

An Analysis of the Influence of Code-Mixing Towards Engagement in an Indonesian Influencer's Social Media

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengetahui pengaruh penggunaan *code-mixing* terhadap *engagement* komentar, karena peneliti menilai ada perbedaan jumlah komentar dari konten yang menggunakan *code-mixing* dan konten yang menggunakan sedikit *code-mixing*. Data diperoleh dengan menganalisis enam konten Tiktok milik Lutfi yang diunggah pada bulan Januari sampai Februari 2025. Peneliti menginterpretasikan data berdasarkan tipe dan alasan penggunaan *code-mixing*, serta pengaruh *code-mixing* terhadap *engagement*. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, dapat disimpulkan bahwa penggunaan *code-mixing* memberikan pengaruh kepada *engagement* komentar.

Kata kunci: *code-mixing, engagement, bahasa Indonesia, bahasa Inggris*

ABSTRACT

This research is conducted to find out the effect of code-mixing to the comment engagement as the researcher considered there are differences between the amount of comment engagement of content using code-mixing and content with less code-mixing. The data was collected by analyzing six contents from Lutfi's Tiktok from January to February 2025. Then the researcher interpreted the data based on type and reasons of code-mixing as well as the influence of code-mixing towards engagement. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the use of code-mixing has an effect to the comment engagement.

Keywords: *Code-mixing, engagement, Indonesian language, English language*

1. INTRODUCTION

Seeing as English has become the most spoken language around the world, it is unlikely to find a country where learning English has not become a norm (Mahu, 2012). Research data shows that there are over 300 million people who use English as their second language as it has become a powerful tool in today's modern world since it allows people to be able to communicate universally. In Indonesia, even though there are various regional

languages, the government establishes English as a subject at various levels of education to prepare the young generation to compete globally. In many jobs, English is the most important requirement and if person has high English proficiency, they will have a greater chance of getting a job (Junita & Nurdiana, 2019).

Many young Indonesians are attracted to use English language to express themselves, especially in the virtual world. Research shows that

English is considered more natural and appropriate for “slang” by the young generations. In addition, Faltis (1989) stated that code switching and code-mixing are ways to help bilingual kids to overcome communication and language predicament as they have to decide which language is the best to use with family, peers, and teachers in school.

In today's world, technological advancements have impacted various fields including education. Incorporating technology into the learning process is widely seen as an effective method for teaching and supporting student learning, including English language learning (Tanihardjo, 2023). In digital communication, English plays an important role as there are a lot of social media nowadays that make people all around the world easier to communicate with one another. Many Indonesian people use Indonesian and English at the same time in social media such as Instagram (Nuraeni et al., 2018). They would use Indonesian as their national language and English as a lingua franca that shows modernity.

In Indonesia, social media usage has significantly surged in the digital age, making it easier to promote products and services through these platforms (Girsang & Situmeang, 2025). Each social media post has content engagement which is the amount of reaction, interest, and involvement that is demonstrated by the audience. It has been found that users who are more inclined and feel that the social media platform is personally meaningful for fulfilling their needs will be more likely to contribute, retrieve, and explore content.

There are several studies that have analyzed the use of code-mixing in social media. Sutrisno & Ariesta (2019) analyzed the use of code-mixing on influencers' Instagram caption. The study was done by questioning the influencers about the reason why they often use code-mixing. Anggarini (2022) also analyzed

the use of code-mixing by Indonesian top celebrities in social media product endorsements by gathering the data through check-list observation which consisted of Instagram posts. Another study by Hartono (2022) analyzed the types and also the reason code-mixing is used among Instagram users through observation and interview. However, there is a lack of studies which focus on the analysis of the impact of code-mixing on social media engagement. To be more specific, this study aims to fill the gap by analyzing the audience reaction on the comment section to see if there will be any difference with content which does not use a lot of code-mixing and content which does use a lot of code-mixing. The proposed research questions are as follows:

1. What type of code-mixing does the influencer use?
2. Why does the influencer use code-mixing?
3. How does the use of code-mixing influence audience interaction and engagement in the comment section?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Muysken (2000) defined code-mixing as the use of lexical items and grammatical structure from two languages within the same sentence. The phenomenon happens without fully switching to another language. This process often occurs in multilingual communities where the speakers are fluent in more than one language and naturally blend elements from different languages to express themselves more effectively. In addition, Muysken (2000) divides code-mixing into three, namely:

- 1) Insertion: occurs when there is a process of inserting other language elements into a sentence of another language.

- 2) Alternation: involves two different languages in a sentence where each language uses its own grammatical structure to be mixed in a sentence or clauses.
- 3) Congruent Lexicalization: this type of code-mixing combines elements from two languages which have a similar sentence structure. Thus, the result is grammatically correct in both languages as the elements of both languages are similar.

In addition, there are several reasons for using code-mixing as proposed by Bhatia & Ritchie (2004 as cited in Kim, 2006) as follows:

- 1) Participant roles and relationship: in a conversation, the roles and relationship of the individuals influence the way they communicate. For example, whether they share a common language or from different cultural backgrounds, the speakers must choose the proper way or expressions when communicating.
- 2) Situational factors: certain languages are often considered more appropriate to particular social groups, topics, and contexts. Additionally, social variables such as class, religion, gender, and age play a significant role in shaping how and when the language switch and mix should be done.
- 3) Message-intrinsic factors: people often use words from their native language to avoid misunderstanding. This could be a quotation from someone. The use of code-mixing itself is to avoid misinterpretation of the meaning. Additionally, paraphrasing is also another function that encourages code-mixing which is preferably conveyed in native language as it expresses cultural wisdom.
- 4) Language attitudes, dominance, and security: in terms of social attitude, the rate of code-mixing

can be observed by how frequent people switch languages as it sometimes refers to a particular social identity. Several bilinguals who feel more fluent or dominant in one language may use code-mixing more fluidly.

Furthermore, engagement can be defined as the nature of particular interactions or experiences, discourse portrayed in the context of business relationships and branding as the way communication occurs between a company and its audience (Brodie et al., 2013). According to Katz (1973), audiences are not passive recipients, but they are active participants who seek out media to fulfil specific needs or desires. There are five audience needs according that audience seek through media use:

- 1) Cognitive needs to gain knowledge, information, and understanding.
- 2) Affective needs to gain emotional gratification that is sought by the audience through media.
- 3) Personal integrative needs to gain self-esteem, credibility, or reinforcement of personal identity.
- 4) Social integrative needs to gain networks and interaction with others.
- 5) Tension release needs to escape or relieve stress. Individuals use media as entertainment, games, or casual browsing to escape from daily responsibilities.

3. METHODOLOGY

Source of Data

The source of data for this research is Lutfi Afansyah Wijaya who is a Tiktok influencer with more than 800k followers. The reason why Lutfi's contents are chosen to be the object of the research is because there are several contents that use many code-mixing and there are also several contents that mainly use Indonesian language which are

suitable for the data of the research. The data that is taken is from comment section, specifically the top 4 comments on each content which received the most likes. The reason why the researcher only takes the top 4 comments is because they represent the most likes or engagement that make them become a good reflection of the audience's relevant reactions to the content. The data are taken by purposive sampling which focused on analysis of the most relevant or popular to represent the most influential or widely supported opinions (Sharma, 2017). Six contents are selected starting from January 2025 to February 2025. The contents chosen have more than 50,000 viewers. Three contents often used code-mixing and the other three contents used less code-mixing.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection in qualitative research involves setting boundaries for the study by selecting appropriate data sources, collecting relevant information, and organizing the data for analysis purposes (Creswell, 2014). The data was collected through an analysis of six of Lutfi's Tiktok contents with a focus on examining code-mixing and its impact on the comment section engagement.

To analyze the data, the theories described in the previous section are used to help answer the three research questions. The first research question dealing with the types of code-mixing employs the theory from Muysken (2000), while the second research question related to the reason for code-mixing uses the theory from Bhatia & Ritchie (2004 as cited in Kim, 2006). Lastly, for the third research question about the influence of code-mixing towards audience interaction and engagement, the analysis will use the theory from Katz (1973).

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

First of all, the contents with a lot of code-mixing are analyzed. The analysis of the first three contents can be seen below.

Content 1



Figure 1. Screenshot of Content 1

The first content that was posted on 7th January 2025 has over 1k comments with over 450k viewers per 1st May 2025. In this content, Lutfi gives a review of HTS water which in Indonesia, HTS itself means a relationship without a status. This term is defined as a humour in Indonesia as it reflects a weird social phenomenon in which two people act as a couple without labelling each other as boyfriend or girlfriend. The amount of viewers is more than 50.000 viewers.

There are several code-mixing found in this content. All of them use insertion. One example is in the utterance **“Gw mau review sebuah minuman yang udh lama banget gw cari.”** In this sentence, “review” is an English word which is the code mixing in the sentence as the whole sentence used Indonesian language. By inserting another language in the sentence, it could be concluded that the type of code-mixing used is insertion as it embedded elements from other language while the sentence still follows the Indonesian grammatical structure.

In this content the researcher found two factors of code-mixing used which are participant role and relationship

and message-intrinsic factors. As the speaker uses Indonesian informal and casual slang to communicate with the audience, such as “gw” and “gatel gitu loh”, it indicates closeness with the audience (showing an understanding between similar age/social background). The use of code-mixing “review”, “bullshit”, and “commitment issue” fits casually in the communication suggesting a familiarity and equality of the social roles between speaker and the audience. For message-intrinsic factors, the use of English terms for code-mixing carries a specific connotation that might lose impact if it is translated into Indonesian language. For instance, the words “bullshit”, “commitment issue”, and “after taste” have no exact Indonesian language or equal expressive language. Mixing the sentence with English terms enhances the emotional and expressive cultural resonance for the audience.

In terms of the influence of the code-mixing towards engagement, it is found that the comment reaction with the top four comments reacted the word after taste. It fulfilled their affective needs by using the English language to entertain the audience with playfulness sentence and even sarcasm. The use of informal slang and English terms also shows that Lutfi aligns with younger and casual audience, inviting them to express themselves in a similar informal language. It shows personal integrative needs. The phrase “commitment issue” and “after taste” are embedded to convey specific emotions that the audience understand as it is shown by the familiarity reaction from the audiences.

Content 2



Figure 2. Screenshot of Content 2

The second content is about Lutfi impersonating the communication type that is used by corporate workers. There are several terms that are used by corporate workers on their daily working life. The content served intentional and dense use of English-Indonesian code-mixing in a corporate parody context, which resonates strongly with a specific social group such as millennials or gen. Z office workers. Lutfi’s exaggerated use of “corporate speak” which demonstrates on how code-mixing is used for social identification and humour. The second content was posted on 22nd January 2025. It has over 3k comments with over 1.6M viewers per 1st May 2025.

In the second content, there are several types of code-mixing found. One example is alternation which can be seen from the sentence **“Kak as I mentioned before on the call yesterday nih kak.”** This is an alternation because there is a switch to an English clause within Indonesian framing “kak” and “nih kak”, by maintaining both grammatical system on the Indonesian language and English language. Another example is the use of congruent lexicalization which can be seen in the sentence **“Iya kita coba recheck nih kak supaya kita align on the same page aja nih kak.”** The sentence blends Indonesian and English lexicon within one sentence without changing the syntactic structure of both languages, by demonstrating shared grammatical patterns between English and Indonesian language.

Next, it could be concluded that one of the reasons of the code-mixing used in this content is situational factors. In this content, Lutfi mentioned several English terms that are mainly used in corporate field. It shows that a specific group of corporate people understands and uses English terms more than using the local language. Message-intrinsic factor is also one of the reasons of the code-mixing used in this content. The words “bottleneck”, “circle back”, and “best regards” have no specific meaning in Indonesian language and may not be translated well. Therefore, they are kept to also keep the original meaning.

In terms of the comment engagement, the comment reaction shows that there is an understanding and relation with the English terms used in a corporate context. Similar to the first content, the code-mixing adds a light and fun atmosphere by mixing the English corporate language with informal Indonesian that shows professional and social language. Humour, relatability, and the topic itself could be one of the factors of the comment engagement. However, the audience comments specifically reference and mimic code-mixed phrases that indicate an active trigger for engagement not a passive background element. It shows that Lutfi is part of a corporate community that then inviting the viewers who also part of the community to comment the language use. It reflects the desire of the viewers to connect and interact through the same language, code-mixing helps build unique bond between the audience which leads to more engagement. It fulfilled personal integrative needs as it is shown by the reaction from the audience who then engage with the use of English terms by repeating or referencing the terms in their comments.

Content 3



Figure 3. Screenshot of Content 3

This content is for corporate parody and branded satire by using familiar workplace expressions and stressful situations that entertain and build a relatability among young workers audiences. This content is selected as it combines a corporate parody and code mixing expressions. The third content was posted on 28th February 2025 and has over 376k viewers with 286 comments per 11th May 2025. This content is about Halodoc advertisement but Lutfi brought corporate language as an entertainment to the audience. Lutfi brought the entertainment by giving a point of view of a worker who is on leave but still being bothered by the superior.

With regards to the types of code-mixing, several are found in this content. One example of insertion is from the sentence **“Aku udah ganti DP aku jadi on leave.”** There are two English words in this sentence which are inserted, the first one is “DP (Display Picture)” and the other is “on leave”. Another example is congruent lexicalization which can be seen from the sentence **“My world about ya pak alias location unknown gitu karena aku udah on leave.”** This sentence illustrates congruent lexicalization type of code-mixing since elements from both languages are used within a single grammatical structure.

In this content, the reason of the code-mixing use is mainly message-intrinsic factors. There are many English expressions that are used as a quotation or have no exact Indonesian word that could utter the same meaning. For example, the

phrase “can work under pressure” is a quotation that is commonly used in a job interview. Situational factor is also one of the reasons of code-mixing used in this sentence as it references to corporate environments. The speaker mainly used workplace terms such as “on leave”, “touch base”, and “alignment” that encourage the use of particular language choice in specific environment conversation.

For the engagement, the personal integrative needs is fulfilled as the audience can relate to the code-mixing use in the content means they come from a similar social group which is corporate communities. Many of the audience repeated to the code-mixing used in the content as they found it funny such as “bukan can work underpaid” with a cry emoji which interpreted laughing in Indonesia and “bahwasanya dp on leave adalah sebuah ikhtiar untuk tidak diganggu, NAMUN APA DAYA” which also use the cry emoji to interpreted laughing. The quotation to the original content by repeating the code-mixing use is also a prove that the audience is entertained and there is an enjoyment between the audience.

Moreover, the analysis of the contents with less code-mixing is presented below.

Content 4

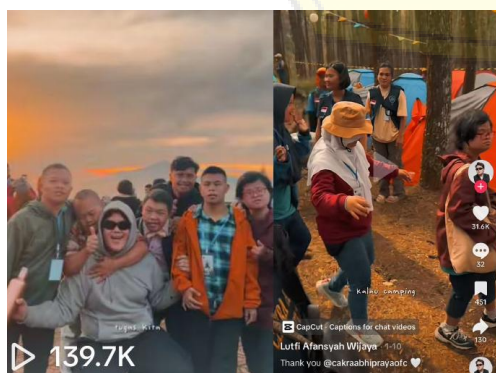


Figure 4. Screenshot of Content 4

The first content was posted on 10th January 2025 with the amount of 32 comments, it has 32 comments with over 139k viewers per 1st May 2025. In this content, Lutfi documents his experience with his friends during a charity glamping event with children with special needs. Compared to other contents that has been analysed, this video adopts more sincere and reflective tone that focus on social advocacy and emotional value rather than entertainment or satire.

There is only one code-mixing found in this content which is “**Kalian pernah kebayang ga kalau camping bisa jadi momen**” as Lutfi himself mainly speak Indonesian language rather than English language. In relation to the code-mixing type, it could be concluded that it is insertion as the words are inserted in Indonesian phrase without changing the grammatical structure of the sentence. Although “camping” is widely used in Indonesia, it still claimed as foreign word as it is not fully adapted into local grammar or pronunciation as people in Indonesia still use the word “berkemah” instead. As for the reason of code-mixing, the code-mixing is used as the speaker try to use words which is more familiar and informal with the audience. Based on participant roles and relationship, the word “camping” in English language is more casual rather than the Indonesian word itself “berkemah” which sounds more formal. The word “camping” could also reflect language dominance where the English word feels more natural in certain contexts rather than the term in the original language itself.

Different from the previous contents that mainly use code mixing, this content that uses less code-mixing might not fully fulfill the entertainment value for specific people who enjoy playful or relatable content. This likely results in a lower comment engagement compared to the other posts where code-mixing is mostly used. The needs of personal integrative which was found in the

previous contents is not found here as there is no audience that reference the term that is used in the content. Nonetheless, the content still has affective needs which can be seen from the comment section where the audiences are feeling proud and touched with the action that was done by Lutfi in the content. The limited use of code-mixing in this content correlates with lower levels of comment interaction and relatability which is boosted by informal, code-mixed language that could mirror the audience speech patterns. Code-mixing significantly contributes to increased comment interaction and engagement as it could encourage audiences to respond, quote, and connect especially on platforms like TikTok where language is used as a tool for building online communities.

Content 5

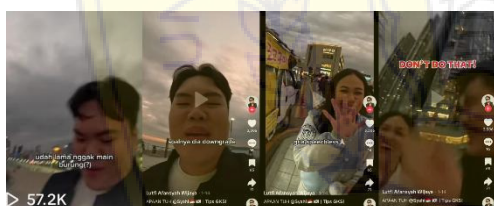


Figure 5. Screenshot of Content 5

The next content to be analyzed was posted on 14th January 2025 with over 57k viewers and 16 comments per 1st May 2025. The content is about Lutfi and his friend communicating with each other in Korea and joking about things, incorporating light humour and informal dialogue. The content is largely conversational and a casual in tone but only includes limited instances of code-mixing with only 3 usages found in the content.

In terms of the types of code-mixing that are used here, there are insertion and alternation. The example of insertion can be found in the sentence **“Soalnya dia downgrade.”** The sentence uses Indonesian language “soalnya dia” +

a word in English “downgrade”, which make the type of code-mixing used is insertion. As for the example of alternation, it can be seen in the sentence **“Ihh do- don’t do that!”** The phrase starts with “ihh”, which is an interjection commonly used in Indonesian, followed by an English clause “don’t do that!”. The type of code-mixing in this sentence is alternation as there is a switch from an Indonesian element “ihh” to a full English structure “don’t do that”. Alternation itself happens when there is a shift between two languages within a conversation or utterance, often involving both language grammatical structure.

Furthermore, this content use code-mixing because of the participant roles and relationship. In

this content, Lutfi was talking to his friend about random things while walking in Korea. The language used is informal which naturally encourages code-mixing to be used by both speakers to make the conversation more comfortable and efficient. Message-intrinsic factor is also one of the reasons of code-mixing used in this content. Several English words that express emotion cannot be translated well to the original language. The words “downgrade” and “speechless” do not have an exact equivalent translation in Indonesian to express the same emotion. “Downgrade is a technical term that is often used in social settings to convey status decline, it is difficult to express as sharply in Indonesian language. “Speechless” is an expressive word to show shock or surprise that already has a fixed expression in English, it expresses stronger emotion than a direct Indonesian translation might. The minimal code-mixing use makes the content accessible but not necessarily engaging as the word do not contribute significantly to the communication and emotion of the audience. Nonetheless, the affective needs of the audiences is still fulfilled as most of them found the content funny.

Content 6

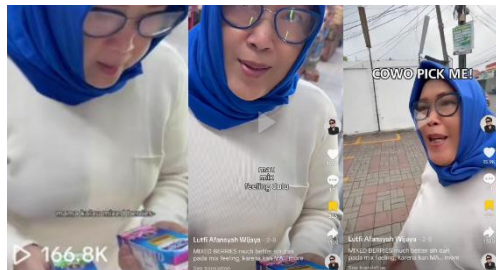


Figure 6. Screenshot of Content 6

The last content was posted on 8th February 2025 with over 166k viewers and 171 comments per 11th May 2025. This content is actually an advertisement content where Lutfi and his mother are going for an evening walk together and buying milk at a supermarket for their refreshment. There are 3 instances of code-mixing in this content, all of them are insertion types. One example is in the sentence **“Gak dulu deh, mau mix feeling dulu.”** “Mix feeling” is a noun phrase which is inserted into an Indonesian sentence. The sentence uses Indonesian grammatical structure but to express the emotion, English term might make the sentence tone become more youthful.

The main reason of code-mixing use is message intrinsic factors. The phrases “mix feeling” and “pick me” are used to express a modern emotional nuance that is often used in social media contexts. “Mix feeling” is a colloquial phrase that reflects an ambiguity and carries a specific emotional tone that is hard to express naturally in Indonesian language. The phrase “pick me” is an English slang that is also mainly used in social media. Similar to the phrase “mix feeling”, the phrase “pick me” carries a specific connotation that is hard to translate in Indonesian language. For the sentence “minimal react instastory lah”, it used code-mixing because of the situational factors. The word “react” is used to refer to social media features and are better suited to certain topics.

The comment reaction shown by the reaction of the audience that reflects joy and laughter. Different from the previous contents which mainly use code-mixing, the reactions are mainly not directed to the use of language but it is addressed to Lutfi’s mom. The audiences reacted to the inside jokes of the content, but the amount of replying with each audience is not as many as the content that mainly use code-mixing. The audience seemed more engaged with the characters and storyline between Lutfi and his mother rather than quoting to the English phrase used in the content. This supports the idea that code-mixing, especially when it reflects shared group identity and incorporates internet slang, can drive stronger engagement by enhancing relatability and playfulness with the audience.

Discussion

In this section, a summary of all the findings is presented to help answer the research questions. First of all, with regards to the type of code-mixing, the table below summarizes all instances of code-mixing found in all contents.

Table 1. Summary of Code-Mixing Types

Code-Mixing Type	Total	Percentage
Insertion	30	75%
Alternation	6	15%
Congruent Lexicalization	4	10%

The findings on Table 1 show that the type of code-mixing that is mainly used in Lutfi’s TikTok content is insertion. This findings is similar to the findings of the previous research done by Anggaraini (2022) about the type of code-mixing that are mainly used by using Muysken’s (2000) theory. The difference is that in Anggaraini’s findings, insertion is mainly used during promoting product endorsement while in this paper, insertion is mainly used for entertainment.

Next, in terms of the reason for code-mixing, Table 2 below summarizes the findings from the six contents which are analyzed in this study.

Table 2. Summary of the Reasons for Code-Mixing

Reasons for Code-Mixing	Total	Percentage
Participants roles and relationship	3	43%
Message-intrinsic factors	3	43%
Situational factors	1	14%
Language attitudes, dominance, & security	0	0%

The reasons for code-mixing in Lutfi's content summarized in Table 2 shows that it mostly occurs because of message-intrinsic factors and also participant roles & relationship. There are no exact words that can express the same meaning as in English language. Additionally, the speaker uses code-mixing to make the audience feel connected and understand more to the context of the content.

Lastly, with regards to the influence of code-mixing to the engagement in the comments section, it is found that the content that got higher comment engagement is from the contents that mainly use code-mixing. The first content got more than 1k comments, the second content got more than 3k comments and the last content got 286 comments. The content that uses less code-mixing got only 32, 16, and 171 comments for the last three contents respectively. All of the contents contain affective needs which achieve the emotional pleasure of the audiences. The contents with code-mixing invoked fun feelings of the audiences by entertaining them. One of the contents with less codemixing also invoked fun feelings of the audience, while the other content invoked proud feelings from the audiences. Based on the findings, the

highest level of comment engagement occurs when English slang or idioms are used in the content. This is evident in the first three contents, where audience reactions in the comment section are primarily directed at the English slang or idioms, as they can quote or respond to the language.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the research findings, it was discovered that the type of code-mixing used by Lutfi is mainly insertion, in which the total from six contents, 75% of the code-mixing used is insertion. The researcher also found that the use of insertion is mainly for entertainment. There are only two out of six contents that use code-mixing for promotion with the rest of the four contents use code-mixing for entertainment.

Message-intrinsic factors and participant roles & relationship are the main reasons of code-mixing use in Lutfi's content, which accounts for 43% of data found from the analysis. The analysis shows that the speaker uses code-mixing to gain a relationship and understanding by the audience. It can be seen by the comment reaction that the audience reacted to the use of code-mixing in the content. Lutfi also use code-mixing to avoid word misuse or misinterpretation to the audience.

For the last research question, code-mixing does affect the comment engagement in Tiktok. Most of the audience react to the content by using the code-mixing in the comment section that shows the ability to understand the foreign language used in the content. Compared to the content which used less code-mixing and does not use any slang or idioms in English terms, the audience are mainly quoting the slang or idioms used in the content to also share their experience.

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