis or investigating broader trends across genres.

Findings and Discussion

To begin the analysis, the following excerpt illustrates how code-mixing is identified and interpreted in the lyrics:

Naykilla: "Kamu paling bright (Silau, silau)"

Tenxi and Naykilla: "But she know that I'm the best"

The word "bright" is an English adjective that has been added to an Indonesian phrase. According to Muysken's (2000) typology, this is an insertion. The foreign term serves to emphasize the characteristic more effectively than its Indonesian equivalent. Another example is "But she knows I'm the best," which shows alternation since the full phrase is in English. The purpose here is to personalize and convey one's individuality, which shows that the speaker is sure of themselves. Through this process, all lyrics were analyzed and classified. A summary of the results is presented in Table 1.

Each utterance of code-switching has its own social and emotional coloration. Some of these words or phrases are inserted to convey emphasis or express feelings, while others are used to reflect social trends and values, including materialism and a global lifestyle. Alternation between languages typically indicates a shift in tone or function, such as making a strong poetic point. At the same time, congruent lexicalization indicates how English components can be accommodated within Indonesian, reflecting a high degree of bilingual fluency.

By examining the song lyrics from a sociolinguistic perspective, we can see that code-mixing is not just an artistic style but a strategic communication tool with multiple uses. English phrases in nearly all Indonesian lyrics have proven to be an intentional effort by artists to address the contemporary audience as well as to reflect their bilingual space. The analysis identified several key functions of code-mixing in the song including self-expression of feelings, highlighting ideas, showcasing modern selves, and referencing global culture. The following table presents the type and communicative function of each code-mixed lyric detected in the song:

Table 1. Code-Mixing Instances in 'Kasih Aba-Aba'

Lyrics	Types	Functions
Kamu paling bright (Silau, silau)	Insertion	Emphasis
Yeah, aku mau test	Insertion	Prestige
Dia mau aku atau mau cash	Insertion	Prestige
But she know that I'm the best	Alternation	Personalization
Dia suka baju hitamku, celana camo ku	Insertion	Prestige
Dia tanya aku punya plan (Hey)	Insertion	Prestige
Dia tau kalo I'm the man (Hey, hey)	Alternation	Personalization
Kamu Tinker Bell, aku Peter Pan	Insertion	Quotation
Tapi ini nyata no bukan cerpen	Insertion	Emphasis
She's 10 outta 10	Alternation	Emphasis
Pilih mau mana, dollar atau yen?	Insertion	Prestige
Angkat koper, kita pergi Japan	Insertion	Prestige
I'll give you the best that I can	Alternation	Personalization
Go to the moon, kita berdansa	Alternation	Emphasis
Aku wish you best (Ooh)	Congruent Lexicalization	Personalization
Kamu yang the best (Ooh)	Congruent Lexicalization	Emphasis

As shown in Table 1, the use of code-mixing in the song conveys a range of meanings. Switching between English and Indonesian is not just a matter of style. However, it also reflects the artists' everyday experience as bilingual speakers and their way of connecting with today's generation, who are influenced by both local and global cultures. In this regard, Holmes (2013) claims that code mixing is a technique used by speakers to adjust to social situations and participants. Through the mix of languages, people can express feelings like love, self-confidence, and ambition in a way that feels fresh and relatable (Nabila and Idayani, 2022). The presence of English also adds a modern and trendy vibe, reflecting how language in music often mirrors personal identity and the way we choose to convey emotions and ideas (Temperley, 2022).

The research conducted here proves that the use of the code-mixing in the song *Kasih Aba-Aba* performed by Tenxi, Naykilla, and Jemsii is more than a stylistic preference, but a means to convey emotion, thought, and identity. Indonesian and English are seamlessly interwoven in the lyrics, demonstrating how both artists effortlessly switch between languages. It reflects the real way many young Indonesians switch between languages in everyday life, having been exposed to both through education, media, or social interaction (Alrajafi, 2021).

By drawing upon Muysken's (2000) classification of code-mixing, we can reclassify three different types used in the lyrics: insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalisation. The most commonly used was insertion, where English words are inserted into Indonesian sentences.

Naykilla: Kamu paling bright (Silau, silau)

Naykilla: Yeah, aku mau test

Tenxi: Dia mau aku atau mau cash

Tenxi: Dia suka baju hitamku, celana camo

ku

To illustrate, the word "bright" slips into the otherwise Indonesian line to highlight a person's charm or brightness. Moreover, in the word "test" is used to imply an emotional or personal test. In the word "cash" implies a materialistic dimension to the lyrics, using an English term that carries specific cultural connotations of wealth and transactional relationships. This reflects Solano (2023) and Diveica et al., (2022) view that insertions often enrich expression by filling lexical gaps or adding prestige. Further instance of insertion is the word "camo" modernises the description. Compared Sakul and Lumoindong (2024) findings on junior high school students' experiences on English-Indonesia bilingualism, these insertions demonstrate that English borrowings are no longer limited to academic or technological domains but extend to lifestyle, fashion, and intimate expression. The widespread use of English in young Indonesians' everyday semiotic languages is thus reflected in the insertion in these lyrics.

Tenxi: Dia tanya aku punya plan

Tenxi: Tapi ini nyata, no bukan cerpen

Tenxi: Angkat koper, kita pergi Japan

Then the word "plan" conveys a connotation of purpose or ambition. Another example of insertion is "Kamu Tinker Bell, aku Peter Pan", which draws on universally recognised characters from Western children's literature to create a playful and romantic metaphor. This insertion serves multiple functions, creating an immediate visual image, establishing a whimsical tone, and positioning the speakers within a global cultural framework. Then, the use of the word "no" creates contrast more forcefully in English than it would in Indonesian. There is also "Pilih mau mana, dollar atau yen?", where the two currencies are used as metaphors for desire or value. In the use of "Japan" creates expectations

and a sense of aspiration, as if the journey itself is not just physical but also symbolic of freedom or dreams.

Alternation is also evident in several of the lyrics, with sharp shifts between languages. "But she knows that I'm the best" is a good example that switches completely to English to express self-assurance. Another alternation line is "Dia tau kalo I'm the man (Hey, hey)", where the use of the code-switch enhances the claim to identity. Alternation frequently entails a complete clause switch, which is in line with Muysken's (2000) definition and emphasizes how bilingual artists can switch between languages flexibly to produce a poetic effect. The current data goes beyond the findings of Yannuar et al. (2023) and Filipi (2019), who discovered that Indonesian musicians utilize English to create cosmopolitan identities, by demonstrating how alternation also communicates intimacy and personal branding. This demonstrates that alternation is contextually motivated and frequently selected due to its enhanced expressive power rather than being random. "She's 10 outta 10" does the same thing; it was a typical English idiom used to express attractiveness and perfection, and can be heard used in social media and pop culture. Then again, in "I'll give you the best that I can", the line is entirely in English to convey sincerity and romantic devotion. In "Go to the moon, kita berdansa", the switch between the phrase "Go to the moon" and the subsequent Indonesian phrase creates a dreamlike poetry that makes the moment more magical.

We also encounter evidence of congruent lexicalisation, a form of code-mixing where the two languages are grammatically distinct and the switch is cohesive. Consider the case of "Aku wish you best" where English and Indonesian grammar are blended but still sound natural in usage, particularly when spoken by bilingual speakers. The same applies to the phrase "Kamu yang the best". Though "the best" itself is English, the word order is mimicked in typical Indonesian speech when English adjectives or compliments are used casually to reinforce or add style. Previous studies (Levinia and Najla, 2022; Adityawarman, 2025) have rarely highlighted this hybridization in Indonesian contexts, making it a new insight of this study. The emergence of an "Indonesian-English youthlect" suggests that English has progressed from occasional code-mixing to establishing a standard bilingual grammar.

The sociolinguistic functions found in these instances of code-mixing are significant to discuss, as they reflect broader patterns of language use in multilingual societies (Gumperz, 1982; Hoffman, 1991; Poplack, 1980). The prestige

function is prominently associated with English as a marker of modernity, sophistication, and globalization. It can be seen in the ubiquitous use of English words related to fashion ("camo"), personal qualities ("bright"), and way of life ("plan," "Japan"). This aligns with Larassati and Suyudi (2021) study, which claimed code-mixing in both spoken and written forms is motivated by a desire to express prestige. The emphasis function is used when English is used to intensify emotional appeal or form imagery, as in the case of "She's 10 outta 10" or "bright." Fahlefi et al., (2024) show that code mixing is often used to highlight or stress a particular message, making it stand out emotionally or contextually. The quotation function is used when the lyrics invoke international pop culture, referencing characters such as Tinker Bell and Peter Pan. Studies on Indonesian and Korean pop songs show that English phrases are frequently inserted to quote or allude to global pop culture, making the lyrics resonate with international listeners and signaling cultural awareness (Ulhaq, 2025; Dola and Afnita, 2025; Picone, 2024; Suwiyah and Kholis 2024; Mulyati et al., 2021). Personalisations created through romantic statements, where the two languages alternate in use to express closeness and emotion, as in "I'll give you the best that I can". Nazak et al., (2023) also found that the creative use of code mixing in songs personalizes communication which make it feel more intimate and tailored to the relationship.

The use of code-mixing in "Kasih Aba-Aba" reflects broader sociolinguistic patterns in Indonesian youth culture. Code-mixing in this case is neither a self-aware linguistic technique, but rather a natural form of expression that reflects their everyday communication behaviour. The song illustrates how English is embedded in the language use of young Indonesians as both a foreign language and yet another resource at their command, through which they can express and constitute their self and identity.

The cultural implications of this extensive code-mixing are also significant. The song presents a linguistic portrait of young Indonesians who are equally comfortable with global (English) and local (Indonesian) cultural references, and who see no contradiction in blending these influences. It reflects Indonesia's unique position in the global cultural landscape, where traditional and modern, local and global elements coexist and interact in creative ways (Hiswara et al., 2023).

Conclusion

This study reveals that code-mixing in *Kasih Aba-Aba* by Naykilla, Tenxi, and Jemsi serves as a purposeful communicative and cultural

strategy, rather than merely a stylistic enhancement. Muysken's (2000) typology identifies three forms of code-mixing: insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalisation, with insertion being the most prevalent. The integration of sociolinguistic theories demonstrates that the functions of code-mixing in the lyrics encompass emphasis, identity expression, prestige signaling, and emotional personalization. The primary limitation of this case study is its focus on a single song, which prevents broad generalization and does not account for audience reception. However, the findings hold significant practical value, particularly for the field of English language teaching (ELT) in multilingual contexts like Indonesia, which suggests music-based texts such as Kasih Aba-Aba can be implemented as valuable resources for discourse-oriented instruction, critical language awareness, and the creation of culturally relevant materials in multilingual classrooms. The findings provide a contribution to the sociolinguistic practices of Indonesia's bilingual youth culture, where English and Indonesian are utilized interchangeably to express personal identity, reflect global cultural affiliations, and engage with social norms. The song exemplifies the role of popular music as a reflection of linguistic hybridity and youth expression within a rapidly globalising society. The research contributes to the fields of sociolinguistics, bilingualism, and media discourse by examining code-mixing as a mechanism for identity formation and cultural signalling. Future research could examine cross-genre or cross-artist comparisons to analyse variations in code-mixing across musical contexts, or investigate audience perceptions of bilingual lyrics to evaluate their reception and sociocultural impact.

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