

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Code-Switching Practices of Gen Z in Online Conversations: A Netnographic Discourse Analysis

Faith Shannley M. Bustamante^{*1}, Life Gabriel F. Osumo¹, and Maria Fe B. Doong¹

College of Teacher Education, Central Mindanao Colleges, 9400 Kidapawan City, Cotabato, Philippines

*Corresponding author: bustamantefaiithshannley@gmail.com · ORCID: F.S.M. Bustamante 0009-0000-1957-5793 · L.G.F. Osumo 0009-0005-6061-6899 · M.F.B. Doong 0009-0007-1078-8080

Article history

Received: September 07, 2026

Revised: October 06, 2026

Accepted: October 20, 2026

Published: October 27, 2026

Keywords

code-switching
English-Bisaya bilingualism
Generation Z communication
digital discourse
netnographic discourse analysis

Cite this article

Bustamante, F. S. M., Osumo, L.G.F., and Doong, M.F.B. (2026). Code-switching practices of Gen Z in online conversations: A netnographic discourse analysis. *AETHERION: International Journal of Society, Education, and Development*, 1(1), 1–14.

ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study investigates the patterns and discourse functions of English-Bisaya code-switching in the online communication of Generation Z users in Kidapawan City. Specifically, the research aims to identify the structural patterns of code-switching in online interactions, determine the communicative functions these language shifts serve, and examine how code-switching reflects Generation Z identity, emotional expression, and social alignment in digital spaces.

Method: The study employs a qualitative netnographic discourse analysis to examine naturally occurring online conversations collected from public posts and comments on social media platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, and X (formerly Twitter). A purposively selected corpus of online excerpts containing English-Bisaya code-switching was analyzed using linguistic classification and discourse interpretation guided by Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model and concepts from Interactional Sociolinguistics.

Findings: The findings show that intrasentential code-switching is the most frequent structural pattern in the dataset, followed by intersentential switching and tag-switching. These patterns demonstrate Generation Z users' fluid bilingual competence in digital communication. The analysis further shows that code-switching serves multiple discourse functions, including expressing humor, emphasizing ideas, conveying emotions, strengthening social connections, and signaling shared cultural identity among users.

Contribution: Overall, the study highlights that English-Bisaya code-switching among Generation Z in Kidapawan City is not random but a strategic communicative practice that reflects bilingual identity, digital culture, and social belonging. The findings contribute to sociolinguistic research on multilingual communication in online environments and provide insights that may support more inclusive approaches to language education and digital discourse studies.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the modern era, where communication is increasingly shaped by technology, Generation Z has redefined how language operates in digital spaces. Globally, this generation, those born between 1997 and 2012, spends an average of 6 to 9 hours per day interacting online, using social media not only for information exchange but also for self-expression, identity construction, and cultural participation (Palfrey & Gasser, 2022). Studies reveal that nearly 75% of Gen Z users worldwide alternate between two or more languages when communicating online, using code-switching as a deliberate means of conveying belonging, humor, and emotion (Lee & Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2022; Goh & Wu, 2024). In the Philippines, recognized as one of the most multilingual nations in Southeast Asia, this phenomenon is evident, with more than 185 languages coexisting, including English, Filipino, and regional varieties such as Bisaya and Ilonggo (Bautista, 2023).

In Kidapawan City, where English and Bisaya naturally intersect in everyday communication, these multilingual patterns extend vividly into online platforms such as Facebook, Tiktok, and X (formerly

Twitter). Among local Gen Z users, code-switching between English and Bisaya in the context of Kidapawaños is a routine feature of comments, captions, and chats used to create humor, emphasize emotions, and reflect community identity. Despite its prevalence, this specific form of language alternation remains undocumented, particularly in academic research. Most existing Philippine studies focus either on Tagalog-English switching or on classroom-based contexts, leaving informal digital interactions in regional settings such as Kidapawan underexplored.

National and regional data emphasize the need for such localized research. As shown in Suizo (2024), 68% of Filipino Gen Z respondents reported regularly switching between Filipino and English in online spaces, while 42% also used regional languages such as Bisaya or Ilonggo. These statistics suggest that language hybridity is not random but part of a conscious digital identity. However, as Hashmi (2025) notes, few studies in Mindanao explore how these language practices shape expressions of self and community online. Addressing this gap is essential to capturing the multilingual realities of digital youth culture beyond metropolitan centers such as Manila and Cebu.

Although several studies in Mindanao address code-switching, none fully align with the specific focus of this research. The closest is a classroom-based study conducted in Kidapawan that examined students' code-switching practices in academic settings using Hiligaynon (Sosas & Quinding, 2025). However, this research does not explore English to Kidapawen's Bisaya code-switching in informal online conversations which encourages the culture of Kidapawen's, nor does it analyze digital platforms such as Facebook, Tiktok, and X. To date, no published research has specifically documented how Generation Z in Kidapawan City code-switches between English and Bisaya in digital platforms, highlighting a clear and significant gap that this study aims to address.

This study contributes to the goals of Sustainable Development Goals 4 (Quality Education) and 10 (Reduced Inequalities) by documenting the authentic language practices of youth in Kidapawan. In doing so, the research promotes more inclusive approaches to language education and recognizes and validates learners' multilingual realities rather than penalizing hybrid communication. The findings can inform educators, curriculum designers, and digital literacy advocates in developing more context-sensitive strategies that bridge academic expectations with lived linguistic practices.

The purpose of this study is to examine how Generation Z in Kidapawan City use English-Bisaya code-switching in their online conversations. By focusing on this specific language pair, the study aims to generate a localized understanding of multilingual communication among young digital users in Region 12. Specifically, the study seeks to analyze the patterns and communicative functions of code-switching as they naturally occur in online discourse. It investigates how language alternation is used to express identity, signal social alignment, construct meaning, and navigate relationships in digital spaces. Through this inquiry, the study aims to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of multilingual practices among Filipino youth, particularly in regional contexts where digital communication reflects both cultural hybridity and everyday linguistic realities.

Research Questions

This study aims to contribute to a broader understanding of multilingual communication by providing insights that may benefit educators, linguists, and policymakers in developing inclusive and contextually relevant approaches to language use in both education and media. Guided by this aim, the research seeks to answer the following questions:

- RQ1. What patterns of English to Bisaya code-switching are evident in the online conversations of Generation Z in Kidapawan City?
- RQ2. What discourse functions do these English-Bisaya code-switching practices serve in digital interactions?

- RQ3. How does English to Bisaya code-switching reflect Generation Z's identity, social alignment, and expression of emotions in their online communication?

1.1 Definition of Terms

The following terms are operationally defined to clarify their use in this study.

Code-Switching. This refers to the alternating between two or more languages or language varieties within a single conversation or utterance.

Digital Identity. This refers to the self-representation an individual creates and performs in online spaces through language, visuals, and behavior.

Digital-Native Generations. This refers to individuals who grew up with digital technology and the internet, which have become integral to their life.

Generation Z (Gen Z). This refers to individuals born between 1997 and 2012, who are characterized as the first generation to have grown up fully immersed in digital technology.

Kidapawen-Bisaya. This refers to the local cultural use of Bisaya among individuals residing in and born in the communities of Kidapawan City.

Multi-modal Communication. This refers to the communication that integrates multiple modes such as text, emojis, images, and hashtags.

1.2 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the growing body of sociolinguistic research on multilingual digital communication by examining English-Bisaya code-switching among Generation Z users in Kidapawan City. By focusing on a regional linguistic community in Mindanao, the study highlights how bilingual youth use language in online spaces to express identity, negotiate social relationships, and participate in contemporary digital culture. The research also supports Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) by promoting awareness of authentic multilingual practices in learning environments and Sustainable Development Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities) by recognizing the linguistic realities of regional communities often underrepresented in Philippine language research. The findings of the study are expected to benefit the following:

Policymakers and Education Stakeholders. The findings of the study may contribute to the development of more inclusive and context-sensitive language policies in education and digital communication. By documenting the multilingual practices of Generation Z users in regional online communities, the study provides insights that may help policymakers and educational institutions recognize the realities of bilingual communication beyond formal classroom settings. The research may also support initiatives that promote linguistic inclusivity and culturally responsive approaches to language use in education and media.

Educators and Language Practitioners. The results of the study may help educators, language instructors, and curriculum developers better understand how bilingual students naturally communicate in digital environments. Recognizing English-Bisaya code-switching as part of authentic language use may encourage more inclusive teaching approaches that acknowledge multilingual competence rather than viewing language alternation solely as linguistic interference. The findings may also assist educators in connecting academic language instruction with the lived communication practices of students in contemporary digital spaces.

Students majoring in English. The study may help students majoring in English develop a deeper understanding of sociolinguistic concepts and multilingual communication in real-world contexts. By examining code-switching practices in online discourse, the research may strengthen students' awareness of how language, identity, culture, and social interaction intersect in digital communication. The findings may also encourage critical reflection on contemporary language use among bilingual speakers in the Philippines.

Future researchers. The study contributes to existing literature on bilingualism, digital discourse, and code-switching practices among Filipino youth. As research on regional multilingual communication in Mindanao remains limited, the findings may serve as a reference for future studies exploring language use in online communities, identity construction in digital discourse, and evolving multilingual practices among younger generations. The study may also encourage further research on underrepresented linguistic communities in Philippine sociolinguistic scholarship.

2. THEORETICAL LENS AND REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Theoretical Lens

This study is primarily anchored on Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model (1993), which provides the central theoretical foundation for understanding how bilingual speakers choose between languages in social interaction.

The model proposes that every instance of language choice carries a "marked" or "unmarked" value, signaling expected norms or deliberate shifts in social meaning. In digital communication among Generation Z, this framework offers a strong basis for analyzing how English-Bisaya code-switching reflects intentions such as expressing solidarity, signaling in-group belonging, adding humor, or emphasizing emotional nuance. The Markedness Model directly connects language choice to social meaning; it offers a cohesive lens capable of explaining both the patterns and functions of code-switching in online discourse.

While the Markedness Model serves as the primary framework, the study draws supporting insight from Gumperz's Interactional Sociolinguistics (1982), specifically its concept of contextualization cues. This

perspective helps illuminate how speakers use language alternation to shape meaning, interpret relational intent, and construct identity in conversation. In online environments—where messages are multimodal and often accompanied by emojis, hashtags, or digital symbols, code-switching operates as one of the key cues that guide interpretation. However, Gumperz's contribution is treated here as supplementary rather than as a separate theoretical framework, ensuring conceptual unity in the analysis.

By centering the analysis on the Markedness Model and selectively drawing on Interactional Sociolinguistics, the study maintains a coherent theoretical foundation while capturing the social, relational, and identity-driven nature of English-Kidapawan Bisaya code-switching. This integrated approach allows the research to interpret not only what patterns occur, but also why they occur and what social meanings they carry in the digital interactions of Generation Z in Kidapawan City.

2.2 Review of Related Literature

A review of related literature provides the scholarly foundation upon which the present study is built. It examines previous research to identify what is already known, what gaps remain, and how the current research contributes to ongoing academic discussions. This section synthesizes international and local studies on code-switching, digital identity among Generation Z, Philippine multilingual practices, and the structural and functional dimensions of language alternation, with emphasis on insights relevant to the online communication of Filipino youth.

Code-Switching in Digital Communication

International research consistently emphasizes that code-switching in digital spaces is intentional and socially meaningful. Lee and Garcés-Conejos Blitvich (2022) found that younger multilingual users often switch languages online to express humor, signal identity, and align with community norms. Similarly, Goh and Wu (2024) observed that Gen Z Japanese Americans use code-switching to negotiate cultural belonging, bridging local heritage and global influences. These studies highlight that social media functions not only as a platform for interaction but also as a space where multilingual youth actively construct identity.

Large-scale discourse analysis further supports the purposeful nature of online code-switching. Bhattacharya and van Schijndel (2024) demonstrated that language shifts in user-generated content frequently reflect audience design, meaning that bilinguals adjust language choice based on their perceived audiences. Their quantitative findings show that social context, rather than linguistic deficiency, drives many switching behaviors.

Despite these insights, limitations remain. Much of the existing literature relies on small qualitative datasets, limiting representativeness across regions and language groups. As Ben Said (2023) notes, global research on online code-switching rarely employs

statistical sampling or broad regional comparisons. This highlights opportunities for studies in Southeast Asian contexts, where multilingual digital communication remains understudied, especially among youth populations.

Types of Code-Switching

A clear understanding of code-switching requires distinguishing among its structural forms. Scholars commonly identify three major types: intersentential, intrasentential, and tag-switching (Poplack, 1980; Myers-Scotton, 1993).

Intersentential code-switching occurs between sentences or independent clauses, typically associated with speakers who have high proficiency in both languages. This form is frequently observed in narrative-style online posts where tone, emphasis, or stance shifts across sentences (Reponte-Sereño et al., 2023).

Intrasentential code-switching takes place within a single sentence or phrase and reflects fluid bilingual competence. Philippine studies consistently identify this form as the most common among youth in digital contexts, where informal and spontaneous communication encourages mixed structures (Bautista, 2023; Pontillas et al., 2023).

Tag-switching involves embedding a discourse marker or filler—such as “right?”, “ba,” or “bitaw”—from one language into an utterance primarily constructed in another. Tag-switching serves interactional functions such as softening tone, expressing stance, or signaling familiarity (Lee & Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2022).

Blom and Gumperz’s (1972) distinction between situational and metaphorical switching further emphasizes that language alternation is tied not only to structure but also to shifting social meanings, emotional expression, and identity.

Understanding these types is essential to the present study, as identifying how Generation Z alternates between English and Bisaya will clarify the structural patterns and discourse functions of their online communication.

Generation Z and Digital Identity

As digital natives, Generation Z engages in linguistic practices shaped by constant exposure to online media. Suizo (2024) found that Filipino Gen Z constructs digital identities by blending English, Filipino, and regional languages, influenced by global media trends and online communities. These multilingual practices function as tools for identity expression and social alignment.

Sawe (2025) similarly documented the linguistic creativity of Gen Z TikTok users, noting that slang and hybrid expressions operate as markers of group belonging. Conny et al. (2024), studying Indonesian youth, observed comparable trends, with language mixing, slang, emojis, and non-standard spellings shaping digital identity performance.

However, most of these studies rely heavily on small interview samples or limited platform analysis. While they provide rich descriptions of identity work, their findings lack broader generalizability. This reinforces the need for additional research exploring everyday peer-to-peer interactions among Gen Z across different Philippine regions, including Mindanao.

Philippine Multilingualism and Code-Switching Practices

The Philippines presents a vibrant multilingual landscape where English, Filipino, and regional languages regularly intersect. Bautista (2023) notes that code-switching among Filipino millennials and Gen Z serves pragmatic purposes, including solidarity, emphasis, and conversational flow. Pontillas et al. (2023) found that switching and tag insertion in online classrooms enhance comprehension and rapport.

Quantitative insight into switching frequencies is offered by Reponte-Sereño, Cuevas, and Sagayno (2023), who documented Cebuano-English switching among Visayan Facebook content creators. Intrasentential switching appeared most frequently, followed by intersentential and tag-switching. Functions included expressive, referential, and phatic purposes. Their findings illustrate the expressive richness of bilingual communication in informal digital spaces.

Studies on borrowing also broaden understanding of multilingual practices. Sales (2022) found that Cebuano Visayan youth commonly borrow English nouns and verbs, suggesting that borrowing and code-switching coexist on a continuum shaped by global linguistic influence (Villadarez, 2021).

Research from UM Peñaplata College (2022) expanded this view by documenting multiple types of switching, including intra-word switching, in student speeches. However, classroom-based findings do not fully capture informal online spaces, where identity performance and creativity play more prominent roles.

Taken together, Philippine studies reveal that code-switching is pervasive and multifunctional across regions. Yet most studies focus either on structured environments or on specific subgroups, leaving informal Gen Z digital communication, especially in areas such as Kidapawan City, underexamined.

Code-Switching’s Effects, Motivations, and Social Functions

Scholars agree that code-switching serves diverse communicative functions. Bautista (2023) and Pontillas et al. (2023) emphasize that switching fosters rapport, expressiveness, and comprehension in both casual and educational contexts. Reponte-Sereño et al. (2023) reported that expressive switching predominates in online interactions, underscoring its emotional and interpersonal significance.

At the same time, Sales (2022) and Foster (2020) note that switching may sometimes be associated with hesitation or gaps in lexical retrieval, especially in high-pressure contexts such as public speaking. This

suggests that the effects of switching depend heavily on setting, purpose, and participants.

Ali et al. (2024) further complicated this discussion by arguing that switching can enhance fluency or hinder monolingual proficiency, depending on its use. This duality underscores the complex role of bilingualism in communication.

Overall, the literature points to code-switching as a flexible, context-dependent strategy that supports identity, emotional expression, and communicative effectiveness.

Synthesis

The reviewed literature demonstrates that code-switching is a deliberate and multifaceted linguistic practice shaped by identity, audience design, and the multilingual environments in which youth communicate. International studies highlight that bilingual speakers switch languages online to express humor, negotiate belonging, and manage social relationships. At the same time, Philippine research shows similar patterns among millennials and Gen Z across educational and creative contexts. Structural classifications—such as intersentential, intrasentential, and tag-switching—provide essential frameworks for analyzing these linguistic behaviors, especially in informal digital spaces.

However, existing research is limited in several ways. Most studies rely on small qualitative samples, focus on specific groups such as content creators or students, or examine formal Bisaya varieties rather than local variants such as Kidapawan Bisaya. Although quantitative studies offer insights into switching frequencies, they are often region-specific and do not capture everyday peer-to-peer communication. Notably, there remains a lack of research on how Generation Z in Kidapawan City employs English–Kidapawano Bisaya code-switching in public social media interactions across popular platforms such as Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and Tiktok.

This study addresses these gaps by analyzing the types and discourse functions of English–Kidapawan Bisaya code-switching used by Gen Z in their online communication. Through a focused investigation of an underrepresented linguistic community in Region 12, the study aims to contribute a deeper understanding of multilingual digital practices and their implications for identity construction, social interaction, and language use in contemporary Philippine contexts.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a netnographic research design, an adaptation of traditional ethnography that focuses on observing and analyzing interactions within online communities (Bowler, 2010; Addeo et al., 2019). Netnography is particularly well suited to examining Generation Z's communication, as their social and linguistic practices occur predominantly in digital spaces (Gerasimova, 2024), thereby allowing

researchers to study naturally occurring conversations without disrupting interactional flow.

In this study, netnography will be used to observe online communities on platforms like Facebook, Tiktok, and X, capturing how Gen Z users in Kidapawan City express identity, humor, solidarity, and emotion through multilingual discourse. The approach provides cultural sensitivity and ecological validity, enabling the researcher to document subtle linguistic choices such as English–Bisaya code-switching. To complement this, discourse analysis will examine the structure, purpose, and social functions of code-switching within these interactions, thereby enabling interpretation of both observable patterns and underlying communicative intentions. By focusing on English–Kidapawano Bisaya code-switching, the study maintains a clear and coherent scope that reflects the bilingual realities of youth in the research context.

3.2 Data Sources and Corpus

This study examines publicly accessible digital content from Generation Z online users in Kidapawan City and nearby communities in North Cotabato, focusing specifically on naturally occurring instances of English–Bisaya code-switching in online communication. Data were collected from public posts, captions, and comment sections on Facebook, TikTok, and X (formerly Twitter), as these platforms are widely used by Generation Z for everyday interaction and self-expression (Gerasimova, 2024).

The study employed purposive and criterion-based sampling to identify online excerpts that reflected the linguistic and contextual focus of the research. Selected posts were required to contain at least one observable instance of English–Bisaya code-switching and include contextual indicators associated with Kidapawan City or nearby communities, such as local references, school affiliations, location tags, community-related expressions, hashtags, or recognizable regional linguistic patterns. Private accounts, restricted posts, and content without relevant linguistic features were excluded from the corpus.

Rather than prioritizing statistical generalization, the study focused on the contextual richness and interpretive depth of naturally occurring bilingual interactions in digital spaces, consistent with qualitative netnographic research approaches (Bowler, 2010; Addeo et al., 2019). The finalized corpus consisted of selected online excerpts representing different communicative contexts, including humor, emotional expression, personal reflection, peer interaction, and identity performance across multiple social media platforms.

Data collection involved systematic observation and documentation of publicly visible posts and interactions. Relevant excerpts were captured through screenshots and text transcription, after which all identifiable information such as usernames, profile photos, account links, and timestamps were removed or anonymized to protect user privacy. The collected

corpus was then organized into a coded database for qualitative discourse analysis.

Table 1. Criteria in the Selection of Corpus

Criterion	Description	Purpose
Public Accessibility	Only posts, captions, or comments that were publicly visible on social media platforms were included. Private accounts, restricted posts, and private messages were excluded.	Ensures ethical data collection and respects users' digital privacy.
Presence of English–Bisaya Code-Switching	Posts must contain at least one observable instance of English–Bisaya code-switching within a sentence or across sentences.	Ensures the data directly reflects the linguistic phenomenon being studied.
Generation Z Users	Content must originate from accounts indicating users belonging to Generation Z (approximately 13–25 years old).	Aligns the dataset with the target population of the study.
Location Relevance	Posts must show a clear connection to Kidapawan City through profile information, local references, hashtags, or contextual indicators.	Ensures the data reflects the linguistic practices of Gen Z in Kidapawan City.
Platform Source	Data were collected from publicly accessible posts on platforms commonly used by Gen Z, such as Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and TikTok.	Captures authentic digital communication where code-switching naturally occurs.
Account Activity	Only accounts with at least three years of visible posting activity were considered.	Helps verify that the account represents a genuine and active user rather than a temporary or inactive profile.
Language Scope	Posts involving other language pairs such as English–Tagalog or Tagalog–Bisaya without English–Bisaya switching were excluded.	Maintains the focus of the study on English–Kidapawan Bisaya code-switching

Table 1 presents the criteria used in selecting the corpus for the study. These criteria ensured that the collected data consisted of authentic examples of English–Bisaya code-switching occurring in online interactions among Generation Z users in Kidapawan City. Only publicly accessible posts and comments from Facebook, TikTok, and X that contained observable instances of code-switching were included in the dataset. By applying these criteria, the researcher ensured that the selected excerpts were relevant to the objectives of the study and suitable for discourse analysis.

3.3 Data Analysis

The data will be analyzed using a combination of linguistic coding and discourse analysis, guided by Gee's (2011) framework and supported by Myers-Scotton's Markedness Model and concepts from Interactional Sociolinguistics. First, all instances of English–Kidapawan Bisaya code-switching in the corpus will be identified and classified into intersentential, intrasentential, and tag-switching (Irawan, 2022; Yulandari et al., 2018), with each excerpt coded for placement, topic, and pragmatic functions such as humor, social alignment, stance, emphasis, or emotional expression.

Following this, discourse analysis will interpret the communicative intent and social meaning of each switching event, examining how Gen Z users employ bilingual alternation to construct identity, negotiate relationships, express attitudes, and signal group belonging in digital interactions. The Markedness Model (1998) offers a lens for understanding how language choices reflect social expectations and norms, while contextualization cues from Interactional Sociolinguistics (Jaspers, 2023) clarify subtle communicative signals in online discourse. Expert validation of the coding guide and the researcher's multilingual proficiency ensures accurate

interpretation of slang, idioms, and culturally embedded expressions. Finally, findings will be organized according to the research questions, highlighting patterns of code-switching, their discourse functions, and the social meanings embedded in digital communication among Generation Z users in Kidapawan City.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

This study adheres to ethical principles of respect, non-intrusion, and responsible engagement with digital communities. As the research relies exclusively on publicly accessible online content, the researcher will not interact with, manipulate, or influence any users or their conversations. Data will be collected only from posts, comments, or captions that Generation Z users intentionally make public. At the same time, private messages, restricted groups, and locked content will be excluded to respect users' digital boundaries. Interpretations will focus solely on linguistic behavior rather than personal characteristics or evaluations of online users.

Data Privacy

To protect participants' personal information, all data collection and handling will comply with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (RA 10173) and institutional policies on digital research. Collected data will be thoroughly anonymized: usernames, profile photos, timestamps, links, and other potential identifiers will be removed or encoded to prevent traceability. Raw and anonymized data will be stored in secure, password-protected folders accessible only to the researcher. Screenshots will be kept separate from anonymized textual data, and all materials will be permanently deleted upon completion of the study to prevent unauthorized access. Only publicly available posts will be used to ensure full compliance with legal and ethical standards.

Research Integrity

The researcher will maintain high standards of research integrity by ensuring transparency in methodological procedures, grounding interpretations in the actual data, and properly citing all scholarly sources. The study will avoid fabrication, falsification, or selective reporting of findings. Any limitations encountered during data collection or analysis will be explicitly acknowledged to maintain credibility and responsible scholarship.

Minimizing Bias

Recognizing the risk of selection, interpretive, and positionality biases inherent in qualitative research, the study will employ systematic procedures for data

selection using explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria. Reflective practice will be applied during analysis to monitor and mitigate personal assumptions. Peer debriefing and periodic validation of coding and themes will further reduce bias and strengthen the dependability and trustworthiness of the findings.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the study based on the analysis of English–Bisaya code-switching in online conversations among Generation Z users in Kidapawan City. The results are organized according to the research questions of the study and are presented through tables accompanied by corresponding discussions.

4.1 Patterns of English–Bisaya Code-Switching

Table 2. Patterns of English–Bisaya Code-Switching in Online Conversations of Generation Z in Kidapawan City

Excerpt ID	Platform	Code-Switching Type	Language Direction	Structural Pattern Observed	Illustrative Evidence
Xo1	X	Intrasentential	Bisaya → English	English inserted as explanatory clause	“like im flirting just because i reply to comments”
Xo2	X	Intersentential	Bisaya → English	English punchline after Bisaya narrative	“So not me. The things I do for you.”
Xo3	X	Intrasentential	English → Bisaya	English factual opener, Bisaya reflection	“No lunch for today maayo nalang...”
Xo4	X	Intrasentential	English → Bisaya	English topic framing + Bisaya elaboration	“my childhood friend got married...”
Xo5	X	Intrasentential	Bisaya → English	English lexical insertion (academic concept)	“venn diagram”
FB01	Facebook	Intrasentential	Bisaya → English → Bisaya	English self-assertion within emotional discourse	“I’m matured enough...”
FB07	Facebook	Intersentential	English → Bisaya → English	Sentence-level alternation for clarification and compliment	“So that’s why... Nag swimming si madam... Blue suits you”
Tk02	TikTok	Intrasentential	English → Bisaya	English identity marker + Bisaya explanation	“UNITE!!! Also as an SPFL student...”
Tk04	TikTok	Intersentential	English → Bisaya	English clarification followed by Bisaya elaboration	Safety explanation comment

The analysis reveals that intrasentential code-switching is the dominant structural pattern across platforms. This pattern reflects the fluid bilingual competence of Generation Z users, in which English lexical items or clauses are embedded in Bisaya discourse for efficiency and expressive nuance. English is often used as explanatory or clarifying material, while Bisaya provides emotional and contextual grounding.

In contrast, intersentential switching appears primarily in humorous posts, clarifications, and emphasis-driven communication. The alternation between complete sentences allows users to strategically highlight punchlines, compliments, or explanations. Across platforms, a recurring pattern emerges: English often frames informational or performative content, whereas Bisaya conveys personal reflection and emotional depth, suggesting functional specialization between languages.

Structural Integration of Bilingual Language Use

The prevalence of intrasentential code-switching observed in the dataset reflects the linguistic flexibility

of bilingual speakers in digital environments. In several excerpts, English lexical items are embedded within Bisaya discourse to clarify ideas or introduce expressions that are widely recognized in online communication.

For instance, Excerpt X01 demonstrates how an English explanatory clause “*like im flirting just because i reply to comments*” is inserted within a Bisaya narrative to elaborate the speaker’s point. Similarly, Excerpt X05 illustrates lexical insertion through the phrase “*venn diagram*,” where an English academic term is integrated into the discourse to convey a concept more efficiently. These examples highlight how bilingual speakers can integrate linguistic elements from both languages within a single utterance while maintaining coherence in the message.

Such linguistic integration is characteristic of bilingual communities where speakers regularly navigate multiple languages in both formal and informal communication contexts. Recent studies on bilingual discourse suggest that code-switching often occurs when speakers possess strong competence in

both languages and are able to strategically alternate between them to enhance meaning and conversational flow (Dumanig & David, 2020). In online communication, this flexibility allows speakers to combine linguistic resources that best suit the communicative context.

Functional Distribution of English and Bisaya

The data further reveal a noticeable functional distinction in the use of English and Bisaya within the discourse. English frequently appears in segments that introduce explanations, opinions, or statements intended to clarify information. For example, in Excerpt X03, the statement begins with an English factual opener “No lunch for today” before transitioning into a Bisaya reflection that elaborates the situation. Likewise, Excerpt X04 introduces a narrative topic using English “my childhood friend got married” before continuing the discussion in Bisaya. This reflects the role of English as a language often associated with informational framing and performative expression in multilingual communication.

Conversely, Bisaya tends to convey emotional reactions, contextual elaborations, and personal reflections. The use of the local language allows speakers to maintain cultural familiarity and relational closeness with their audience. Studies on multilingual interaction in social media environments have shown that local languages often serve as markers of solidarity and authenticity in online discourse (Montes-Alcalá, 2020). The alternation between English and Bisaya therefore enables speakers to balance informational clarity with emotional connection in their communication.

Code-Switching in Digital Communication Practices

The switching patterns observed in the dataset also reflect the broader communication practices of Generation Z users who frequently engage in

multilingual interaction across social media platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, and X. In digital environments where communication is informal and interactive, speakers often combine linguistic resources to convey humor, opinions, and personal experiences more effectively.

Research on multilingual digital discourse indicates that code-switching has become a common stylistic feature of communication in social media contexts. According to Androutsopoulos (2021), language alternation in online interactions often functions as a resource for expressing stance, constructing identity, and maintaining engagement with audiences. Within this context, code-switching among Generation Z users can be understood as a communicative strategy that allows speakers to navigate social interaction and express themselves more dynamically in digital spaces.

Emerging Perspectives on Digital Code-Switching

Although the patterns observed in this study were classified according to traditional structural types such as intrasentential and intersentential switching, language practices in digital environments continue to evolve. Online discourse encourages creative linguistic expression where speakers combine languages fluidly to adapt to the communicative demands of social media interaction.

Recent sociolinguistic studies highlight how multilingual speakers in digital environments frequently employ code-switching not only for structural reasons but also for pragmatic and social purposes, including humor construction, audience engagement, and identity expression (Lee, 2022; Parafina & Dumanig, 2021). Among Generation Z users, these practices demonstrate how bilingual communication extends beyond grammatical structure and becomes a flexible resource for negotiating meaning and social relationships in digital interaction.

4.2 Discourse Functions of English-Bisaya Code-Switching

Table 3. Discourse Functions of English-Bisaya Code-Switching in Digital Interactions

Excerpt ID	Context of Use	Discourse Function	Linguistic Strategy	Interpretive Insight
Xo1	Defensive explanation	Self-defense & justification	English rationalization + emotional appeal	Balances logic and emotion
Xo2	Humor/fandom	Punchline emphasis	English used as humorous closure	Enhances comedic timing
Xo3	Daily routine	Personal reflection	Bisaya emotional commentary	Signals intimacy
Xo4	Personal anecdote	Narrative framing	English topic introduction	Creates conversational tone
FB01	Defensive comment	Assertion of maturity	English self-evaluation	Establishes credibility
FB03	Emotional caption	Emotional expression	English phrase triggers reflection	Adds dramatic nuance
FB04	Humor about crush	Playful nostalgia	English platform references	Maintains casual tone
Tk03	Humorous reaction	Comedic exaggeration	Mixed language punchline	Reinforces peer humor
Tk04	Travel update	Informational efficiency	English abbreviation (“Otw”)	Digital shorthand identity

The findings indicate that code-switching serves multiple discourse functions, with humor, emotional expression, and self-presentation emerging as the most prominent. English often serves as a resource for emphasis, punchlines, or rational statements, while

Bisaya is used for affective elaboration and relational positioning.

Moreover, code-switching supports interactional alignment, allowing users to negotiate stance and interpersonal meaning. Defensive posts illustrate how English is employed to signal maturity or logical

reasoning, whereas Bisaya communicates emotional authenticity. Humor-related posts highlight the pragmatic value of switching as a comedic device, reinforcing shared peer culture and digital conversational norms.

Humor as a Communicative Strategy in Digital Interaction

One of the most prominent discourse functions of code-switching observed in the dataset is its role in constructing humor within online interactions. This is particularly evident in Excerpt X02, where the English sentence “*So not me. The things I do for you.*” functions as a humorous punchline following a Bisaya narrative. The shift into English highlights the ironic tone of the statement and enhances its comedic impact.

Similarly, humorous exchanges in other excerpts rely on switching between languages to create contrast between narrative setup and humorous conclusion. The alternation between languages enhances the comedic timing of the statement, allowing speakers to create contrast between the narrative setup and the final humorous expression.

Humor-driven code-switching is particularly common in informal digital environments where speakers engage in playful interaction with peers. In social media discourse, multilingual speakers frequently draw from multiple linguistic resources to produce stylistic effects such as irony, exaggeration, and comedic emphasis. Studies on multilingual digital communication indicate that language alternation in online interactions often functions as a stylistic device that strengthens humor and reinforces shared cultural understanding among participants (Lee, 2022).

Emotional Expression and Relational Communication

Another important discourse function observed in the data is the use of code-switching to convey emotional expression and personal reflection. For instance, Excerpt FB03 presents an emotional caption where an English phrase introduces the reflection before the discourse shifts into Bisaya commentary that elaborates the speaker’s feelings. Bisaya is used when speakers express feelings such as nostalgia, amusement, or mild frustration. The use of the local language in these contexts allows speakers to communicate emotions in a way that resonates with their audience and reflects shared cultural experiences.

At the same time, English phrases often serve as triggers that frame the emotional context of the message before the discourse transitions into Bisaya elaboration. This pattern reflects how bilingual speakers structure their messages by combining the clarity of English expressions with the emotional resonance of the local language. Research on bilingual discourse in social media environments suggests that speakers frequently employ their first language when expressing personal emotions, as it carries stronger relational and cultural meaning (Montes-Alcalá, 2020).

Self-Presentation and Identity Performance

Code-switching in the dataset also contributes to how users present themselves and negotiate their identity within online interactions. In several defensive or explanatory comments, English expressions are used to convey rational arguments or statements of maturity. By using English in these contexts, speakers may position themselves as knowledgeable, confident, or logically grounded when addressing others in the conversation.

This linguistic choice reflects broader sociolinguistic patterns in multilingual communities where English may be associated with authority, education, or modern digital discourse. At the same time, the use of Bisaya in the surrounding commentary maintains the conversational tone and social connection with peers. According to Parafina and Dumanig (2021), code-switching in digital discourse often functions as a strategy for identity negotiation, allowing speakers to balance different social roles and communicative intentions within the same interaction.

Interactional Alignment and Peer Solidarity

Another key function of code-switching in the dataset is its role in facilitating interactional alignment among participants in online discussions. By alternating between English and Bisaya, speakers signal agreement, reinforce shared experiences, or respond humorously to other users in the conversation. These linguistic shifts help maintain the collaborative nature of social media interaction and strengthen the sense of community among participants.

In humorous exchanges and nostalgic discussions, code-switching often reflects a shared understanding of local experiences and peer culture. The alternation between languages allows speakers to demonstrate familiarity with the conversational norms of their social group while maintaining an engaging and relatable tone. Recent research on multilingual communication in digital spaces suggests that such switching practices serve as markers of social belonging and peer solidarity among young bilingual speakers (Androutsopoulos, 2021).

Code-Switching and the Dynamics of Digital Discourse

Beyond individual communicative functions, the switching practices observed in the dataset highlight the dynamic nature of language use in digital communication. Social media platforms encourage spontaneous and expressive interaction where speakers adapt their language according to audience, context, and communicative purpose.

In these environments, code-switching becomes a flexible communicative strategy that allows speakers to combine linguistic resources creatively. Multilingual users frequently shift between languages to emphasize particular ideas, engage with audiences, and construct meaning within the interaction. Recent studies on multilingual discourse emphasize that digital communication spaces often foster innovative forms of

language mixing that reflect the evolving linguistic practices of younger generations (Tagliamonte, 2020).

4.3 Code-Switching as a Reflection of Identity, Social Alignment, and Emotional Expression

Table 4. Code-Switching as a Reflection of Identity, Social Alignment, and Emotional Expression Among Generation Z

Excerpt ID	Identity Marker	Social Alignment Indicator	Emotional Expression	Interpretive Meaning
Xo2	Fandom reference	Alignment with SB19 community	Playful excitement	Identity through fandom culture
Xo5	Shared friend group	Peer network representation	Casual belonging	Social closeness
FB01	Maturity claim	Romantic relationship norms	Defensive emotion	Identity as rational partner
FB05	Romantic humor	Peer discourse on love	Mild longing	Collective romantic experience
Tk02	“Kidapawan Unite”	Local identity affirmation	Pride	Geographic belonging
Tk03	Tricycle humor	Shared local experience	Amusement	Cultural Familiarity
Tk07	Nostalgia about Kidapawan	Community attachment	Sentimental longing	Place-based identity
Tk06	Travel update	Mobility and peer connection	Excitement	Youth lifestyle identity

The analysis demonstrates that English–Bisaya code-switching functions as a symbolic resource for identity construction and social positioning. References to fandoms, school affiliations, and local experiences illustrate how switching practices index group membership and shared cultural knowledge. Notably, expressions such as “Kidapawanenos Unite” highlight the role of code-switching in reinforcing geographic identity and communal pride.

Emotionally, Bisaya remains the preferred medium for expressing vulnerability, nostalgia, and humor rooted in local experience, while English contributes to performative identity, digital fluency, and cosmopolitan orientation. This interplay reflects Generation Z’s hybrid linguistic identity, in which bilingualism is not merely functional but also emblematic of social belonging, emotional authenticity, and cultural negotiation.

Code-Switching and the Construction of Social Identity

The data illustrate how code-switching functions as a linguistic resource for expressing identity within digital interactions. References to fandoms, friendships, and shared experiences demonstrate how speakers use language alternation to position themselves within particular social groups. In several excerpts, English expressions are used to reference widely recognized cultural symbols such as fandom communities or digital trends, while Bisaya anchors these references within the local social context of the speakers.

This practice reflects how bilingual speakers negotiate multiple layers of identity in online discourse. Recent studies on multilingual communication in digital environments suggest that language choice often indexes group membership and social affiliation among participants in online communities (Androutsopoulos, 2021). By alternating between English and Bisaya, Generation Z users are able to simultaneously express participation in global digital culture and maintain connections with their local linguistic community.

Local Identity and Geographic Belonging

The dataset also highlights how code-switching contributes to expressions of local identity and

geographic belonging. This is particularly evident in Excerpt Tk02, where the expression “Kidapawan Unite” functions as an identity marker that emphasizes the speaker’s connection to the local community. The use of English in the phrase signals participation in broader digital discourse, while the accompanying Bisaya explanation grounds the message in local context.

In these contexts, code-switching allows speakers to celebrate local identity while participating in broader online discourse. The integration of English expressions within locally grounded narratives demonstrates how digital communication enables speakers to negotiate both global and local identities simultaneously. Research on multilingual youth discourse indicates that such linguistic practices often reflect the intersection between global digital culture and localized social identities (Lee, 2022).

Peer Solidarity and Community Alignment

Another important function observed in the dataset is the role of code-switching in reinforcing peer relationships and community belonging. In several excerpts, switching between English and Bisaya signals shared experiences among friends or members of the same social network. This linguistic alternation allows speakers to align themselves with their audience and create a sense of familiarity within the conversation.

In digital environments where interaction occurs among peers with similar linguistic backgrounds, code-switching becomes a marker of social closeness and mutual understanding. Studies on bilingual communication in social media contexts have shown that language alternation often functions as a signal of solidarity and shared identity among users who belong to the same cultural or linguistic community (Dumanig & David, 2020).

Emotional Expression and Cultural Familiarity

The data also demonstrate that Bisaya frequently serves as the primary medium for emotional expression within the discourse. In Excerpt Tk07, the speaker reflects on memories of visiting Kidapawan, expressing sentimental longing for the location and its familiar experiences. The emotional resonance of Bisaya reflects

its role as the language of everyday interpersonal communication within the community.

English, on the other hand, frequently contributes to performative aspects of identity in digital communication. It may be used to frame statements, introduce widely recognized phrases, or signal familiarity with global digital culture. The combination of these linguistic resources illustrates how bilingual speakers navigate emotional expression and social interaction simultaneously within online discourse. As noted in recent research on multilingual communication, bilingual speakers often employ different languages to convey distinct emotional and social meanings within the same interaction (Montes-Alcalá, 2020).

Hybrid Linguistic Identity in Digital Communication

The interaction between English and Bisaya in the dataset ultimately reflects the hybrid linguistic identity of Generation Z users who participate in multilingual digital environments. For these speakers, bilingual language use is not merely a practical communicative tool but also a reflection of their cultural positioning within both local and global contexts.

The ability to shift between languages allows users to express multiple aspects of identity, including local affiliation, peer belonging, and digital fluency. Recent sociolinguistic research suggests that such hybrid linguistic practices are increasingly common among younger speakers who navigate both offline community relationships and online social networks (Parafina & Dumanig, 2021). The code-switching patterns observed in this study therefore illustrate how bilingual communication functions as a dynamic resource for identity construction and social interaction in contemporary digital discourse.

4.4 Synthesis of Findings

The findings of the study reveal several important patterns in the use of English–Bisaya code-switching in online conversations among Generation Z users in Kidapawan City. Across the selected excerpts from Facebook, TikTok, and X, code-switching emerges as a dynamic linguistic practice that reflects both the structural flexibility of bilingual communication and the social functions of language in digital environments.

First, the analysis of structural patterns demonstrates that intrasentential code-switching is the most dominant form of language alternation in the dataset. As shown in excerpts such as X01 and X05, English lexical items are frequently embedded within Bisaya discourse to provide explanation, emphasis, or commonly recognized expressions. This pattern reflects the bilingual competence of the speakers and illustrates how multilingual individuals integrate linguistic resources from different languages within a single utterance. Such structural integration has been widely observed in bilingual communities where speakers possess strong proficiency in both languages and use code-switching strategically to enhance

meaning and conversational flow (Dumanig & David, 2020).

Second, the findings indicate that code-switching performs several important discourse functions in online communication. The analysis of excerpts such as X02 and FB03 demonstrates that language alternation contributes to humor construction, emotional expression, and self-presentation in digital discourse. English expressions often serve as punchlines or framing devices, while Bisaya provides emotional elaboration and contextual meaning. These switching practices allow speakers to convey nuanced meanings and engage more effectively with their audience. Similar patterns have been observed in multilingual social media interactions where language alternation functions as a stylistic and pragmatic resource for expressing stance and interpersonal meaning (Lee, 2022).

Finally, the analysis also highlights how code-switching reflects identity construction and social alignment among Generation Z users. Excerpts such as Tk02 and Tk07 illustrate how language alternation indexes group membership, geographic belonging, and shared cultural experiences. The use of both English and Bisaya enables speakers to express local identity while simultaneously participating in global digital discourse. This hybrid linguistic practice reflects the complex social identities of young bilingual speakers who navigate both local community relationships and online networks. As noted in recent research on multilingual digital discourse, code-switching often serves as a resource for negotiating identity and belonging in contemporary online communication (Androutsopoulos, 2021).

Overall, the findings suggest that English–Bisaya code-switching among Generation Z users in Kidapawan City functions not only as a structural linguistic phenomenon but also as a meaningful communicative strategy that reflects social interaction, cultural identity, and digital communication practices.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO PRACTICE AND SDG ALIGNMENT

The findings of this study highlight the significance of code-switching as a natural and meaningful communication practice among bilingual Generation Z users in digital spaces. The prevalence of English–Bisaya code-switching observed in the analyzed corpus suggests that language alternation plays an important role in facilitating expression, interaction, and identity construction in online discourse. This demonstrates that bilingual speakers actively draw from their linguistic resources to communicate effectively within their social environments.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, the results emphasize the dynamic nature of bilingual language use in contemporary communication. Code-switching functions not only as a structural linguistic phenomenon but also as a social strategy that enables

speakers to convey emotions, humor, and shared cultural understanding. The observed patterns of language alternation reflect how bilingual speakers negotiate identity and belonging within online communities, particularly among Generation Z users who are highly engaged in digital communication.

The findings also suggest important considerations for language education. Recognizing the presence of code-switching in everyday communication may help educators better understand how students naturally use multiple languages in real-life contexts. Rather than viewing code-switching solely as interference between languages, educators may consider it as evidence of bilingual competence and linguistic flexibility. This awareness may contribute to more inclusive language teaching approaches that acknowledge the realities of multilingual communication.

Overall, the implications of this study extend to both sociolinguistic research and educational practice by highlighting how digital environments provide valuable contexts for examining authentic bilingual language use. Understanding these patterns contributes to a broader appreciation of how language continues to evolve in response to social interaction and technological communication platforms.

Educators and language practitioners may consider acknowledging the role of code-switching in everyday communication among bilingual students. Recognizing code-switching as a natural linguistic practice may help educators better understand students' language behavior and create more inclusive approaches to language learning that reflect real-world multilingual communication.

By documenting and validating the authentic bilingual practices of young people in Kidapawan City, the study supports Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) and Sustainable Development Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities), consistent with the aims set out in the Introduction.

6. CONCLUSION

This study examined the patterns and communicative functions of English–Bisaya code-switching in online discourse among Generation Z users in Kidapawan City. Through the analysis of the selected corpus gathered from Facebook, TikTok, and X, the findings demonstrate that code-switching is a prevalent and meaningful feature of digital communication among bilingual speakers. The results reveal how language alternation reflects both the linguistic competence and the social communication practices of Generation Z in contemporary online environments.

The analysis of the data identified several structural patterns of code-switching present in the corpus. Among these, intrasentential switching emerged as the most frequently occurring type, indicating that bilingual speakers are highly capable of integrating elements from both English and Bisaya within a single utterance. Intersentential switching and other forms of language alternation were also observed, illustrating

the flexible ways in which speakers navigate between languages in everyday digital interaction.

Beyond its structural forms, code-switching was found to serve a variety of communicative functions within online discourse. The alternation between English and Bisaya enables users to express humor, emphasize particular ideas, convey emotions, and establish relatability with their audience. In many instances, English expressions are used to frame explanations or deliver punchlines, while Bisaya conveys emotional nuance and contextual meaning. This complementary use of languages highlights the role of code-switching as a communicative strategy that enhances interaction in digital conversations.

The findings also demonstrate that code-switching reflects the identity and social alignment of Generation Z users in online spaces. Through language alternation, users express group belonging, local identity, and shared cultural experiences. References to local contexts and community experiences indicate that bilingual language use serves as a resource for constructing identity and maintaining social relationships within online communities.

Overall, the study demonstrates that English–Bisaya code-switching in digital discourse is not merely a random mixture of languages but a purposeful communicative strategy. The patterns observed in the corpus illustrate the dynamic nature of bilingual communication among Generation Z users, highlighting how language practices continue to evolve alongside social interaction and digital communication.

7. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study focused exclusively on publicly accessible online content from Facebook, TikTok, and X (formerly Twitter). As privacy settings and restricted account access among Generation Z users continue to increase across digital platforms, the researcher encountered limitations in obtaining a larger corpus of publicly visible interactions. In some cases, verifying exact demographic information such as age and location was also limited due to the nature of online self-presentation. To address this, the study relied on contextual indicators including local references, linguistic patterns, hashtags, school affiliations, and community-related expressions associated with Kidapawan City and nearby communities. Furthermore, as a qualitative netnographic discourse analysis, the study prioritized contextual depth and interpretive richness rather than statistical generalization.

Future researchers may expand the scope of this study by examining a larger corpus of online discourse or by including data from multiple social media platforms. Doing so may provide a broader understanding of how code-switching occurs across different digital environments and communication contexts.

Further studies may explore additional sociolinguistic aspects of bilingual communication among Generation Z, such as language attitudes,

identity construction, and the influence of audience interaction on language choice in digital spaces. Investigating these factors may contribute to a deeper understanding of how bilingual speakers navigate language use in online communities.

Future research may also explore emerging patterns of language use in digital discourse, including new forms of language mixing and creative linguistic expression among young social media users. Such studies may further contribute to the growing body of knowledge on language use in contemporary digital environments.

Through continued research and awareness, a deeper understanding of bilingual language practices in digital communication may be further developed.

DECLARATIONS

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Conflict of interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Ethics: The study received ethics clearance from Central Mindanao Colleges' Research Ethics Committee with a clearance control **CMC-REC-CTE-032** approved on **November 12, 2025**. It analyzed only publicly accessible online posts and comments; the researcher did not interact with users, and all identifying information was removed in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173).

Use of AI: AI use was employed during manuscript preparation, the authors used Claude (Anthropic) to assist with restructuring, language editing, and reference verification. The authors reviewed all content and take full responsibility for the work.

Acknowledgments: The author thanks her thesis adviser, Life Gabriel F. Osumo, the members of the thesis panel, and the College of Teacher Education of Central Mindanao Colleges for their guidance and support.

Author Contribution (CRediT)

Author	Proposed Contributions
Faith Shannley M. Bustamante	Conceptualization, literature review, collection of online materials, discourse analysis, and manuscript drafting.
Life Gabriel F. Osumo	Methodological guidance, interpretation of findings, and critical manuscript revision.
Maria Fe B. Doong	Research supervision and manuscript review for contextual and disciplinary alignment.

REFERENCES

- Addeo, F., Paoli, A. D., Esposito, M., & Bolcato, M. Y. (2019). Doing social research on online communities: The benefits of netnography. *Athens Journal of Social Sciences*, 7(1), 9–38.
- Ali, M. A., et al. (2024). Polar influence of code-switching on oral communication skills: The case of Philippine Cebuano-Visayan bilinguals. *Eternal: English, Teaching, Learning, and Research Journal*, 10(1), 85–98.
- Androustopoulos, J. (2021). Multilingualism, language mixing and digital communication. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 25(4), 465–486.
- Bautista, M. L. S. (2023). Code-switching among Filipino millennials and Gen Z: Pragmatic functions and online discourse. *Philippine Journal of Linguistics*, 54(1), 23–41.
- Ben Said, A. (2023). A sociolinguistic study of code-switching motivations and language attitudes among multilingual

- Algerians in the UK (Doctoral dissertation, Canterbury Christ Church University).
- Bhattacharya, D., & van Schijndel, M. (2024). Code-switching in text and speech reveals information-theoretic audience design. *arXiv Preprint*. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2408.04596>
- Bowler, G. M. (2010). Netnography: A method specifically designed to study cultures and communities online. *The Qualitative Report*, 15(5), 1270–1275.
- Conny, Y., Yultisa, M., Sagala, G., & Rezeki, I. (2024). Linguistic shift among Gen Z in computer-mediated communication. *English Review: Journal of English Education*, 12(3), 155–165.
- Dumanig, F. P., & David, M. K. (2020). Code-switching in computer-mediated communication: Linguistic practices among bilingual youth. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 17(4), 525–540.
- Foster, P. (2020). Oral fluency in a second language: A research agenda for the next ten years. *Language Teaching*, 53(4), 446–461.
- Gerasimova, A. (2024). Social media and Generation Z: A qualitative inquiry into usage patterns and motivations.
- Goh, E., & Wu, H. (2024). Code-switching in computer-mediated communication by Gen Z Japanese Americans. *Linguistics Vanguard*. <https://doi.org/10.1515/lingvan-2024-0031>
- Gumperz, J. J. (1982). *Discourse strategies*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hashmi, S. U. (2025). Digital influence on identity within multilingual educational contexts. In *Global goals, global languages: 2025 Report of the Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages* (pp. 63–82).
- Irawan, D. (2022). An analysis of the use of code-switching in students' conversation. *Scope: Journal of English Language Teaching*, 6(2), 62–66.
- Jones, D. A. (2023). A review and critical analysis of qualitative methodologies and data-collection techniques used for code-switching research. *American Journal of Qualitative Research*, 7(2), 53–72.
- Lee, C., & Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, P. (2022). Digital discourse and language ideologies: Code-switching, identity, and belonging. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 195, 85–97.
- Lee, J. S. (2022). Multilingual practices and language mixing in online youth communication. *Language in Society*, 51(4), 567–589.
- McCordle, M., & Wolfinger, E. (2009). *The ABC of XYZ: Understanding the global generations*.
- Montes-Alcalá, C. (2020). Code-switching in social media communication: Linguistic creativity and bilingual identity. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 24(5–6), 1127–1144.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (1993). *Social motivations for code-switching: Evidence from Africa*. Oxford University Press.
- Myers-Scotton, C. (1998). A theoretical introduction to the markedness model. In *Codes and consequences: Choosing linguistic varieties*.
- Palfrey, J., & Gasser, U. (2022). *Born digital: How children grow up in a digital age* (2nd ed.). Basic Books.
- Parafina, M. L., & Dumanig, F. P. (2021). Code-switching and identity construction in social media discourse. *Asian Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 5(1), 45–60.
- Pontillas, M., Agna, A., Molina, C., & Ignacio, J. (2023). Exploring code-switching occurrences in an online English language learning setting in a state college, Philippines. *Journal of Education, Management and Development Studies*, 2(3), 37–46.
- Poplack, S. (1980). Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish y termino en español: Toward a typology of code-switching. *Linguistics*, 18(7–8), 581–618.
- Puspita, V. G., & Ardianto, A. (2024). Code-switching and slang: An analysis of language dynamics in the everyday lives of Generation Z. *Linguistics Initiative*, 4(1), 76–87.

- Reponte-Sereño, J., Cuevas, A., & Sagayno, R. (2023). Bisaya-English dynamics in online communication: An investigation of code-switching among Bisdak content creators. *International Journal of English Language Studies*, 5(4), 45–56.
- Sales, A. J. G. (2022). Linguistic borrowing of English words and utterances among Philippines' Generation Z in Cebuano Visayan. *REILA: Journal of Research and Innovation in Language*, 4(1), 45–58.
- Sawe, M. (2025). Digital identity and linguistic play: A study of Filipino Gen Z online communication. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 9(2), 3054–3063.
- Sosas, R., & Quinding, M. (2025). A qualitative linguistic analysis of Hiligaynon code-switching structure in Kidapawan City. *TRANS-KATA: Journal of Language, Literature, Culture and Education*, 6(1), 1–13.
- Suizo, C. D. (2024). Gen Z's language identity and contemporary philosophies in the digital era. *Journal of Natural Language and Linguistics*, 2(1), 1–15.
- UM Peñaplata College. (2022). Code-switching in Grade 11 students. *ELT Forum: Journal of English Language Teaching*, 11(2), 122–134.
- Villadarez, C. A. (2021). Nativized Hispanic borrowed words: Cebuano Visayan. *Journal of Linguistic Research*, 21, 25–40.
- Yulandari, R., Muhaimi, L., & Azis, A. D. (2018). Code switching in classroom discourse: A sociolinguistic study. *Jurnal Ilmiah Profesi Pendidikan*, 3(2).

© 2026 The Authors. Published under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0).