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Language:  
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Su-Hie Ting

Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

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# Preface

*Advertising Language: Secrets of Persuasion* reveals the mileage gained through the strategic use of language in advertising to convince customers to purchase products and services. Emotions can sell, but not facts! Find out what research has unravelled.

This book starts with an analysis of slogans in Chapter 1. Wun-Chiew Pung and Nurin Nisa' Aminuddin uncovered the clever use of the emotional appeal to create anticipation of enjoying fast food, and the logos appeal to highlight speed and quality. From their five-level linguistic analysis of the slogans, they found a formula for writing slogans to engage customers and accentuate the advantages and uniqueness of the fast food products.

In Chapter 2, Fatin Izzati Mohd Izam and Kee-Man Chuah turn their attention to femvertising on Instagram. They found that women empowerment messages in the caption and the brand's stance need to be coupled with the right use of emotive words to sell the product or services. Read on to find out the double standards of combining activism and consumerism, including how some brands hide behind the "go green" façade to boost sales.

Chapter 3 presents Siti Marina Kamil and Alvenna Theay Ritchi's work on code-mixing in a Malaysian social influencer's YouTube videos, Bella Khann from Kuala Lumpur. Let the authors walk you through her videos to find out how she achieves psychological closeness with her viewers through her frequent outer code-mixing between Malay and English, and versatile inner code-mixing – often relying on single words in up to seven Malay varieties!

In Chapter 4, Su-Hie Ting and Siti Sarah Hosen delved into how code-switching is used in online advertisements for identity construction. By comparing advertisements in English and Malay, they show that the need for code-switching is greater in English advertisements to tap into certain identities to increase product appeal, often achieved using single words. Find out how inter-sentential code-switching juxtaposes formality and informality.

Chapter 5 focuses on a less-known type of advertisement. Nadia Husna Yusuf Anthony and Rosnah Hj. Mustafa revealed that public service announcements on mental health rely on the pathos or emotional appeal to create a strong connection with the audience. However, there is a place for logos or the rational appeal in poster-type advertisements and the ethos appeal in video advertisements!

**Professor Dr Su-Hie Ting (Editor)**

# Foreword

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## Code-mixing in a Malaysian Social Influencer's YouTube Videos

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### Introduction

As the Internet has become the most useful tool for communication in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, more and more people have turned to the internet as a main source of communication. Apart from the increase in usage of the Internet for educational and professional purposes, online entertainment media platforms have also seen a spike in its usage. Statista (2022) reported that as of January 2022, YouTube alone has 2.6 billion active monthly users and has gained USD 8.6 billion in ad revenues. As more and more YouTube “celebrities” who are better known as influencers are produced by this social media platform, the spotlights have shifted from singers and actors to YouTube celebrities.

YouTube content creators, called YouTubers who are committed to creating content, get paid really well if their videos are viewed by more people and their channels are subscribed by users. Thus, many people have opted to become paid YouTubers who earn income based on the numbers of views and subscribers they received. The nature of their video content totally lies in the creativity of the creators, as they have the freedom to explore anything that can increase their views. Some actually attract viewers just by their chatty nature while others make million of reviews of various products available in the market. YouTubers like PewDiePie from Sweden (111 million subscribers) and Mr Beast (103 million subscribers) from the United States are just two of the many content creators who became millionaires just by making YouTube videos (Hill, 2022). In Malaysia, the top two individual YouTubers with the most subscriptions are Alyssa Dezek (4.3 million subscribers) who does song covers and Alieff Irfan (4.19 million subscribers) who does pranks (“Top 20 Most Followed”, 2022).

But what makes YouTube videos interesting? Is it because of the creators who are famous, or is it because of the content that they make? Various studies have been done on YouTube as a subject of research and this chapter will add to the list by looking at the use of code-mixing by a famous Malaysian YouTuber, a social influencer, Bella Khann in her videos.

To put it simply, this chapter focuses on the phenomenon of code-mixing by examining the uses and the types of code-mixing as portrayed by Bella Khann. Bella Khan is a YouTube celebrity whom at present has 1.28 million subscribers and whose videos have, more than 92 million views (Bella Khan YouTube Channel, n.d). Bella is also recorded as having a net worth of USD200,000 making her one of the most successful YouTube celebrities in Malaysia. She is chosen because she is among the most active content creator for who would have thousands of views upon upload. (Ahmed Faez, 2020).

## **Code-mixing**

Hammer and Blanc (2000) stated that languages in contact describe a situation where two or more codes are used in interactions between people, and the study of code-mixing originates from research on language contact. Muysken (2001) referred to code-mixing as the appearance of lexical items

and grammatical features from two or more languages in a sentence. In other words, code-mixing refers to a situation, where a person uses two or more forms of languages alternately while participating in a speech act. Code-mixing is not unusual in Malaysia, as the country is multiracial and most Malaysians are at least bilingual. In Malaysian video content, more than one language may be used. Indeed, the more common the language used, the more diverse audience it will attract, hence resulting in an increased number of viewers. What would be interesting is to look at how they code-mix and why they do so.

Code-mixing by Malaysian YouTubers is little understood compared to code-mixing on Facebook among Malaysian youth (Anuar, Paramasivam, & Ismail, 2020; Halim, Nadri, & Mahmood, 2015), and in Chinese newspaper's entertainment news reporting (Lau, Cheng, Yee, & Ling, 2011). It is important to study and understand how code-mixing is used by YouTubers because of the popularity of YouTube videos in the current day and age.

## **The Study**

The data analysed in this descriptive study are 20 YouTube videos of Bella Khann's channel consisting of live, hauls and reaction videos. Live videos refer to livestreaming of a video where the creator does a live session with viewers. Haul videos are basically a video where the creator shows and talks about items recently purchased, which became quite a popular YouTube trend among Youtubers. Reaction videos are videos of the creator reacting to something, like when watching a popular trending television series or music videos. The videos chosen are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. List of videos analysed for study

	<b>Video Title</b>	<b>Duration (in minutes and seconds)</b>
1.	Aku live kat youtube doh hahaha	55:04
2.	Ni anak sapa ni? Kici-kici sudah berani WOAH!	21:04
3.	Mak siapa ni ? Kenapa buat cikgu sampai mcm tu ?   REACTION	21:35
4.	Aku react & tiru   halal *kiss* couple dari tiktok yang viral kat twitter	19:46
5.	Apa pulak kali ni ? agama BTS ? Biar betul !	13:41
6.	AKU REACT   Lathi (MV) & Lathi challenge tiktok ! GILA BABS !!!!	17:45
7.	KERJA GILA Aku borong semua yg ada kat shopee ?! Part 2	12:16
8.	Aku beli semua barang viral tiktok kat shopee ! GILA AH ! benda mcm ni pun wujud eh !	19:05
9.	WEH ! Aku beli 40 kitchen gadget pelik kat shopee SHOPEE HAUL !   UNBOXING	25:45
10.	AKU BELI SETUP GAMING RM15,000.00 ?!!! KERJA GILA   UNBOXING	26:06
11.	AKU JIJIK !!! kenapa aku begini ?!   React status facebook	25:58
12.	SHOPEE HAUL   Aku kena tipu dgn kedai ni, haih !!! Patut lah semua murah2 nak mampus	23:13
13.	Reaction + Unboxing silver play button rewards ehk !!!	22:17
14.	[Explained] Everyday makeup tutorial   step by step for beginners	24:02
15.	IM PREGNANT ?!	10:13



16.	Laki aku cabar keluar dengan muka macam ni ?! KAU SERIOUS LAH GILA ??	25:59
17.	Memang bankrupt lah saloon tu kalau mcm ni gaya nya !	25:47
18.	Twitter tak chill + mukbang 7 jenis makanan ! WOW	19:06
19.	REACTING TO   TIKTOK GELEKEK Tapi sa...	23:02
20.	MY FIRST YOUTUBE PAYCHECK - gaji pertama aku yehooo !!!!	18:52

A total of 20 videos were chosen for the study, amounting to seven hours 30 minutes and 36 seconds of recorded screen time. For the analysis, only Bella's spoken words in the YouTube videos were transcribed, as the study aimed to identify the different languages she used and the types of code-mixing found in her videos. The introduction part was also excluded in the transcription as it is the same for all 20 videos and not relevant to the purpose of the study.

In identifying the languages involved in the code-mixing, the video transcripts were read three times. Cross-checking was also done to ensure that the words in the code-mixed utterances were correctly labelled with reference to Hamers and Blanc's (2000) classification framework which categorised code-mixing as:

- 1) Inner code-mixing - Mixing of a language with the variations within the language or dialects in an utterance. For example, "**Pasaipa** balik lambat?". Translated to English, it means "Why did you come home late?"
- 2) Outer code-mixing - Mixing of two different languages in an utterance. For example, "**Confirm** sasaran. **Roger** komander." Translated to English, it means "Target confirmed. Roger the commander."

## Code-Mixing in Bella Khann's YouTube videos

Analysis of code-mixing in Bella Khann's YouTube videos showed that she uses a lot of languages, but the most dominant language is Malay. The reason for this was mentioned in one of her videos entitled “*Aku live kat YouTube doh hahaha*” where she said that she lives in Kuala Lumpur. She was quoted as saying, “Bella orang Kuala Lokoh. Kuala yang penuh lumpur aa” that translates to English as “Bella is a resident of Kuala Lokoh. Kuala is full of mud aa.” So it can be concluded that her mother tongue is Malay, and she used Malay as a medium for all her videos. In fact, Bella Khann is versatile enough to use at least seven Malay varieties of her videos, that is, Kedah Malay, Penang Malay, Perak Malay, Sarawak Malay, Sabah Malay, Kelantan Malay and Indonesian Malay. Examples of words used in her videos are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Malay varieties in Bella Khann's Code-mixing

Malay varieties	Example	Meaning in standard Malay	English translation
Kedah Malay	Tang mane, tang mane? Cuba hang-pa bak mai sikit.	Di mana, di mana? Cuba kamu bawa sedikit ke sini.	Where at, where at? Why don't you all bring some here.
Penang Malay	Entah macam mana dia dok sembang laju ye.	Entah macam mana dia selalu sembang laju ya.	Don't know how he always speaks so fast.
Perak Malay	Untuk kome ini sambungan <i>part one</i> jadi takde <i>intro</i> .	Untuk kamu orang sambungan bahagian satu jadi tidak ada pengenalan.	For you guys this is the continuation from part one so there is no intro.
Sarawak Malay	Kamek sik tau.	Saya tak tahu.	I don't know.
Sabah Malay	Cakap sabah tak reti ba bah.	Cakap Sabah tak tahu lah.	Don't know how to speak Sabah.
Kelantan Malay	Nak <i>adjust</i> apo namo dia punya <i>temperature</i>	Nak atur apa nama dia punya suhu.	Want to adjust what you call the temperature.
Indonesian Malay	Ya nungguin apa pak?	Ya tunggu apa pakcik?	Yes what are you waiting for uncle?

Table 2 shows that Bella Khann used the most code-mixing in her live video sessions when she was interacting with her viewers via the comments that she received while doing the livestreaming. The code-mixing may only involve one word of Indonesian Malay (e.g., “nungguin” for “wait”). Even though her use of Malay varieties was minimal, we found that Bella Khann is aware of the many varieties of Malay in Malaysia. She used the varieties accordingly as she replies to the comments left by her viewers. For example, in her use of Kedah state Malay, she uttered phrases like “tang mana” (meaning “where at”) and “hangpa bak mai” (meaning “you all bring some here”). This phrase is a question-and-answer structure whereby Bella Khann asked her viewers about something and requested her viewers to bring her some samples.

In another example, Bella Khann uses the Sarawak and Sabah varieties of Malay, both samples. This indicates that she knows a few common words to use, although she cannot converse in these two Malay varieties spoken in East Malaysia. For Sabah Malay, she uttered the “bah” ending to her sentence because that is how a Sabahan speaks. The particle “bah” is added at the end of a sentence to stress on a point. As for the Sarawak Malay variety, Bella Khann uttered the phrase “kamek sik tau” (meaning “I do not know”). It is common to hear Malaysians from Peninsular Malaysia using the first personal pronoun “kame” (for “I” or “me”) when they try to speak Sarawakian Malay to the locals of Sarawak.

In her YouTube videos, Bella Khann used a few words from the Penang, Perak and Kelantan Malay varieties. Words like “kome” from the Perak Malay means “you all”. The word “dok” from Penang Malay dialect means “always”. The phrase “apo namo” is a Kelantanese Malay phrase that means “what is”. Bella Khann also used an Indonesian term “nungguin” that means “waiting”. All these utterances accordingly show Bella Khann’s awareness to the types of viewers in her channel. As her live videos do attract a big number of viewers, her spontaneous reactions towards her viewers are highly expected.

Table 3. Use of other languages in Bella Khann's YouTube videos

Language	Number of uses	Percentage (%)
English	1932	93.88
Arabic	121	5.88
Korean	3	0.15
Spanish	1	0.05
French	1	0.05
Total	2058	100

It is also interesting to note that Bella Khann uses a lot of code-mixing using foreign languages apart from English. Her uses of other languages could mean that she is open to using other language to display a more global personality. Table 3 displays other languages found in her YouTube videos.

English is the most used language (93.88% of 2,058 utterances) by Bella Khann when she code-mixes. This situation perhaps can be explained by looking at the status of English in Malaysia. English is the second most important language of the country, and it has been taught in schools since the elementary level up to secondary level throughout the country. As mentioned in one of her videos, Bella is a resident of Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia. Hence, it is understandable that she is comfortable mixing her Malay with a lot of English when she communicates. Malay bilingual students living in cities like Kuala Lumpur often mix Malay and English in their conversations (Abdul Rashid, 2019).

The forms of English that is used by Bella Khann are more of words and phrases, especially the words “okay” and “so”. For example, in her video entitled “*Aku live kat YouTube doh hahaha*”, Bella said:

***Okay** kalau macam ni **okay** kalau lepas ni andai kate aku tak buat ape aku tak buat video ke ape aku tak upload video ke sebab busy, nanti aku akan live **okay**.*

(Translated to English: Okay if like this okay if after this let's say that I did not do anything I did not make any videos or if I did not upload any videos because I am busy, I will do live okay)

In this utterance alone, she said the English word “okay” three times. In another example, she said “so” many times in:

*So dia daripada dua ribu dua belas, so maknanya aku umur enam belas, enam belas okay.*

(Translated to English: So she is from two thousand twelve, so this means that I was sixteen years old, sixteen okay)

The second most used language by Bella Khann is Arabic. Bella is a Muslim (Nandhini, 2022) and therefore she frequently recites Arabic phrases in her videos. Phrases like “*Alhamdulillah*” and “*Insya-Allah*” are among the most used utterances by Bella in her videos. For example, in her video entitled “My First YouTube Paycheck – gaji pertama aku yehoo!!!”, she used Arabic words in three sentences consecutively. The sentences read:

*Ni pendapatan aku la tige ratus enam puluh satu dollar **alhamdulillah** syukur rezeki daripade **Allah**.”, “*Sekarang ni dah macam ni aku dah serius ya **Allah** tuhanku ya tuhanku terima kasih ya **Allah**.” and “*Kalau korang buat dalam Malaysian ringgit seribu lebih la **Alhamdulillah**.***

(Translated to English: This is my income of three hundred sixty-one dollars Alhamdulillah am thankful for this blessing from Allah., Now this is like I am serious ya Allah my god thank you ya Allah, and If you guys convert this in Malaysian ringgit it is about one thousand plus Alhamdulillah.

Bella Khann used less of foreign languages like Korean, Spanish and French. Korean was used three times, and both Spanish and French appeared one time each. Korean language was used in the following utterances:

*Aku rase aku nak buat betul-betul pas tu aku make up macam geurae, eh tu Korea aah.* (Translated to English: I think I want to do it properly, and then I will do my makeup like geurae, aaahh that is Korean)

“Geurae” here refers to the word “really” or “sure”. Another example is “*Andeo? Anjakenimida? Anchanya.*” Indeed, these utterances sound Korean,

but it does not mean anything. As for Spanish the words she uttered was “*Mierda*”, a Spanish form of cursing. The French phrase “*Pas avoir*” mean “do not have”. These instances of code-mixing seem to be used to identify with the followers, rather than for conveying intended meaning.

### Types of code-mixing in Bella Khann’s YouTube videos

Table 4 shows the inner code-mixing and outer code-mixing in Bella Khann’s YouTube videos. In the 20 videos analysed, 2,091 occurrences were recorded (82 instances or 3.9% inner code-mixing and 2,009 instances or 96.1% outer code-mixing). Most of the outer code-mixing involved the use of English and Malay. The extensive outer code-mixing with English displays Bella Khann’s upbringing in the metropolitan city of Kuala Lumpur, despite Malay being her first language. However, most of the English words were “Okay” and “so” which many Malaysians also use habitually in their spoken communication.

Table 4. Types of code-mixing in Bella Khann Videos

No.	Video Title	Inner code-mixing	Outer code-mixing
1.	Aku live kat youtube doh hahaha	43	270
2.	Ni anak sapa ni? Kici-kici sudah berani WOAH!	1	42
3.	Mak siapa ni ? Kenapa buat cikgu sampai mcm tu ?   REACTION	1	51
4.	Aku react & tiru   halal *kiss* couple dari tiktok yang viral kat twitter 🤔	7	66
5.	Apa pulak kali ni ? agama BTS ? Biar betul !	3	43
6.	AKU REACT   Lathi (MV) & Lathi challenge tiktok ! 🤔 GILA BABS !!!!	0	44
7.	KERJA GILA 🤔 Aku borong semua yg ada kat shopee ?! Part 2	3	226
8.	Aku beli semua barang viral tiktok kat shopee 🤔! GILA AH ! benda mcm ni pun wujud eh !	1	70

9.	WEH ! Aku beli 40 kitchen gadget pelik kat shopee 🤔 SHOPEE HAUL !   UNBOXING	1	95
10.	AKU BELI SETUP GAMING RM15,000.00 ?!!! KERJA GILA 🤔👉   UNBOXING	2	126
11.	AKU JIJIK !!! kenapa aku begini ?! 🤔👉   React status facebook	0	112
12.	SHOPEE HAUL   Aku kena tipu dgn kedai ni, haih !!! Patut lah semua murah2 nak mampus 😞	6	112
13.	Reaction + Unboxing silver play button rewards ehek !!!	0	84
14.	[Explained] Everyday makeup tutorial   step by step for beginners ✨	4	144
15.	IM PREGNANT ?! 🤔👉	1	53
16.	Laki aku cabar keluar dengan muka macam ni ?! KAU SERIOUS LAH GILA ?? 🤔👉	0	133
17.	Memang bankrupt lah saloon tu kalau mcm ni gaya nya ! 🤔👉	5	160
18.	Twitter tak chill + mukbang 7 jenis makanan ! WOW	0	44
19.	REACTING TO   TIKTOK GELEKEK 🤔 Tapi sa...	3	40
20.	MY FIRST YOUTUBE PAYCHECK - gaji pertama aku yehooo !!!!	1	94
Total for each type		82	2009
Overall total		2091	

Bella Khann used less inner code-mixing, that is, she seldom mixed several Malay varieties of an utterance. Table 4 shows that Video 1 (“Aku live kat YouTube doh hahaha”) has the most instances of inner code-mixing (that is, 43). This video is also particularly long, with a duration of 55 minutes and 4 seconds. This video also showed great interactivity between Bella Khann and her viewers as she had to respond to the various comments left by her viewers. However, a majority of her videos has approximately less than 10 instances of inner code-mixing.

There were five videos where Bella Khann did not use any inner code-mixing at all; instead only outer code-mixing was used, perhaps because there were non-Malaysians among her viewers. The video titles are:

- 1) *AKU REACT | Lathi (MV) & Lathi challenge TikTok! 🤪 GILA BABS!!!!*
- 2) *AKU JIJIK !!! kenapa aku begini?! 🤪🤪 | React status, facebook*
- 3) *Reaction + Unboxing silver play button rewards ehek!!!*
- 4) *Laki aku cabar keluar dengan muka macam ni?! KAU SERIOUS LAH GILA?? 🤪*
- 5) *Twitter tak chill + mukbang 7 jenis makanan! WOW'*

The one with the least number of outer code-mixing was the video entitled 'REACTING TO | TIKTOK *GELEKEK Tapi sa...*' that had only 40 instances of outer code-mixing.

It is apparent that Bella Khann code-mixes in all her YouTube videos. Regardless of whether it is an inner or outer code mix, she used code-mixing to show her bilingual identity through her YouTube Videos. It is apparent that the social influencer is aware that different languages are associated with different identities, and she is also aware of the social norms that governs the language selection. "Language as identity expresser, or even identity maker, is thought to be strongly connected with identity" (Abubakr, Hassan, & Muhedeen, 2019).

## Conclusion

In this study, the phenomenon of code-mixing by Bella Khann in her YouTube videos was analysed using Hamers and Blanc's (2000) categorisation. All the 20 videos had instances of code-mixing, whether inner code-mixing involving varieties of the same language, or outer code-mixing involving different languages. She mostly used a mix of Malay and English, and at times words and phrases from other languages, namely, Arabic, Korean, Spanish



and French at a minimal level. Bella Khann tends to use more English terms than other foreign languages. Perhaps her flair in the languages she chose to use became a selling point to her viewers. Linguistic style and emotional contagion are associated with the number of views and subscribers, based on the perceptions of viewers of superstar social media influencers (Lee & Theokary, 2020). In their study on automotive reviews, linguistic style refers to concreteness, preciseness, interactivity and psychological closeness. Linguistic style may appear to be a peripheral matter compared to content and video production expertise, but it can attract viewers when used strategically. Similar findings were obtained by Al-Kaisi and Zaki (2022) in the Arabic culture. In the Malaysian context, Bella Khann seems to have achieved psychological closeness through her code-mixing with various languages and Malay varieties.

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# Advertising Language:

*Secrets of Persuasion*

This book exposes the secrets of persuasion embedded in advertising language used in various social media platforms. While you and I may be aware of the magnetism of vibrant imagery, we may not realise the surreptitious pull of wordplay. This book explains how slogans and emotive words are used to convince consumers that “This product is worth it!”. The book also reveals the power of weaving in and out of languages. Read and find out how code-switching is used by social influencers to carve out their desired profile and advertisers to construct identities that appeal to a range of consumers. “Advertising language: Secrets of persuasion” is not only about increasing sales. The book also goes into how rhetorics are used in public service announcements on mental health to spur actions towards social well-being.



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