

CODE MIXING IN WEBTOON COMIC *SOEKIRMAN: RAMADHAN DI KAMPUNG HALAMAN* AS A FORM OF JAVANESE LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE

Yashinta Farahsani^{1*}, Sri Ani Puji Setiawati²

^{1, 2}Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta

yashinta.tirta@gmail.com

Abstract

The increasing dominance of national and global languages has raised concerns about the maintenance of regional languages in multilingual societies. In response to these challenges, digital media have emerged as alternative spaces for preserving local linguistic identities. One such medium is Webtoon, a digital comic platform that enables the representation of regional languages within contemporary online communication. This study investigates code mixing in the Webtoon comic *Soekirman: Ramadhan di Kampung Halaman* and examines its role in maintaining the Javanese language in a digital environment. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, the study analyzed utterances containing code-mixing phenomena involving Javanese, Indonesian, and English. The data were collected through observation and documentation techniques. The data were analyzed based on the sociolinguistic concept of code mixing (Bokamba, 1988; Muysken, 2000), while the classification of code-mixing forms followed Suwito's (1996) framework developed for the Indonesian linguistic context. The interpretation of the findings was subsequently informed by Fishman's (1991) theory of language maintenance. The findings revealed 37 instances of code mixing categorized into seven forms: basic words, affixed words, compound words, phrases, basters, reduplication, and clauses. Among these categories, basic-word code mixing was the most dominant form. The findings further demonstrate that code mixing functions not only as a communicative strategy but also as a mechanism for preserving Javanese linguistic visibility, cultural identity, and local expressions within contemporary digital discourse. The study concludes that Webtoon serves as a new domain for language maintenance by facilitating the continued use and transmission of Javanese linguistic elements to wider audiences. These findings contribute to sociolinguistic discussions on multilingual communication, digital media, and regional language preservation in the digital era.

Keywords: code mixing; digital media; Javanese language; language maintenance; Webtoon

INTRODUCTION

Language is not merely a means of communication but also an important marker of cultural identity, collective memory, and social belonging. Across the world, many regional and minority languages are currently facing challenges due to globalization, urbanization, and the increasing dominance of national and international languages. Crystal (2000) argues that languages may gradually lose their vitality when younger generations no longer perceive them as relevant in contemporary social domains. In the digital era, these challenges have become increasingly complex because communication practices are rapidly shifting toward online and multimedia environments. However, Androutsopoulos (2015) argues that digital platforms may function as important spaces for language use, documentation, and cultural transmission, thereby supporting language maintenance and revitalization among younger generations.

Indonesia is one of the most linguistically diverse countries in the world, with hundreds of regional languages spoken across its archipelago. Among these languages, Javanese remains the regional language with the largest number of speakers. Asrif (2010) states that Javanese functions not only as a medium of communication but also as a symbol of regional identity and cultural heritage. Nevertheless, despite its large speaker population, the use of Javanese has gradually declined, particularly among younger generations who increasingly prefer Indonesian or foreign languages in their daily interactions (Farahsani et al., 2018). This tendency reflects broader sociolinguistic changes occurring in multilingual societies, where language choice is often influenced by social prestige, educational opportunities, and patterns of communication (Holmes & Wilson, 2017).

The issue of language maintenance has long been a central concern in sociolinguistic studies. Fishman (1965) defines language maintenance as the continued use of a language by a speech community despite pressures that may encourage language shift. Later, Fishman (1991) emphasizes that language maintenance depends not only on intergenerational transmission but also on the availability of social domains in which the language can be actively used. Similarly, Kridalaksana (2008) argues that language maintenance involves conscious efforts to preserve and develop a language through education, literature, media, and other cultural activities. Consequently, maintaining regional languages requires adaptation to contemporary communication environments, including digital media platforms that are widely used by younger generations.

Recent studies further indicate that the vitality of Javanese cannot be taken for granted, even though it remains one of the most widely spoken regional languages in Indonesia. Changes in intergenerational transmission, language attitudes, and patterns of everyday communication have contributed to the reduced use of Javanese among younger speakers. Therefore, language maintenance requires not only the preservation of traditional domains such as family and community interaction but also the expansion of Javanese into contemporary communication spaces. Digital media can provide alternative

domains where regional languages remain visible, accessible, and meaningful to younger generations (Afdholi & Hidayat, 2024; Wulandari et al., 2025).

The role of digital media in supporting regional language visibility has become increasingly important in multilingual societies. Online platforms allow local languages to circulate beyond conventional community boundaries and enable speakers or creators to represent linguistic identities through familiar digital formats (Androutsopoulos, 2014; Jones & Uribe-Jongbloed, 2013). For Javanese, digital storytelling platforms such as Webtoon may offer an informal space where local expressions, cultural values, and multilingual practices can be presented to wider audiences. Thus, Javanese elements in Webtoon dialogues should be understood not merely as stylistic features but also as part of broader efforts to sustain regional language visibility in contemporary digital culture.

In multilingual digital environments, language users often draw on different linguistic resources to negotiate identity, social relationships, and communicative goals (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2021). Social media, online communities, and digital storytelling applications have therefore become important spaces where multilingual practices are increasingly visible. In this context, digital media may contribute not only to language shift but also to language maintenance by creating new opportunities for local languages to remain present in everyday communication.

One digital platform that has gained significant popularity among young people is Webtoon. Originally developed in South Korea, Webtoon enables creators from different countries to publish digital comics and reach broad audiences through smartphones and online applications. In Indonesia, Webtoon has become one of the most popular digital comic platforms, particularly among teenagers and young adults. Interestingly, several Indonesian Webtoon comics incorporate regional languages alongside Indonesian, creating multilingual interactions that reflect local cultural identities. This phenomenon demonstrates that digital comics can function not only as entertainment media but also as spaces where regional languages continue to be represented and transmitted to wider audiences.

The incorporation of multiple languages in Webtoon comics is closely related to the sociolinguistic phenomenon of code mixing. Bokamba (1988) defines code mixing as the embedding of linguistic elements such as words, phrases, or clauses from one language into another language within a communicative event. Similarly, Muysken (2000) explains that code mixing reflects the dynamic interaction of multiple linguistic systems in bilingual and multilingual communication. Previous studies have shown that code mixing is commonly found in digital communication, social media content, and digital comics because it allows speakers to express identity, solidarity, cultural affiliation, and communicative efficiency (Hoffman, 1991).

Several studies have examined code mixing and regional language representation in digital media. Farahsani et al. (2018) investigated Javanese language maintenance in the Webtoon comic *Jamu Gendong Mbok De* and found that the insertion of Javanese expressions into Indonesian dialogues helped represent local linguistic identity.

Mayangseto and Setyowati (2023) analyzed code mixing in the Webtoon comic *WEE!!* and identified various forms of bilingual language use in digital comic dialogues. In addition, Afdholy and Hidayat (2024) and Wulandari et al. (2025) show that digital literature and digital learning platforms can support Javanese language engagement among young users.

Although these studies demonstrate that digital media can represent multilingual practices and support local-language learning, they mainly focus on identifying forms of code mixing, developing digital learning materials, or describing the presence of local languages. Less attention has been given to how specific code-mixing forms contribute to the visibility of Javanese as part of language maintenance efforts in digital narratives. This gap is important because code mixing may function not only as a linguistic feature but also as a means of sustaining regional linguistic identity in contemporary media.

To address this gap, the present study investigates code mixing in the Webtoon comic *Soekirman: Ramadhan di Kampung Halaman*. It identifies the forms of code mixing based on Suwito's (1996) classification and interprets how these forms support the visibility and representation of Javanese in digital media. By connecting code-mixing analysis with language maintenance perspectives, this study contributes to sociolinguistic discussions on regional language preservation in the digital era.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is grounded in sociolinguistic perspectives on code mixing and regional language maintenance in digital communication. The review focuses on four areas: the concept and classification of code mixing, language maintenance, digital media as a contemporary domain of language use, and previous studies that establish the research gap.

Code Mixing

Code mixing refers to the use of linguistic elements from different languages within a single utterance, sentence, or discourse. Bokamba (1988) defines it as the embedding of words, phrases, clauses, or other linguistic units from one language into another, while Muysken (2000) explains that code mixing reflects the interaction of multiple linguistic systems in bilingual speech. In multilingual communities, this practice is not only structural but also social, since speakers may use it to express identity, solidarity, cultural affiliation, and communicative efficiency (Hoffman, 1991; Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2021).

Muysken (2000) classifies code mixing into insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalization. However, this study adopts Suwito's (1996) classification because it is more suitable for identifying linguistic forms in the Indonesian context. Suwito categorizes code mixing into words, phrases, basters, reduplication, idioms, and clauses. This framework is used to classify the forms of code mixing found in the Webtoon comic *Soekirman: Ramadhan di Kampung Halaman*.

Language Maintenance

Language maintenance refers to the continued use of a language by a speech community despite pressures that may encourage language shift (Fishman, 1965). Fishman (1991) emphasizes that language maintenance depends on intergenerational transmission and the availability of social domains in which the language can be actively used. Similarly, Kridalaksana (2008) views language maintenance as a deliberate effort to preserve and develop a language through education, literature, media, and cultural activities.

In multilingual societies, language maintenance is closely connected to identity and domain expansion. Holmes and Wilson (2017) argue that language choice reflects social identity, group membership, and cultural affiliation, while Crystal (2000) stresses that languages are more likely to survive when they remain visible and relevant in contemporary life. Recent studies on Javanese also show that technology-based learning and digital literature can increase young people's engagement with Javanese and support its continued presence in contemporary communication (Afdholy & Hidayat, 2024; Wulandari et al., 2025). For this reason, maintenance efforts should include digital domains where younger generations increasingly communicate and consume cultural content.

Digital Media and Language Maintenance

Digital media has transformed patterns of communication and created new spaces for multilingual language practices. Although digital communication is often associated with the dominance of major languages, it can also support regional language visibility by enabling speakers to create, share, and consume local-language content. Androutsopoulos (2014) argues that media should be understood as part of sociolinguistic change because it shapes language practices, ideologies, and minority-language visibility. Similarly, Androutsopoulos (2015) shows that digital platforms provide important spaces for multilingual speakers to negotiate identity and cultural meaning through language choice.

Within Fishman's (1991) framework, digital platforms may be understood as contemporary domains where regional languages remain visible and meaningful. Jones and Uribe-Jongbloed (2013) emphasize that social media and creative digital industries offer new opportunities for minority and regional languages to circulate beyond traditional community settings. For younger generations, platforms such as social media, online communities, and digital storytelling applications are part of everyday communication. The presence of regional languages in these spaces therefore helps sustain familiarity with local vocabulary, expressions, and cultural values.

Webtoon is relevant to this discussion because it combines digital storytelling, visual communication, and informal dialogue. Afdholy and Hidayat (2024) show that Javanese digital literature can increase teenagers' interest in using Javanese and can function as supplementary material for local-language learning. In Indonesia, Webtoon comics that incorporate regional languages alongside Indonesian allow local expressions to circulate

among broad digital audiences. Thus, Webtoon can function not only as entertainment but also as an informal space where Javanese expressions remain visible within contemporary multilingual communication.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design. Qualitative research is appropriate for investigating linguistic phenomena in their natural contexts and providing detailed descriptions of language use (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Moleong, 2017). The study aimed to identify the forms of code mixing found in the Webtoon comic *Soekirman: Ramadhan di Kampung Halaman* and to analyze their contribution to Javanese language maintenance in a contemporary digital environment.

The primary data source of this study was the Webtoon comic *Soekirman: Ramadhan di Kampung Halaman* (Yogadanu, & Moza, 2016). The data consisted of utterances containing code-mixing phenomena involving Javanese, Indonesian, and English linguistic elements. A total of 37 instances of code mixing were identified and analyzed in this study. The units of analysis included basic words, affixed words, compound words, phrases, basters, reduplication, and clauses appearing in the dialogues among the comic characters.

The data were collected using the observational method, specifically the *Simak Bebas Libat Cakap* (SBLC) technique because the researcher did not participate directly in the communication process but observed and documented linguistic data from the comic (Sudaryanto; 1993). The data collection process consisted of several stages. First, the researcher read all episodes of the comic intensively to gain a comprehensive understanding of the storyline and linguistic context. Second, utterances containing code-mixing phenomena were identified and recorded. Third, the selected data were classified according to their linguistic forms. Finally, all identified data were documented and organized for further analysis.

The data were analyzed using the code-mixing classification proposed by Suwito (1996), which categorizes code mixing into words, phrases, basters, reduplication, idioms, and clauses. The analysis was conducted through several stages, namely data reduction, coding, classification, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. After the relevant data had been selected, they were classified into categories of code mixing according to their linguistic forms. Each datum was subsequently interpreted within its conversational context and analyzed using sociolinguistic perspectives on code mixing (Bokamba, 1988; Muysken, 2000) and language maintenance (Fishman, 1965, 1991; Kridalaksana, 2008). The findings were then described and discussed to explain how code-mixing practices contribute to the maintenance of the Javanese language in digital media.

To ensure the credibility of the findings, theoretical triangulation was employed by comparing the identified data with concepts and classifications proposed in previous studies on code mixing and language maintenance. In addition, all data were reviewed repeatedly to ensure consistency in coding, classification, and interpretation. This procedure was intended to enhance the trustworthiness and dependability of the analysis.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents and discusses the findings of the study concerning the forms of code mixing identified in the Webtoon comic *Soekirman: Ramadhan di Kampung Halaman*. The analysis focuses not only on the linguistic forms of code mixing but also on their contribution to Javanese language maintenance within a contemporary digital environment. Drawing on Suwito's (1996) classification of code mixing and sociolinguistic perspectives on language maintenance proposed by Fishman (1965, 1991), the findings are interpreted to explain how multilingual language practices function as a means of preserving local linguistic identity. The discussion begins with an overview of the distribution of code-mixing forms and is followed by a detailed examination of lexical, phrasal, and clausal forms of code mixing as well as their role in maintaining the visibility and vitality of the Javanese language in digital media.

Distribution of Code-Mixing Forms in the Webtoon Comic

A total of 37 instances of code mixing were identified in the Webtoon comic *Soekirman: Ramadhan di Kampung Halaman*. Based on Suwito's (1996) classification, the data were categorized into seven forms: basic words, affixed words, compound words, phrases, basters, reduplication, and clauses. Table 1 presents the frequency and percentage of each code-mixing form identified in the comic, while Figure 1 illustrates their overall distribution.

Table 1. Distribution of Code-Mixing Forms in the Webtoon Comic *Soekirman: Ramadhan di Kampung Halaman*

No.	Code-Mixing Form	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Basic Words	17	45.95
2	Affixed Words	5	13.51
3	Compound Words	1	2.70
4	Phrases	6	16.22
5	Basters	1	2.70
6	Reduplication	3	8.11
7	Clauses	4	10.81
Total		37	100.00

As shown in Table 1, code mixing in the form of basic words was the most dominant category, accounting for 45.95% of the total data. This was followed by phrases (16.22%), affixed words (13.51%), clauses (10.81%), and reduplication (8.11%). In contrast, compound words and basters were the least frequent forms, each representing only 2.70% of the identified instances. These findings indicate that lexical-level code mixing occurs more frequently than phrase- and clause-level mixing in the comic.

The predominance of basic-word insertions suggests that lexical items are the most accessible linguistic resources for bilingual speakers. Unlike phrases or clauses, individual words can be incorporated into another language with minimal grammatical adjustment.

This finding is consistent with Muysken's (2000) concept of insertional code mixing, in which speakers embed lexical elements from one language into the grammatical structure of another language. The frequent use of lexical insertions reflects the flexibility of bilingual speakers in drawing upon linguistic resources from different languages during communication.

Furthermore, the dominance of lexical forms may indicate that vocabulary is one of the most easily maintained components of a language in multilingual contexts. Several Javanese lexical items identified in the comic, such as *apik*, *suwun*, and *manut*, continue to be used even when the surrounding sentence is predominantly Indonesian. This pattern demonstrates that bilingual speakers do not completely abandon their local language but instead preserve culturally meaningful vocabulary within broader multilingual interactions. According to Fishman (1991), language maintenance depends on the continued use of linguistic elements across various communication domains. Therefore, the recurrent appearance of Javanese lexical items in the comic may be interpreted as a manifestation of language maintenance within a digital environment.

In addition to lexical forms, phrase- and clause-level code mixing also appeared in the data, although with lower frequencies. Despite their limited occurrence, these forms are sociolinguistically significant because they preserve not only vocabulary, but also cultural expressions, speech patterns, and interactional norms associated with the Javanese language. For example, the use of Javanese phrases and clauses reflects local cultural knowledge and traditional patterns of communication that cannot always be fully represented through individual lexical items alone.

Overall, the distribution of code-mixing forms demonstrates that multilingual language practices are systematically represented in the Webtoon comic *Soekirman: Ramadhan di Kampung Halaman*. The predominance of lexical insertions, combined with the presence of phrase- and clause-level mixing, suggests that code mixing functions not only as a communicative strategy but also as a means of maintaining Javanese linguistic and cultural identity in contemporary digital media. The following sections discuss each category of code mixing in greater detail and examine its contribution to Javanese language maintenance.

Lexical Code Mixing as a Strategy for Javanese Language Maintenance

The findings reveal that lexical code mixing constitutes the most dominant category of code mixing in the Webtoon comic *Soekirman: Ramadhan di Kampung Halaman*. This category includes basic words, affixed words, compound words, and reduplicated forms, which together account for the majority of the identified data. The predominance of lexical forms indicates that vocabulary is the most frequently preserved linguistic component in multilingual communication. According to Muysken (2000), lexical insertions represent one of the most common manifestations of code mixing because individual lexical items can be incorporated into another language with minimal grammatical modification. In the context of this study, the frequent use of Javanese lexical elements suggests that code

mixing serves not only as a communicative strategy but also as a mechanism for maintaining the visibility of the Javanese language within a contemporary digital environment. The following sections discuss each lexical category in greater detail and examine its contribution to language maintenance.

Basic Words

Code mixing in the form of basic words was found to be the most dominant category in the Webtoon comic *Soekirman: Ramadhan di Kampung Halaman*, accounting for 17 out of the 37 identified instances. This finding indicates that lexical insertions are the most frequently employed code-mixing strategy in the comic. According to Suwito (1996), code mixing in the form of basic words occurs when a single lexical item from one language is inserted into an utterance structured in another language. The dominance of this category suggests that vocabulary is the most accessible linguistic resource for bilingual speakers because individual words can be incorporated into another language with minimal grammatical adjustment.

Several Javanese lexical items were inserted into predominantly Indonesian dialogues, including *apik*, *suwun*, and *manut*, such as presented in the following datum.

Episode 4

Dirun: “Gimana Man acaranya? Asik to?”

Soekirman: “Nyenengin Dir. *Apik*.”

The word *apik* (good or excellent) is a Javanese lexical item inserted into an Indonesian utterance. Although the Indonesian equivalent *bagus* could have been used, the speaker intentionally retains the Javanese expression. Linguistically, this represents code mixing in the form of a basic word because a single lexical item from Javanese is embedded within an Indonesian sentence structure. Sociolinguistically, the use of *apik* reflects the speaker’s cultural identity and linguistic background. As Holmes and Wilson (2017) argue, language choice often functions as a marker of social identity and group affiliation. Therefore, the insertion of *apik* allows the speaker to maintain a connection with Javanese culture while communicating in a multilingual context.

A similar pattern can be observed in the use of the words *suwun* (thanks) and *manut* (ok), which appear in Indonesian-language dialogues despite the availability of equivalent Indonesian expressions. The repeated use of these lexical items suggests that the characters do not merely alternate languages for communicative convenience but also preserve culturally meaningful vocabulary associated with their local identity. Such lexical choices enable Javanese expressions to remain visible within contemporary digital communication.

The frequent occurrence of Javanese basic words in the comic supports Fishman’s (1991) argument that language maintenance depends on the continued use of linguistic elements across different communication domains. In this case, Webtoon functions as a

contemporary digital domain where Javanese vocabulary remains actively used and represented. Readers are repeatedly exposed to lexical items such as *apik*, *suwun*, and *manut*, which increases familiarity with these expressions and contributes to the preservation of Javanese linguistic knowledge among digital audiences.

In addition to Javanese lexical insertions, the comic also contains Indonesian and English words embedded within Javanese or Indonesian utterances. Examples include *jempot* (pick up), *oke* (ok), *yuk* (let's go), *bro*, and *legend*. These findings demonstrate the multilingual nature of the comic and reflect the linguistic flexibility of bilingual speakers in contemporary communication. However, the prominence of Javanese lexical items remains particularly significant because these expressions serve as markers of local identity and cultural continuity.

Overall, the dominance of basic-word code mixing indicates that lexical items constitute one of the most resilient components of language maintenance. Through the repeated insertion of Javanese vocabulary into multilingual dialogues, the comic not only reflects everyday bilingual communication but also contributes to maintaining the visibility and vitality of the Javanese language in a contemporary digital environment.

Affixed Words and Compound Words

In addition to basic words, the data also revealed instances of code mixing in the form of affixed words and compound words. Five instances of affixed words and one instance of a compound word were identified in the Webtoon comic *Soekirman: Ramadhan di Kampung Halaman*. Although less frequent than basic-word insertions, these forms provide valuable insights into the interaction between different linguistic systems within multilingual communication.

One example of code mixing involving an affixed word is the use of *ridernya* in the following excerpt.

Episode 10

"Buat para ridernya jangan lupa pakai helm ya!"

The word *ridernya* consists of the English lexical item *rider* combined with the Indonesian suffix *-nya*. According to Suwito (1996), this phenomenon represents code mixing because linguistic elements from two different languages are integrated into a single lexical unit. The formation of *ridernya* demonstrates how bilingual speakers adapt foreign lexical items to Indonesian grammatical structures, thereby facilitating communication while maintaining familiarity with globally recognized terms.

Another example is *gebyuran*, which derives from the Javanese lexical item *gebyur* (splash) combined with the Indonesian suffix *-an*. The incorporation of Indonesian affixation into a Javanese lexical base illustrates the dynamic interaction between local and national languages. Such linguistic forms reflect speakers' ability to negotiate multiple

linguistic resources simultaneously, a characteristic commonly observed in multilingual communities (Bokamba, 1988).

The data also include the compound expression *street food*, which combines two English lexical items and is inserted into an Indonesian discourse context. Although an Indonesian equivalent exists, the use of *street food* reflects the influence of globalization and contemporary popular culture on language practices. According to Muysken (2000), such lexical insertions demonstrate how speakers draw upon linguistic resources from different languages to achieve communicative efficiency and social relevance.

From the perspective of language maintenance, the occurrence of affixed words and compound words highlights the adaptability of local languages within multilingual communication. Rather than replacing Javanese entirely, speakers continue to incorporate Javanese lexical elements into evolving linguistic structures. This finding suggests that language maintenance does not necessarily involve preserving a language in an unchanged form; instead, it may occur through processes of adaptation and integration that allow local linguistic elements to remain functional in contemporary communication settings.

Furthermore, the presence of affixed words and compound words indicates that code mixing extends beyond the insertion of isolated lexical items. These forms demonstrate more complex interactions between linguistic systems, reflecting the creativity and flexibility of bilingual speakers. Through such practices, local linguistic elements remain visible within digital discourse, thereby contributing to the continued presence of Javanese language and culture in contemporary media.

Overall, the findings suggest that affixed words and compound words function as manifestations of multilingual competence and linguistic adaptation. Although less frequent than basic-word insertions, these forms contribute to language maintenance by enabling local linguistic elements to coexist with national and global languages within the digital communication practices represented in the comic.

Reduplicated Forms

Another form of lexical code mixing identified in the data is reduplication. A total of three instances of reduplicated forms were found in the Webtoon comic *Soekirman: Ramadhan di Kampung Halaman*. According to Suwito (1996), reduplication refers to the repetition of a lexical item functioning as a single linguistic unit. In multilingual discourse, reduplicated forms may be incorporated into utterances dominated by another language, reflecting the interaction of different linguistic systems within a single communicative event.

One example identified in the comic is the expression *pit-pitan* (riding a bicycle). The term derives from the Javanese word *pit* (bicycle) and, through reduplication, refers to the activity of cycling. Although Indonesian provides comparable expressions such as *bersepeda* or *sepedaan*, the use of *pit-pitan* retains cultural nuances that are closely associated with everyday Javanese life and local patterns of expression. The choice of this expression

therefore reflects the characters' linguistic background and reinforces the cultural authenticity of the narrative.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, the occurrence of reduplicated forms demonstrates how regional linguistic expressions continue to be represented within multilingual digital communication. Rather than replacing Javanese expressions with their Indonesian equivalents, the comic retains culturally specific lexical forms that reflect local identity. As Holmes & Wilson (2017) argue, language choice often serves as a marker of social identity and cultural affiliation. In this context, the use of *pit-pitan* contributes to the representation and visibility of Javanese linguistic features in the Webtoon narrative.

The presence of reduplicated forms also illustrates how digital comics can provide opportunities for regional language expressions to remain visible in contemporary communication. Repeated exposure to culturally specific expressions such as *pit-pitan* may increase readers' familiarity with Javanese vocabulary and cultural concepts, thereby supporting the transmission of local linguistic knowledge within digital environments. However, these findings should not be interpreted as direct evidence of language maintenance in the comprehensive sociolinguistic sense proposed by Fishman (1991). Fishman emphasizes that language maintenance involves broader processes, including intergenerational transmission, community language use, institutional support, and the continued use of the language across multiple social domains. The present findings therefore indicate that Webtoon serves as a contemporary digital domain that enhances the visibility and representation of Javanese linguistic elements, which may contribute to broader efforts toward language maintenance.

Overall, although reduplicated forms occur less frequently than other types of lexical code mixing, they play an important role in representing culturally embedded linguistic expressions within the comic. Their presence enriches the cultural authenticity of the narrative while demonstrating how digital media can support the continued visibility and representation of regional languages in multilingual communication. Consequently, reduplicated forms should be understood as contributing to the representation and visibility of Javanese in digital discourse rather than as direct evidence of language maintenance.

Phrase and Clause Mixing as Markers of Cultural Identity

In addition to lexical forms, the findings reveal instances of code mixing at the phrase and clause levels. Although these forms occur less frequently than lexical insertions, they represent more complex bilingual constructions because they involve combinations of lexical items or complete grammatical structures rather than isolated words. According to Muysken (2000), phrase- and clause-level code mixing reflects speakers' ability to integrate linguistic resources from different languages within a single discourse while maintaining communicative coherence. Similarly, Hoffman (1991) argues that larger code-mixed units often convey social, cultural, and pragmatic meanings that cannot always be expressed

through single lexical insertions. These perspectives provide the theoretical basis for interpreting the occurrence of phrase- and clause-level code mixing in the present study.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, phrase-level and clause-level code mixing extends beyond structural variation. Wardhaugh & Fuller (2021) explain that multilingual speakers frequently employ longer linguistic units to express cultural affiliation, interpersonal relationships, and social identity. Therefore, the occurrence of phrase and clause mixing in digital narratives may reflect not only bilingual competence but also the representation of culturally meaningful expressions within multilingual communication. In the context of this study, these forms illustrate how Javanese linguistic elements continue to appear alongside Indonesian and English in the Webtoon comic, thereby enhancing their visibility within contemporary digital discourse.

The following sections discuss phrase-level and clause-level code mixing in greater detail and examine how these linguistic forms contribute to the representation of Javanese cultural identity within the Webtoon narrative.

Phrase-Level Mixing

The analysis identified six instances of phrase-level code mixing in the Webtoon comic. According to Suwito (1996), phrase-level code mixing occurs when a phrase from one language is embedded into an utterance structured in another language. Unlike basic-word insertions, phrases consist of two or more lexical items functioning as a single grammatical unit, allowing speakers to convey more complete cultural and contextual meanings. Muysken (2000) further notes that phrase-level insertions frequently occur in multilingual discourse because they enable speakers to preserve culturally specific expressions while maintaining the grammatical framework of another language.

Several examples of phrase-level code mixing found in the comic include *ya wis*, *ajian agawe mitulungi lan wicaksono*, *let's go*, and *by the way*. Among these expressions, *ya wis* is particularly significant because it represents a commonly used Javanese phrase expressing acceptance or agreement. Although Indonesian provides an equivalent expression *ya sudah* (which means it is what it is), the use of *ya wis* reflects the characters' cultural background and contributes to the authenticity of the dialogue. Likewise, the expression *ajian agawe mitulungi lan wicaksono* carries philosophical and cultural meanings deeply rooted in Javanese traditions, illustrating how phrase-level code mixing may preserve culturally specific expressions within a multilingual narrative.

These findings are consistent with previous studies highlighting the role of code mixing in representing local cultural identity within digital media. Farahsani et al. (2018), for example, reported that the incorporation of Javanese expressions in Webtoon dialogues strengthened the representation of local linguistic identity, while Mayangseto & Setyowati (2023) found that phrase-level code mixing contributed to the naturalness of multilingual interactions in digital comics. Similar to these studies, the present findings indicate that phrase-level code mixing functions as a linguistic resource for representing culturally embedded expressions within contemporary digital communication.

Rather than demonstrating language maintenance in Fishman's (1991) comprehensive sociolinguistic sense, the present findings suggest that phrase-level code mixing enhances the visibility and representation of Javanese cultural expressions within the Webtoon narrative. The repeated appearance of these phrases may increase readers' familiarity with culturally specific linguistic forms and contribute to their continued presence in contemporary digital communication.

Clause-Level Mixing

The study identified four instances of clause-level code mixing. According to Suwito (1996), clause-level code mixing involves the insertion of a complete clause from one language into discourse predominantly structured in another language. Compared with lexical or phrase-level insertions, clause-level mixing represents a more complex form of bilingual communication because it preserves complete grammatical structures and culturally specific interactional patterns (Muysken, 2000).

One example identified in the comic is the expression *Pripun kabare?* (How are you?). This clause represents a culturally appropriate greeting commonly used in Javanese-speaking communities. Rather than merely conveying information, the expression reflects politeness norms and interpersonal values associated with Javanese culture. Holmes & Wilson (2017) argue that language varieties frequently encode social relationships and cultural expectations through conventionalized expressions such as greetings, requests, and forms of address. Consequently, the use of *Pripun kabare?* contributes to representing culturally specific interactional practices within the comic.

The findings also align with previous sociolinguistic studies emphasizing that multilingual communication frequently incorporates complete clauses to reinforce cultural identity and interpersonal solidarity (Hoffman, 1991; Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2021). In digital narratives such as Webtoon, clause-level code mixing therefore serves not only as a bilingual communication strategy but also as a means of presenting authentic cultural interaction.

Nevertheless, the occurrence of complete Javanese clauses should not be interpreted as direct evidence of language maintenance in Fishman's (1991) framework. Instead, these clauses demonstrate that Webtoon provides a contemporary digital space in which Javanese linguistic expressions remain visible and represented. Such visibility may support broader efforts to sustain regional language awareness, although the comprehensive process of language maintenance also requires intergenerational transmission, community language use, institutional support, and the continued use of the language across multiple social domains.

The findings from both phrase-level and clause-level code mixing indicate that multilingual practices in the Webtoon comic contribute primarily to the representation and visibility of Javanese linguistic and cultural expressions within contemporary digital communication. Rather than claiming that the comic itself constitutes evidence of language maintenance, the present study argues that Webtoon functions as a

contemporary digital domain that supports the continued presence of regional linguistic elements and may contribute to broader language maintenance efforts.

The Role of Code Mixing in Enhancing the Visibility of Javanese Language in Digital Media

The findings of this study demonstrate that code mixing in the Webtoon comic *Soekirman: Ramadhan di Kampung Halaman* serves functions that extend beyond bilingual communication. The occurrence of Javanese lexical items, phrases, and clauses throughout the narrative indicates that code mixing operates as a linguistic resource for representing local cultural identity within a contemporary digital environment. Rather than functioning merely as a stylistic feature, the incorporation of Javanese expressions enables culturally specific meanings, values, and social norms to remain present alongside Indonesian and English in multilingual discourse. This finding supports the sociolinguistic view that language choice reflects not only communicative needs but also speakers' cultural affiliation and social identity (Holmes & Wilson, 2017).

The findings also reinforce previous studies suggesting that digital media has become an important domain for multilingual language practices and regional-language visibility. Androutsopoulos (2014) argues that media participate in sociolinguistic change by shaping language practices, ideologies, and minority-language representation, while Androutsopoulos (2015) emphasizes that digital communication allows multilingual speakers to negotiate identity and cultural meaning through language choice. Similarly, Jones and Uribe-Jongbloed (2013) show that social media and creative digital industries create opportunities for minority and regional languages to circulate beyond traditional community settings. In the context of the present study, Webtoon functions as one such digital domain where Javanese linguistic expressions continue to appear within popular digital narratives, thereby increasing their visibility among broader audiences, particularly younger readers who regularly engage with web-based comics.

Although the findings demonstrate the continued representation and visibility of Javanese linguistic elements in digital media, they should not be interpreted as direct evidence of language maintenance in the comprehensive sociolinguistic framework proposed by Fishman (1991). Fishman conceptualizes language maintenance as a long-term social process involving intergenerational transmission, sustained community language use, institutional support, and the continued use of a language across multiple social domains. Since the present study focuses exclusively on linguistic representations in a Webtoon comic, it does not examine these broader sociolinguistic dimensions. Therefore, the findings are more appropriately interpreted as indicating that digital comics can support the visibility and representation of Javanese rather than demonstrating language maintenance itself.

Nevertheless, enhancing language visibility constitutes an important contribution to broader language maintenance efforts. As regional languages become increasingly exposed to the influence of dominant national and global languages, digital media offers

opportunities for culturally meaningful linguistic expressions to remain accessible within everyday communication. This interpretation is supported by studies on Javanese digital media, which show that digital literature and digital learning platforms can increase young people's engagement with Javanese and support its continued use in educational and informal settings (Afdholy & Hidayat, 2024; Wulandari et al., 2025). Through the incorporation of Javanese words, phrases, and clauses, the Webtoon comic introduces readers to regional linguistic forms while preserving the cultural authenticity of the narrative.

Finally, this study contributes to sociolinguistic research by integrating structural analyses of code mixing with discussions of regional language visibility in digital media. While previous studies have primarily focused on identifying the forms and functions of code mixing, the present study demonstrates how different linguistic forms—including words, affixed words, reduplication, phrases, and clauses—collectively contribute to representing Javanese cultural identity in digital storytelling. These findings highlight the potential of Webtoon not only as a medium of entertainment but also as a contemporary digital space that supports the continued visibility of regional languages within multilingual communication.

CONCLUSION

This study examined code mixing in the Webtoon comic *Soekirman: Ramadhan di Kampung Halaman* and its relevance to Javanese language visibility in digital media. The findings identified 37 instances of code mixing classified into seven forms: basic words, affixed words, compound words, phrases, basters, reduplication, and clauses. Basic-word code mixing was the most dominant form, indicating that lexical items are the most accessible and visible linguistic elements in multilingual digital communication.

The use of Javanese words, phrases, and clauses within predominantly Indonesian dialogues shows that code mixing functions not only as a communicative strategy but also as a way to represent local identity and cultural meaning. Through these linguistic choices, the comic helps maintain the visibility of Javanese expressions among digital readers, especially younger audiences familiar with Webtoon as a storytelling platform.

However, the findings should be understood as evidence of language visibility rather than full language maintenance, since broader maintenance requires intergenerational transmission, community use, and institutional support. Future studies may examine other digital platforms to further explore how multilingual practices contribute to regional language preservation in contemporary media.

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