

## **Code Mixing on SMS: Emerging Alay Language**

**Muhammad Sayuthi**

Department of Computer Engineering, STMIK Budi Darma, Medan, Indonesia

Email: sayuthi.m@gmail.com

**Abstract**—Communication can be done by various ways. One of them is by sending message on cellular phone called SMS. The limitation of character is the caused for having short writing system on it. The character of it is various due to the users. It is Alay who present the new system of writing SMS by shortening, mixing, and giving any codes of symbols to represent the message. The research on it has lead of figuring out the relationship of life style to it; the possibility by doing it; and how it develops. The data are taken from ten students about Alay technical writing system and it is analyzed by using descriptive analysis. The finding will lead to discover this emerging new style of language.

**Keywords:** Cellular Phone, SMS, Code Mixing, Alay

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Language is a way to communicate among humans. It links many occasions due to the activities they have in daily life. No matter the way, the goal of it is about to convey the message to the others well. In addition, for this goal, technology is the criterion to be used so that the message can be reached immediately. For this reason, technology is needed as the tool to convey the message.

Cellular phone (cell-phone), as one of the development of technology, is considered as a tool of communication. It has been used by many people all over the world since its function it has. It develops well for this decade. It is no more as part of communication but it becomes a part of important moment to be had. Many people will compete to have the new variant of it as it has new function which has high technology from the former one. The most popular one for people to do with it is Short Message Service (SMS). SMS becomes popular nowadays because it consists of writing text. It has been used by many people, from the younger ones to the older ones. Because it uses writing text, various ways of writing are coming up now. One of them is the using of mix languages and also with the abbreviations.

Alay community is one of the social members that use some code in writing SMS. The users tend to use mix languages. The using of code mixing is there even the most from this group. The characteristic of them is whenever they combine abbreviations in two languages and it is written in text which uses the combination of capital and small letter and also symbols.

This group is emerging now and they try to make the existence of them among the society. Then the questions arise: is life style the most reason to do this?, Is there any possibility for them of having this?, and how does it develop among the youngsters? These questions lead the writer to investigate it furthermore.

### **2. METHODOLOGY**

This research uses descriptive analysis in the elaboration of the topic. Data used for this research were collected in Medan from students any subject who acted naturally to their closed friends as many as different people by means of their SMS texts on their cellular phones. The subjects are students who without any doubt have often activated the range of their speech repertoire involving Indonesian, English, and any symbols resulting in texts mostly characterized as having Indonesian (and its varieties) as the base language.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The data is taken from ten SMS and all of which are taken from the students who acted as Alay community. From the tenth SMS, all of them tend to use Alay style as the most one and they are done every day even in every moment that they have to communicate among the members. It implies that this action is legal for them even as a must to be done as the members of Alay community.

Communication by means of the SMS code between closed friends may reflect the working of speech repertoire, i.e. the totality of the (major) language(s) and language varieties at the disposal. This may reflect the whole range of linguistic behavior among members of bilingual or multilingual speech communities that indicates that speakers may have options for the use of the linguistic resources in the forms of (a) an adherence to the exclusive use of a single (usually major) variety or code, (b) code switching and/ or (c) code mixing (Grosjean, 1982) depending on the demand of the social situation and context.

The communication itself holds naturally since it is the need of human life being. People are used to using language as the intermediate language. Since the mastering of language is a must, people now are having competition to learn many languages as they can. They do this because the need of the era. Nowadays, people who

Speak one language cannot develop themselves in the real competition. For them who cannot any skill, they will be slave to the others since they do not have any knowledge particularly in using foreign language.

The mastery of languages also encourages people to have better living. There are so many people who are success because they have ability in using foreign language. They, in average number, are able enough to elaborate the language in their business so that they can communicate well and automatically they will have better living.

In the daily life conversation, the tendency of code mixing is as a cover term to include mixing phenomena from single lexical items, morphological adaptations as well as (intrasentential) code-switching (Pfaff (1979)). This use of the term is taken to include the linguistic phenomena when a speaker speaks in one language, he or she incorporates the use of any linguistic item(s) coming out of single lexical items such as noun, verb, adjective, phrases such as NP, PP and VP up to clauses (coordinate, subordinate, relative) from another language.

Kachru (1978) also proposes the use of the term code mixing as "...the use of one or more languages for consistent transfer of linguistic units from one language into another" (p. 28). Kachru (1982) identifies the three criteria of code mixing such as (1) the existence of a transfer of the units of code **A** into code **B** at intersentential and intrasentential levels, (2) the existence of an "absorbing code" and an "absorbed code", and (3) the transferred units that can be in the forms of morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, sentences and the so-called idioms. He also classifies the formal properties of code mixing in South Asia into five different types as follows:

a. Unit insertion

This refers to the introduction of a grammatical unit above a word (a noun phrase or a verb phrase) from another language to the base language.

b. Unit hybridization

This refers to the use of linguistic elements from another language within a unit (e.g. a noun phrase, a verb phrase, or a compound verb) of the base language.

c. Sentence insertion

This refers to an insertion of a sentence from another language into the language base of the discourse.

d. Idiom and collocation insertion

The use of idiom and collocation of one language in another language.

e. Inflection attachment and reduplication

The inflectional and reduplication processes of one language that are introduced to another that does not have such a grammatical system.

Those elements can be implemented in any human utterances. In this case, SMS is as the major thing to be done. The using of Multilanguage is being the new trade mark for having the written communication on cell phone. Like Kachru's words, the tendency of using more than one language is often done by the community since the main reason is to communicate. The factor of mutual intelligibility is the reason. As long as the addressee can understand what the sender sent to him or her, it does not make any matter.

Idiomatic and any others words and also with the rule of the writing of sentence are no longer as the point of the making the message. Collocation also be done. It means that the language used on it is the habitual communication among the people.

The shorten of writing the text is also there. Some reasons can make them true. The limitation of the writing is the reason for having it. On the SMS, the user is only limited to have the message in 160 characters. Every character is determined by the length of the sentence. If the user uses formal writing system, it will take many places and of course can reduce the capacity of the writing. Besides, it does not work well if it is sent to the addressee since he or she will regard the sender as the "Mr. Formal one". That is why the using of short words or even abbreviation is allowed to be done.

Another reason for having this that the provider often rates the highest price for having this. Since there are new providers arises, the competition of the price on SMS is vary. The provider will compete to promote its price on doing SMS and as the result, the variation of price charge is there. Then, it is up to the user whether he or she wants to have the provider as his or her own number or not. Because of it, the cheapest price promoted and implemented by the certain provider will be adopted by the users. This is the other reason for having it and it becomes a real habit which cannot be stopped right away. Alay community, as the members of society who always uses the writing style of Alay too, do this regularly in their daily activities. It is going up now. Its members are the teenagers who are as students even at school or in university. Most of them characterize themselves by clothing such: small and tight trouser and dress, wear many color and clue of picture on their cloth, and colored shoe. Their hairstyle is also the same one to another. They usually gather just with their own since only them that can communicate with their own language. SMS is one of the media that they use to communicate. They write it to send news or just to have conversation among them. The characteristic of it can be seen such follow.

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hI!!! ge ApAH? d4cH l@M4 nEcH GA
haNKouT.....

~ ^ ^ ~
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For common people, it is strange because it cannot be understood well. However, for them, it is common way to be used to communicate. The using of combination of capital and small letter are straightly seen, and also the using of mix languages but not in the right one. If it is based on bahasa Indonesia, KBBI cannot permit the usage of those kinds of words. It can be transferred into good Indonesia such:

Hai. Apa yang sedang kamu lakukan? Sudah lama kita tidak bertemu, bagaimana kalau kita bertemu?

The transcription is actually good but it is strange since Indonesian particularly the students seldom even never use that kind of writing. They tend to ignore the right form of writing on the SMS. This is done because the limitation of the term has. SMS or short message service provides only small numbers of characters. It consists of 160 characters. That is why people particularly the students use the abbreviation due to the limitation of its service.

If it is analyzed from English, it is also not in the right from of English. The word “hankout” is the wrong one. It is better to use “hangout” means spend time with someone. However, they tend to substitute “ng” with “nk”. It is known much so far.

**Life style is the most reason to do this. Is it true?**

Teenagers particularly the Alay always try to find the new trend for themselves. They like the new one better than the old one. Code mixing, as one of the new trend mark, is now a new trademark for them to be done. They tend to do this as the member of Alay. This community actually tries to make its existence in the social life. There are many terms on their namely Alay. Some identify that Alay is the abbreviation of anak lebay.

For the beginning, the writing style of Alay cannot be joined well. It is because they have not used to it. Meanwhile, it becomes their habit and it cannot be left even for a while. The statement of being existence is the reason for them have this style.

Hey..... dA d ManSE diRimU bUk? W gE otw  
nEcH k Te kA pE. JaNgAn tElaT lAge lAh  
bUk. BoRiiinK neCH.....  
  
~ ㄨ ㄨ ~

Being exist (gaul in bahasa Indonesia) is the most reason to have this. The tenth students of doing this state that it is one of the ways to communicate among the youngsters. They are reluctant to use formal language since it does not have any kind of existence element. It is ancient and moreover it is a prohibition of having SMS in formal one.

Being existence is also the criterion to be implemented in social life. Beside they have their own style in dressing, the characteristic of SMS also provides them as one of the life style they must do. If they do not this, they will be regarded as one of the generation called old-school (in bahasa Indonesia called “ketinggalan zaman” alias “kuno” or “cupu”). It is an embarrassing value that they dress and act as the old-school one.

**Try and then Addicted. Is it the way to be Alay?**

Five of ten respondents say that they do this because they try for the first time. First, they got he message from their friend on the Alay writing style. Then they replied it not in Alay one and then here came other message told them that they were not existence to “anak gaul”. Then they were called “cupu”. Of course this is very annoying to be called such an unpleasant title. So, they tried to reply the same way and finally, here they are as the members of Alay.

It shows that the habit comes from trying to have something new. The beginners of Alay, will try to socialize themselves to get used to using this terminology of writing. It is difficult for the first time since they are not used to doing it but later one it becomes one the activities that cannot be left instantly. They become so addicted by doing this. When it has been started, it could not be stopped by any ways.

The Alay consider this action as the normal one for them. They deny to be called addicted of having wrong style of writing. They also do not care about people’s judgment on their clothing. They feel that they are very comfortable. So, they do not need any opinion that can give them urgent obstacle.

People who are suffer from disease have two possibilities on the addiction: they can go well or they even can be killed. This also happens in the taking of medicine. People who are too much consuming drugs, can deal the addiction and it cannot be stop in a short time. It needs longer time, even in the longest one.

**Development of Alay community: How it happened?**

The phenomenon of Alay was exactly held by the experts of language. They want to learn this symptom why it could happen and it was spread out quickly among the society. Just like “Procam” language, it becomes the trend setter for teenagers particularly to do it.

In the medieval of November 2010, one of the private stations had proposed this community. It covered the performance of Alay started from the features, places for having meeting point, till the ways of communicating each other. In the performance, it was look like the previous statement as mentioned above. About the communication, it also investigated the means of communication by checking the cell phone of every member. As the result, the style of writing was found clearly as it is previously mentioned.

The strangeness of this generation leads the youngsters to try this new community. First they will learn how they deserve perform the performance. They look unique. Because of this uniqueness, it affects the other youngsters to have it. Since they look for the modern and representative for their age and style, it is acceptance well. How it develops that it goes from mouth to mouth. There is no special treatment to spread this out. They just show what they look, behave, and it will affect the others by the feeling of curiosity. So, it can be conclude that it has no treatment in the spreading of the community but the teenagers themselves who come for the new trend.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Alay now has its point even though it is not accepted wide to the society yet. They have their own performance and they have their own style on writing message on the SMS of the cell phone. They are characterized by using capital along with the small letter on the words. They tend to use abbreviation or even to shorten the language itself. The new word that they made often cannot be found in the dictionary since it has wrong pattern but to make it more stylish. The new words are just for having communication as long as they have mutual intelligibility among them.

The mixing of languages also happens to them. They tend to mix more than one language. English is the most to be adopted since it contains the highest status for its users. The opinion arisen that English is the modern style for communication. It will be modern if it is combined with any other languages. One language to be spoken is not cool enough to the youngsters but it must be combined such bahasa Indonesia and English. By this happening, the phenomenon of code mixing on the SMS is not rare anymore but a part of modern way to communicate.

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