

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research method that is used to inquire into the translanguaging practices of a female university student and how these practices signal the kind of person she is online. The chapter begins with a description of the qualitative case study, and moves on to the research questions, and a description of the participant and the data sources. The chapter also explains how the data were collected and analyzed.

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design to investigate the translanguaging practices of a female university student on Twitter, and how these practices project the kind of person she is on social media. Creswell ((2014) defines qualitative research as an approach to explore and understand the meaning of individuals or groups in relation to a social or individual issue. The key to understanding qualitative research is from the idea that meaning is socially constructed and interpreted by individuals based on their interaction in the dynamic world or reality (Merriam, 2002). This study focuses specifically on an individual's 'way of being' on social media; and for this, a qualitative case study research design is deemed to be the most appropriate method.

Case study is a research design to develop an in-depth analysis of a case bounded by time and activity in which the researchers collect detailed information through various data collection techniques (Creswell, 2014). As Gerring (2007), a professor and a researcher, argues that case study is “an intensive study of a single unit (or a small set of cases) with an aim to generalize across a larger set of cases of the same general type” (p. 65). Focusing on the linguistic practices of an Indonesian female university student, this study is expected to provide an in-depth insight into her translanguaging practices and its motivational reasons hence indicating the complexity of language.

3.2. Research Questions

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The research questions of the present study have been formulated as follows:

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1. What linguistic features can be found in regard to the participant's translanguaging practices on her social media?
2. What are the underlying factors that influence her use of different languages?

3.3. The Participant

The participant of this study is a female final-year university student currently living and studying in Bandung. The participant is chosen by considering several reasons. First, the participant is a multilingual and is an active user of social media. The participant was born in a multicultural family. Her father is from East Java who usually speaks Javanese, while her mother is from West Java who speaks Sundanese. Hence, the participant speaks both of languages to interact with her family and relatives. She also speaks Indonesian as the national language and English as a foreign language which she is currently studying as her major at the university. Considering her family background and her education background, it is quite common for her to interact using different languages as she writes her posts on social media. Second, the participant is a friend of mine, and she willingly volunteered as a participant in the study. Our relationship thus enables me to gain further insights regarding her posts more easily. She has also given me permission to use her online posts as data.

3.4. Data Collection

Data collection techniques in this study involved two types: document gathering in the form of tweets/online posts and a stimulated-recall interview, in which snapshots of the participant's posts were shown during the interview to find out the intention or reasons for using particular languages and linguistic features in her tweets. Thus, the interview sought to relate linguistic behaviors realized on social media to particular intentions of the participant.

3.4.1. The Gathering of Online Posts

The online posts were taken from the participant's Twitter account posted from 17th May to 31st May 2021. There are two criteria in selecting the posts for the data: (1) the posts must contain translanguaging, and (2) they should be 'whole' and written by the participant herself. What is meant by 'whole' is the post highlighted and analyzed should talk about one idea or topic, even though the post contains two or more tweets in a form of 'thread'. Thread is a feature of Twitter in which its user adds more tweets in previous post to organize a perfectly threaded series of thoughts (Lomas, 2020). In addition, since Twitter does not provide a service to edit a post, adding a tweet to previous post can be a way to let people know the correction to a preexisting tweet.

Within the given time frame, she wrote 14 posts that contained the use of different languages: Indonesian, English, Javanese and Sundanese. The time is limited to May posts because the participant had been actively using social media in that period of time, while also considering that these posts are quite recent, hence I am able to better inquire into the participant's current self. Further, due to time limitation in doing the research, the present study limited the data collection to tweets posted on Twitter only. Twitter is chosen as the online platform because it is the most used platform by the participant.

3.4.2. The Interview

Interview is a method for exploring particular human behaviours and people's beliefs or perceptions towards particular issues. The interview allows the researcher and the participant to construct and negotiate meanings of particular experiences in a natural setting in an in-depth manner (Alshenqeeti, 2014). In this research, I adopted a stimulated-recall interview. The term refers to an interview in which the participant being interviewed is required to recall certain events or experiences; the act of recalling is necessary for the interview aims to gain detailed information regarding particular motivations, understandings and strategies that they have taken for making specific decision (Dempsey, 2010). This technique seeks to bring a deeper understanding of an individual's experience of an activity, such as how they

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understand what they are doing and how it relates to the social context (Katz & Csordas, 2003).

In interviewing the participant, I provided snapshots of the participant's posts during the interview to find out the intention or reasons for using particular languages and linguistic features in her tweets. The participant was asked regarding her reasons for particular actions. Below is the interview protocol referred to in the interview session:

1. *Apa alasan anda membuat postingan tersebut?* (What was the reason for posting the tweet?)
2. *Apa yang anda pikirkan ketika anda membuat postingan tersebut?* (What were you thinking when you posted the tweet?)
3. *Apakah anda sadar bahwa anda menggunakan lebih dari satu bahasa dalam tweet ini? Kenapa Anda menggunakan lebih dari satu bahasa dalam tweet ini?* (Are you aware that you were using more than one language in this tweet?)
4. *Apakah anda mempunyai tujuan khusus dalam menggunakan kata ini?* (Do you have specific purposes in using this words?) – this question is frequently asked in a single post since it refers to the specific terms used in the post.
5. *Apa yang anda rasakan ketika menggunakan lebih dari satu bahasa dalam tweet ini?* (What did you feel when you used more than one language in this tweet?)
6. *Bagaimana penggunaan bahasa-bahasa tersebut dalam postingan anda membantu anda dalam mengekspresikan diri?* (How does the use of different languages help you to express yourself?)

3.5. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed through qualitative content analysis approach. Flick (2014) defined qualitative analysis as “the classification and interpretation of linguistic (or visual) material to make statements about implicit and explicit dimensions and structures of meaning-making in the material” (p. 5). Similarly, qualitative content analysis is defined by Schreier (2014) as a method for

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systematically describing the classification and interpretation of the qualitative data. In relation to the analysis of the data, I combined both “systematic observation of online discourse” and “direct contact with its user” (Androutsopoulos, 2008). ‘Discourse’ here is a written language employed by the participant on her social media and its relation to social context. The aim of combining the above approach is to better understand the purpose of the participant in writing her posts and confirming the interpretation given to the online data. The interview session can thus be seen as a way to triangulate the data. In analyzing the data, I drew on theories of translanguaging (Garcia, 2009; Wei, 2018), as well as relevant studies on linguistic features commonly found on social media (Herring, 2013).