

Hybrid Language Practices and Identity Negotiation among Generation Z: Code-Switching between Cirebonese Javanese and Jakarta Slang in Cirebon

Rofingatun Nguluwiyah¹ and Septi Gumiandari²

¹²Postgraduate Program, Universitas Islam Negeri Siber Syekh Nurjati Cirebon

¹²Email: rofingatun@gmail.com, septigumiandari@uinssc.ac.id

Proceedings of the Kalijaga International Conference on Education 2026

Abstract. The rapid expansion of digital communication and urban popular culture has reshaped language practices among Generation Z in multilingual societies, where local, national, and global linguistic resources dynamically intersect. This study investigates the forms, interactional patterns, influencing factors, and socio-cultural meanings of code-switching between Cirebonese Javanese and Jakarta slang among Generation Z adolescents in Suranenggala, Gunung Jati, Plered, and Kapetakan, Cirebon Regency. Employing a descriptive qualitative design, the study draws on data from participatory observations and semi-structured interviews with 23 Generation Z participants across face-to-face and digitally mediated interactions. The findings reveal that code-switching occurs in inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and tag-switching forms, operating through solidarity, situational, and metaphorical patterns. Rather than functioning merely as an arbitrary mixture or reflecting language attrition, this linguistic behavior represents a deliberate sociolinguistic strategy shaped by interlocutor hierarchy, digital exposure, topical-emotional framing, and social prestige considerations. Through hybrid language practices and cultural syncretism, adolescents strategically balance local cultural affiliation (*wong dewek*) with modern, cosmopolitan youth identities, while maintaining traditional communicative ethics (*unggah-ungguh*) in domestic and intergenerational domains. The study demonstrates that urban slang adoption does not displace the local heritage language, but prompts a functional domain redistribution that fosters linguistic creativity, social adaptability, and layered cultural sustainability in contemporary multilingual Indonesia.

Keywords: Code-switching; Cirebonese Javanese; Cultural sustainability, Generation Z, Hybrid identity, Jakarta slang, Sociolinguistics

INTRODUCTION

Language is not only a means of transmitting information but also a resource through which speakers construct social relationships, express emotions, and negotiate identity. In multilingual and multicultural societies such as Indonesia, linguistic practices continuously develop through interaction between local languages, Indonesian, and varieties associated with popular culture. Cirebon provides an important context for examining this process because Cirebonese Javanese continues to function as a local language while its speakers are increasingly exposed to urban and digitally mediated language practices. The interaction between local linguistic resources and popular expressions has become particularly visible among Generation Z, whose everyday communication is shaped by both face-to-face interaction and social media [1].

Among Generation Z in Cirebon, code-switching between Cirebonese Javanese and Jakarta slang is increasingly observable in informal conversations, peer interactions, and digitally influenced communication. Previous studies have demonstrated that code-switching and code-mixing may function as strategies for maintaining interactional effectiveness, expressing social identity, and negotiating interpersonal relationships [2], [3]. Research on Generation Z has similarly shown that social media contributes to the spread and normalization of slang and hybrid linguistic practices [4], [5]. These developments suggest that language choice among young speakers cannot be understood solely in terms of linguistic competence. Rather, language choice is closely related to social positioning, cultural affiliation, and the communicative context.

Research conducted in other Indonesian settings has documented code-switching in social media, educational environments, marketplaces, transportation settings, and peer interactions [6]–[7]. Studies concerning Cirebon have also identified bilingual and multilingual practices in local communities, including interactions in traditional markets and public spaces [8], [9]. However, much of the existing research examines code-switching as a general linguistic phenomenon or focuses on particular communication settings. Less attention has been given to how local Cirebonese Javanese interacts specifically with Jakarta slang among Generation Z and how this interaction contributes to the construction of hybrid identities in everyday communication.

The present study addresses this gap by examining the linguistic forms, interactional patterns, influencing factors, and meanings of code-switching between Cirebonese Javanese and Jakarta slang among Generation Z in four subdistricts of Cirebon Regency: Suranenggala, Gunung Jati, Plered, and Kapetakan. The study considers code-switching not simply as the alternation of linguistic codes but as a social practice through which young

speakers manage interpersonal distance, demonstrate group affiliation, respond to digital trends, and negotiate their position between local cultural belonging and broader popular culture.

The study is also relevant to contemporary discussions of language and digital communication. Recent studies indicate that Generation Z frequently incorporates popular expressions acquired from social media into everyday communication [4], [10], [11]. Such practices may increase linguistic flexibility and creativity, while simultaneously raising questions about the continuity of local languages and the changing boundaries between formal and informal communication [12], [13]. In this context, Cirebonese Generation Z provides an important case for understanding how local linguistic identity is maintained, modified, and renegotiated under conditions of intense digital exposure.

Therefore, this study aims to: (1) identify the forms and patterns of code-switching between Cirebonese Javanese and Jakarta slang among Generation Z; (2) examine the social, cultural, psychological, and situational factors influencing code-switching; (3) interpret the communicative and social meanings of code-switching in constructing identity and peer relationships; and (4) explain the broader dynamics of communication produced through the interaction of local and popular linguistic resources among Generation Z in Cirebon Regency.

METHODS

Study area

The study was conducted in four subdistricts of Cirebon Regency, West Java, Indonesia: Suranenggala, Gunung Jati, Plered, and Kapetakan. These locations were selected because the research focused on Generation Z speakers who routinely interact within local Cirebonese linguistic environments while simultaneously being exposed to popular and digitally mediated language varieties.

The research context included everyday interactions among adolescents and young people in domestic, educational, social, and informal settings. Particular attention was given to peer conversations and situations in which speakers alternated between Cirebonese Javanese, Indonesian, and Jakarta slang.

Procedures Research Design and Participants

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design. The approach was selected because the research sought to describe and interpret the forms, patterns, meanings, and contextual factors associated with code-switching in naturally occurring social interactions. The qualitative design enabled the researchers to address questions concerning what forms of code-switching occur, how speakers use them, and why particular linguistic choices are made in specific interactional situations [14]. The primary participants consisted of 23 Generation Z adolescents from Suranenggala, Gunung Jati, Plered, and Kapetakan, Cirebon Regency. Primary data were obtained through observation and interviews, while secondary data consisted of relevant journal articles, research reports, theses, and other scholarly materials.

Data Collection

Data collection primarily involved participatory observation and semi-structured interviews. Through participatory observation, the researchers observed participants' everyday communication practices and identified instances of language alternation. Semi-structured interviews were subsequently used to explore participants' motivations, perceptions, and interpretations of their own linguistic practices.

The interviews addressed several dimensions: the interlocutors involved, the topics discussed, the social setting, the linguistic forms selected, exposure to social media, and participants' perceptions of identity and social relationships. The interview data included examples of actual expressions used by participants in interactions with friends, family members, and other interlocutors. "Isun pengen tuku dimsum ning marawi, Lu mau ikut ga pi." This utterance combines Cirebonese Javanese and Jakarta slang within an informal invitation. Another participant reported: "Put jujurly ya, isun rada malas pisan ning kerjaan kien rasane pengen metu." The utterance incorporates the popular expression jujurly into a predominantly Cirebonese Javanese structure. Such examples were treated as evidence of speakers' strategic and context-sensitive use of multiple linguistic resources.

Data analysis

The collected data were analyzed using a qualitative analysis process consisting of data reduction, data presentation, and verification or conclusion drawing [15]. During data reduction, relevant excerpts involving code-switching were identified and classified according to their linguistic forms and communicative contexts. The data were subsequently organized around three principal forms of switching identified in the study: inter-sentential switching, intra-sentential switching, and tag switching.

The analysis then examined recurrent patterns associated with solidarity, interlocutor adaptation, emotional or humorous emphasis, digital exposure, situational context, and social prestige. Finally, the researchers interpreted the relationship between linguistic choices and identity construction. This analytical procedure allowed the study to

move beyond simply identifying instances of code-switching and instead examine the social meanings attached to linguistic choices.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Forms of Code-Switching between Cirebonese Javanese and Jakarta Slang

The findings reveal that Generation Z adolescents across Suranenggala, Gunung Jati, Plered, and Kapetakan in Cirebon Regency employ three structural forms of code-switching in everyday communication: inter-sentential switching, intra-sentential switching, and tag switching. Rather than functioning merely as syntactic alternations, these forms operate as socially motivated communicative strategies through which young speakers negotiate interpersonal distance, topical framing, and generational identity. In line with previous research on Indonesian youth communication, code selection is not arbitrary; it represents an active management of linguistic repertoires shaped by social relationships, digital exposure, and situational demands [16], [17], [18].

Inter-Sentential Switching

Inter-sentential switching occurs across sentence boundaries, where an utterance begins in one linguistic code and transitions into another in the subsequent clause or sentence. The empirical data show that participants utilize this form to balance local cultural belonging with peer-oriented informality. As demonstrated by Amelia Putri Kartika: "Isun pengen tuku ning marawi, Lu mau ikut ga pi."

Structurally, the first clause establishes a local communicative base in Cirebonese Javanese ("Isun pengen tuku..."), while the subsequent clause shifts into Jakarta slang and colloquial Indonesian ("Lu mau ikut ga...") to articulate a casual invitation. A complementary pattern was articulated by Nurfaridah: "Aja dolan disit sih, isun lagi bli deduit. Mending sekarang dirumah aja karena asli gua mager banget keluar."

This structural shift demonstrates that inter-sentential switching serves as an interactional device for compartmentalizing information: speakers use Cirebonese Javanese to frame immediate, locally situated realities and shift to Jakarta slang to convey personal stances, social invitations, or emotional evaluations. These findings are consistent with Fauziyah and Rianto [6] as well as Srihartatik and Mulyani [19], who observe that sentence-level switching in Cirebon reflects situational adaptations across heteroglossic spaces. The switch does not stem from lexical gaps in Cirebonese Javanese, but rather reflects the speaker's sociolinguistic awareness of audience design, wherein linguistic choices are adjusted to match the age, familiarity, and expectations of interlocutors [20], [21], [22].

Furthermore, inter-sentential switching is strongly mediated by conversational topics and generational boundaries. Participants reported that discussions centered on social media trends, TikTok viral news, and romantic relationships readily activate Jakarta slang, whereas family matters and interactions with older relatives retain Cirebonese Javanese. This topic-driven distribution demonstrates that Jakarta slang provides access to translocal youth culture, while Cirebonese Javanese preserves local cultural rootedness [7], [8], [23], [24]. Consequently, inter-sentential switching does not indicate the displacement of the heritage language; rather, it reflects an expanded communicative repertoire where local and urban resources coexist complementarily.

Intra-Sentential Switching

Intra-sentential switching refers to the insertion of lexical items, phrases, or clauses from Jakarta slang into the grammatical matrix of Cirebonese Javanese within a single sentence. This form is particularly prominent in informal peer gatherings, where speakers embed popular buzzwords to enrich stylistic expression. Sri Hanifah highlighted this practice: "Put jujurly ya, isun rada malas pisan ning kerjaan kien rasane pengen metu."

A similar integration of digital terms into local grammatical frames was described by Farhat Kamal: "Menurut lu gimana tentang kegiatan orang-orang yang fomo di tiktok yang pada naik gunung itu, maksudde kita hal kaya konon harus siap mentale, fisike dudu malah cuman melu-meluan bae, ya beli sih..."

In both instances, lexical insertions such as *jujurly* and *fomo* are not syntactically required for grammatical completeness; instead, they function as pragmatic markers of stance, signaling that the utterance is casual, emotionally expressive, and socially aligned with contemporary youth discourse. This aligns with sociolinguistic findings indicating that intra-sentential switching among youth operates as a resource for identity projection, stylistic nuance, and communicative flexibility rather than a compensatory response to limited vocabulary [16], [18].

The empirical evidence also demonstrates a clear structural asymmetry: Cirebonese Javanese remains the underlying matrix language, while Jakarta slang provides stylistic and evaluative overlays. Expressions originating from digital media—such as TikTok, Instagram, and WhatsApp—are continuously absorbed, recontextualized, and embedded within local syntactic structures [25], [26]. This allows Generation Z speakers to signal peer solidarity and shared digital competence without relinquishing their regional linguistic base [27]. Thus, intra-sentential

switching reflects a localized hybridization that enables youth to participate in national pop culture while maintaining regional communicative norms.

Tag Switching

Tag switching involves inserting short particles, discourse markers, interjections, or formulaic expressions from one language into an utterance structured in another. In the speech of Cirebonese Generation Z, this pattern includes both local Cirebonese particles (jeh, tah, yowes, sih) and contemporary urban/English-derived markers (real, red flag, bestie, woy, salken). Rahma illustrated this usage: "Aja mengkonon, sih, nyadar beli dina kien panas pisan, real. Bocah kaen gah red flag."

In contrast, Muhammad Rafli highlighted the situational and relational distribution of colloquial tags: "Kari isun sih, ngobrol bari batur lanang biasane ana tambahan kata jeh, yowes, yo, tah, sih... Beda maning kalo nyapa wong biasa-e yah ngundang aran, atau woy, itu lebih ke batur parek. Batur sejen mah ya kadang ngomong halo bang, salken."

These concise insertions perform pragmatic work by calibrating interpersonal distance and setting conversational tone without requiring syntactic restructuring. The choice between a local tag (jeh, tah) and a modern urban tag (real, red flag, woy) serves as an interactional index: local tags reinforce regional intimacy, whereas urban tags display familiarity with digital youth culture and regulate degrees of social closeness [18], [24], [25].

Tag switching also highlights the communicative economy characteristic of youth communication. A single inserted token allows speakers to project humor, skepticism, or affection while sustaining fluent interaction. Furthermore, tag switching establishes symbolic boundaries across generations: while shared tags foster in-group solidarity among peers, they are systematically suppressed during interactions with parents and elders to maintain traditional linguistic etiquette (unggah-ungguh) [26], [27]. This bidirectional versatility demonstrates that tag switching is not merely ornamental, but constitutes an adaptive sociolinguistic device for negotiating dual cultural identities.

Patterns of Code-Switching between Cirebonese Javanese and Jakarta Slang

The interaction between Cirebonese Javanese and Jakarta slang among Generation Z adolescents manifests across three primary interactional patterns: solidarity patterns, situational patterns, and metaphorical patterns. Rather than reflecting arbitrary code mixing, these patterns illustrate how youth dynamically manage their communicative repertoires to establish social alignment, adjust to situational hierarchies, and intensify emotional and humorous expression.

Solidarity Pattern

The solidarity pattern highlights code-switching as a primary mechanism for cultivating in-group cohesion and interpersonal closeness among peers. Generation Z participants selectively combine Cirebonese Javanese with Jakarta slang to create a shared communicative frame that signals common digital experiences, cultural references, and peer affiliation. In informal peer gatherings, hybrid speech dissolves the communicative distance associated with formal Indonesian or strictly polite registers of Cirebonese Javanese. As articulated by Aisyah: "Kalau aku sih ka, seringnya tuh sadar engga sadar sih kalau lagi nyampur bahasa gitu. Kadang bilang up-to-date, spill, split, update. Itu tuh kayak bahasa sehari-hari aja nggak kerasa gitu... identitas kita sebagai anak muda Cirebon tuh ya di situ, kita tetep punya logat Cirebon tapi kata-katanya tetep asik dan up-to-date kayak anak Jakarta. Rasanya kalau pakai bahasa Cirebon murni tuh terlalu kaku, tapi kalau pakai Jakarta murni juga kerasa aneh karena kita kan tinggal di sini."

Aisyah's reflection illustrates that hybrid language functions as a localized badge of modernity. Blending viral buzzwords (spill, update) with Cirebonese phonological accents allows adolescents to construct a "Modern Cirebonese" peer identity—participating in broader national youth trends while maintaining regional rootedness. This finding corroborates Azika et al. [28], who demonstrate that youth language variation strengthens emotional bonds within peer communities, as well as Rosdiana [29], who notes that shared linguistic varieties establish boundaries of inclusiveness and group cohesion.

Sociolinguistically, this pattern establishes a form of dual solidarity. Cirebonese Javanese provides horizontal solidarity rooted in shared geography and cultural background, whereas Jakarta slang affords translocal solidarity linked to digital networks. As observed by Kandiawan [30] and Gultom et al. [31], slang and code alternation among Indonesian youth serve as vital social capital that validates peer group membership across physical and digital spaces. The shared repertoire functions as an in-group filter: recognizing and deploying trending expressions confirms that speakers are operating on the same communicative "frequency," thereby generating a safe, relaxed, and socially supportive interactional climate.

Situational Pattern

The situational pattern reflects participants' adaptive competence in modifying their linguistic choices according to interlocutor characteristics, physical settings, and degrees of formality. Generation Z speakers do not use hybrid language indiscriminately; rather, they demonstrate acute sensitivity to social hierarchy and communicative context through two distinct mechanisms: vertical and horizontal adaptation.

Vertical Adaptation: When communicating with parents, teachers, and elders, adolescents deliberately restrict Jakarta slang and shift toward polite Cirebonese Javanese (*unggah-ungguh*) or standard Indonesian to maintain cultural deference and respect (*tahu diri*).

Horizontal Adaptation: When interacting with age peers in informal settings, speakers freely intensify Jakarta slang and code-mixing to project equality, warmth, and contemporary relevance (*asik*).

Agysti Kobliani highlighted this contextual duality: "Kalau di rumah sama orang tua, saya nggak berani pakai istilah kayak 'lu-gua' atau 'spill' demi menjaga kesopanan. Tapi kalau lagi kumpul sama teman-teman di kafe daerah Plered, secara refleks bahasa campuran langsung keluar karena kalau pakai bahasa Cirebon halus di tongkrongan malah kerasa kaku dan nggak cocok sama suasananya."

This contextual flexibility aligns with the communication accommodation theory described by Maitimu et al. [32], wherein speakers systematically adjust communicative styles to manage social distance and interpersonal relationships. It is also consistent with Rakhmaniar [33], who emphasizes that physical setting and social proximity govern adolescent register selection. Informal commercial venues (e.g., cafés in Plered or modern hangouts) provide permissive spaces where urban hybridity is celebrated, whereas domestic and traditional environments mandate cultural alignment. Furthermore, situational switching demonstrates that regional loyalty and contemporary youth identity are not mutually exclusive. By compartmentalizing Cirebonese Javanese for familial respect and Jakarta slang for peer engagement, participants actively balance tradition with modernity.

Metaphorical Pattern

Metaphorical switching occurs when speakers alternate codes not because of changes in setting or interlocutor, but to manipulate the pragmatic force, emotional intensity, or humorous framing of an utterance. In this pattern, Cirebonese Javanese is positioned as the language of "everyday reality" and factual grounding, while Jakarta slang functions as the language of "drama, content, and stylistic stance." Anggi Fadilah illustrated this evaluative practice: "Aku sering nyampur bahasa kalau lagi cerita persoalan pribadi kayak hubungan asmara biar dapat efek emosional yang lebih berasa. Nyelipin istilah kayak 'red flag' atau 'gua' bikin ceritanya lebih berwarna dan gampang dipahami teman-teman sebagai situasi yang 'serius tapi santai' dibanding pakai bahasa Cirebon murni yang dirasa kurang ada unsur dramanya."

As Anggi's testimony illustrates, inserting terms such as red flag allows the speaker to perform stance-taking by framing a personal experience within a globally and nationally recognized youth evaluation category. This corresponds with previous research indicating that youth slang and metaphorical code-switching serve as interpretive resources for evaluating interpersonal events and establishing affective stances [18], [25], [26].

Metaphorical switching performs several key communicative functions among Cirebonese youth:

Emotional Intensification and Regulation: In conflict or frustration, combining direct Cirebonese Javanese with casual Jakarta slang allows speakers to articulate irritation while softening the interpersonal impact, preventing peer conversations from becoming overly confrontational.

Affective Playfulness and Intimacy: Integrating affectionate urban markers (*bestie*, *gemes*, *santuy*) into Cirebonese structures fosters playful warmth and dissolves conversational rigidity.

Linguistic Humor and Performance: Juxtaposing localized Cirebonese expressions with trending viral terms (*healing*, *gabut*, *nggak ada obat*) produces deliberate semantic and stylistic incongruities that evoke humor among peers sharing identical digital references.

Overall, the metaphorical pattern provides the clearest evidence that code-switching among Cirebonese Generation Z is an active meaning-making practice. The integration of digital and urban vocabulary does not signify a lexical deficiency in the mother tongue. Instead, it reflects an expanded pragmatic repertoire where speakers creatively juxtapose local and popular linguistic resources to negotiate complex emotional, humorous, and identity-driven expressions in everyday social life.

Factors Influencing Code-Switching Practices among Generation Z

The code-switching practices observed among Generation Z in Cirebon Regency are driven by a dynamic interplay of interpersonal, digital, situational, and psychological factors. Rather than functioning in isolation, these factors guide how young speakers evaluate interactional contexts and deploy their multilingual resources.

Participant Factors: Speaker and Interlocutor

Participant-related factors—particularly age hierarchy, social proximity, and familiarity—serve as primary determinants of code selection. Participants actively calibrate their speech depending on who initiates the

conversation and the social distance between speakers. Riswanto illustrated this relational variation: "Bahasa campuran antara Jawa Cirebon dan istilah gaul atau bahasa gaul Jakarta sering saya gunakan... Semisal kata 'Isun agak telat dimin ya, ngko sore mono. Sorry banget ya bro'. Tapi kalau ngobrol sama orang yang lebih tua tetep bahasa Jawa Cirebon... kitanya juga harus sopan."

Similarly, Fajri highlighted how peer intimacy licenses informal, hybrid discourse: "Kalau untuk temen main atau nongkrong lebih menyesuaikan aja si... Kalimat yang biasa gua pake ketika ngobrol sama teman seumuran: 'Bocah kaen pancen beli jelas nemen kesanne pick me pisan' atau pas nasihatn percintaan: 'Kalo ira bli demen karo deke yowes cut off bae, ngapain di jalani coba'."

These accounts demonstrate that code-switching operates through interactional accommodation: speakers monitor their interlocutor's profile and adjust their register to establish a shared communicative frame. This corresponds with communication accommodation theory, wherein linguistic convergence reduces perceived social distance among peers [32]. Conversely, when interacting with elders, adolescents deliberately suppress slang to uphold traditional politeness (unggah-ungguh). As Rakhmaniar [33] notes, interpersonal closeness dictates the deployment of informal varieties to reinforce solidarity, while social hierarchy enforces deference. Thus, participant-sensitive switching serves a dual function: it fosters horizontal peer cohesion while maintaining vertical intergenerational boundaries [30], [31].

Digital Exposure and Globalization

Continuous engagement with social media platforms (TikTok, Instagram, WhatsApp, X) functions as a primary catalyst for lexical innovation and hybrid speech among Cirebonese youth. Digital media acts as a linguistic reservoir from which popular expressions and English borrowings are absorbed and transferred into face-to-face conversations. Isma Puja Larasati explained: "Rata-rata yang pake istilah-istilah seperti itu ketika menulis di kehidupan nyata dibawa si istilah gaul itu... Contohnya gini si pi, 'sirah wis weruh beli konten si lagi trending ning Twitter? Jujur vibes-e sedih pisan jeh yo'."

Chela Ragil similarly reported: "Ungkapan istilah-istilah bahasa gaul yang ada di media sosial memang lagi banyak banget... Semisal 'Yu gah coba gawe konten pov due batur durung cerita tapi uwis ketawa duluan' atau pas lagi curhat 'jujurly aja kien mah isun uwis muak pisan deleng rai deweke'."

Expressions such as vibes, POV, trending, and jujurly carry cultural associations and stylistic capital that lack exact equivalents in daily Cirebonese Javanese. Incorporating these terms allows speakers to index familiarity with national pop culture and digital discourse. This supports findings by Yana and Dwi Nova [34] and Dewi [35], who emphasize that digital exposure does not simply encourage code-mixing out of lexical necessity, but serves as a performative strategy for expressing contemporary social identity and digital connectedness [30], [31]. Rather than displacing Cirebonese Javanese, digital exposure expands the speakers' communicative repertoire through localized hybridization.

Situational and Topic Factors

Situational contexts and conversational topics govern the boundaries within which code-switching is deemed appropriate. Physical settings establish distinct interactional expectations: informal public spaces (e.g., modern cafés in Plered or Tuparev) encourage hybrid speech, whereas domestic and institutional domains demand greater adherence to standard or traditional varieties. Tiara Khairunnisa Darmawan highlighted this topic-driven alternation: "Kalo lagi ngobrolin soal tren di media sosial atau nonton drakor sih reflek aja mba, pakenya istilah gaul Jakarta kayak Vibes, atau Pov. Rasanya lebih pas aja buat ngejelasinnya. Tapi kalo lagi bahas masakan mamah atau urusan dirumah, yah balik lagi pake bahasa Cirebon."

Dian Agustin reinforced the impact of spatial framing: "Kalo lagi ngobrolin soal tempat rekomendasi kafe modern, atau tren tiktok, memang benar secara tidak langsung keluar istilah menanyakan wah bagus ya vibes nya... Tapi kalo bahas soal keluarga, yah balik lagi bakalan menggunakan bahasa Cirebon biasa, karena situasi di luar dengan di rumah itu berbeda..."

These testimonies illustrate that topics associated with digital trends, lifestyle, and modern entertainment trigger Jakarta slang, whereas domestic and cultural matters activate Cirebonese Javanese. This functional distribution corroborates Heryani [36], who argues that situational formality acts as an interactional switch in multilingual Cirebonese communities. As Nabila et al. [37] observe, youth slang operates as an effective communicative tool when aligned with appropriate conversational domains.

Social Prestige and Identity Factors

Psychological motivations tied to social prestige (gengsi sosial) and self-presentation heavily influence language alternation. Generation Z adolescents utilize popular urban vocabulary as an identity accessory to project an image of modernity, cultural awareness, and social mobility. Mixing local Cirebonese Javanese with Jakarta slang allows speakers to construct a "Modern Cirebonese" identity (Wong Cirebon Modern)—avoiding the stigma of being perceived as insular or old-fashioned (ndesa). Muhammad Farhan explained: "Kalau aku jujur ya rofi,

pake kata-kata kayak 'real' atau 'red flag' itu biar ngerasa lebih nyambung aja sama tren sekarang. Rasanya ada kebanggaan tersendiri kalau kita tahu istilah yang lagi viral di Jakarta. Kalau pake bahasa Cirebon terus, kadang ngerasa kayak kurang 'gaul' gitu... bikin aku ngerasa lebih percaya diri."

Raja Hasyimi similarly stated: "Pake istilah kayak 'worth it' atau nyapa 'halo bang' itu emang ada pengaruh gengsinya sih rop. Di tongkrongan tuh kalau kita bisa nyelipin bahasa gaul, kita dianggap lebih asik dan nggak kaku... Kita tetep bangga jadi wong Cirebon, tapi dengan campur bahasa Jakarta, orang jadi tahu kalau pergaulan kita tuh luas."

These insights confirm that code-switching serves as an instrument of social validation. Integrating urban terms enables adolescents to assert peer relevance while maintaining regional pride. This aligns with Taufiq et al. [38] and Handayani [39], who demonstrate that youth slang enhances communicative prestige and solidifies group cohesion, transforming code choice into a symbolic marker of contemporary lifestyle and cultural mobility.

Communicative and Social Functions of Code-Switching

The functional significance of code-switching among Cirebonese Generation Z extends across communicative, social, and symbolic dimensions, serving as a versatile resource for identity construction and social alignment.

Communicative Efficiency and Psychological Comfort

Code-switching facilitates communicative economy and psychological ease in interpersonal interaction. Participants frequently utilize Jakarta slang and English loanwords as expressive shortcuts to articulate nuanced mental states, emotional conditions, and subjective evaluations that are cumbersome to express in local idioms. Syifa noted: "Kalau aku sih ngerasa lebih nyaman aja pi kalau nyelipin kata kayak 'mager' atau 'overthinking'. Rasanya lebih pas buat ngungkapin perasaan kita yang sekarang. Bahasa Cirebon tetep dipake buat sehari-hari, tapi buat ekspresi yang sifatnya pribadi atau perasaan yang lagi viral di sosmed, pake bahasa campuran itu bikin obrolan kerasa lebih cair..."

Terms like *mager* and *overthinking* fulfill precise lexical needs within contemporary youth discourse. Utilizing hybrid language alleviates communicative stiffness, providing an informal conversational space that fosters emotional openness. This corresponds with Oktavia and Achسانی [40] as well as Mareta et al. [41], who emphasize that code-switching promotes interactional intimacy, clarifies message qualification, and ensures psychological comfort in non-formal interactions.

In-Group Signaling and Peer Solidarity

Code-switching operates as an active mechanism for in-group signaling, functioning as a social filter that establishes boundaries between peer groups and outside generations. Competence in navigating hybrid expressions signals shared cultural references and digital fluency. Dian Agustin elaborated: "Ngobrol pake bahasa campuran itu kayak cara kita buat nandain kalau kita tuh satu circle pi. Kalau aku pake istilah kayak 'bestie' atau 'spill' ke temen rumah, terus mereka nyambung, rasanya tuh kayak kita punya ikatan yang kuat aja sebagai sesama anak muda. Itu bikin kita ngerasa lebih solid dan nggak ada jarak..."

Using shared colloquial markers (*bestie*, *spill*) creates mutual alignment and dissolves social distance among peers. As demonstrated by Rosdiana [42], code-switching within social networks generates symbolic inclusiveness and reinforces mutual belonging, effectively constructing an exclusive yet cohesive peer community.

Symbolic Meaning: Construction of Hybrid Identity

Symbolically, code-switching represents the negotiation of a layered, fluid identity that synthesizes regional heritage with national modernity. Cirebonese Javanese functions as an anchor representing familial origins and local rootedness (*wong dewek*), while Jakarta slang reflects openness to global information and urban youth culture. Annisa articulated this balance: "Menurut aku fi, campur-campur bahasa itu nunjukkin kalau kita tuh nggak mau ketinggalan zaman tapi nggak mau lupa asal-usul juga. Aku tetep pake bahasa Cirebon karena itu identitas aku sebagai wong kene, tapi dengan nyelipin kata kayak 'lowkey' atau 'worth it'... identitas aku tuh kayak 'Cirebon Modern' gitu fi, tetep lokal tapi gayanya dapet."

This syncretic practice illustrates that local identity in the digital era is dynamic rather than static. Rather than abandoning their heritage language, adolescents recontextualize it through contemporary vocabulary, constructing an empowered, cosmopolitan self-concept. As observed by Maharani et al. [43], the expansion of digital lexicons enables young speakers to project grounded yet contemporary identities in a globalized society.

Cultural Syncretism, Domain Shifts, and Intergenerational Negotiation

The sociolinguistic landscape of Generation Z in Cirebon reflects broader structural transformations in language maintenance, domain distribution, and intergenerational interaction.

Cultural Syncretism and Linguistic Hybridity

The intersection of Cirebonese Javanese and Jakarta slang has fostered an organic linguistic syncretism characterized by hybrid morphological affixation and phonological adaptation. Speakers regularly attach

Cirebonese affixes and emphatic particles to urban or English root words, producing unique hybrid constructions. Dwijaya observed: "Kalau aku kak, seringnya tuh nggak sadar kalau lagi nyampur bahasa. Kadang bilang 'nge-spill-e mengko bae' atau 'mager-pisan'. Itu udah kayak bahasa sehari-hari aja, nggak kerasa kalau itu bahasa Jakarta atau Cirebon lagi, udah nyatu aja gitu. Jadi identitas kita sebagai anak muda Cirebon tuh ya di situ..."

Forms such as *nge-spill-e* (combining the Indonesian/Cirebonese active prefix *nge-*, the English root *spill*, and the Cirebonese possessive/determiner suffix *-e*) and *mager-pisan* (combining the acronym *mager* with the Cirebonese intensifier *pisan*) reflect sophisticated grammatical integration. This demonstrates that youth are not merely passive consumers of urban culture, but active linguistic agents who reshape their heritage language to maintain its communicative vitality [44].

Domain Redistribution

Linguistic hybridization is accompanied by a functional redistribution across communicative domains. While Cirebonese Javanese remains dominant in domestic and traditional spheres, Jakarta slang and digital loanwords increasingly dominate peer interaction and digital communication. Siti Aidah explained: "Kalau di rumah sih pi, saya nggak berani pake bahasa macem-macem, tetep pake bahasa Cirebon biasa karena ngomong sama bapak atau ibu. Tapi kalau udah di sekolah atau lagi hangout bareng temen, rasanya aneh kalau nggak nyelipin bahasa gaul Jakarta. Apalagi di sosmed, hampir nggak pernah pake bahasa Cirebon murni..."

This domain specialization demonstrates that while public and digital spheres are increasingly permeated by urban slang, the domestic sphere functions as a protected domain for heritage language transmission. This finding aligns with Yana and Dwi Nova [45] and Handayani [46], who argue that contemporary youth maintain functional bilingualism by separating registers across social spaces.

Intergenerational Tension and Communicative Negotiation

The emergence of hybrid language occasionally creates communicative friction with older generations (Generation X and Baby Boomers), who may find modern slang unintelligible or lacking in traditional deference. In response, Generation Z adolescents demonstrate sociolinguistic competence by actively negotiating communicative codes within domestic environments. Hanifah described her accommodation strategy: "Sering banget pi, kalau lagi di rumah terus keceplosan bilang 'worth it', atau 'healing', orang tua saya langsung nanya 'apa itu maksudnya?'... Di situ saya harus negosiasi, jadi saya jelasin pelan-pelan pake bahasa Cirebon murni biar mereka nggak salah paham. Jadi kalau di depan orang tua, saya bener-bener ngerem bahasa gaulnya biar nggak ada ketegangan dan tetep dianggap sopan sebagai anak."

Adolescents manage intergenerational tension by practicing linguistic "braking" (*ngerem*), translating borrowed concepts back into Cirebonese Javanese, and adopting respectful intonations. As Khoyriyah et al. [47] note, navigating intergenerational discourse requires sociolinguistic awareness and mutual accommodation. This adaptive behavior confirms that Generation Z in Cirebon does not abandon traditional cultural ethics; rather, they act as sociolinguistic bridges between regional heritage and modern digital society.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the linguistic forms, interactional patterns, influencing factors, and socio-cultural meanings of code-switching between Cirebonese Javanese and Jakarta slang among Generation Z adolescents in Suranenggala, Gunung Jati, Plered, and Kapetakan, Cirebon Regency. The findings demonstrate that code-switching is not an arbitrary linguistic mixture or a marker of declining mother-tongue proficiency. Rather, it operates as a structured, rule-governed communicative strategy. Structurally, language alternation manifests in inter-sentential, intra-sentential, and tag-switching forms, which are systematically deployed across solidarity, situational, and metaphorical interactional patterns to manage social relationships, adjust to conversational contexts, and intensify expressive stances.

The practice of code-switching is driven by an interplay of participant dynamics (age hierarchy, social distance, and familiarity), pervasive digital exposure via social media platforms, situational and topical contexts, and psychological motivations linked to social prestige and identity projection. Functionally, incorporating Jakarta slang and English borrowings provides communicative shortcuts for complex emotional and psychological expressions, while simultaneously functioning as an in-group filter that establishes peer solidarity. Symbolically, code alternation enables young speakers to negotiate a layered "Modern Cirebonese" (Wong Cirebon Modern) identity—grounded in regional heritage yet actively participating in contemporary national youth culture.

Crucially, the influx of urban slang does not signify the direct displacement of Cirebonese Javanese. Instead, Generation Z speakers engage in functional domain redistribution and linguistic syncretism, combining local grammatical affixes and intonations with modern roots. Cirebonese Javanese remains firmly anchored in domestic environments, traditional customs, and respectful intergenerational communication, whereas Jakarta slang dominates informal peer interactions and digital spaces. When intergenerational tensions arise due to vocabulary gaps, adolescents actively employ sociolinguistic accommodation—suppressing slang and translating concepts into

polite local registers—to maintain cultural ethics (unggah-ungguh) and familial harmony. Generation Z in Cirebon thus exhibits sophisticated sociolinguistic competence, successfully serving as a bridge between local cultural preservation and digital modernity.

Despite offering a comprehensive analysis of youth multilingualism in Cirebon, this study is limited by its qualitative focus on four specific subdistricts, meaning the findings may not capture the full dialectal diversity of other regions. Additionally, the rapid pace of digital culture introduces linguistic trends that evolve continuously. Future research should expand the geographical and demographic scope by incorporating cross-regional comparative analyses, longitudinal intergenerational tracking, and mixed-method sociolinguistic assessments to further evaluate the long-term vitality and sustainability of local heritage languages in the digital era.

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